

Medical 601

Chapter 601: Not Enough to Defeat the Emperor_2

Although all the comments were incredibly hostile, Yan Xiaobao paid them no attention. He continued to walk toward the stairs, his movements in the audience quickly catching the Emperor's notice. As they watched the young man heading toward the arena, their faces were full of smiles. While some commanders were still uncertain about their feelings toward this youth, they all respected him. Despite their respect and willingness to obey his orders, they still felt he was both too young and too weak to genuinely back his statements with strength.

It was his understanding of War Art that had allowed Yan Xiaobao to reach his current level. Though he did tell Wan Qiao about reincarnation, he had never mentioned War Art. When the topic of his rebirth came up, they weren't thinking about war, and he naturally didn't either. Later, when she brought up the matter of war, Yan Xiaobao did speak about the art of war; however, he didn't elaborate on his knowledge of the book and never asked about it. When he needed to make excuses for Lord Pan, it seemed Wan believed him as well. Whether that person or she was an excellent actor or not, Yan Xiaobao decided it didn't matter. What mattered now was whether he could convince everyone that the art of war was the key to victory.

He paused for a moment as he approached the stairs. Lost in thought, his eyes had grown vacant; however, when he stepped closer to the stairs, his gaze was fixed on his tightly clenched fists. His actions continued to draw hostile commentary, raindrops pelting him, but the young man ignored them as he took his first step onto the staircase.

"Ha, that kid needs to learn his limits! He'll be crushed by those emperors. Death comes too easily for the arrogant!"

"Haha, who does he think he is? A useless fledgling King daring to share a stage with so many experts in our forest?"

The entire audience mocked him, eagerly anticipating the punishment the young man was bound to receive, with everyone reveling in their hostility. Knowing full well the malice directed at him, Yan Xiaobao did nothing but sigh. He climbed another step, still undeterred by these experts. Step by step, the tension grew thicker, as though it could be sliced apart with a blade. Everyone unexpectedly held their breath as they watched, uncertain of what was happening or when the young man would be dragged away.

Finally, Yan Xiaobao stepped onto the arena floor, and as he did, everyone leaned forward. This was surely the moment he would be punished, yet when the commanders on stage showed no signs of moving against him, a collective gasp filled the air. Instead, they all slightly lowered their heads, making room for him to continue toward the podium.

Every individual on the podium was filled with surprise, shock, and disbelief. Murmurs rippled across the surrounding area, fragments of sentences barely audible. "What's he doing up there?" "Who is this person?" "Why does he look so weak?" "Is this for real?"

As Yan Xiaobao stood on the podium and cleared his throat, the questions directed toward the young man continued unabated. This gesture quieted many experts, who stared at the youth in disbelief. The young man was said to be weaker than them, and much younger. Some experts recognized him from the training grounds, while others had never laid eyes on him before.

"Good day," Yan Xiaobao said in a crisp, resonant voice, loud enough to reach every corner of the area, his words ringing crystal clear to every expert listening. All eyes fixed on him, some squinting in skepticism and others widening in shock. Yet, it seemed no one was truly concentrating on his words.

"I am Yan Xiaobao, the one granted the rank of Great Marshall," he declared, his voice loud once more, ensuring the experts heard every word. Understanding, however, seemed to elude them.

Realizing that no one was truly paying attention to what he was saying, Yan Xiaobao sighed again and paused. He said nothing more, simply eyeing the many experts in front of him. After deliberating for a moment, he wondered how he might capture their interest or, at the very least, help them set aside doubts about his rank so they could function normally. Suddenly, an idea struck him.

"I'm here representing your Lord," his voice rang out again. As soon as the Lords were mentioned, it was as if the cultivators in front of Xu Yue snapped out of their daze. Eyes widened, and backs straightened.

"The Lords have decided to appoint me as Great Marshall for this war. Though I may not be as strong as you. Though I may not be a seasoned duelist, nor truly grasp the honor of a cultivator at my young age, there is one thing I understand deeply—war!"

"What we're facing is not a tournament; we're not here to crown the strongest among our ranks. This isn't a petty squabble with another Kingdom; this is war! A war filled with blood, despair, and death! In war, you don't battle a single opponent. You put all your strength into killing anything that isn't an ally."

"If you wish to earn glory for your Lords, you must win this war!"

"We will form forty armies, each controlled by your respective Upper Houses! Should any army fail, the loss will be catastrophic for your Lords. Survive for your self-interest, but more importantly, fight so your Lords may gain face!"

"I need each of you to assemble into forty groups. Gather under the banners of your respective Lords!" Yan Xiaobao finally roared, standing firm as his gaze swept over the many experts before him, his arms crossed against his chest. His eyes were sharp with impatience as he stared at the cultivators before him, his fingers drumming lightly on his arm, signaling his irritation.

Seeing his impatience, the experts behind him felt a sudden surge of danger. The Commander of Ten Thousand People leaped off the stage and promptly arranged himself in a precise line. Ten commanders stepped forward, forming the starting points of forty straight lines, each comprised of ten thousand experts in rows. Surveying the cultivators neatly aligned before him, Yan Xiaobao felt exhilarated, a smile spreading across his face.

"These forty armies will be assigned individual tasks," Yan Xiaobao continued, "but before that, I need every one of you to form groups of five. Create a group of five and listen carefully to your commander's instructions. I need to revise some arrangements and strategies."

Having completed these instructions, Yan Xiaobao stepped down from the podium and headed back toward the stairs. He knew the commanders were better suited to persuading these experts of the benefits of group coordination.

As he left the arena, Yan Xiaobao wore a smile, observing how the commanders divided the many guards into groups of five. The commanders' faces were grave and serious as they stared down at the experts under their command. Though they had never commanded anyone before, they naturally found confidence by repeating Yan Xiaobao's words from the previous day. His speech convinced them that while they were cultivators, this wasn't their forte—they needed to act as soldiers. Here and there, the commanders maintained harsh expressions as they explained to lower-ranked experts the importance of these arrangements. Witnessing their efforts, Yan Xiaobao couldn't help but feel a sense of satisfaction.

Once again, the young man walked through the tented encampment, but this time, everything felt entirely different. Earlier, Yan Xiaobao had been surrounded by bustling activity, with people rushing back and forth; now, it felt completely empty. The tents stood there, swaying in the breeze, but no one was nearby to see them.

Yan Xiaobao made his way back through the city gates and entered the bustling city. Everything was as it had been in the morning, the air saturated with a sense of anticipation and excitement, as though a festival were underway.

Returning to the castle, Yan Xiaobao greeted the guards and servants he encountered on his way back to his room. However, the closer he approached his quarters, the more Saints appeared. One after another, they sought to inquire about the details of his speech. Some asked about his performance, while others were curious about the reception he had received.

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Chapter 602: The Man Who Once Left the Divine Domain

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When Li Meilin headed to the Imperial Palace, she was astonished to see a group of guards come out to greet her and take her directly to meet the Emperor, who was waiting to hear what she had to say.

