

War God 341

Chapter 341 - Live And Die Together

Long Chen had experienced three significant battles during this journey of life and death. He had started at a disadvantage when facing the six commanders and the dwarves, but ultimately, he was able to turn the tides. However, the third battle caused his cultivation to regress by two stages and Ling Xi ended up losing her Heavenly Profound Jade Lotus body.

Although Long Chen did not show his rage outwardly, flames of anger burned in his heart.

One day, I will go back to the Biyang Imperial Capital. Then, with tens of thousands of people watching, I shall defeat the number one prodigy of the Cangyang Kingdom! he swore to himself.

He had to return to the Biyang Imperial Capital and the Counter Essence Realm. The imperial family had bullied him, and he was going to take revenge for this one day, in broad daylight. He would make them suffer just as much as him!

Lin Zichen, I must admit that you are an admirable prodigy. You're not only powerful, you also possess the ultimate divine weapon. Everyone thinks you're an undefeatable legend. Today, I had to rely on Blood Sacrifice to forcefully increase my cultivation level just to fight you. One day, I will squash you beneath my feet with just my own cultivation!

If Lin Zichen had not arrived, Long Chen and Ling Xi would have fled to the Western Sea Kingdom already. He would have been able to strengthen himself there while living a peaceful life with Ling Xi. However, now it was all different. Long Chen had to work very, very hard to return to the Biyang Imperial Capital as soon as possible. He wanted to get his dignity back from the imperial family!

And also resolve Xiaolang's grudge! This was a matter between the two brothers. Xiaolang was still unconscious and Ling Xi had lost the lotus, so how could he not rage? And not hate them?

You all will regret not killing me today ... The moment I return to the Biyang Imperial Capital, the imperial family will cease to exist in this world!

Long Chen made a blood pact with himself!

Lin Zichen traveled further into the horizon.

It was clear that he was afraid of the Heavenly Demon Lord.

"Brother Chen, it really is fine. I can still live well like this, right?" Ling Xi said sadly, floating in front of him. To be honest, if she had not chosen this, Long Chen would have died by now.

He did not blame her one bit.

"It's fine. I understand. Don't worry about it," he said, looking at her. It had been a long time since he saw her in this illusory state.

"We had to flee all because of the Profound Heavenly Jade Lotus. Now that I've abandoned it, I actually feel a lot lighter inside. As for the feeling of having a body, experiencing it for a short while was enough. I'm truly content now. It's just that you

won't be able to hold me while i fall asleep now ...” Ling Xi started to mumble towards the end.

“Don't worry. We'll get the Nine Heavens Immortal Fruit very soon,” he said, determined.

“Mhm!” She nodded hard with absolute confidence in Long Chen. “Brother Chen, I'm going back to the Ling Xi Sword.

Then she turned into a cloud of mist and slipped into the sword. The Ling Xi Sword gradually shrank and, with a *whoosh*, pierced into Long Chen's ear.

Long Chen was left in a daze when he felt the piercing sting on his ear. He had not felt this in a very long time. Suddenly, he felt content to have Ling Xi there.

Whatever. The Profound Heavenly Jade Lotus was just a dream. Only the Nine Heavens Immortal Fruit can help us turn our dream into reality. That is why I must work hard ...

At this point, the effect of Long Chen's Blood Sacrifice expired. His cultivation level gradually regressed, finally stopping at the Fourth River Stage. He was about as strong as he was when he exited the Counter Essence Realm. Long Chen could not help but smile bitterly. His cultivation level had not changed at all throughout this whole journey, yet so much had happened.

There was suffering, but there were also touching moments. There was one undeniable outcome: the relationship between him and Ling Xi, and the brotherly bond between him and Xiaolang, had become extra solid after surviving this ordeal. Nothing, not even time, could break their bonds. Even many, many years into the future, this near-death experience would remain in their minds. They would even become nostalgic for this feeling.

Only change was constant in life. People often grew nostalgic for old times because nothing remained the same forever.

They would remember the passion, the heroics, the romance, the loyalty, the determination, and fighting together side by side, living and dying together!

Long Chen, Ling Xi, and Mo Xiaolang!

Wait for the day I return to the Biyang Imperial Capital!

Long Chen, now at the Fourth River Stage, carried the comatose Xiaolang in his arms. He would now start a new journey to become as powerful as possible.

“Brother Chen, where should we go now? Lin Zichen must have placed tight security all over the perimeter of Demon Emperor Mountain. He must be waiting for us to come to him, right?” Ling Xi sounded anxious.

“We don't have to go anywhere else. We'll stay at Demon Emperor Mountain.” Long Chen looked up at the mountain that resembled a black sword piercing through the ground to reach the sky.

“Why? Wasn’t the Western Sea Kingdom our original destination?”

“With Lin Zichen blocking us, we won’t be able to go to the Western Sea Kingdom. Plus, to be honest, I think the Heavenly Demon Lord decided to protect us. Why else would he chase Lin Zichen away? Only because Lin Zichen is from the imperial family?” Long Chen knew that the enemy of an enemy was a friend. Since Long Chen was an enemy of the imperial family, and the Heavenly Demon Palace was an even larger enemy to them, then it made sense that the clan would protect and even recruit him.

“Do they want to take you in?” Ling Xi did not understand. Their original plan was to head to the Western Sea Kingdom, so she was a little confused when she heard that they were staying.

“Let’s wait here. We’ll know very soon.” Long Chen was severely injured from the battle, though they were only surface injuries. After a short period of rest, he quickly recovered his strength. When he opened his eyes, there was a white-haired old man standing in front of him. The old man had traveled at unparalleled speed.

Long Chen quickly regarded the old man’s looks.

He was muscular and slightly taller than Long Chen. His old age did not show on his body as his muscles were still solid and filled with explosive strength. He had a hard expression with a gaze as sharp as a sword, as well as a tall nose like a male eagle that soared through the skies.

Long Chen felt like all his secrets were exposed in front of the old man. He felt restrained due to suddenly meeting a cultivator much stronger than Lin Zichen, and he quickly greeted him. “My name is Long Chen. Greetings, Heavenly Demon Lord!”

With such a high cultivation level, he was definitely the Heavenly Demon Lord. Long Chen had heard his name before—Zhao Qingyun. Despite the elegant name, he was a vicious person who raped, robbed, and committed every crime. He was a powerful demon through and through.

But Long Chen did not believe that.

It was easy to detect a person’s qualities through their expressions, eyes, and aura. Since the imperial family was in charge of the Cangyang Kingdom, it was easy for them to spread false rumors to vilify the Heavenly Demon Palace.

Long Chen had his own opinions on this person. Zhao Qingyun had an impassive look, as if he was uninterested in the battles of mortals. No killing intent radiated from his body. Instead, he gave off the energy of an immortal, as well as a hint of regality. How could a person with these qualities be the demon from the rumors?

Zhao Qingyun was also eyeing Long Chen with confusion in his eyes. Despite his confusion, he nodded and said, “I’ve heard a lot about your heroics during the past few days, kid, so much that scabs will form in my ears soon. I guessed you’d come to the Heavenly Demon Palace. And here you are.”

“It is my honor. Thank you for saving my life just now, Sir.” Zhao Qingyun was a senior worth respecting, plus he was one of the top cultivators in the Cangyang Kingdom. That was why Long Chen maintained a respectful demeanor.

The effects of Blood Sacrifice had a time limit. If Zhao Qingyun had not stopped Lin Zichen, and if he and Ling Xi continued fighting, the outcome could have been tragic. There was still a large gap between him and Lin Zichen after all.

Zhao Qingyun gave a small smile. He looked past Long Chen, and his gaze fell on the withered Profound Heavenly Jade Lotus. Slightly impressed, he said, “Although I did not see it with my own eyes, I could roughly sense what happened. The girl really is peculiar. Long Chen, there are many peculiar things about you. For example, you fought Lin Zichen just now, but you’re only at the Fourth River Stage.”

Indeed, Zhao Qingyun had a rough idea of what had happened. Both Ling Xi’s Profound Heavenly Jade Lotus and Long Chen’s Blood Sacrifice were topics that were difficult to explain. Worried that Zhao Qingyun would question him, he grew guarded.

“Don’t worry. If I were still young, I would not have let you go easily; I would have demanded the truth. However, everyone has their own secrets and trump cards. You are an extraordinarily talented junior, and you have a chance of growing to become Lin Zichen’s rival; that is why I will not trouble you. I came here to ask you about your plans for the future. Let me give it to you straight ...”

Zhao Qingyun paused, then he continued, “If you want to leave the Cangyang Kingdom, I can escort you out.”

“Really?” Long Chen gasped. He would no longer need to worry about Lin Zichen watching them if he did that.

But he was even more interested in listening to what Zhao Qingyun had to say next.

“Option two is to become my direct disciple. You will get many things that you desire, including combat techniques, strength, and a Heaven-tier divine weapon that rivals the Imperial Sword!”

Chapter 342 - Demon Emperor Sword

A Heaven-tier divine weapon that rivaled the Imperial Sword?

Zhao Qingyun’s offer immediately grabbed Long Chen’s attention. He was almost on par with Lin Zichen when he used Blood Sacrifice. What had ultimately led to his defeat were inferior combat techniques and, more importantly, Lin Zichen’s Imperial Sword!

When Zhao Qingyun noticed that it had piqued Long Chen’s interest, but there was still some caution in the latter’s eyes, so he smiled in exasperation. “Don’t think that this offer is too good to be true. There are many people who appreciate talent in this world. Also, the Heavenly Demon Palace and the imperial family have always been enemies. Our strength is somewhat equal. However, the imperial family has a powerful young Ninth River Stage cultivator, while the Heavenly Demon Palace does not. Based on your performance, I’m guessing that you hold a huge

secret. If you become my disciple, you will be able to inherit my skills in the future. You'll even be able to surpass Lin Zichen and make me proud."

Zhao Qingyun looked down. "I've been suppressed by the Sword Emperor all my life. Even my progeny is far inferior to his. I am unwilling to accept this fate."

"It's not that I don't believe you, your offer was just too sudden. That's why I hesitated for a moment." After hearing Zhao Qingyun's sincere tone, Long Chen knew that this was an amazing opportunity. Zhao Qingyun could give him whatever Lin Zichen had that Long Chen did not. So what if he had to become his direct disciple?

Furthermore, Zhao Qingyun had saved his life just now, and he was far stronger than himself. He was even the Heavenly Demon Lord, who held a first-tier position in the Cangyang Kingdom. Long Chen would not lose face if he had such a man as his master.

Seeing as Long Chen's guard was down, Zhao Qingyun felt confident and said, "You don't have to decide just yet. Don't you want to hear about this divine weapon that rivals the Imperial Sword?"

"I was just about to ask," Long Chen said with an embarrassed smile.

"It could be said that this sword and the Imperial Sword were once a pair. When these divine weapons were born, the ancestors of the Heavenly Demon Palace and the imperial family each managed to snatch one. They then became the most powerful weapons for both clans. The imperial family ended up with the Imperial Sword, which Lin Zichen is currently using, while the Heavenly Demon Palace's divine weapon is known as ... the Demon Emperor Sword!"

"Demon Emperor Sword?"

Based on the names, the swords were clearly a pair. The Heavenly Demon Lord would not lie, so this was a huge opportunity for Long Chen. If he could get the Demon Emperor Sword and storm the Biyang Imperial Capital, it would surely be a huge surprise to Lin Zichen.

