

## Battlefield 491

### Chapter 491: Dream Revisited, Mythical Society (Three-in-One)

In the top room of the Dan Tower, the incense burner emitted a warm fragrance, dispelling the chill from outside.

Master Gu He of Dan Tower withdrew his hand from Xiao Yu's wrist, his voice steady like an ancient bell: "Her injuries have completely healed, and upon awakening, her power will significantly advance. However, her essence was deeply corroded by the curse, and she will never again be able to transfer injuries for others as you described."

"Thank you, Master." Dongfang Mingyue rose to give thanks, her eyes full of gratitude.

The Yin Yang Rebirth Pill is a Seventh Grade Elixir, even for a Tier Seven Spiritualist, it's extremely costly to obtain just one. Yet, upon hearing Xiao Yu's plight, Gu He took out the elixir without hesitation, a kindness that she secretly remembered.

Gu He stroked his beard with a slight chuckle, a hint of deliberation hidden in his eyes — if someone else had sought this elixir, he probably wouldn't have shown up at all.

But Dongfang Mingyue was different; the talent she displayed in alchemy was enough to support her future pursuit of becoming a Seventh Grade Alchemist, and she might even touch the supreme realms of Eighth Tier, Ninth Grade.

Exchanging a Seventh Grade Elixir for the friendship of a future alchemy master — no matter how you calculate it, it's a worthwhile trade.

"Mingyue, given your current situation, it's no longer suitable for you to live outside." Gu He shifted the topic, his tone reassuringly authoritative, "From today until the alchemy finals, you will reside at Dan Tower. With me here, no one can harm you in the slightest."

As the master of Dan Tower, his strength is not only immeasurable, but his connections are also deeply rooted.

If someone dared to cause trouble at Dan Tower, he would undoubtedly make sure they could not leave.

Dongfang Mingyue felt warmth in her heart, bowing in gratitude again. Being able to find sanctuary at Dan Tower meant peace not only for her, but also for Xiao Yu and the guards who would no longer be plunged into danger because of her.

Gu He nodded faintly, meticulously checking Xiao Yu's aura once more. Confirming no issues remained, he then turned and exited the room, leaving the space to these sisters who had endured life and death.

"Xiao Yu." Dongfang Mingyue gently sat by the bed, holding Xiao Yu's warm hand. That hand was soft and delicate, now absent of the dryness and folds from before, a round face glowing with healthy pinkness, breathing steady and prolonged.

Looking at the vibrant figure before her, Dongfang Mingyue suddenly felt a moment of daze.

Destiny had indeed been changed.

Since she awakened the ability "Future Dream," all the tragedies foretold in her dreams eventually came true, without exception.

Those destined to pass away, no matter how she struggled or sought help, ultimately could not escape their predetermined end, and sometimes even met a more tragic fate due to her intervention.

Time and time again, her efforts were crushed, her hopes turned to despair, and she had long surrendered to the shackles of fate.

"Fate cannot be changed" — these six words were imprinted in her very bones, becoming a principle she dared not trespass.

But today, she witnessed the collapse of that principle.

Earlier in the snow, everything was identical to the scenes in her dream; the same snow flying across the sky, the same farewell words, the same old decay. Xiao Yu, using the ability she could only employ once in her lifetime, sacrificed her life to shield her from the deadly curse. According to the dream's trajectory, Xiao Yu should have grown cold in her arms, perishing entirely.

But now, the girl who should have died lay vividly breathing before her, her aura steady, her appearance alive.

The shadow of fate had indeed been torn open.

Dongfang Mingyue felt a slight sourness in her nose, a surge of indescribable thrill rising in her heart — like someone who has walked in endless darkness finally sees a ray of dawn ahead.

The chains of destiny tightly entwining her quietly broke at this moment.

Her eyes, long closed due to despair, reopened at this moment, seeing the light called "hope."

And it was all brought by one person.

Dongfang Mingyue's heart seemed pushed by something, beating quickly and urgently; the impulse to break through destiny transformed into a warm stream, flowing through her veins, reaching every corner of her body. She couldn't sit still, turning and running towards the door.

The stone steps of Dan Tower were still covered with thin snow, she sprinted down, the icy snowflakes soaking the soles of her shoes, yet she felt no cold.

As she rushed out of Dan Tower's gate, the bitter wind and snow greeted her face.

Raising her eyes, she saw Qin Tian standing in the center of the square, still wearing that blood-stained black robe, with blood marks long frozen into dark red ice crumbs on the hem. His jet-black hair and brows dusted with a thin layer of snow, like frost, yet enhancing his stern face, his posture upright like a pine never bending in the wind and snow.

The guards surrounded him, whispering something, each face displaying the fatigue of surviving a disaster, yet their brows relaxed in relief from safety.

Dongfang Mingyue's gaze firmly locked onto Qin Tian, her mind uncontrollably replaying scenes from the snow — how he was pierced by Sword Qi creating countless bloody holes, yet not retreating a step; facing that towering giant finger, his bones shattered, yet his frame remained erect; the resolute glow in his palm as he pulled Xiao Yu back from the Death God's grip...

Those scenes rushed in like tides, gratitude, emotion, and the joy of breaking fate converging at this moment into an unstoppable urge.

She didn't hesitate, walking step by step toward Qin Tian facing the wind and snow.

The snowflakes landed in her hair, on her shoulders, quickly accumulating a thin layer, yet she remained unaware, her eyes fixed solely on the figure standing in the storm.

When Qin Tian saw Dongfang Mingyue approaching, his originally stern gaze softened slightly.

Chapter 492: Dream Revisited, Mythical Society (Triple Combo) (Part 2)

"Miss Ming Yue, what about Xiaoyu..."

The words were left unfinished as a soft, delicate figure embraced him tightly around the waist.

Qin Tian was completely stunned, with his raised hand suspended in mid-air, and a slight ripple emerged in his profound eyes.

Dongfang Mingyue pressed her face against Qin Tian's blood-stained yet still warm chest, clearly sensing his steady heartbeat, a heartbeat like a drumbeat, dispelling all her anxiety. Tears welled up again, but they were no longer tears of despair; rather, they were filled with gratitude and relief, soaking Qin Tian's black coat.

"Thank you." She choked out, her voice soft yet clear, "Really... thank you."

This "thank you" was not only to thank Qin Tian for fighting with all his might to protect everyone and save Xiaoyu but also to thank him for being like a ray of light, breaking the prison of fate that had bound her for many years, allowing her to finally believe that destiny can indeed be changed.

Upon hearing the tearful gratitude, Qin Tian's suspended hand finally lowered gently, softly landing on Dongfang Mingyue's back, as if soothing, or perhaps responding.

The wind and snow continued to fall, yet they seemed to be imbued with warmth by the embracing figures.

The nearby guards watched the closely-knit young couple, pausing their conversations to exchange glances, revealing a peculiar smile and amusement in their eyes.

...

"Miss, Miss?"

Xiaoyu's soft call resonated nearby, snapping Dongfang Mingyue back to reality. Her eyes met Xiaoyu's whose eyes were filled with confusion. Her cheeks, already flushed from the earlier recollection, turned even redder, and even her earlobes tinged with pink. Her gaze instinctively drifted toward the window, not daring to meet Xiaoyu's eyes.

"Miss, what were you daydreaming about just now?" Xiaoyu propped herself up and looked at Dongfang Mingyue's evasive demeanor. Her eyebrow suddenly cocked, a mischievous look flashed in her eyes, and a knowing smile tugged at her lips, "I know! You must have been thinking about Qin... mm!"

Before the sentence was finished, Xiaoyu's mouth was hastily covered by Dongfang Mingyue's hand. Her warm palm pressed against her lips, allowing only muffled groans to escape.

"Don't talk nonsense!" Dongfang Mingyue's voice carried a barely noticeable hint of panic; her cheeks blushed even more deeply, resembling a ripe apple, "I was just thinking, Qin Tian saved all of us this time and pulled you back from the brink of death. How should we properly repay him..."

Even though she spoke, her mind uncontrollably replayed the scene outside the Dan Tower — in the wind and snow, Qin Tian's blood-stained black attire, snow-covered eyebrows, and the stable heartbeat she felt when she leapt into his arms.

In dreams, she had once experienced similar scenes of embrace, yet the sensation in reality was far clearer, more heart-pounding than in dreams, especially recalling the guards' sly glances afterward, causing her cheeks to flush and her ears to burn, yearning to find a crack to hide in.