The Emperor sat on his throne, dressed in royal attire, holding the Royal Seal in his hand, patiently awaiting Li Meilin's arrival into the hall. One side of the grand hall was filled with officials, nobles, and everyone of high rank within the Siban Empire. All were eager to hear what Li Meilin had to say. She was the only person to have ever returned from the Divine Domain.

Accompanied by a large group of knights, all clad in the Emperor's crimson uniform, it was evident these experts were members of the Royal Guard, the finest protectors in all of Siban. The fact that Li Meilin was escorted under their watchful protection demonstrated the Emperor's level of importance placed upon her.

Li Meilin was picked up from a marketplace in town, and now she was being escorted by twenty men dressed in red. Their pace slowed as they spent nearly two hours crossing through the bustling city. With the news of Li Meilin's return spreading like wildfire across the capital, even the typically quiet

residential areas were teeming with crowds. Everyone wanted to catch a glimpse of this woman—the first person to emerge from the Divine Domain.

Finally, after hours of snail-like movement, Li Meilin saw the Imperial Palace before her. Her heart tightened with anxiety, anticipating the weighty topics she was about to raise with the Emperor. Although his cultivation might pale in comparison to hers, he was still the leader of the entire Spanish Empire—a figure Li Meilin deeply respected and would do anything for.

After traversing countless halls and corridors, they finally reached the hall where the Emperor welcomed his subjects. As soon as the guards spotted Li Meilin, they swung open the grand doors and loudly announced: "Ms. Li, High-Level Governor of the Divine Domain delegation."

Once her name was called, murmurs erupted within the hall as the nobles and officials stirred, unable to keep their voices in check. The experts had returned, and rightly so, everyone felt a wave of excitement. Yet questions lingered about how Li Meilin survived, especially when the delegation's leading Saint appeared to have perished—a man considered the most powerful among the group. Even so, it seemed he succumbed to the lands of the Divine Domain.

The noise grew louder as she entered the room, though it was impossible to grasp every conversation simultaneously. Upon reaching the center of the hall, Li Meilin stopped and knelt deeply before the Emperor, a man she highly revered.

When the Emperor raised his hand, the room fell into silence; no one dared utter a word. Everyone held their breath as quietly as possible, doing everything they could to avoid attracting the Emperor's attention.

"Ms. Li Meilin, we are thrilled to see you have successfully escaped the borders of the Divine Origin. We presume you have much information to share with us."

Upon hearing his words, Li Meilin nodded and slowly rose to her feet. She bowed deeply to the Emperor, keeping her upper body bent forward. She dared not raise her head, as it might seem disrespectful.

"We entered the Divine Domain as planned, but the first thing we encountered was a village inhabited by humanoid magical beasts." She began to recount the events from the very beginning. "God decreed

that we must enslave and destroy this city. After that, we were to execute anyone unworthy of being enslaved."

"The beasts we encountered were unable to fight, so the battle was over much sooner than we expected. Once the slaves were bound, we continued our march through the forest."

"The Divine Domain is a forest?" The Emperor questioned, startling Li Meilin for forgetting this detail. "The Divine Domain is an enormous jungle. The entire nation is a forest. I apologize for that oversight," she stammered, her heart racing in her chest.

"Proceed," the Emperor said, as if he didn't much care. Relieved, Li Meilin continued her tale.

"All we saw was an endless forest and magical beasts. Within the vast expanse of trees, no ordinary beasts were present—only humanoid beasts and magical beasts lived within. Our journey progressed slowly, but eventually, we encountered a group of humanoid beasts. All of them were Kings or Emperors, except their leader, who was a Saint. When they attacked us, their leader toyed with ours effortlessly. Killing him was hardly a challenge for her, and freeing the slaves felt like a mere stroll in the park. I was the sole survivor, for some reason—the beasts brought me to their capital and allowed me to live. If I had to guess why they spared me, it would be because I opposed the enslavement of their people."

"The Divine Domain's capital is akin to one of our cities, but it's filled with humanoid beasts rather than humans. They resemble humans in appearance but possess distinct beastly features. I was granted permission to reside in the castle of the Divine Origin Queen herself. Soon, I uncovered some troubling information. The Divine Domain is divided into sixty-six counties, each ruled by a Forest King. To become a Forest King, one must be a Holy Name Expert."

"What?!" Shock and disbelief washed over the crowd. Everyone forgot their obligation to remain silent. They were astounded to learn that at least sixty-four Saints resided within the Divine Domain. Sixty-four Saints far exceeded what the Siban Empire currently possessed. At most, Siban had half that number. Though the Empire was proud to boast the most Saints across the African continent's three other kingdoms, the revelation of the Divine Domain having so many experts left the crowd overwhelmed by terror and awe.

Chapter 603: The Man Who Once Left the Divine Domain_2

Here is the requested translation:

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"Your Majesty, the situation is getting worse," Li Meilin whispered. Her words immediately silenced the entire hall. Everyone stared at her in shock.

"The reason they made me leave the Divine Domain is that they started something they didn't want me to know. Inside the Divine Domain, there is a half-human, half-beast individual. This person warned me that the Divine Domain is preparing for war. They will either attack the Sun Kingdom or our Siban Empire. He comes from the Sun Kingdom, and the reason he warned me and helped me escape is to inform the Sun Empire. Clearly, the beast known as the Divine Origin Queen, Wan Qiao, plans to start a war against humanity to expand their empire."

The Emperor's face turned pale upon hearing this, but he wasn't the only one. Everyone present was now filled with anxiety. If there are 64 experts willing to go to war, who could possibly stop them? Based on their knowledge, no one could.

"I suspect they will deploy all 64 Chenyuan experts to the battlefield," she continued. "The Divine Domain has always been a coveted target for both the Sun Kingdom and us. If they leave it undefended, the Kingdom they choose not to attack might retaliate. However, their army isn't composed solely of Saints."

"Each of these experts commands ten thousand guards. These guards are not soldiers, but I assume that they could easily be used as such. Let's suppose only half of the Saints are mobilized for war; they would still have a large number of guards accompanying them. Even though these guards aren't soldiers, and our army outnumbers them four times over, all of their guards are experts ranked at the level of Kings or Emperors. In terms of quality, they far surpass our troops. We must also remember that these experts aren't human cultivators—they are magical beasts."

Li Meilin felt deeply troubled about their current predicament. Her heartbeat was irregular, and she closed her eyes, dreading what punishment might await her for delivering such bad news. Yet, when she secretly peeked at the worshipful figure before her, she didn't see fear of these events in his expression; rather, he seemed to be contemplating.

Silence prevailed in the hall, and no one dared to speak. After a moment's stillness, only the faint sound of sobbing could be heard. Evidently, the upper-class ladies were terrified by the information Li Meilin had just shared. Li Meilin herself was filled with unease and fear.

