

## Medical 941

### Chapter 941: Guardian of the World

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"Welcome to the Trial by Fire." The Bull spoke in the Human language, though it was easy to understand, there was a strange accent as it spoke, as if it was singing every word.

"I am the Guardian of this world. I was placed here by the four Masters, and I am the overseer of those who attempt to ignite the fire."

"Since the birth of this realm, I have been here. Until someone successfully seizes the formation of life, I will remain here to challenge all those who deem themselves strong enough to acquire my Master's precious array."

"Nevertheless, I have never let an entire team enter this realm; fortunately, the Holy Master foresaw such a day would come."

The Bull kept speaking, and no one in Yan Xiaobao's group interrupted them, everyone listened intently. Absorbing every word spoken, they listened attentively to learn more about this isolated realm they had entered.

"In this Trial by Fire, there are five levels, each stronger than the last. If you challenge the path, you can withdraw from the challenge and improve your conditions before attempting again. If you happen to die in this trial by fire, then you will truly die. If you give up, just shout it out, and I will immediately teleport you out of the world. If you return, you must redo any trials you have already cleared."

"The rules are simple. Because you are a complete group, you cannot pass through the forest. The forest is for individuals; a group cannot advance together, hence, your only choice is to cross the wasteland of death. You will encounter five challenges that will test your strength, perception, teamwork, dedication, and talent."

"These paths have no time limit, but if another group enters this world and completes it before you do, then you will not be able to obtain the formation of life."

"I will follow your team. I can only leave you when another group appears within this domain." The Bull continued to explain, and Yan Xiaobao nodded. Although it was clear these trials would be very challenging, it was evident that they would not utterly kill those who undertook them. If that were the case, then they would not retreat or give up at any time.

"Elder, thank you for your explanation." Yan Xiaobao said, clapping his fists and bowing respectfully to the Bull. His reaction made the Bull slightly surprised. "I am called Mu Haolong." The Bull nodded to Yan Xiaobao, who smiled and nodded in return.

"This is Yan Xiaobao." He introduced himself, then everyone behind him stood up, bowing deeply and stating their names. The absolute respect they showed evidently affected the Bull, making them think better.

"While I like your personality, in terms of the Trial by Fire, I cannot help you, but I will do my best to explain what will happen." The Bull said with a smile on its face.

"We thank the senior." Yan Xiaobao said again. It was obvious the power of this Bull was simple, just like Huli, it had no aura.

"I will let you experience the first trial yourself. Your goal is to reach the end of this wasteland. Once you get there, you will see what happens next. If you manage to pass this trial, then everyone will receive and then you can choose to attempt the second trial or give up. Alright, I've told you too much, get ready to start the trial! Remember, if you feel you cannot cope, then tell me, I will save you. If you just keep pushing forward, you might end your small life here."

Nodding, Yan Xiaobao motioned for his friends to follow him, and they cautiously moved towards the wasteland, filled with geysers and lava-filled craters, leading to rivers of lava on the ground.

As they stepped into the wasteland, they were hit by intense heat waves, almost unable to breathe. The attack on their nostrils and throats felt as if their bodies were on fire. Nevertheless, each of them had a distinct determination, and without saying anything, the entire group decisively took one more step forward.

Initially, their speed was very slow. Their bodies felt as if they were on fire, but their speed began to slow down. No one in the group was foolish, and they began to move quicker than others. Together they

managed to slowly increase their speed, but even so, moving across this endless wasteland made them feel like they were making no progress at all.

From the side, the Bull was surprised. Although it had never seen a group enter the wasteland before, it knew the heat here was not something they should be able to handle easily, but this group, mainly composed of the Emperor's group, had already managed to adapt to this terrible heat.

With a smile on its lips, the Bull couldn't help but watch them with amazement. In the days when the Divine Beast still controlled this domain, they sometimes allowed those with outstanding merits to challenge this fiery trial and attempt to attain the formation of life, and for the first time, it felt that it might actually be able to leave this domain. Perhaps now was the time for the formation of life to find another guardian.

Crossing the wasteland required everyone to use their inner energy to protect their bodies. The deeper they went into the wasteland, the hotter the air became. After moving for several days, they occasionally saw small flames exploding in the air as the high temperature ignited tiny particles. However, even so, as they slowly ventured further into this vast desert wasteland, no one had any intention of stopping.

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Chapter 943: Flame Army

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"When it comes to individual combat, I might not be very good at it." A voice suddenly rang out from the back, and everyone turned to look at Wang Julong. She walked forward with determination, looking at the Flame Army with a strange expression.

"However, I believe we can defeat this Flame Army," she said, her voice full of certainty. Everyone was shocked when they heard this. Hui Yu, panting, smiled and couldn't help but ask, "How?"