Xiaoyu shook her head vigorously, finally freeing her mouth from beneath Dongfang Mingyue's hand. While rubbing her numbed cheek, she grumbled softly: "I didn't even finish speaking, you covering my mouth admits it without needing words!"

"You dare to speak!" Dongfang Mingyue feigned anger, her willow eyebrows gently raised as she pinched Xiaoyu's cheek. The tactile softness at her fingertips subtly softened her voice, "Fine, I won't tease you anymore. Xiaoyu, it's really great that you're alive."

Her voice brimmed with gratitude; the despair of holding Xiaoyu's gradually cold body in the snow contrasted sharply with the lively person before her, making her cherish this regained companionship all the more.

Xiaoyu leaned and embraced Dongfang Mingyue's arm, lightly resting her head on her shoulder: "I'm also super happy that I can continue while accompanying Miss. I want to see Miss become the best alchemist, achieve her dreams, and witness Miss in a beautiful bridal dress, having adorable babies... Just..."

At this point, her voice grew soft, a hint of sadness drifting through her eyes: "But I can no longer protect Miss anymore."

"Silly girl." Dongfang Mingyue gently caressed Xiaoyu's long hair, fingertips brushing through her smooth strands, "I've never thought of needing you to protect me, nor have I expected you to trade your life for mine. Xiaoyu, you're my sister, my closest kin. I only hope for the days to come that we both live safely and happily, that's enough."

"Mm!" Xiaoyu nodded vigorously, the sadness in her eyes replaced by brightness, holding onto Dongfang Mingyue's arm tightly, seemingly clutching onto the warmth with all her might, "I want to stay with Miss forever, never to part!"

Just then, the buzzing vibration abruptly sounded, interrupting the warm atmosphere in the room.

Dongfang Mingyue's smart wristwatch screen lit up, vibrating continuously.

Xiaoyu glanced, quickly saying: "Miss, it's Young Master Haoyue calling! You should answer; he's probably worried sick."

Dongfang Mingyue smiled and patted Xiaoyu's head, rising to pick up the watch and walking to the adjacent room.

Gently closing the door to shut out the noise outside, she took a deep breath and pressed the video call button.

The screen soon lit up, immediately displaying Dongfang Haoyue's handsome face, an indisputable urgency etched between his brows. As soon as the call connected, he spoke at high speed, "Ming Yue! Why are you just answering now? Do you know I..."

Chapter 493: Dream Revisited, Mythical Society (Triple Release) (3)

"Brother."

Dongfang Mingyue gently interrupted him, her voice soft yet bearing an unprecedented firmness. She looked at her brother's anxious expression in the video, her gaze serious enough to make one's heart tremble, as she spoke each word with precision:

"Fate has changed."

"Brother, you and I, perhaps... won't die."

Upon hearing these words, Dongfang Haoyue on the other end of the video was visibly shaken. The anxiety on his face gradually faded, his eyes shifting from initial shock to a complex mix of emotions, as he stared intently at his sister on the screen, as if to ascertain the truth of her statement.

.....

The wind and snow raged at the summit of the desolate mountain, with heavy snowflakes akin to fragments of jade dancing in the air, painting the world in a vast expanse of white. Qin Tian's figure appeared abruptly amidst the snow like a specter, the hem of his black robe billowing in the cold wind. He glanced around, his gaze quickly falling on the ground not far away.

There lay a corpse split in two, belonging to the Tier Seven Dark Mage who had previously escaped.

The dark red blood had long since solidified in the low temperature, forming eye-catching patches with the white snow. The thick layer of snow nearly covered the corpse completely, leaving only the tattered edges of the black robe visible, testifying to the fierce battle that had taken place here.

Qin Tian felt a chill in his heart—he had tracked the Hunting Mark here, and when it suddenly disappeared in this location, he thought the enemy had sensed the mark and used a Secret Technique to erase it. He never expected that the enemy had already perished.

To split a Tier Seven Mage in two with a single strike, the individual responsible must possess power far beyond his imagination.

"Did you do something to him?"

A faint voice suddenly sounded behind Qin Tian, as gentle as snowflakes falling on water, yet carrying an unmistakable penetrative force.

Qin Tian's pupils contracted sharply, his hackles rising instinctively as he turned around abruptly—his Perception Ability had already covered a radius of several miles, allowing him to detect any subtle anomalies in sound, smell, heat sources, or magnetic field fluctuations.

But this man in white had managed to approach him silently, without him noticing!

The Black Frost Blade appeared instantly in Qin Tian's hand, its dark blade glinting with a cold, threatening sheen. His body tensed like a drawn bowstring, his gaze locked onto the man in white, Spiritual Energy coursing rapidly through his body, ready to respond to any sudden situation.

The man in white stood amidst the wind and snow, his pristine robes untouched by dust, as snowflakes landed on his shoulders, seemingly reluctant to mar his transcendent aura.

He waved his hand lightly, his tone casual as if engaging in idle chat: "Don't be so tense. If I wanted to make a move against you, I would've done so long before you noticed, and wouldn't be wasting words with you."

His gaze swept over Qin Tian, a faint smile tugging at the corners of his lips as he added, "Besides, if I had the intent to kill, you wouldn't be alive right now."

"Who on earth are you?" Qin Tian's voice was low and heavy, his grip on the knife handle tightening slightly.

The behavior of the man in white was too bizarre—he had suddenly retreated halfway through their battle, citing "insufficient funds"; now, judging by the wounds on the Tier Seven Mage's corpse, it was clearly split by a sharp blade, very likely his doing; yet here he stood, displaying no hostility whatsoever.

Qin Tian couldn't fathom the intentions of this powerful and enigmatic man in white.

Hearing this, the man in white chuckled softly, his expression carrying a hint of mystery: "Want to know my name? It's simple."

He shifted his tone, suddenly becoming icy, "But you must think it through—once you know my name, you only have two choices: either die or join my organization."

He looked at Qin Tian's tense expression and slowly asked, "Now, do you still want to know?"

The wind and snow howled on, falling onto the snowy ground between the two, yet it felt as though an invisible barrier kept it at bay, unable to close in.

Qin Tian's grip on the Black Frost Blade tightened, as vigilance and confusion intertwined in his mind, leaving him unsure of how to respond.

The man in white observed Qin Tian's taut posture and solemn expression, a faint smile on his lips, his tone teasing: "What, frightened already? Earlier when shielding Dongfang Mingyue in the snow, your determined spirit was nothing like this."

Qin Tian's grip on the Black Frost Blade remained firm, but his gaze deepened—he had enough confidence in his life-saving measures, and even if the man in white's power was unfathomable, he had some means of escape.

But the problem lay in the fact that as long as this mysterious powerhouse kept his true intentions hidden while keeping a watchful eye on Dongfang Mingyue, he couldn't truly be at ease.

To protect Dongfang Mingyue, he must first ascertain the man's identity and goals.

"Who on earth are you?" Qin Tian asked slowly, emphasizing each word.

Upon hearing this, the man in white's smile widened, yet his tone remained nonchalant: "Qin Tian, male, twenty-two years old. Two years ago, you were a freshman at the Eagle Military Academy on Silver Gray Star, merely a Tier One Spiritualist; in just two years, you've risen to a Major General in the Military Department, holding the Emperor's Radiance Medal, your Spiritual Ability Level breaking through to Tier Six. Besides that, the Lingfeng Trading Company you founded is now a rising star with limitless potential in the business world, and the Youth Potion you developed is a best-seller across the Nine Great Star Realms..."

Qin Tian's brows furrowed sharply; although his background wasn't exactly a secret, it wasn't something widely accessible either, especially as he had only met the man in white a few hours ago, and yet the man seemed to know everything about him.

The only possibility is that the person in front of me already started investigating me a long time ago.

"So, you came for me?" Qin Tian's voice turned colder, as Spiritual Energy quietly circulated within him, ready to handle any sudden situation.

The tone of the man in white finally turned more serious: "You could say that. However, Dongfang Mingyue is also one of my targets."

Seeing the sharp glint in Qin Tian's eyes, he added, "Don't look at me like that. I was also entrusted by someone to protect Dongfang Mingyue once. Kid, do you think the assassins sent by the Round Table Meeting are easy to deal with? If I hadn't preemptively dealt with that Tier Seven peak assassin and disguised myself as him, do you really think you could have protected Dongfang Mingyue with your current abilities?"