Long Chen gritted his teeth and asked directly, "Senior, what do I need to do in order to receive the Demon Emperor Sword?"

At this point, he had decided to stay in the Heavenly Demon Palace. His cultivation level would increase if he went to the Western Sea Kingdom, but he was unlikely to receive more combat techniques and divine weapons. It would be very different at the Heavenly Demon Palace. Since they were rivals of the imperial family, they had a thousand years' worth of wealth and experience. They probably had treasures and combat techniques as impressive as the imperial family's inventory.

Long Chen's question showed that he was tempted.

"To obtain the Demon Emperor Sword, you must first be a Heavenly Demon Palace disciple, specifically a core disciple. Only then you will have the right to compete for it. Then you must be the strongest among all the other young disciples," said Zhao Qingyun.

“Deal! From today onwards, I, Long Chen, will be the direct disciple of Zhao Qingyun!” Long Chen declared boldly.

“Don’t celebrate too soon. Although there are no core disciples as powerful as Lin Zichen, we have two disciples who have reached the peak of the Eighth River Stage, and even the Ninth River Stage. If you try fighting them now at the Fourth River Stage, you’ll be a joke. It’s also very possible that after joining the Heavenly Demon Palace, you’ll amount to nothing and become the butt of jokes.” Zhao Qingyun eyed him with a rare show of mischief, smirking.

He was very satisfied with Long Chen’s decisiveness and determination.

Eighth River Stage cultivators, as well as Ninth River Stage cultivators who were equivalent to Lin Zichen without the Imperial Sword. They were undeniably super strong. However, if he could injure Lin Zichen’s shoulder, why would he be afraid of Eighth River Stage cultivators?

Of course, he would need time.

“How much time do I have?” It would take time to rise from the Fourth River Stage to the Eighth through stable, honest means.

“We don’t really have much. You have three months. Spend your time wisely,” Zhao Qingyun answered.

“Three months?” Long Chen grinned. Three months was enough. In three months, he would rise from the ashes and storm the Biyang Imperial Capital!

“Hey, kid, are you truly committed to taking this risk? You must know that since we are called the Heavenly Demon Palace, we naturally have the ‘demonic’ aspect within us. If you become my direct disciple, you will have an infinite halo around you. However, if you are not strong enough to live up to this identity, then infinite calamities will come. Are you prepared for this?” Zhao Qingyun asked solemnly.

“I’m used to difficulties and challenges. I don’t care how deep the waters are in the Heavenly Demon Palace. In order to get the Demon Emperor Sword, I, Long Chen, must try!” said Long Chen with great determination.

“Aren’t you worried that the relationship between us as master and disciple might seem transactional? Isn’t that a little unhealthy?” Zhao Qingyun joked.

“The unhealthiness will turn healthy with time, I think.” After some observation, Long Chen had a better grasp of Zhao Qingyun’s personality. Indeed, it was embarrassing for the Sword Emperor’s rival to not have a disciple who could fight Lin Zichen. Long Chen’s startling talent had indeed attracted his attention and revived his long-dead interest in recruiting disciples.

“Alright, then. From today onwards, you shall be my ninth direct disciple!” Zhao Qingyun was happy with the confirmation of the matter. Although this disciple had not chosen him out of sincerity, but rather for the Demon Emperor Sword, Zhao Qingyun had his own plans.

He was only planting a seed today. And maybe this seed would one day grow from annihilating the dwarves to destroying the imperial family.

“Ninth? Are you saying that the top two cultivators are my seniors?” Long Chen asked sourly. Due to the matter with the Ninth Prince, he didn’t like the thought of being called “Ninth Junior Brother.”

“They’re not ...” Then, Zhao Qingyun explained awkwardly, “They’re not my direct disciples. You can say that I was blind years ago when I recruited disciples. Your senior brothers and sisters have not amounted to much. Even the best one is only at the Sixth River Stage. The most outstanding disciples in Heavenly Demon Palace are under the Three Demon Elders ...”

“Oh, I see!”

It was no wonder the old geezer was so enthusiastic in recruiting Long Chen. His disciples were just too embarrassing. Forget about the Sword Emperor—his disciples were worse than the disciples of the Three Demon Elders.

Zhao Qingyun’s face twitched when he saw Long Chen’s look of realization. However, to be honest, he genuinely liked this disciple very much but could not show it too much as a master.

“Long Chen, let me tell you this. There are currently two factions in the Heavenly Demon Palace. I am the Heavenly Demon Lord, and also the most powerful person there. That is why I hold the most power within the clan. Of course, the three Demon Elders also hold certain influence, and they have countless disciples under them. Now that you are my direct disciple, you must be prepared to be challenged. My other disciples have not achieved much partially because they are so used to being bullied by the Demon Elders’ disciples ...”

Zhao Qingyun was a little bitter.

Long Chen did not laugh at him. He understood that despite Zhao Qingyun being a powerful master, he felt miserable about having such weak disciples. The younger generation of disciples all competed on equal footing, and Zhao Qingyun had indeed given his disciples more resources. However, he could not do anything if they could not produce results.

“So, you’re my hope for giving me face,” Zhao Qingyun admitted honestly.

“Give you face? Of course I will.” Zhao Qingyun was an interesting person. Long Chen gave an evil smirk and said, “As your favorite disciple, I will obviously make you proud. But, Master, how could you not have a welcome gift for this new disciple?”

“You brat, are you really asking me for stuff this soon?” Zhao Qingyun was speechless. “I can’t give you anything too precious for now, but tell me, what do you currently need most? I’ll help you think of a way.”

Long Chen hesitated. If he asked for an advanced Earth-tier combat technique, it would be pointless because he was currently at the Fourth River Stage. Although Zhao Qingyun had explained everything in a casual tone, Long Chen knew that being in the Heavenly Demon Palace meant imminent danger. Without sufficient strength, he would be humiliated. Although he didn’t care about making Zhao Qingyun lose face, he could not stand being looked down on by others.

Therefore, what he needed most now was to increase his cultivation level.

Of course, Xiaolang, who was in his arms, also urgently needed help.

“I want demonic beast carcasses. The higher the tier, the more helpful it will be to me.” Long Chen revealed his objective directly. Zhao Qingyun had already spotted many extraordinary abilities that Long Chen had, and Long Chen did not mind letting him know a little bit more. Long Chen was merely requesting for beast carcasses, not performing Blood Transmutation in front of him!

“Demonic beast carcasses?”

Zhao Qingyun froze, wondering why he needed them. But he still agreed immediately and said, “I don’t have demonic beast carcasses on hand right now, but I think there’s a Category Seven Earth-tier beast near Demon Emperor Mountain. Follow me there; I will kill it now and it will be my welcome gift to you!”

Long Chen was filled with emotion.

Was this the benefit of having a master’s protection?

Chapter 343 - Rhino King

In the past, Long Chen had relied on himself to fight for almost everything he owned, including killing his own high-tier beasts to use Blood Transmutation on. Now, under the wing of one of the most powerful masters in the Cangyang Kingdom, everything was different.

With the Heavenly Demon Lord’s mentorship, Long Chen imagined that he would soon be able to take his revenge.

“Although I don’t know why you want beast carcasses, I’m afraid the strongest beast within a hundred and fifty kilometers of Demon Emperor Mountain is this Category Seven Earth-tier Rhino King,” said Zhao Qingyun as he led Long Chen hurriedly to the beast.

Is this place really that pitiful?

Long Chen was immersed in the joy of having a master to help him slay demonic beasts. This was an unexpected outcome. Though it looked like his dream of using Blood Transmutation to grow quickly would not come true.

However, using Blood Transmutation too often was not the best way to grow. Long Chen now understood this concept, so he was not feeling dejected.

“But there is a tunnel in Demon Emperor Mountain that leads to the Pyro Passageways, where there are many Ember Beasts. However, the passages have been closed and I can’t open them just for you ... There will be a training session there soon, though only the top ten disciples are qualified to enter.”

Pyro Passageways? Ember Beast?

Long Chen privately memorized these names. If Xiaolang could wake up, the Pyro Passageways would be heaven to him.

“This demonic wolf is as extraordinary as you are. I believe myself to be a well-traveled person, and yet I have not seen this demonic beast before. Could this be a mutation of the Moon Devouring Wolf? The Moon Devouring Wolf has a silver moon on its forehead, while this beast has a golden sun. How interesting. But I think he’s injured. How do you plan to save him?” Zhao Qingyun asked when he saw that Long Chen was looking rather sadly at Xiaolang.

Long Chen looked up and asked directly, “Master, do you have any fire elemental treasures?” Now that he had a master, he would be an idiot if he did not capitalize on this resource.

“Fire elemental treasures? Let me think ...”

It was obvious that Zhao Qingyun liked his newly recruited disciple. Long Chen had already made two consecutive requests, but he had not even furrowed his brows.

“I do have a few Fire Essences, but they’re not with me now. I’ll get you some when I return to the Heavenly Demon Palace,” said Zhao Qingyun after some thought.

“You have Fire Essences too? I’m being pursued right now because I killed the Ninth Prince. He has nine Fire Essences on his sword!”

“Fire Essences are produced in the Heavenly Demon Palace’s Pyro Passageways. The Sword Emperor probably took them from our disciples. Although there aren’t any large-scale wars between the imperial family and the Heavenly Demon Palace, there are many hidden scuffles. Not long ago, a Seventh River Stage elder from the Heavenly Demon Palace died outside the Imperial Capital. He died because he attempted to kill the Ninth Prince. Since you killed the Ninth Prince, you have indirectly avenged him,” Zhao Qingyun said sorrowfully.

As the Heavenly Demon Lord, he obviously did not want any clan members to die, especially not in the hands of the imperial family.

“You killed the six commanders of the royal guards, then annihilated the whole dwarf tribe. You’ve got some guts. To be honest, I’ve always wanted to kill off the dwarves,

but I never got the chance because the imperial family has always protected them.” Zhao Qingyun gave a look of disgust when he spoke of the dwarves.

“Those were just appetizers,” Long Chen said mildly.

Zhao Qingyun heard the determination in his statement.

“Kid, you’re ambitious. If you can kill off the imperial family, the Demon Emperor Sword will be yours. You can even leave with it,” said Zhao Qingyun with a smile. If Long Chen could grow to that level, he would naturally choose to leave the Cangyang Kingdom.

But that was not going to be easy.

“Then I shall receive the Demon Emperor Sword gratefully,” Long Chen said very boldly.

There was a burning passion beneath his great confidence.

“And I will be waiting with great anticipation.”

The two of them had almost arrived at their destination by the end of the conversation. There was a vast field ahead littered with weeds as well as murky streams. The ground rumbled and shook as there were many beasts, especially demonic beasts, living here. A violent aura emanated from the deepest parts of the wilderness. The source had to be the Category Seven Earth-tier Rhino King.

Long Chen followed Zhao Qingyun through the fields and finally spotted the Rhino King. It was a huge beast, slightly larger than the Nine Heavens Fire Beast. It had gray skin stronger than steel and solid knots of protruding, rock-like muscles.

The most outstanding part of its body was the thick, sharp, four-meter-long horn on its head. It looked intimidating and was a weapon of nature!

But these features were as unimportant as clouds to Zhao Qingyun. He gently thrust his palm onto its body, and the mighty Category Seven Earth-tier demonic beast’s internal organs shattered from the vibrations. The gigantic Rhino King squealed in pain, then crashed into the ground, throwing up a plume of smoke. Then it never moved again.

