

Medical 331

Chapter 331 From the Royal Family

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One thing is certain, these nobles know that a fifteen-year-old boy cannot produce such a large amount of Elf Coins unless he has someone backing him. Whether his family is hidden from the public, or he has a mysterious respected expert, nobody knows, but everyone present has a vivid imagination, coming up with one theory after another.

Though Yan Xiaobao mingled and chatted with all the guests, his mind was constantly troubled by the information he received from the bearded man. His eyes were vigilant, constantly searching in different crowds for the assassin, hoping to find him and perhaps learn something useful.

Most of the night passed without finding a trace of the man, as if he had vanished, and when Yan Xiaobao decided to give up outside, he abandoned the search. Having spent time chatting with the nobles of Liluo City, he needed fresh air and a breather.

Every noble now decided to try to establish a good relationship with Yan Xiaobao. Some wanted to become friendly for money, others hoped to befriend Yan Xiaobao to get close to the person backing this young man.

While seeking refuge in the Stone Garden, Yan Xiaobao crouched behind a large stone statue, slowly exhaling as he felt his energy being exhausted. Then, he had Lan Feng completely conceal his aura, leaned against the cool statue, and let out a heavy sigh of relief.

A sigh escaped his lips, Yan Xiaobao's eyes widened tightly, and he held his breath as he sensed a familiar presence emerge in the Stone Garden.

Yan Xiaobao held his breath, moved slightly, and looked towards the mansion entrance, seeing the bearded man. As the man's profile turned towards Yan Xiaobao, a big smile appeared on his face, seemingly unaware of the young man's presence.

Beside the bearded man was a figure Yan Xiaobao knew. This strong build and serious expression instantly identified him as Lord Rong Liang. Yan Xiaobao felt a surge of excitement, guessing the Rong twins might give him some needed information.

Hui Yue regretted not approaching the two men, as he hoped to hear what was being said. Sworn internally, Yan Xiaobao quietly moved to at least see the two, but no matter how strained his ears were, he could only make out a mere murmur.

"Without me, you are helpless," Lan Feng suddenly said from within the Dantian Cave. Then, he rose to where the Qi Spiral was, raised his hands, unraveled a few strands of Qi, and guided Yan Xiaobao's meridians until they converged in his right ear, allowing Yan Xiaobao to listen to the conversation between the two middle-aged men.

"No," the assassin said. "We will end this matter when our target is dead." Hearing this, Yan Xiaobao froze. Could it be Rong Liang? However, his fear quickly dissipated as Rong Liang asked, "Who is your target?" before Harumph.

"I can't tell you," the assassin said, "But if I can bring his head to my employer, I will receive a great recompense."

"Is it the Royal Family?" Rong Liang asked, not appearing surprised upon realizing this person was an assassin.

"No," the bearded man said again. "It's not from the Royal Family but from him."

With that said, Hu Rong and Rong Liang both fell silent for a long time. Rong Liang finally spoke again, "I hope this is worth it. So far, everyone who meets him ends up dead, and I cannot explain to His Majesty why you died doing private work in my city. Don't forget you belong to the Silent Crows."

With that, Rong Liang turned back to the hall, leaving behind only the assassin and Yan Xiaobao. Fortunately, Yan Xiaobao's spiritual energy was completely hidden by Lan Feng, and neither the assassin nor Rong Liang noticed the young man sitting behind the statue.

The party lasted throughout the night, with Yan Xiaobao and the Rong twins being perfect hosts, mingling and chatting, but Yan Xiaobao's thoughts were elsewhere. He was given a name, which he planned to investigate immediately after his guests left.

As the last guest left the house, the first rays of sunlight shone on the beautiful courtyard, and Yan Xiaobao collapsed onto his bed, feeling more exhausted than after a night of fighting a group of assassins.

At the beginning of the party, Sha Yun appeared vibrant, and Yan Xiaobao had a theory that she gained energy by flirting with different people.

Wang Julong had maintained a consistently normal expression, showing not the slightest sign of fatigue, and Yan Xiaobao envied those who had been former guests.

For both the Rong twins and Yan Xiaobao, they were as exhausted as ever, having helped him host the party, they allowed no slight errors, causing them to run around continuously for more than ten hours.

Gao Yan was also exhausted, but his endurance was strong. His job was to ensure all the servants were in place and to ensure a continuous supply of drinks and snacks at the table.

The vast majority of guests were drunk, or at least tipsy, as they enjoyed a constant supply of wine and beer. These drunk guests, in turn, divulged many secrets to each other, and the servants stationed by Gao Yan managed to write down everything they heard, as everyone knew knowledge was power. To Gao Yan, knowledge was both power and wealth. Selling information was his best business, and today his pollution of everyone was extremely large.

Chapter 332 From the Royal Family_2

"Does anyone here know what the Silent Raven is?" Yan Xiaobao suddenly asked, leaning back against his chair, though none of those present seemed to understand what he was talking about. Yan Xiaobao sighed. He had expected that no one would know about this matter, but it still felt somewhat disappointing.

Even though his friends were unaware, Yan Xiaobao did not give up because of this and decided to pay Lord Rong Liang a visit. It was clear that this man knew what the Silent Raven was, but the biggest challenge was whether he would be willing to share the information with Yan Xiaobao.

The issue wasn't just whether Lord Rong Liang wanted to tell Yan Xiaobao; it was also whether the white-haired youth would even be allowed to survive if he dared probe into matters considered top-secret by the upper class within the nation.

Despite the dangers, Yan Xiaobao understood the importance of uncovering the truth about Silent Raven. He knew that, for now, he couldn't defeat the Bearded Assassin unless he gathered more information. This ultimately made it necessary to visit the City Lord's estate and obtain intelligence about this mysterious group.

If Lord Rong Liang turned into an enemy, Yan Xiaobao was prepared to leave the city. Although he didn't want to leave so soon, there was essentially nothing preventing him from returning later, especially since Lan Feng had promised to take him traveling once reaching the higher tier. Leaving for a few months wasn't likely to change much, though Yan Xiaobao was sure he would miss his friends.

Gazing out the window, Xu Yue sincerely hoped he could stay in Liluo City for a while. He had just purchased a perfect estate with three gardens, but this property wasn't the only thing making Yan Xiaobao reluctant to leave. He wanted to stay and spend time with his friends.

The sisterly care from Rong Xing and the brotherly bond with Rong Ming. Deng Wu's annoying yet entertaining teasing and his narcissistic bragging. Ma Kong's taciturn demeanor and his uncanny ability to always say the right thing at precisely the right moment. Gao Yan was the loudest person Yan Xiaobao had ever met, yet he was also the most loyal. Gao Yan would go to great lengths to support his friends.

As Hui Yun looked at the now almost empty estate, a smile spread across his face when he thought about his friends. The smile widened further when Sha Yun appeared in front of him, beaming and holding a tray of food.

Seeing Yan Xiaobao's expression freeze with worry as he noticed the tray, Sha Yun laughed, realizing he wasn't suspecting her cooking but merely leftovers from the party.

