

Medical 731

Chapter 731: Born a Monster_2

A bit numb, Cou Ling nodded. Her mouth was still open, and her eyes wide. It took her a long time to finally pull herself together, just like her, she shook her head and rethought.

Glancing at the werewolf standing beside her, she couldn't help but fear that everyone knew the beast was dangerous, and the fact that Yan Xiaobao could turn into one proved he was definitely not a normal person.

"Let's begin," Yan Xiaobao said solemnly with sharp claws, managing to cut a long wound on his arm. This allowed the blood infused with metal to flow onto the altar, causing the inscriptions within to shine and the altar to activate once again.

The sky started to rumble, and the clouds gathered above Yan Xiaobao as the young man gritted his teeth. When his blood flowed onto the sword, he summoned some of his Fog Energy to surround him. A sword forged by Cou Ling. Suddenly, the first lightning bolt struck and landed directly on Yan Xiaobao. This made him grit his teeth in pain but made no sound, a stubborn expression visible in his eyes.

Unlike last time, Yan Xiaobao in his Wolf Form required less power to protect his body, so the Fog Energy was able to shield him from two lightning strikes. Using the remaining fog energy, the second lightning struck his tense body, making him feel blood seeping into his mouth from his throat.

As he prepared for the third bolt, some martial power forced the blood down, some leaving his body and coiling around him. As he did so, he saw Cou Ling working hard. She was sweating, with sweat constantly dripping down her forehead, yet the back of her hand was completely removed as she rhythmically hammered the beautiful sword she was restoring.

Looking at the sword, a frown appeared on Cou Ling's face. The day before when Yan Xiaobao was in human form, the blood leaving his body was Silver; a perfect silver, just like when she made the hammer, but now the blood had a slightly red hue. As for what this red hue's source was or what it meant, the woman did not know.

Focused on this red hue, she felt the fierce air from the sword. As if a beast was trapped inside. Cou Ling felt dazed, muttering to herself, "It must be because of his transformation," although she couldn't find any other reason, she also found the metal on the sword was far sharper than she had anticipated. The

blade was thin but simultaneously very durable. The edge was sharper than anything she had seen before. Creating this sword from Nine Heavens' Devouring Blood Metal mixed with the beast's blood and nine great calamities' lightning, clearly, the sword would not be broken as before.

Deep within the sword was its core. Deep within was the original sword, but this material was devoured by Blood Metal. The inscription, rust, and metal all became part of the Blood Metal, and now that Cou Ling had taken her time creating it, she felt it was a masterpiece. A weapon unlike any she had created before, and deep inside, she realized she would never create anything similar.

As Cou Ling was busy thinking this, Yan Xiaobao was doing his utmost to withstand the lightning. When the fourth bolt descended, he was almost out of the remaining energy. "I need help," he said frustratedly, and in Yan Xiaobao's heart, a grunt could be heard.

A gust of wind appeared, and the wolf suddenly transformed. His red fur turned into blue feathers, and his long arms transformed into beautiful wings. His legs turned into those of a bird. A screeching sound rang out, and the wolf had fully transformed into a giant blue Phoenix. A bird covered in a golden veil, to protect it. The wings were injured much like the former arms, and the blood that fell on the Sword Body before appeared blue in this blood. The magnificent bird soared into the sky, and when the final energy bolt landed on it, the pride in its eyes made Cou Ling's heart race faster as she hammered the sword.

The moment the last lightning struck the avian form of Lan Feng, a shudder ran through him. He spent a considerable amount of time refining the energy, and when he took over the body in that moment, its shape naturally evolved from a wolf into a Phoenix. Standing there, lightning streaked across his body, making the Phoenix resemble a Thunderbird. A mysterious bird born from lightning and thunder, as the final sparks died before the Phoenix's form slowly reverted to Yan Xiaobao's shape.

Once the last lightning descended, the sky calmed down, as if lightning never appeared in the first place, and the altar gradually stopped shining.

After the altar extinguished, the sound of hammering rang for a few minutes, but the sound also slowly stopped.

Yan Xiaobao was currently exhausted due to the lightning, he didn't have the energy to stand up and see how his heavy sword was reforged. But there was great interest in his eyes, as Cou Ling gently lifted the sword, walked towards Yan Xiaobao, and handed it to him.

Yan Xiaobao said, "Thank you," picking up the sword and holding it. The sword was made of silver metal, but red and blue hues shimmered from it. These colors alternated and merged together glowing. Sitting with the sword in his hand, the feeling Yan Xiaobao had was extremely domineering. The sword felt fierce, as if a dangerous animal was stored in the blood.

Recalling what Xiao Ling said about the Blood Feeding Sword, Yan Xiaobao gently scratched his arm, placing the sword on the wound, only to see it greedily sucking the blood. As if they were attracted by the metal itself. As it absorbed the blood, the blue and red hues increased dramatically.

As the sword absorbed the blood, it began warming up in Yan Xiaobao's hand, eventually, it became so hot that he had no choice but to let it go. With his eyes on it, Yan Xiaobao couldn't comprehend the sword's issue until he discovered it humming again. Very similar to when Yan Xiaobao first discovered it.

As soon as the hum began, Yan Xiaobao felt a buzzing from his Lower Dantian. Suddenly, the sword lifeless on the ground floated into the air, beginning to spin. As this happened, the buzzing increased, becoming louder and louder.

As it spun, small streaks began to appear. As Yan Xiaobao observed the sword closely, he found patterns inscribed on it that he had never seen before. Inspecting closely, he guessed these patterns were of the original sword; the core being the sword devoured by Nine Heavens' Devouring Blood Metal.

Along with the inscription, a name was engraved near the hilt. The name of the Ice Cold Storm Sword. When the engraving was completed, Yan Xiaobao reached out to grab the sword, observing every detail as he watched. Standing up, he swung the sword, hearing a whistling sound, as it flashed by, leaving only a shadow.

Thinking for a moment, Yan Xiaobao added his Qi to the sword, and suddenly a massive whirlwind seemed to grow from the sword tip. A whirlwind he could whip up anywhere he desired. The more Qi he pushed, the larger the whirlwind became.