Zhao Qingyun turned to ask Long Chen smugly, “Someone as strong as me is more than fit to be your master, right?”

“Of course!”

Long Chen was about to receive a huge piece of treasure with zero effort, so why wouldn’t he praise Zhao Qingyun? However, he was genuinely impressed because even Ninth River Stage cultivators could not kill a Category Seven Earth-tier Rhino King this effortlessly.

There was no question about Zhao Qingyun being beyond the Ninth River Stage.

Long Chen had rough knowledge about the realm beyond the Heavenly River Realm. It was known as the Heavenly Passage Realm. The name of this realm was easy to understand, and it was like passing through to heavens to achieve a level that Ninth River Stage cultivators could not compare.

The Draconic, Divine Core, Heavenly River, and Heavenly Passage Realms were known as the four foundational realms of cultivation. They were only fundamentals, and there were more layers above these four foundational realms. The masters from Ling Xi's hometown were mostly in those further realms, but not many people in the Cangyang Kingdom were aware of them. Naturally, Long Chen was no exception.

Combat techniques, divine weapons, spiritual medicines, and demonic beasts were all divided into four main tiers, in reflection of the four foundational realms. However, just like cultivation, there were tiers beyond these four too, though they did not exist in the Cangyang Kingdom.

But these were matters for the future.

Long Chen was only able to store the Rhino King's carcass using his largest Universe Pouch.

"Now that you have accepted the welcome gift, Long Chen, we shall return to the Heavenly Demon Palace if there are no other matters to discuss. I will call all the high-level clan members to a meeting to announce my ninth direct disciple. When that happens, you'll have to kneel and formally acknowledge me as your master in order to complete the initiation. Are you willing?" Zhao Qingyun asked solemnly.

"If you're genuinely going to treat me as a disciple, and are kind to me, why would I have a problem with it? Plus, you gave me this Rhino King as a gift; it's only right for me to show some form of respect, right?" Long Chen did not mind. It was very common for people to kneel before their master as a formal initiation ritual. If there was not enough respect and formality in the ritual, why would a mighty master want to pass his knowledge to someone?

"Then let's head out. However, let me give you a reminder. You're only at the Fourth River Stage right now. If other people try to provoke you, ignoring them is definitely an option. Self-control prevents future problems. When you are strong enough, all the chattering clowns will naturally shut their mouths," Zhao Qingyun said.

"A true man picks his battles. Don't worry, I'm not an idiot. I wouldn't put myself in a situation where other people can bully me," Long Chen said honestly. However, Zhao Qingyun's words made him understand that his days at the Heavenly Demon Palace would probably not be easy.

Xiao Xi, Xiaolang! You two will witness my extraordinary growth at the Heavenly Demon Palace! In three months' time, I will storm the Biyang Imperial Capital with the Demon Emperor Sword!

With that silent declaration in his heart, Long Chen followed Zhao Qingyun and started to head towards the Heavenly Demon Palace.

Demon Emperor Mountain was huge, and its peak pierced through the clouds. The Heavenly Demon Palace was built on a vast, flat platform on the slope of the mountain. The platform was completely flat, as if someone had carved it with a sword!

When Long Chen arrived on the platform, he touched the ground. Although there were many scratches, the platform was still clearly manmade.

“You’re shocked, aren’t you?” Zhao Qingyun looked like he had expected this reaction.

“I am.”

“This platform was built by the founder of the Heavenly Demon Palace, Tian Mozi. He carved it with the Demon Emperor Sword! I’m not strong enough to replicate that feat right now. It seems that every generation has been weaker than the last,” Zhao Qingyun said with some regret.

The legendary Tian Mozi must have been much more terrifying than Zhao Qingyun to be able to carve this place out with a sword. Cultivators of the Heavenly Passage Realm were powerful indeed.

After appreciating Tian Mozi’s might, Long Chen finally looked up at the Heavenly Demon Palace. Although there was the word “demon” in its name, the cluster of buildings looked like a paradise nestled within the mountains. Long Chen could not relate the structures in front to the rumored violent, psychotic clan he had heard about.

“A little surprised, aren’t you?” Zhao Qingyun had expected this. “Why ‘demon?’ From my perspective, ‘demon’ does not mean violence. ‘Demon’ means to not be restricted by worldly problems. ‘Demon’ means freedom and doing whatever you want to. It means achieving extraordinary cultivation levels. That is the core value of the Heavenly Demon Palace. If we’re talking about massacres and violence, then the imperials are the demons.”

Long Chen was shaken by his words.

Based on this explanation, Long Chen was a demon too. The demon of demons.

“Alright. I shall call for everyone to gather. Get yourself prepared.”

Chapter 344 - The Three Demon Elders

Long Chen followed Zhao Qingyun into the Heavenly Demon Palace. The architecture was the same as what he saw from the outside: refreshing, elegant, and classic. From the plants and trees to the birds and flowers, it felt like a paradise in the mortal realm. The Heavenly Demon Palace was huge, but there were not many people inside. That was why he did not see many people along the way.

However, whenever someone passed them, they looked at Zhao Qingyun with reverence in their eyes, bowing slightly before veering out of his way. Of course, they also cautiously studied Long Chen. Since they did not recognize him, they knew from a glance that he did not belong to the Heavenly Demon Palace.

“Why is this teenager following the Palace Lord? He doesn’t usually pay attention to mortals and mortal matters. We don’t even see him for a month sometimes.”

“I don’t know either. But it’s best we don’t speculate on the Palace Lord’s matters.”

There were whispers when they walked past, even turning around to study Long Chen.

“He’s only at the Fourth River Stage. Not some prodigy or anything. There’s no need to pay him any attention.”

Long Chen smirked when he heard the whispers.

It looks like the only demon in the Heavenly Demon Palace is my master, Zhao Qingyun. The rest of them are mere mortals suffering from jealousy and hatred and competing for status. It looks like it’s exactly as Master described. It won’t be easy here. Long Chen shook his head.

Ignoring the shocked gazes from passersby, he followed Zhao Qingyun into the largest hall in the Heavenly Demon Palace.

This building was named the Demon Pavilion, its architecture exuding regal magnificence. It definitely lived up to its name. Under the revered gazes of the guards, who were also disciples of the Heavenly Demon Palace, at the entrance, Zhao Qingyun entered the hall.

“Gather the Three Demon Elders, Eight Protectors, Enforcers, Executioners, as well as the various Pavilion Lords. I have an announcement to make,” Zhao Qingyun instructed the guards when he entered.

“Right away, my Lord!” The guards nodded, then he hurried off. They went to instruct other disciples, who then scattered through the place to inform all the high-level members mentioned by Zhao Qingyun.

Zhao Qingyun sat on a large, raised, sandalwood chair and looked down at the seats below before he said to Long Chen, “Long Chen, the Heavenly Demon Palace has a strict hierarchy, but it’s alright if you can’t remember everything right away. Out of all these people, only the three Demon Elders have the right to speak in front of me. Sometimes I respect the Demon Elders’ opinions, since they have managed the Heavenly Demon Palace for many years and have a deep loyalty to the people.”

Since Long Chen was a junior, he naturally did not have a seat here.

“The three Demon Elders are all at the Ninth River Stage. Other than me, they are the most powerful people in the Heavenly Demon Palace. They hold great influence here too,” he explained.

“Does that mean that they might not listen to your instructions? That they might target me?” Long Chen understood what he was implying.

“It’ll be fine. They can’t do anything about my decisions.” Zhao Qingyun grinned as he stroked his beard.

Soon, people started arriving in the hall. The lower their positions, the earlier they arrived. Many elders, Enforcers, and even Palace Lords started to gather within the hall. The three Demon Elders were still not present.

Everyone had already noticed Long Chen standing behind Zhao Qingyun. This was a stranger, and they had a feeling that the announcement would be related to him. Since the Heavenly Demon Lord was present, they could not discuss loudly, but whispers were rampant.

“The Palace Lord must have gathered us here because of that teenager.”

“I know that. But what’s so special about him?”

“He is at the Fourth River Stage. That’s barely an acceptable level for his age. However, the way he acts so nonchalantly and without a change in expression despite standing in front of so many people means that he has a strong mind.”

“We’ll see if he has a strong mind later.”

Zhao Qingyun maintained an impassive expression as time passed. When all the people had arrived, he looked up to see three elderly people walking slowly into the Demon Pavilion. Long Chen looked up immediately, studying the legendary three Demon Elders. They were directly under Zhao Qingyun in the clan.

They were not young. Standing in the middle was an old man who looked like he was at least eighty years old. He was thin, with a lot of wrinkles on his face, but a pair of bulging eyes with a sharp glint as they swept across the crowd.

To his left was an old woman. She looked a little younger than him and could still walk with a straight back. She had an arrogant look and did not seem like an easy person to deal with.

The last elder was a short and fat old man, younger than the woman. His hair was still black, but he had a fierce face with fat rolls, making him look terrifying.

They were not attractive in the least; to a normal person, they were indeed demons. As for Zhao Qingyun, although he was no longer young, he still looked charismatic. He must have been as handsome as Dongfang Xuanxiao when he was young.

After entering the Demon Palace, the three Demon Elders took their seats and finally looked up to notice Long Chen standing behind Zhao Qingyun. They were no idiots, so they instantly guessed that Long Chen was the reason why they had been called to the hall. This was a mere Fourth River Stage cultivator, yet all three Demon Elders had been called over just for him. A bad impression of him formed in their minds. They could not care less about what he was here for.

Seeing as everyone had gathered, Zhao Qingyun’s eyes opened and surveyed the room. “I have gathered everyone here today to make an announcement,” he said mildly.

“Please do, Palace Lord,” the group replied respectfully in unison below.

To them, although Zhao Qingyun usually did not intervene much in clan matters and rarely appeared in public, he was a Heavenly Passage Realm cultivator through and through. Without his presence here, the Heavenly Demon Palace would have been flattened by the imperials a long time ago.

Over the past thousand years, the imperials and the Heavenly Demon Palace had maintained one Heavenly Passage Realm cultivator each, causing both clans to maintain a thousand-year-long

stalemate. This meant that both parties had existed at the same time for that long. That was why they maintained great respect for the Palace Lord.

Zhao Qingyun pointed at Long Chen and said, "It's nothing major. I only wanted to introduce everyone to him. This is my ninth direct disciple!"

The crowd erupted when he finished speaking. There had been many disciples before Long Chen, but he had never gathered everyone to make such a grand announcement. Also, he usually selected his direct disciples from the pool of regular disciples. This time, Zhao Qingyun had picked up a random Fourth River Stage cultivator from God-knows-where!

To be honest, the Fourth River Stage was an extremely average cultivation level. The Palace Lord had always been mysterious, appearing whenever he wanted, and they could never figure out his personality. They thought that he was excellent in all aspects, except he was terrible at picking disciples. So far, the best direct disciple he had wasn't even ranked in the top fifty in the Heavenly Demon Palace. In contrast, the number one disciple of each Demon Elder took up the top three spots, and the rest of the top ten were almost all under them too.

From this alone, they opined that Zhao Qingyun was terrible at selecting and teaching disciples compared to the three Demon Elders. Now it was even worse because he had gathered so many people at the Demon Pavilion just to announce that he had recruited an outsider to be a direct disciple.