To please Sha Yun, Xu Yue accepted the tray. Sitting beside him, Sha Yun's face lit up with excitement as she gazed around the various rooms.

"This feels like home," she said in awe, her silver eyes shimmering as they darted over the mansion's many spaces. Her face radiated pure joy.

Watching her excited expression, Yan Xiaobao felt a twinge of guilt. Although the two finally had a place they could call home, there was still the possibility they might have to leave when Yan Xiaobao met Lord Rong Liang.

Standing outside a heavy wooden door, Yan Xiaobao patiently waited as the guide entered the room to announce his arrival. The room belonged to Lord Rong Liang; it was his office, where he managed all matters related to the city's administration.

Although he spent most of his time in the back garden, he had taken three out of ten days off to train his skills in spirit and refine it into Qi.

The refining process was crucial because Yan Xiaobao needed to charge into the master tier as soon as possible. However, he knew that if he didn't continue purifying his Qi as meticulously as before, his entire cultivation foundation thus far would be wasted.

Even though Yan Xiaobao had absorbed vast amounts of essence and was now able to complete Qi transformations faster than before, he still understood that he wouldn't break into the master tier within ten days. As such, he sought out the City Lord, hoping the man could provide some useful information.

With the situation weighing on him, Yan Xiaobao went so far as to hire guards to watch over his home. All of these guards were of Master rank, and this decision had been heavily deliberated. While Yan Xiaobao hated admitting he was too weak to handle his own circumstances, he had no choice—rushing to perfect cultivation would be reckless.

For now, Yan Xiaobao's only option was to obtain information about the Silent Raven and act accordingly. Earlier, he had asked Gao Yan if his network had ever heard of such a group, but despite speaking to countless individuals, no one knew anything—even the offer of spiritual rewards yielded no results.

Looking at the solid wooden door before him, Yan Xiaobao couldn't help but sigh, knowing this was his sole chance to resolve the issue himself. He could call upon Lan Feng to deal with this man, but that option carried equal risks.

If Lan Feng were to intervene here, he would undoubtedly leave traces that, upon analysis, would reveal they came from a Holy Position expert. The last thing Yan Xiaobao could afford right now was to let others believe these significant events were connected to him.

It wasn't just pride that had stopped Yan Xiaobao from accepting help from Lan Feng thus far. Yan Xiaobao took pride in achieving things through his own persistence and overcoming hardships. Even though he had narrowly escaped danger the last time, Yan Xiaobao knew that, for now, there was only one assassin behind him, and with Velocity Flow, he had a chance to escape.

Unfortunately, the Bearded Assassin was evidently brilliant. It was highly likely he would set elaborate traps for Yan Xiaobao in the days ahead.

As deep thoughts occupied his mind, the heavy wooden door creaked open. The guide reappeared, offering Yan Xiaobao a slight bow before gesturing for the white-haired boy to enter.

Yan Xiaobao swiftly pushed his thoughts aside, nodding politely at the guide before stepping into the room.

Glancing around, Yan Xiaobao saw that everything was impeccably tidy. There were no papers randomly scattered across the desk; all items were neatly stored in boxes. Not a speck of dust was visible, and even the floor gleamed.

Lord Rong Liang held a scroll in his hand, carefully rolling it with utmost precision before placing it next to other documents lined up in straight rows.

"What an unexpected surprise," Lord Rong Liang remarked, gesturing for Yan Xiaobao to sit down. The two hadn't interacted much, as Yan Xiaobao usually avoided Lord Rong Liang when possible. Yet, despite their scarce contact, they were seen as friends or allies, and Xu Yue had no one else to turn to—he was ready to take a gamble.

"I apologize for the intrusion," Yan Xiaobao said immediately, knowing he had to act decisively to persuade the City Lord. "I need some information, but I don't expect you to share it for free," Yan Xiaobao continued. "I'll give you tools to clean up the city. Even in impoverished areas, you can eliminate foul odors. I'll even stabilize your roads using innovative techniques and ensure they don't turn muddy during the rainy season."

Upon hearing these enticing promises, Lord Rong Liang squinted slightly, as if suspecting a trap was being set for him. "What information do you need?" he asked hesitantly. Although his guard remained up, the proposed benefits were undeniably tempting.

"What is the Silent Raven?" Xu Yue wasted no time circling around the matter. He had already baited Lord Rong Liang, and the longer he dragged out the request, the harder it would be for the middle-aged man to agree.

As the words left Yan Xiaobao's lips, Lord Rong Liang froze, his eyes filled with shock. Moments later, he regained composure, calming both his body and spirit, as though he had never been shocked at all.

"How do you know about them?" Rong Liang asked, his gaze fixed intently on Yan Xiaobao's face, scrutinizing every flicker of expression for signs of deceit.

"I don't know much." Yan Xiaobao shrugged casually. "I overheard you discussing it with a bearded man at the housewarming party, and it piqued my curiosity."

Observing Xu Yue's demeanor, Rong Liang realized the boy wasn't lying, prompting him to utter a quiet grunt. If it was true, then sharing information about Silent Raven shouldn't be too troublesome. Yet, somehow, the elder felt that while Yan Xiaobao wasn't lying, he wasn't telling the whole story either.

"Are you sure you can devise a way to rid my city of all its filth?" Rong Liang finally asked, his excitement evident as his eyes gleamed slightly red. Rong Liang despised dirtiness, especially how some parts of his beloved city drowned in muck. Currently, people were dumping their garbage at designated spots throughout the city, but the stench was intolerable. Rong Liang had been searching for a solution to eliminate it and improve the situation.

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Chapter 333 Insurance Policy

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Rong Liang wasn't foolish. He knew Yan Xiaobao was hiding a secret, though he had no idea what that secret was. Nevertheless, he was aware that Yan Xiaobao had introduced insurance policies to the Ma family, and as a result, he suspected Yan Xiaobao might be harboring some brilliant idea.

Watching Yan Xiaobao confidently propose a concept related to waste disposal, Rong Liang nodded lightly and let out a soft sigh.

Yan Xiaobao had learned that the best strategy in the Senario was to first provide Rong Liang with information, then receive the answer. After all, Lord Rong Liang was the City Lord, someone who never looked back. Thus, Yan Xiaobao placed three Memory Stones on the table in front of him.

Lord Rong Liang, with a furrowed brow, carefully shifted the stones until they formed a neat line in the center of the table. Then, he picked them up one by one, allowing their information to flood into his mind.

The first Memory Stone stunned Rong Liang, revealing a complete blueprint of the city's sewer system. This system would enable everything Yan Xiaobao had promised to become a reality. Its design was exceptionally straightforward; with sufficient earth-affinity cultivation machines, it could be implemented within days.

Lord Rong Liang couldn't help but admit the outcome far exceeded his expectations. When he grasped the second stone, he uncovered a formula for making concrete, resembling the kind used in ancient Rome. While the formula itself was of little use to Yan Xiaobao—since construction plans were not his forte—he had chosen to relinquish it to Rong Liang. With this, dusty roads that were a menace to everyone in the city could finally be eradicated. On hot days, the dust would rise from the streets; on damp days, everything sank into mud.