"It's really quite simple," Wang Julong waved her hand, saying, holding a set of small bottles. "I can concoct a poison that can take out every one of these soldiers. It's very effective, so it's crucial for all of you to take the detoxification agent before we start. Although we can retreat, I have a feeling that once I start mixing the magic potion, the army will make their move. After all, when we begin actively preparing to attack them." Wang Julong continued, and the others nodded. What she said made sense.

"It will take the burning of three incense sticks of time to protect me," she said confidently. "By then, I will have completed the poison. However, before I start mixing the poison, all of you must take this medicine."

Wang Julong distributed a pill to everyone, and no one even questioned what it was. They all swallowed them immediately and felt a warmth emanating from within their bodies.

The warmth of this pill was very different from the heat they experienced in the fire trials. It was a comfortable and calm warmth spreading through their bodies, while the other was volatile and dangerous to them. It felt like some kind of screen was forming inside them, which happened to be the detoxification agent. This was a pill Wang Julong created with all her might; a pill not refined like that of an Alchemist, but mixed from poisonous plants and finally combined with pearls through force rather than fire.

"Alright, everyone," Yan Xiaobao shouted. "Let's take on this trial of strength!"

Just as Wang Julong began mixing the poison, the Flame Army started their attack. As she anticipated, the army would not wait for the poison to mix before they acted.

Seeing their movements, Yan Xiaobao issued a command. "Everyone gather around Wang Julong! Protect her and make sure no one gets near her while she's busy making the poison. If we cannot manage it, then we will retreat. We can redo this as many times as necessary, so there's no reason to take great risks now."

"While we can complete this task with minimal risk, we still need to give it our all. These challenges are by no means simple, nor are they issues we can resolve easily, so do your utmost! While we can complete this task with minimal risk, we still need to give it our all. These challenges are by no means simple, nor are they issues we can resolve easily, so do your utmost!"

Hearing Yan Xiaobao shout, everyone nodded. As the Flame Army crashed into this small group of experts, swords were drawn, spears, and other weapons were everywhere. The impact felt as if a massive warhammer had slammed into each of them.

One fiery human after another leapt at them, only to be reduced. Whenever an enemy was defeated, they would disappear, and even their bodies would vanish. This made it easier for other burning soldiers to advance on them. They mercilessly threw themselves at Yan Xiaobao and his friends, their formation under pressure from the start.

The Lao was struggling, clearly the weaker link in the group. He was focused on training rather than martial arts. Although his sword strikes were swift and dangerous, they were at a disadvantage against the powerful experts charging at them. His sword attacks could hit only one soldier at a time, but there were so many soldiers being thrown at him that his movements were much faster than he imagined. Despite his speed, it was not enough to combat the many attacking him.

Yan Xiaobao was using his two swords as he constantly cut down one flaming soldier after another. Although there were many, he quickly found a rhythm to attack and retreat without leaving his position around Wang Julong.

Although he was taking down expert after expert, Yan Xiaobao was not hopeful about this battle. When one was replaced by two, and two by five, they would exhaust their energy. More and more experts charged them, challenging them, and becoming increasingly desperate as they had already seen how Yan Xiaobao and his friends planned to pass this trial. The Flame Army could not wait for Wang Julong to finish making the poison.

Behind him, he heard Deng Wu shout. Although Deng Wu was performing admirably against many foes, there were simply too many of them. His soul shadow did not have enough space to move, and

whenever the battle reached Deng Wu, he could only use his martial power to fend off attacks, but his personal strength was limited as he focused on Necromancy. Thus, he was pushed back further. At least those around him, Cai Jie and Sha Yun, had managed to protect him, but even so, they were slowly being pushed back.

"Five more minutes!" Wang Julong gritted her teeth and said, as she mixed one drop of poison with another, her full attention on the small bottle in her hand. Toxic fumes began to radiate outward, but due to the detoxification agent they took earlier, nothing happened to Yan Xiaobao and the others.

#### Chapter 944: Flame Army (Part 2)

"We can take on these guys!" he shouted, his words energizing the exhausted people. No one gave up; everyone gave their all. Sha Yun fought those against her and Deng Wu with her whole body; her whip flashed through the air, wrapping around soldiers' necks, killing them. Her breath became ragged, but she pushed on.

Beside her, more and more energy entered the soul shadows, and these shadows fought with full force as well. Cai Jie appeared and disappeared like a flash. His shadow was almost imperceptible, as he moved swiftly like the wind, managing to take down one soldier after another.