Qin Tian's heart was suddenly shaken; listening to his tone, it seemed as if the man in white was on the same side as him.

If what the man in white said was true, then Dongfang Mingyue really did escape a disaster this time.

Killing is inherently easier than protecting, even with his Reflective Damage ability and spatial tactics, defending the unprepared Dongfang Mingyue against a surprise attack from a Tier Seven peak assassin would still be incredibly difficult.

Unless he directly sent Dongfang Mingyue into Yang Space and brought her back to the Royal star, but such a method would be unacceptable to Dongfang Mingyue unless absolutely necessary.

"Then earlier..." Qin Tian was about to ask why his previous actions were so ruthless, but the man in white interrupted him.

"You want to ask why I was intent on killing you?" The man in white took over the conversation, his smile gaining a playful edge, "If it weren't for your strange Reflective Damage ability, you would have already been a corpse."

Qin Tian nodded silently, waiting for the other's explanation.

"This ties into my second task—to assess you."

The man in white spoke plainly, but combined with the previous clues, he immediately guessed a possibility—that the other came from some mysterious organization, and after witnessing his "rocket-like" speed of progress in two years, they intended to test his strength through actual combat before deciding whether to extend an invitation.

Sure enough, with a flick of his wrist, the man in white sent a token flying towards Qin Tian.

Qin Tian hesitated for a moment before catching it steadily with one hand, feeling the cool metallic touch at his fingertips.

He looked down; it was a golden token, engraved on the front with an intricate design—like a giant door suspended in the starry sky, with a mysterious glow faintly emitting from behind, as if leading to some unknown world.

"I come from the Mythical Society, a small secret organization that only admits the top geniuses."

There was a rare solemnity in the man in white's voice, "Someone recommended you, and the head of the society appointed me as the assessor to test your power. Although your current Level isn't high, being able to injure me with a Tier Six body qualifies you to join the Mythical Society."

Mythical Society... the top geniuses.

He looked up at the man in white, his tone carrying a hint of inquiry: "Are most of the members of your Mythical Society Holy Blood geniuses?"

"Holy Blood?" Upon hearing this, the man in white's mouth curled into a faintly disdainful smile, as if those words were not the supreme honor in his eyes, "I admit, Holy Blood indeed has an innate advantage in bloodline inheritance, born with a Spiritual Energy Talent far surpassing that of ordinary

people. But if you think the top potential in the Cosmos is limited to this, then you are too narrow-minded."

He brushed the snow off his shoulder, his tone becoming heavier, filled with a sense of awe about the vastness of the Cosmos: "Throughout the Star Sea, there are those who, in desperate situations, obtain ancient legacies, awakening powers that have slumbered for millennia; others who find treasures of the Cosmos, using extraordinary items to modify their physique, breaking through the shackles of Spiritual Cultivation; and still others who are exceptionally gifted in fields like Alchemy, crafting, and Array, achieving heights in their youth that others cannot reach in a lifetime. The potential of these individuals is in no way inferior to the most elite Holy Blood Descendants, and in some areas, they even surpass them. The Mythical Society embraces these unconventional, against-the-odds talents—like me, and perhaps like you."

"Well, my assessment task is complete." His tone shifted, returning to its earlier nonchalance, "Whether you join the Mythical Society is entirely up to you. Three days from now, the Mythical Society will hold its quarterly internal gathering. You only need to infuse your spirit into this token, and you can meet other members in the virtual space."

He paused, as if remembering something, and added a piece of friendly advice: "Oh, and members of the Mythical Society don't like using their real names. Everyone chooses a codename derived from ancient mythology for communication."

Qin Tian's grip on the token tightened slightly, his gaze on the man in white's ethereal figure as he asked, "Then what's your codename?"

Upon hearing this, the man in white's lips curved into a faint smile.

He tapped lightly on the snowy ground, and his figure, seemingly moved by no wind, slowly ascended into the air. His white robes fluttered in the wind and snow, his dark hair and snowflakes intertwining, a faint aura surrounding him, like an immortal descended on a snowy night, untouched by earthly dust.

"My codename—" his voice carried by the cold wind, clear yet distant, as if traversing through time and space, "True Martial Emperor."

Before his voice even fell, the man in white's figure had already transformed into a white light, disappearing into the vast snowy curtain, leaving Qin Tian standing alone on the mountaintop, clutching the golden token, with "True Martial Emperor" and the sound of howling wind and snow still echoing in his ears.

#### Chapter 495: Round Table Meeting

"Morning, Miss!"

Little Jade had just woken up and was rubbing her eyes as she walked out of the bedroom, only to see Dongfang Mingyue wearing a light-colored apron, busy in the open kitchen, which instantly startled her and made her eyes widen. In her impression, Miss had always been focused on alchemy and had never cooked a meal herself. Today's scene was truly a first-time event.

"Morning, Little Jade." Dongfang Mingyue turned back with a smile. On the stove, there were several dishes of exquisite pastries with golden crispy crusts and supple cakes, rivaling the signature items from outside stores in appearance.

"Wow! Miss, did you make all these? That's incredible!" Little Jade quickly stepped forward, the faint sweet aroma lingering around her nose, her eyes sparkling with surprise and delight.

Dongfang Mingyue picked up a freshly cooled osmanthus cake, handing it to Little Jade's mouth with a hint of relaxation in her tone, "I can handle complicated tasks like alchemy, so making these pastries is much simpler than alchemy."

"Then... are these made especially for me?" Little Jade took a small bite of the osmanthus cake, its sweet but not greasy taste melting on her tongue. She asked vaguely while holding onto the pastry.

Dongfang Mingyue nodded with a smile but added, "They were made for you, but also for Mr. Qin Tian. He saved all our lives, and we should show some gratitude. Making something myself seems more sincere."

Little Jade paused her chewing on the pastry, suspiciously staring at Dongfang Mingyue with a mischievous smile on her lips, "Miss, why do I feel like I'm the 'bonus' here?"

"You cheeky girl, always so talkative!" Dongfang Mingyue helplessly tapped Little Jade lightly on the forehead, her cheeks slightly red. "Go wash up quickly, or the pastries will get cold."

Little Jade stuck out her tongue, skipping off to freshen up. Before long, Dongfang Mingyue carried several dishes of pastries and warm tea into the suite dining room.

The Dan Tower suite was elegantly and luxuriously furnished, with a spacious and comfortable layout of two bedrooms and a living room, initially meant for managers or high-tier guards, now temporarily loaned to them for a room.

As the two of them just sat down, Dongfang Mingyue softly called out to the air, "Mr. Qin Tian, are you there?"

"I am here."

As soon as the words fell, a slight spatial ripple appeared in the air, and Qin Tian's figure materialized out of thin air beside the dining table.

He was still wearing that signature black outfit, its fabric stiff as if yesterday's bloody battle hadn't left a trace on him. His face remained stern, yet was a bit softer than usual.

"Brother Qin Tian, good morning!" Little Jade greeted enthusiastically first, her tone filled with warmth.

"Morning." Qin Tian's lips curled into a rare, slight smile, his gaze falling on Little Jade as he asked with concern, "Little Jade, are you recovering well?"

"Better than ever!" Little Jade immediately straightened her torso, spreading her small hands as a cluster of pure white spiritual energy blossomed in her palm, sparkling with pure radiance. "After taking the Yin Yang Rebirth Pill yesterday, I directly advanced from Tier Two Nine Stars to Tier Three Three Stars! Master Gu He even said that over eighty percent of the pill's medicinal properties remained in my body, and will gradually nourish my body, aiding me to at least breakthrough to Tier Five!"

She spoke, her eyes full of longing: "Tier Five... I never dared to dream of it before, but now there's hope!"

When she finished speaking, Little Jade looked at Qin Tian again, her eyes became particularly serious. She stood up and bowed deeply to Qin Tian, her voice full of gratitude, "Brother Qin Tian, if it weren't for you yesterday, neither Miss nor I, nor anyone around us would have survived. Thank you so much!"

Qin Tian quickly reached out to help her up, his tone gentle, "Protecting Miss Ming Yue is my duty; Little Jade, you don't have to be so formal."

"Then Brother Qin Tian should just call me Little Jade from now on!" Little Jade looked up seriously, "Everyone calls me that, 'Little Jade' sounds too formal."

Looking at her sincere eyes, Qin Tian pondered briefly and nodded, "Alright, Little Jade."

