

Medical 591

Chapter 591 Forest King and Divine Origin Queen

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"I will talk to her about this matter. I agree to send her away, since there's no reason for her to stay here any longer," Wan Qiao said with a smile. "Now hurry, so I can summon that woman to send her off. Once I finish these documents, I'll make sure someone sends them to you," she concluded as her stomach started rumbling. Looking down, she chuckled for a moment, then burst into laughter. "Perhaps I need some food before I continue," she said softly, even surprising Yan Xiaobao, who raised his eyebrows.

How could an expert of Saint rank be hungry? The higher the rank they achieve, the more their bodies are nurtured by the essence of the heavens and the earth. Their physical needs grow increasingly elastic. Food is no longer a necessity, let alone drinks, yet Wan Qiao's stomach was growling, signaling that she was indeed hungry. Hearing the sound caused Yan Xiaobao's eyebrows to shoot up in astonishment. It meant her last meal had been many years ago, as it had been years since she last ate.

Wan Qiao gently patted the boy's face, a sad smile flickering across her own. "Long ago, the last normal beast in the Divine Origin's territory perished. At first, villagers bred the animals they had raised; however, all the magical beasts hunted and consumed the domesticated animals one by one until no beasts were left. The beasts in towns and villages survived on vegetation they planted and by hunting magical beasts simultaneously," she said.

"These beasts can attack other beasts because this is a survival-of-the-fittest world. But as the Forest King and Divine Origin Queen, I refuse to attack and consume any beasts in the forest. As for eating wheat products and fruits, which the Single-Horned Jasmine Hawk deeply despises," she continued, frowning.

"The last time I ate was when I left the Divine Domain. That day, when I met you in Liluo City, was the last time I departed. Since then, I've held back," she sighed, grumbling. Yan Xiaobao nodded. He could understand why this woman refused to consume her own kind, but while Yan Xiaobao himself had already turned into a half-beast, he had no qualms about eating other magical beasts.

"You can't do anything about it," she continued, waving her hand and signaling for Yan Xiaobao to keep walking and not worry about her. Yan Xiaobao complied. Though Wan Qiao was hungry, Yan Xiaobao

was fully aware that she had nowhere else to go. Despite her starvation, even after many years without food, she would endure. She could easily last another ten years before it reached a dangerous point.

With that knowledge, Yan Xiaobao turned and left. He returned to his room, sat down, and began cultivating, awaiting news about Li Meilin's departure or perhaps waiting for the newspapers stacked on Wan Qiao's desk to bring him updates.

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"Hello, young lady," Wan Qiao said, looking at Li Meilin as she entered the room. The Single-Horned Jasmine Hawk was sitting at her desk, organizing a towering pile of documents, her back turned to the woman who had just walked in.

As anxiety surged within her, Li Meilin felt her hands trembling. Yan Xiaobao had said he would do his best to help her leave the Divine Domain; however, there remained the possibility that the Divine Origin Queen would refuse to aid her departure, forcing the Emperor to leave on her own. Before making her way back to her hometown in the capital, she would have to pass through the Divine Domain and Xiban.

"I recall telling you that once Yan Xiaobao manages to reach King-level, you may leave the Divine Domain," Wan Qiao said, straightening her back and walking toward the young woman in front of her. Li Meilin greeted her with a gesture before sitting down in a set of chairs. Neither of them spoke, instead waiting for the other to say something first.

Seeing that Li Meilin had no intention of speaking, Wan Qiao let out a deep sigh and leaned back in her chair, gazing at the woman before her.

"You've been quite busy these past few days, haven't you?" Wan Qiao asked with a feigned curiosity. Her words sent a shiver down Li Meilin's spine. Could Wan Qiao be aware of the efforts she had quietly put into obtaining information and working tirelessly over the past few days? If she had been noticed, who knew what might happen to her? Perhaps she would end up unable to leave the Divine Domain after all—perhaps she might be buried here forever.

"I could kill you, and then you'd no longer pose any threat to me," Wan Qiao said casually, lifting her hand and examining her nails. Each word she uttered sent chills down Li Meilin's back, and fear filled her

eyes. She knew her life was in Wan Qiao's hands; yet the woman seemed utterly indifferent to the Emperor.

"I could kill you, but doing so would only bring me more trouble," Wan Qiao finally sighed, ceasing her focus on her nails. Instead, she leaned back in her chair and looked at Li Meilin with a faintly sour expression. "Yan Xiaobao personally requested that I grant you permission to leave," she continued, sparking a glimmer of hope in Li Meilin's heart.

"While he hasn't explained to me why he wants me to let you go, he was very persuasive," Wan Qiao continued, closely observing every reaction on Li Meilin's face. The woman displayed significant uncertainty, but after hearing Wan Qiao's words, hope was visible deep within her eyes.

Li Meilin sat quietly, contemplating her emotions for quite some time. She knew Yan Xiaobao could not have made such a request of Wan Qiao without offering a compelling argument, though it seemed he hadn't disclosed those reasons to her. This immediately reminded her of the war that Yan Xiaobao had previously mentioned.

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Li Meilin was deeply worried. She knew her journey held countless ways to lead to her demise. If she tried to return by herself, who knew what dangers awaited her on the way. If she were to be escorted by guards of another Emperor, there was a high chance she'd be ambushed and killed during the journey. Even now, she could vanish from this city, and Wan Qiao could simply tell Yan Xiaobao that she'd already left.

Considering all these dangers, Li Meilin couldn't help but feel a deep sense of fear and unease. She knew the likelihood of surviving and ever seeing anyone she held dear again was slim. Yet, at the same time, her resolve hardened as she looked seriously at Wan Qiao.

Even if it would likely cost her life, if there was a declaration that she would be brought home, she was willing to follow these beasts. It was a gamble she had no choice but to take. The slim chance to return home and warn the Kingdom was enough to make her risk her life.

Noticing the resolve and calmness on Li Meilin's face, Wan Qiao was very pleased. Her face lit up with a smile, and her voice softened.

"Go get your things. I have a guard ready to take you to the Divine Origin Border," Wan Qiao said calmly. Hearing this, Li Meilin immediately sprang to her feet, nearly bolting out of the room, rushing toward her quarters to pack her belongings. Watching the woman's urgency, Wan Qiao smiled with satisfaction as she exited the room.

"Attend to me!" Wan Qiao said commandingly. In an instant, four experts appeared by her side, seemingly manifesting from nowhere. These four were evidently Wan Qiao's personal bodyguards, and all of them were Holy Name Experts. If Yan Xiaobao were present, his face would surely betray his shock. He wouldn't detect any energy ripples from these four experts unless he directly focused on them. Their presence was so faint they may as well not have existed.