The Lao wasn't as astonishing, but his sword gestures flashed continuously. One by one, they cut down expert soldiers, and next to him, Qiao showed her amazing warrior abilities. She might have been weaker than the Lao, but she seemed to dance among the army, taking down expert soldiers one by one, as if cutting hot tofu. Seeing her fight the enemies instead of him, the Lao couldn't help but feel amazed and astonished. It was the first time he understood that compatibility was at least as important as cultivation. Even if you have infinite energy, what's the use if you don't know how to use it? For survival, they indeed needed to balance both.

"Step back!" A hoarse voice erupted suddenly. As Wang Julong stepped forward, everyone moved back in unison. From her hands, a substantial mass of poison kept growing. It grew larger and larger, anyone who came in contact with it would immediately decay.

"Kill her!" One of the higher-ranking Flame Generals shouted. If they managed to eliminate the expert they desperately protected, clearly they couldn't continue the trial, but Wang Julong only sneered at the army. Anyone who rushed towards her instantly became a corpse, collapsing and disappearing on the ground. Clearly, the poison was utterly terrifying; it could even kill them.

"Retreat, wait for the poison to dissipate!" Another person shouted, but by this time Wang Julong started to move. With every elegant motion, the poison cloud began to grow larger. The cloud moved

outward, and soon, the entire area was filled with green poisonous mist. Even some of the higher-ranking generals could endure for a while, but they too were killed and vanished into the air.

It was a barren wasteland all around them, filled with nothing but desolation. Many Flame Army soldiers were gone. Not a single person remained, and seeing this sight, the Bull was deeply shocked.

When he heard about their plan to use poison, he was also interested to see if it would work. But he knew to what extent she reached to create such a powerful poison, and he couldn't believe that such a young girl could achieve such a truly terrifying level in the poison domain. He never expected she would really succeed. Even her group of friends were shocked by the absolute effectiveness of Wang Julong's poison.

"Congratulations on passing the trial of strength." The Bull said, looking at the group. "Since you've all completed the trial of strength, you will receive the Power Fire." he continued, as flames appeared in his hand. Before anyone had time to say anything, the flames surged into their bodies. Deep inside, they began forging and strengthening their bones, marrow, and muscles. It felt like their bodies were being thrown into lava. This sensation was very close to what they felt when struggling to reach the end of the wasteland; however, its intensity was many times higher. Despite the intense pain, they also felt their physical strength and vitality increasing. Energy surged through their bodies, and after controlling this surge of energy,

Due to the merger with Lan Feng, Yan Xiaobao had an astonishing compatibility with fire, making him the first to complete the body refinement with the flames. As he stood up, his body crackled, and he found his clothes had all been burned to ashes. Watching many people beside him, as he saw everyone else was in the same position, a brazen smile appeared on his face.

He glanced at Sha Yun and Wang Julong, shook his head, and found the cloak he gently placed on his shoulder covered their bodies. Then, he looked at the Bull sitting not far from them, quietly observing them.

Seeing Yan Xiaobao wake up so quickly, the Bull was amazed again, but by now, he had become numb to surprises from his achievements. They were not the strongest who had ever participated in the fire trial, but they possessed something special, unlike anything he had seen before.

The first to awaken after Yan Xiaobao was Cai Jie; when he opened them, his eyes were ignited with fire, and as he opened his eyes, his aura burst outward. When he felt the changes in his body, his face was filled with a shocked expression.

"I'm much stronger than when I last became a Saint!" he said to Yan Xiaobao in surprise, looking at his hands. "If I'm strong now, I can't believe how powerful I'll become!" His voice was shocked, his face full of disbelief.

"Well, there's no need to be so shocked. You've never participated in this trial before, so it's natural you're not as strong as you are now. This trial was specially created by my Holy Master. Naturally, you can become stronger through these trials." the Bull said from the side, his words causing a hint of greed in Cai Jie's eyes. If the first test made them strong, how strong would they become by the end of the trial? It was truly terrifying.

"We shouldn't be greedy." Yan Xiaobao said after some thought. "This was a trial of strength, so it's natural we gained strength from this trial. The next trial will be different, so the rewards should be different as well."

His words made sense, Cai Jie nodded, finally accepting his newfound strength. One by one, people slowly woke up. When everyone was awake, Yan Xiaobao found they had reached new levels of power. Qiao was now an Emperor, her strength now equal to the Lao, but her combat power still surpassed his. Though many would be envious, the Lao was not among them. When he saw the strength his sister had just gained, he simply smiled contentedly.

Cai Jie had become a Saint, now the group had two Saints. Although no one apart from these two reached another domain, they were nevertheless very strong and had gained great strength from the flames. None of them had broken through now standing at the peak of their domain, ready to break through at any moment.

Seeing they had all awakened, the Bull was surprised but also excited. He had never seen such a bizarre group before, and he hoped this group could capture the formation of life and restore his freedom.

