

War God 501

Chapter 501 - Ying Shaotian

The seventh meridian was the Earth Yang meridian. Long Chen slowly directed his Qi to his Earth Yang meridian. The eighteen starry rivers in his body provided a lot of Qi, but because of how violent it was, Long Chen needed a large amount of Heavenly Passage Pills to stabilize it. Otherwise, he would destroy his meridians.

The strength of 350,000 Heavenly Passage Pills was not to be trifled with!

The seventh meridian point was dangerous to carve open, but thanks to Long Chen's careful control, he did it successfully. Thanks to the effect of the Heavenly Passage Pills, the Earthly Yang meridian slowly formed in his head. It was not large, but it contained a fiery energy. The core formed inside of it also resembled a ball of fire.

Long Chen assumed the eighth meridian, the Earth Yin meridian, would resemble a ball of cold wind.

As for the last meridian, even he did not know where it would form. The heavenly meridian point was the center of all the meridian points, and its location differed from person to person. It could be said that it was the core of the cultivator. Long Chen would only learn its location once he reached the Eighth Passage Stage.

It took almost ten times longer for him to finish carving the Earth Yang meridian. When he was done, the sky was already bright. He pushed open the door and saw that his vision had changed.

Clear. The clarity was unparalleled. His vision, hearing, scent, and even taste had been elevated to a clarity he never imagined he could experience. He could see the small ditches on a mountain and he could hear many people talking in the Clear Shallows Pavillion. This was the effect of carving out the Earth Yang meridian. Since both the Earth Yang and Earth Yin meridian were situated in his head, not only had they increased his strength, they had also enhanced his five senses.

It was an evolution.

Long Chen estimated that he could defeat an average Eighth Passage Stage cultivator. If he fought Liu Yiyi again, he was confident he would be able to block not only her two advanced Heaven-tier martial techniques, but also her King-tier Demonic Illusion.

There's still a month left. I didn't know that I would hit my goal so fast. I don't think anyone had ever advanced from the First Passage Stage to the Seventh Passage Stage in just a few days.

Long Chen was impressed with his talent.

Though he knew where it came from—his talent originated from the hundredth of the Inherited Blood Essence that increased his body's resistance. Without it, Long Chen's continued usage of Blood Transmutation would've destroyed him by now.

I have one more month, but most of my Qi came from outside sources, meaning my basics are still shaky. Rather than advancing to the next stage, I should consolidate my Qi. Also, it might be difficult to advance into the Eighth Passage Stage. I will need at least a million Heavenly Passage Pills for that, but I only have 150,000 left. While I might be able to obtain more from the Clear Shallows King, I doubt I'll be able to find a Category Nine Heaven-tier beast ...

Long Chen was not in a hurry to increase his cultivation level. His current strength was more than enough for the exam that came every five years. He had just entered the Ancient Demon Domain, yet he was exhibiting unprecedented talent. His strength would shock the entire Ancient Demon Domain soon.

There were two thousand elders at the Sixth Passage Stage, two hundred higher-tier disciples, and six thousand regular disciples. Ten thousand people, and none of them could hold a candle to Long Chen's talent.

In fact, no one in the Divine Martial Empire exhibited the talent he had. If he revealed it, everyone would be shocked, and those at the top management of the Martial Alliance would be alerted by his presence.

The Martial Alliance was the largest organization in the country, comprising many sects and families rivaling the Ancient Demon Domain. The Huangfu family that Huangfu Qi came from was just one of them. Even then, they only had a single seat at the top of the Martial Alliance.

But Long Chen wouldn't bother with them just yet.

I'm lacking martial techniques. Now that my physical body has reached the peak of the Heavenly Passage Realm, I doubt that anyone can rival it. I already have the Heaven Sword Array, a technique far stronger than its peers. What I need are Body Combat techniques and Defensive techniques. Even Liu Yiyi has a King-tier divine technique.

Long Chen really wanted to get his hands on the Demon Illusion technique. That technique could create a clone with seventy five percent of his original strength. A single Demon Illusion was stronger than all 125 Divine Fire Clones. Having the Demon Illusion was akin to having another companion.

Long Chen had advanced far too fast, much faster than Xiaolang. In a battle, Xiaolang wouldn't be able to help him. Fat Cat, on the other hand, was a coward even though he had a lot of strange techniques.

I need to find a King-tier martial technique, but how? Liu Yiyi? I don't think it's feasible. Maybe I should just talk to the Clear Shallows King. She might give me one since she wants me to win.

With that in mind, he headed over to where she was. Thanks to the increased sensitivity of his hearing, he heard some noise coming from the Clear Shallows King's palace. *Someone is here.* Long Chen focused a little and heard who it was.

Must be the Red Ghost King. It seems news of Zhao Wuji's death has reached his ears. While the Clear Shallows King could seal the mouths of most people, she could not control Demon General Strongman. Since the Clear Shallows King had ordered Demon General Strongman not to attack Long Chen, he would have the Red Ghost King do it instead.

Thankfully, Long Chen had reached the Seventh Passage Stage and was one step closer to becoming one of the strongest members of this sect. He wasn't worried, because the Clear Shallows King would protect him. He quickly ran towards the palace and soon saw the Red Ghost King's tall and muscular figure in the palace.

He ran past the Red Ghost King and took his place beside the Clear Shallows King. The Clear Shallows King was sitting with her eyes closed to calm down. Liu Yiyi was wearing a white skirt,

standing beside her mother silently. She was a little afraid of the Red Ghost King and was looking at him nervously.

She had learned about yesterday's events through the Clear Shallows King.

She noticed that Long Chen's Qi felt different from last time. *He has gotten stronger!* She quickly gestured for him to come closer, and the Clear Shallows King took a look at Long Chen before glaring at the angry Red Ghost King.

Long Chen was staring at the Red Ghost King as well as the man behind him. The Red Ghost King was easily recognizable by his red skin. Just as Huangfu Qi had said, he looked like a red toad. Compared to the man behind him, he indeed looked exactly like an ugly toad.

The man behind the Red Ghost King was tall and regal. He wore a black and white robe and his eyes were like a constellation. His lips were thin, his nose was tall, and his fingers were long yet strong. He was a beautiful man, and he had surely seduced a lot of girls in the Ancient Demon Domain.

But Long Chen also looked good. His body was exuding strength, and the innocent look he had in the past had been replaced by an authoritative and regal look. He was also radiating the murderous aura coming from the Inherited Blood Essence.

Long Chen looked like he was born for massacre.

That was all because of the Inherited Blood Essence of the Ancient Bloodsoul Dragon.

“That man is Ying Shaotian, the only Eighth Passage Stage cultivator in the Red Ghost Pavilion. He's ranked third among the disciples of the Seven Demon Kings ...” Liu Yiyi whispered to Long Chen.

She was wary and repulsed by Ying Shaotian. There was even a hint of hatred in her eyes.

There's no reason for her to hate him if he's a good guy. That means that he's an asshole too.

Long Chen had noticed that Ying Shaotian had given Liu Yiyi a faint smile before he looked at the Clear Shallows King.

The Red Ghost King's face was red to begin with, but now it was even redder. He had taken note of how Long Chen had rudely ran past him without saying anything, and he was fuming because Long Chen had killed his favorite disciple. His anger burst forth and he slowly approached Long Chen.

“You brat! How dare you kill my beloved disciple?! I will tear you apart!”

The Qi of an Earthly Martial Realm master radiated from his body and almost flattened Long Chen.

But Long Chen did not move, because he knew that the Clear Shallows King would protect him and would never allow the Red Ghost King to go crazy here.

Chapter 502 - Plan

As expected, when the Red Ghost King was about to hit Long Chen, the Clear Shallows King stood in front of Long Chen and dispersed the pressure that came crashing on him. Long Chen enjoyed being protected by someone, especially when that someone was a pretty lady like the Clear Shallows King.

“Red Ghost King, did you just walk into my pavilion and try to kill one of my direct disciples? Are you here to wage war with me?”

“Direct disciple?! How is Jiang Cheng your direct disciple?! You can only take one every year!” the Red Ghost King hollered.

“Are you stupid? I did want to accept Huangfu Qi as my direct disciple, but since she’s someone important from the Huangfu family, I had to let her go. Since she’s gone, I can naturally have Jiang Cheng take her place. Who are you to come and question my freedom?” The Clear Shallows King's face was filled with frost and arrogance.

“Fine! I won’t talk about that right now. You know why I’m here. Even though he’s your direct disciple, he can’t just kill mine! Jiang Cheng must die today!” The Red Ghost King didn’t want to fight the Clear Shallows King if possible, because there were no benefits to that, and they would also get reprimanded by the Demon Emperor.

But Long Chen had to pay!

The Red Ghost King doted on Zhao Wuji. He intended to train him to become the second Ying Shaotian. In a few years, he would have two geniuses under his care and he would defeat the other Kings. That was why he had given Zhao Wuji the Nine Heavens Thunder Talisman to defend his life. But then the news of his disciple’s passing reached his ears merely hours later.

The Red Ghost King’s heart shattered when he heard that, so he had grabbed Ying Shaotian and rushed to the Clear Shallows Pavilion to get revenge.

But things were not going as smoothly as he had thought. Even though Zhao Wuji was his direct disciple, the Clear Shallows King was claiming that Long Chen was her direct disciple as well. It would’ve been fine for him to kill Long Chen if the latter were just a normal disciple, but how could a Demon King let someone kill their direct disciple?