"Zhu Wei, secure Yan Xiaobao. There's a strong chance someone is out for his life," Wan Qiao said sternly. "Even though the Lords have agreed to start the war, they might still change their minds. We cannot allow him to die."

One of the shadows nodded in silent acknowledgement before vanishing as though he had never been there. Wan Qiao then turned to another expert and spoke in a measured tone, "Song Jie, find an Emperor to assign a guard for me." At her words, another expert melted into the shadows again.

The shadow named Song Jie moved swiftly, making his way to the military barracks where the guards resided. In what felt like only moments, the shadow returned to Wan Qiao's side, this time with another man who looked slightly disoriented.

Upon noticing Wan Qiao, the man quickly overcame his confusion, kneeling before her and bowing deeply under her curious gaze. She nodded and finally spoke. "Guard, I have a very special task for you." She gestured for the man to follow her into her private room, and without hesitation, the young man complied.

"You may already know that I have someone residing in this castle. I need her brought to the border of the Siban Empire, but I won't be able to accompany her myself. I'm entrusting this mission to you," Wan Qiao said, her words causing the guard's confusion to deepen. Although he had heard rumors about someone staying in the castle, he would never have imagined that the Divine Origin Queen herself cared to offer any assistance to this person. However, the young man knew better than to question her. He simply nodded, his lips pressing tightly together.

"You will depart tomorrow morning. Inform her to be prepared by then," Wan Qiao stated casually, turning her attention back to the stack of documents on her desk. Yet, before she immersed herself fully

in her work, her voice grew icy as she issued a warning, "I need this woman delivered safely to the border of the Siban Empire. If she dies before reaching her destination, I will personally ensure you follow her in death in an instant." At her chilling words, the guard immediately scrambled out of the room.

Once the guard had left, Wan Qiao sat down again to finalize the documents meant for Yan Xiaobao. Her eyes focused intently on the papers before her, and a deep sigh escaped her lips. The room around her was utterly devoid of any other presence. The three shadows from earlier had seemingly vanished without a trace.

As Wan Qiao concentrated on completing her work, the guard arrived at Li Meilin's quarters and knocked on the door.

"Come in," the woman called out, though she did not turn her head. With her back to the door, she packed her belongings methodically, one item at a time. Although she heard the door open, she neither quickened her pace nor appeared flustered. Instead, she meticulously busied herself with packing the items she had used during her stay in the Divine Domain.

"I'm here to assist you in leaving this place," the guard stated in a neutral tone, prompting Li Meilin to nod. Her heart pounded within her chest as she mulled over whether it was wise to place her trust in this guard. If she was fortunate, she would find herself in Siban again. If she was not, her journey would end in some part of the forest, where her bones would be gnawed upon by savage creatures.

Closing her eyes, she took several deep breaths to steady herself. When she heard the guard speak again, she nodded in response. Slowly, her eyes opened, and they gleamed with a bone-chilling resolve. She clenched her fists tightly as she gazed out the window. She was an Emperor; if they sought to bring about her demise, she would ensure that they paid dearly for it. However, if they truly intended to help her return home, then Li Meilin was willing to seize that chance.

"I suppose he won't come to visit me again," Li Meilin muttered to herself, staring at the door. The guard who had appeared earlier decided to stand watch outside the door, leaving Li Meilin feeling like a prisoner as she pondered whether Yan Xiaobao would return to bid her farewell. Shaking her head mockingly at her own naivety, she scoffed at herself for harboring such childish hopes. It was clear Yan Xiaobao held no affection for her; by his own admission, the only reason he chose to help her was so she could warn the Sun Kingdom of impending danger. He had never promised to invest any more time in her than was necessary.

The day passed swiftly, and Yan Xiaobao remained in his quarters, focused on cultivating his strength. Having already reached the nine stars rank at Duke University, he aspired to break through the final barrier. Before he entered the war, he wanted to become a King. Although he understood power alone would not determine the war's outcome, he couldn't shake the feeling that he needed more strength—for himself, for what lay ahead.

With Li Meilin's escort plans underway, Yan Xiaobao no longer concerned himself with her fate. Instead, his mind raced with thoughts of what might unfold between Siban and the Sun Empire. Would they truly take steps to shield themselves? The answer to that was something he needed for advancing the war strategy further.

With a deep sigh, he glanced out his window at the multitude of guards settling on the castle walls. He wondered if they would heed his words when the time came.

While Yan Xiaobao preoccupied himself with observing the masses outside, a dark shadow silently slipped into his room and vanished into the ceiling. No aura could be felt. The shadow seemed to have phased straight through the door without opening it and disappeared in the same manner.

As the day drew to a close, Li Meilin sat in her room, her heart beating steadily in her chest. With her head resting in her palms and her elbows atop her knees, she sat in quiet reflection. This was her final night in the Divine Origin Capital. Whether her life would end or she would complete her journey remained uncertain, but she resolved to do everything in her power to return to the Spanish Empire.

Knock Knock

The sound of knocking pulled Li Meilin from her thoughts, prompting her to immediately rise to her feet. Looking around the room, she felt a pang of nostalgia. Now emptied of her belongings, no one could tell that Li Meilin had stayed there for so long. While a part of her felt sentimental, the room also resembled a prison cell to her—a place where she had been forcibly confined while longing to be elsewhere.

In the courtyard, the guard awaited her, but this time, he was no longer wearing his uniform or even resembling a humanoid beast. He had transformed into a massive eagle, at least seven meters in length with a wingspan that stretched wide. Standing at over two meters tall, his majestic form radiated both pride and disdain.

His imperious eyes brimmed with displeasure, though such feelings were impossible for him to cast aside. The proud eagle allowed the woman to climb onto his back, gripping the feathers at his neck firmly. Letting out a sound of mild irritation, the eagle launched into the sky, swiftly disappearing into the distance—the direction of the Siban Empire.

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Chapter 593 The Will of the Divine Origin Queen

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The chill of the wind on Li Meilin's face was sharp and cold. Beneath the eagle lay a vast forest sprawling across part of the African Continent. In the distant Li Meilin, one could see towering mountains encircling every kingdom on the continent.

Li Meilin sat on the Emperor's back, astonished by its incredible speed. Below her, the forest transformed into a green blur, shrill cries piercing the air one after another, reflecting the eagle's perception of the situation. Although she found it disrespectful, the eagle would never defy the Divine Origin Queen's will. The quickest way to finish the task was to rush to the border of the Siban Empire, drop the woman there, and return home, pretending nothing had ever happened. Doing so would merely be a stain from its past. Being a magical beast whose consciousness was used as a mount gravely harmed its dignity.

The eagle did not rest overnight but continued flying, and two days soon passed. The distant mountains drew closer as time went on, and as the bird began to understand what was happening, its screaming gradually subsided.