"We will conduct the next test here." as he looked at the group, the Bull continued. "This is the trial of perception. To be allowed entry into the formation of life, one must possess keen perception. I have an incomplete ability that I will give you. Upon gaining this ability, everyone must create a complete ability based on the information you receive." The Bull explained well. "If someone for some reason cannot pass this perception trial, they can wait here for others to continue the trial."

"Although this is a group trial, there are some trials that require individual handling. Even if you're annoyed by this, there's nothing to be done. These are the laws laid out by the Holy Master, which I will follow." The Bull said decisively, everyone nodded.

They sat in a circle, closed their eyes, and waited for the Bull to take the next step. Seeing they were all prepared, he waved his hand and smiled. Beams of light shot from his hand, penetrating the minds of all the young experts sitting down. Entering their minds was part of an ability, however, this ability was unlike anything these young experts had seen before. It required no Qi, no spiritual energy, or elemental affinity. It wasn't even a skill needing Wu Wei or could be considered martial arts.

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Chapter 945: A Difficult Trial

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Merely understanding what kind of attack this was and its foundation was not simple. Fortunately, the Bull did not set a time limit on comprehending it.

The first day slowly passed by as everyone fell into a deep, trance-like state. Depending on what they were experiencing, one might occasionally see their brows furrow or their lips form a smile.

Although it was a challenging trial for many of them, for Cai Jie, it was a piece of cake. Cai Jie, a former God, noticed that the fire entering his body was not of any ordinary energy, but was clearly Ancestor World Power. The attack they were attempting to complete was evidently targeting this power. This trial relied on a person's understanding of the rules and energy reactions of this power.

Previously, Cai Jie had knowledge of the laws and powers of the Ancestor World. He had used this energy to fight before, and although it was an incomplete ability, creating it from scratch was not difficult for him. The more he pondered what he learned from the Bull, the deeper his meditation and astonishment grew. Although he was familiar with Ancestor World Power and their attacks, he had never encountered an attack that brought energy into the body and directly transformed it into something else.

While Cai Jie delved into the intricacies of this ability, everyone else slowly came to the conclusion that the energy they needed to use was the kind they absorbed while traveling through the wasteland. As to what kind of energy it was, no one knew, not even Cai Jie, until he was able to connect it to this strange

attack. By now, he finally understood why his body had become much stronger than before. Heaven, his Holy Level body had already merged with Ancestor World Power from the Godrealm! Undoubtedly, his body was far stronger compared to anything he had felt before.

While everyone was immersed in a deep trance, cultivating and understanding the abilities transmitted into their minds, the Bull sat quietly to the side. He observed each of them, a gentle smile on his lips, his eyes full of anticipation. "How many of them will manage to overcome this barrier?" he wondered as he looked up at the sky.

"The trial of strength was created by the Azure Dragon. The perception trial was created by the Vermilion Bird. They are different; although both are Divine Beasts, this one is more challenging. The ability was just some scattered thoughts that the Vermilion Bird Lord came up with in a few minutes, and many attacks can be created through it. I've only seen once the intended attack that Vermilion Bird Lord hoped it would be. This Phoenix Descendant isn't as simple as these mortals imagine, but even if they manage to turn it into an ability that illuminates the surrounding world, I must let them pass. Still, I eagerly await the day when a master who perfects the Phoenix Guardian arrives, as I saw the Vermilion Bird Lord." As he looked at Cai Jie, the Bull sighed. He felt that maybe this talent could create a miracle.

"The air around the expert is getting hotter and hotter. The Ancestor World Power within him is boiling, as if he is already crafting an attack. To be able to so quickly understand the power used in this attack, and even to meditate to create any residual attack, he truly is a genius!" the Bull continued in awe.

Looking at everyone, he saw that they all seemed to be giving it their all. Most of their faces were covered in beads of sweat, trailing down. Except for one, all faces showed wrinkles and tightly pressed lips.

Looking at Yan Xiaobao, the Bull was completely dumbfounded. There was nothing. His face was serene, as if in meditation. No energy leaked outside his body, and his entire demeanor was completely ignorant.

"Doesn't he know how challenging this trial is?" the Bull wondered to himself. "Maybe at the start of the challenge, he wasn't at his peak state, and now he's letting himself reach his highest state before beginning to understand the attack." Thinking of this, the Bull felt better, but three days later, the young man remained exactly the same, while others were worsening.

Flames burned spontaneously over and over on other flames. Their faces were filled with determination and traces of comprehension, their inner selves clearly expressing their minds, although Yan Xiaobao

remained as serene as ever. "Has he given up?" the Bull was puzzled but couldn't come to a conclusion no matter how much he thought.

Just as he was about to consider more questions, the first person opened their eyes.