Long Chen nodded in his heart. The Clear Shallows King was determined to protect him. Long Chen was officially her direct disciple after she announced it today. That meant he was now qualified to go to the third layer of the Demon World. Also, since he was at the Seventh Passage Stage, he could go to the region where the other Seventh Passage Stage disciples were.

The Red Ghost King still intended to take Long Chen’s life despite everything.

The Clear Shallows King scoffed, “Red Ghost King, everyone is bound by rules. You cannot treat my direct disciple as a nobody while calling your direct disciple an important person at the same time. The masters must come out to mediate when disciples fight. Also, while Zhao Wuji was indeed killed by Jiang Cheng, do you know the reason why? Jiang Cheng, tell us what happened.”

Long Chen explained what had happened the previous night. The Red Ghost King knew that ever since Zhao Wuji reached the Fifth Passage Stage, he had knocked on Long Chen’s door every day to redeem his dishonor. While he believed Long Chen’s story, he didn’t want to accept it.

“Fucking bullshit! He used the Nine Heavens Thunder Talisman, and there’s no way you could’ve avoided it! Your story is full of holes! I think you’re hiding something

from me about his death. Did someone set up an ambush to kill him?" The Red Ghost King's eyes were like cold daggers as he glared at Long Chen.

"What are you insinuating?" The Clear Shallows King was angered.

"What do I mean? My direct disciple was killed and I demand an explanation! I will never back down! My disciples cannot die without a reason!"

The Red Ghost King was saying that he wouldn't leave without an explanation.

"You want one? Fine, I will play by your rules! Come, let's fight! It's been five years since we sparred, but don't you dare assume I'm afraid of you!" The Clear Shallows King's eyes glittered with cold light. Since the Red Ghost King was refusing to step back, she had no intention of stepping back either. In fact, she was even more angry. She would rather fight the Red Ghost King right here and now.

"You and me? Fine!" The Red Ghost King laughed but stopped halfway. "You have guts. I don't think I will be satisfied if I don't fight you today! Two Demon Kings fighting against each other! I guess this will be the highlight of the day!"

Their Qi built up slowly while their argument escalated. The other three felt uncomfortable by the amount of Qi permeating in the air.

Just then, Ying Shaotian suddenly interjected, "May the two Kings please listen to my plea? Both of you occupy high positions in the Ancient Demon Domain. If you fight now, it will affect our reputation and, more importantly, yours. Since the disciples were the ones who committed the offense, we should be the ones to settle the disagreement. How does that sound?"

Long Chen's eyes shrunk. Based on what he had said, Long Chen deduced that Ying Shaotian was a formidable foe ...

Just as expected, the Clear Shallows King and the Red Ghost King stopped fighting. The Red Ghost King was satisfied with his direct disciple's idea. In fact, he loved him more than Zhao Wuji. "Shaotian, how do you think we should go about this?"

Ying Shaotian smiled and looked at Long Chen. "Didn't you say that he could deal with the Nine Heavens Thunder Talisman? My attacks are almost on par with the power of a single talisman, so let me hit him with one move. If Jiang Cheng survives it, that means he is telling the truth. That would mean that my junior really did attempt to challenge Jiang Cheng and even used an underhanded technique just to die in shame. If that's the case, he deserved it ..."

Ying Shaotian was an eloquent and smart man. After hearing the conversation between the Red Ghost King and the Clear Shallows King, he had obtained the key information and put it to use. He actually wanted to use his Eighth Passage Stage strength to deal with Long Chen, and he had made up the perfect excuse for it.

If it were yesterday, Long Chen wouldn't have been able to take even a single one of his attacks. Therefore, he was under the assumption that he could just kill Long Chen and say it was an accident.

The Red Ghost King was impressed by his direct disciple's intellect and laughed. "You are right. Let's do as you've said. Clear Shallows King, do you accept? If not, your direct disciple is lying, and you won't be able to blame me for what happens next ..."

The Clear Shallows King hesitated. Ying Shaotian was indeed strong, and even she didn't know how to turn the situation around. She would be asking for Long Chen to die if she asked him to take even a single hit from Ying Shaotian.

The Clear Shallows King was about to reject that proposal when Long Chen interjected, "That's a good idea. Let's do it right now. But if I manage to block it, take your master and get out of here. We do not welcome you here."

"Jiang Cheng ..." Both the Clear Shallows King and Liu Yiyi were shocked. They thought Long Chen was being rash. Liu Yiyi had seen Ying Shaotian's strength, and he was stronger than her, so she was worried.

Both the Red Ghost King and Ying Shaotian were surprised by how fast Long Chen had agreed. Ying Shaotian had a feeling that the situation was now beyond his control after a single sentence from Long Chen.

"To be fair, I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for the death of my junior." Ying Shaotian nodded and accepted Long Chen's proposal. If Long Chen could block a single attack from him, they would leave.

"Don't worry." Long Chen said when he saw the Clear Shallows King frowning. He then walked to the empty spot in the middle of the pavilion and looked at Ying Shaotian. "Come, stop wasting our time."

The Red Ghost King and Ying Shaotian exchanged looks before the latter approached Long Chen. Ying Shaotian stopped ten meters away from his target and looked at him carefully. He sensed nothing wrong with Long Chen.

I watched him barely beat someone at the Fourth Passage Stage during the qualifiers. He's much weaker than me, yet he agreed to my proposal? Might as well kill him and let Master reward me later on ...

Ying Shaotian circulated his Qi and turned serious. A soft wind blew his sleeves, making him look like a godly general descending from the heavens.

Long Chen decided not to transform. It was not yet time for him to reveal his true strength. He only needed to chase the two of them away today.

Liu Yiyi and the Clear Shallows King looked on with concern on their faces. To the Clear Shallows King, Long Chen was her hope for the event in one month. If he died, she would be in trouble too.

Ying Shaotian's body flashed and he shot towards Long Chen like a tornado. When he got close, he pointed at Long Chen with his finger. The atmosphere changed, and strong wind hurled past the pavilion and blew Long Chen's hair wildly.

Chapter 503 - Wind Riding Sword Finger

Ying Shaotian was talented in wind-attribute techniques just like Chu Yunxi was. Inside the tornado, Ying Shaotian pointed a single finger at Long Chen's throat. A strong ray of energy shot towards him like a sword.

“Wind Riding Sword Finger!”

To make sure his plan worked, Ying Shaotian used an advanced Heaven-tier martial technique. The strongest aspect of this technique was its speed. Just like Long Chen's Sword Devil Finger, Ying Shaotian had used it when the sword was already near Long Chen's throat.

The attack was several times scarier than Ling Xi's Sword Devil Finger in terms of speed and strength.

Under the whirlwind's effect, the sword was also rotating like a drill. If it hit Long Chen, it would pierce through his throat!

Both Demon Kings were in awe at the attack. With Ying Shaotian's talent, he would definitely become the next Demon King in just ten years. A Demon King at the age of twenty-seven was unheard of.

Of course, there were many others at the Earth Martial Realm in the palace.

The Clear Shallows King was frowning. She knew most of Long Chen's battle strength came from his transformation, and he hadn't transformed yet, so he was defenseless against the advanced Heaven-tier martial technique. If Long Chen died here, he wouldn't be able to participate in the upcoming assessment.

Liu Yiyi's face was pale. Long Chen was a boy who had left a deep impression on her. She couldn't stop Long Chen's naughty smile for the past few days, not the stoic expression he had on his face when he walked away. If he died now, her heart would be empty.

The Clear Shallows King was about to save him when she saw the Red Ghost King staring at her. It was likely that he would stop her the moment she moved.

At the final moment, Long Chen made his move. Everyone was shocked to see him transform into a blood-red light and dodge the attack. He also disappeared from the Clear Shallows King Pavilion.

Both the Clear Shallows King and the Red Ghost King saw the bizarre scene.

They were certain that even if they used all their strength, they could not move at such speeds. Only one person could move at that speed, and it was none other than the master of the Ancient Demon Domain, the one who was called the Demon Emperor, Jiang Wuxie!

The two were stunned. Only Liu Yiyi sighed in relief when she saw that Long Chen was fine. She looked towards the outside of the pavilion and knew that Long Chen was somewhere nearby.

She had seen how mysterious Long Chen was. She was certain that she had killed him in their fight, but he had come out unscathed. And now, despite being at such a low cultivation level, he had exhibited such demonic speed ...

Ying Shaotian was the one who was most surprised. He had finally found a chance to kill Long Chen with justification, but Long Chen had somehow disappeared right before his eyes. With that speed, he was a hundred times faster than Ying Shaotian!

That was how Long Chen disappeared. Ying Shaotian recalled his technique and almost spat blood at how he had missed Long Chen with that attack. Still, he could not trash the Clear Shallows Pavilion.

After recalling his technique, he looked back in a daze. His gentlemanly look was gone because of how zoned-out he was.

“That technique ... seems to burn up Qi to escape. It’s very rare to find one,” the Clear Shallows King mumbled to herself.

She now understood how Long Chen had dodged Zhao Wuji’s Nine Heavens Thunder Talisman that night. It wasn’t because he was strong enough to withstand the damage, but because of his method to escape.