This seemed like a childish act.

Of course, most only criticized Zhao Qingyun's decision internally, though there were some who outwardly expressed their dissatisfaction, namely the three Demon Elders. The fat Third Demon Elder laughed dryly once, then he said, "Palace Lord, you're kidding, right?"

"Did that sound like it was a joke?" Zhao Qingyun squinted. He had been expecting the damn fat man to cause trouble, and indeed, he was the first to blurt out an objection.

"This teenager isn't a Heavenly Demon Palace disciple, is he? And he's only at the Fourth River Stage. His talent is only average. How could he have the right to be your direct disciple? That is why I thought you were only joking." The Third Demon Elder smirked.

"You don't have to say anything else. I have already made my decision. Long Chen, greet your elders. These are the three Demon Elders. They manage the affairs of the clan." Zhao Qingyun could not be bothered to argue, so he started introducing them to Long Chen instead.

"I am Long Chen. Greetings, Demon Elders." Long Chen knew that these were only formalities. He only had to greet them as those were rules, then he would shut his mouth.

Of course, he did not like the three Demon Elders either.

The three old geezers were clearly not people who could be offended, because they dared to refute Zhao Qingyun in public.

“We shall begin the master-disciple ritual now,” Zhao Qingyun said with a smile, looking at Long Chen approvingly.

“Wait.”

That was when the Third Demon Elder suddenly spoke up. He continued, “Palace Lord, are you really going to take him in as your direct disciple? Please be cautious about this, Palace Lord. You have not even told us where this person has come from!”

Annoyed, Zhao Qingyun replied coldly with raised eyebrows, “His name is Long Chen. Have you all not heard his name?”

“Long Chen?” Everyone thought for a second and suddenly recalled something. They then stared at him in shock!

Chapter 345 - Reunited with Xuanxiao

It was not by choice. Long Chen’s fame had skyrocketed recently because he had started as an unknown, nameless kid but committed several earth-shattering acts. Since then, he had stepped into the ranks of the Cangyang Kingdom’s strongest cultivators. The common person would find it difficult or even impossible to kill the Ninth Prince, the six commanders of the royal guards, and annihilate the dwarf tribe. But one psycho had done all of that.

Even the three Demon Elders were shocked by Long Chen. Since the imperial family was their archnemesis, they were privately happy to see their rivals being abused by a newbie kid. However, they had been under the assumption that Long Chen was at least at the Eighth River Stage in order to accomplish these earth-shattering feats. How could he have killed Song Zhongcheng, who was at the Eighth River Stage, if he was not at the same level himself?

The teenager standing in front of them was only at the Fourth River Stage. That was why after they eyed him for a while, they could not figure it out and concluded that the Heavenly Demon Lord had made a mistake.

The three Demon Elders looked at each other. They genuinely did not believe that this Fourth River Stage kid was the Long Chen that everyone had been talking about. The Third Demon Elder was the most straightforward of the three. He scoffed and said in a low voice, “All he wanted was to recruit a new disciple, but I can’t believe he used that young prodigy’s name as a cover. This is difficult to swallow.”

Although the words he used were ugly, most of them agreed.

Naturally, the rest of them dared not speak their minds. This was the Heavenly Demon Palace after all, and Zhao Qingyun was a good Palace Lord. They merely felt that he was unreliable at recruiting disciples. After this experience, he had become even more unreliable.

Zhao Qingyun obviously heard them, but he was not angry. He merely gave a small smile.

“Why don’t you explain?” Long Chen raised an eyebrow. If he were the Heavenly Demon Lord, he would have kicked all three Demon Elders out.

“Have you heard of this saying? It goes like this: ‘the world criticizes me, bullies me, humiliates me, laughs at me, looks down on me, betrays me, hurts me, and lies to me. How can I solve it? The only solution is to control thyself, let him be, avoid him, have patience, respect him, and ignore him.’ Wait a few years, and they’ll see. Today, they underestimate you; I do not need to say more. When the day comes, they will see it. Why should I waste my time?” Zhao Qingyun smiled.

Long Chen was stunned.

This was the difference between him and Zhao Qingyun. Perhaps due to his youth, he was impatient for revenge every time he was humiliated. However, he started to reflect after hearing Zhao Qingyun’s words. Due to the Ancient Bloodsoul Dragon’s influence, he had been rash and impatient along his growth journey since the beginning, strengthening himself through violent killing. This caused his mind to become heavily influenced by the Ancient Bloodsoul Dragon, and he had a huge amount of violent energy within him.

Perhaps being as nonchalant and focused as Master will help me greatly. A gentleman’s revenge can wait; even ten years is not too late. I am not in a great hurry, so I should stay in Heavenly Demon Palace for a while to train my mind in order to achieve stable growth. Perhaps both my cultivation and mind will strengthen beyond my expectations here.

Long Chen suddenly realized what he needed to learn most from Zhao Qingyun. It was not combat techniques, but attitude. An attitude of “letting it go.” Only this mindset would prevent Long Chen from losing himself on the path of massacre.

From this moment onwards, Long Chen truly recognized Zhao Qingyun as his master because he saw the things he could learn from Zhao Qingyun.

Seeing as the announcement had ended, the Third Demon Elder stood up and said directly, “Palace Lord, since the announcement has been made, can we adjourn now? We have many matters to attend to; we’re busy people, you know.”

His tone was filled with mockery. Indeed, the three Demon Elders managed the daily affairs of the clan while Zhao Qingyun was merely a symbol.

“Go ahead.” Zhao Qingyun flicked his sleeve gently.

“Alright. Also, are you sure you want to write ‘Long Chen’ on the name list?” The Third Demon Elder eyed Long Chen and smirked.

He spoke so rudely that it was incongruent with his position. It was clear that he was extremely disapproving of the Palace Lord’s actions. Since the three Demon Elders always acted together, Long Chen guessed that the other two were not happy either, seeing as the Third Demon Elder was dissatisfied.

“Let’s put something else then ...” Long Chen suddenly said. He smiled and looked at the Third Demon Elder, then continued, “Third Demon Elder, my real name is Dié Dié. Like ‘Hu Dié.’ You may record this name in the namelist and read it aloud thrice daily. I think you’ll get a very magical feeling.”

“Dié Dié?” The crowd was a little confused. That was not a man’s name! But when they realized what the joke was, many people burst into laughter. [1]

Didn’t “Dié Dié” sound like “daddy?” Long Chen had told the Third Demon Elder to read it aloud thrice daily, meaning he wanted him to call Long Chen his father. No one could have imagined Long Chen to be as bold as this.

When the Third Demon Elder realized that he had been insulted, his temper flared instantly. He roared at Long Chen and was about to charge at him! He had always been arrogant due to his lofty status in the Heavenly Demon Palace, so there was no way he would stand for being insulted like that! He had been humiliated in front of a bunch of people by a bratty kid!

But he was held back by the other two Demon Elders because Zhao Qingyun stood in front of Long Chen. His expression turned cold when he saw that the Third Demon Elder was about to attack.

“Were you about to attack someone in the Demon Pavilion? Third Demon Elder, have you forgotten our ancestors’ reminders? No one is allowed to attack their own kin in the Demon Pavilion. This is your last warning. If this happens again, I don’t mind crippling you.”

Zhao Qingyun was mild when he was not angry, but when he was, it was terrifying. The Third Demon Elder had crossed the line today. If Long Chen had not humiliated the Third Demon Elder, he would have been walking out with his tail in the air.

From this moment onwards, everyone started to become cautious of Long Chen. No ordinary person would be bold enough to use Zhao Qingyun’s power to insult the Third Demon Elder after all, as the Third Demon Elder was ranked fourth in the clan.

“Everyone, you may all leave. I do not want to see a repeat of what happened today. His name is Long Chen. I don’t care if you record it or not. My direct disciple is recorded in my heart, not on the namelist,” Zhao Qingyun said mildly as his gaze swept across the crowd.

“Yes, Palace Lord!” Everyone nodded and left with their heads bowed low. Although the Third Demon Elder was indignant, he had no choice but to leave the Demon Pavilion after the two Demon Elders gave him pointed looks. However, there was already hatred in his glare towards Long Chen.

Zhao Qingyun turned to Long Chen in exasperation. “You’re really good at creating problems for me. Aren’t you afraid he’ll start targeting you?”

“Master, I’m sure you understand that the more you oblige these clowns, the more arrogant they become. Although you’re completely focused on cultivation and do not care about trivial matters, people like that still need to be taught a lesson. And if he targets me, what do I have to worry about when I have you?” Long Chen said with a chuckle.

When everyone was heading out, a couple entered the Demon Pavilion. The elders and enforcers gave the man unfriendly looks.

“Father, let me tell you some-”

They were a man and a woman who looked to be above thirty years old. The man was handsome and the lady was beautiful, therefore making them look like a compatible couple. They passed the crowd and entered the Demon Pavilion excitedly. The woman had just entered and spoke excitedly to Zhao Qingyun, but when she saw Long Chen next to him, she froze. Even the man behind her froze instantly.

Long Chen had no idea how to react either, because the couple was his stepfather, Dongfang Xuanxiao, and Xuan Ming!

Long Chen gasped and blurted, “Stepfather?” He never imagined that he would meet Dongfang Xuanxiao in the Heavenly Demon Palace.

“Chen’er?” Dongfang Xuanxiao was shocked too.

Xuan Ming could barely react to this and asked hurriedly, “Chen’er, why are you here?”

After hearing their conversation, Zhao Qingyun was also stunned. He looked at the trio and asked, “You all know each other?”

“Of course, Master. Dongfang Xuanxiao is my stepfather. We are from Yuanling City,” Long Chen quickly explained. Since Xuan Ming was a member of the Heavenly Demon Palace, it was normal that she was here. However, he had not expected her to be Zhao Qingyun’s daughter. The relationships were getting complex.

Zhao Qingyun was pleasantly surprised by this outcome. This was great because the relationships would become even stronger.

All four of them stood together while Dongfang Xuanxiao and Xuan Ming regarded Long Chen carefully. Dongfang Xuanxiao could not help but ask, “Chen’er, there are stories out there about someone named ‘Long Chen’ killing the Ninth Prince and being pursued. Is that you?”

This was what he desperately wanted to know. When he first heard the news, he did not believe it because no matter how quickly Long Chen improved, it was impossible for him to reach that level within such a short time.

“Of course it’s me! Why would I be here if it wasn’t?” Long Chen replied with a grin. Then he asked, “Stepfather, you’ve been to Yuanling City recently, right?”

If Dongfang Xuanxiao had not returned to Yuanling City, he would’ve been under the assumption that Long Chen was dead.

“That’s right. I’ve gone back to Yuanling City. I think you were in the Burning Heaven Secret Realm then. Ming’er and I waited for a few days, but since you hadn’t come out, we left,” he said.

That was how he had heard the news that Long Chen was still alive. Not only had he not died, but Long Chen was also even stronger now.

“Chen’er, I can’t believe how much stronger you’ve become. Father, how did you get to know Chen’er?” Xuan Ming asked, looking at Long Chen emotionally.

Chapter 346 - Nepotism

“You should ask him,” said Zhao Qingyun with a mysterious smile.

Since Zhao Qingyun had not answered Xuan Ming’s question, Long Chen replied in exasperation, “Stepfather, and my beautiful Stepmother, I’m afraid our relationship hierarchy will become very complicated because I am now his direct disciple. He is my Master.”