The first to open his eyes was Lao. The moment he opened them, flames could be seen in his pupils, but they quickly disappeared as he stood up and faced the Bull.

Standing in front of the Bull, he bowed deeply. "I hope to demonstrate the ability I learned after immersing myself in the fragments provided." Lao said earnestly, nodding at the Bull, before the young boy stepped forward. "Ha!" he shouted, flames all appeared on his arms, soaring into the sky. As he moved his arms with the flames, it was evident that the attack greatly improved the young man's offensive capability.

"I understand it's not the true Phoenix Descendant, but I name this the Vermilion Bird's Fire Gloves." Lao humbly said, and the Bull nodded in agreement with the name. It was clear that it fell far short of the original Phoenix Descendant, but it was also an ability Lao managed to create solely based on his comprehension. Considering the short amount of time he took to reach this point, it was an astonishing capability. The Bull was secretly impressed with this child's accomplishments.

Chapter 946: The Difficult Trial (Part 2)

"You have passed the trial!" he proudly announced. "Wait for your comrades to also complete the trial. I suggest you train more with your Vermilion Bird's Fire Gloves, so you can use them in future tests."

Upon hearing this, Lao nodded and thanked the Bull. Sitting down, he began to analyze this new ability he had created.

The Vermilion Bird's Fire Gloves are not just a simple attack. They awakened the power of the Ancestor World and unleashed his hidden potential. It is so powerful that it enhances his combat skills, increasing not only his strength but also his speed, vision, reaction time, and more.

The combination of the Vermilion Bird's Fire Gloves and his sword finger was enough to make him fear his own creation. The attack he devised was truly terrifying.

The second person to awaken was Wang Julong. Though she could not create a skill like Lao's, she crafted a technique based on flames. Her flame was similar to elemental affinity flames, dwelling in her Middle Dantian. This flame allowed her to ignite her Ancestor World Power, and finally, she found a flame that made her an Alchemist.

She named this flame the Flame of New Beginnings, as it symbolized the start of her journey on the path of Alchemy. This would help her become an even more mature Poison Master. To now be able to create actual medicine pills was a dream come true.

This flame was not only useful for refining materials but also for combat. Its ability was very much akin to the flame controlled by Yan Xiaobao, although it was slightly inferior to Lan Feng's Blue Flame.

Witnessing Wang Julong's attack, the Bull was even more astonished, having already been shocked by Lao's fire attack. It was a flame resembling elemental affinity, something he had never seen before. This Eternal Flame would never die and forever reside in her Middle Dantian. It is constantly supported by the power of the Ancestor World. Considering this, the Bull was left speechless, even with his high intelligence and perception, he couldn't fathom the thought process this woman went through in Phoenix City to create such a flame. He was given insight into her mind.

The next to awaken was Deng Wu. His attack was equally outstanding, managing to create a burning armor over his soul shadow, making them stronger than before. Moreover, the flame had acquired a sacred aura, darker than any other flame. When Deng Wu wielded it himself, it was almost as if a purple ray joined the red flames, the fire seemed capable of burning a hole in space. The flame was very effective, but this extraordinary power brought a high consumption rate, and he couldn't maintain it for long before all of his Ancestor World Power was exhausted.

It was eleven days since the trial started when Deng Wu awoke, yet even so, Yan Xiaobao remained seated, looking as serene as ever. Everyone else had chaotic energy in their bodies, their clothes drenched in sweat.

Despite this shocking the Bull, it wasn't surprising or shocking to those who followed Yan Xiaobao. On the contrary, everyone believed he would pass this test.

While waiting for others to awaken, the three who had passed the trial focused on refining their attacks. They were enhancing their abilities and familiarity with these attacks to rely on them when needed later on. Although they never knew what they would experience, they couldn't help but feel that something

was not as simple as it seemed. They thought they had to showcase their strength at least once more to pass the test. Thus, honing their powers was the best they could do.

It was another three days before the next person awoke, and this time, surprisingly, it was Sha Yun. When she awakened, she was covered in wounds, her scales shattered, blood dripping from her mouth, yet she stood determinedly in front of the Bull. Looking at him and lowering her head slightly, she was ready to show how remarkable her firepower had become. For those who often controlled the earth, fire was nothing to fear, yet the fire she created resembled what anyone else might have done. She managed to merge Phoenix Descent with her control over the earth, and the technique she devised enabled the creation and full control of magma. Seeing the magma appear at Sha Yun's feet, the Bull was simply amazed. After one miracle after another, these experts emerged one by one, creating wonders. For someone to launch an attack, all their attributes would stand out, yet another managed to create an Eternal Flame, and someone else fused their soul shadow with flames. More prominently was how the Ancestor World War integrated the Snake Woman's own elements.