Blood Warp was incredibly strong, and there was no limit to its speed. There were other techniques used to escape, but all of them were limited by their tiers. Once a cultivator’s level surpassed that tier, the technique would be useless. Blood Warp was in its own league!

The Red Ghost King knew of the existence of such techniques.

They then looked at Long Chen slowly strolling into the pavilion. He said to the Red Ghost King and Ying Shaotian, “I believe you wanted to see how I survived the talisman, and I just showed it to you. Brother Ying’s attack didn’t even touch me, so I hope you are convinced that I was not lying. Please leave the pavilion now.”

His voice was filled with authority and defiance.

“No, you needed to take on the technique, not escape it!” The Red Ghost King didn’t know what to do here.

“Red Ghost King, did you forget what Ying Shaotian said? He said that he wanted to see how I survived the talisman, not block it. Red Ghost King, it’s very easy for people to misunderstand what you are trying to do here. People might think you are trying to kill me through a test. You’re not that kind of person, right?” Long Chen returned to the side of the Clear Shallows King.

Long Chen’s words made the Red Ghost King silent. Ying Shaotian was even more frustrated. He had shot himself in the foot. Long Chen had used his words against him, and there was no way to turn the situation around.

Ying Shaotian shook his head at the Red Ghost King.

The Red Ghost King’s face turned even redder as he suppressed his anger, but the Clear Shallows King’s face made him extremely mad. Zhao Wuji was dead, and as his master, he couldn’t do anything due to the wager just now. Ying Shaotian had sealed the deal by setting the wrong conditions.

He had no choice but to leave now.

The largest surprise had come from Long Chen. Both the Red Ghost King and Ying Shaotian looked at him. To think that the youth who had just entered the Ancient Demon Domain had so many

secrets ... The Red Ghost King also recalled how Long Chen was supposed to be his direct disciple. He felt that he was blind to pass on Long Chen now that he had witnessed his talent.

Of course, Long Chen hadn't shown his true power. If he had, the Red Ghost King would've spat blood out of regret and died.

"Both of you, please leave," Long Chen reminded them once more.

The Red Ghost King gritted his teeth and suppressed the urge to smack Long Chen, but he was wary of the Clear Shallows King, so he had to endure it for now. Just then, he looked at Liu Yiyi and chuckled. "Is this your daughter? She's growing up to be beautiful. I don't think it's an exaggeration to call her the greatest beauty in the Seven Demon King Pavilions. She would be a great match for Ying Shaotian. Clear Shallows King, don't forget about the bet we made before. It was made in front of the Demon Emperor himself. I wonder, can anyone in your pavilion defeat Ying Shaotian?"

He then laughed and walked away. Ying Shaotian smiled and bowed. "I apologize for the brazen words of my master. Miss Liu Yiyi is definitely stronger than me. It's uncertain who will win. I'm sorry for offending you today, and I will return to apologize another day. Goodbye."

He then left with the Red Ghost King.

Only Long Chen and the other two were left.

Both the Clear Shallows King and Liu Yiyi were impressed by how Long Chen had turned the situation around so easily.

"Jiang Cheng, you did well today. I would like to appoint you as my direct disciple. Do you accept?"

"Of course I do ... But what's the bet that you made with them?" Long Chen had a feeling that the bet concerned Liu Yiyi and Ying Shaotian, and the reason why the Clear Shallows King was nurturing him so much was because of the bet.

The Clear Shallows King knew that she could not hide it anymore, so she sighed and looked apologetically at Liu Yiyi. "This was five years ago. I was rash and harmed Yiyi."

Harmed?

"What's going on?"

"During the previous assessment, the Red Ghost King Pavilion got second place and we got last. At the final battle, the Red Ghost King's disciple killed our strongest disciple. We never had a friendly relationship to begin with, so I fought him that day. Afterwards, we made a bet in front of the Demon Emperor. If we lost to the Red Ghost King Pavilion in the next assessment, I would marry off my daughter to his strongest disciple, and if he lost, he would have to kowtow three times to me and apologize."

The Clear Shallows King was regretting her actions when she looked at her daughter. "This was the biggest mistake of my life. I harmed my daughter because of how rash I was, and I still blame myself to this very day. Yiyi, I'm so sorry ..."

Long Chen suddenly felt like the Clear Shallows King was not as irritating as before.

Chapter 504 - Demonic Illusion

Seeing how sad her mother was, Liu Yiyi started to cry too. She carefully stroked her mother's arm. "No, Mother, I don't blame you. I know that we were always the weakest and you always felt bad because of the bet. I'm so sorry for being weak. I'm only at the Seventh Passage Stage, so I can't win against them. I'm so sorry ..."

The two apologized to each other without end.

The Clear Shallows King had never really taken notice of Long Chen. When she discovered his strength and wanted to nurture him, Long Chen was shocked to hear that she wanted him to kill her direct disciple. That made him think that she was cruel, but she had her sad side as well. She loved her daughter, and that was why she had tried to dig out every single bit of potential Long Chen had in him so that he could represent her pavilion.

Long Chen slowly forgave what the Clear Shallows King had done. It was already hard to survive as a woman in this male-dominated world, especially when it came to maintaining an entire pavilion by herself.

When the mother and daughter duo stopped apologizing to themselves, the Clear Shallows King recalled something and looked at Long Chen with excitement. "Jiang Cheng, Liu Yiyi is not strong enough to fight against Ying Shaotian yet. Do you think you can beat him if you train for another month? Yiyi's happiness is in your hands."

Long Chen thought about it. "I have confidence when it comes to increased my cultivation level, but Ying Shaotian is the Red Ghost King's number one disciple, so he definitely has more martial techniques than me. I think I'm lacking a good martial technique to win."

He had been trying to come up with a way to request the Demonic Illusion technique, and the opportunity had finally presented itself.

"What do you need?" The Clear Shallows King was more than happy to give him any techniques he wanted for the sake of Liu Yiyi. She was initially suspicious of Long Chen, but his performance today had convinced her of both his conviction and potential. Long Chen was a top fighter, but the Red Ghost King was too blind to see that.

Long Chen looked at Liu Yiyi and smiled. "The King-tier combat technique, Demonic Illusion."

Both she and the Clear Shallows King were slightly taken back. The Clear Shallows King laughed bitterly. "Did you see Yiyi use it? You have good taste. I will let you learn the King-tier combat technique Demonic Illusion, but can you learn it in one month? This is a King-tier we are talking about!"

Long Chen nodded. "Don't worry, I know my limits. As long as you give it to me, I can solve your problem."

He had made a daring claim, but both the Clear Shallows King and Liu Yiyi saw the conviction in his eyes and trusted him. "Alright, let's do as you've said. The Demonic Illusion is a technique

taught to others through words. Since you and Liu Yiyi will be joining the assessment, you should just live with her so that she can teach you the technique.”

“Uh ...” Both Long Chen and Liu Yiyi felt awkward about that arrangement since they were technically single.

The Clear Shallows King glared at Long Chen. “Jiang Cheng, I need to warn you not to do anything to my daughter, or I will kill you.”

She was being serious.

Long Chen was somewhat at a loss of words. “Don’t worry. Even though your daughter is beautiful, not every man values appearances, right?”

Liu Yiyi was still in a daze when she remembered that Long Chen had called her “flat.” Her face blushed with embarrassment and indignation.

“In that case, I will leave now. I want to enter the third layer of the Demon World. Could you send word to them to let me in?” Long Chen had heard that as long as their masters agreed, direct disciples could enter the third layer.

“You may do so, but why do you want to go there? It’s filled with Category Seven Heaven-tier beasts. Many of them are stronger than Yiyi too. Are you sure you want to go there?”

“Yes, and it won’t take long. I will come back and train with Yiyi once I’m done with my own stuff.” Long Chen only had one reason to go there. Even though his strength had increased a lot, Xiaolang’s cultivation was stuck. He had always been Long Chen’s strongest ally, so Long Chen wanted to increase Xiaolang’s strength too. There were sure to be strong fire-attribute monsters in the third layer, so going there now was a good choice. Xiaolang was only at the Category Four Heaven-tier, so there was not much he could help with right now.

Once Xiaolang became stronger, Long Chen could focus on cultivating the Demonic Illusion until the assessment to obtain the Emperor Flame Pearl.

Long Chen had always been mysterious, but the Clear Shallows King knew that he would never go overboard. She nodded and gave him a letter to enter the third layer of the Demon World. She even gave him a new identity token that signified his new position as her direct disciple.

Once that was done, Long Chen left the pavilion.

Both the Clear Shallows King and Liu Yiyi stood there motionlessly.

“Yiyi, what do you think about Jiang Cheng?” the Clear Shallows King asked after she calmed down.

“I think he’s strong yet mysterious, just like a cloud of fog that we cannot see through. He sometimes surpasses our expectations, and it is difficult to grasp his character.”

The Clear Shallows King nodded. "Do you know what I think of him?"

"Mother, what do you think of him?"

"I think he's very dangerous. He is covered in thorns, and he only retracts them around the people he cares about the most. If you are together with him, and you can't control him, you will find yourself hurt by those thorns. Do you understand? Try not to do anything to him, though it seems that you already have a budding idea in your heart ..."

"Huh?" Liu Yiyi was speechless. "Mother, what are you saying? I just got to know him recently. You are thinking too much."

"Is that so? Hehe, maybe. Just don't interact with him too much when you teach him the Demonic Illusion."