From the moment she climbed onto the eagle's back, Li Meilin had been on high alert. At first, she was very anxious. Every gust of turbulence or wind, stronger than the one before it, made her feel terrified, wondering if the eagle was intentionally causing her death to seem like an accident. Yet, no matter how the eagle swayed in the wind, she was never once close to falling off.

Understanding this, Li Meilin felt a trace of shame, knowing she had mistrusted the beast. She was also keenly aware that these creatures were likely to have their own agendas, hidden from her comprehension.

With a deep sigh, she no longer regarded the beast's plans but instead gazed at the rugged cliff walls before her. Her eyes shone with joy. As the bird suddenly shot into the sky, she gripped its feathers tightly, soaring straight upwards to cross the mountains. During these two days, neither human nor beast had exchanged a word—the eagle focused solely on its flight, while the woman couldn't think of anything to say to the creature.

Having crossed the mountains, the eagle landed on the ground, its eyes brimming with relief. It didn't pause for a moment, shaking its entire body to eject the Emperor off its back. With a final cry, the eagle rose into the skies again and vanished into the distance.

Watching the beast's departure, Li Meilin felt the experience was surreal. She had estimated her chances of survival at less than twenty percent, yet here she was, standing at the edge of the Siban Empire without a single scratch.

Taking one last glance at the mountains, Li Meilin bowed deeply toward the forest behind the jungle, paying her respects to the beasts that had aided her return and ensured her survival. Li Meilin stood there for a few moments, then turned and began walking forward, her feet pounding heavily into the earth as her legs carried her ahead. The Emperor did not cast another glance back, hurrying back to the capital. She had much information to share with the Emperor and the Sun Kingdom. Even if it turned out to be a trap set by the beasts, Li Meilin was willing to follow their designs as long as it would allow her to evacuate the citizens and prepare the armies.

Yan Xiaobao was once again sitting in his room within Wanqiao Castle. He spent all his spare time cultivating. He felt as though, with each passing day of his dedicated cultivation, he was inching ever closer to reaching King-level, his current goal along his long journey of training.

Unlike his previous experiences, the spiritual energy within the ocean showed no signs of overflowing, nor did he feel his cultivation press against the Upper Dantian's opening. Instead, the more energy he generated, the more the waters expanded. Still, the gate to his Upper Dantian remained locked. Furrowing his brow, Yan Xiaobao realized cultivation alone was not enough. While cultivation was essential, insight was equally crucial, and Yan Xiaobao concluded that achieving enlightenment would require a higher level of mastery. He needed profound understanding on his path of cultivation.

Sighing, he rose from his bed and stretched his aching body. He had cultivated for an extended period, but with his recent conclusion that breakthroughs required insight, he decided to head to the training ground to temper his physical body.

The training ground was completely empty now. All the guards had moved outside the castle, leaving Yan Xiaobao plenty of space to himself. With a wild howl, Yan Xiaobao felt his body beginning to creak as it visibly grew larger. Fur abruptly sprouted across his skin, and his face transformed into a wolf's visage, his blue eyes gradually turning crimson. His hands morphed into clawed paws, and his nails sharpened into deadly talons. Just witnessing this transformation, one could imagine how powerful this young man would eventually become.

Since he didn't need to engage in any battles, Yan Xiaobao didn't remain in his wolf form for long. He began his running training instead. Yan Xiaobao once again felt the satisfying comfort of exerting his muscles. Smiling to himself as he felt his muscles working, Yan Xiaobao couldn't resist grinning. To anyone who saw him, it might have been terrifying, as it wasn't so much a smile as it was an expression of merciless and deeply sinister glee.

After running for two hours, starting slow and gradually picking up pace, Yan Xiaobao felt ecstatic. This was why he loved the balance of power.

Suddenly, a sharp pain erupted in Yan Xiaobao's forehead. As the world around him dimmed, he was forced to sit down. A dizzying spell took over, and the world seemed to tilt. The ground appeared to be above him, and Yan Xiaobao began vomiting from the nausea.

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It felt like sitting still for hours, but in reality, it was only a few minutes before everything slowly returned to normal. Yan Xiaobao opened his eyes, a sinister smile on his face.

Yan Xiaobao hoped to delve deeper into what allowed him to unlock the Upper Dantian, yet who would have guessed he had been blocking himself all along. Once he started running and felt the comfort of the balance between external and internal forces, he understood this was it. Wu Wei is a balance point. People need to maintain balance with the world, becoming one with it.

To become a true expert, to become a God, one must transform into nothingness. People need to become a perfect energy balance.

'Well done!' Lan Feng's excited voice rang in Yan Xiaobao's heart as the young man began to laugh. Although he now knew how to unlock the Upper Dantian, he had not yet opened it. Looking around, Yan Xiaobao rushed back to his room, sat in a chair, and let his mind enter his heart. He appeared at the Lower Dantian, slowly passing through the Middle Dantian toward the Upper Dantian.

Standing at the entrance of the Upper Dantian, there was a massive door. Nine different fireballs were carved on the door. As soon as Yan Xiaobao touched it, the door seemed to vanish, transforming into golden streaks. These golden streaks all entered the room behind the door.

With a pounding heart, Yan Xiaobao stepped into the room, feeling the gentle warmth surrounding him. Before him was a pedestal, a golden sun spinning atop it. Golden brilliance constantly radiated out, making anyone inside Wendian Cave feel warm.

"You have quite a bit of martial power there," Lan Feng nodded with satisfaction, "you managed to refine some, not to mention the energy you absorbed from the holy flower bestowed by the Deng Family."

"This is incredible," Yan Xiaobao said as excitement filled his eyes when he finally broke through to the King-level.

"It is; however, you need to work hard from now on," Lan Feng warned. 'To increase energy, you need to acquire spiritual energy in the Dantian; however, there's one more thing you need. You need to merge this spiritual energy with the Yin Yang Energy of the world around you.

"Have you ever wondered why you look like a girl and even Xiao Wu used to hit you when you were a child?" Lan Feng asked. Yan Xiaobao could sense the Phoenix's excitement within, seeing a contented smile on his lips. This was clearly a question the Phoenix had wanted to ask for a long time, but it seemed now was not the time to do so. He had held back for eighteen years.

"Why do I look like a girl?" Yan Xiaobao was startled, partly out of curiosity and partly because he wanted to play with the bird.

"When you and I merged our souls, some of my energy flowed into your body," the Phoenix began, his voice low and slow; the smile on his face grew. "I am a Saint, so I possess a lot of Yin Yang Energy," he continued, 'Yin Energy is easier cultivated by women. As a man, you need to cultivate in a specific way to refine the energy, yet Yang Energy is most easily refined by men; you can improve it with ease.'

"However, although it's easier to refine, you need to ensure your internal balance of Yin Yang. These energies need balance; the more balanced they are, the more you can merge with the world. When you

become one with the world, your body transforms. You will no longer have a mortal body but will possess a body of a God; a relic purely created by the great powers of the Ancestor World.