After considering for a while, Yan Xiaobao stopped adding Qi to the sword but added his spiritual energy instead. This time, the sword gently trembled, inscriptions around the sword appeared, creating patches of ice. With a flick of his hand, the ice shards sped towards the boulder that was Yan Xiaobao's target. When the ice shards collided with the boulder, a whistling sound could be heard. Due to the collision with the ice, some sharp cuts could be seen on the rock.

Yan Xiaobao paused for a while before withdrawing his spiritual energy and instead pushed his martial power into the sword.

The moment Wu Wei entered the sword, the temperature around him dropped instantly. A strong wind appeared behind him and began to blow around him. Thousands of ice shards appeared, and this time not around the sword but around the young man. These ice shards were even larger than before, their edges as sharp as knives. Seeing how the Ice Cold Storm surrounded him, a satisfied nod could be seen, he once again withdrew his energy. The sword definitely lived up to its name as the Ice Cold Storm Sword.

When they saw how Yan Xiaobao could summon attacks time and again on his own, both Cou Ling and Fang Wei were very shocked. They were astonished that the original sword's inscription survived the nine great calamities' bloody forging.

Yan Xiaobao was completely focused on the sword, not noticing the other two waiting for him to finish, so they could return to the Capital. Although Cou Ling had now finished the work she promised to complete, she still hesitated without an employer.

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Chapter 732: Not Alone

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Yan Xiaobao, fully immersed in the sword, suddenly paused as he lifted his head. He could sense someone approaching, and this person was not alone.

"Someone is heading this way," Yan Xiaobao murmured. "At least twenty people are coming toward us, and there's a carriage being pulled by a mystical beast, with four more riding mystical beasts." He placed one hand on the ground and continued.

Yan Xiaobao had an elemental affinity with the earth, and he had just merged with the element. He had become one with the earth, enabling him to scan the surrounding area. As long as someone stepped on the ground within half a kilometer, Yan Xiaobao could feel it.

"We should get moving. Things could become troublesome once they arrive here."

With Xiao Ling and Fang Wei agreeing to the young protagonist's words, the three of them began leaving the altar. Yan Xiaobao furrowed his brow and shot a glance at them. The group heading their way was accelerating, the four riding mystical beasts moving faster than those on foot.

"You two, hide behind that boulder," Yan Xiaobao said as he pointed toward the massive stones nearby. Although Cou Ling and Fang Wei showed expressions suggesting they were about to argue, Yan Xiaobao quickly shook his head; his commanding tone left them no choice but to comply with his orders.

Turning around, Yan Xiaobao tightened his grip on the Ice Cold Storm Sword. His eyes faintly reddened as a killing intent flickered within. Simultaneously, energy surged through his body, making it easier for him to wield it in an instant.

"If it's going to be like this, let's give it a shot," he murmured as he stared at the sword in his hand. As the riders drew closer, the sword seemed to tremble more intensely, as though the spirit of a fighter within it was getting restless. It was as if the sword wished to battle alongside Yan Xiaobao.

Soon, the riders arrived before Yan Xiaobao. All four were mounted on Qilins and appeared comparable to experts ranked among the practitioners. Seated atop the Qilins, these experts were Kings, just like Yan Xiaobao.

Though their rankings were similar, Yan Xiaobao possessed many trump cards. He wielded advanced martial arts, advanced spiritual art, the ability to transform into a wolf, and the reforged sword in his hand. Furthermore, he had a Phoenix resting within his Lower Dantian.

Gazing at the four Kings, their sly grins surfaced as they rode closer, but their smiles quickly vanished when they felt their Qilins begin trembling in fear. It reached the point where the mystical beasts could hardly move forward.

"Useless trash!" one of the Kings roared, leaping off his Qilin and decisively slicing the beast's head clean off. The Qilin's body collapsed, twitching as blood gushed outward.

Witnessing his decisiveness, Yan Xiaobao couldn't help but raise a brow in surprise. Though he was shocked, there was no outward expression on his face, nor did he let it influence him. After all, it was merely the slaughter of a mystical beast—a deed he had done countless times himself.

The other experts weren't as resolute, but they all dismounted their Qilins, leaving the creatures behind as they closed in on Yan Xiaobao, slowly walking toward him.

"Young boy, what's someone like you doing here?" one of the Kings asked as his gaze fell on the silver sword in Yan Xiaobao's hand. The faces of the four experts immediately became filled with greed. One of them even licked his lips hungrily as they each stepped forward.

"Hand over your weapon, and we'll let you live," another man said, focusing entirely on the sword Yan Xiaobao held. Seeing the greed in the man's eyes, Yan Xiaobao scoffed disdainfully.

"If you've got the skill to take it, then try." He spoke with contempt, already prepared to face the Four Kings in battle. His expression remained calm, but an icy aura surrounded him. Watching the young man, the Four Kings first laughed loudly, then felt a faint chill ripple through their bodies.

"It's four against one. Boy, you might be talented, but this isn't your wealthy family's home. We have no qualms about killing a prodigy, nor do we fear your family's retaliation. All we care about is getting what we want. If you value your young life, you'd better hand over the sword."

"Shut up. Leave, or die," Yan Xiaobao sneered at the man who just spoke, as a soft humming sound seemed to resonate within him—a vibration harmonizing with his sword. Without waiting any longer, Yan Xiaobao infused Qi into his sword and waved his hand lightly, unleashing an Ice Cold Storm toward the Four Kings.

Although it was merely a Qi attack, the sword in Yan Xiaobao's hand was far from ordinary. As the storm bore down upon the experts, they were forced to defend themselves against the wind.

"Shattering Rock Palm!"

"Stargazing Kick!"

"Golden Finger Attack!"

"Destructive Fist!"

The Four Kings roared their attacks as the storm collided with them, soon causing it to slowly collapse and dissipate. Seeing this, Yan Xiaobao wasn't surprised, knowing the storm wouldn't last long, as he had only infused it with spiritual energy briefly.

Ice shards reappeared at the edges and tip of the sword. Each shard sparkled under the sunlight, and with a flick of his wrist, all the fragments shot toward the Four Kings, once again forcing them to protect themselves.

This time, they abandoned offensive techniques and encased themselves in golden light for protection. However, even so, all four underestimated the ice shards' power, and several fragments managed to pierce their surface, wounding the experts.