This led to a tremendous increase in the power of her Earth Skills, not only did all her powers enhance to an unimaginable degree, her level hadn't increased, but her combat capabilities improved significantly. Her skills were in no way inferior to the overall power gained by the original Phoenix Descendants, initiated ages ago by the Holy Master.

Fourteen days passed, and now more than half the group had awakened. Only Qiao, Cao Jie, and Yan Xiaobao were left, deep in contemplation.

Qiao only needed a day to awaken. When she did, her entire body was aflame. Moving around, she managed to create a Fire Sea around her. The flames radiating from her body and from ring after ring encircled life. As they spread, they burned the surrounding landscape.

Seeing the destructive power, the Bull was taken aback. This attack was undoubtedly one of the most aggressive among all the assaults so far, and it was clear that Qiao's perspective on skills was by far the finest attack.

The Bull couldn't help but shiver. Even though he was stronger and ranked higher than these experts, he had underestimated them, especially the two young ones; they were as extraordinary as they seemed. Their talents were truly limitless!

Looking at Yan Xiaobao, he sighed. In his view, Yan Xiaobao was the leader of this group, but among all experts, only one, he feared, wouldn't surpass this path, and that was Yan Xiaobao. He was so calm, behaving as if the attack he was considering wasn't difficult, seemingly not exerting any effort.

As Cai Jie and Yan Xiaobao continued to ponder, time slowly began to slip by. Soon, three weeks had passed, yet neither Yan Xiaobao nor Cai Jie showed any signs of awakening from their trance-like state. By now, Cai Jie was visibly in pain, his face twisted by a sustained grimace, while Yan Xiaobao still appeared as serene as if taking a leisurely stroll in the park.

Five weeks later, everyone began to worry about Yan Xiaobao. They saw the changes expressed by Cai Jie day by day, understanding he truly comprehended this attack known as Phoenix Bloodline, but Yan Xiaobao appeared to have no insight at all. His body was as cold as a deep lake, and he didn't seem to feel a hint of warmth. Could Yan Xiaobao really not perceive this attack? They all found it hard to believe. After all, Yan Xiaobao was the strongest in their team. Continuing without him would be meaningless, so their hearts were filled with concern.

Seven weeks later, Cai Jie finally opened his eyes. His entire body released a terrible aura exploding outward, and behind him, the Ancestor World Power surrounding Cai Jie's body transformed into a massive, fire-like sun. As Cai Jie floated from the ground with the sun beginning to descend behind him, it continuously rose and fell.

The Bull was amazed. This was as close as he had seen to the original Phoenix Descendants. The attack he witnessed lacked the original form and a trace of the original Phoenix Bloodline's power, but it appeared very similar. It descended upon the world, covering everything in a fiery ocean that continued to expand.

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Chapter 947: Leader

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To protect everyone around him, the Bull raised his arms, and a small energy shield appeared in front of everyone. The Bull ensured no one was hurt. He was really surprised and wondered if this was the end of their trial. He couldn't return to what he had said before. Since this trial had no time limit, all he could do was wait for Yan Xiaobao to open his eyes and admit he didn't understand the power transferred to his heart.

"Don't be discouraged," Cai Jie said, noticing Yan Xiaobao's strange appearance. "Although he might be different from our methods, remember, Yue has always been different from us. When has he not overcome something? I believe in him, and I will continue to believe in him. Let's wait and see what kind of miracle he will bring."

Hearing Cai Jie's words made everyone suddenly feel much better, but the Bull was very surprised. Cai Jie clearly had the capability to be the leader of this group, yet he was unwilling to take over. Even now, he firmly believed his military brother had the ability to pass this trial.

Yan Xiaobao took more than a month to open his eyes. When he did, it seemed the whole world had no heat. All the previous stressful atmosphere disappeared in an instant, all seemingly swallowed by Yan Xiaobao's body.

Witnessing this phenomenon, the Bull was shocked. He couldn't propose any reasoning for what was happening and couldn't fully understand it. Things beyond his understanding were only created by Saints!

Watching Yan Xiaobao, the Bull suddenly felt excited. "Let's see what you've gained from this attack," he said with great anticipation, and Yan Xiaobao nodded but didn't immediately start.

"Old man, can you take care of them? Even though I can use this attack, without the old man's protection, I'm afraid I might accidentally kill them."

Hearing this, everyone was shocked. Was the attack so powerful that Yan Xiaobao couldn't control it? Was the attack so intense that they needed to protect this senior? Could it be stronger than what Cai Jie created?

"Don't worry about your friends; I will protect them," the Bull said excitedly, enclosing many of his friends with the same energy shield as before.