"When we merged our souls, some of my power entered you, and the power that entered was all the energy within me. As you may have noticed, although I am a Saint, I'm weaker compared to many others. This is because all of my Yin Energy is within you.

"Relinquishing this energy caused my own energy to become unbalanced, but you are more important than my power. Working together like this, you will be able to restore me to my original body. At that time, I can begin cultivating again. The most important thing is to defeat An Hee, and only after he is defeated will I not feel regret in life.

Hearing this, Yan Xiaobao was deeply shocked. The Phoenix was actually willing to give up its own power for Yan Xiaobao, making him greatly moved.

"But just because you have my Yin Energy, it is not enough to reach the Holy Level," Lan Feng warned, 'the Yin Energy is only enough to elevate you to the peak of King-level, even if there might be that much now. What you should do is slowly refine the Yin Energy while improving the Yang Energy. Eventually, you will be able to break into God's ranks.

Understanding Lan Feng's words, Yan Xiaobao nodded solemnly. "Which way is the easiest to refine Yin Energy?" Yan Xiaobao asked curiously, and the Phoenix immediately shook his head happily. He always enjoyed it when he could prove he was indeed a beast that had lived for a long time.

"The simplest way is to sit outside under the moonlight and enhance the essence of Heaven and Earth. Now that your Upper Dantian is open, you can extract the Yin Yang Energy from the essence. Another way to obtain Yin Energy is to rely on pills. Some of them contain Yin Energy. This is the most common way, as it is faster than refining it yourself. You can also find a very cold area; the colder the area, the stronger the Yin Energy.

"Hmm, I understand," Yan Xiaobao muttered. He had hoped to acquire some medicinal medicine, but unfortunately, he did not have it with him nor any means to obtain it. As far as he knew, these beasts rarely took medicine. They considered it cheating, which was also one reason beasts were usually stronger than humans of the same level.

Yan Xiaobao sighed deeply, accepting his echo, he needed to work hard once again. He had just broken through, and Yan Xiaobao knew it was time to thoroughly check his body. A small golden Energy Ball appeared in his outstretched hand, summoned in less than a second after the energy call.

Unlike spiritual energy and Qi, Wu Wei didn't travel through his meridians. It would disappear instantly within the Upper Dantian and reappear anywhere it was summoned. It might be the ball in his hand, or it might be a palm above his head, or perhaps the golden martial wings resting in his Lower Dantian.

No matter how Yan Xiaobao attempted, Wu Wei was so swift that the young man was filled with admiration and happiness. He finally became a King-level expert. He had finally stepped into the world of powerful cultivators!

Just as he prepared to continue training further, he heard a knock on the door, causing him to immediately stop what he was doing. He steadied his breath before opening the door. Outside was Wan Qiao, her face beaming, with a paper in her arms, all decked with information on the front and back.

"You're done," she said proudly, stuffing all the papers into Yan Xiaobao's arms, "It took me a long time to do this, but now that I've finished, you'd better be ready to read. If you skip a page, I won't be happy!" she said, waving lazily at him as she turned around, "It's time to take a nap," she mumbled as she hurried back to her room.

Yan Xiaobao stood at the door, feeling a headache. With all the information stuffed into his arms, now the papers were no longer in the order they should be. Before he could start reading and understanding the Saints, the young man had to sort them out. Then he could decide who would join him during the war and who would stay behind.

"I guess it's time to get to work," Yan Xiaobao muttered to himself as he placed all the papers on the table. Before writing letters to friends, he had only used this table once, but he was here now. The table was littered with papers he slowly began organizing. Yan Xiaobao was delighted when he saw Wan had kindly written page numbers on many pages, for without them, he wasn't sure he would even be able to put them in order.

Finally finding the head and tail of many sheets, he slowly began reading. Each document truly contained all the information Yan Xiaobao hoped for. This included the age of the beasts, the species, their primary attacks, whether they were strong or mediocre beasts, and whether they wished to join the war.

Yan Xiaobao felt an unprecedented tranquility at the moment. His stress was far greater than the stress of reaching the King-level, but now he had achieved his goal, a strange peace washed over him, with a gentle smile on his face as he dug into the list of Lords.

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Chapter 595 Another Unknown Phenomenon

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The Upper Dantian is located at the forehead, behind the two eyes. As Yan Xiaobao was busy reading, radiant energy floated through his entire body, reconstructing each cell, adding extra elasticity to his physique, and greatly enhancing his strength. As his body was reshaped, energy also appeared in the Lower Dantian. It seemed as though a cave wall within his Dantian was obstructing part of the cave, slowly starting to collapse under the light of golden energy.

Without Yan Xiaobao noticing, the wall completely disappeared. As it did, a new and unknown phenomenon emerged within his Dantian Cave.

'Oh, you slow **turtle! How could you not feel what's happening inside your Dantian?' Phoenix roared, dragging Yan Xiaobao's attention from the documents before him to the inner workings of his Dantian. Within the Dantian, he was suddenly shocked to find pulsating energy roaming in his Lower Dantian and entering his meridians. The circulating energy through his body enhanced every organ, every muscle, and every bone.

With wide eyes, Yan Xiaobao observed the previously enclosed cave within his Dantian, but now it contained a red gemstone. The gemstone wasn't coarse but rather faceted, and it was the most beautiful deep red gem. It emitted constant energy pulses that traversed his entire body, merging with the golden radiance of Wu Wei, reconstructing his entire being internally.

Unlike Wu Wei, who disassembled and rebuilt cells while injecting each cell with martial power, this red pulse buried itself within the cells and remained there, fortifying them from within.

Seeing this, Yan Xiaobao was momentarily at a loss. But driven by curiosity, he immediately summoned the black blood dagger from his storage stone. Without infusing any Qi into the dagger, he attempted to cut his arm, yet he couldn't even create the faintest incision. Not a single mark was left on his skin.

Witnessing this, Yan Xiaobao couldn't help but raise an eyebrow in surprise. Even though he was now a King-level expert, he shouldn't possess such formidable defense. His thoughts instantly deduced the cause to be the pulsating gemstone within his Dantian Cave. Could it even surpass Wu Wei's defensive power? Yan Xiaobao was shocked.

He added Qi to the dagger, strengthening it as he would in combat, and once again tried to cut his arm. This time, only a faint red line appeared on his arm, but no blood was visible. The red line quickly vanished, leaving his arm without a trace.

Pondering for a moment, Yan Xiaobao examined the dagger and then glanced at his arm, now back to normal. He absentmindedly nodded while lifting the dagger into the air. He aimed at his leg and, using all his power, struck his leg forcefully. Knowing he might seriously injure himself, his heart raced. However, he needed to understand the robustness of this new defense. Without second-guessing, he allowed the dagger to stab his leg.