"Why don't you teach him, then?" Liu Yiyi was confused.

"He's even more guarded against me. If I teach him, there's a chance everything would fall apart. I need him to save you, but you are different. Your kindness will make him stay, and he will not fight against you."

"Oh. I think I understand what you mean. You want me to make him like me, but I cannot like him?" Liu Yiyi finally understood what her mother was trying to say.

The Clear Shallows King nodded, her eyes slightly sad. "You are still young and haven't experienced much of the world, so you don't know what love is. Those who have their heart moved by love end up suffering the most. They are inflicted with countless wounds."

"What are you talking about?" Liu Yiyi was slightly unnerved by her mother today.

"You don't understand? Look at me. Do you not see what's wrong? Why does everyone have a father but you don't? Why does no one talk about your father? That's because no one knows who your father is, and I lost terribly in love."

The Clear Shallows King sighed and gently pushed Liu Yiyi away from her. "Remember my words. Let him stay for a little longer. You can ignore him once the assessment is over ..."

The Clear Shallows King left the pavilion, leaving only Liu Yiyi staring at her mother's back.

"My ... father?"

Long Chen felt a shiver when he exited the Clear Shallows Pavilion. Someone was staring at him from the left. He used the Soul Swallowing Gaze and immediately saw who it was. He walked over and found Demon General Strongman.

Demon General Strongman was surprised by how easily he had been spotted.

His eyes were filled with hatred as he glared at Long Chen. The Clear Shallows King's actions to protect Long Chen made him feel indignant and frustrated. To think that he, one of the twenty-eight Demon Generals, and one of the four strongest Demon Generals of the Clear Shallows Pavilion, was nowhere near as important as Long Chen!

“How brazen of you to approach me,” Demon General Strongman growled.

“You leaked the news to the Red Ghost King, right?” Long Chen was calm in front of Demon General Strongman.

“And so what if I did? To think that even the Red Ghost King could not kill you. It seems that the Clear Shallows King has decided to coddle you.” Demon General Strongman chuckled.

He had said “coddle” rather than “look after.” Those two had a different meaning altogether. Demon General Strongman was insinuating that the Clear Shallows King loved Long Chen and would do everything to protect him.

I’ve been here for a long time, yet I’ve never heard of anyone mentioning her husband. Is she a widow? But why would Demon General Strongman say it in such a way?

He looked up at Demon General Strongman. “Do you think I’m afraid of telling the Clear Shallows King what you’ve just said?”

Demon General Strongman chuckled. “And so what if she finds out? She was the one who did it in the first place, and now she wants to silence me? Only the Demon Emperor can pass judgment on a Demon General. She never loved herself and gave birth to a baby even before she was married. We don’t even know who impregnated her, and now you want me to stop talking about it? You can tell her whatever you want, but I doubt she would kill me after I’ve worked so hard for the Clear Shallows Pavilion.”

Demon General Strongman was losing it ...

Chapter 505 - Third Layer of the Demon World

Zhao Wuji’s death and his inability to do anything about it must’ve impacted him a lot. He’s going crazy, and it’ll be dangerous if I continue standing in front of him like this since I’m his enemy. He might kill me if I’m not careful. Long Chen said nothing and left.

One thing he did take note of was what Demon General Strongman had said about the Clear Shallows King. Long Chen treated it as mere gossip though as he knew that the Clear Shallows King was not the kind of woman who would sleep with just anyone. Judging by how headstrong she seemed, she would only sleep with someone if they killed her first.

Back in his room, Long Chen informed Xiaolang about his plan. “I have a method to go to the third layer of the Demon World, but let me consolidate my Qi first. It’s still a bit unstable since I’ve just reached the Seventh Passage Stage.

Xiaolang nodded. Ever since they came to the Divine Martial Empire, he hadn’t had a chance to help Long Chen in anything, so he was feeling uncomfortable even though there was no choice. His strength would only increase if he ate flames; he could not grow strong through cultivating.

“I will start cultivating the Demonic Illusion with Liu Yiyi in a few days. Since we learned Divine Fire Clone together, you should cultivate it too.”

Xiaolang had also cultivated Long Chen’s two divine techniques, Divine Fire Clone and the Demon Seed Planting Technique. As long as Long Chen guided him, Xiaolang wouldn’t have too much trouble mastering the Demonic Illusion.

Two days later, Long Chen finished consolidating his Qi. Only then did he depart for Demon World Mountain.

He was now stronger than the first time he went there.

The Clear Shallows King never announced that Long Chen had killed Zhao Wuji, and the Red Ghost King would die rather than humiliate himself by announcing that his disciple had lost. But there was one news that the Clear Shallows King had spread to the world, and that was Long Chen becoming her direct disciple.

This told the public that Huangfu Qi was indeed from the Huangfu family. The Red Ghost King had given up on Long Chen, causing the latter to lose his chance to become a direct disciple, but Long Chen had lucked out and ended up becoming a direct disciple of the Clear Shallows King. Many people had seen Long Chen in the past, so he was recognized when he went out.

After all, there were six thousand regular disciples, but only seventy or so were direct disciples. No matter where they went, they would be the focal point. Long Chen’s popularity was technically at the bottom of the barrel, while Liu Yiyi and Ying Shaotian were known by everyone.

Everyone steered clear of Long Chen when they saw his fierce face.

Once back at the mountain, Long Chen heard someone gossiping about him. “That’s Jiang Cheng. He just got lucky and became a direct disciple. Do you see how haughty he looked?”

“There’s no point in being haughty. He might be strong, but his potential is finished. I’m sure he will become a regular disciple again in two years, and no one will pay him any mind. I heard that he was only at the First Passage Stage. It seems he might not even become an elder before the age of thirty.

One needed to be at the Sixth Passage Stage to be an elder.

There were many people above the age of thirty from the Ancient Demon Domain that had been sent out to work. Some of them worked in the businesses of the Ancient Demon Domain, some opened branch sects, and there were even a few who went to smaller kingdoms like the Cangyang Kingdom to build their own country.

Long Chen ignored their gossip.

Once back at the mountaintop, he jumped down and arrived at the first layer. With his previous experience, he soon found the second layer. He remembered the path leading to the third layer, but it was still a large place to explore. It took a whole hour for Long Chen to find Demon General Typhoon again.

It was clear that the Seven Layer Demon World was massive. The first layer was around the size of the Ancient Demon Domain, and the second layer was bigger than that. It was clear that the deeper levels would be even larger.

It was a strange Miniverse.

The Ancient Demon Domain had been in operation for tens of thousands of years, and they never would've chosen to build their base here if it wasn't for the Seven Layer Demon World. Many of the larger sects were reliant on the Miniverse they found.

Long Chen's appearance came as a shock to the guards who looked after the entrance to the third layer. Demon General Typhoon approached him. "Jiang Cheng, this is the third layer of the demon world. There are demonic beasts at the Category Seven Heaven-tier. You should stand back a little."

He assumed Long Chen was lost.

Still, he was surprised that Long Chen had found this place so easily in the second layer.

"Demon General, have you heard of the news of me becoming the direct disciple of the Clear Shallows King?" Long Chen handed him his identity token.

The Demon General examined it and returned it to Long Chen. "I've heard. Congratulations! Your future prospects are good if the Clear Shallows King is teaching you personally."

"Thank you. This is a letter from my master."

He looked at the letter and was shocked. "You want to enter the third layer?"

As far as he was aware, Long Chen was only at the First Passage Stage, and he assumed that Long Chen had only managed to explore the second layer because of his unrivaled talent in battle. But that should've been his limit. It was too much of a joke for him to enter the third layer.

Long Chen nodded. "Yes. Please let me in."

Demon General Typhoon confirmed again and was certain that the Clear Shallows King had allowed him to enter the third layer. He had no right to stop him, but he still didn't understand why. At this moment, he suddenly hurled a punch and shouted, "Take this!"

He had controlled his strength to be around the level of a Fourth Passage Stage cultivator. Surely Long Chen wouldn't be able to defend himself.

This test was his way of being kind.

Long Chen smiled and extended his arm to block the attack easily before punching back. The Demon General's eyes went wide with shock. "Jiang Cheng, you crazy bastard! To think that you hid your strength so well! You are already close to the Seventh Passage Stage!"

He didn't know that Long Chen's cultivation level increased explosively in the past few days. Progressing that quickly was impossible as far as he knew, so he assumed Long Chen had used a secret technique to hide his real cultivation level. If not, how could his new strength be explained?

"Can I enter the third layer now?" Long Chen whispered.

Only the two of them knew about this.

“Of course. I had no idea you were hiding your strength; even I was fooled! The Red Ghost King will die from regret if he learns about your real strength.”

Long Chen chuckled. “Please keep this a secret for now.”

The Demon General Typhoon nodded. “Of course. You may enter, but don’t go too deep. There are Category Eight Heaven-tier demonic beasts in the deeper regions, and there’s even a Category Nine Heaven-tier demonic beast in the deepest region!”

Long Chen nodded. “Thank you. I will remember your warning.”

Having said that, Demon General Typhoon led him to the entrance. Inside the entrance was a fork.

“The left leads to the third layer, while the right leads to the fourth. There was once a King-tier demonic beast in the fourth layer, but it was slain a long time ago. Now that it’s empty, they built a large warfield there, and it’s where the assessment will be held. I hope you do well when that time comes!”