“That’s great news! Your cultivation will improve even more now that you’re my father-in-law’s direct disciple!” Dongfang Xuanxiao was genuinely happy for Long Chen.

Some people had not left yet and were straining their ears to listen in on their conversation.

“Stepfather?” They only heard this word amidst the blurry conversation. Once they were far from the Demon Pavilion, the Third Demon Elder huffed disappointedly. “After such a bold act, I thought he was the real Long Chen! I didn’t know he was Number One Trash’s stepson! So he is here because of nepotism; it’s no wonder the Palace Lord protected him. He even gave him the name ‘Long Chen!’”

“The Palace Lord is becoming more and more unreasonable.” The Second Demon Elder, who was the old woman, also shook her head.

“To tell if it’s a mule or a donkey, you’ve got to take it out for a walk. Time will tell us what the hell is going on with that brat. We don’t need to be impatient. If he really is untalented, then like Dongfang Xuanxiao, he’ll be an embarrassment to the Palace Lord only. Not us. Let’s hope the Palace Lord learns his lesson this time and finds an appropriate disciple to inherit his skills,” said the First Demon Elder in his hoarse voice for the first time.

“His skills? It does not matter how strong his disciples are; how will they compare with each of our strongest disciples? Mine has already broken through to the Seventh River Stage, and you two have disciples at the Eighth River Stage. By the time the Palace Lord finds a suitable disciple, your disciples might already be at the Heavenly Passage Realm. Once that happens, he will not even need to be the Palace Lord anymore,” the Third Demon Elder said resentfully.

“Old Three, shut your mouth. Don’t say things like that here. Zhao Qingyun is the most powerful person in the Heavenly Demon Palace right now. We are no match for him, even if all three of us fight him together. If you want to die, do not drag us down with you.” The First Demon Elder gave him a warning glare, then he walked away.

News that Long Chen had only become Zhao Qingyun's direct disciple through nepotism spread across the whole Heavenly Demon Palace. From that day onwards, Long Chen's name was known across the whole clan. Of course, they did not know if he was the real Long Chen.

Dongfang Xuanxiao was only at the First River Stage and, in reality, he was considered very weak in the Heavenly Demon Palace. There was nothing about him that attracted attention, not until he married the Palace Lord's daughter. That's when everything changed for him. She was an angel, and how could anyone be willing to see a pretty flower given to a pig?

Therefore, Dongfang Xuanxiao now had a popular nickname within the Heavenly Demon Palace, which was "Number One Trash." Long Chen obviously knew nothing about this. With his temper, he would punch someone the moment he heard it.

At this point, Long Chen had already explained how he became Zhao Qingyun's disciple to Dongfang Xuanxiao. Everyone started chatting happily once more. He also learned that Dongfang Xuanxiao and Xuanming had gotten married. After eighteen years of suffering, Long Chen was genuinely happy to see them have a happy ending.

"Oh, Ming'er, you rushed in so excitedly just now. That's not according to protocol. I bet you were about to tell me some really good news." Zhao Qingyun was especially happy today because he had managed to recruit a direct disciple like Long Chen.

"Xuanxiao, you tell him!" Xuanming blushed, a little embarrassed.

"Father-in-law ... Uh ... We have some good news. You're going to be a grandfather." Since this was his first child, Dongfang Xuanxiao was also a little reserved. After all, he had not been a father before. He felt like a child in front of his elders.

"Ming'er is pregnant?" Zhao Qingyun gasped, then he let out a hearty laugh. "We've had double good news today! Not only did you two get to reunite with Long Chen, but you've also got a baby on the way! Double good news! This is worth celebrating!"

Long Chen was overjoyed. The child was late. Eighteen years late. If the Azure Dragon Patriarch had not broken the couple up, their child would have been almost as old as Long Chen.

This was amazing news, and with Long Chen's arrival to the Heavenly Demon Palace, all four of them were overjoyed. Although they were not related by blood, Long Chen felt very comfortable with them.

They enjoyed a feast filled with warmth, though only the four of them were present.

At the dinner table, Long Chen talked to them about many things, including his experiences during recent times, though he had to be vague about many things that involved his personal secrets. Despite that, Xuanxiao and the rest listened with great horror.

"Chen'er, you've suffered so much." Xuanming was about to be a mother, and since Long Chen called her "Stepmother," she saw him as her child. She felt horrible hearing about her child's suffering.

After some time, Zhao Qingyun stood up and said, "You all carry on. Long Chen, I'll go get you some Fire Essence."

Fire Essences were a necessity to Xiaolang, so Long Chen had to get some as soon as possible. He nodded. Once Zhao Qingyun had left, Xuanxiao said solemnly, "Chen'er, there's something you must remember. Do not tell anyone about Ming'er being locked up in the Star Devil Prison. I only told him that we were trapped in a secret realm for twenty years."

"I understand. You're worried that Master will be angry and destroy the Lingwu family, right?"

Dongfang Xuanxiao had roots in the Lingwu family after all, and he already knew that Long Chen had killed the Azure Dragon Patriarch. Since this was a personal vendetta against the Patriarch only, and the Patriarch was dead, there was no need to kill off the whole Lingwu family.

"That's right. That is my clan after all. Ming'er understands me," Dongfang Xuanxiao said tiredly.

"There's still so much time ahead of us. I can't believe I will get to spend my life with you and our child ... Brother Xuanxiao, I'm very happy ..." Xuanming said as she gazed deeply at Dongfang Xuanxiao.

Their bond is as deep as mine and Xiao Xi's bond! But I will never let Xiao Xi suffer as much as her!

Long Chen privately swore to himself.

As they chatted, Zhao Qingyun soon returned with almost twenty Fire Essences in his hands. Due to the blinding light from them, he only showed them for a brief moment, then placed them in a Universe Pouch to hand to Long Chen.

"These were collected by the disciples during the last training session at the Pyro Passageways. Since we aren't doing anything with them, I took them all for you."

Long Chen was filled with gratitude for receiving such great gifts without giving anything in return. Since he had always repaid all kindness shown to him, he knew that he would return this favor a hundredfold.

"Master, do the Pyro Passageways contain many Fire Essences and high-tier beasts?" Long Chen asked.

"That's right. The Pyro Passageways are actually formed from a large river of flowing lava. A lot of Fire Essence can be found there, as well as many fire elemental beasts. Why do you ask?" asked Zhao Qingyun.

"I need a large amount of fire elemental treasures. It doesn't matter if it's Fire Essence or a fire beast's demonic core, they all work. When can I go to the Pyro Passageways?" Long Chen asked expectantly.

“The Pyro Passageways are opened periodically. It will be opened in less than two months’ time, but before that happens, are you confident that you will be able to become one of the top ten disciples? The top ten are usually at the Seventh River Stage.”

“Yes,” Long Chen said decisively.

“Then there won’t be a problem,” said Zhao Qingyun a little wishfully. He smiled proudly, because he could tell that Long Chen was a confident person, and his confidence seemed to be based on actual ability.

After chatting for a while longer, Xuanming needed to rest, so Dongfang Xuanxiao sent her back to her quarters. Since they were all in the Heavenly Demon Palace, there would be many more opportunities for them to meet, so Dongfang Xuanxiao was not anxious about staying for a longer chat.

Then Zhao Qingyun made arrangements for Long Chen’s quarters, which would be within the Azure Cloud Residence, the quarters solely belonging to the Heavenly Demon Lord’s direct disciples. It was a huge place, so every disciple had their own yard. All the necessary amenities were duly prepared.

Before that, Zhao Qingyun even introduced Long Chen to his eight seniors. However, these people were only averagely talented and had average personalities, so Long Chen could not even remember one of them. Despite their disappointing cultivation results, Zhao Qingyun did not shun them, but treated them as true disciples.

Masters could only act as guides along the path of cultivation. How far one would get depended mostly on oneself. Zhao Qingyun had already done well in guiding them, and they could have anything they needed. Unfortunately, they were just not capable, and there was nothing Zhao Qingyun could do about that. At this point, he could only hope that Long Chen would help him regain some dignity.

To be honest, it was embarrassing to tell anyone that the Heavenly Demon Lord did not have a single outstanding disciple. Once Long Chen had retired to his quarters and Zhao Qingyun had left, the other direct disciples gathered and discussed in hushed voices.

“Do you guys believe that he’s the Long Chen who killed the six commanders of the royal guard, and the whole dwarf tribe?”

“When I looked at Ninth Junior Brother’s face, there was a hint of viciousness in his eyes. If we disregard his current cultivation level, I can believe it.”

“Don’t overthink it. Didn’t you hear? He’s Dongfang Xuanxiao’s stepson. Master only took him in as a disciple because of his daughter. Don’t get your hopes up about having someone to stand up for our Palace Lord. Go back and cultivate.”

Chapter 347 - Focusing On Cultivation

Long Chen had lost count of the number of places he had stayed in so far. However, due to Dongfang Xuanxiao and the rest, he felt like this was home.

Once he entered his quarters and closed the door, Ling Xi emerged excitedly from the Ling Xi Sword. The tiny girl appeared in front of Long Chen, prancing around. It had been a long time since Long Chen had experienced this.

He placed the unconscious Xiaolang gently on the soft bed while Ling Xi watched quietly.

“Brother Chen, I want you to hold me while I fall asleep ...” Ling Xi complained. She had gotten used to that. Now that she had returned to her miniature size, she felt miserable.

“Don’t worry. I will storm the Biyang Imperial Capital in three months. And I will get the Nine Heavens Immortal Fruit.”

Long Chen held out his palm so she could stand on it.

“Mhm!” She nodded hard. “Brother Chen, I’ll be fine, actually. I’m just missing the feeling of having a body. Plus, I have a lot of soul power right now, and there are many soul-nourishing herbs in the Heavenly Demon Palace, so I don’t need to worry about fading away. And I can help you a lot too! Don’t you like it better when I’m like this? Unlike before, I’m not a mere burden.”

“It doesn’t matter how you are; I like you all the same. However, I don’t like other people making my decisions for me. Lin Zichen forced you to abandon the Profound Heavenly Jade Lotus, so I must kill him,” said Long Chen, gazing at the shining stars outside the window.

“Brother Chen, I think your master is right. On the journey of cultivation, one’s mindset is very important. If you let go a little, it might be better,” she said gently, sitting on his shoulder.

He nodded.

“But I must not waste the Rhino King’s carcass. I am now at the Fourth River Stage, which is nothing in the Heavenly Demon Palace. If someone harasses me, I might even need to stand there and endure the humiliation.”

The Rhino King carcass was a welcome gift given to him by Zhao Qingyun. Long Chen used Blood Transmutation to absorb its blood. The Category Seven Earth-tier beast allowed him to return to the Fifth River Stage, but that was still a distance away from his peak at the Sixth River Stage.

“Blood Sacrifice is truly an extraordinarily powerful divine technique, but I need to use it less in the future, or my cultivation level will keep decreasing. That’s not the way to do it. I shouldn’t use it unless my life is at risk,” Long Chen grumbled.

“This time, I must cultivate in a stable and proper manner. Let’s see if I can reach the Sixth River Stage. I also condensed my Heavenly Rivers too quickly, so I need to find a place with adequate starlight in order to slowly fortify my cultivation.”

“Isn’t the peak of Demon Emperor Mountain the closest you can get to starlight?”
Ling Xi cocked her head in thought.