Finally, after a long pause, the Emperor spoke in a calm yet resolute voice.

"We appreciate the information you've brought us," he said. His voice resonated throughout the silent hall, drowning out the faint sobs that had been audible here and there. "We will meet with our Generals to discuss how to deal with these magical beasts. Although they are more numerous, we will not shirk our responsibility to protect our citizens." Hearing such words from the Emperor brought some relief to the nobles and officials present in the hall. If those guards from the Divine Origin chose to wage war against their Siban Empire, the outcome would be uncertain. These guards weren't soldiers, and while they were more powerful, the Empire still had a greater number of experts. Even if their opponents were Kings, though far superior to Dukes, how could they prevail if twenty or thirty Dukes attacked them simultaneously? Although most Kings would still hold an advantage, a battlefield is never ordinary. The Emperor wagered that they had the capacity to overpower smaller armies.

"Generals, attend me!" the Emperor shouted as he stood. Twenty men from the audience stepped forward with straight postures and solemn expressions. It was clear they understood the stakes of their participation in this meeting. As they approached, each of them bowed deeply to the Emperor. Once the Emperor stood upright, they all bowed again. All nobles and officials present in the room also knelt before the Emperor, waiting for him to leave.

"Oh," standing upright, the Emperor momentarily looked back as his gaze fell upon Li Meilin, who seemed young yet was a distinguished expert. "Li Meilin, you will accompany us. You are the only one who has entered the Divine Origin Jungle. Your assistance will be greatly valuable." He spoke firmly before walking toward the door behind the throne. As he departed, the Generals and Li Meilin bowed low, while the rest scrambled to follow the Emperor. All kept their heads lowered to avoid looking directly at him.

Although this Emperor was merely an expert from Duke University, he was feared even by most Saints across Spain. The reason wasn't merely his high status and royal lineage but also the two shadows that followed him. These shadows went unrecognized unless one held a Saint's rank. They were the Emperor's personal aides. When their strength was unleashed, no Saint in Siban could rival them. Even within the Divine Domain, the Emperor believed his two shadows would be capable of overcoming their opponents. Though the Lord he had previously sent to the Divine Domain was a Saint, he was merely the weakest among the Emperor's Saints. For the Emperor, it wasn't surprising that this Lord hadn't succeeded. What was truly astonishing was that Li Meilin had accomplished so much.

The following morning, Yan Xiaobao woke feeling both tired and excited. He had spent a great deal of time preparing to meet with numerous experts and to begin arranging for war. He would be addressing

an entire training ground filled with Emperor-ranked experts; their collective strength vastly exceeded that of their peers, and the thought left him slightly nervous.

The young man dressed himself and left the elegant room he had been given. As he stepped out, he discovered that the hallway outside wasn't as empty as he had expected. Instead, Lord Pan stood there with Wan Qiao and a small group of Lords. This took Yan Xiaobao by surprise; it was entirely unexpected.

Looking at them, he cleared his throat, "Forgive me; I was in a rush this morning. How may I assist you all?" He asked, puzzled. He wasn't sure why so many experts were waiting for him, but now that they were here, it would be rude not to listen to their concerns.

"Don't mind us," Lord Pan laughed when he saw the confusion on Yan Xiaobao's face. "We're merely here to observe how you plan to deal with the many Emperors waiting for you," he continued, revealing the intent of all the experts.

Learning the reason for their presence, Yan Xiaobao felt slightly bitter as he muttered to himself, "As if I'm not under enough pressure already, now these Lords think they can treat this like some form of entertainment."

"That's actually a good thing," Lan Feng pointed out upon hearing his complaints. "When the Lords come here, they're likely to lend their support. Having them observe might prevent any Emperor from testing your strength. To be honest, I don't think that will happen. But I do believe some Emperors might envy you and your position. However, as long as the Lords are present, they won't dare act out of jealousy."

"I guess you're right," Yan Xiaobao sighed as he glanced at the guards. Paying his respects to Lord Pan, Yan Xiaobao turned and quickly left the group of Lords behind. He could see them smiling and chatting among themselves as they followed him. All of them seemed eager to see what Yan Xiaobao planned for the guards awaiting him.

Crossing the castle grounds, Yan Xiaobao soon arrived at the training field. When he saw nearly a thousand Emperors standing before him, his throat suddenly went dry. All of the Emperors were watching the young man. Some had gentle smiles, others malicious expressions, while some looked serious, and others seemed mocking. Yet they all shared one thing in common—they were all staring at Yan Xiaobao. A few began conversing among themselves, while others remained silent. As Yan Xiaobao ascended the arena platform, he knew every Emperor could see him, just as he could see them all.

"I'm glad to see you all here today," Yan Xiaobao said with a smile. He made no effort to amplify his voice, simply letting his words carry. Not all the Emperors quieted down, so some details of his speech remained unheard by a portion of the crowd.

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Chapter 604: I am of No Use to You

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Yan Xiaobao didn't pay attention and continued speaking, "I want everyone to split up. The Thousand-man Commander over there. The Two Thousand-man Commander move here." Twice, he pointed toward different areas of the training grounds; however, considering that the Emperors were still conversing among themselves, many people couldn't hear his words. The young man ignored them and kept designating positions for the Five Thousand-man Commander and eventually pointed to the Commander of Ten Thousand People. Although he instructed the Emperors to find their positions, only a few were truly moved. Most of the others remained busy chatting, not paying attention to what he wanted them to do.

Seeing this, Yan Xiaobao's eyes darkened, and his voice, the same as it had been just moments before, rang out, "Those so-called experts who ignore me—I'll simply report to your Lord that you are useless to me. If you can't even follow a simple order, I can't trust you to be a commander in the army."

Though the tone of his voice was as strong as ever, his words instantly quieted the murmuring crowd, who now stared at Yan Xiaobao. Some experts opened their mouths, their expressions filled with disbelief, but when they looked at the young King standing in the arena, they saw a hard, unyielding face, void of any sign of regret. It was clear—he was completely serious.

Witnessing this sudden development unfold on stage, it wasn't long before all the experts began to compose themselves, arranging themselves by their rankings within the military hierarchy.

"This young man is truly skilled," one of the Lords remarked after seeing how Yan Xiaobao managed to bring order to all the experts. "Our Emperor may not know we're watching, but he's absolutely aware of it. To threaten them like this, all while knowing we're already observing everything... I can't wait to see what he'll do next."

As they continued to watch the experts standing before them, Yan Xiaobao's icy blue eyes remained merciless. Yan Xiaobao was fully aware that these so-called experts looked down on him—they were clearly displeased to have to follow his orders. On the other hand, Yan Xiaobao himself felt no satisfaction dealing with these so-called experts, as they didn't understand the true meaning of war.