"Then you shouldn't be partial." At this moment, Dongfang Mingyue spoke softly, her gaze falling on Qin Tian with seriousness in her tone, "You've changed how you address Little Jade; you shouldn't call me 'Miss Ming Yue' anymore, just call me Ming Yue. Going forward, I will also call you Qin Tian directly."

Qin Tian was momentarily taken aback and instinctively wanted to refuse. He had thought that the embrace in the snow yesterday was just Dongfang Mingyue's emotion after surviving the ordeal; after all, the two were in a protector and protected relationship, and such intimate terms seemed inappropriate.

However, when he looked up at Dongfang Mingyue, he saw her eyes firm, with no hint of joking. That seriousness rendered his rejection unspeakable.

After a brief silence, Qin Tian gently nodded, his voice softer than usual, "Alright, Ming Yue."

Upon hearing the address, Dongfang Mingyue's cheeks blushed lightly, but her lips involuntarily formed a soft smile as she sipped her tea.

"Qin Tian, these are the pastries I made for you and Little Jade. Try them out."

Dongfang Mingyue said with a radiant smile.

"Okay."

Qin Tian didn't hesitate anymore, picking up a piece of pastry and putting it in his mouth, biting lightly and savoring the taste before giving a thumbs up.

"Superb, better than those made in the shops."

At those words, the smile on Dongfang Mingyue's face grew even broader.

Beside her, Little Jade watched their expressions, sneaked a glance and took another pastry, stuffing it into her mouth, finding it tasted even sweeter than before.

"Miss, did Brother Min find out the identity of those who attacked us yesterday?" Little Jade asked vaguely with a mouthful of pastry, her eyes tinged with curiosity and wariness. After all, they were enemies who nearly cost her life, and not knowing their background always left her uneasy.

Dongfang Mingyue placed down her teacup, gently shook her head, her tone tinged with a hint of helplessness, "Brother Min has already sent those black clothed men's bodies to the relevant department for identity checks, but so far, there's no news."

On the side, Qin Tian listened quietly without interrupting, though his fingers unconsciously stroked the edge of his teacup.

From the white-robed man's "True Martial Emperor" yesterday, he had already learned the assassins' origins—the Round Table Meeting.

The Round Table Meeting is not comparable to regional assassin organizations like Shadowmoon Pavilion; its influence spans the entire Nine Great Star Realms, even including Star Realm areas densely populated by the Spirit Race and territories belonging to the Beastman Empire.

More daunting is the organization's exceedingly long history, founded by the legendary "Round Table Twelve Knights," and has been passed down for thousands of years, nearly as old as the Empire's history.

Their method of training assassins is almost rigorous—most of the ace assassins in the core circle are chosen from childhood and undergo brutal training in closed environments. Only those who survive multiple selections and are the top-tier powerhouses can enter the core circle and access the Round Table Meeting's core secrets.

As for those attackers from yesterday, they were merely "peripheral contractors" of the Round Table Meeting.

Though these peripheral assassins also have internal ratings and can undertake various tasks published by the organization, they will never touch the core circle of the Round Table Meeting, let alone know the true identities of the Twelve Knights.

The only one who might have known more information, the Tier Seven peak killer, had already been preemptively eliminated by the white-robed man, leaving not a single clue.

In other words, even if the relevant department finally uncovers the identities of those black clothed men and confirms their connection to the Round Table Meeting, it's challenging to derive more information from this clue. Peripheral killers are just deliberate "smoke bombs" left by the Round Table Meeting.

With this thought, Qin Tian frowned imperceptibly.

Since the Round Table Meeting had already set its sights on Dongfang Mingyue, they probably wouldn't just send peripheral assassins once. The upcoming situation might be even more tricky.

Chapter 496: Myriadwood Source Crystal

The lights in the hotel suite were warm and soft.

Dongfang Xi held a delicate Spiritual Energy pen between her fingers. Upon hearing her subordinate's report, the pen paused on the paper, and a barely noticeable flicker passed through her gaze: "Dongfang Mingyue was assassinated?"

Her tone was flat, yet carried a hint of secretive expectation, aiming straight for the heart of the matter: "Is she dead?"

The subordinate quickly shook his head, lowering his voice slightly: "No. It's said she was severely injured last night, but now she's been sent to the Dan Tower to recuperate. With the protection of the Dan Tower, she should be fine."

"Not dead... what a pity." Dongfang Xi let out a cold laugh, her fingers clenching the Spiritual Energy pen until it turned slightly white.

As a member of the Dongfang Clan, she knew better than anyone the terrifying healing power of the Qingmu Bloodline—so long as there's still a breath left, the Bloodline Power can rapidly heal the injuries.

What's more, Dongfang Mingyue is currently at the Dan Tower, where healing elixirs are abundant. With the aid of elixirs, the recovery speed would only be faster, and even the alchemy finals in five days might not be affected.

Thinking of this, she let out another cold laugh and asked, "Who did it?"

"Currently, there are no clear leads." The subordinate replied truthfully, pausing before adding, "But outsiders are speculating, it's likely forces like the Beastman Empire or the Xieshen Association—because they don't want to see another alchemy master rising among humans, they took action against Dongfang Mingyue in advance..."

Before he could finish his sentence, he noticed Dongfang Xi's gaze growing colder, like a blade of ice, directly landing on him. His heart tightened, and the rest of his words got stuck in his throat, no longer daring to continue.

"You're saying Dongfang Mingyue is being assassinated because she's a 'future alchemy master,' while I'm not worth their attention since I lack her potential, not even qualifying for an assassination, and just

living uneventfully, is that it?" Dongfang Xi's voice was as cold as winter wind, each word tinged with sharp sarcasm.

"No! Absolutely not! Young Miss, that's not what I meant at all!"

The subordinate quickly waved his hands in panic, cold sweat instantly appearing on his forehead, and his back was drenched.

He knew all too well the nature of this young lady, narrow-minded and prone to overthinking. If she bore a grudge against him, life would be tough.

Yet he couldn't help but think: assassination is such a major danger, isn't safety a good thing? Why compare to Dongfang Mingyue over this—does she wish for someone to try to assassinate her to feel content?

"Hmph."

Dongfang Xi coldly withdrew her gaze. If Dongfang Mingyue had died directly from the assassination, she would've had a winning edge in the upcoming alchemy tournament. But unfortunately, this woman's fate was remarkably resilient, and now she's hiding in Dan Tower. Even if she wanted to use some tactics, she couldn't get a chance to do so now.

"Damn assassins."

Dongfang Xi cursed inwardly, "Truly a bunch of incompetents."

.....

Two days later in the Dan Tower suite, sunlight streamed through the window lattice, dispelling the cold brought by successive snowy days.

Two tall, burly figures stood in the middle of the living room, their build almost identical, as robust as iron towers, with hair standing straight like steel needles, exuding a steady aura of strength.

"Miss Mingyue." Both of them spoke simultaneously. Although their voices had slight differences, they both carried a sense of power.

"Big Brother Xiahou Wen, Big Brother Xiahou Wu." Dongfang Mingyue greeted with a smile. The twin brothers were experts specially dispatched by the clan to protect her. Both were Tier Seven Spiritualists with silver bloodlines, elder brother Xiahou Wen was Tier Seven Three Stars, and younger brother Xiahou Wu was Tier Seven Five Stars.

What was even rarer was that from a young age, they had a mutual understanding; when working together, they could unleash power far exceeding others of the same rank, capable of matching Tier Seven Spiritualists with Gold Bloodlines.

Xiahou Wen took a step forward, his tone calm and clear, contrasting sharply with his rugged appearance: "Miss Mingyue, for the upcoming period, my brother and I will be fully responsible for your safety until we escort you safely to the Royal Star."

"Then I must trouble you both." Dongfang Mingyue nodded in gratitude. With these two powerful warriors present, her sense of safety increased substantially.

"Mingyue."

At this moment, a gentle voice sounded, and an elder clad in a green robe walked in from outside, his hair and beard white, with a kindly face, but his eyes sharp.

"Grandpa Yuan Sheng!" Upon seeing the elder, Dongfang Mingyue's face immediately lit up with a cheerful smile, and she walked up quickly.

The elder was Dongfang Yuansheng, a side branch elder from the Dongfang Clan. He had watched over her and Dongfang Haoyue growing up, treating them like his own grandchildren, maintaining a close relationship with them.