These two Memory Stones had already proven immeasurably valuable to Lord Rong Liang, but there was still one more. Taking a deep breath to brace himself for whatever earth-shattering concept might await, he reached for the third Memory Stone.

Clutching the third stone with both hands, Rong Liang slowly pressed it to his forehead. His face twisted as information poured into his mind, painting the detailed blueprint of an underwater system where the city's trash would be incinerated, with the heat repurposed to fuel a steam engine.

Yet something was missing. There was a sense that these blueprints lacked the details necessary for completion—a final piece that would truly reveal what the steam engine was.

Noticing Rong Liang's increasingly perplexed expression, Xu Yue chuckled softly.

"As long as you provide me with the Silent Crows' information I need, I'll give you the missing part," Xu Yue said, his smile tinged with a hint of mischief. Rong Liang couldn't help but return a bitter smile; he realized he would've done the exact same thing in Yan Xiaobao's place.

Yan Xiaobao had offered solutions to complete the city's sewage system and eliminate muddy streets with concrete.

Yet this final innovation—the steam engine—was undoubtedly the true gem among them. Gazing upon the fragmented details, Rong Liang was convinced he would wholeheartedly endorse this extraordinary technological marvel.

"The Silent Crows are an assassin organization. Officially, they operate independently, but in reality, they work under direct orders from the Royal Family. As assassins, they also take on private contracts, much like the one currently targeting you."

"You knew this?" Hui Yue sighed wearily. Rong Liang nodded and said, "When I encountered Old Huzi at your residence, I immediately knew he was there for his assignment. I must say, I'm impressed by your ability to stay alive under such circumstances."

"Tell me more about the Silent Crows," Yan Xiaobao said with a tired sigh, realizing he was being pursued by a Royal Assassin. Facing a foe of this caliber was far from pleasant.

"To become a Silent Crow, one must rank no lower than Master. After joining the Crows, aspirants undergo rigorous and grueling training before being entrusted with any missions. While Old Huzi is merely a Ninth Star Master-level cultivator, he has been known to outwit even those of Master level."

Hearing Rongrong's explanation, Yan Xiaobao chuckled. If the Bearded Assassin were just a plain Master-level cultivator, there wouldn't be any issue for Yan Xiaobao—but evidently, this man presented a far greater challenge.

Interest flickered within Yan Xiaobao as he began to contemplate his options. A series of plans began sprouting in his mind. Where worry had once clouded his eyes, brightness and enthusiasm now shone through, his face breaking into a confident smile. Yan Xiaobao now knew what needed to be done.

With a flick of his hand, Yan Xiaobao retrieved another Memory Stone. He tossed it into Lord Rong Liang's hands before leaving the office.

Left alone in the office, Lord Rong Liang swiftly grasped the Memory Stone. Holding it to his forehead in utter silence, his eyes widened in shock as he absorbed its contents.

After processing the information within the stone, Rong Liang crushed it into fragments and immediately dispatched a servant to provide all the insights he had gathered concerning the production of Magic Gems.

The Bearded Assassin had spent the past ten days meticulously tracking Yan Xiaobao's movements. He had even bribed a maid to deliver daily reports on everything Yan Xiaobao did.

Because of this, the Bearded Assassin knew that Hui Yue had met Rong Liang. However, he remained unaware of what, if anything, Yan Xiaobao had obtained from the City Lord.

Old Huzi wasn't particularly concerned about his identity being exposed. In fact, the idea excited him; he preferred the thrill of the hunt to mere pursuit. At the moment, Yan Xiaobao was his prey, a young man of seemingly limitless potential who had entertained him time and again.

Chapter 334: Insurance Policy_2

At first, when they met, Yan Xiaobao had already reacted as swiftly as he did, not to mention the fact that he managed to escape despite his paralyzing injuries. Moreover, by the next day, he showed no signs of harm.

Initially, Old Huzi assumed his injuries were healed by a fellow cultivator with affinity healing abilities. However, after reviewing all the records, it was clear Hui Yue had not requested treatment from anyone, nor did his friends possess the ability to heal him.

A greater mystery remained: How did a lower-tier Dantian cultivator manage to heal himself?

Next, Old Huzi was shocked by the young man's audacity in taking action, as he invited his own assassins into his home to gather information and learn about his adversaries. Unfortunately, nine days after his housewarming party, Old Huzi was thoroughly disappointed.

During the week-long truce, aside from training in the backyard garden, Yan Xiaobao did nothing else. Occasionally, his friends visited him there, but apart from hiring some guards to watch over the estate during these meetings, there was nothing else to do.

This made Old Huzi feel let down by the young man with white hair. Had he truly underestimated this Master-level cultivator, believing that guards alone could hold him back?

As Old Huzi began planning his next move, he complained in frustration. It was evident the young man had no intention of leaving the safety of his domain, forcing the assassins to infiltrate.

Several methods could achieve this, but all required meticulous thought. First, killing all the guards to ensure interruptions wouldn't occur later was an option. However, after observing the estate for some time, Old Huzi noticed all the guards moved in groups of four, unlike the usual pairing seen in other places.

The four-person guard formations made it nearly impossible for him to deal with them alone, rendering the option of eliminating the guards impractical.

The next option was disguising himself to sneak into the mansion, but its security was top-notch, making this plan unviable as well. Frustration mounted as Old Huzi quickly realized these irksome guards were proving to be more troublesome obstacles than he'd ever encountered before.

Nonetheless, the guards continued to stand between him and his prey. Eventually, Old Huzi decided that the task had shifted from intriguing to aggravating and resolved to assassinate the young man during the night.

On the other hand, Yan Xiaobao spent the past week cultivating in quiet peace and enjoying pleasant conversations with his friends, as though it were just another day.

One day, Deng Wu brought him a new storage stone containing items Yan Xiaobao had requested. While everything seemed ordinary, Deng Wu couldn't help but wonder what Yan Xiaobao needed those items for.

Gao Yan arrived one day to inform Hui Yue about the betrayal of one of her maids, who had sold information about Yan Xiaobao. Gao Yan suggested firing her immediately, but Hui Yue shook her head, instructing him to keep her on, as she was a useful link to Old Huzi. This greatly puzzled Gao Yan, as he couldn't understand why Yan Xiaobao tolerated being spied on. Yet Yan Xiaobao was her employer, and if he didn't mind being surveilled, then Gao Yan had no room to complain.

Late at night, Yan Xiaobao finally sensed a change in the atmosphere. The wind sweeping through the courtyard carried subtle chimes from a distance.

His previously closed eyes suddenly opened, revealing blue eyes flickering with a thin red mist as they gazed toward the garden ahead.

Yan Xiaobao's hands mirrored his opponent's stance as he activated Velocity Flow. The chimes seemed closer now, and a second later, Yan Xiaobao perceived the source of the sound hit the ground before rolling away.

An Earth Spear appeared near his head, and a bitter smile spread across his young face as Hui Yue slipped away; he triggered Qi Fan and flew into the air, safely avoiding the earthen attack.