Chapter 733 Not Alone_2

Yan Xiaobao grinned foolishly, feeling satisfied with the power of the second attack from the Ice Cold Storm Sword. The spiritual energy attack, rare as it was, managed to injure the upper-level Dantian People, and seeing the blood flowing from several scratches, he knew this strike surpassed most spiritual energy assaults.

Not only was Yan Xiaobao surprised at the effectiveness of this attack, but the four experts were completely stunned, their faces turning increasingly grim. Their fists tightened, their eyes became bloodshot. The four King Ranking Experts were engaged in a fierce battle, and it wasn't just the weak spiritual energy strike that managed to harm them.

"Kill him. Tear him to pieces until there's nothing left," one of them said in a low but dangerous voice. "Grab the sword. If we deliver such a precious treasure to our master, he'll pay us a massive reward!" another added. Yet their words failed to stir any fear in Yan Xiaobao; instead, a smirk crept across his face. Channeling Wu Wei into the sword, he sneered as the wind suddenly picked up. The blue skies above abruptly turned cloudy, thunder rumbled in the distance, and the temperature dropped several degrees.

Seeing Yan Xiaobao's wicked expression, the four Kings trembled, but as veterans of countless battles, they recognized that his attack was imminent.

In this warm summer, snow began to descend from the heavens. The temperature plummeted continuously, and the four experts unleashed their martial power without reservation. One of them conjured a massive disc-shaped platform, rushing downward at Yan Xiaobao. In response, the young man merely glanced at the descending platform with contempt in his eyes.

The falling snowflakes intensified, quickly transforming into a full-fledged blizzard. The snow became so dense that the four experts could no longer see Yan Xiaobao before them; all they could make out was an impenetrable wall of snow.

Suddenly, a whistling sound pierced the air, followed by a chilling scream. Glancing to the side, they found one of their companions collapsed on the ground, clutching his legs—or what was left of them.

A massive shard of ice had sliced cleanly through his leg, ripping through muscle without leaving anything intact. Witnessing this, the remaining three experts turned pale as golden Wu Wei surged from their bodies, forming a more powerful protective layer around them.

"Ding," "clang," the sounds echoed as more and more ice shards struck the martial power cloaks of the remaining three Kings. The fallen man on the ground grew eerily silent, but the other three had no time to worry about him. The attack was relentless, and the speed at which the ice shards were falling seemed to be escalating. The more martial power they poured into their defense, the worse their predicament became.

"What's going on here?!" A voice suddenly rang out from outside the blizzard. As the voice echoed, discomfort deepened on the faces of the three experts. "Young Master, don't enter!" one of them shouted. Though their master waited outside, his expression was haggard; he refrained from stepping into the blizzard.

"Master, we're dealing with a foreigner who seems to be using blood sacrifices. He wields a sword forged from Nine Heavens Blood Metal. This snowstorm originates entirely from that sword! I'm certain he's physically frail and will soon be unable to sustain this attack. He won't endure much longer. Leave him to us. We'll exhaust his energy, and when he's weak, we'll tear him apart and present his weapon to you. Without it, he's worthless!" one of the King-level experts shouted from within the blizzard. His words made Yan Xiaobao laugh, surrounded by the white snow. They thought the sword was the source of his strength—how gravely mistaken they were.

A few meters away, no one noticed two individuals observing the scene. One was the spiritual blacksmith Cou Ling, and the other was her assistant Fang Wei. Both abruptly witnessed the onset of the

violent blizzard. Yan Xiaobao had poured such immense energy into the sword that the snowstorm became so dense that visibility was entirely obstructed. They could only hear the sounds emanating from within, and what Cou Ling heard boded no good for Yan Xiaobao. While she worried for him, deep down, she sensed that this young man wasn't as easy to defeat as everyone imagined. After all, the image of the red wolf was etched deeply into her memory. The wolf appeared incredibly powerful, even against a group of ten men. She felt certain that this young man could overcome all of this. Sitting behind a rock with her hands clasped and her eyes closed tightly, she prayed that Yan Xiaobao was as strong as she hoped.

"So they think without my weapon I'm nothing," Yan Xiaobao muttered to himself as he gazed at the raging blizzard around him. Looking at the sword in his hand, a satisfied smile appeared on his face. Without hesitation, he sent another volley of ice shards at the three experts. The fourth was already dead, having failed to protect himself with Wu Wei. The pain in his legs had humiliated the man, leading to his demise.

"Let's see who's truly the master here," Yan Xiaobao said with a laugh. He stopped channeling Wu Wei into his sword and instead wrapped it up. He placed it into a storage stone and embedded it into the bracelet encircling his arm.

Though the weapon was undeniably extraordinary, Yan Xiaobao was accustomed to fighting with daggers, and his skills with the sword were still limited. Therefore, he decided to rely solely on Wu Wei for battle, without any weapons. If things became dire, he could always transform into the wolf.

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As Yan Xiaobao stopped the flow of martial power into the sword, the blizzard gradually dissipated. The surrounding temperature began to rise once more, and the previously dry ground was now soaked with mud. Amid the mire, Yan Xiaobao stood tall, gazing down at the three kings. They had expended most of their martial power protecting themselves from the blizzard's wrath. Despite the immense energy they had used, none of them showed any regret.

"Now he's brimming with energy!" one of them exclaimed excitedly. "Watch me, your grandfather, and I'll show you what a cultivator truly is!" he continued, as Wu Wei gathered around his fist. Then, he lunged at the young man with a manic grin plastered across his face.

As his opponent charged toward him, Yan Xiaobao showed no signs of retreat or fear; instead, he simply stood there, smiling. He waited for the man to come within range, and when he did, a massive golden palm suddenly appeared out of nowhere. The cultivator tried his best to avoid it, but as Yan Xiaobao gestured with his own hand, the palm attack descended swiftly from the heavens—at an unavoidable speed.

A deafening explosion echoed in the aftermath. Then, the golden palm vanished, leaving behind a crater where it had struck. At the bottom of the crater, the man who had been surging forward now lay reduced to nothing but meat paste. The sheer carnage caused the remaining two experts to tremble in terror.

While they stood frozen in place, a group of people appeared beside them. Among them was a young man, roughly twenty to twenty-five years old. His eyes were narrow, and he gazed at the remains of the defeated man without a trace of emotion. Instead, his gaze shifted with disdain toward Yan Xiaobao as he sneered.