The fourth layer?

Long Chen only knew that the assessment was going to be held at the fourth layer of the Demon World.

That meant the entrance to the fifth, sixth, and seventh layers was hidden in either the third or the fourth, though it was most likely in the fourth.

Long Chen thanked Demon General Typhoon and entered the third layer.

As he had expected, it was just a beefed-up version of the second layer. It was much larger, and the dark gas in the sky was even more dense than in the second layer. He even faintly sensed the presence of several demonic beasts in the area that posed a threat to him.

Fat Cat suddenly spoke up at this point.

“I feel it. The thing that’s consuming Life Qi is below us.”

Long Chen was stunned. He kept hearing the cat talking about it, but what was its true nature?

Below? Maybe it’s in the bottom layers? Around the seventh layer, maybe?

The rumored palace was built in one of the bottom layers.

Chapter 506 - Nine Wheels Ghost Fire Beast

“Do you know what it is?”

“It’s too far to tell. I might be able to detect it if we get to the same layer, but the barriers between the layers are blocking me.” The cat sighed.

Long Chen couldn’t go to the deeper layers for now, but he was confident that he would get there eventually if he stayed in the Ancient Demon Domain longer. He just wasn’t sure how long it would take. His mission was to find a way to enter the Ancient Graveyard, so he wouldn’t stay here for too long.

The Ancient Demon Domain was just a place for him to increase his strength. The Divine Martial Empire was massive, and he wasn't content with being stuck in one place. He had come here to avoid the Martial Alliance as well as to hunt down stronger demonic beasts. After meeting Huangfu Qi, he had come up with another goal: obtain the Emperor Flame Pearl.

And now it was within his sights.

Once he reached the third layer, he didn't dare to let his guard down. The place had fewer demonic beasts, but all of them were extremely strong. He used the Soul Swallowing Gaze to navigate the area. At his current stage, he needed the blood of a Category Nine Heaven-tier beast to become stronger. Unfortunately, he wasn't strong enough to kill one.

The stronger he got, the larger the gap between stages was. The advantages brought to him by his strong physical body had completely diminished.

He was focused on finding fire-attribute demonic beasts in the third layer, but there were very few demonic beasts in the first place, and finding ones that suited Xiaolang's needs was proving to be difficult. It took Long Chen almost four hours to find a Category Seven Heaven-tier fire-attribute beast.

It was a wolf-type demonic beast. It was larger than Xiaolang and its fur was red. The heat it emitted made it hard to see what it looked like. The Sun Devouring Wolf was originally a Category One Earth-tier beast, but because of its special talent, it was much rarer than the fire wolf in front of him.

Long Chen didn't need to transform to hunt the beast down, since he was already at the Seventh Passage Stage. He took the Demon Emperor Sword and shot out a Supreme Demon Sword at the wolf's waist.

The Sword Qi pushed the wolf several meters back, and Long Chen quickly followed it. He used Blood Devouring Domain at the same time to restrict the wolf's movements. Long Chen used this chance to stab his sword into the wolf's throat and destroy its brain using Sword Qi.

The wolf howled and fell over. Long Chen picked up its demon core and placed the corpse in the Primordial Realm. It was a Category Seven Heaven-tier demonic beast, so there was a possibility the corpse would be useful at some point.

The demonic core was enough for Xiaolang to advance into the next tier. Long Chen was happy to see his brother slowly growing stronger. Xiaolang's ability to devour fire was several times stronger than Long Chen's Blood Transmutation. The latter had restrictions, but Xiaolang didn't. All he needed to do was eat as much as he could and he would eventually reach the peak of all demonic beasts.

After some time, Xiaolang finished digesting the demonic core and reached the Category Five Heaven-tier. However, he had failed to copy the talent of the fire wolf, as the odds were fairly low. Thankfully, he had managed to copy the talent of the Blazing Lion last time, which allowed him to control the Nine Demons Ancestral Fire even more accurately.

"I still can't hunt a Category Nine Heaven-tier beast, and I don't think there are any with the fire attribute here. Let's go see if there's any at the Category Eight Heaven-tiers instead. I can still hunt them down."

Xiaolang nodded. "I will just follow you."

He was actually bored.

Thanks to Long Chen's Inherited Blood Essence, his growth could be described as explosive. If he got the Emperor Flame Pearl, he could easily reach the Ninth Passage Stage, and Xiaolang would fall behind. Thankfully, they were working together, and the stronger one would protect the weaker one until they grew up. Since Long Chen was stronger now, he was protecting Xiaolang while hunting down the resources for his brother to grow.

If Xiaolang became stronger, he could hunt the demonic beasts down himself.

Long Chen and Xiaolang slowly encroached into the deeper part of the third layer. Even though Demon General Typhoon had warned him not to go too deep, Long Chen slowly entered the deeper regions. After an hour, the demonic beasts around them became suspiciously scarce. Long Chen searched around for a long time, but he found nothing.

"Hmm. You are really lucky," the cat suddenly said.

"Fat Cat? You found something?" Long Chen was pleasantly surprised.

"What should you call me?"

"Sir Cat, hehehe."

The cat lazily pointed at a direction, and Long Chen walked towards it. When he got closer, he sensed the temperature around him rising rapidly. The closer he got, the hotter it became.

It's a Category Eight Heaven-tier fire-attribute beast! I'm so lucky!

But he didn't dare to let his guard down. Hunting down a Category Eight Heaven-tier beast was pushing it, though it would allow him to gauge how well he could handle an Eighth Passage Stage cultivator like Ying Shaotian. The only difference was that the latter would have a lot of martial techniques as he was a direct disciple of the Red Ghost King.

He was closer now.

There was a deep gorge in front of him. Black rocks littered the place, and the walls were burnt black. Long Chen entered the gorge and slowly moved towards the end.

There were small embers floating in the air and white smoke drifted out from the rocks. The temperature was visibly high here. Those below the Divine Core Realm would be burned to a crisp in no time.

He heard the sounds of a strong heartbeat coming from the depths of the gorge, signifying the strength of the beast. The loud heartbeat meant that its blood was very strong too, though the blood of a Category Eight Heaven-tier beast was no longer useful to Long Chen.

Long Chen also understood that using Blood Transmutation to increase his cultivation level was not a good idea. He had only done it for the Emperor Flame Pearl. Thankfully, his emotions were still under control thanks to the hundredth of the Inherited Blood Essence.

Long Chen slowly made his way towards the beast. Soon, he saw what kind of beast it was.

The beast's body was covered in green flames. The beast was ugly, with thick paws, sharp fangs, and green saliva. The disgusting saliva did not evaporate in the heat but instead burned a dark hole on the ground when it dripped out of the creature's mouth.

The beast had one other characteristic: there were nine fiery wheels on its back, and they seemed to be the source of the fire.

The greenish fire flowed viciously on its body.

"Nine Wheels Ghost Fire Beast ..." Long Chen recalled what he had read about it. It was a Category Eight Heaven-tier demonic beast that was fairly well known. Its strongest attack was called the Nine Wheels Ghost Fire. It was an attack that chained nine times with destructive force.

Xiaolang was looking at the beast with greed. It was a delicious meal for him.

"Xiaolang, watch how well I perform, hehehe ..." Long Chen took out the Demon Emperor Sword and transformed. His blood-red scales and sharp bone spikes completed his battle form. The ancient and regal aura of a king overflowed from his body, and the Nine Wheels Ghost Fire Beast immediately reacted to it. It warily looked at the direction where Long Chen was hiding and stood up.

After standing up, Long Chen saw that the beast was larger than the wolf from earlier. Its thick paws indicated that it excelled in ripping things apart.

Long Chen had decided that there was no point in sneaking around. He shot forward like a red arrow and used the Blood Devouring Domain in the process. Under its influence, Long Chen could attack even more fiercely!

"Roar!"

The beast howled in anger when it saw the small being attacking it.

Chapter 507 - Chen Feng

The blood-red mist spread throughout the gorge, covering it like a red cocoon. Since Long Chen had a lot of Qi, the Blood Devouring Domain was stronger than ever. He imagined that he would easily be able to kill billions with it once he reached the peak of cultivation.

Naturally, that was the level of the Ancient Bloodsoul Dragon.

I should be able to use the full strength of the Heaven Sword Array right now. Long Chen raised his sword as he flew close to the beast. A tornado of runes formed a massive array under his command, then he shot it towards the beast.

The Nine Wheels Ghost Fire Beast felt the threat to his life the moment Long Chen did that. It had thought Long Chen was insignificant, but now it treated Long Chen as its mortal enemy. The Heaven Sword Array displayed its true strength as it surrounded the beast from every direction. The entire gorge was covered by the array, and the rocks were cut up by its power.

The collateral damage was caused by the tiny bits of power that escaped from the gaps in the array.

Under the influence of both the Blood Devouring Domain and the Heaven Sword Array, the beast felt the largest threat it had ever faced, so it roared towards the sky. A suffocating demonic aura spread out and engulfed the surroundings. Long Chen felt like he was deep in the ocean and his movements were restricted.

But the Nine Wheels Ghost Fire Beast was even more restricted, as Long Chen's Blood Devouring Domain reduced at least twenty percent of its strength.