Nodding, Yan Xiaobao retreated fifty meters, his body becoming blurry. Unlike the others, flames appeared on Yan Xiaobao's body, and they were blue. His entire body slowly disappeared before forming a large Phoenix.

Yan Xiaobao had transformed into this fiery-red Phoenix, with a few flaps of its wings, the Blue Flame Phoenix flew into the sky, emitting a sound that shook the heavens and the earth, then swooped straight towards the Bull and his friends.

His speed of movement was simply incredible, and the fact that he could control this massive Blue Flame Phoenix made all his friends gasp in surprise. But the one most shocked was the Bull. Seeing how Yan Xiaobao became a Blue Flame Phoenix and was descending upon him filled his heart with pride. It reminded him of a red Phoenix when his master showed him the Phoenix's power thousands of years ago. Except what he saw this time was even more powerful.

After they woke up, the Blue Flames had completely wreaked havoc. Not only did the ground shatter, but all the stones melted, and scars appeared on the earth's surface. The absolute power and destruction of this attack left everyone speechless. This attack was so extraordinary, so awe-inspiring, that no one knew what they should say. All they could do was stare at Yan Xiaobao, their mouths agape, eyes wide open. What he understood in this attack far surpassed the Holy-level. Yan Xiaobao once again proved he was the strongest among them all; he indeed was the highest expert among experts.

Thinking Yan Xiaobao couldn't comprehend this ability, even the Bull could only smile wryly at himself. Now, seeing the Blue Flame Phoenix Descendant nearly collapse the entire world, his eyes sparkled.

"Well done!" He nodded, and the world around them twisted and spun, and he couldn't help but praise it. The wilderness they had been in for months vanished in an instant, and suddenly they found themselves in desolate mountains. Peaks rose all around them. These mountains were so high that clouds obscured them, making it impossible for anyone to see them.

They stood in a valley between the mountains. Here, they suddenly saw many shadows appearing in front of them. These shadows seemed to slowly take on human shapes, but they didn't stop there. Their forms kept changing until they all took on the forms of the expert group entering.

"This is a trial of teamwork!" the Bull began but quickly fell silent again. Behind him, he found Yan Xiaobao had collapsed after using such a powerful ability. All his energy was exhausted, and he needed to recover it before continuing the trial.

Before he woke up, it only took Yan Xiaobao three hours, and as he did, his eyes were filled with amazement as he looked at their new destination. He had collapsed the moment he used the Phoenix Descendant and hadn't even noticed their change in location.

Seeing Yan Xiaobao's surprised expression, the Bull cleared his throat. "This is a trial of teamwork. This trial is simple. You need to defeat yourself. Although this trial seems simple, it is not as easy as you imagine because as you improve, your copies will too. As you gain power, so will they. The only thing they won't gain is the ability to work together. They will possess your current capability for teamwork, but it will not develop any further."

Chapter 948: Leader 2

"Once again, without any time limit. What I need is for you to defeat your replicas! Now enjoy the battle!" Bull said, as before, he expected these youths to immediately unleash their strongest attacks and assault their replicas; however, they did not move initially.

Instead, they formed a group, sat down, and started conversing.

"We can't just attack. This is a test of teamwork, not a test of strength. Defeating them clearly requires our joint efforts. Our current teamwork isn't the best, so let's take this opportunity to understand our cooperation better," Yan Xiaobao said, and the others nodded, everyone excitedly agreeing.

Seeing their actions, Bull was surprised but nodded in approval. Rushing into this battle was indeed not the best decision. Although they had strong attacking power, that wasn't the only important thing. These replicas also had fierce attacks, and if faced head-on, they might end up hurt. Knowing this, Yan Xiaobao had stopped them, and now they were considering different plans and strategies while their shadow replicas patiently waited for their first challenge. "Again!" Yan Xiaobao roared, fiercely striking his opponent's chest and retreating three steps. Before him was his own energy clone, in his hand the copy of Ice Cold Storm.

After being forced to retreat, Yan Xiaobao's call led everyone else forward. As their attacks descended upon them, everyone rushed towards their own replicas. Some used fire attribute attacks learned from Ancestor World Power, while others relied more on their other strengths. When his soul shadow flew from his scroll, Deng Wu was completely immersed in purple flames, attacking repeatedly only to meet the same advancement before him. Both kept fighting until their shadows slowly tired and returned to their scrolls. Neither side had the upper hand.

Sha Yun was like a Demon. Her silver eyes sparkled in the reflection of lava flowing from her hands; though it wouldn't harm her, it couldn't harm her energy clone either.

In such battles, one-on-one, neither side had an advantage, but neither was at a disadvantage either. However, looking at the overall battle, it was clear that both sides would exhaust their energy, and neither could win.