After evading the ambush, Yan Xiaobao didn't wait long before lighting sparks in his hand. He infused them with three drops of spiritual energy, causing them to grow immensely larger than any he'd created before.

The red energy surged through him, coursing through all his meridians, eventually exiting his palm with spiritual energy. Once the red mist merged into the fireball, it seemed to explode into the air, its oppressive aura instantly spreading across the garden, exerting immense pressure on Old Huzi, disrupting his heartbeat and slowing his movements.

The momentary hesitation caused by the crushing aura gave Yan Xiaobao enough time to hurl the fireball toward Old Huzi. Flames engulfed the garden, accompanied by booming explosions.

Old Huzi was forced to leave his hiding spot, muttering numerous spells as wooden spears emerged around him, shielding him from the ever-growing fire that began igniting ancient trees and small shrubs.

Cursing loudly, Old Huzi prepared to flee. When the sound of the chimes rang out again, his attention shattered for a moment, and he glanced back at what used to be the backyard garden, now a raging inferno.

Old Huzi often noticed things too slowly. The fiery assault was undoubtedly not something a low-tier soldier could create, but this boy had conjured it as though it were the easiest thing in the world.
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This young man not only managed to create such savage flames, but he also seemed to control their explosions and direction of propagation.

All of a sudden, Old Huzi felt something wrapping around his body, but he quickly brushed it off as smoke. All the while, he'd been watching Yan Xiaobao, who did absolutely nothing while retreating from the blazing fire.

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Yan Xiaobao stood above it all, towering like a demon. His white hair was dyed red by the flames, and his eyes were no longer icy blue but blood-red. As he gripped transparent threads in his hands, his face contorted with a twisted and sinister smile.

Seeing him pull those threads, Old Huzi's eyes widened in disbelief, finally understanding that the Mars Fire was not aimed at him. Rather, it was ignited to exert pressure on the assassin, making it harder for him to anticipate his movements.

The more he pulled, the larger they grew, and the more desperate Old Huzi became. He could feel those incredibly strong yet thin threads wrapping tightly around his body; they encircled him and suspended him midair, completely neutralizing his earth-based attacks.

"You can't do this!" Old Huzi roared, helplessly suspended in the air, entirely at Hui Yue's mercy.

"Stay quiet." Yan Xiaobao nodded coldly, his voice and expression devoid of warmth. The red in the flames mingled with the red fog, and Yan Xiaobao's eyes resembled those of a demon.

In the distance, Yan Xiaobao and Old Huzi heard the rustling sounds of people rushing toward the back garden, clearly intent on stopping the fire. Yet, for some inexplicable reason, the flames didn't spread to any buildings or neighboring gardens. They remained neatly contained within the back garden, where Yan Xiaobao and Old Huzi were locked in combat.

As the approaching guards came into view, Qi Yue faintly hummed, gathering energy into his right hand. Within seconds, Qi Country manifested a sword, while Yan Xiaobao wore an innocent smile on his face. Glancing at Old Huzi, he said, "Don't take it personally. I just don't want to die."

When the fire was discovered, Deng Wu was among those rushing to Yan Xiaobao's mansion. Leading the guards into the back garden, he called out loudly for Yan Xiaobao.

A moment later, Yan Xiaobao appeared before Deng Wu, his body covered in blood and his face contorted into a grotesque, eerie grin. In his hand was a severed head. Deng Wu's eyes widened in shock upon seeing Old Huzi's lifeless face. While this man had already fallen victim to Yan Xiaobao's hand, it was evident that he had been even stronger than Deng Wu. Realizing Yan Xiaobao had truly lived up to the name "Silver Demon," a shiver ran down the spine of his friend.

"All sorted?" Deng Wu asked calmly as Yan Xiaobao descended from the air before him. The malicious aura surrounding Yan Xiaobao quickly faded as the blood-red hue in his eyes gave way to tranquility.

The guards who had gathered were completely stunned, noticing how the fire had consumed them. Meanwhile, Hui Yue accidentally tossed the severed head into the smoldering flames, watching Old Huzi's corpse burn. freewebnovel.com

"It's done." Yan Xiaobao said with a smile, turning and walking toward the mansion to clean himself up in the bathroom.

This incident caused chaos in Liluo City as the fire seemed to ignite on its own and extinguish just as mysteriously.

After Old Huzi's death, Hui Yue no longer needed to struggle with daily assassination attempts. He quickly returned to a peaceful life, renovating his garden and improving his spiritual cultivation.

"Cloud! Where are you, Sha Yun!" Yan Xiaobao exclaimed excitedly, leaping up from his seat in the stone garden and rushing into the mansion. Searching through the rooms, he finally encountered Snake Woman in front of the house.

"Why are you yelling?" she asked curiously, her eyes fixed on the excited boy. But her curiosity quickly turned to astonishment when she noticed two small flames dancing in Yan Xiaobao's palm.

"You did it?" she asked in surprise, "You really broke through?"

Hearing this, Yan Xiaobao eagerly nodded, having managed to manipulate the flames in his palms into playful orbs. His face overflowed with excitement as Hui Yue prepared to brag in front of his friends — just as Lan Feng's dry voice came from inside.

Chapter 336 Spiritual Attack Skill

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"This is good, but now you need to train stronger Spiritual Attack Skills than before. Do you think it's time to celebrate? No! It's time to train; you've grown complacent. Who knows when the next batch of assassins will appear," Lan Feng rebuked harshly. Despite the sharp words, Hui Yue could feel the genuine joy and excitement of the Phoenix.

"I can finally start refining Wu Wei," Lan Feng said, his voice tinged with unmistakable longing.

"What kind of elemental affinity did you gain?" Sha Yun asked curiously. As a beast born with elemental affinity, she knew that humans could only unlock theirs when cultivators managed to reach the Middle Dantian and achieve the level of a renowned cultivator.

Before he could answer, Yan Xiaobao complained slightly, "I'm not sure. The only change I can feel is that I'm far stronger than I've ever been before. It's actually quite strange."

Inside the deep blue Dan Feng Cave, the previously arrogant expression gave way to a baffled frown.

"I can't sense your affinity," Lan Feng said slowly. "How do you feel?"

Yan Xiaobao gave an apologetic look to Sha Yun before sitting down in a meditation posture, creating a mental projection, and moving toward his Dantian. Now was the time to explore the depths of the changes in his body.

Sitting inside the Dantian Cave, Yan Xiaobao's mental projection scanned his surroundings, noticing a new tunnel-like structure forming above the Qi Spiral's ceiling. He observed how the spiral's airflow was being pulled into the tunnel at an astonishing speed.

In this situation, Yan Xiaobao furrowed his brows, his mental avatar ascending into the tunnel excitedly to examine where it led.

The tunnel was long, twisting upward in a slope within the rocky cave. Initially uneven, the walls of the tunnel gradually grew smoother the farther Hui Yue walked, eventually resembling a stone corridor instead of a rugged path.

After traversing this corridor for a while, Yan Xiaobao arrived at a set of massive stone gates. The gates were intricately carved, depicting two phoenixes and, in the center, a gigantic Vermilion Bird radiating an awe-inspiring resonance at the sealed entrance. Staring at the gates, Yan Xiaobao couldn't help but wonder what had created such an extraordinary sight.