“Xiao Xi, you’re so smart! I’ll ask Master tomorrow if I can cultivate up there. From today onwards, I shall focus my mind on cultivation until I become strong enough to defeat Lin Zichen, and maybe until I become the strongest cultivator in the Cangyang Kingdom.”

Long Chen’s heart was filled with passion.

Time passed while he cultivated. Close to dawn, Long Chen noticed that Xiaolang had regained consciousness. He was overjoyed to see that Xiaolang was waking up. Ling Xi also treated Xiaolang like a younger brother, so she was ecstatic to see him wake up. The two communicated telepathically for a while as she told Xiaolang everything that had happened ever since he had fainted. That was how he had learned why he was here.

From Ling Xi’s explanation, Long Chen learned that Xiaolang burning his life fire had resulted in many negative consequences. His strength had even plummeted from Category Five Earth-tier to Category Four.

Long Chen and Xiaolang were very similar in many aspects. The combination of Blood Transmutation and Blood Sacrifice were similar to Xiaolang’s life fire and ability to swallow flames to strengthen himself. However, Long Chen’s method was superior because when he used Blood Sacrifice to increase his strength, it only cost him his cultivation level, while Xiaolang was risking his life.

“If you burn your life fire again in the future, you will no longer be a brother to me.”
Afraid that Xiaolang would make an impulsive, rash decision again, Long Chen had no choice but to give him a stern warning.

Xiaolang nodded awkwardly.

“These Fire Essences are all yours. I also have some good news for you. Soon, we will be going to a place called the Pyro Passageways. There will be a lot of Fire Essence there, as well as many high-tier fire elemental demonic beasts. Xiaolang, the chance for your cultivation to skyrocket and even surpass me is here!” Long Chen announced excitedly.

Xiaolang’s eyes widened, visibly excited. The Fire Essences in Long Chen’s hand excited him even more.

If a place like the Pyro Passageways existed, then it would be heaven for him.

“But the catch is that my cultivation level must be among the top ten disciples of the Heavenly Demon Palace,” said Long Chen.

Ling Xi and Xiaolang communicated for a while, then Ling Xi said threateningly to Long Chen, “Brother Chen, Xiaolang wants you to work hard. If he doesn’t get to go to the Pyro Passageways, you will no longer be a brother to him.”

Long Chen did not know whether to laugh or cry, because Xiaolang was using his own words against him.

But it felt good to work hard together as a team ...

Seeing as Ling Xi was much livelier and happier, Long Chen suddenly realized that his previous insistence that she should keep her Profound Heavenly Jade Lotus body might have been the wrong move. Right now, Ling Xi could truly offer Long Chen assistance, and this made her a lot happier. She did not want to be a useless person who only burdened Long Chen.

“Xiao Xi, I’m sorry. I haven’t been considerate of your feelings,” he said sincerely.

“What? I don’t know what you’re talking about. Xiaolang, let’s go play. Let him cultivate on his own.”

Life at the Heavenly Demon Palace was quiet. His life became much simpler because after obtaining Zhao Qingyun’s permission, he never returned to the Azure Cloud Residence. Instead, he stayed at the peak of Demon Emperor Mountain and worked all night and day. He mostly cultivated at the peak, but he occasionally descended to visit Dongfang Xuanxiao and Xuanming. He would keep Dongfang Xuanxiao company for a while, passing his days without worry.

Other than that, he never visited any other place in the Heavenly Demon Palace. Despite his shocking arrival at the Demon Hall, like Zhao Qingyun, his public appearances were infrequent and unpredictable. He had basically disappeared from sight. After some time, other than the occasional nepotism-related joke, the people of the Heavenly Demon Palace almost forgot about him.

As for Long Chen’s attitude towards these insults, he had once overheard a conversation about it, and he did not know whether to cry or laugh about it. He was the real Long Chen, but he couldn’t believe that the others thought he was pretending to be Long Chen, relying on his relationship with Dongfang Xuanxiao to become the Palace Lord’s direct disciple. He was speechless. However, recently, he had deliberately worked on calming his mind and suppressing the killing intent inside him. Zhao Qingyun had inadvertently taught him to open his heart. He gained many insights when his heart was open, learning to smile and let go when he heard criticisms like that.

There were many things that did not require explanation. Once Long Chen truly soared, everyone would be blinded by his shining light.

He cultivated at the peak where he was closest to starlight. Days and nights passed, and the eighteen Heavenly Rivers took turns appearing above Long Chen. His cultivation continued to grow towards the Sixth River Stage while he solidified the Heavenly Rivers in his body from the previous five stages to make his foundation more stable.

Clouds and mist enveloped Demon Emperor Mountain’s peak, and not an inch of grass grew. When he looked down, he could see as far as five hundred kilometers. Even Lake City was only the size of his palm from there. That was how high up he was.

He immersed himself in cultivation day and night while Ling Xi stayed by his side as always. Xiaolang no longer needed to cultivate because after consuming the twenty tiny balls of Fire Essence, he was once again a Category Five Earth-tier beast. He was now on the same level as Long Chen at the Fifth River Stage, and like Long Chen, he was also very close to Category Six.

Long Chen looked out at the group of mountains in front.

He stood up on the peak amidst strong wind, his clothes flapping around him.

One month had passed. At this moment, he had a more reserved look. Faint starlight flowed beneath his skin while the blood color slowly faded from his eyes, returning to their original clarity.

After experiencing the tumultuous escape, coupled with focused cultivation on Demon Emperor Mountain, Long Chen's mind had strengthened greatly.

“Not bad. You finally understand. At this rate, you'll soon reach the Sixth River Stage.” This was Zhao Qingyun's comment for him.

On this day, Long Chen completed his cultivation task and returned to the Heavenly Demon Palace. He first met up with Dongfang Xuanxiao, then he reported to Zhao Qingyun and decided to return to the peak.

He was not afraid of getting tired or bored. With Xiaolang and Ling Xi around, fatigue and boredom did not exist.

After he left the Heavenly Demon Palace, he had not walked for long when he noticed some people up ahead. He wanted to mind his own business, but what they did was getting unreasonable.

“You brat, lick it all! Lick them one by one! Stick your butt up! Lick it now! If you don't lick it clean, I'll spank your bottom!”

“Yes! If you make your big brother feel good and make us happy, we might reward you with some Heavenly River Pills!”

Long Chen's gaze fell on a row of Heavenly Demon Palace disciples. Kneeling in front of them was a teenager who was dressed like one of the errand boys. He was crying hard, begging them for mercy. But based on the rudeness of their tone, begging was probably not going to work ...

Chapter 348 - Three Great Heaven-Tier Scriptures

Long Chen did not intend to intervene in small scuffles like this, seeing as he did not know anyone within the Heavenly Demon Palace. However, when he passed, he realized that the kneeling disciple looked familiar. He recognized him as the disciple who ran errands for himself and the other direct disciples. Long Chen had seen him a few times and had a faint impression of him. Based on what he could remember, the kid was quite timid.

The disciples standing in a row were all rude and arrogant. They were probably backed by powerful people. They had all taken their feet out of their boots, then placed their feet on the ground in a row for the kneeling disciple to lick them.

A repugnant smell came from every foot, and it was inhumane for them to ask the errand boy to lick them clean. Long Chen had met the boy several times after all. Seeing as the boy was about to close his eyes and oblige them, Long Chen made his way over.

The disciples all saw Long Chen when he approached, but they did not recognize him. Long Chen had only made an appearance at the Demon Hall once, then he hardly showed his face again. That was why regular disciples didn't recognize him despite having heard his name.

“Who are you?” one of them asked Long Chen haughtily.

“Get up. You can go back.” Long Chen ignored them and helped the errand boy up.

The errand boy was utterly relieved to see Long Chen. He had heard that Long Chen was at the Fourth River Stage, and although that was not considered powerful in the Heavenly Demon Palace, at least he was a little stronger than the other disciples present.

He was very surprised to get out of this incident unscathed.

If he had to lick all those stinky feet clean, he was not sure if he could continue living.

Long Chen’s attitude angered them. They demanded indignantly, “You brat! Are you looking for death? Do you know who we are? We are the Third Demon Elder’s direct disciples! It’s best you get the fuck out of here immediately, or you’ll end up like him! You’ll have to lick our feet too!”

Then they started to surround Long Chen. If he did not leave immediately, they would attack.

Xiaolang was there as well, and when he saw that they were being too arrogant, he could not watch any longer and immediately opened his mouth to reveal a mouthful of roaring flames. Terrified, the disciples shrieked and stumbled backwards. Based on their cowardly behavior, they realized that the disciples were merely putting on airs.

“What beast is that?!” They were shocked to see Xiaolang.

“It does not matter what it is. How dare it offend us? Brothers, let’s slaughter it! We will have wolf soup tonight!” one of them yelled, and everyone assented. Then they charged at Xiaolang with their combat techniques. Xiaolang had been bored these days, and since these people were delivering themselves to his doorstep, he morphed into his combat state instantly!

Xiaolang’s huge, muscular body and sharp teeth and claws were on full display. Black flames curled from his fur, and the sun diagram on his forehead made him look extra terrifying. After taking on his combat form, they almost peed their pants in fear and fled for their lives, crying for their parents. They quickly disappeared from Long Chen’s sight.

“What a bunch of cowardly bullies,” said Long Chen with a tired grin.

Xiaolang looked bored too. He thought he would be able to enjoy himself, but they had turned out to be completely useless. They all seemed fierce at first but turned into cowardly turtles the moment he showed his strength.

“Thank ... Thank you!” The errand boy looked at Xiaolang reverently, then he turned to Long Chen. The rumors had said that Long Chen was a useless idiot. However, when he saw Long Chen’s impassive expression, as if everything was in his control, he did not look like an idiot.

“I’ve seen you a few times before. You’re from the Azure Cloud Residence, right?” Long Chen probed cautiously.

“Yes, yes! I’ve cleaned your quarters a few times, but you weren’t there. What ... what should I call you?” asked the errand boy.

“You’re about my age. Just call me ‘Brother Chen.’ What is your name?” Long Chen had nothing to do and was worried the idiots would come looking for trouble again, so he decided to escort the boy back.

“Brother Chen, I’m Wang Xing. I’m an errand boy now, but in two months’ time, I will be promoted to become a regular disciple!” Wang Xing grew excited speaking about it. Becoming a true Heavenly Demon Palace disciple had always been his dream, and it would come true very soon.

Long Chen called for Xiaolang, then he turned to Wang Xing and said, “Those punks might come looking for trouble again. It’s better for me to escort you back.”

“Thank you, Brother Chen!” Wang Xing was surprised. He thought Long Chen would be like what they described in the rumors, that he had only become the Heavenly Demon Lord’s direct disciple due to nepotism. However, Long Chen radiated confidence and openness. At a glance, he could not see how Long Chen was any weaker than the other people.

Since this was a rare chance and Long Chen was friendly, Wang Xing started to talk along the way.

“I don’t know why they targeted me. I don’t even know them. It’s probably because they happened to see me and wanted to toy with me. But they’ve crossed the line.” Wang Xing clenched his fist. “Once I’m stronger, I won’t need you to save me anymore, Brother Chen. I’ll be able to defeat everyone who bullied me!”

“Work hard, then.” Long Chen grinned when he saw his battle spirit. This teenager was decently talented and motivated. All he lacked was the fire within him.