Making a grimace, Yan Xiaobao looked at the dagger. A single drop of blood fell onto its blade. Inspecting his leg, he was astonished to find that despite the strike containing all his strength, it hadn't reached the bone; instead, it merely penetrated a few centimeters into the flesh. Although the injury would be painful and somewhat deep under normal circumstances, Yan Xiaobao's face brimmed with a smile; his heart overflowed with excitement.

His body was now exceptionally resilient—even Saints might not necessarily possess a stronger physique. Even now, the pulsating sensation from the gemstone within his Dantian Cave did not cease, continuing to surge throughout his body. Yan Xiaobao was amazed to find the pulsation within him growing larger alongside his smile.

Although the wound on his leg had not yet healed, Yan Xiaobao speculated that if he waited for half an hour—or even less—it might become impossible to pierce his skin again. Yet, as for the source of such power, Yan Xiaobao had no idea. Reflecting on the incredible defense he'd gained, he was filled with deep shock. Nevertheless, if the pulsation continued, he would soon face the ancient memories of his past life. Once he touched them, he would be able to understand everything about that existence.

At present, the phenomenon closest to integration was the blue cloud. He was extremely curious about what it contained. However, no matter how much he allowed the blue cloud to envelop him, he had yet to manage to merge with it—to solidify the blue cloud into memories. This, as Yan Xiaobao understood, was a process that required chance and enlightenment.

Heaving a deep sigh, though Yan Xiaobao was highly enthusiastic about these phenomena, he knew that he was now the Great Marshall of war. It was his duty to decide who would participate in the war and who would stay behind. He had to determine what kind of training the guards should undergo. He had to choose which tactics to employ. Though he wanted to observe the transformations in his body, he couldn't neglect his responsibilities. After his moments of amazement, he shifted his focus back to the documents before him.

He devoted himself to the paperwork on the desk, meticulously analyzing each expert one document at a time, sorting them into two piles. One pile consisted of those who would remain in the Divine Domain, while the other was for the Saints who would participate in the war.

The Saints staying behind were to keep their guards by their side, while those participating in the war would have their guards turned into soldiers.

After a period of contemplation, Yan Xiaobao decided that all guards needed to become a unified entity rather than separate family retainers. Only those who could form a united force were eligible to be called soldiers.

Chapter 596 Another Unknown Phenomenon_2

Having an army composed of King-level experts made it difficult for Yan Xiaobao to determine who should serve as the commanders of a thousand, two thousand, and five thousand men. Ultimately, he also needed someone to command ten thousand men. Clearly, these positions would be offered to the highest-ranking experts, with most of these top-level orders assigned to Emperor-level experts. Generals would obviously be Saints.

Each Saint oversaw approximately ten thousand men, most of whom were Kings, with about one-third being Emperors. Yan Xiaobao couldn't ascertain who was the best, so he sat down and wrote to each Saint. In one letter, he informed them he had decided who would participate in the war, and he instructed the Saints Team to select their five highest-ranking Emperors. These Emperors would become the commanders of the military camps.

As he thought through this structure, he slowly began to bring order to the new army. First, he wanted the soldiers to form teams of five. Among these five people, there would be a captain. Each five-person team would be part of a thousand-man unit, controlled by a commander known as the Thousand-man Commander.

Two groups of one thousand experts would be controlled by a Two-Thousand-man Commander, and eventually these two thousand-man groups, along with an additional thousand-man unit, would be commanded by a Five-Thousand-man Commander. The highest-ranking holy knight team in the army would be commanded by the Ten-Thousand-man Commander, who oversaw two five-thousand-man groups.

Thousand-man Commanders, Two-Thousand-man Commanders, and Five-Thousand-man Commanders each had two lieutenants. All commanders and lieutenants were Emperor-level experts, though it was left to the Saints who knew them best to decide who went where.

While drafting these documents, Yan Xiaobao was fully immersed in his writing, paying no attention to what was happening within his body. He knew many changes were occurring, but he still didn't know the extent of those changes. So far, the only thing he had experienced was the increase in external power from the gemstone within his Dantian Cave, not to mention the renewal of all his cells caused by Wu Wei.

The entire night was spent writing. Yan Xiaobao was so busy that he didn't even have time to cultivate. Yet even so, while he was busy writing, his body continued to absorb the pulses of red energy emitted by the red gemstone. The gemstone gradually grew smaller with each pulse of energy, shrinking from the size of a fist to the size of a thumbnail.

As Yan Xiaobao finally finished writing the message he planned to send to the Lords the next day, the moon had already risen high in the sky. These documents would outline which Lords would remain to join the war and request details about their Emperor Guards.

Realizing he could do no more, with several hours of bright moonlight still ahead, the young man opened the window and positioned himself so that the moonlight could be absorbed as he began cultivating.

This was his first time cultivating at night, and a new tingling sensation appeared in his heart. He felt a new energy, one he had never experienced before. As he examined it more closely, Yan Xiaobao could sense all the essence of heaven and earth, enveloped in a thin white mist surrounding him like a membrane. This membrane contained pure Yin Energy.

As the energy flowed through his meridians, the white energy slowly transferred from the raw essence of nature and earth into the upper Dantian, where it was refined into Qi. In the upper Dantian, it merged with a mist-like black energy similar to the white energy. The two intertwined, and their combined color

turned into pure gold. Then the golden mist gradually entered the golden sphere at the center of the upper Dantian. The sphere now shone brighter than ever before, emitting golden light with increased intensity. Even so, Yan Xiaobao felt that although he had refined a significant amount of energy, he was still only at the early stage of King-level cultivation.

Noticing how the brief changes under the moonlight had profoundly affected him and his energy, Yan Xiaobao spent the rest of the night under the descending glow of the moonlight. He cultivated until dawn, when sunlight finally broke through the sky. Feeling satisfied, Yan Xiaobao stood up and stretched his body. Normally, he would sit on his bed to cultivate, but tonight he had been seated on the cold stone floor, leaving him sorer than usual.

His blue eyes were filled with a calmness he had never possessed before. Although he missed his friends back in the Capital, he knew he had to focus entirely on what was happening around him and could not allow himself to dwell on what he had left behind. Preparing for war was among these responsibilities. After the war was over, Yan Xiaobao would return to his friends. Until then, he would focus solely on securing victory for the beasts.

Grabbing the letters, each sealed with Qi, ensuring they wouldn't be opened before reaching the Lords they were intended for, Yan Xiaobao immediately left the room. He set out to find a guard he could entrust with delivering the letters. He personally had other matters to attend to.