"They were carved by Qi—like a form of manifestation," Lan Feng replied to his unspoken question.

"Ever since you reached the pinnacle level of a nine-star physician, every bit of refined Qi has sculpted this gate to allow you to open your Middle Dantian. The more intricate the gate, the greater the hope for your Spirit Sea."

Hearing this, Hui Yue was momentarily dazed. "Once these gates are completed, all the Qi you've refined for the gates will return to the Qi Spiral, triggering a surge that will push you into the master level. But you haven't yet unlocked your Middle Dantian."

Yan Xiaobao nodded. What he felt was that the immense strength he perceived earlier came from the return of all those refined Qi over the past few weeks. Initially, Yan Xiaobao noticed the essence he refined had disappeared, assuming it was because he hit a bottleneck. Before his breakthrough, he couldn't absorb any more Qi.

Eagerly, he gazed at the gates, his hands trembling slightly as he placed his palm on the enormous stone doors and gently pushed. After pushing, Yan Xiaobao's brows shifted into an angry slope as the door didn't budge an inch.

"Are you stupid?" Lan Feng's bright voice rang out, his laughter echoing indescribably in Yan Xiaobao's mind. "This is a massive gate. To unlock your Middle Dantian, did you think you'd just push it open lightly?"

Lan Feng's mocking words made Yan Xiaobao reconsider his actions. Standing before the gate, an uncontrollable chuckle escaped his lips.

"Break open my Middle Dantian, huh?" Hui Yue muttered. With just a thought, the Qi Spiral in the Lower Dantian immediately began rotating, firing a stream of Qi straight into the newly-formed tunnel where he now stood.

With the Qi's blistering speed, it took less than a second to reach Yan Xiaobao, gathering in one place. Extending his arms into the form of a battering ram, Yan Xiaobao forcefully merged the spectral energy into his assault against the gate.

The burst of force initially showed no results, but after consecutive strikes, signs of budging began to appear on the massive stone gate. Finally, the last concentrated strand of Qi in his spiral integrated into the battering ram. The sound of creaking echoed through the gate as it slowly crumbled under the pressure, dust billowing into the air to reveal a new cavern.

Before he entered this new area, Yan Xiaobao withdrew Qi from the battering ram and allowed all of it to settle back into the Dan Ding Cave, where it rested within the Qi Spiral.

It was an inner cavern, unlike anything Yan Xiaobao had ever seen before. He speculated its location to be near his heart, but its size dwarfed the Dan Cliff Cave by thousands of times. Yet, the cavern now resembled an empty void.

Gazing into the cavern, Yan Xiaobao realized he had little space to advance further, forced instead to hover above the ground that looked like a dried-up ocean. No matter how hard Yan Xiaobao strained his eyes or pooled his Qi to consolidate them, he couldn't see the end of the dried ocean. He only understood its vastness through his mental projection, which allowed him to observe his entire body from the inside.

Chapter 337 Spiritual Attack Skill_2

'It's vast.' Lan Feng said in an astonished tone. "Clearly, the purity of your Qi has already created miracles."

Yan Xiaobao could only nod his head. He had no way of knowing how expansive other cultivators' Spiritual Oceans were, but he was certain of one impression: this sea was vast, making it difficult to bridge the gap of spiritual energy within. freewebnovel.com

Just as Hui Yue began to feel a bit dejected, he noticed how a surge of Qi emerged in the cave. A Hui Yue appeared in the center of the Spiritual Energy Sea, sitting upright with his eyes closed, forming the shape of a bird with his hands.

This duplicate looked identical to his lower half. Much like the lower copy refining Qi from its essence, this duplicate attracted stable Qi threads and absorbed them slowly. Gradually, it began refining the first drop of spiritual energy.

A long time ago, Yan Xiaobao watched the Spirit Essence Sea in front of him silently, finally shifting his focus away. Beside him, Lan Feng stood proudly, gazing at the vast ocean in the same way Yan Xiaobao did. The white-haired boy noticed how nostalgic Lan Feng's soul looked.

For Lan Lan, Yan Xiaobao was the sole way he could restore his body, let alone avenge the man who forced him into this pitiful state. This step of forcing the Middle Dantian was merely a small step on a grand path. However, the expanse of the Spiritual Energy Sea far exceeded Lan Feng's expectations. Despite requiring more effort to fill the void and reach King-level—and eventually achieve the Dantian top level—it laid a strong foundation for dealing with other mid-ranking experts and elevating the quality of his peers through alliances to entirely new heights.

'So... where can I find my elemental affinity?' Yan Xiaobao asked Lan Feng, his excitement still running high. Considering affinities, Yan Xiaobao couldn't help but secretly hope his would be wood.

'Sit down.' Lan Feng ordered, and Yan Xiaobao followed his mental projection accordingly. 'Feel your entire Spiritual Energy Sea. Somewhere in its dryness, there is a fiery color. That is your affinity; you control the existing one.'

Hui Yue obediently followed Lan Feng's instructions and it didn't take long before he found the flame Lan Feng mentioned. However, it wasn't just one flame, or even two.

In Yan Xiaobao's mental projection, five flames of differing strengths and colors appeared before him. The first flame was yellow, soaring toward the cave's ceiling, clearly representing earth. The second flame was red and, much like the yellow flame, aimed for the top; the two seemed to be locked in a battle, vying for supremacy.

The third flame was silver, slightly lower than the first two flames. However, the final two flames were much weaker—one blue, the other green.

"I've never seen anything like this before." Lan Feng said, unease brewing in his heart. He began to worry about how this young man had managed to harbor so many secrets in his body—secrets most of which Lan Feng hadn't even heard of, despite his long years of experience.

'Does this mean I have five elemental affinities?' Yan Xiaobao asked, his handsome face displaying an excited yet faintly greedy expression.

'I don't know.' Lan Feng responded after a moment's pause, before muttering something to himself. 'Try calling to them.' He finally said. "If they respond to your summons, then they are truly under your control. If they ignore you, then I have no idea what the significance of the five flames' appearance is. It might be related to the nine gates within the Dantian Cave."

Yan Xiaobao nodded quickly and sat down, closing his eyes and waiting for a moment. 'How should I call to them?' he asked awkwardly, as he sat there for a while, unable to take action.

"You really are slow." Lan Feng commented before explaining the procedure. 'First, you need to demand them come to you. The more you deeply desire for them to reside in your hands, the faster they will respond. Focus your attention on the specific area you wish them to appear; otherwise, they will randomly appear anywhere, or in some cases, not move at all.'

Upon hearing this, Yan Xiaobao nodded again. Earlier, he had called out with his soul, but saw no results, causing some slight internal worry. Hui Yue extended his arms, once again thinking of the five flames, this time hoping they would appear in his hands. He wished for his elemental affinities to become his power, and then he suddenly felt something drop into his palms.