"I am here to teach you the meaning of war," Yan Xiaobao proclaimed. This time, no one dared interrupt him as he spoke. Although Yan Xiaobao was weaker than them, they all knew one thing—he was here under orders from their Lord. To oppose him, to fail in battle, would shame their Lord. No guard could tolerate seeing their Lord humiliated. Thus, they all listened carefully to Yan Xiaobao's words.

"In war, what matters is not your personal honor, nor the glory of your Lords. In war, you are fighting for the Divine Domain, and to the Divine Domain, you are merely chess pieces ensuring victory in battle."

"Thousand-man Commanders, all those under you will be divided into groups of five. The primary task of these groups will be to ensure their survival. Survival and teamwork are the principles they must remember. Within these five-person teams, they must work together to destroy the waves of humans being sent against us. By having five experts look out for one another, none of the human onslaught should be able to kill even one of them while leaving the rest vulnerable. Even if this feels like the strong oppressing the weak, this is war. In such times, there is no room for honor or dignity. Anything goes in war—as long as it ensures victory, everything is permitted."

Yan Xiaobao's words left many experts looking at him in dejection. These were cultivators, not warriors. To them, fighting weaker enemies was already a lowly task, but to actively strategize against them—it felt even more disgraceful. What Yan Xiaobao was demanding of them went against everything they believed in. Even the Saints standing farther away, overhearing his words, had fallen silent at this moment.

Yan Xiaobao observed the dejected expressions and heaved a sigh. The pride ingrained in these guards was difficult to extinguish. Making them understand they had no choice but to succeed in war was an even greater challenge. Convincing them that unity was the key to defeating the waves of soldiers was the only way Yan Xiaobao could guarantee success in this war. Yet, figuring out how to achieve this monumental change in these proud cultivators was not something Yan Xiaobao felt entirely sure of.

Yan Xiaobao sighed again, gazing at the experts before him. "Do not think of war as a duel. This war is one we cannot afford to lose. We must claim victory, and to do so, we need to unleash our most powerful warriors to obliterate the Siban Empire's army. Although we are strong, the nation we are up against commands a vast army. As an Empire, their soldiers have been rigorously trained from the very beginning. Each one is prepared to lay down their life to win the war. They will carry out suicide attacks,

one after another. To them, death is a source of pride. They will continue attacking until they manage to kill even one of our experts. For them, sacrificing twenty ordinary soldiers to take the life of just one King-level expert would be cause for celebration. Now, tell me, although your rank far surpasses that of ordinary soldiers, do you possess the resolve to sacrifice your life for victory in this war? Do you have the courage to attack a Saint, even if it means trading your life for theirs?"

Chapter 605 I'm Useless to You_2

Every word Yan Xiaobao spoke deeply shocked the experts. To them, their lives were of paramount importance. They were still striving to become truly supreme cultivators and hoped to break through the bottlenecks they had encountered. Training and reaching the pinnacle of power to become Saints, like their respected Lords, was their ultimate goal.

When they heard Yan Xiaobao's words, their hearts trembled. The fact that they were willing to trade their lives deserved respect and was certainly something they had to acknowledge.

"If you want to survive, if you want to win this war for your Lords, then you must ensure that every group of five works together. Work collectively to maintain vitality while evading the army. We all hope to survive and cultivate after the war, but not everyone will. However, we can work together to reduce the number of casualties."

The initially reckless experts, who had been staring at Yan Xiaobao, started nodding their heads. Their hearts were filled with unwillingness and trampled dignity, but now they were filled with vigilance and anxiety. If the war was truly as dangerous as Yan Xiaobao described, it was clear they needed to alter their usual combat methods.

When they heard about the tactics the Siban Empire might employ, even the Saints listening felt fear. Waves of human soldiers could be resisted, but only up to a certain point. Utilizing martial power to kill many men might be a possible solution, but their attacks could only reach a limited number at once. Placing five Kings together to protect one another could indeed reduce their army's casualties. Listening to Yan Xiaobao thus far, the experts finally began to understand why only Kings were elevated to become Great Marshals. This young man seemed to be a cultivator like everyone else, but he understood how an army thinks and operates, something the Emperor had to admit they themselves didn't grasp.

After persuading the Emperor that the Five Nations Group must fight together to win this war, Yan Xiaobao no longer needed to deal with each King individually. They would be handled by the Emperor, most likely in a manner similar to how Yan Xiaobao had convinced him.

"Tomorrow, I want to address the entire army," Yan Xiaobao said. His voice resonated throughout the area, and everyone nodded in agreement. Unnoticed by all, the young man whom they once looked down upon was now an entity they revered. Upon reflecting, they couldn't understand how this youth had changed their minds with just a few sentences, but his words made sense. They felt as though they had been reprimanded; their way of life had been shaken.

They realized their previous lifestyle was the cultivator's way, but now their eyes had been opened. It was not the only path in life. The values they respected were not universal truths; others might assess things differently.

To them, despite being soldiers, they knew they weren't being asked to permanently change their values but only to set them aside temporarily during the war. In this conflict, survival outweighed fair combat; if they wished to win, they had to embrace the lifestyle of ordinary soldiers. For their Lords, this was something they could do.

Seeing the change in the Emperor's eyes, Yan Xiaobao felt satisfied. He nodded, smiled, and left the Emperor, heading to the room where he had been cultivating. Yan Xiaobao was ready for the next day; however, he was still excited and curious about how he would stand before forty thousand Kings and the Emperor.

Sitting in his room as the sky darkened and the moon rose, Yan Xiaobao sighed with emotion as he thought about how the Siban Empire was preparing for war. After achieving King-level, he was now allowed to leave the Divine Domain. Yet, although he longed to go to Sun City, the young man chose not to. Instead, he stayed to ensure the war proceeded as planned. He yearned to return, but he was even more eager to succeed in bringing this war to a victorious conclusion.

It had been a long time since he last saw his friends. That year, in the Shrine, and during the months spent in the Divine Domain, he had constantly been training. But when he finally achieved King-level, he did not head to the Capital as he had imagined. Instead, he was now occupied with planning a war, something he had never thought he would do.

The night passed like any other. The blue cloud enveloped the young man, enhancing Yan Xiaobao's cultivation speed. Sitting under the moonlight, the young man refined his energy to the best of his ability. His eyes were closed, and he appeared like a handsome figure as if from a Master craftsman's painting. Only upon careful observation could one see this handsome man breathing, proving he was a living being rather than a mere artwork.

Yan Xiaobao spent the rest of the night cultivating. When he woke, he prepared for the most significant day of his life—the day he would address the entire army for the first time. Ready, the young man left his room, only to find two Saints standing outside his door. Although both were Saints, he could tell that neither were Lords, and both seemed to possess power equivalent to Lan Feng but in a weakened state.

Yan Xiaobao was surprised to see the two Holy Name Experts at his doorstep. He became even more perplexed when the two Saints bowed deeply before him, and the first one spoke: "Lord Xu, we come from the Forest's Shadow. Our task is to ensure you suffer no misfortune while preparing for the war. Do not worry, you will never notice our protection. We will not interfere with your daily life."