Dongfang Yuansheng gently patted her shoulder, carefully examining her to make sure she looked well, then finally relaxed a bit. His face darkened, and he spoke with concern and gravitas, "The clan received news of your assassination, and I was sent here immediately. How are you now? Have we discovered who was behind it?"

Dongfang Mingyue lightly shook her head: "Grandpa Yuansheng, I'm fine. As for those assassins, after Brother Min's investigation, we only confirmed they were from the Round Table Meeting, but we haven't found any clues about who hired them."

"Round Table Meeting..." Dongfang Yuansheng furrowed his brows. He wasn't unfamiliar with this organization. If it were really the Round Table Meeting, it would indeed be challenging to trace it back to their employer.

He looked at Dongfang Mingyue, his eyes full of compassion—this child had always been straightforward and focused solely on alchemy, never making enemies, yet now she was targeted by such a dangerous assassin organization.

It likely aligned with external speculation that opposing forces didn't want to see another top-notch alchemist emerge in the Human Empire, thus resorting to such a severe assassination attempt.

"Mingyue, I heard this time during the attack, a military expert by your side protected you?" Dongfang Yuansheng's tone carried a hint of earnestness.

"Can I meet him? Upon hearing the news, Haoyue specially applied for a treasure from the clan, asked me to deliver it to him as a token of gratitude."

Knowing it was a good thing, Dongfang Mingyue gently said towards the empty living room, "Qin Tian, could you please come out for a moment?"

As soon as she spoke, a ripple of spatial energy suddenly appeared in the air, like the surface of water being gently stirred.

The next second, a figure abruptly materialized before everyone's eyes, as if stepping right out of the void, with no premonition.

"Swoosh—"

The pupils of brothers Xiahou Wen and Xiahou Wu sharply contracted, their fists clenching instinctively, eyes filled with amazement.

Dongfang Yuansheng's gaze showed a trace of surprise—this was a Spatial Ability!

To wield spatial skills so deftly that even he couldn't detect the presence beforehand, the young man before him was truly extraordinary.

Qin Tian stood next to Dongfang Mingyue, his gaze swept past the Xiahou brothers and Dongfang Yuansheng, nodding slightly in greeting: "Military Department, Qin Tian."

Dongfang Yuansheng carefully observed Qin Tian, noticing his stern features, his stance firm and upright like a pine, exuding a balanced and steady presence, indeed embodying a soldier's robust demeanor, which increased his goodwill towards him.

Without much small talk, he directly raised his hand to activate the space ring on his finger, retrieving an ancient dark wooden box from within.

The surface of the wooden box was carved with intricate wood element patterns, faintly exuding a gentle vitality from within.

Dongfang Yuansheng handed the wooden box to Qin Tian, explaining, "Inside is the 'Allwood Source Crystal,' applied by Haoyue from the clan and approved for allocation by Elder Ke. Elder Ke specifically instructed, let your companion spirit plant first consume this Allwood Source Crystal. After it completely absorbs the primordial wood energy of the crystal, then use the previously given Center of Wood Marrow, the two complementing each other, to assist your spirit plant to break through to Tier Seven successfully."

"Elder Ke?"

Qin Tian's heart was suddenly jolted, memories of the elderly man he met at the Dongfang Clan's ancestral home—the Great Elder of the Dongfang Clan, former Patriarch Dongfang Ke.

Chapter 497: Absorbing the Origin Crystal of Ten Thousand Woods, Jie La Falls Asleep

"Wanmu Origin Crystal..."

Qin Tian held the ancient wooden box in both hands, his fingertips clearly feeling the warm touch emanating from within, along with that faint, yet majestically breathtaking life force.

This familiar wood element aura reminded him of past events a year ago.

Back then, the Qingmu Genius Battle had just concluded. He shattered the Blood Demon Cult's conspiracy, safeguarding the lives of many talented participants. As a token of gratitude, the Dongfang Clan's Great Elder Dongfang Ke personally met him and gifted him two precious treasures—one was the Void Dragon Essence Blood, the other was the Center of Wood Marrow prepared for Jie La.

The effectiveness of the Void Dragon Essence Blood was evident. It not only helped him evolve his talent to the Orange Level [Void Dominator], but also greatly enhanced Kazik's racial talent.

Meanwhile, the Center of Wood Marrow could help Jie La safely pass the "Celestial Plant Tribulation" that was sure to occur when the wood element Spirit Plant advanced to Tier Seven; it could also raise the racial limit of the Soul-Devouring Demon Vine from Tier Eight to Tier Nine, with boundless potential for the future.

Lately, Jie La accompanied him on numerous battles, especially devouring a vast amount of demon corpses in the Demon Suppression Abyss. Her spiritual energy had long accumulated to the Peak Tier Six, just a step away from Tier Seven.

But he knew well that advancing a Spirit Plant to Tier Seven, just like a Spiritualist breaking through Tier Seven, was never simply about absorbing energy—it required a foundational metamorphosis, and the Wanmu Origin Crystal happened to be the best material to supplement this "foundation."

Evidently, the Dongfang Clan, through Dongfang Mingyue's descriptions, had figured out Jie La's situation, and specifically chose this gift to precisely meet the need.

In terms of understanding and controlling wood element Spirit Plants, across the entire star system, no force probably surpasses the Dongfang Clan.

"Elder Yuansheng, thank the Dongfang Clan for their generous gift." Qin Tian put away the wooden box and nodded solemnly to express his gratitude.

This gift was too important to him—once Jie La successfully broke through to Tier Seven, she would be equivalent to an additional Tier Seven combat force by his side, comparable to the Golden Bloodline.

Moreover, Jie La's range control, battlefield manipulation, and her unique ability to provide energy replenishment to him were far beyond ordinary Tier Seven Spiritualists.

With Jie La's control assistance, he was confident he could harness the power of the Heaven-Burning Purgatory to directly annihilate Tier Seven experts.

"No need to be so polite, young friend Qin."

Dongfang Yuansheng looked at Qin Tian, a gentle smile on his face. "This is the clan's small gesture for your protection of Mingyue. To speak of it, Mingyue's brother Haoyue also put a lot of thought into this matter. He specifically requested the clan to allocate this spiritual material for you."

Dongfang Haoyue... Qin Tian's eyes subtly shifted.

From Dongfang Yuansheng's words, it wasn't hard to tell that Dongfang Haoyue's influence within the Dongfang Clan far exceeded that of ordinary members. Even some direct lineage talents might not have as much say as him.

If Dongfang Mingyue was given importance by the clan due to her top-notch alchemy talent, then why did Dongfang Haoyue have such weight in the family?

Unconsciously, his curiosity about Dongfang Haoyue, whom he had only met once, grew deeper.

"Mingyue, there's one more thing to tell you." Dongfang Yuansheng looked at Dongfang Mingyue, his expression turning solemn, "Considering your current situation, Elder Ke specially instructed—if you can win the championship in this alchemy final, the clan will arrange a secret route for you, directly reaching the Royal star from Shuang Hua star, avoiding all possible risks during the journey."

He paused, his gaze swept over Xiao Yu beside Dongfang Mingyue, his tone becoming more measured: "However... with eyes everywhere, to ensure absolute safety, Elder Ke means that except for the Xiahou brothers, Qin Tian, and necessary crew members, the rest of your companions need to split into two groups and take another route to reach Royal star."

"Ah?" Xiao Yu heard about being separated from the lady, instinctively hugged Dongfang Mingyue's arm, looking up at her with eyes full of reluctance, her voice tinged with a hint of grievance, "Miss, I don't want to be separated from you..."

Dongfang Mingyue looked at Xiao Yu, her heart too filled with reluctance. But after thinking for a moment, she seriously nodded: "Alright, let's follow the family's arrangements."

"Miss!" Xiao Yu gently shook her arm urgently, full of perplexity.

Dongfang Mingyue shook her head. The family consideration was correct; with eyes everywhere, no one could guarantee that they would not expose their location due to some oversight, such as comments exchanged online.

Especially after the incident of Nie Yun star being controlled by the Soul, although she still trusted the guards, caution was necessary.

As for Xiao Yu, it's out of safety concern, given she's already been targeted. There might still be dangers along the way, and she didn't want Xiao Yu to get hurt because of her.

"Xiao Yu, as Grandpa Yuansheng mentioned, after the competition, I will depart from Shuang Hua star to Royal star. But my family has many belongings to take to Royal star, and those all need your help to organize and transport; these are tasks only you can do well." Dongfang Mingyue comforted.