“Brother Chen, since you’re the Palace Lord’s direct disciple, you’ve received the Heavenly Demon Palace’s Three Great Secret Scriptures, right?” Wang Xing suddenly asked when they arrived at the Azure Cloud Residence. “I’ve heard that the Three Great Secret Scriptures contain the most powerful combat techniques of the Heavenly Demon Palace! That’s my dream. I hope one day I’ll be able to cultivate them!”

“What are the Three Great Secret Scriptures? I’ve only just joined the Heavenly Demon Palace, so I don’t know about them,” said Long Chen, puzzled.

“Huh? Brother Chen, are you really the Long Chen who killed the six commanders of the royal guard and the whole dwarf tribe?” Wang Xing’s jaw dropped. If Long Chen had known about the scriptures, that would’ve indicated that was indeed a nepotism

baby who already had a deep understanding of the Heavenly Demon Palace. However, since he did not know about them, it was likely that he was an outsider.

“Do you think that I am?” Long Chen smirked.

“If I were to guess ... I don’t know, but my instinct tells me that the answer is yes!” Wang Xing said confidently.

“Just treat me as if I am, then. Anyway, what are the Three Great Secret Scriptures? Tell me about them in detail!” Long Chen said.

Wang Xing grew excited talking about them.

“According to rumors, the Heavenly Demon Palace has three Heaven-tier combat techniques in total! Listen carefully! They’re not advanced Earth-tier! They are true Heaven-tier combat techniques!”

“Heaven-tier combat techniques? Three of them?” Long Chen was shocked. That was no joke. If it was true, then these three techniques were among the most powerful treasures owned by the Heavenly Demon Palace, on par with the Demon Emperor Sword.

“Wang Xing, tell me more about the Three Great Secret Scriptures,” Long Chen said. It had piqued his interest.

“The first one is a body combat technique! It’s called Traceless Demon Shadow. I heard that it’s an extraordinary technique. Once you use it, you’ll turn into a blur of illusory images. Even an opponent at the same level will find it very difficult to catch you! However, despite being such a magical technique, it is only ranked third among the three!

“The second scripture is a divine combat technique called the Demon Seed Planting Technique. I hear that it has two layers. When you use the technique, you can plant a Demon Seed in your Qi so that when needed, the seed explodes and you can double your Qi level! The second level of the technique allows you to increase your Qi level by four times!

“The number one scripture is even more terrifying. It’s an attack combat technique called the Demon Emperor Sword Technique. It is a formidable sword technique. I heard that the only one in the Heavenly Demon Palace who can use it is the Palace Lord. The technique is a part of the Demon Emperor Sword. It can only be comprehended when one has been recognized by the Demon Emperor Sword as its master!

“Traceless Demon Shadow, the Demon Seed Planting Technique, and the Demon Emperor Sword Technique are the most powerful techniques owned by the Heavenly Demon Palace. I’ll be content for the rest of my life even if I get one of them. Hehe. I know I’m only dreaming. Only extremely talented disciples from lofty backgrounds get the chance to own one of the three techniques. That’s why I asked if you received them,” Wang Xing said, scratching his head awkwardly.

Long Chen mulled over his words. He knew that since Zhao Qingyun had invited him to the Heavenly Demon Palace, then he would give him these things eventually. But of course, he could not give them away for nothing. With the disciples of the Three Demon Elders fighting to get their hands on them, Long Chen’s cultivation level was not high enough to receive the three scriptures.

I was at a disadvantage in terms of combat techniques during my recent battles. Only Divine Fire Clone was able to hold up against my opponents, though barely. The Azure Dragon Combat Technique is already useless. It looks like I need to put in more effort for better combat techniques. Once I have attained the Sixth River Stage, I should mention this to Master. With my talent in learning combat techniques, I might even be able to master Heaven-tier combat techniques.

The Heavenly Demon Palace was indeed Long Chen’s cultivation heaven. With the deep relationship between himself and Dongfang Xuanxiao, he and Zhao Qingyun already saw each other as family. The fact that Zhao Qingyun did not shun Dongfang Xuanxiao was enough to show that he was a very good person, and an elder worthy of respect.

“Wang Xing, we have arrived at the Azure Cloud Residence. I’m going to the peak of Demon Emperor Mountain to cultivate. Goodbye!” Long Chen said with a grin.

“Goodbye, Brother Chen! I will work hard!” said Wang Xing with great determination.

“Alright! I’ll be watching your growth! If you improve, I don’t mind giving you a little something,” said Long Chen with a smile.

Chapter 349 - Return to the Sixth River Stage

Long Chen was in possession of many things that were useless to him but were treasures to Wang Xing.

Wang Xing left happily after Long Chen made his promise. Wang Xing’s incident had not caused much delay, and Long Chen returned to the peak of the mountain once more.

If the three Heaven-tier Secret Scriptures are being guarded by Master, then he will give them to me once my cultivation has reached a certain level. However, the Three Demon Elders also hold great power, so I will still have to work hard for the scriptures. At the very least, I need to fight for the Demon Emperor Sword Technique on my own.

Long Chen sat at the peak of the mountain to cultivate while thinking over these matters.

As for Traceless Demon Shadow and the Demon Seed Planting Technique, I’ll mention them to Master when I have attained the Sixth River Stage. With the abilities brought to me by the dragon jade pendant, I might be able to cultivate them even though they’re Heaven-tier techniques. If I master those Heaven-tier techniques, then my combat abilities will get a huge boost.

Traceless Demon Shadow is definitely a formidable body combat technique, but Demon Seed Planting sounds even more peculiar. I can boost my Qi by two or even fourfold! Doesn't that mean that after my Dragon Soul Transformation, I can boost my Qi up to gain an advantage over opponents on my level, or even opponents above my level?

If that was the case, then Long Chen truly had to get his hands on the Demon Seed Planting Technique. If he received a Heaven-tier body combat technique, divine technique, and attack combat technique, then he would not need anything else.

His heart burned with passion as he thought about this. Now he had a goal to work towards.

However, he had learned the concept of tranquility from Zhao Qingyun. No matter how brightly the fire in his heart burned, he slowly immersed his mind into cultivation. He connected to the power of the stars and strengthened the Heavenly Rivers within his body while increasing his Qi.

The days passed, and Long Chen experienced quick growth. He was fast approaching the Sixth River Stage. Since he had reached that level before, breaking through was much easier than the first time. Finally, after five days, he successfully condensed the sixth pair of Yin and Yang Heavenly Rivers and attained the Sixth River Stage once more!

The last time he was at the Sixth River Stage, Long Chen had used Blood Sacrifice to boost his strength to the Eighth River Stage, leading to a regression of two stages back to the Fourth River Stage. This time, he had reached it after using Blood Transmutation once and focused cultivation. This was the highest level he had ever achieved. Also, since he had achieved this breakthrough through honest cultivation, he was more stable and more powerful.

He stood up at the peak of Demon Emperor Mountain and suddenly felt light. The improvement in his cultivation made his senses much sharper.

Ling Xi flew out of his ear and fluttered in front of him. "Brother Chen, have you achieved a breakthrough again?"

"I'm at the Sixth River Stage now," Long Chen said with a nod. "Although I didn't use Blood Transmutation, my progress hasn't been too slow. My foundation is much more stable with this method of cultivation!"

"That's awesome!" Ling Xi praised with a wide smile.

She was happy that he was making progress towards his goals.

Perhaps one day he'll actually be able to storm the Biyang Imperial Capital, and he'll get the Nine Heavens Immortal Fruit. But if that happens, what will I do?

There was a small dilemma in her heart.

Long Chen did not know of this dilemma.

He did not stop cultivating even after attaining the Sixth River Stage, as he needed time to solidify his cultivation. After cultivating from morning to noon, he decided to return to the Heavenly Demon Palace. He had not returned for a while because he had been working towards his breakthrough, so it was time. It was also a chance for him to tell Zhao Qingyun and Dongfang Xuanxiao about the great news.

During this time, Zhao Qingyun had taken great care of Long Chen and basically gave him everything he wanted. That was why Long Chen genuinely recognized him as his master. In fact, Zhao Qingyun was likely Long Chen's first master on his cultivation journey. So far, he had learned what freedom and tranquility truly meant from Zhao Qingyun, and their relationship had brought him many benefits.

Long Chen first returned to Dongfang Xuanxiao's home. Dongfang Xuanxiao and Zhao Xuanming lived very peaceful lives, which was also what Long Chen longed for with his beloved. However, he was currently working hard towards his goals. Once he found a Nine Heavens Immortal Fruit, he would have the right to live like Dongfang Xuanxiao.

Dongfang Xuanxiao had expected Long Chen to attain the Sixth River Stage soon. He knew how extraordinary his stepson was, climbing his way up the ranks and even surpassing himself.

Long Chen then entered Zhao Qingyun's pavilion and found Zhao Qingyun, who was cultivating.

"Master, I have reached the Sixth River Stage," said Long Chen directly after he arrived in front of him.

"Not bad. That's ten days faster than I expected. But it's already been one month and five days. There's less than two months left. Are you still confident you can reach the Eighth River Stage?"

"Of course I am. But Master, I would like to request a combat technique today."

Long Chen and Zhao Qingyun had always been straightforward, never beating around the bush. In the beginning, Zhao Qingyun was speechless at his manner of speaking, but he slowly got used to it. None of his other disciples had made as many direct requests. And this was not even Long Chen's first time.

Naturally, Long Chen was only this bold because he was much better than Zhao Qingyun's other disciples. Zhao Qingyun's strongest disciple was at the Sixth River Stage, and he was no match for Long Chen now.

"What do you want? Zhao Qingyun asked solemnly. Looking at how excited Long Chen seemed, it wouldn't be a small request.

"Traceless Demon Shadow, or the Demon Seed Planting Technique. Hehe ..." Long Chen knew that these two items were very precious, so he was a little embarrassed to ask for them. So far, he had not even helped Zhao Qingyun in any way, plus barely anyone in the Heavenly Demon Palace even believed he was the infamous Long Chen. In fact, due to Long Chen, Zhao Qingyun's trustworthiness had decreased greatly among the disciples.

Zhao Qingyun was speechless. He knew Long Chen had a big appetite, but he didn't know it was this big. He was merely at the Sixth River Stage, and yet he still dared to demand a Heaven-tier combat technique?

It was understood that every three stages represented a huge leap. The Heavenly River Realm's first three stages were the initial tier, while the next three stages were the intermediate tier. Long Chen

was only at the intermediate Heavenly River Realm, yet he wanted to cross two large canyons to learn a Heaven-tier combat technique?[1]

“You can ask again when you have attained the Seventh River Stage. You’ll have a higher chance of cultivating it then. If you do it now, you’ll likely fail to cultivate it,” said Zhao Qingyun with furrowed brows. It was not because he did not want to give it to Long Chen, but rather he felt that Long Chen would be unable to master it. He felt that there was no need to rush, and that it would end up distracting him from his current cultivation.

“Master, I have extraordinary talent in combat techniques. I was already able to cultivate advanced Earth-tier combat techniques when I was at the Divine Core Realm. That is why I guarantee that I can cultivate it as well as a Seventh River Stage cultivator,” Long Chen said confidently, patting his chest.

“Are you sure? You cultivated advanced Earth-tier techniques when you were at the Divine Core Realm?” Zhao Qingyun asked in shock.