"Hey, you there!" Yan Xiaobao shouted as he spotted a guard in the distance. Pure luck quickly brought the guard within reach, and the young man smiled brightly. "I need you to deliver these letters to the Lords whose names are written on them. You are absolutely not allowed to open these letters. They are extremely important," he continued, though the guard, wishing he could refuse, knew doing so would only bring trouble upon himself. Hearing there were sixty-four letters, the guard sighed, wondering why his luck was so terrible. Though unhappy with his task, he promptly turned around and sought out the first Lord, Wan Qiao.

Chapter 597 Another Unknown Phenomenon_3

Seeing this, Yan Xiaobao went to the guards' training ground. The area was as empty and desolate as before. It was unoccupied because most of the guards had moved outside the city gates. Sitting down, the young man decided to see if he could convince the blue cloud to congeal into a form within his Dantian. Yan Xiaobao sat on the hard, rocky ground and entered his consciousness. When he arrived within his lower Dantian, he immediately noticed that the gemstone had shrunk until it was even smaller than a thumbnail. It was now as tiny as a grain of rice, yet even so, it still sent out pulses of energy, although these pulses were much weaker than before.

Yan Xiaobao was delighted to know that the gemstone remained active, because this meant that memories would solidify faster than with most other phenomena. This was entirely different from the green pearl, which took a long time to fuse with Yan Xiaobao. However, despite its pulsations, the red gemstone had used up so much energy that it still trailed far behind the blue cloud. Yan Xiaobao shifted his attention from the small gem-like particle to the immense blue cloud patiently hovering in the cavern. With a single thought, the blue cloud rolled forward, surging to encompass his entire meridian system. It spread outward, blanketing everything in a vast sea of blue clouds.

"Ah, how comfortable!" Yan Xiaobao exclaimed in excitement, his voice trembling as he felt warmth enshroud and nourish him. This also caused an increase in the density of the surrounding essence of heaven and earth.

Sitting still, Hui Yue refined Qi, and as he did, he also created traces of black mist one after another. This energy, separate from the essence of heaven and earth, surged rapidly toward the upper Dantian, where it floated around a golden sphere. Watching this, Yan Xiaobao realized that what he was refining was Yang Energy, and the energy he had gained far surpassed what he usually absorbed at night. Refining Yin Energy, though it felt impactful, was in truth like a single drop in a roaring ocean. There simply wasn't enough capacity to perfect all the Yang Energy within Yan Xiaobao's body.

"Stop cultivating," Lan Feng said in a sharp, irritable voice, immediately halting Yan Xiaobao's actions. The young man was deeply confused, but he dared not contradict the Phoenix. Though the beast was not physically powerful, it still held vast knowledge.

"If you keep refining Yang Energy incessantly, your martial power will become imbalanced. Once your energy becomes imbalanced, correcting it will be much harder. That's why Xu Biao and Xie Lan never spent all their time solely on cultivation, unlike those youngsters in the Shrine. What you need is enlightenment and Yin Energy. There are many ways to acquire Yin Energy. I've already explained cold and midnight training using medicinal pills and herbal medicine. Another method is to take a woman's virginity. Personally, I think that's the best way, but unfortunately, there's a lack of beautiful birds in this place. On the other hand, if it were Sha Yun..." The bird's voice trailed off awkwardly as it cleared its throat. "As I was saying, there are many ways to gain Yin Energy, so if you truly wish to train rigorously, the only thing you're allowed to cultivate is your external strength. Train your body and absorb all the Yin Energy you possibly can."

With weight bearing down on his body, Yan Xiaobao felt himself approaching his physical limits. His teeth clenched tightly, and determination burned in his eyes as he continued to whisper to himself, "One more step. Just one more step." It seemed as though something deep within him was compelling him to push further. His steady, fast pace had slowed, but no matter how much it faltered, his trembling legs continued to move. He never stopped until a surge of power flooded through his entire body. It felt

as if a fresh wave of energy had emerged from some deep, hidden place. The moment that energy surfaced, Yan Xiaobao stopped running. As he gasped for breath, his hands rested heavily on his thighs.

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Chapter 598 Pushing One's Limits

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Although he had just gained some additional energy, this energy came from his own limits. If he continued what he was doing and expended a lot of effort, it was very likely to have adverse effects, rather than positive ones.

After finishing his routine, Yan Xiaobao did not stop training. Following the exercise for his legs, as soon as he managed to hold his breath, he shifted focus to other parts of his body. The young man embarked on a series of movements, training every muscle from his fingers to his toes.

Each time Yan Xiaobao trained a specific muscle, he continued until this external energy manifested, proving he had broken through yet another limit for that muscle. Wan Qiao had taught him this limit training method, which had already bestowed immense strength and greater endurance upon him. Strengthening his body greatly bolstered his cultivation path.

After finishing his training, Yan Xiaobao picked up a towel to wipe the sweat flowing down his forehead. Only then did he notice that his training had attracted quite a large audience. The spectators were a mixture of the Forest King and High-level Emperors. Initially startled by the presence of all these experts, Yan Xiaobao quickly observed that every Lord in front of him was someone he selected to participate in the upcoming war. The Emperors stood as experts most likely to serve as low-level military Commanders.

Faced with this sight, Yan Xiaobao could not help but smile. He stood before the most esteemed experts in the Divine Domain; all waiting for him—the one who had recently ascended to King-level. After spending most of the day training rigorously, he was drenched in sweat. He had been so focused on his training that he hadn't noticed many experts gathering around him.

"Apologies," he spoke in a clear voice. "I am sorry to have kept you all waiting," he continued. Though his tone didn't convey genuine remorse, many experts still accepted his words gracefully. Some had waited hours for Yan Xiaobao to finish his training. Truth be told, while all these experts were familiar

with limit training, only a few truly persisted in pushing their limits. Seeing someone capable of breaching one limit after another left everyone present—experts included—with a fresh impression of this young man.

"I regret to ask, but I would like all of you to form a line. The Lords should follow behind their respective Emperors. I don't mind your status; I only need to see all of you clearly." He spoke aloud, with a voice imbued with a certain degree of authority. Even though the figures before him were far more powerful, not to mention revered in the forest, Yan Xiaobao held his ground and issued simple commands to everyone present.

Initially, the Emperors anticipated resistance from the Lords against the orders of this meager King. They thought they could easily crush him. But when they saw the Lords nodding and immediately complying with his instructions, everyone was taken aback.

Facing the multitude of experts before him, Yan Xiaobao showed no signs of intimidation. He knew he was indispensable, and he was well-aware that the Lords valued him for his ability to mobilize war. Standing before him were the cornerstones of his army. Watching the men standing in a long line, Yan Xiaobao finally understood that his task was to build an army. His eyes turned solemn as he took several steps back, clenching his fists.