Hearing this, Xiao Yu pouted, her eyes still red, but she understood the lady did it for her own good. She sniffed, finally nodding: "Well... alright, I'll organize everything."

"Then I'll rely on you." Dongfang Mingyue smiled as she gently ruffled her hair.

Dongfang Yuansheng watched the scene with a comforting smile in his eyes, and said to Dongfang Mingyue, "Mingyue, from now on, just focus on preparing for the alchemy finals. Don't worry about anything else. I believe with your talent and strength, you will achieve your wishes and win the final crown."

"Hmm!" Dongfang Mingyue nodded heavily, confidence glowing in her eyes — she was determined to win the championship of this alchemy final.

...

At the peak of the desolate snow mountain, the cold wind swept by with ice particles, and the perennial snow covered the exposed black rocks, leaving only a vast white and cold gray between heaven and earth,

At this moment, the space suddenly rippled with a circle of light blue ripples, Qin Tian's figure suddenly stepped out from within, the hem of his black robe lifted by the cold wind. He glanced around, his perception covering tens of kilometers, confirming there was no one, then slowly raised his hand, holding an ancient dark wooden box in his palm.

In the instant the wooden box opened, a warm jade-green light burst forth like the rising sun piercing the clouds, instantly dispelling the surrounding cold.

Inside the box lay a Wanmu Source Crystal, a fist-sized rhombus-shaped crystal stone, its body as smooth as the finest jade, internally not solid, but flowing with a visibly faint golden spiritual aura, as if the vitality of an entire ancient forest was compressed within.

As soon as the crystal stone touched the air, it spontaneously emitted a crisp and refreshing herbal fragrance, which, as it dispersed with the wind, actually stirred the surrounding lifeless environment.

"Sususu—"

Underneath the snow, those seeds that had been frozen for untold years quietly broke through their seed coats under the nourishment of the fragrance, pushing up the thin layer of snow, sprouting tiny green buds; in the crevices of distant rock walls, several stalks of long-withered moss also visibly revived to green, even spreading slowly along the rock face, as if this desolate snow mountain was being awakened by an invisible force.

"Buzz!"

The green vine bracelet on Qin Tian's left wrist reacted almost the moment the Wanmu Source Crystal appeared.

The vine originally clinging tightly around his wrist suddenly broke free, swelling like a waking spirit snake, the dark green vine with serrated leaves stretching and twining in the air, emitting a subtle rustling sound.

Meanwhile, a wave of excitement and longing flooded directly into Qin Tian's sea of consciousness, a childlike jubilation in the wave, as if eagerly conveying its yearning for the Wanmu Source Crystal, while the buds at the vine's tips trembled frequently, leaning slightly towards the direction of the crystal stone.

Feeling this urgency, Qin Tian's mouth curved into a faint smile, he raised the Wanmu Source Crystal gently and said to the vines in the air, "Jie La, I'll entrust this to you."

The moment the words fell, the vine shot out like an arrow, the tip curling into a soft vine loop, carefully wrapping around the Wanmu Source Crystal, fearing excessive force might damage this precious treasure.

In the next second, intricate light green patterns surfaced on the vine's surface, enveloping the Wanmu Source Crystal like veins, beginning to frantically absorb its energy.

The jade-green light within the crystal stone seeped slowly into the vine through the patterns, the originally dark green vine gradually taking on a layer of luster, with golden fringes appearing at the edges of the leaves.

The vine's originally fine hairs became softer and tougher, and one could even vaguely see the energy flowing within.

As the energy constantly surged in, Jie La's aura also climbed rapidly—from the stability of Peak Tier Six, it gradually became turbulent and formidable, with the surrounding wood-type spiritual aura spreading like dense fog, melting the surrounding snow faster, with the newly sprouted buds visibly growing taller, branching out, and even blooming with tiny white flowers.

Half an hour later, the glow of the Wanmu Source Crystal completely dimmed, turning into an ordinary crystal stone devoid of luster, softly sliding off the vine.

And the vine of Jie La had long ceased its previous frenzy, now gradually restraining its aura, the luster on the vine turning inward, and the golden fringes on the leaves softened.

Soon, the vine began to retract slowly, like a sleepy child, re-twining itself around Qin Tian's wrist to form a ring, only this time, the green vine bracelet bore a faint, elusive jade glow, with the bud at the tip slightly closed, exuding a serene slumber.

Qin Tian could clearly feel that Jie La's soul wave had become stable and satisfied, plunging into a deep sleep, digesting the elemental transformation brought by the Wanmu Source Crystal.

Upon the completion of its transformation, it would be the time for Jie La to reach Tier Seven. With the aid of the Center of Wood Marrow, Jie La would easily overcome the Celestial Plant Tribulation and smoothly advance to Tier Seven.

It's just that he doesn't know how long Jie La will take to digest this power.

"I hope that day comes soon."

Considering the dangers that might be encountered along the way, a trace of solemnity flashed across Qin Tian's eyes.

A flash of silver light, and the figure at the peak of the snow mountain vanished from the spot.

The cold wind still howled, but the snow mountain was not as desolate as before—the newborn vegetation thrived under the nourishment of spiritual aura, adding a vibrant touch of green to this once desolate land.

Chapter 498: Joining the Mythical Society, Codename—Hades, Lord of the Underworld

The night gradually enveloped Shuang Hua star, and the Dan Tower shed the bustle of the day, leaving only silence flowing through the corridors.

In the dimly lit, deserted storage room, Qin Tian sat quietly in the shadows of the corner, his fingertips holding the golden token. The "Giant Gate" pattern on the token faintly appeared in the weak light, reflecting the deep, unreadable thoughts in his eyes.

"Are you struggling with whether to participate in that Mythical Society?"

A voice suddenly sounded in his mind, breaking the silence. Qin Tian's eyes moved slightly, and he softly said:

"Blaze, you finally decided to speak up."

The owner of this voice was none other than Blaze, the Gun Spirit from the Heaven-Burning Purgatory. Since the last battle at the Demon Suppression Abyss, Blaze hadn't spoken up proactively for a long time.

"What do you mean by 'finally decided to speak'?" The virtual image of the flame demon appeared out of thin air in front of Qin Tian, its hooves stepping in the air and scattering tiny sparks. "I wasn't asleep, but you have been busy either protecting people or cultivating recently, days are too boring, I was just too lazy to chitchat."

Blaze's gaze landed on the golden token in Qin Tian's hand, sweeping over the Giant Gate pattern, speaking in a somewhat nonchalant tone: "I've seen many secret societies like this, essentially it's just a small circle. Some circles gather alchemists or artifact refiners, some hide killers and assassins, but this Mythical Society merely sets 'talent' as the threshold."

Mentioning this, Blaze specifically glanced at Qin Tian. In Blaze's view, Qin Tian was undoubtedly an absolute talent.

His incredible growth speed and endless abilities and trump cards were unparalleled in the long years since Blaze's consciousness was born.

"I don't know what you're hesitating about, but if you ask me, there's no harm in going to take a look." Blaze retracted the joking tone, the expression becoming calm. "In any case, with your abilities, you've likely already thoroughly checked whether this token has any issues. As long as there's no threat, going to learn about the so-called 'top talents' is more interesting than always revolving around that girl from the Dongfang Family."

Qin Tian's fingertips caressed the pattern on the token. On the day he received the token, he had already thoroughly examined it with the power of the [Divine Weapon Emperor].

The token not only allowed access to the virtual space through soul power but also had a built-in micro-space array for storage, making it a practical piece of equipment, indeed without any threat.

His real hesitation stemmed from the mysterious identity of the white-robed man, the "True Martial Emperor." He was unsure whether he should be prematurely entangled in such an unknown force network.

But on second thought, if what the white-robed man said was true, and the Mythical Society gathered the Empire's top talents—those not inferior to the Holy Blood's direct lineage, even far surpassing the Holy Blood Descendants in some fields—they surely possessed unique resources, intelligence, or rare cultivation methods.

If he could establish connections with these individuals, achieving the exchange of information and resources would greatly aid his subsequent work and development.

After careful consideration, the hesitation in Qin Tian's eyes gradually faded. He looked up at Blaze and gently nodded: "Alright, let's give it a try."

"It should have been like this long ago!" Blaze became spirited immediately, a sly smile flickering on its flame-composed face. "Then remember, when you meet those talents, ask for me—if they have any fire-type treasures? If so, make sure to get them for me!"