“A hundred percent.” Long Chen was referring to Divine Fire Clone, though he had magnified his accomplishments a little bit, as he had only mastered Divine Fire Clone after he attained the Heavenly River Realm. He was only dramatizing it to receive the Heaven-tier combat technique as soon as possible.

“Alright. I will let you try. If you can’t complete it, you must stop at once to prevent delaying advancing your cultivation level. You must understand that cultivation level is the most important thing,” said Zhao Qingyun with a nod.

“What are you planning to give me, Master?” Long Chen did not expect to get Zhao Qingyun’s agreement so easily and was excited. Zhao Qingyun was definitely a good master. Long Chen had made the right decision to stay at Demon Emperor Mountain instead of going to the Western Sea Kingdom after all.

He had always been a grateful person. Since Zhao Qingyun had given him such great benefits, he would repay Heavenly Demon Palace greatly when he became powerful.

“The Demon Seed Planting Technique is the reward for the disciple who ranks first at the Pyro Passageways training exercise. I don’t have the right to give it to you privately. After all, these techniques were passed down by the ancestors, and they set the rules. However, I do have the right to let you try out Traceless Demon Shadow. Among the younger disciples, only two have received it. They are both Eighth River Stage cultivators and very talented. I assume they have mastered it by now.”

“Thank you, Master.”

Traceless Demon Shadow would be more useful to Long Chen now than the Demon Seed Planting Technique. Now that he had received Zhao Qingyun’s permission, he was filled with gratitude. In

the past, he had to rely on his own efforts to get anything. Now he received items so easily. He was not used to this at all, but it felt good.

“The secret scripture for Traceless Demon Shadow is stored in the Heavenly Demon Palace’s Martial Library. It’s heavily guarded. I’ll take you there now.”

Since he had agreed to Long Chen’s request, he did not waste any time and immediately led Long Chen to the Martial Library.

Both the Heavenly Demon Lord and Long Chen were considered mysterious people in the Heavenly Demon Palace who did not appear in public very frequently. Now that they both appeared in the public eye once again, it quickly attracted a lot of attention. Many people had not even seen this nepotism baby’s face before.

In a dark spot not far away, several teenagers watched intently and cursed, “That damn nepotism bastard! No wonder he was bold enough to scare us with that wolf!” They were the teenagers who had bullied Wang Xing.

Chapter 350 - Martial Library

Long Chen and Zhao Qingyun had not walked for long before they arrived at a pagoda-type building. The pagoda had seven floors and was both grand and regal. It was far from the impression of “demons” that normal people had. Long Chen even thought that the Heavenly Demon Palace should have been called the Heavenly Deity Palace because that would have been more accurate.

From far away, he saw many guards standing around the Martial Library. More than ten of them, who were leaders of the guards, were around the Seventh River Stage and could be considered stronger members of the Heavenly Demon Palace. The Martial Library was a sacred place for cultivation here.

Long Chen and Zhao Qingyun stood before the sacred pagoda.

“The Martial Library stores tens of thousands of martial techniques from the Yellow-tier up to the Heaven-tier. Defense techniques, attack techniques, body techniques, healing techniques, body tempering techniques can all be found here. They have been passed down in the Heavenly Demon Palace for over a thousand years, and I’ve read through most of them. I’ve got more experience in cultivating combat techniques, so if you don’t understand, you can ask me,” Zhao Qingyun said with a bit of pride in his tone.

Tens of thousands of combat techniques spanning over many levels and categories. It was clear that the Heavenly Demon Palace possessed great wealth; they even had Heaven-tier techniques at the very top of the Martial Library.

“The security around the Martial Library is extremely strict. In fact, the three Demon Elders’ residences are all less than five hundred meters from here, so the slightest commotion here will cause them to show up immediately. The three Demon Elders are indeed annoying sometimes, but it is undeniable that they have contributed greatly to the Heavenly Demon Palace,” Zhao Qingyun explained.

As he spoke, the bowing guards moved aside to let him take Long Chen up. Traceless Demon Shadow was located on the seventh floor.

Long Chen grew excited. He was about to receive a Heaven-tier combat technique.

Suddenly, footsteps could be heard from behind. Long Chen and Zhao Qingyun turned around and saw that the elders were approaching, along with two people leading in front. One of them was the short but fierce Third Demon Elder, along with a muscular teenager who was standing respectfully behind him.

This teenager was more than two meters tall and was covered in solid muscles and tan skin. There was a hint of viciousness in his eyes; he gave Long Chen the same feeling as the Heavenly Wolf Gang. They were all brutish, violent people.

In terms of looks, the Third Demon Elder looked comical standing in front of the muscular young man.

Based on the teenager's aura, Long Chen guessed his identity. The two most powerful disciples of the Heavenly Demon Palace were at the Eighth River Stage, both under the First and Second Demon Elders. The Third Demon Elder's most powerful disciple's name was Yang Jun, and he was at the peak of the Seventh River Stage, apparently about to break through to the Eighth River Stage some time soon. He had also cultivated many advanced Earth-tier combat techniques, so he was ranked third among all the young disciples of the Heavenly Demon Palace. He was the Third Demon Elder's favorite disciple.

The strong and vicious teenager was Yang Jun.

But what did Zhao Qingyun going to the Martial Library have to do with them?

"Greetings, Palace Lord!" The Third Demon Elder led the group to first greet Zhao Qingyun. Zhao Qingyun was the most powerful person in the clan after all, and they could not break protocol.

"What are you doing here?" Zhao Qingyun asked coldly. To be honest, he did not like the Third Demon Elder.

"Palace Lord, I was going to meet you, but I just happened to see you in front of the Martial Library while I was passing by. This has saved me some effort." The Third Demon Elder was obviously intending to ask Zhao Qingyun for something, so his tone was extra polite.

"Tell me, then, why are you looking for me?" Zhao Qingyun asked.

"It's like this." The Third Demon Elder glanced happily at Yang Jun behind him and said, "In the past, my Big Brother and Second Sister's first disciples received Traceless Demon Shadow when they reached the Seventh River Stage, and they managed to cultivate it successfully. Yang Jun is about to break through to the Eighth River Stage, so I humbly request the Palace Lord to let Yang Jun cultivate Traceless Demon Shadow!"

The young man, Yang Jun, also bowed at Zhao Qingyun and said, "Palace Lord, please believe me. I am absolutely confident that I will master Traceless Demon Shadow within half a year and attain the Eighth River Stage. Soon, I will be able to fight Lin Zichen from the imperial family!"

The other elders, who were here to support his cause, all muttered words of praise. Yang Jun should have received the Traceless Demon Shadow a long time ago, but the last time he requested it, Zhao Qingyun rejected his request. This time, they had brought a large group of people to put pressure on Zhao Qingyun.

They did not believe that Zhao Qingyun would refuse him with so many people supporting Yang Jun. The youth was an outstanding disciple after all, and the Third Demon Elder loved him. There was no reason for Zhao Qingyun to refuse to give the Third Demon Elder face again.

"Didn't I say it last time? Yang Jun's most important task now is to reach the Eighth River Stage. He has been at this level for a long time, and adding a distraction will not benefit him." Zhao Qingyun furrowed his brows. The Third Demon Elder had picked a terrible time. There was only one scripture, and he had already promised to give it to Long Chen. Now that the Third Demon Elder was here, who would he give it to?

Of course, he privately wanted to give it to Long Chen since he had made a promise and Long Chen was his direct disciple. However, because he was his direct disciple, the Third Demon Elder would pressure him even further, citing favoritism.

"Palace Lord, I can already sense a breakthrough coming. If all goes smoothly, then I will achieve it in a month. Can I get Traceless Demon Shadow first, then cultivate it after that? No one is going to need the Traceless Demon Shadow scripture within a month anyway, right?" Yang Jun never even looked at Long Chen once. To him, Long Chen had only become a disciple because of nepotism, so he was not worth his attention.

"Come again once you have attained the Eighth River Stage, then," said Zhao Qingyun slightly impatiently, waving his hand.

This angered the Third Demon Elder. He had brought so many people with him, yet Zhao Qingyun refused to give him face. This enraged him because Zhao Qingyun's refusal meant that Zhao Qingyun did not take him seriously. How could he not be angry at this? He then said mockingly, "Palace Lord, Traceless Demon Shadow is sitting in the Martial Library, and no one is using it. Since it's going to be given to Yang Jun later anyway, we'll save you the effort of coming to the library again if we give it to him now. You're unwilling to give it to him today ... Could it be because the scripture is being used for something else? For example, could it be possible that it'll be given to your direct disciple, *Long Chen*?"

The group laughed at the Third Demon Elder's mocking words.

The name "Long Chen" had become the butt of the joke in the Heavenly Demon Palace. In truth, no one understood why Zhao Qingyun would name his nepotism baby disciple "Long Chen." Was it to make him more famous? Indeed, because he was called "Long Chen," he was now as well-known as the sun within the clan.

The Third Demon Elder knew that there was no chance Traceless Demon Shadow would be given to Long Chen, which was why he had made a joke. However, to his shock, he was right.

“You are right. I came here today because I have decided to let Long Chen cultivate Traceless Demon Shadow. As for Yang Jun, come again when you have attained the Eighth River Stage.” Zhao Qingyun’s words rang across the group.

He had always been a straightforward person. After making this direct statement, he was not afraid of attracting more problems.

The crowd fell silent. Everyone stared at Long Chen in shock. After a long time, they finally believed that they had not made a mistake.

“Him? Are you kidding me? He’s a fake! Does he even know what a Heaven-tier combat technique is?”

“Palace Lord, your decision has made my heart turn cold! Are you really going to show blatant favoritism?”

Words of disagreement arose from the group instantly, and each statement was worse than the last. Forget about Zhao Qingyun—even Long Chen’s brows were deeply furrowed after he heard them.

Everyone was in disbelief, especially the Third Demon Elder and Yang Jun. Yang Jun did not say anything. All he did was glare venomously at Long Chen with killing intent in his eyes. Although the Third Demon Elder was famous for his short temper, how could Yang Jun swallow this injustice too?

“Palace Lord, did I hear you right? Are you saying that a prodigy like Yang Jun is less deserving of receiving the Traceless Demon Shadow scripture than a nameless brat from God-knows-where? I refuse to believe it. Is this really coming from the Heavenly Demon Palace’s Palace Lord? Was this decision made solely because he is your direct disciple? Palace Lord, while it is undeniable that your strength allows you to hold an indisputable position as our leader, this does not mean that you can do whatever you want and ignore our ancestors’ teachings! Your decision does not only disappoint me, it will also disappoint Yang Jun, who is a hardworking child, and the tens of thousands of Heavenly Demon Palace disciples!”

Although the Third Demon Elder used ugly words, it was what everyone was thinking.

Seeing that Zhao Qingyun was silent, the Third Demon Elder continued, “I have indeed overstepped, but I’m sure everyone here thinks the same. Palace Lord, if you think I am wrong, kill me! And I will die without regret!”

“Yes, Palace Lord. Although the Third Demon Elder’s words were a little emotional, he is correct! We are all moved by his words too! We hope you will re-think your decision regarding Traceless Demon Shadow!”

“Please, Palace Lord!”

The large group of people knelt before Zhao Qingyun. Only Yang Jun and the Third Demon Elder did not.

“Everyone, get up and we’ll talk,” said Zhao Qingyun in exasperation after a moment of hesitation.