The Heaven Sword Array above its head flew downwards, and the beast felt the threatening power approaching. It decided not to hold back—the greenish fire covering its body shot upwards. Nine fiery wheels made of green flames swirled rapidly around its body, then all of them detached and grew bigger. After a few seconds, the wheels grew into massive wheels of fire three meters across and flew towards Long Chen's Heaven Sword Array.

The beast was confident it would be able to Long Chen as soon as it destroyed the Heaven Sword Array! It refused to believe that it was weaker than Long Chen, telling itself that it was only in this predicament because the latter had launched a surprise attack.

The nine wheels of fire were not weak in the slightest; Long Chen determined that they could destroy an entire mountain! A green flash of light exploded under the Heaven Sword Array that even outshone Long Chen's blood-red mist.

Is it using its strongest attack?

Long Chen smiled and saw that the Heaven Sword Array was going to clash with the wheels of fire. Only then did he release the remaining strength of the Heaven Sword Array that he had been intentionally suppressing. Long Chen had suppressed half of the array's strength in the beginning, yet it was enough to force the beast to use its strongest attack!

The Nine Wheels Ghost Fire Beast was going to die!

The Heaven Sword Array generated an inexhaustible number of swords that sliced apart the nine wheels of fire. Following that, the runes shot downwards and exploded. The beast could not defend itself, so its organs were blended up by the swords.

Long Chen was stunned by the Heaven Sword Array's full strength.

No wonder Ling Xi had said the technique was close to being a King-tier technique even though it was only an advanced Heaven-tier. The Category Eight Heaven-tier Nine Wheels Ghost Fire Beast was no match for Long Chen. Although they had a similar amount of Qi, their techniques weren't on the same level.

After giving Xiaolang the demonic core, Long Chen took the corpse and left. Their battle had caused a huge commotion, and it would be bad if anyone or anything came here right now.

Xiaolang took the demonic core and started refining it once he was back in the Primordial Realm. As for Long Chen, his mission in the third layer of the Demon World was now complete. He was also confident that he could win the assessment.

The other pavilions don't know about me. I will give them a huge surprise later! Long Chen needed to get his hands on the Emperor Flame Pearl no matter what.

Earthly Martial Realm, Heavenly Martial Realm, and Divine Martial Realm ... I need to be at least at the Divine Martial Realm to be able to meet Ling Xi, but can I grow that strong? No one in this land is above the Heavenly Martial Realm. Of the millions of people in the Cangyang Kingdom and the hundreds of billions of people in the Ten Thousand Nation Territory, even the strongest person has only managed to reach the Heavenly Martial Realm. Will I be able to surpass them?

He was under a lot of stress.

Long Chen stopped thinking about it. Now that he had completed his objective, he headed for the exit. There wasn't much time left, and he still needed to cultivate the Demonic Illusion.

He couldn't wait to have a shadow with almost as much strength as himself.

He remembered how he had gotten here, so he quickly retraced his steps back to the entrance. However, two people intercepted him when he was about to reach the exit.

One of them was none other than Ying Shaotian from the Red Ghost King Pavilion, and the other was another man slightly thinner than him. The man was completely dressed in black with black skin. His nimble-looking body shape made Long Chen think that he looked like a black panther, especially his cold eyes. Long Chen could feel the hostility coming from the man. Somehow, he sensed a stronger pressure from him than Ying Shaotian.

The three of them stood still.

“Brother Chen Feng, he's Jiang Cheng from the Clear Shallows Pavilion. Someone as extraordinary as him is sure to become a pillar of the Clear Shallows Pavilion soon.” Ying Shaotian's voice was filled with hints of sarcasm.

The man called Chen Feng scoffed. “Stop joking with me. He's barely qualified to join the assessment, much less become an elder or a pillar.”

“Then you don't know what I've experienced myself. I used the Wind Riding Sword Finger on him, and he somehow managed to avoid it with his incredible speed! You're always trying to improve your speed, so you should be interested in his escape technique ...” Ying Shaotian chuckled and looked at Long Chen with eyes glimmering with schemes.

No wonder Ying Shaotian was talking in circles. Long Chen understood what he wanted to do—he wanted Chen Feng to get interested in Blood Warp. Long Chen would never give it to him, and then Chen Feng would then attack him. That was a good plan indeed.

The man called Chen Feng lit up with excitement and asked, “Are you certain, Brother Ying?”

“He even managed to escape the Nine Heavens Thunder Talisman. What do you think?”

Chen Feng looked at Long Chen with greed in his eyes. “I am Chen Feng from the Azure Purgatory King Pavilion. Have you heard of me before? I'm the eldest disciple there.”

Long Chen shook his head. “Never heard of you. Are you famous?”

“Not really, but I’m the only disciple who has reached the Ninth Passage Stage in the seven pavilions,” Chen Feng said with pride.

“You haven’t heard of the news? He reached the Ninth Heaven Stage a few days ago and shocked the entire Ancient Demon Domain. It’s natural you don’t know a lot of things. Hahaha ...”

Ninth Passage Stage?

Long Chen looked at the man, and sure enough, he felt the strength of a Ninth Passage Stage cultivator. It appeared that he was indeed the strongest disciple in the seven pavilions, powerful enough to rival a Demon General.

Long Chen knew that there was a massive gap between the Eighth and Ninth Passage Stages, since one could soar in the sky at the Ninth Passage Stage. Since Chen Feng had activated his heavenly meridian point, he could fly too.

“I don’t want to bully you, but Brother Ying says that you have a special technique used to escape. Could you give it to me? I can trade an advanced Heaven-tier technique for it. You can choose either a martial technique, a body tempering method, or even body combat techniques. Judging your strength, that technique is an advanced Heaven-tier technique, right? If we make a trade, you can gain another advanced Heaven-tier technique. What do you think?”

Chen Feng was looking at Long Chen with anticipation. Long Chen was supposed to tearfully accept the offer due to the other party’s identity, and he would get another technique at the same tier, but Long Chen did not budge.

Chen Feng’s face slowly changed.

Chapter 508 - Emperor Flame Pearl and Beauty

“Jiang Cheng, Chen Feng is offering to trade a technique at the same tier. You can’t just decline his offer. There aren’t a lot of disciples in the Clear Shallows Pavilion, so you will be joining the assessment, right? Even though Chen Feng is already at the Ninth Passage Stage, he’s going to be there as well. If you refuse, you will suffer later.” Ying Shaotian chuckled sneakily.

Even someone at the Ninth Passage Stage is joining the assessment to get the Emperor Flame Pearl?

Chen Feng had managed to advance a few days ago, after the rosters had been confirmed. Even though he didn’t need the Flame Emperor Pearl anymore, he could give it to others. There was no reason for him to not join it.

Long Chen was slightly taken aback. This was beyond his expectations. He thought the Emperor Flame Pearl was as good as his with his current strength, but having to compete with someone at the Ninth Passage Stage would make things difficult.

Chen Feng would be a deadly foe for him to face.

But Long Chen wasn't afraid. All it meant was that his chances of winning had become slimmer. Also, Chen Feng would not be able to cultivate Blood Warp even if he got it.

Long Chen wasn't fazed by their combined threat. Even someone like the Clear Shallows King could not capture him if he used Blood Warp, much less two disciples. Long Chen looked at them and said coldly, "It's my technique. It's up to me whether or not I give it to you. Now, it's not a courteous thing to block the path of others. A good dog doesn't block the road, don't you know that?"

Both Ying Shaotian and Chen Feng were stunned by his words. They thought Long Chen was weak. In the past, Chen Feng would've just taken what he wanted rather than trying to bargain, but Long Chen had thrown his offer into the dirt just like that. He had even called them dogs!

They exchanged angry looks and nodded at each other. They were planning to kill Long Chen here. Since this was the third layer, they could push the blame onto the beasts. In their eyes, Long Chen was stupid for offending them.

"What? Are you going to kill me?" Long Chen wasn't afraid. He took a few steps back and chuckled. "Are you stupid? Ying Shaotian, you know that I have a method to escape. You think you can succeed the second time after failing the first?"

Ying Shaotian knew that Long Chen was right. Long Chen did indeed have the power to fight back, because he could escape and there was nothing either of them could do about it.

It was frustrating to know that there was nothing he could do despite being stronger than Long Chen!

But Chen Feng hadn't seen the technique before, so he didn't believe in Long Chen's claims. His Qi exploded and he growled, "Then you will die here. Jiang Cheng, just try to escape!"

Chen Feng's speed exploded and he appeared in front of Long Chen instantly!

He's too quick!

Chen Feng was like a black panther that excelled in speed. No wonder he was so interested in Long Chen's Blood Warp. Even though he specialized in speed, that didn't mean he was weak in other aspects; someone at the Ninth Passage Stage would never be weak. His fist caused the air to explode.

To think a simple fist could be so strong!

"Too slow!" Long Chen turned into a red light and disappeared right before their eyes. He was a hundred meters away from the exit when he reappeared.

Chen Feng turned around, his eyes lighting up in excitement.

"What an incredible technique!" Chen Feng needed the technique now. He forgot the humiliation Long Chen had given him and said, "Jiang Cheng, I will trade two advanced Heaven-tier techniques for it! You are benefiting from this trade!"

Long Chen shook his head adamantly. "Dream on. I wouldn't agree even if you gave me a King-tier technique."

Chen Feng's eyes turned bloodshot. "Don't force me! You can't run away with only a single technique. I have a dozen ways to kill you!"