"I am Jing Cai, of the Jing Family," he introduced himself. "I hail from the Sky City Garden in Moon Province. We have traveled a long way to visit this Blood Sacrificial Altar. I came here to seek some Nine Heavens Devouring Blood Metal, but I see you possess an item forged on this altar. Sell it to me, and I shall allow you to leave here alive," he said in a dismissive tone. It was clear that he was a young master accustomed to getting his way, but as he spoke to Yan Xiaobao, the young man's face broke into a sinister smile.

"Go ahead and forge your own weapon," he retorted with obvious disdain. "Mine is not for sale. It is bound to me by blood, so even if I wanted to sell it to you, I couldn't," he continued, shrugging nonchalantly.

"I see," Jing Cai replied, staring at Yan Xiaobao for a moment before shaking his head. "You're nothing but a mixed-blood. I doubt anyone will miss you after you're gone. Why don't you surrender your life here and give me the sword? If you hand it over now, I promise to leave behind an intact corpse."

Upon hearing those words, the smile on Yan Xiaobao's face froze, and a growl escaped his throat. Though he was accustomed to being regarded as a mixed-blood, he was not used to being completely disregarded. The thought ignited a flame within him, and laughter erupted from his lips unexpectedly.

"Weaklings like you actually dare to utter such words? You and what army will kill me?" Yan Xiaobao asked, as his body began to undergo a transformation. His skin turned crimson, his frame swelled to twice its normal size, and his teeth lengthened into sharp fangs. His hands morphed into powerful claws.

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Chapter 735: Health and Optimism

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The handsome young man with white hair stood there, now transformed into a massive red wolf. A single crimson eye, blood-red and sinister, glimmered behind his twisted grin. "I want to see what you and your little friends can do," Yan Xiaobao snarled. His voice was now hoarse and rough, but each word carried its weight with grim clarity. Staring at the wolf, the young master looked slightly startled but wasn't sure if he needed to be afraid. Waving his hand, twenty Duke University Ranking Experts simultaneously appeared beside two King Ranking Experts. Before anyone could react, a horde of wolves descended upon them, forcing the Duke University Ranking Experts to their knees and making them cough up blood. Their bodies were subjected to tremendous pressure from the colossal wolf heads. Four King-level Experts unleashed various techniques to protect themselves, but even their faces turned pale as they struggled to defend both themselves and their young master. Among all the experts caught in this assault, the young master Jing was the only one who still appeared healthy and optimistic.

"You are weak; he is nothing but a mongrel beast!" The Jing Family's young master shouted angrily, watching his forces crumble under a single attack. "Everyone, attack him together; overwhelm his strange beast bloodline with sheer numbers!" he commanded, and all the experts attempted to rally around him. The Dukes, forced to their knees, struggled to rise again, while the King Team stepped forward.

As they refused to back down, Yan Xiaobao raised his hand, a cold sneer flashing across his face. Suddenly, an icy killing intent combined with golden martial power surged outward. Seeing his golden martial power merge with the surrounding red fog energy, the young master Jing narrowed his eyes.

"Actually, don't kill him. Cripple him and capture him. He can harness both martial power and mist energy—there's no doubt he could be a valuable asset to the Jing Family. If someone were to bind him with bloodline ties, he would make a great slave. So capture him!" he declared, his words leaving Yan Xiaobao completely stunned. The statement was so absurd that he couldn't help but laugh out loud.

"I don't think you have the ability to do that!" Yan Xiaobao said with a serious expression. After glancing at the numerous Dukes, his speed suddenly became explosive as he activated Velocity Flow. It seemed as though he teleported, disappearing from one location before reappearing behind the Duke University Ranking Experts, overwhelming them with raw power. He crushed the throats of some, while smashing his fists into others' chests, causing them to cave inward.

One by one, the Dukes collapsed to the ground. Some managed to let out sharp screams before succumbing, while others experienced death so swiftly they didn't even have time to react.

The sudden shift on the battlefield left the four King Ranking Experts utterly shocked; stunned by how quickly their men fell, one after another, at such a terrifying speed. Unlike the Dukes, however, these Kings were seasoned warriors. When fleeting shadows launched military assaults at them over and over, they all narrowly escaped destruction.

Facing Wu Wei's relentless assaults—whether punches, kicks, or weapon strikes—Yan Xiaobao pushed Velocity Flow to its limit and reactivated the Ice Cold Storm Sword. He wasn't highly skilled in swordsmanship, but he had basic knowledge. Holding the mighty sword in his grasp, he managed to finish off the final Duke before they could react further. As he stood completely motionless, he stared at the four King Experts, who watched him closely, waiting for the right moment to strike.

Having just witnessed their comrades die one after the other, the King Experts' eyes burned red with fury, yet they knew their abilities were insufficient to save the situation. Meanwhile, at the rear, the young master Jing boldly swore, "He's just one person. Kill him immediately!" he shouted, stomping his foot on the ground, arrogance glinting in his gaze. Clearly, he had never considered the possibility of his team losing. After all, he had four King-level Experts protecting him, and though Yan Xiaobao had dared to kill the Dukes, to him, they were just Dukes—nothing more. In the young master's eyes, Yan Xiaobao was far beneath someone who could challenge the Jing Clan, even if he dared harm their bodyguards.

"Don't capture him! Even if he's some sacred beast, he's completely infuriated me! Kill him immediately!" The young master shouted at the four Kings again. Though hesitant, the experts nodded while maintaining high vigilance, monitoring every movement Yan Xiaobao made.

With a grin revealing his fangs, Yan Xiaobao let out a ferocious howl before charging toward the Kings. A sword in one hand and claws on the other, both prepared for battle. Yan Xiaobao unleashed streams of mist energy and martial power from his body, shaping the mist into a massive wolf pack—shadowy specters resembling the essence of souls. Each of these wolves appeared alive, sinking their fangs and crushing their claws into their targets to overwhelm and subdue them. The wolves split into two groups, each group made up of roughly ten wolves, as they zoomed toward two of the King-level Experts.

Seeing the wolf pack speeding toward them, the Kings quickly surrounded themselves with martial power and launched attacks against the incoming wolves. Their martial power struck the wolves, creating gaping holes in their bodies that soon shifted and regenerated. These wolves, born of mist energy, had razor-sharp teeth and claws but weren't so easily destroyed.