Upon hearing this, Yan Xiaobao was astonished but felt grateful to Wan Qiao, as he was certain it was she who had assigned the two Saints to take care of him. As for the Forest's Shadow, Yan Xiaobao didn't know what it was. He guessed it was a group of experts dedicated to protecting key figures.

When the two Saints vanished into thin air, a third shadow appeared, and all three disappeared without a trace, leaving the young man under the protection of two new experts.

Walking out of the castle, Yan Xiaobao felt a strange calm descend upon him. Maintaining tranquil eyes, he traversed the city and moved toward the outer regions.

As Yan Xiaobao walked through the city, he noticed a buzz of activity. The townspeople were energetic, with smiles and excitement on their faces. The children and their parents seemed comforted by the notion that the beasts would go to war; they felt assured that their living space would expand. They would be able to travel freely once again.

Though many beasts had always lived in the Divine Domain, many had heard stories from their grandparents, tales of a time when beasts roamed freely across the continent. Lives were spent in freedom, not restricted to a single Kingdom or confined to the forests. This hope gave the beasts dreams of living alongside humans again or at least being allowed to leave the Divine Domain. The guardians brought hope to the citizens.

Back in the Capital, Yan Xiaobao overheard various discussions surrounding him, truly understanding what Wan Qiao had meant. He had seen Wan Qiao and many experts yearning for freedom and more territory, but as Great Marshall, he knew winning this war wouldn't be like a stroll in the park. Sighing, Yan Xiaobao was filled with complex emotions. He wanted to help the beasts achieve their dreams, to leave the Divine Domain once more; but to do so, he needed to succeed in the campaign. Although he had managed to convince the commanders of his army, persuading the forty thousand experts awaiting

him was another challenge. Convincing them to set aside their morals and become soldiers, if only temporarily.

Snickering faintly, Yan Xiaobao decided that while this would indeed pose a problem, it wasn't entirely his responsibility. His task for the day was to divide the army and assign which guards would be under the command of which experts. As for persuading the Kings and the Emperor that they needed to unite against the humans they were destined to encounter in this war, Yan Xiaobao decided this mission belonged to their commanders.

As he walked and thought simultaneously, Yan Xiaobao suddenly found himself at the city gates. He paused for a moment, closing his eyes to take a deep breath. When his eyes reopened, an expression of unparalleled determination emerged on his face. His back straightened, and he held his head high. Though he was merely a King-level expert, he was the only one who had engraved the "War Art" into his mind. He was the sole individual who had ever studied war and its strategies. He was the chosen one of all the Forest Kings. Even if his individual strength was weak, his mind was held in high regard, and two shadows lingered behind him. No matter what the future held, these two Holy Name Experts would protect him.

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Chapter 606: The Genius Before Us

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Yan Xiaobao knew he couldn't hastily go through these encounters and once again sighed inwardly, though he wore a smile outwardly. He narrated to the saints, one by one, the experiences he had that morning. Repeating them over and over, Yan Xiaobao slowly walked toward the back door, which led to his sanctuary. When he finally reached his room, he grasped the handle with trembling hands and rushed inside. At last, he could breathe a sigh of relief; there was no need to explain what had happened yet again.

The reason these experts were so curious was straightforward. The day before, they had the ability to overhear events before the meeting—the conversation between the commander and the talent before them; however, this time, they couldn't follow along. Despite being experts themselves, hiding together in such numbers would undoubtedly draw attention, and if noticed, it would be seen as rude. But now that Yan Xiaobao had appeared, simply asking him what had transpired would be the easiest way. Yan Xiaobao exhaled deeply, closed the door to his room behind him, and slowly walked toward the restroom. Speaking with so many experts was mentally exhausting, yet he was sure no one had noticed his discomfort. Reflecting on the meeting with the military, Yan Xiaobao felt positively energized. He also trusted that the Emperor would manage these groups as he had handled those before. The only

difference was when the Emperor looked at him with suspicion, the military felt admiration toward the Emperor.

Yan Xiaobao was excited to finally begin collaborating with the military. He could now grasp the military's true significance. Although it was a relatively small army, seeing the four hundred thousand experts standing before him made Yan Xiaobao intoxicated with excitement. To command such a vast number of individuals, Yan Xiaobao had to admit he felt adrenaline coursing through his veins. Yet he also understood the kings and emperors from the military weren't listening to him out of respect, but because he had nearly a thousand Emperors backing his decisions. Frustrated by this fact, Yan Xiaobao resolved to prove that he was more than just a weak young man. He sat cross-legged on the stone floor facing the window, so as the moon rose high in the sky, its light would bathe him while he trained upon the hard surface.

Yan Xiaobao entered his Lower Dantian and advanced toward the blue cloud, which now rolled out of the Dantian Cave where it had previously rested peacefully. Moments later, the blue cloud had fully left the cave, enveloping his entire body in a massive mist. The density of the essence from heaven and earth grew heavy. A smile appeared on Yan Xiaobao's face as he permitted the cloud to enter his body, flowing through his meridians and slowly being refined into Qi. The Yin Yang Energy filtered out the remaining impurities, passed through the meridians, and entered the Upper Dantian, where the energies gradually fused, forming Wu Wei.

The refinement of Wu Wei lagged far behind the other energies in Yan Xiaobao's body. Qi and spiritual energy surged continuously, both flooding into his body, yet no matter how much he refined them, Wu Wei remained an energy that couldn't be hurried—it would only allow a limited amount to be created at any given time.

Yan Xiaobao was acutely aware of this and never displayed impatience as he sat there. His body remained perfectly still, and as the moon rose higher in the sky, his smile widened. The higher it climbed, the more Yin Energy he was able to harvest from the essence of heaven and earth.

His Upper Dantian grew saturated with Yang Energy, but as the moon reached its zenith in the sky, Yin Energy began to overflow. The two energies merged during the creation of martial power, generating golden energy that surged into the Upper Dantian.

As the sun climbed over the horizon, its rays spilling through the window, a radiant smile spread across Yan Xiaobao's face. The young man felt his entire body brimming with energy. Slowly standing, he sensed the teeming forces within himself, but suddenly the world began to spin around him. A dizzy

spell struck, and Yan Xiaobao collapsed to the floor. As he tried to understand what had occurred, the world turned black.

Yan Xiaobao remained sprawled on the ground for hours, while the blue cloud began to churn outward once again. By the time morning transitioned into noon, Wan Qiao started to wonder about the young man's whereabouts, noticing the door to his room was already ajar when she knocked. She immediately stepped inside, a terrible premonition creeping into her heart. Her eyes showed growing concern.