Yan Xiaobao opened his eyes to see three multicolored flames in front of him, each vying to surpass the others. One hand held a red flame, the other a yellow and a white flame. The blue and green flames, however, didn't budge, leaving Hui Yue slightly disappointed as he abandoned hope of becoming an Alchemist.

Still, becoming an Alchemist wasn't the only remarkable profession. For most people, having two elemental affinities was exceedingly lucky. Yet here Yan Xiaobao sat in his newly accessed Middle Dantian, holding three roaring flames in his hands.

As he gazed at the flames, Yan Xiaobao was filled with satisfaction. The three flames were strong, and he was determined to use them for survival and to fight his enemies. Although he had hoped for Alchemy, the current reality wasn't so bad; instead, he took to inscription.

Yan Xiaobao waved his hand, allowing the three flames to return to their original positions, where they continued slowly refining strands of Qi. Every hour, Hui Yue could feel a drop of pure spiritual energy descend into his Spiritual Energy Sea.

'Rest now.' Lan Feng instructed excitedly. "Tomorrow, I'll teach you a new skill and reveal a new ranking. Soon, we'll be able to enter the Sacred Dungeon."

'Rest now.' Lan Feng repeated, but Yan Xiaobao's whole body, shaking with adrenaline, seemed almost incapable of resting. His excitement over the new training schedule was blatantly clear as he sat back down to meditate. Struggling to contain his impatience, Hui Yue simply used his refining technique to gather Qi, doubling the speed of refinement compared to before.

Sitting amidst the spiritual energy sea, Yan Xiaobao couldn't help but let his mental projection sweep through his entire body, only to encounter something that left him startled.

Xu Yue had never possessed a masculine physique, nor was his stature exceptionally tall. However, upon entering the main phase, some major changes occurred that he hadn't noticed before. Hui Yue remained quite frail, but his form had now become entirely lean. Looking around, Yan Xiaobao realized his whole body had evolved—not into a broad, muscular figure focused on sheer strength, but one emphasizing agility and swift movements.

Feeling like his entire body resembled a leopard's, Yan Xiaobao couldn't suppress a laugh. Whenever he engaged his taut muscles, they triggered explosive movements, exerting additional force with each action.

This was usually the time to open the Chongmai Meridians, but Xu Yue's meridians had long since been opened. After many years passed, his entire body had undergone Qi Enhancement, placing Yan Xiaobao in an advantageous position to start practicing Spiritual Art in the days ahead.

At least, that was Yan Xiaobao's expectation. The process of refining spiritual energy took far longer than the white-haired youth initially imagined. Although he could now study Spiritual Art, he couldn't practice it, unless he utilized Lan Feng's spiritual energy—which the Phoenix flatly refused.

"I require this spiritual power to improve certain attributes for Wu Wei." It declared without room for dispute, leaving Xu Yue to sit and bitterly smile as he once again resumed the tedious task of Qi refinement to strengthen his cultivation base.

Not long after, Yan Xiaobao's friends discovered his ascension into the noble tier. They came to visit him in his newly renovated backyard, bringing snacks as they sat together.

Nothing in the backyard seemed to escape the flames, which had once resulted in Old Belli's demise. Still, Yan Xiaobao's servants had spent days ensuring the garden looked beautiful, despite Huihua costing a substantial sum.

Regardless of some expenses, Yan Xiaobao didn't mind. One thought kept rolling through his mind: he would soon be ready to face the Sacred Dungeon. This was the place Lan Feng wanted Yan Xiaobao

trained for, yet the bird stubbornly refused to disclose what it was or where it could be found. Yan Xiaobao's only knowledge was that it contained the Shenzhou Flower.

One night, though Yan Xiaobao had spent the entire day cultivating his spiritual power, Deng Wu and Wang Julong came over to dine with him. Together, Yan Xiaobao engaged his old friends in another round of sparring practice.

Chapter 338 Leaps and Bounds

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Yan Xiaobao clearly knew that he currently lacked knowledge of any spiritual art skills, but at the same time, he also realized the possibility of devising spells. As long as someone could skillfully control their elements, Yan Xiaobao could attempt to use such methods to craft Earth Spears, just like the ones employed by Old Huzi.

Although Yan Xiaobao managed to create spears, they were only twenty centimeters high, making them hardly capable of threatening Deng Wu. In truth, if the older boy stepped on them, they would shatter instantly.

Nevertheless, Yan Xiaobao was not entirely defenseless; as long as he activated the Flame Spark Skill, Deng Wu immediately confiscated the matchstick, remembering the last battle he had witnessed.

Most Master-level cultivators tended to rely on their spiritual power for combat, yet Xu Yue couldn't help but think that standing slightly apart from others and chanting different spells to activate one's elemental affinity felt somewhat dull. Based on this perspective, Hui Yue never gave up practicing his Qigong techniques, which accelerated his training progress.

From morning until noon, Yan Xiaobao would train with various Qi methods, and then, from midday until the following morning, he would spend as much time as possible cultivating.

Dividing his life into two parts like this allowed his cultivation base to grow rapidly. Within just two weeks, Yan Xiaobao possessed spiritual energy that Lan Feng had managed to refine only after years of effort.

It must be noted that Lan Feng purely refined his spiritual energy with his soul; however, Yan Xiaobao's speed was so astounding that no one could keep up with him. Although he had now gathered enough spiritual strength to start practicing Spiritual Art, it was clear he was still a first-class Master-level cultivator.

"Yan Xiaobao, I need to speak with you about something," Deng Wu said as he prepared to leave the mansion. His usual cheerful expression was now filled with caution, and his typically jovial voice had turned cold and harsh.

The contrast to Deng Wu's usual demeanor made Hui Yue frown, but he nodded, walked into the house, and the two began their conversation. An hour later, Deng Wu emerged through the front door, his face looking grim as he strode toward the streets on his way home.

Suddenly, the young man paused in his tracks, muttering to himself as he turned back toward the mansion, his eyes filled with a sorrowful gaze. "You really shouldn't trust us so much."

After staring at the mansion for a while, Deng Wu let out a heavy sigh, turned again, and walked away down the steps.

Returning to the mansion, Yan Xiaobao sat in a chair, his fingers slowly tapping on the table, his eyes deeply contemplative. Sitting beside him was Sha Yun, who stared intently at the door Deng Wu had left through earlier, her eyes shimmering with a faint silver dignity.

"Sorry, Yun," Yan Xiaobao said, closing his eyes as he slowly rubbed his forehead. "It looks like we'll have to stay in Liluo City for a while."

Across the city in the Deng Family Mansion, Deng Wu's face was still twisted with disgust as his father and the elders summoned him hurriedly to the hall.

"So," Deng Zeng began as his gaze settled on his son expectantly, "did you manage to persuade that boy to join our faction's fight?" He asked directly, sparing no pleasantries. Everyone in the Deng Family knew about the plan that had to be executed within the year.

"No," Deng Wu said firmly, looking into his father's eyes. "He said he doesn't want to join our cause and advised us to stop what we're doing now."

"Who does he think he is?!" Deng Zeng roared throughout the hall, his cultivation base surging, and all the flames in the room flared as if driven by his fury.