"Lord Pan, please step forward," Yan Xiaobao called out. His voice resonated as the man—whom Yan Xiaobao had the fortune to meet a few times—walked forward, followed by four other experts. The elderly figure with pure white hair held his head high with a faint smile. His demeanor betrayed no emotion, as though everything was kept beneath the surface. Even Yan Xiaobao felt a chill the moment he sensed the man's power standing before him. Closing his eyes briefly, Yan Xiaobao quickly opened them to reveal no trace of fear. All that could be seen in his deep, icy-blue eyes was determination and authority—the authority to decide the fate of the many experts before him. Yan Xiaobao was building an army, and all Lords were bound to comply with his every command.

The number of Saints within Divine Origin was unclear. While there were sixty-four Forest Kings, this did not imply only sixty-four Saints existed. Roughly once every century, a challenge would arise to claim the seat of a Forest King. In the vast jungles of the Divine Domain, numerous hidden experts dwelled, preferring a life of isolation.

The only Saints who had been invited were Wan Qiao and the sixty-four Lords. However, neither Yan Xiaobao nor Wan Qiao were aware that many hidden experts had sensed shifts within Divine Origin and thus surfaced in the Capital. They were gathering to acquire all the information they could. As for their opinions on the impending war with humans, that was something no one knew.

Currently, forty of the sixty-four Lords stood in the training grounds. Aside from the Lords, everyone else lined up and awaited Hui Hui's plans.

"Greetings, Lord Pan," Yan Xiaobao said as he bowed deeply to the esteemed expert. "I see you've brought four other experts. Please introduce them to me."

Without a moment's hesitation, Lord Pan began to respond to the young man, "This is Hu Min," he said, signaling for one of the experts to step forward. The mentioned expert immediately moved ahead and gave Yan Xiaobao a deep bow. Though he wasn't entirely certain who this young man was, he witnessed the immense respect the Forest Kings were showing him. For a minor Emperor like Hu Min, opposing such figures was unthinkable.

Chapter 599 Pushing One's Limits_2

"Hu Min is my rear guard commander. He is a peak-stage Emperor, on the verge of becoming a Saint. He is the strongest in my army," Lord Pan continued. Hearing this, Yan Xiaobao nodded. He made his decision on who would become Lord Pan's Commander of Ten Thousand People.

Mr. Pan went through the four people in his group and introduced them all. There were a total of four individuals, and after the introductions, Yan Xiaobao frowned.

"These are four experts, but each army needs five specialists. We will divide some armies into groups of a thousand. Each of these groups will have a Thousand-man Commander. Other armies will be divided into groups of two thousand and five thousand. Some will remain as ten-thousand-man units. Each of these groups will be controlled by a commander. The stronger the commander, the more troops they will lead. The reason we need armies of various sizes is because they must handle different tasks during the war. I will let you choose which experts will serve as your commanders. Ensure there are five commanders present tomorrow for each group."

"Next is Lord Jiang," Yan Xiaobao called out, and another Lord stepped forward. This Lord, accompanied by five experts, came forward. Looking at this small group, Yan Xiaobao couldn't help but nod. All of them were evidently killing machines. They were all the same type of magical beasts—large cat-like creatures with two prominent fangs, razor-sharp claws, and a bloodthirsty expression.

"Introduce yourself and your followers," Yan Xiaobao said, and the feline Lord did just that. Following him, another summoned expert appeared. Hours later, all the Lords were introduced to Yan Xiaobao.

The young man gave them all the same order: ensure the commanders appear at the training grounds the next day. Doing some calculations, he requested forty Forest Kings to take part in this war. Each Lord commanded ten thousand guards, totaling four hundred thousand troops. Each Lord's army required eighteen commanders, summing up to seven hundred and twenty commanders. Yan Xiaobao had to ensure everyone was trained and ready for war. Watching the experts leave the training grounds, only one expert remained behind, letting out a sigh.

Yan Xiaobao sighed deeply, suddenly realizing the enormity of the task he had taken on—it was almost too much for him. However, as he stood still, watching all the Lords leave, he sighed again and turned around. In front of him now stood Wan Qiao, who had been waiting all along.

"You've done well," she said with a smile on her face. "I think you're as excited about this war as I am, aren't you?" she asked curiously. A faint smile appeared on Yan Xiaobao's lips. Was he excited? Of course, he was. This was his chance to prove himself, but the sheer level of power he was tasked to command and train made him nauseous. He honestly doubted whether he had enough knowledge and skill to lead them all to victory.

"Wan Qiao, do we happen to have any very small magical beasts? Perhaps some from the rodent family, or creatures like bats?" Yan Xiaobao suddenly asked the slightly surprised woman, and upon hearing the question, she started to ponder deeply. After some thought, she nodded.

"We have some cultivators from the rat family," she responded. "The strongest is an Emperor, and the other three are Kings. What do you need them for?"

"While I hope the Siban Empire acts according to my plan, I don't know if they will," Yan Xiaobao sighed. "Having some smaller creatures infiltrate the Imperial Castle could give us insight into what they are scheming." His suggestion made Wan Qiao nod. Their actions might deviate from expectations.

"Don't worry about that part," Wan Qiao said after some consideration. "I will handle it. All you need to do is focus on forming an army from these guards. As long as we have a strong army, we will win this war. Intelligence gathering is my responsibility. Any information I gather will be sent directly to you," she said seriously. Yan Xiaobao nodded gratefully, knowing that if he had to both prepare the army and handle reconnaissance, he would be doomed to fail.

"Thank you for your help," Yan Xiaobao said as he was about to leave. But before he could go anywhere, his hand was grabbed by Wan Qiao, who, with a mysterious smile, began dragging the young man toward the castle. Confused about what was happening, Yan Xiaobao allowed himself to be pulled along. He knew Wan Qiao was far stronger than him, so even if he wanted to resist, it would be impossible.

Wan Qiao didn't lead Yan Xiaobao toward his usual quarters. Instead, he was dragged toward the Wing Building where Wan Qiao's room was located. All the Lords lived in the same area.

They rushed into a very luxurious wing, heading away from Wan Qiao's room. After walking quickly for a few minutes, they arrived at a door carved from heavy wood, adorned with intricate artwork depicting various magical beasts.

"Who lives here?" Yan Xiaobao asked, looking at the massive door in front of him with curiosity. Contrary to his expectations, Wan Qiao immediately opened the door without knocking or showing any form of warning before entering. While Yan Xiaobao would have preferred to announce his arrival first, he had no choice but to follow Wan Qiao in, his eyes scanning the beautiful room around him.

They had entered what appeared to be a living room. Fine furniture occupied the center of the room: the highest-quality sofas, chairs, and tables. In one corner, a desk and a comfortable chair served as a small office space.

Yan Xiaobao walked through the room and discovered an adjoining bedroom and bathroom. Both were enormous and fully furnished. The bedroom contained a bed three times the size of any bed he had used before. The bathroom had a large pool, big enough to accommodate dozens of people. The water seemed to be heated by a hot spring beneath the room.