As soon as she entered the room, she felt an oppressive atmosphere. The density of the heaven and earth essence was so great that she had never experienced anything like it before. The deeper she ventured into his room, the more she noticed the blue cloud enveloping the young man. As Wan Qiao stepped into the cloud, nausea and weakness overtook her. The mist locked onto her, siphoning energy from her body until her legs felt feeble. Her eyes widened in astonishment as she watched the blue cloud transfer the absorbed energy directly to Yan Xiaobao, delivering it to his forehead and permeating the skull of his unconscious body sprawled on the floor. Clenching his teeth in pain, his face contorted, but his eyes remained tightly shut, his body unresponsive.

"Come to me," Wan Qiao said, staggering backward. She struggled to withdraw from the blue fog that continued to drain her absorbed energy, only managing to escape after exerting all her strength. As she stumbled back, her face turned pale, and her eyes widened in shock.

"This must be what he meant by monkhood," Wan Qiao muttered to herself, staring at the young man who remained unconscious on the floor. The blue cloud seemed to act as a barrier, preventing anyone from approaching.

Chapter 607: The Genius Before Us_2

Three shadows appeared beside Wan Qiao. As she waved her hand, two other experts appeared near Yan Xiaobao. They seemed confused and uncertain.

"Tell me what happened," Wan Qiao ordered. Her voice was cold, and her eyes sharp. She had personally instructed these two shadows to follow and protect Yan Xiaobao, but now the young man lay unconscious on the ground. His entire body was twisting in pain.

"He cultivated all night," one shadow knelt on the ground and spoke in a hoarse voice. "When he finished his training, he collapsed. We tried to get close to him, but the closer we got, the stronger the pull became. The more we approached him, the more pain he seemed to be in. When we left him alone, he appeared to feel better. We couldn't leave his side to warn you." The shadow continued, his words

clear and honest. Wan Qiao nodded and let out a heavy sigh after she sensed energy being drawn from herself.

"We cannot move him, but this is also a good opportunity to give him extra energy," she said with a sly smile. "Though it won't feel pleasant for him, we can help him. Summon all the Queens in our army," Wan Qiao ordered. Her five shadows nodded before disappearing to carry out Wan Qiao's command.

Wan Qiao sat in the room, staring at the unconscious young man. As she leaned against the wall, a smile appeared on her face. "I'm sorry," she murmured as she looked at him. "This will hurt you, but I need you to grow stronger."

Soon, there was a knock on the door, and when Wan Qiao opened it, a King-level expert walked in. It was a woman, her face filled with curiosity and uncertainty about what to expect.

"Come here," Wan Qiao said, raising her hand to bring the woman to Yan Xiaobao. As she became ensnared by the blue cloud, fear filled her eyes, but this fear quickly turned into pain as energy surged from her forehead. She collapsed to the ground. Her power continuously flowed into Yan Xiaobao. Before long, the screams of both the woman and the young man on the floor echoed in the room. After witnessing this for ten minutes, Wan Qiao pulled the woman back. She severed the blue cloud binding the woman.

As the woman was removed, she slowly began to regain her strength. When she looked at Wan Qiao, her eyes welled with questions. Seeing the discomfort and doubt in the young woman's gaze, Wan Qiao decided to respond.

"I assume you recognize this young man," she began. The woman nodded. The day prior, she had seen this young man standing on the podium as their army's Great Marshall. What she now witnessed left her deeply shocked. The blue cloud had visibly drained her energy, and upon being freed from it, she worried about the potential damage to her cultivation base. However, she discovered her loss was only some Yin Energy, which she could easily replenish from the surrounding world.

"Don't worry," Wan Qiao told the woman. "Take a seat and relax until you feel better. We will need more people like you. Once you've recovered, you may leave." As Wan Qiao finished speaking, another knock came from the door. Another woman entered the room. Wan Qiao once again guided the woman toward the blue cloud, and just as before, her face turned pale as her energy was forcibly extracted and transferred to the unconscious, pain-stricken young man on the floor.

As before, Wan Qiao held onto the woman, severed the blue cloud, and set her down to recover. Just as the first woman was about to leave, another appeared. As more and more energy poured into Yan Xiaobao, Wan Qiao repeated the process tirelessly. Over time, his body began to emit a faint glow. The more energy he absorbed, the more agonized he appeared. Finally, after the twenty-fourth woman was brought into contact with the blue cloud, the cloud itself seemed to thicken. The density grew so profound it became touchable, yet impenetrable. It coalesced and lifted the young man off the ground, as a golden light began to radiate from his forehead. The entire room was bathed in a dazzling brilliance.

As the cloud entered his upper Dantian, the young man's body rose higher until the last trace of energy dissipated. He then fell abruptly. But even so, the young man showed no signs of regaining consciousness, and the golden light from his body showed no intention of fading.

Wan Qiao quickly ordered all the women to leave. As they departed, every one of them carried the same thought: this Great Marshall was far different from what they had anticipated. The young man seemed to hold countless secrets they had no way of knowing. Though discomfort lingered, they were all shocked at the feat this young man had been capable of achieving.

After dismissing the women, Wan Qiao approached Yan Xiaobao's side. This time, none of her energy was absorbed by the blue cloud. The cloud itself had utterly vanished. As Yan Xiaobao lay gently on the ground once more, the golden light slowly receded. He now looked as though he were simply sleeping. His breathing was steady, and there were no traces of pain on his body. While he seemed much better now, it was evident he was completely and utterly spent. His body had been pushed to its limits, and he would need a period of rest before awakening again.

Chapter 608: The Genius Before Us_3

Wan Qiao lifted the young man, carried him to her bed, and laid him down. She gently stroked her own face and then sat on the ground, waiting for him to wake, her visage softened by a tender smile. This young man stirred emotions within the Divine Origin Queen's heart, feelings she herself had not known. Whenever he showcased his knowledge, she felt proud, akin to the pride of a mother, and now as she looked at him, her gaze resembled that of a mother admiring her son. For Wan Qiao, her bond with Yan Xiaobao grew increasingly intimate. As the young man lying on the bed groaned, the sun was setting. At that sound, Wan Qiao instantly stood up. Her eyes widened with hopeful anticipation, and when she saw him rising, her lips trembled faintly. His hand gripped his head, and as he slowly opened his eyes, the sound of his teeth grinding was audible. The rays of the setting sun shone sharply in his eyes, and he groaned once again before sitting upright. Though his body was consumed by incredible pain, it brimmed with an energy he had never felt before. The energy erupted from his body, and as he sensed the sudden surge in power, he was taken aback. Without even opening his eyes or glancing around, he crossed his legs and sat. His hands placed atop his knees,

the process began within his Upper Dantian. He was astonished to see massive amounts of Yin Energy merging with Yang Energy, creating a ceaselessly flowing martial power that condensed into a Golden Treasure Pearl within his Upper Dantian. The sheer amount of Yin Energy far surpassed anything he had witnessed before, and after sensing the force of Wu Wei's energy, he was stunned to discover he had ascended to the sixth star of King-level. He had leapt from a one-star King to a six-star King overnight. As for how he managed such a feat, it was entirely beyond his comprehension.