"We should get rid of him," one of the elders said, his face pale. "If he won't join us, we can't let him know about our plans."

"It's not that simple," Deng Wu snapped at the elder, his teeth clenched. "He's already handled Old Huzi of the Silent Ravens. Do you think we could do better?"

The mention of Yan Xiaobao dealing with a Silent Raven made everyone present gasp. They all knew Old Huzi, and the idea that a child might have killed him was incomprehensible.

"Old Huzi was, after all, only a Master-level cultivator," Deng Zengying laughed. "If we send someone at a higher level, there won't be any problems."

"Yan Xiaobao was just an expert when dealing with Old Huzi, unless you intend to send someone of a higher rank to face him," Deng Wu said, pausing briefly before continuing. "Oh, I forgot." His tone was laced with barely concealed sarcasm. "If we send any of our higher-ranked cultivators, then when the Water Affinity faction traces that battle back to our Deng Family, we'll ultimately have to come up with a very good excuse."

Hearing this, Deng Zengying's expression turned ugly. He knew that killing Hui Yue wasn't a wise move. The Water Affinity cultivators could trace marks through other cultivators. Every object in the world sent out ripples, akin to the effect when a stone is thrown into a lake.

"We need to discuss this with the Wang Family," Deng Zengying said at last. He summoned a servant and ordered him to invite a Wang Family elder for a visit.

The Deng Xiaoping family didn't just issue messages. Even Yan Xiaobao was considering what measures he should take to deal with the information he had provided. As the Deng Family pulled together with the Wang Family, the two family leaders hoped to end Lord Rong Liang's rule over Liluo City.

Chapter 339 Breakthrough Progress_2

To truly attempt recruiting Yan Xiaobao, the white-haired boy understood that things would not settle down peacefully after their conversation. The only outcome he could foresee was the two factions eventually engaging in violent conflict, yet the Rong Family and their allies remained oblivious to the progress made by Deng Xiaoping and the Wang Family.

Sighing, Yan Xiaobao once again gazed out of the window, as the faces of all his friends appeared in front of him. Wang Julong and Deng Wu were undoubtedly the ones he had spent the most time with, but he would never sacrifice the Rong twins for everything they had done for him in his younger days.

Gao Yan and Ma Kong were both part of the Rong Sect. If a real battle were to occur, they might fight one another. Yan Xiaobao did not wish to see his friends fighting amongst themselves, and he was lost in contemplation as he considered his options.

"Did you tell him?" The next day, Wang Julong asked Deng Wu as the two gathered with the Deng Family. The two families had reunited to discuss the upcoming plans.

Looking toward the horizon, Deng Wu nodded. "Yan Xiaobao trusts us," he said, a faint bitter smile flashing across his face, with a glint of happiness in his eyes. "Even after telling him what was happening, he actually trusts us." Wang Julong smiled at the handsome man beside her, a slight blush appearing on her cheeks, as if she had received the most beautiful compliment in the world.

"I knew he would trust us," she said cheerfully. "When his friends speak of him, they always say he is so kind-hearted that—after everything they've been through together—he wouldn't distrust you."

Watching Wang Julong and hearing her words, Deng Wu couldn't help but chuckle. Rising from the pair of chairs they had occupied, he slowly walked toward the hall, where the elders were frantically debating which plan to follow.

While Yan Xiaobao had acquired some crucial information, he remained silent for a time, knowing that although the Deng Family and Wang Family were prepared to act, nothing significant would occur this year. Everything required perfect planning and timing—matters that could not afford impulsiveness.

The Deng Family had always been a prominent household in Liluo City, but after acquiring the water mill, their greed intensified with their income increasing tenfold; they began striving for more.
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The Wang Family was different. They did not partake in Liluo City's battle for greed, nor were they driven out for reasons of revenge.

At present, Deng Xiaoping's family and the Wang Family had already agreed that Deng Zengying would become the new City Lord, as long as the Wang Family was permitted to seize everything belonging to the Rong Family.

As for which of the two families initiated this rebellion, Hui Yue remained clueless and only conveyed the truth—that pinpointing the mastermind behind it was immaterial.

What concerned him was that his friends were being divided by the two factions, and Yan Xiaobao felt he had to make an important decision.

However, Yan Xiaobao was not the only one facing a critical decision. The Deng and Wang Families ensured that no one knew of their plans from the start, yet they tried to draw the brilliant young prodigy to connect with a highly respected expert, which left them frustrated.

Not only had he refused to join their ranks, but now he had some degree of understanding of their plans. If he divulged this intel to the City Lord, their scheme would collapse, and their hopes of overthrowing Lord Rong Liang would be dashed.

Unfortunately, Hui Yue—a student of a respected expert—was impossible to eliminate, as they knew the expert would exact vengeance. Someone's reckless actions posed a far greater threat than the possibility of a young boy informing the City Lord.

Recently, Lord Rong Liang had been busy crafting something he called the "sewer system," which vastly improved the living standards of the city's impoverished areas, not to mention his sudden investment in mining for Magic Gems and minerals.

This was evidently sparked by Yan Xiaobao, as the two major families seized the opportunity to bribe other households and lure them into their factions. In particular, rumors of the City Lord introducing an entirely transformative mining mechanism began circulating. This stirred envy and greed among numerous impoverished aristocratic families. Magic Crystals were undoubtedly among the treasures they coveted.

Though Liluo City's surface appeared unchanged, information began trickling into the underground. Once the servants gathered all the data, they relayed it to Gao Yan.

Gao Yan, a member of the Rong Sect, passed everything he obtained directly to the twins, who then brought it back home.

Though the rumors were far from reality, they soon discovered that something was indeed unfolding, including the Deng Family recruiting additional households to ally with them. This wasn't unprecedented, but the urgency it displayed was troubling for the Rong Sect.

The Rong twins sat in Yan Xiaobao's mansion, summoning their entire group of friends. Standing in the middle of the living room, their expressions were filled with doubt and suspicion as they eyed Deng Wu and Wang Julong warily.

"We don't know what's happening," Rong Xing chose her words carefully, beginning her statement. "All we know is that the Wang Family and the Deng Family are plotting something, but no matter how much we dig, it's impossible to uncover any information about their plan." A worried expression surfaced on her face as her gaze never strayed from the two friends.

"If you know anything, please tell us." She spoke in a calm voice. Rong Xing was a prideful girl. She believed herself capable of completing any task and looking after herself under any circumstances, but here she was, seeking help from those who should have been adversaries.

Yan Xiaobao initially contemplated responding to her request, as it was clear she was in a very precarious and painful situation. However, his ultimate decision was to refrain from taking any action as long as his two groups of friends remained in opposition.

Yan Xiaobao trusted all of his friends, including Wang Julong and Deng Wu. He had no position to choose between them, nor between the Rong twins or those from Gao Yan and Ma Gang. Yan Xiaobao simply

decided to step back and let the group resolve things on its own. Should it escalate into an all-out battle, Yan Xiaobao resolved to do everything in his power to save his friends. He was adamant that not a single one would die.