A black line instantly appeared across Qin Tian's forehead. He glared at Blaze in exasperation: "I knew it, you suddenly came out to persuade me because you had an ulterior motive, wanting me to find treasures for you."

"What do you mean by ulterior motive?" Blaze was unfazed, instead laughing more heartily, the sparks on its hooves splattering even more densely. "We have a symbiotic relationship. If I get stronger, it benefits you too. Alright, I won't disturb your preparation; expecting your good news!"

As the words fell, the flame demon's figure gradually dissipated as if blown away by the wind, leaving only a lingering hint of scorching heat in the air.

Qin Tian looked at the golden token in his hand, took a deep breath, and gathered a faint wisp of soul power at his fingertips, slowly injecting it into the token.

...

A misty fog enveloped all around, with no sky, no ground, and even the passage of time was indiscernible. Qin Tian's soul floated in this nebulous space, as if placed in a primordial chaos, with his own sense of existence becoming blurred.

At this moment, an emotionless electronic voice sounded abruptly, echoing in the vast space, clearly reaching Qin Tian's soul: "Welcome to the virtual space of the Mythical Society. Please create your virtual image and name yourself."

As the voice fell, a vast information stream poured into Qin Tian's soul like a tide — containing the rules of image creation: from height and physique to facial details, from clothing material to accessory

patterns, even the subtle shades of eye and hair color could be freely adjusted, offering far more freedom than usual virtual spaces.

"It feels a bit like the character creation interface in the online game novels I used to read." Qin Tian felt a hint of novelty, his eyes sweeping over the options in the information stream, and without much hesitation, he directly used his willpower to start adjusting.

First was the height. He set his virtual image height to about two meters, slightly taller than in reality, making the overall figure appear more imposing.

Next was the clothing. With a thought, an entirely black set of armor covered his body—armor that was not bulky plate armor but streamlined light armor, with shoulder plates carved with dark gold bone patterns, and a rhombus-shaped dark purple crystal stone embedded in the chest, faintly glowing with his breathing, appearing both majestic and lively.

Subsequently, a matching black crown slowly hovered above his head, the edge of the crown adorned with small dark patterns, devoid of overly ornate decorations, yet exuding a cold aura of overlooking all living beings.

Finally, for facial details, he adjusted the features to be more three-dimensional and profound, with slightly raised brow bones, a tall nose bridge, and distinct lip lines. The originally black eyes transformed into mysterious purple, with pupil centers seemingly swirling with a faint nebula, making the entire face appear less stern than in reality, adding a touch of the unique delicateness and aloofness of the two-dimensional world.

Within a brief moment, a virtual image combining majesty and finesse was created—a black armor-clad figure, adorned with dark gold bone patterns, crowned with purple eyes, resembling a netherworld emperor emerging from mythical legends, distinctly different from Qin Tian's real-world demeanor yet subtly conveying a shared sense of stability and power.

At the moment the image was confirmed, a line of pale golden text appeared above his head, as his will fixed it: "Hades, King of the Underworld."

The electronic voice sounded again, carrying a note of confirmation: "Virtual image and codename confirmed, Hades, King of the Underworld, you have successfully created your identity. You may freely enter the Mythical Society's public communication area, or wait for the gathering to commence."

Qin Tian looked at his virtual image, raised his hand to touch the dark purple crystal stone on his chest, feeling the connection between his soul and the virtual space, with a hint of anticipation flashing in his eyes.

Next, he was eager to see what secrets this secret organization, gathering the Empire's top talents, might be hiding.

#### Chapter 499: Meeting of the Gods, Image Shattered

Qin Tian's virtual figure slowly moved along a narrow corridor, the ground beneath him made of unknown material, silent underfoot. Only the gray mist around him flowed gently with his movement, as if guiding the direction.

After advancing about several hundred meters, the gray fog suddenly dispersed, revealing a grand and ancient door ahead—its panels carved with intricate mythological patterns, including Western deities and Eastern immortals and Buddhas, the dark golden sheen flowing between the patterns, exuding a sense of weight that transcends time and space.

Qin Tian steadied himself and gently pushed the door open with his hand.

"Creak—"

The light sound of the door hinges echoed in the emptiness, and the scene behind the door suddenly opened up.

A magnificent hall came into view, its high dome embedded with countless light spots like stars, casting a soft yet dignified glow.

Almost the moment the door opened, several figures standing scattered in the hall focused their gazes on Qin Tian—curiosity, scrutiny, and a faint exploration, as if they wanted to see through his virtual image.

Qin Tian also rapidly scanned the hall, and the next second, he couldn't help but reveal an odd expression in his eyes—he had thought his "Hades" character design was already quite anime-like, yet the virtual appearances of the people present were no less exaggerated, some even more so.

To the left, a giant figure standing over five meters tall was particularly conspicuous, his bronzed chest bare, muscles knotted like rocks, iron chains wrapped around his arms, exuding a mountainous aura, with the code name "God of Strength" hovering above his head.

Not far away, a woman in a white long dress stood quietly, her long pink hair cascading like a waterfall, her appearance as exquisite as a goddess from legend, eyes as clear as sapphires, surrounded by a faint holy light, her name was—"Athena."

Near the jade pillar, a man wearing bright blue armor, his head full of eye-catching golden hair, holding a shimmering trident, surrounded by phantom waves, code-named "Poseidon."

On another side, there was "Taoist Duobao" dressed in a bright yellow Taoist robe, holding a horsetail whisk, with dense patterns of magical treasures embroidered on the robe, conveying a mysterious Daoist aura.

Clad in red-golden armor, holding a spear, "God of War Ares," surrounded by a faint bloody halo, with an imposing presence like a drawn sword.

And in a corner of the hall, a familiar white-robed figure leaned against the jade pillar, holding a fairy sword emitting a glowing white light, exuding a cold and ethereal aura, it was none other than the "True Martial Emperor" whom Qin Tian had met in the desolate mountains.

If any cosplay enthusiasts were here, they'd probably faint from happiness.

"Haha! True Martial, the newcomer you spoke of has finally arrived!" A hearty laugh first rang out, as Poseidon, carrying the trident, strode forward with his golden hair lightly fluttering, his smile as dazzling as the sun, "Hades, in Western mythology, we are brothers, after all, welcome, welcome."

Qin Tian raised his hand to shake his, a clear sensation came from his fingertips, yet it lacked some warmth compared to reality, more like separated by a delicate energy membrane, he nodded slightly, "Hello."

"After half a year, Mythical Society finally has fresh faces." Taoist Duobao lightly waved the horsetail whisk, the hem of his bright yellow Taoist robe slightly swaying, his voice gentle like a breeze caressing leaves, his gaze on Qin Tian with a hint of scrutiny but no malice, "Welcome to join."

"Welcome."

God of War Ares also stepped forward, red-golden armor reflecting the starlight from the dome, a smile appearing on his face.

Feeling no hostility from the crowd but rather some friendliness, the tension and vigilance in Qin Tian's heart quietly eased.

"I knew you would come." True Martial Emperor, carrying the fairy sword, walked slowly closer, his gaze sweeping over Qin Tian's "Hades" code name, a faint smile tugging at the corner of his mouth, "This code name does suit your abilities and temperament."

"Oh? From what I hear, Hades is quite the battle expert?" Poseidon instantly caught the key information, a hint of curiosity flashing in his eyes.

True Martial Emperor lightly nodded, his tone calm as if stating an ordinary fact, "Hmm, he can take three moves from me without dying, even left me slightly injured—whether that counts as a battle expert, you decide."

"Damn, can't you stop showing off?"

Athena spoke up, completely destroying her goddess demeanor, "Always acting like a sword immortal, when in reality you're a guy who doesn't even change his stinky socks. Next time we meet, can you properly wash your hair, I'm almost fainting from your greasy hair odor."

Qin Tian's mouth twitched sharply, his gaze instantly becoming quirky—before in his mind, True Martial Emperor was still that unfathomable, ethereal mysterious master, but with Athena's "underwear-level" critique, that tall image instantly collapsed, replaced by a vivid picture of a "lazy slob + couch potato."

He also picked up on the implication: Athena and True Martial Emperor not only knew each other in reality, but were also quite familiar, otherwise, she wouldn't reveal such "shortcomings" so unreservedly.