From the Upper Dantian, transitioning to the Lower Dantian, Yan Xiaobao was once again startled by the blue cloud. But to his amazement, the blue cloud had vanished. Instead, seated in meditation was a burly, towering figure. He was clad in the filthiest garments Yan Xiaobao had ever seen. His face was concealed behind scraggly hair and an overgrown beard. It was evident that this unassuming man was the monk previously mentioned by Wolf.

As Yan Xiaobao ventured toward the Lower Dantian, the monk ceased his meditation, his face breaking into a smile as he approached Yan Xiaobao. His strides were deliberate, unhurried, and his hands were clasped before him. Step by step, his eyes fixed unwaveringly on his path.

"Yan Xiaobao, I am also Yan Xiaobao," the monk spoke, now only two paces away from the young man. His eyes finally opened, and the young man was astonished to find that the monk's eyes were as blue as the blue cloud. Though the man appeared middle-aged, his gaze was brimming with wisdom—wisdom that could not be gained in a single lifetime.

Bowing deeply, Yan Xiaobao understood that what stood before him was nothing more than a figure pieced together from countless memories of the past; yet even so, Yan Xiaobao recognized that this entity still possessed a mind capable of deep thought. Yan Xiaobao knew that this older aspect of himself could impart great lessons to him.

When he noticed the monk gazing at him with a faint, tender smile, Yan Xiaobao's memories began to stir. Within that smile lay the weight of deep sorrow. As words almost escaped his lips, Yan Xiaobao felt them lodge in his throat, an indescribable inability to speak overtook him.

"You are faced with a decision of utmost importance, a choice that must be made for the greater good," the monk said with a soft sigh, his hand reaching out to Yan Xiaobao's head and stroking it with an understanding smile.

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Chapter 609: His Sad Smile

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Slowly, the man in front of Yan Xiaobao became transparent, leaving behind only his sorrowful smile. Yan Xiaobao's senses were overwhelmed by a lifetime of emotions and experiences. He lived on a farm, alone in an unknown place. As he grew up, he played by himself, feeling nature endlessly impose itself on his senses. When he became a man, he was forged by the surrounding nature, his temperament as tranquil as the fields he toiled in all his life. Becoming a cultivator came naturally, as his body gradually fused with the elements around him. His body absorbed the essence of heaven and earth effortlessly before being deeply refined into strength.

As time passed, his parents aged and eventually passed away, leaving the young man to care for the farm alone. Years went by, and the young man was no longer young but middle-aged. He noticed that no matter how many years passed, he seemed never to age. After living on the farm for hundreds of years, the man decided to leave it behind and travel the world. On his journey, he saw many things, experiencing both delightful surprises and harsh realities.

He married, but he watched as his loved ones passed away, for he had never grown a day older. After going through this several times, the man decided once again to wander the world alone. His eyes were filled with the knowledge of love and loss. He no longer cared about his appearance, yet wherever his adventures took him, he was respected. From time to time, young cultivators would approach him to challenge him, but each time they found themselves powerless. All Yan Xiaobao needed to do was raise his arm, and their cultivation bases would be suppressed. With just a lift of his finger, their energy would ripple outward—not by their control, but because this middle-aged man would absorb it and fuse it with himself.

The farther he traveled, the more young people followed him. He earned the name "Monk," a name he fully embodied as a man. Apart from the clothes on his back, he owed nothing to anyone. He neither ate nor drank, allowing all to approach him; however, he could never be bound. A sense of peace and serenity took over Yan Xiaobao's entire being, and he felt at ease. As he experienced countless memories as the Monk, and when it all finally came to an end, his character was honed.

The Monk had traveled for thousands of years, experiencing countless things before he finally grasped the truth: life is a cycle. Even after death, new life begins. He had faced failure and sorrow, and after tens of thousands of years of existence, he finally understood it was time for him to move on. It was time for him to return to the embrace of the earth he had walked upon all his life.

As an unknown Primal-level expert appeared, the Monk wore a sorrowful smile. He observed that this person was merely a young man and was certain of his decision. With arms open wide, he allowed the young man to aim a sword at his heart. The Monk slowly closed his eyes and sighed; the last thing he saw was the soft, warm cotton clouds, as gentle and comforting as the life he had lived.

Having experienced all this, Yan Xiaobao froze, tears gathering at the corners of his eyes. After recalling all the memories, Yan Xiaobao felt as though a dear friend had passed. Yet, at the same time, he felt more complete than ever. Merging with the Monk had tempered his character. When he opened his eyes, a new sense of tranquility could be seen within them.

Seeing this sense of tranquility, Wan Qiao was astonished. At the same time, she felt that something about this young man had changed. He appeared the same, yet there was something different in his eyes. There was no longer any tension or worry. He seemed like a transformed person.

"Yan Xiaobao?" Wan Qiao's voice trembled slightly as she called his name. She couldn't help but feel a hint of doubt—though these changes were subtle, they could not escape her gaze. Was this truly the same person she had met the day before? The same man who had harshly criticized the Emperor? He no longer seemed like the same person.

Yan Xiaobao looked at Wan Qiao, a faint smile curving his lips. As he sat in the retreating sunlight, he resembled an angel who had descended to the earth.

Yan Xiaobao chuckled softly and slowly swung his legs off the bed. Leaving the comfort of the pillow and blankets, he stretched his aching body as a new surge of energy flowed through every cell. His breakthrough did not stop at the Sixth Star Level; instead, he had leapt from the rank of the first Star King Ranking Expert all the way to the eighth Star Expert as he awoke from his slumber. The Yin Yang Energy within him was now fully fused. The transformation to his body was profound—not only was his energy level far beyond what he could have imagined, but his entire body was brimming with strength. His muscles had been rebuilt and reinforced with energy. His entire being radiated power.

"I need to examine my body," Yan Xiaobao said as he immediately returned to the bed. Crossing his legs, he sat down with his eyes closed and entered his consciousness. He began to inspect every vein, every meridian, and every part of his body, observing and testing the changes that had been made.

Typically, when someone ascends through such high levels rapidly, it requires balancing their energy. One would need to spar with other experts to get a sense of their strength. However, Yan Xiaobao had a feeling that he had perfect control over the energy within his body. He felt completely in sync with it.

Chapter 610 His Sad Smile_2

During the remaining hours of the evening, Yan Xiaobao inspected his body without even opening his eyes. He didn't feel any difficulty controlling his new powers. It was as if he had established a stronger bond with his body and fused with the power inside him. The young man sat down, and as he did, he felt his body blending seamlessly with his surroundings—the air, the bed, and the tranquility of the room. When his body started to emit flashes, a faint buzzing sound could be heard. Though lying in the same spot on the bed, he seemed not to have moved. Yet, his body subtly flickered back and forth by mere centimeters. Watching this, Wan Qiao squinted in disbelief, startled by the phenomenon taking place before her, though she couldn't make sense of its significance; she had never witnessed anything like it before.