Chapter 736: Health and Optimism_2

The Fog Wolves kept two experts occupied, while Yan Xiaobao and two other experts engaged in a deadly dance. The sword in his hand spun as if it were a dagger. His movements were fluid yet lethal, striking and slicing from various angles at the four experts. He slashed through the air, and if the experts were even slightly slower, they would have suffered severe injuries. Watching Yan Xiaobao entangle four King Ranking Experts so effortlessly, Cou Ling and Fang Wei, hiding behind a rock, were dumbfounded. They gazed at him with fervent admiration, something they had never experienced before.

As Ke Ling observed Yan Xiaobao's battle, she placed her hand on her chest, holding her breath. The probing expression in her eyes and her lingering doubts about Yan Xiaobao were completely replaced by astonishment. Seeing this young man fight with such fierce intensity left her no choice but to admire him. While Cou Ling was captivated by Yan Xiaobao's displayed abilities, the other four experts were becoming increasingly agitated. Two of them were entangled with the Fog Wolves; although they had found a way to escape the wolf pack, this required manually inserting Wu Wei into the wolves and detonating them from within. While Fog Energy could regenerate blows from fists or kicks, once fully shattered, it could not reform its shape.

Catching a glance at the two experts who discovered how to destroy the Fog Wolves, a cold glint appeared in Yan Xiaobao's eyes. Spiritual energy merged into his sword, producing icy shards once again, which he hurled directly at the two experts he was currently engaged in combat with.

The two experts dared not underestimate the shards flying from his sword. Using their retreat as an opportunity, Yan Xiaobao activated Speed Flow to its limit. He streaked across the battlefield, as though he had teleported, leaving behind only a shadow of blurred motion.

One opponent before him was using his Wu Wei cloak to protect himself. Yan Xiaobao revealed a sinister grin and, with all his strength, plunged his sword into the expert's throat using both hands.

Although the expert sensed someone behind him, he was preoccupied evading the icy shards and could do nothing to stop the stabbing. Moments later, as the sword was withdrawn, blood gushed from the wound, and yet another King Ranking Expert collapsed to the ground, lifeless, his limbs frozen forever.

Seeing not just the Duke-ranked expert fall prey to Yan Xiaobao's sword, but even a King Ranking Expert perish so easily, the remaining three experts' gazes grew increasingly alert. Though rage burned quietly within them, fear now eclipsed their growing fury.

The three remaining experts retreated together, forming a triangular protective stance around their young master. Each of them felt a deep unease brewing within.

"We apologize for insulting you. I hope we can end this battle right here," one of the King Ranking Experts said, his entire body pulled taut like a bowstring, watching Yan Xiaobao as if readying to defend his master from any sudden attacks.

"As long as you agree to end it here, we will overlook the number of guards you've slain," another King Ranking Expert said cautiously, though an expression of bitterness flashed across the young master's face as the words were uttered.

"I told all of you to kill him! Kill him this instant! You have the advantage in numbers—he must pay for all the deaths he has caused!" the young master yelled furiously, complex emotions flashing in the experts' eyes.

"Please forgive our young master," the third and final King Ranking Expert said, bowing his head slightly toward Yan Xiaobao. "We hadn't expected to encounter someone so formidable at the stone altar. But our goal wasn't to fight you; our purpose is to create weapons. Please forgive our master's rashness."

"Haha," Yan Xiaobao couldn't help but laugh as he listened to the experts speaking in front of him. "Do all of you believe that merely saying sorry will make everything fine? You started this battle, and if you want to end it while keeping your lives intact, you'd better pay up—either with a hefty sum or valuable items. I'm not one to let anyone deceive me. Not even a young master from Moon Province will get away with it."

The faces of the three Kings grew increasingly bitter, but at the same time, they understood they had indeed instigated the fight. They had no choice but to compensate him in some way—it was only natural.

After a tense staring contest, one of the Kings pulled out a golden Memory Stone and tossed it toward Yan Xiaobao, who caught it with the claw of his red wolf form. He infused a bit of consciousness into the stone and discovered it contained twenty-four spirit coins. A faint smile appeared on his face as he pocketed the stone, gestured toward the three experts and the young master, then turned to leave.

Though his back was now turned to the experts, Yan Xiaobao kept Speed Flow activated, prepared to dodge instantly should anything suspicious occur. Yet, no attack came—the three Kings did nothing, even as their young master screamed at them to slaughter Yan Xiaobao. They didn't move an inch.

Arriving at the rock where Cou Ling and Fang Wei awaited, Hui Yue stepped out of his beast form. He gently helped the two of them to their feet and guided them forward with his long furry arm, positioning them ahead of him. This way, if their group was attacked from behind, he would be the one to shield them.

As the three of them pressed onward under a tense atmosphere, all of them remained on edge, expecting an ambush. Yet, nothing happened after they distanced themselves from the expert group. Finally, Yan Xiaobao relaxed slightly, but he didn't let his guard down as he cast one last glance at the desolate landscape behind them before departing.

Chapter 737: Health and Optimism_3

When they arrived at a beautiful stream, Yan Xiaobao went to the water's edge to wash. The water running through his red fur was stained a faint red, and the congealed blood slowly faded from his werewolf form.

Finally, after completing his cleansing, with no extraneous thoughts, he transitioned back into his human form before heading to his storage stone to look for a new set of clothes. With his transformation, the old remnants had been completely destroyed.

As Yan Xiaobao bathed, Cou Ling watched him curiously, uncertain of whether this young man was human or beast. But when she saw Yan Xiaobao return to his human form without any clothing, her cheeks turned a faint red.

Cou Ling was about ten years older than Hui Yue, but her appearance didn't make her seem older than Hui Yue at all. Looking at her, one would guess she was around twenty-five, though this was because her age had reached the Master Level. Chiding herself, Cou Ling couldn't quite understand why, as a woman who had lived far longer than this young man, she felt so flustered seeing him naked. After all, this wasn't her first time seeing a man unclothed.