Embarrassed in public, True Martial Emperor's face turned various shades, his lips moved, but he finally managed only to squeeze out a line: "A gentleman does not argue with a lady."

With that, he silently retreated to the corner with the fairy sword.

The others in the hall were already used to it, Taoist Duobao smiled and shook his head, God of Strength had a smile on his lips, and Poseidon directly burst into laughter, "Haha, True Martial, this is the consequence of meeting offline! Do you regret it now?"

Chapter 500: The "Gods" Meet, Images Shattered (2)

True Martial Emperor said despondently, "This is the thing I regret most in my life."

"Haha!"

The crowd burst into even more enthusiastic laughter.

Qin Tian watched the relaxed and humorous scene before him, the corners of his mouth slightly raised — it seemed the Mythical Society was not just full of aloof and distant geniuses, but it also had its lively, down-to-earth side.

"Hades, this is the daily life of our Mythical Society — don't be fooled by the code names being all 'gods,' in reality, everyone is more like familiar online friends, gathering in this virtual space when free to chat, exchange resources, and share scarce materials."

Poseidon kept his cheerful smile, "In the future, if there's something you want, like special spiritual materials or rare cultivation techniques that you can't figure out how to obtain, feel free to tell us. Perhaps what seems like a 'problem' to you, others can solve with ease — after all, everyone's connections and areas of expertise are different."

Qin Tian nodded upon hearing this, his understanding of the Mythical Society deepening: "Alright, I understand."

"Now that the newcomer is here, let's start today's 'exchange.'" Poseidon turned to Taoist Duobao with a slightly expectant tone, "Duobao, the two Spiritual Artifacts I commissioned last time should be finished now, right?"

"Prepared long ago." Taoist Duobao lightly flicked his dust whisk, his tone composed, waving his hand grandly, two streaks of flowing light instantly appeared in front of him — a set of armor completely black, its plates covered in intricate dark patterns, exuding a cold metallic luster; beside it stood a thick iron rod, engraved with golden runes, though quietly suspended, one could vaguely feel the immense power contained within.

"According to your needs, this 'Black Water Profound Armor' primarily focuses on defense and flexibility, able to shrink freely with body shape, even if an animal transforms, it won't affect the armor's protection; as for this 'Golden Hoop Rod,' the material is deep-sea black iron mixed with star core sand, its hardness far surpassing ordinary Spiritual Artifacts, and it can freely change size as you mentioned." Taoist Duobao carefully explained, his tone filled with confidence in his work.

"Perfect!" Poseidon's eyes shone, didn't even inspect them, and directly reached out his hand; the black armor and golden hoop rod transformed into two streaks of flowing light, instantly merging into his palm and disappearing.

He turned to Qin Tian and specially explained, "The golden token we hold, besides letting us access the virtual space, also has storage capabilities. You can store items in the token in everyday life, and it's convenient for using them in reality or summoning them for trading within this Mythical Palace, without being constrained by distance limits."

Qin Tian's eyes shifted slightly, secretly marveling — a trading platform that disregards real-world distances is simply a rare opportunity.

If put to good use, whether acquiring rare spiritual materials or exchanging crucial intelligence, it could save countless troubles and even have unimaginable effects at critical moments.

Additionally, from the simple dialogue, two pieces of information could be inferred: Taoist Duobao, true to his name, is an Artifact Refiner, and Poseidon commissioning Duobao to make armor for beasts indicates he's likely a Beastmaster.

"Duobao, here is your commission fee, Star Iron Essence and Mother of Scarlet Gold." Poseidon waved his hand grandly, two metallic gleams instantly lit up before him.

Two fist-sized ores quietly floated, one emanating a deep silver-blue glow, a surface seemingly flowing with tiny stars, precisely the "Star Iron Essence"; the other showing a scarlet-golden hue, its texture dense, faintly revealing internal metallic luster, a rare "Mother of Scarlet Gold."

Taoist Duobao's eyes lit up instantly upon seeing the two ores, quickly stepping forward two steps, gently pressing both hands against the ores' surfaces, using spiritual senses to carefully perceive inside.

Moments later, he withdrew his hands, his face full of satisfied smiles, expressing gratitude: "Poseidon, being able to acquire such rare ores of this level means I've profited from this transaction. Thus, if you need me to craft another Spiritual Artifact next time, I'll do it for free to offset the material cost."

"I won't be polite then!" Poseidon laughed even more joyfully, raised his hand, and pushed the ores to Taoist Duobao, completing their transaction.

"My turn."

Ares, seeing the two finished exchanging, stepped forward and raised his hand, summoning dozens of transparent glass containers which appeared out of nowhere, neatly suspended in mid-air.

The containers were filled with vivid red blood, soaking various organs of different shapes — some resembling hearts, emitting a scorching aura with every beat; some similar to tough tendons, shining with a faint metallic sheen; others like livers, their surfaces covered in intricate patterns.

"Athena, these are organs stripped from a Tier Six giant dragon, including dragon heart, dragon liver, dragon tendons, and dragon scales." Ares' gaze fell on the central container, his tone with a hint of solemnity, "Especially this one—it's the dragon heart of a Tier Seven Red Dragon King, freshly stripped and still active, containing pure fire energy."

Everyone's eyes focused on that container — the massive dragon heart gently beat in the blood, each pulse causing the surrounding air to tremble subtly, its scorching aura transmitted through the glass, clearly felt by even Qin Tian from afar.

Athena's eyes lit up, without hesitation, she raised her hand and took out a large pile of white jade porcelain bottles, neatly arranging them in front of Ares,

"Here are the Ice Heart Pills you wanted, totaling three thousand pills, along with one thousand Spirit Essence Pills, five hundred Vitality Pills, and five hundred Detoxification Pills. Three days was too tight a timeline, and I could only gather this many for now."

Ares looked at the porcelain bottles, showing a grateful expression, quickly collecting the elixirs: "This is enough. These elixirs helped me greatly, thank you."

"You're welcome." Athena waved her hand, her tone frank, "To be honest, the value of these elixirs actually doesn't compare to those dragon organs — especially the heart of the Red Dragon King. If I had a few more days, I could gather more than double the elixirs, but, alas..."

"There's not enough time." Ares gently shook his head, "I only have three days."

Qin Tian stood quietly aside, pondering to himself — for Ares to hunt a Tier Six giant dragon and even acquire the heart of a Tier Seven Red Dragon King, his strength must be formidable.

Yet the Ice Heart Pills, Vitality Pills, and others he sought aren't considered high-grade elixirs, clearly intended for people around him.

Reflecting his urgency in speech, it's likely there's trouble in reality, requiring these elixirs urgently to save someone.

And Athena being able to gather thousands of elixirs in just three days points to the formidable backing and financial strength behind her.

"Ares."

At this moment, Qin Tian spoke up, "How much dragon blood like this can you acquire?"

Ares replied, "Acquiring dragon blood isn't difficult, but storing blood is an issue; I don't have containers large enough."

"That's simple, I have a Spiritual Artifact named Blood Spirit Bead, capable of storing blood."

Qin Tian continued, "I'll entrust this artifact to you, so that when you hunt dragons in the future, store the dragon blood within, and deliver it during our gatherings. In exchange, whatever elixirs you need — be it Ice Heart Pills, Vitality Pills, or others, provide a list and I can collect them; and besides, I'll provide a batch of explosive weapons, which might help with your current troubles."

"Explosive weapons?"

Hearing this, Ares immediately showed interest, eagerly asking, "Are they powerful?"

Qin Tian explained, "One explosive weapon can kill a Tier Four Spiritualist, the blast range covers 500 meters, ten explosives would make survival for anyone under Tier Five nearly impossible, and over a hundred explosive weapons could even injure Tier Six Powerhouses, powerful enough to destroy a medium-sized city."

What!

This revelation stunned everyone present — explosives aren't rare, and the Empire has developed numerous powerful explosive weapons.

But weapons that can threaten Tier Six, and a hundred creating city-level destruction, definitely fall under the Empire's high-level controlled weapons. Who exactly is Hades, to possess such items?

Ares' body shook, his eyes bursting with joyful excitement, "Hades, how many of these explosive weapons can you provide?"

Qin Tian smiled faintly, uttering a number that left everyone dumbfounded.

"5000."

As those words fell, silence enveloped the scene, not a sound was heard.

Even True Martial Emperor, sitting in the corner, sharply raised his head to look at Qin Tian, as if perceiving him anew.