Yan Xiaobao felt incredible. His body seemed to integrate perfectly with the environment. As this occurred, his Upper Dantian felt like a swirling vortex, absorbing the energy in his surroundings. It refined the Yin Yang Energy, merging it into one harmonious power.

Soon, Yan Xiaobao had been sitting for an extended period, and as time went by, Wan Qiao continued observing him closely. Yan Xiaobao consistently absorbed the essence of heaven and earth. Everything seemed normal, except for the astonishing rate at which Wu Wei expanded within Yan Xiaobao's Upper Dantian. Compared to the energy shown by the blue cloud earlier, it had multiplied significantly.

As the first rays of dawn pierced the horizon, Yan Xiaobao opened his eyes. His blue eyes glimmered with golden light for a fleeting moment before the glow vanished. Rising once more from the bed, the young man stretched and gazed out the window. It was time for him to lead the army. As Yan Xiaobao approached the doorway, Wan Qiao noticed that the young man appeared to be floating—a sight that bewildered her. His movements had become more elegant than ever, as if he were truly one with the air itself. Yan Xiaobao drifted silently out of the castle, and no resistance seemed to impede his steps. Wan Qiao followed behind him even as he moved toward the city. Though her shadow remained unseen, she sensed their proximity and trusted in her power; in the Divine Domain forest, she felt she had little to fear.

Xu Yue failed to notice Wan Qiao, though he was fully aware she was trailing him closely. The young man moved through the city tirelessly until he eventually arrived at the city gate. Exiting the city, Yan Xiaobao entered the military camp once more. But unlike last time, soldiers could now be seen within the tents. Space was limited, so the guards adhered to various schedules for training. However, Yan Xiaobao paid no attention to those experts and headed straight for the arena.

Upon Yan Xiaobao's entrance into the camp, a large group of experts immediately noticed him. But when they realized who he was, their vigilance eased. They recognized this was the young man they had

seen before. As experts, they possessed sharp memories and keen eyesight, and each recalled the Great Marshall of the army vividly.

Given their strong recollection, all these experts were aware that this individual was previously a King-level expert. Yet here he stood before them now, surpassing even his Eight-star rank of just days earlier. The young man had ascended eight ranks within two days—a feat that was utterly impossible. Even if he had spent two days meditating and consuming medicinal herbs without pause, Yan Xiaobao shouldn't have gained such formidable strength. Observing the youth, the guards struggled to comprehend how such a transformation could be conceivable and began doubting their own eyes. Their curiosity was piqued, and they began shadowing him, following him to the arena.

Beside the arena stood a massive bell. This bell was used to summon the entire army to assemble before the arena. Xu Hui debated whether to gather the army in its entirety but eventually decided against it. Instead, he made his way toward the commander overseeing the guards' training. He wanted to evaluate the training regimen he had previously left for them.

As he approached the commander, more experts took notice of his graceful movements and recognized the handsome Great Marshall. However, once they recognized him, they felt a sense of awe and disbelief. Watching him for a while, they gradually acknowledged that their prior assessment of his rank was incorrect. Their eyes widened, their mouths went dry, and each expert realized they were standing before a man who had transformed from someone they could once look down upon into a High-level King—someone the army would now hold in the utmost regard.

For Yan Xiaobao to achieve such a dramatic improvement, the Gods themselves must have infused the young man with energy personally. Yet, everyone knew that no Gods remained on this plane; the four holy deities had long fallen into eternal slumber. Thus, Yan Xiaobao's sudden surge in power was far beyond anyone's understanding and left them astounded. Some wondered if he had deliberately concealed his true strength all along. But upon further reflection, they realized it would have been impossible for Yan Xiaobao to hide his power from the Emperor, meaning his rapid ascension over the past two days was genuine. Somehow, he had gained tremendous strength within such a short span of time—ascending eight King-level ranks in two days. This was unprecedented. Such a feat had never been heard of before. As to how he had managed it? No one knew, but everyone desperately wanted to.

When Yan Xiaobao reached the arena, everyone in sight froze what they were doing, whether Kings or Emperors. All eyes were drawn to Yan Xiaobao, and as they witnessed the enormous leap brought about by his cultivation, they were utterly dumbstruck.

"Master!" One of the Emperors finally broke free from the paralyzing shock of witnessing the young man's power and rushed forward eagerly. "Do you wish for us all to gather together? We can summon the army in an instant and await your command."

Hearing this, a faint smile appeared on Yan Xiaobao's lips. His eyes retained their peculiar calm, which made the Emperor feel as though he were watching a boy. Standing before Yan Xiaobao made him feel as though he was facing a father or a revered elder of his family—someone who commanded awe and respect.

"I want to speak with all commanders," Yan Xiaobao said calmly as he moved to the arena and gently seated himself on the stairs. He gazed at the crowd of experts fixating on him, his expression unwavering.

The Emperor, having regained his composure, adopted a fully serious demeanor. He nodded firmly, tightened his eyes, and pursed his lips before rushing off to summon the commanders, bringing them before the waiting Yan Xiaobao. Though the Emperor had respected Yan Xiaobao previously, his reverence now swelled further, accounting for not only the young man's immense cultivation abilities but also his unparalleled speed in advancing his martial rank.

It wasn't long before the commanders began arriving one after another. Upon seeing Yan Xiaobao and his elevated rank, they experienced shock and disbelief. Each of them had to acknowledge his newfound status, as no other explanation made sense. Even the commanders themselves found themselves deeply intrigued by the young man's mysterious transformation.

The commanders leaped into the arena. As the first expert appeared, Yan Xiaobao rose leisurely, then approached him to exchange pleasantries with a composed demeanor.

"Master, if you don't mind me asking, are you truly now an Eight-star expert?" One commander hesitated before posing the question. While he could feel Yan Xiaobao's overwhelming energy, his mind struggled to accept the reality he perceived. However, the only response he received was Yan Xiaobao's serene smile before the young man deftly shifted topics. "I heard the army has been training in groups of five. Are they prepared for intense drills tomorrow?" he asked with curiosity. The Emperor, proud of his accomplishments, instantly forgot the earlier subject and beamed, nodding enthusiastically.

"Although it was challenging to convince them of the benefits of teamwork, we managed to persuade many soldiers to work collaboratively. Speaking of training, may I ask what your plans are for tomorrow's regiment?"

"I will inform you once everyone has arrived," Yan Xiaobao replied dismissively, before greeting another commander. The crowd swiftly assembled, and silence descended over the arena as everyone anticipated Yan Xiaobao's leadership. Now, everyone looked at Yan Xiaobao differently. If he could truly ascend to an Eight-star rank so quickly, it meant he might advance to Emperor rank in due time. Watching him, many commanders began to sense an air of danger surrounding him. There was something unsettling about the calm he radiated.

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