Yan Xiaobao, too busy slipping on a robe, didn't notice Cou Ling's reaction or the slight embarrassment his unrestrained behavior caused. Instead, as he stretched his body, he felt refreshed and cleaner than before. Seeing Yan Xiaobao's relaxed demeanor, Cou Ling decided they should stop by the tree for the day and return to town the next morning. Even though Yan Xiaobao had not gone all out to defeat the experts he faced, he didn't voice any disagreement with her suggestion.

Instead, he sat down, crossed his legs, closed his eyes, and slowly entered a meditative state. He began cultivating, working to restore the energy within his body. Although he was wholly focused on his training, before she ordered Fang Wei to keep watch over him, he had glanced up briefly. Drawing upon her own abilities, Cou Ling went off to hunt a few low-level magical beasts that could serve as dinner for the evening.

"I wonder if he can eat magical beasts," she muttered to herself as she walked through the forest. "I mean, he's obviously some kind of magical beast himself. Would eating another be considered cannibalism?" Her thoughts were a jumble, but she recalled Yan Xiaobao had previously eaten magical beasts. "Maybe I should avoid serving wolf meat," she mumbled again. After a brief pause, she nodded firmly. "Yes, absolutely no wolf meat."

While Cou Ling was busy searching for prey, Fang Wei was observing Yan Xiaobao. Seventeen years old himself, Fang Wei gazed at Yan Xiaobao and realized that this young man wasn't much older than he was. Yet his maturity was on a completely different level, as was his mastery of cultivation. Fang Wei was utterly astonished by this exceptional youth, unable to tear his eyes away from him.

"Our worlds are different," he murmured to himself as he stood up. Deep down, he hoped that one day he could be as strong as Yan Xiaobao, a hero capable of standing against the twenty-two Dukes and six Kings all on his own. He wanted to become a great and powerful man. Thinking this, a smile appeared on his lips as he rose to gather twigs to start a fire. "What am I even thinking?" he chuckled to himself. "Even though we're about the same age, our lives couldn't be more different. I'm destined to be a spiritual blacksmith. I may not become a hero, but I'll do well enough in life," he nodded with determination. Instead of feeling jealous of Yan Xiaobao's strength, he felt incredibly fortunate. He had been allowed to be close to someone who, one day, would shake the world and gain a reputation on par with General Frozen.

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Chapter 738: Dragon Scale Deer

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The afternoon passed quickly, and about an hour later, Cou Ling returned with a Dragon Scale Deer. Fortunately, it was the first beast she encountered, and although the fight had dragged on a bit, she was stubborn enough to eventually smash its head with her Nine Heavens Devouring Blood Metal Hammer. Although the Dragon Scale Deer had strong defenses, it couldn't withstand her hammer.

Upon returning to camp, she saw Yan Xiaobao still focused on training, but Fang Wei had already started a small campfire and nodded approvingly as Ke Ling began cleaning the deer, placing it over the fire to roast. The meat would need at least a few hours to be ready, which he thought was an appropriate time frame for Yan Xiaobao, who, although still energetic, had expended a considerable amount fighting numerous experts. It made sense for his body to need time to recover.

Another hour passed, and Yan Xiaobao slowly opened his eyes, looking at the delicious meat roasting in front of him. "Oh, I see you've cooked for us. I feel like you're spoiling me, especially since I hired you as a blacksmith, not a guide."

Hearing this, Cou Ling's face turned a shade of red, but she quickly turned away to check on the deer, pretending she hadn't heard what he said. Yan Xiaobao, a King-level expert, had keen senses. He easily noticed the red hue on Cou Ling's face and smiled wryly. He was happy to befriend this spiritual blacksmith, but there was more he couldn't give her. "I should probably tell her I already have someone," he muttered to himself, but chose not to say anything out loud, waiting for the right moment.

After a while, he accepted the meat prepared by Cou Ling, and comfortably silent, the three experts ate the food they had prepared as they slowly talked about their experiences together over the past few days. The return to Muchuan City was smooth, and no problems arose. The three experts traveled at a steady pace together, neither rushed nor taking too long for the journey back. During their travels, both Cou Ling and Fang Wei asked Hui Yue countless questions about what it felt like to be a senior expert at such a young age. Although most questions amused Yan Xiaobao, he still answered them to the best of his ability.

When Cou Ling suddenly spoke, Yan Xiaobao waved his hand, preparing to leave, "Wait a minute," she said as she looked down, her fingers fidgeting with the Memory Stone. "I heard you're looking for people in our city to support you..." She hesitated, raising her eyes from the ground to look at Yan Xiaobao suspiciously.

Yan Xiaobao was taken aback but maintained a neutral expression as he nodded to the woman's questioning gaze. "I do need friends in town. I currently have some, but I need more to increase my power and bring more authority to my words."

Deep down, Yan Xiaobao's heart started pounding, hoping Cou Ling would bring up this topic to help him in the future. Having the best spiritual blacksmith in Muchuan City supporting him would certainly help bring more authority to his words.

"Why did you choose to form your own faction?" Xiao Ling looked at Yan Xiaobao curiously, unsure if the young man before her would answer her question. Although she was curious, she wasn't surprised when she saw the young man shake his head apologetically. "I have some matters in the capital that I need to handle, and I can only do so if my words carry enough weight," he said apologetically, as Cou Ling absentmindedly nodded.

A peaceful atmosphere formed among the three acquaintances, a comfortable silence that none of them felt like breaking, but after some time, Yan Xiaobao decided it was time to leave. As he nodded to Cou Ling, he felt a bit disappointed that she hadn't decided to help him, but he had been away for a while and needed to return to the mansion to hear about what had happened during his absence.

"If possible, if you don't mind, I'd like to support you in the future," she said quietly, looking at him. Her entire being was hesitant, but hearing these words, a bright smile spread across Yan Xiaobao's face.

"I've already told you, I can't elaborate on our group's goals. Are you sure staying by my side is what you want to do?" he asked gently as he turned to look at the spiritual blacksmith behind him, a gentle smile gracing his lips; the smile almost melted Cou Ling's knees. A red hue appeared on her face, and even as she muttered under her breath, her ears burned. "Seeing your struggle and your strength, I believe following you will be a good decision. Even if I don't know what you aim to achieve, it doesn't matter. Zhan Weisheng's goal is to improve our working conditions. While that's good, it's been years since any changes have occurred, and I feel following you might be mutually beneficial," she continued. The red hue faded, and as she looked at Yan Xiaobao, her eyes were clear and direct. She had made her decision, and she wasn't planning to change it.