Once again, Yan Xiaobao wondered who lived here, but he said nothing. Instead, he looked at Wan Qiao, silently waiting for an explanation. It wasn't long before she spoke: "You are the Great Marshall of our war. You can't live in such a small room as before." She smiled as she held up a Memory Stone, the key to the room she was gifting the young man. "Welcome to the high society of Divine Domain experts." Her face lit up with a grin. Hearing her words, Yan Xiaobao couldn't help but give a wry smile. Although he wasn't a Forest King, he was indeed a prominent figure of the Divine Domain. He nodded gratefully and then moved toward the desk, immediately beginning his work. There was still much to do before tomorrow, as he would meet all the commanders for the first time.

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The journey through the Siban Empire was a grueling trek for Li Meilin. Months ago, when she had visited the Divine Origin delegation, she had taken this same path; now, she was the lone survivor. She carried information the Emperor urgently needed and was racing back to the Capital. Determination burned in her eyes. For a long time, she had stopped fearing to act according to the will of the beasts.

As an Emperor herself, her speed was astonishing; however, while she could run exceptionally fast on the ground, her speed was nothing compared to the One-Horned Eagle that could have carried her to the border like a blazing candle. If it were with her, she would have reached the Capital in one or two days. Li Meilin dismissed her naive thoughts as absurd. She pushed herself to the limit, sprinting relentlessly toward the Capital without taking a moment's rest.

As Li Meilin raced through rural Siban, a pang of sadness struck her heart, knowing that if war broke out, these small villages on the Empire's outskirts would undoubtedly suffer immense devastation.

Seeing this thought solidify, the chill in her beautiful eyes turned to ice. She accelerated, determined to aid anyone who needed her, as she charged directly toward the Capital.

Reaching the Capital after running for a week non-stop, her only nourishment had been the essence of heaven and earth. Without resting, she pushed her speed to its limits. When she finally arrived at the Capital, many guards immediately recognized her and sent word to the Royal Palace: Senior Observer Li had returned.

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Chapter 600: Not Enough to Defeat the Emperor

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Passing through the city gates, Yan Xiaobao couldn't help but take a deep breath. Tents were scattered everywhere, and guards were moving about constantly. It was as if he were gazing at a beehive—constant activity surrounded him. The buzzing murmur of thousands of people talking echoed throughout the area as guards shuffled from one post to another.

The experts in the area paid no attention to the young man weaving through the rows of tents. None of them would ever suspect that this young figure before them might be the Great Marshall—the one leading everyone, deciding personnel placements, and strategizing their moves. In truth, if anyone were

to make such a claim among the gathered masses here, they'd surely be met with uproarious laughter and outright disbelief.

Yan Xiaobao paid no mind to their skepticism. He knew that as the sun sat high in the sky, the guards would be gathered together fully, and at that moment, everyone would come to know the identity of the Great Marshall. Yan Xiaobao was acutely aware of how many people would feel insulted by having to take orders from a young man—someone likely the youngest among them now and someone whose strength alone might not even rival the likes of the Emperor. And yet, he knew the same truth: the time of revelation would come under the noonday sun, and the collective disbelief would have nowhere to hide.

With a sigh, Yan Xiaobao could understand why so many men might grumble. This was a world where power dictated one's future achievements, yet even those lacking raw strength as cultivators could possess cunning and wisdom. Though they were often deemed lesser experts compared to their peers, their insight was still held in high regard. Yan Xiaobao hoped he could embody such qualities—to win over not just the Emperor and Saints, but also the hearts of the common soldiers. The moment had arrived for them to acknowledge his leadership.

Reaching the heart of the camp, Yan Xiaobao spotted a massive arena erected boldly in its center. On the arena platform, a group of guards sparred fiercely against each other, engaging in training drills while honing their combat skills. On the surrounding ground below, many guards gathered to cheer on various experts participating in the friendly yet competitive exhibitions. Everywhere Yan Xiaobao looked, the sight of skill and camaraderie was evident as the vibrant camp bustled with activity.

However, the experts fighting on the arena weren't just training for the sake of improvement; many were competing for the attention of the faction leaders. Despite temporarily uniting as an army, Yan Xiaobao could distinctly observe the lingering presence of multiple factions within their ranks. A knowing smile spread across his lips as he realized the potential to exploit this inter-faction rivalry, using it not only to boost morale but to enhance the army's overall combat effectiveness. Squinting at the experts battling before him, he watched the exchanges of blows and skillful maneuvers, his smile deepening in appreciation for their adept displays, accompanied by the electrifying cheers from the crowd.

Training these guards into fully-fledged soldiers might not prove as difficult as he'd initially thought. He even entertained the notion that convincing the experts to transform into soldiers might be easier than persuading their commanders had previously been. With a faint smile on his lips, Yan Xiaobao entertained a pleasant calculation—not needing the entire gathered force of forty thousand, but crafting an elite army of fourteen thousand would suffice.

Finding this idea both clever and promising, Yan Xiaobao couldn't suppress a soft chuckle as he let the thought steadily grow. He pressed onward, nearing the arena, his observant eyes soaking in the bustling expanse. Wherever he turned, more and more experts were making their way toward the arena—some drawn by the thrill of dueling, others simply curious to witness the spectacle, and the majority eager to uncover the identity and prowess of the elusive Great Marshall. Was he the legendary Forest King? If so, many believed he was their rightful master. Could he be some secret, enigmatic expert whose name was unknown? Or perhaps Wan Qiao? Each expert held their own vision of what the Great Marshall might be, yet none could have predicted the young man standing in the front row, a faint smile playing on his lips as he observed the battles from his prime vantage point.

The sun climbed steadily in the sky, inching closer to the moment designated for the Great Marshall's arrival. Yan Xiaobao remained stationed in the front row, quietly watching as the arena slowly cleared of combatants. With each victory declared, the Emperor Expert emerged to escort the participants away from the platform, ensuring no one remained behind to spark another unplanned contest.

Initially, when Yan Xiaobao had arrived, the sheer density of the crowd had allowed for a clearer view of the arena proceedings. But as time passed, the growing influx of guards rendered visibility increasingly strained. The scene had transformed into a sea of cultivators, gathered thickly around the arena in anticipation. Despite its enormous size, the arena now felt constricted with seven or eight hundred experts packed elbow to elbow. Even so, a small podium stood prominently before them all—prepared specifically for the Great Marshall Yan Xiaobao.

Finally, as the sun reached its zenith, Yan Xiaobao began ascending one of the staircases leading toward the arena. Yet, with each step closer, the jeers and sharp remarks from the crowd grew louder: "You fool, you can't enter the arena now! Can't you see the crowd of experts here?" "Don't push—just stand back and enjoy the show!" "Idiot, do you think you're worth watching like these experts are?"