This was one of the reasons Yan Xiaobao trained like a madman. The white-haired young boy chose not to join a real battle unless all his friends aligned with one side or if any of them faced danger. He didn't care if he had to rely on Lan Feng to ensure his friends' safety. Friends were the people one could rely on when it mattered most; even if Yan Xiaobao put himself in harm's way, he knew it was worth it to save them.

Although Lan Feng regarded his own goals as paramount, he refrained from arguing with Yan Xiaobao's personal decision on handling the current situation.

"To call oneself a man, one must strengthen oneself, even with the possibility of death. Friendship isn't cheap. While our goals are important, we must never forget how we achieve those goals, which makes decisions like this equally meaningful."

Sinking back into his chair, Yan Xiaobao observed Wang Julong and Deng Wu, curious about how they would respond to the dilemma, especially considering Deng Wu's feelings for Rong Xing.

"My heart, my flower!" Deng Wu began, but when he saw Zhuang Yan's stern demeanor, his expression suddenly turned serious, and he completely ignored the carefully crafted lines he had prepared earlier.

"I don't know," he shrugged, speaking nonchalantly. Watching this man, Yan Xiaobao couldn't help but admit Deng Wu was an exceptional actor. No one could discern the truth—that Deng Wu had in fact already explained the entire plan to Yan Xiaobao.

"Our families are well aware of our relationship," Wang Julong said in an apologetic tone, taking over. "Whenever we're around, they never mention anything important."

Yan Xiaobao was about to let out a verbal scoff, but he managed to turn it into a cough, cutting off her apology swiftly. Glancing at everyone present, Yan Xiaobao couldn't help but feel sadness as he noticed the confusion and chaos in the Rong twins' eyes.

He let out a deep sigh and stood up. "We're all friends," he said gently, placing a hand on Rong Xing's shoulder. "I'm certain no one here wants anyone else to be harmed. I can promise that if anyone tries to hurt you, their malice will shield my dead body. This applies to everyone, because I truly think of each one of you as my friend."

Chapter 340 Master Level

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Upon hearing this, everyone present showed an expression of gratitude, and the atmosphere became even more cheerful. Yan Xiaobao brought snacks and drinks, which reminded everyone of their days as students.

Hours later, Yan Xiaobao's guests slowly left his mansion, but before Deng Wu walked away, he said a few words of thanks.

Yan Xiaobao gently patted his shoulder, just as he had done to Rong Xing earlier. They all smiled before leaving. Once they disappeared down the street, the gentle smile on Yan Xiaobao's face vanished almost instantly.

"Why didn't you say anything?" Sha Yun, standing behind Yan Xiaobao, asked, her silver eyes gleaming.

"I don't need to," Xu Yue sighed and beckoned Sha Yun to follow him. The two walked through the house and into the backyard, where Yan Xiaobao ensured no one was watching.

"I know you've recently reached Master Level," Yan Xiaobao said, gently patting Sha Yun's head. This gesture elicited a proud smile and an enthusiastic nod from the Snake Woman.

Sha Yun especially loved being patted on the head and receiving praise from Yan Xiaobao.

Sha Yun was a beast. Unlike humans, though beasts cultivated as well, their method differed greatly. Sha Yun didn't have a dantian; instead, her beast core was located in her head. This beast core was essentially her entire cultivation base, and from an early age, the magical beasts focused all their energy at a single point, thereby awakening their spiritual affinity.

Sha Yun had only one elemental affinity: the earth element. Unlike humans, magic beasts didn't need to learn Spiritual Attack Skills or other combat techniques, as they possessed innate abilities tied to their beast cores from birth.

The ability Sha Yun had to control earth with her thoughts was such an innate skill. She didn't need spells because the earth always obeyed her command. Although Sha Yun had only just reached Master Rank, Yan Xiaobao knew she was already more powerful than Deng Wu and Gao Yan.

As for whether Yan Xiaobao was stronger than the two men, he wasn't sure, because Sha Yun refused to pledge her loyalty.

"We need to become stronger," Xu Yue sighed and sat under the new tree he had bought near the fire. Closing his eyes, he began converting his Qi into spiritual energy again. He hoped to reach Second Master Level soon so he could perfect his new Spiritual Art.

For a long time, Sha Yun stood in front of Yan Xiaobao and watched him. As she contemplated her choices, her heart was filled with turbulent emotions. Sha Yun hated Wang Julong—the human-girl-disguised-as-a-man.

Sha Yun knew about the Wang Family's schemes but remained silent, following Yan Xiaobao's leadership. Though Hui Yue had kept quiet all along, Sha Yun couldn't help but wonder how easily Wang Julong could be dealt with. All she needed to do was go to the City Lord and reveal her adversary's plans.

Sha Yun shook her head, refusing to act selfishly or disloyally. She knew that if she did such a thing, Yan Xiaobao would be deeply disappointed in her—and that was something Sha Yun could never accept.

With a deep sigh, she sat down next to Yan Xiaobao, closed her eyes, and began absorbing the essence of the air. Slowly, she transformed it into energy, gradually enhancing her strength.

Her goal wasn't much different from the others': she wanted to be able to protect Yan Xiaobao from danger.

"Well done!" A voice from deep within Yan Xiaobao's body exclaimed as a faint black mist emerged from his skin, evaporating into the air.

The mist represented impurities hidden within Yan Xiaobao's pores. These impurities were forcibly expelled by the sudden surge of energy within his body.

At this moment, Xu Yue remained seated, entirely focused on creating a single drop of spiritual energy. Using cultivation techniques, Yan Xiaobao's replica carefully guided the drop to fall into the vast, barren spiritual energy sea, resembling a small pond.

When the drop of water landed in the pond, ripples spread across its surface until a Phoenix began to take shape from the pond itself. The Phoenix soared through Yan Xiaobao's mental projection, rushing along his meridians. Created from spiritual energy, the Phoenix spread throughout his body, causing profound changes to Hui Yue.

Yan Xiaobao was only a fifteen-year-old boy, but his height had increased by two centimeters, reaching an astounding 178 cm. Now, Yan Xiaobao was as tall as Deng Wu, but despite his handsome appearance, he still had a slightly delicate frame.

Not only had his physical growth changed, but wherever the spiritual energy bird flew, Yan Xiaobao's body underwent significant transformations. His tense muscles became stronger and more flexible. As he inspected himself, Yan Xiaobao could clearly see his toned and supple muscles beneath his skin.
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All his meridians, along with his blood vessels and organs, had been opened up and purified by the bird. Impurities were turned into mist and expelled through his skin, resulting in the black fog emitted earlier.

Yan Xiaobao realized that although he had become much stronger, the main improvement was in his agility. His current strength allowed him to lift up to 500 kilograms, but even so, he slightly lagged behind most Master-level cultivators, who could typically wield at least 100 kilograms more.

This was something Yan Xiaobao couldn't change. Training in the Speed Flow technique at such a young and tender age had shaped his body in ways that would forever prevent it from developing into the bulky, muscle-bound type. Instead, he had cultivated a body that was agile, swift, and near impossible to catch, even by those of higher ranks.