A warm smile slowly spread across Yan Xiaobao's lips, and he nodded. "I'm very honored to have the support of the most skilled spiritual blacksmith in town," he said, and deep inside, he cheered; he needed skilled people like this woman to support him. So far, all the people supporting him were just friends, but this woman, someone he hadn't had a previous relationship with, after just a few days, was already willing to support him. This was something Yan Xiaobao was very pleased with.

Chapter 739: Dragon Scale Deer_2

"I need to return now to check if anything happened while I was away," Yan Xiaobao said warmly to the young lady. "I'll return soon to discuss what your support means to me. I don't expect you to support me without receiving anything in return, but I need to talk to the Ma family first."

Hearing this, Ke Ling nodded slightly without saying anything. She gazed at the young man, who turned around before leaving the Blacksmith Shop, not sparing another glance back.

As the young man's figure disappeared, the woman let out a sigh amid the whirlwind of emotions within her chest. On one hand, she was relieved that he had left since his presence made it impossible for her to control her feelings, but even if she was glad he had gone, the sight of him leaving her had a painful tug at her heart—no matter how contradictory it felt.

Fang Wei noticed the complicated emotions on Ke Ling's face and simply smiled softly before silently exiting the shop and diving into his work in the Blacksmith Shop. With deliberate effort, he breathed life into his creations—a process that required considerable time and focus. He knew that whenever Ke Ling found herself distracted by her thoughts and emotions, her way of avoiding them was to throw herself completely into forging.

While Ke Ling and Fang Wei fully immersed themselves in their tasks, Hui Yue happily returned to his estate to find out whether he'd missed anything after being away for several days.

He felt these past few days had been immensely productive for him. He had managed to restore his sword to better-than-original condition. He had successfully faced off against the arrogant young master Jing and his henchmen. Not only that, but he had also secured the alliance of the town's finest spiritual blacksmith. No one could argue that these were unproductive days.

When Yan Xiaobao entered, the guards greeted him courteously with bows but chose not to speak. Slowly, he walked into the house, which now stood eerily quiet. The only soul in sight was a maid descending the staircase with her arms full of laundry.

Yan Xiaobao sighed, wondering where everyone was, but he concluded that they were likely cultivating in their rooms, handling their personal issues, or perhaps busy elsewhere.

The first thing Yan Xiaobao did was rush to Cai Jie's room. Though he doubted the young man would be home, he still wanted confirmation. Upon reaching the room, his suspicions proved true.

Seeing this, Yan Xiaobao could only shrug and then proceed to Xu Biao's room, where he found the older man inside. As soon as Xu Biao saw Yan Xiaobao, a soft smile appeared on his lips, and he immediately ceased his cultivation. Xu Biao deeply appreciated how Yan Xiaobao had once again infused his life with a sense of purpose, granting him a goal that enabled him to reunite with his loved ones. Because of this, he had sworn to assist Yan Xiaobao whenever his help might be needed.

"Do you need help?" Xu Biao asked the moment he saw Yan Xiaobao. Although he had spent all his time cultivating, he understood that his newfound hope had been sparked by Yan Xiaobao, making him willing to do anything for his friend—even if it meant venturing into Hell and back.

"I'm looking for someone who can inform me about what happened over the past few days while I was gone," Yan Xiaobao sighed at the question, but Xu Biao could only shake his head after hearing his request.

"I've been confined to my room for a week. I'm afraid my understanding of the situation is even less than yours."

"It's alright, don't worry," Yan Xiaobao waved dismissively at Xu Biao. "But be cautious," he continued to advise, "you need to ensure you can perfectly balance your Yin Yang Energy. If you have too much Yang Energy, you won't be able to ascend to the next level. Ultimately, it will halt your cultivation progress and force you to remain at your current level."

This was the reason Yueyue had refrained from spending all his time on training. If he did, his energies would fall out of balance, making advancement even harder. He absolutely refused such an outcome, so during the day, his body naturally absorbed and refined Yang Energy—albeit at a slower rate than when actively cultivating—and at night, he wholly focused on absorbing as much Yin Energy as possible. Although he was already a prodigy who had reached King-level, Yan Xiaobao wasn't satisfied. Having faced creatures like Wan Qiao and the Frozen General, he understood just how frail he still was and knew how much training he needed. Just as he was about to leave, he heard a light creak as the door slowly opened. It revealed a stunningly beautiful Snake Woman. Her body, as alluring as always, and her bright, captivating eyes immediately caught his attention. Even someone like Yan Xiaobao couldn't help but swallow in surprise upon seeing her.

His moment of dazed surprise didn't last long before his face broke into a broad smile. "Sha Yun!" he exclaimed excitedly, "Where have you been? I've been so worried about you. Are you alright? Have you made new friends? Was it because of me?" Faced with the barrage of questions, the Snake Woman seemed almost overwhelmed, not knowing which to address first. But as she gazed at the young man in front of her and saw his ecstatic expression, a warmth emanated from her being, and her lips curved into a gentle smile.

"Come in," she offered as she stepped to the side. Yan Xiaobao quickly slipped past her into the room, curious about all his friend had been up to in recent weeks. After Sha Yun entered her room, Yan

Xiaobao seated himself on a chair, intently observing the woman before him. She looked exactly as he remembered, her silver eyes shining with the same pride as always.

Yan Xiaobao smiled at the woman, waiting for her to sit beside him, but instead, she placed herself on the bed, far from him, causing a light crease to form on his handsome face.

"I've been worried about you lately," Yan Xiaobao repeated softly. "I know you're fully capable of taking care of yourself, and I'm not worried that you'll do something wrong. It's just so strange not having you near me," he said, his apologetic smile directed at her. "Is it my emotions that bother you? You should know, although I don't romantically love you, I still consider you one of my closest friends. I really don't want to hurt you, but at the same time, I understand that being near me might hurt you."

As Yan Xiaobao gazed at the Snake Woman, he paused briefly. She remained silent, though a faint sadness shimmered in her deep eyes. "I don't know what you expect from me," he sighed, "I don't know if you want me to stay away from you for a while, or if you want me to come look for you. I need you to tell me what you need from me," he continued. "As long as it's in my power to help you, I'll do whatever you ask. I don't want to break our connection or cause you pain. I only want to see you happy," he said with another sigh.