"Oh?" Long Chen smiled. "It's too bad I don't have time to deal with you. Just wait for the date of the assessment to fight me. I will give you a surprise on that day. As for Ying Shaotian ..."

Long Chen looked at him with hostility. Ying Shaotian was the one who had instigated this. "You still have to get through me to get married to Liu Yiyi. Don't daydream too much—it's not good for your body! Hahahaha..."

Without waiting for their reply, Long Chen exited.

Ying Shaotian and Chen Feng looked at each other in bewilderment.

"Brother Ying, does he intend to challenge us during the assessment?"

Ying Shaotian revealed a taunting look. "He probably got kicked on the head by a donkey. Someone like him won't live long. All he has is a strange escape technique and he thinks he can beat us?"

Chen Feng smiled too. "What a distasteful encounter. To think a dog could crawl all over my head and we couldn't do anything. Our reputation will be tarnished if news gets out."

"Don't worry. We can just teach him a lesson during the assessment. How about something like asking him to kowtow and kneel to us?"

"Good idea, Brother Ying. Even though I'm already at the Ninth Passage Stage, I truly admire your talent. Once we pass the assessment, you will be able to enjoy your nights with that beauty Liu Yiyi." Chen Feng revealed a grin that only men could relate to.

"She's just a pretty skeleton in the end. You've probably had your fair share of women, right? Probably ten times more than me. I'm sure all of your women are extremely beautiful. I'm actually the one who should be admiring you since the Emperor Flame Pearl is undoubtedly yours."

"The Emperor Flame Pearl? I have no use for it. How about I give it to you and you give me Liu Yiyi? I kinda like her." Chen Feng chuckled.

Even though he was stoic like a panther on the outside, he was a wolf on the inside.

"You're a funny guy! Hahaha ..."

As the two of them laughed, Long Chen bade Demon General Typhoon goodbye. He then left the Seven Layer Demon World and returned to the Clear Shallows Pavilion. On the way, he received excellent news—Xiaolang had reached the Category Six Heaven-tier. More importantly, he had managed to copy the special talent of the Nine Wheels Ghost Fire Beast and could manifest nine wheels of fire. It would be a deadly technique if he used it with the Nine Devils Ancestral Fire.

Long Chen had seen firsthand how strong the technique was and was certain that Xiaolang could elevate it to be even more destructive with the Nine Devils Ancestral Fire.

But Chen Feng is at the Ninth Passage Stage. It seems that the assessment just became harder. I need to find Liu Yiyi and learn the Demonic Illusion as soon as possible.

The moment he returned to the pavilion, he went to Liu Yiyi.

Time was now the deciding factor for Long Chen to win.

Liu Yiyi had been waiting for him, and she sighed in relief when she saw him. “Why did you go to the third layer of the Demon World? Aren’t you afraid of being attacked by powerful demonic beasts?”

“Were you worried about me?”

“No ...” Under his intense gaze, Liu Yiyi backed off and shook her head. “There’s a certain condition to fulfill to cultivate the Demonic Illusion. Come with me.”

Long Chen had teased her because it was fun, but he never thought she would be so shy. He stopped teasing her and followed her towards the back of the pavilion. They soon reached a desolate mountain. Long Chen had a feeling that something was blocking regular people from entering this place.

“This is the mountain behind the Clear Shallows Pavilion. A natural seal prevents people from entering, though someone at the Ninth Passage Stage could just fly over it.” Liu Yiyi didn’t even have the courage to look at Long Chen while she spoke.

Long Chen stopped.

Watching her from behind and hearing her mention seals made him think of the girl he loved. He suddenly felt parched, a result of having his emotions suddenly stirred.

After experiencing life and death together, their journey had ended in separation. Ling Xi’s crying face and Wang Chao’s deadly punch continued to play again and again in his brain. Even his breathing became heavier.

Sensing that Long Chen had stopped, Liu Yiyi turned around and saw that he had lowered his head. Bloodlust emanated from Long Chen’s menacing body. Liu Yiyi was surprised and took several steps back.

“Jiang Cheng ... You ...”

Long Chen snapped out of it.

Jiang Cheng, not Long Chen.

He recalled his identity in the Ancient Demon Domain and suppressed the pain in his heart. He smiled at Liu Yiyi and said, “I’m fine, let’s go ...”

“Oh ...” Liu Yiyi nodded and turned around without another word.

Chapter 509 - Single Guy and Lady

The way Long Chen had acted just now made Liu Yiyi wary. She kept wondering what happened to him to make him look like that. He was so mysterious. As much as she was curious about him, she didn't dare ask.

The Clear Shallows King had told her that Long Chen was a dangerous man, and now Liu Yiyi knew what she meant.

They soon reached their destination. There was a cave in front of them, and Liu Yiyi explained, "To cultivate the Demonic Illusion, you need to be able to see your shadow. This is a closed-off place to cultivate it. Since we have less than a month to cultivate it, we will have to ..." She blushed.

She would have to cultivate here with Long Chen for the rest of the month. She had never spent so much time with him before, so she was panicking.

"Don't worry. I won't eat you." Long Chen smiled wryly. Now recovered, he entered the dark cave. The cave was long but narrow, with only enough room to fit two or three people side to side. They walked for ten meters before Long Chen saw light. At the end of the tunnel was a large, circular cavern around fifty meters in diameter.

There was only a single entrance to the cave, making it relatively sealed off. If it wasn't for the candlelight, the entire cave would be completely dark. Long Chen spotted a large candle in the middle. It was feeding a palm-sized flame that illuminated the cave. He also saw his own shadow on the wall.

It's very strange that the Demonic Illusion requires one to train in such an environment. Long Chen looked around in awe.

Liu Yiyi entered after he did. She was familiar with the place since she cultivated here a lot. She walked to a small, wooden house at the edge of the cave. Even though the door was shut, Long Chen could tell that the interior was decorated quite exquisitely, befitting of Liu Yiyi's behavior.

She blushed when he examined the house. "I spent a lot of time here cultivating the Demonic Illusion. The Earthly Qi here is also thicker, so I've been coming here ever since I was young ..."

"When you were young? Alone?" Long Chen was speechless. He wouldn't be able to endure the loneliness. Even now, he had Xiaolang and Fat Cat accompanying him. He was impressed by how she endured it.

"This is where I live. You can't come inside ..."

Even though it was a weird house, Long Chen understood the rules. It was wrong to barge into a girl's room without any warning.

"Don't worry. I'm not a bad person. I was just teasing you that night."

"I know ..." Liu Yiyi nodded and looked at Long Chen with glimmering eyes.

The atmosphere was nothing less than romantic.

The Clear Shallows King's arrangement was slightly problematic.

Long Chen didn't know what to say, and Fat Cat in the Primordial Realm laughed and rolled on the ground.

Liu Yiyi broke the silence first. “The Azure Purgatory King Pavilion’s Chen Feng reached the Ninth Passage Stage a few days ago, yet he still intends to join the assessment. Have you heard?”

Long Chen nodded.

“Jiang Cheng, do you intend to get the Emperor Flame Pearl?” Liu Yiyi asked boldly.

She was not stupid, so she knew what he wanted, and Long Chen had no need to hide it. “Of course. Who doesn’t want it? But obtaining it is another thing altogether.”

“But Chen Feng is really strong. Can you win against him with your current strength?”

“Probably not. That’s why I need the beautiful Miss Liu Yiyi to teach me the King-tier combat technique.” Long Chen chuckled.

Being called beautiful made her feel a bit awkward, and her heart beat faster. She even felt her face turning hot when she lowered her head. “Chen Feng is the strongest disciple in the seven pavilions. You need to work hard.”

“That’s true, but Miss Liu ...”

“Just call me ‘Senior Yiyi.’ You are technically my mother’s disciple.”

Long Chen smiled helplessly. Liu Yiyi was actually much younger than him. “I have a question. Where is the palace? Which layer is it in?”

“Only those at the rank of Demon General and above can enter the palace. I never went there before, but I know it’s at the fifth layer of the Demon World,” Liu Yiyi answered.

“The fifth? Then what’s in the sixth and seventh layers?” Long Chen asked again. He remembered the cat telling him that the thing sucking the Life Qi was at the bottom layers.

“I know the sixth layer is the Demon Emperor’s vault. There are numerous halls in there that safeguard various Divine Arms, spiritual herbs, and martial techniques. All of his assets are located there. As for the seventh layer ... I’ve never heard anything about it. I suppose no one has been there before?”

That means the being or the thing is at the seventh layer?

Long Chen secretly noted down the information and continued asking questions to defuse the awkwardness. “Then, other than the Demon Emperor, is there anyone else notable in the palace?”

Liu Yiyi slowly grew confident. She answered his questions and didn’t blush that easily anymore. “The grand elders are there too. All of them are at the Ninth Passage Stage, and there are fifty of them. Each of them is as strong as a Demon General. There will always only be twenty-eight Demon Generals that handle the various administrative tasks in the Ancient Demon Domain. If someone reaches the Ninth Passage Stage and doesn’t want to become a Demon General, they can choose to become a grand elder. The grand elders hold the same position as the Demon Generals,

but they only need to concentrate on cultivating and are not burdened by administrative tasks. Chen Feng will probably become one after the assessment.”