Seeing the complex emotions on Yan Xiaobao's face, Sha Yun's gaze softened further, and a warm smile spread across her face. "I need some time for myself," she murmured. "My feelings are so overwhelming, they'll never change, but I need to accept reality. I've happened upon a group of mixed-blood cultivators that I fit in with completely. We cultivate together, and sometimes, like mercenaries, we hunt magical creatures. It's thrilling," she said softly. "When I'm with them, I can enjoy myself in a way I haven't in a long time. They're good friends, but you'll always be the person I care about most," she said, her gentle eyes locking onto the icy blue hues gazing at her from across the room.

"I'm glad to hear you're doing well. But you must know I'll always be here for you," he replied. "If you feel you need a hug or simply someone to talk to, then I'm here for you. Even if I can't give you exactly what you want, I can still offer you an eternal friendship," Yan Xiaobao said with a tender smile as he looked at Sha Yun, glimpsing the rich emotions in her heart, and he could only let out a soft sigh.

"I know," she whispered as she nodded. "I know you'll always be here for me, and one day, I'll find peace with that. But right now, I still need to focus on other things and try to center myself. Tonight, I'll be going out with my group of friends, and we'll return in about a week. Don't worry about me; I'll make sure nothing goes wrong," she said with an excited smile. It was clear she was making every effort to distract herself, and somehow, it seemed to be working.

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Chapter 740: A Very Important Person

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Yan Xiaobao nodded and stood up. As he was about to leave, he turned around and pulled Sha Yun into a warm embrace. Holding her for a moment, he felt how the Snake Woman's body had initially stiffened completely but gradually relaxed. "Remember, your home is by my side. You truly are my important friend, so take care of yourself," he murmured into her ear before releasing her. With a wave of his hand, he left the room, leaving behind a stunned Sha Yun.

The lingering sensation of hugging the Snake Woman remained with Yan Xiaobao as he stepped out of the room. The softness of her body made him smile faintly. Ever since he figured out what Sha Yun spent her time on, he had been in good spirits, especially after realizing that she didn't dislike him. On impulse, he had hugged her—a gesture that even shocked himself—but he felt it was necessary. After all, to him, she was a very important person.

Surveying his surroundings, he sighed softly and muttered, "One woman down, one more to go." Then, he slowly made his way toward Wang Julong's room. Sha Yun wasn't the only woman seemingly trying to avoid Yan Xiaobao; ever since he had returned home, Wang Julong had been doing the same, and for this white-haired young man, the situation had become intolerable. He needed to know what she felt so he could move forward.

After knocking on Wang Julong's door and waiting for half an hour without receiving an answer, Yan Xiaobao concluded that Wang Julong had left the mansion and gone to the medical expert's facility for training.

Considering his next steps, Yan Xiaobao realized that apart from Sha Yun and Xu Biao, no one else was in the mansion. He had already spoken to both of them. Stroking his chin, he began to wonder whether he should head to the Black Lion Society or visit the Ma Family to inform them about Cou Ling's decision. Both places were likely to hold information about the events of the past few days.

"I suppose the Black Lion Society will have more information than Ma Kong. Since that's what I need, I'd better contact Gao Yan," he muttered to himself as he left the mansion. The guards appeared bewildered as they watched him leave. He had just returned, and now he was leaving again within mere hours. Would he disappear once more? Sharing a glance, the two guards found an unspoken question in

each other's eyes, but all they could do was shake their heads. They knew they had no authority to question their employer's plans.

Yan Xiaobao had stayed in Muchuan City long enough to thoroughly know his way around, but even with his familiarity, he faced difficulty reaching the Black Lion Society quickly. There were simply too many people crowding the streets.

Muchuan City, the capital of the Kingdom, was tightly packed with houses in the poorer districts. During the daytime, these families engaged in selling goods at the market; some ran food stalls, begged, or even resorted to theft to survive. Gazing at the crowd before him, Yan Xiaobao let out a deep sigh as he tried to find a way to weave through them.

Suddenly, just as he was preparing to squeeze past a few stout experts, he felt a small hand brush against his clothing. Reacting instinctively, Yan Xiaobao grabbed the hand, which was now clutching several of Yan Xiaobao's Memory Stones.

The thief's face turned increasingly pale upon being caught, yet he didn't panic or try to escape. It was as if he understood that resistance would be futile.

Yan Xiaobao pulled the boy into a secluded alley and finally turned to look at the thief. Observing the youth before him, he quickly realized that the boy couldn't be older than ten. His face still bore traces of innocence, yet his eyes held a mix of stubbornness and defiance—no fear was apparent.

Yan Xiaobao smiled at the boy, spending a moment studying him. The more he looked, the more moved he felt. "Child, why don't you take up Martial Arts instead of stealing? That way, you can earn a free meal every day while training to grow stronger. Strength is essential, especially if you want to be a thief. Anyone can catch you as easily as I did just now," he said with a furrowed brow. But the boy merely scowled at Yan Xiaobao, as if he were a fool. "I might get a meal, but what about my sister?" he retorted. "I'm ten years old, so I can enroll in a school, but she's only seven. If I don't provide for her, she'll die within a month," he said, his stubborn gaze sharpening. Looking at the boy, Yan Xiaobao felt a deep sense of respect.

"Let me take a closer look at him. I believe he might have exceptional cultivation potential. If trained properly, becoming a Saint shouldn't be a difficult goal for him. In fact, if we don't account for those strange phenomena in your lower Dantian, I'd say his talent surpasses yours."

Yan Xiaobao was astonished to hear this, but he had come here to establish a faction. To do so, he needed powerful individuals. Right now, what he required were allies, and this young boy could potentially be of great help in the future.

A surge of energy suddenly flowed out of Yan Xiaobao's body, and the boy stared at him in complete shock. At last, a hint of fear appeared in his eyes. If he died, his sister would undoubtedly die too—a reality he couldn't afford to face.

"Calm down, child; I won't kill you," the cultivator before him said in a voice entirely different from what the boy had heard earlier. It sounded arrogant and vastly authoritative. Yet upon hearing that he wouldn't be harmed, the boy's heart, which had been hammering against his chest, slowly began to settle, though he remained wary and highly alert.