Long Chen was shocked. He thought there were only twenty-eight people at the Ninth Passage Stage in the Ancient Demon Domain, but he was wrong. There were fifty more! To think there were almost eighty people that were stronger than him. Long Chen felt his scalp go numb at the thought of so many people above him.

Long Chen had underestimated the strength of the Ancient Demon Domain.

“The family of the Demon Emperor also resides in the palace, including Jiang Wushang, who is at the First Earthly Martial Stage.” Liu Yiyi’s eyes were filled with awe when she mentioned him.

Reaching that stage at such a young age was almost unheard of. Jiang Wushang was undoubtedly the strongest youth in the Ancient Demon Domain.

Long Chen was also impressed with Jiang Wushang’s strength.

“Are all of the Demon Emperor’s sons as strong as Jiang Wushang?”

“No. He has nine sons. Some are strong and some are weak. But I’m talking about their talent rather than their current strength. He has a ten-year-old son who reached the Third Passage Stage just like Huangfu Qi.”

“How weak is weak?” Long Chen was interested.

“I think one of his sons is around our age, but he is only at the Third Passage Stage. He is quite famous in the Ancient Demon Domain as a bad example ...”

“Oh.” Long Chen nodded. He just wanted to know a bit about the palace and the Demon Emperor, as well as let Liu Yiyi familiarize herself with him. It would be difficult to cultivate the Demonic Illusion if Liu Yiyi kept blushing and avoiding him. “Let’s start training!”

The two of them got closer, and Liu Yiyi started teaching him after seeing that Long Chen was not aiming to “devour” her. She sighed in relief as Long Chen seemed sincere about learning.

“The Demonic Illusion is a special divine technique that surpasses all of the techniques in the Ancient Demon Domain.”

When she started teaching, Long Chen sat down like a good student.

“Look at my shadow.” She pointed at the ground, and Long Chen saw her shadow elongating, then it suddenly stood up. The shadow was the same size and shape as Liu Yiyi.

Except it was wearing no clothes.

Still, since it was a shadow, there was nothing to see. It just had the same external shape as the user. But Long Chen sensed that the shadow was almost as strong as him.

“Do you sense anything from my shadow?”

“Hmm ... I sense that I was wrong. You have a beautiful body.”

Liu Yiyi froze and followed his gaze. She saw her curvy shadow, and her face exploded in a rush of red. Her face looked like an apple. She withdrew her shadow and pointed at Long Chen while huffing. “You ... You ... You bastard student! Lecher!”

“Uh ... I thought you wanted me to notice that.”

Chapter 510 - Attack at Night

Just like that, Long Chen accompanied Liu Yiyi as he cultivated the Demonic Illusion in the cave. The reason they were here was not only because it was safe, but the place also fulfilled the conditions of needing a clear and stable shadow to cultivate the Demonic Illusion. If one couldn't fly, the only entrance to the cave was through the Clear Shallows Pavilion.

Several days passed. Long Chen and Liu Yiyi became closer as time went on. Long Chen teased her a lot in the beginning, but he quickly became more serious. He kept asking her about the parts that he wasn't sure about during his cultivation. Cultivating martial techniques usually took years, ranging from one year to fifty, but Long Chen was different. After absorbing the Inherited Blood Essence, his comprehension was elevated to the point that even a King-tier technique was comparatively simple for him to learn.

Xiaolang hadn't even grasped the fundamentals when Long Chen's Demonic Illusion showed the initial signs of mastery. It had just been a few days since he started.

Liu Yiyi was more and more impressed by Long Chen's performance. She knew how difficult it was to cultivate the King-tier technique, but Long Chen was making it look easy. He cultivated it without any bottlenecks.

“If you continue at this pace, you will be able to utilize the Demonic Illusion even better than me by the time the assessment rolls around.”

Long Chen was focused and smiled plainly before continuing his cultivation.

Liu Yiyi stared at him while he focused. She was somewhat attracted to the outline of his nose and his focused gaze. The Clear Shallow King was right. Long Chen was horrifying when he revealed his thorns, but he looked very friendly when he wanted to. He was like a very friendly and approachable neighbor.

My mom told me to stay close to him, but I must not fall for him. Liu Yiyi stopped looking at him and entered her room. The assessment was just around the corner, and she couldn't put all of her hopes on Long Chen. She needed to work hard too.

Time passed as they cultivated their own techniques. They were seeing good improvements over time.

The first step of the Demonic Illusion is to feel the soul so that I can control the shadow. The second step is to absorb nature's spiritual energy using the technique and replicate my shadow. The shadow must have at least three-fourths of my strength. The third step is to control it. I must learn how to

move it around while using different martial techniques. Only then can I say that I have mastered the Demonic Illusion.

Long Chen had completed the first step, so he could control his shadow to a certain extent. Now it was time to learn the second step. It took him five days to form the shadow replica of himself.

Now all he needed to do was learn how to control it. He needed to familiarize himself with using the Demonic Illusion for combat. It would take a long time to be able to do so, just like a baby learning how to walk.

Ten days had passed since he first started cultivating the technique. Long Chen was busy controlling his Demonic Illusion to run swiftly in the cave when Liu Yiyi came out of her room. She didn't need to be here anymore, but something had attracted her to Long Chen. She smiled in approval when she saw his improvement.

Long Chen continued to improve his control over the Demonic Illusion.

He knew that hard work and effort would get him far, so he focused on his control until he felt like time was almost up.

"How many days do we have left? Is it daytime or night right now?"

"We still have sixteen days, and it's late at night." Liu Yiyi stood up. She realized that her heart would start beating faster every time Long Chen talked to her. The first time she lost to him, she felt like he was a mischievous person. But after interacting with him for so long, she realized that Long Chen was focused on his goal, and he would never stop going after it.

"Why are you here this late? Aren't you afraid that I'll eat you since nobody's here to see?" Long Chen chuckled.

He liked how embarrassed she got from his teasing. It was his sole entertainment in the cave.

"I know you wouldn't." Liu Yiyi smiled. She was not afraid of him anymore, but a numbing feeling traveled up her body when she saw how Long Chen was looking at her.

"How's everything outside?" Long Chen hadn't gone outside in days, since he was focused on cultivating.

"The entire Ancient Demon Domain is getting more and more excited because of the Emperor Flame Pearl. Everyone is talking about it ... as well as about the bet between my mother and the Red Ghost King. They are probably waiting to see the disgraceful defeat of the Clear Shallows King ..." Liu Yiyi revealed an exasperated look.

She really couldn't stomach the thought of marrying Ying Shaotian. She had been living in this place for a long time, so she knew about the scandals involving him. She hated those kinds of people.

“Is that so? I think they will be surprised by the results because of me.” Long Chen smiled with confidence.

Long Chen was confident he could beat Ying Shaotian, but he was wary of Chen Feng. He wasn't certain if he could win against someone at the Ninth Passage Stage. It was impossible to reach the next cultivation level in the time he had left, so he would have to rely on his combat experience to eke out a victory.

He needed to cultivate the Demonic Illusion to perfection so that he could use it as a hidden trump card.

Liu Yiyi nodded. Her fate was in Long Chen's hands. No matter how strong their opponents were, she was confident in his strength.

She knew that Long Chen was at the Seventh Passage Stage just like her. Long Chen had defeated her when he was at the Fifth Passage Stage, so it would be easy for him to defeat Ying Shaotian.

Both of them quietly continued their cultivation.

Liu Yiyi suddenly remembered something that was trivial to her. “Also, when I came back here, I saw Demon General Strongman following me from afar. I don't know what he was doing. When I turned around, he disappeared.”

Long Chen shuddered. He stood up and shouted at her, “You idiot! Why didn't you tell me that first!?”

Liu Yiyi was shocked.

Long Chen immediately used Sight and looked outside. He knew that Demon General Strongman hated him, and the reason he had hidden himself in this cave was to avoid him. Someone who had gone crazy was the worst kind of opponent. After being shunned by the Clear Shallows King, the resentment he had for Long Chen was boiling over. Strongman would never let Long Chen live!

Demon General Strongman had been suspicious of Long Chen's extended disappearance. That was why he had followed Liu Yiyi and learned that Long Chen was cultivating the Demonic Illusion in the cave. Liu Yiyi had told Long Chen that while the mountain had a seal around it, those who could fly could enter. If Demon General Strongman really wanted to kill Long Chen, he would already be here!

Long Chen recalled the bloodlust emanating from Demon General Strongman after the Red Ghost King was chased away.

Just as he had expected, he saw a towering man running towards the cave when he used Sight. The man's heavy footsteps shook the cave.

Liu Yiyi's face paled when she saw Demon General Strongman at the mouth of the cave. He was wearing black armor that covered his entire body. A wild and terrifying aura exuded from his body, and his bloodshot eyes resembled those of a beast.

Demon General Strongman let out a laugh when he saw Long Chen and Liu Yiyi. “How lucky. To think that I would find both of you bitches here. No wonder I didn't see you for so many days!”

Long Chen thought he would be able to cultivate in peace until the assessment; he never thought Demon General Strongman would find him! Long Chen was well aware of Demon General

Strongman's strength and resentment. Dealing with him would be difficult, and he would have to put his life on the line to win.

Long Chen grew serious at the imminent danger.

"Bitches?" Liu Yiyi was visibly upset by the insult and glared at him. "I'm obeying my mother's order to teach him the Demonic Illusion. We are not doing anything immoral here!"