"Retreat," Yan Xiaobao said in a weary voice, and the team retreated together, some less willing than others. "We have two choices," Yan Xiaobao stated decisively, his words causing everyone to look at him in surprise.

"First, we can unite as one. We will rely on our teamwork to fight them and achieve victory, and this teamwork shouldn't be too challenging. If we pursue one person at a time, we should be able to eliminate at least some experts quickly. If we do this, passing the trial easily will be within reach. This teamwork attempt really isn't too challenging for us," Yan Xiaobao explained, and others nodded. Even Bull approved, but what followed surprised not only Bull but his companions.

"Although we have another option. Even though we can fight as a team and quickly pass this teamwork trial, we can choose to fight one-on-one. Doing so will allow us to sharpen our skills and refine our control over new power. We won't pass the trial this way, but we will enhance our strength. Our best opponent will be the one we find this way, and this is an opportunity we cannot ignore. I think we should spend time improving our skills and battling those who force us to improve. If in the next trial we have to fight but spend time honing our skills here first, then it gives us plenty of time. If there really are no more battle trials afterwards, then we still haven't lost anything."

Hearing this, everyone nodded unconsciously. Even though this meant spending more time here, if it meant improving their skills, then it wasn't necessarily a bad thing. They had been away from Muchuan City for a long time, even if it took several months, so be it. As Yan Xiaobao said, finding an opponent as perfect as these clones is truly rare. Reflecting on the trial created by Black Turtle, Bull was moved. Back then, he mentioned that although this was a test of teamwork, it was also a form of self-regulation. It wasn't until now that Bull understood Holy Master's meaning. Rushing through trials isn't always the correct path. Both methods can be considered correct, but one can offer more, yet requires time.

"Who cares how long it takes!" Deng Wu exclaimed passionately. "What we need is to train our bodies. We need to become stronger than before! Otherwise, whenever we become gods, even if we have strength, if we lack the ability to support it, what's its value?"

Hearing his words, everyone else began nodding in agreement. From that moment, this group stayed in the mountains, battling energy clones day after day. They only rested when needing to restore energy or tend to wounds.

Energy clones acted strangely. Although this was a teamwork trial, their shadows weren't any use. Whenever someone advanced alone to challenge their energy clone, only their clone would attack.

Their battle results were as expected. Half the battles centered on relationships, while the rest were split fifty-fifty on both sides. Whenever they faced Clones, they would retreat and start recuperating, exactly what Yan Xiaobao and his friends did when needed during those three months in the mountains. Their increase in power was evident; however, despite their efforts, they couldn't surpass the energy clones. This was because whenever they comprehended something, gained new insights, or gained better control over their attacks, their clones also gained the same insights, making battles increasingly intense.

Initially, all battles were just short scuffles, but now they engaged in long endurance battles, pushing everyone to the limit. Sometimes they were battles of belonging, sometimes battles filled with massive attacks, causing powerful energy waves to surge outward from each collision.

With a sigh, Yan Xiaobao and his energy clone completed another epic battle, leaving both sides completely drained of energy, thus Yan Xiaobao sat down to recover his energy. The longer they stayed here, the less their bodies suffered from damage due to better responses to battle conditions.

Qiao and Lao, who lacked much real combat experience, were truly amazed by Yan Xiaobao as they observed their proficiency in battle. They now had no useless movements at all. Every step was confident and purposeful. Each movement resembled the flow of rivers and streams; they looked as natural as flowing water.

Qiao was no more spectacular than Lao, both continually demonstrating their capabilities.

Watching all his companions, Yan Xiaobao couldn't help but smile. In these grueling months of battle, everyone gained many insights into their combat styles and became more humble after countless defeats. The whole process tempered their minds. It had eliminated all arrogance, replaced by caution and vigilance. Neither he nor his friends dared to underestimate any enemy now, understanding that even if they fully utilized their power, opponents would always have one fierce attack.

"Retreat!" Yan Xiaobao shouted, and as his voice struck the fresh air, everyone withdrew. They separated from their replicas, halting the current battle.

"You better tell us something good," Deng Wu joked, "I won this battle, if I won it, it puts me ahead!"

Upon hearing this, Yan Xiaobao smiled but shook his head. "I know you want to win his victory, but I think it's time for us to enter the next trial. We've been here for three months, proving that we've truly succeeded in greatly improving!"

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Chapter 949: Soul Shadow

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"We can't continue to delay the completion of the experiment's mission, so I suggest we prepare for the attack. We will form the front line with Cai Jie and me. Behind us, Lao and Qiao will cover Wang Julong in the middle, followed by Deng Wu and Sha Yun at the rear."

"Julong, you just need to use your energy to heal us. That's your only task, heal anyone injured, and use your water abilities to brighten us."

"Cai Jie and I will focus on the attack and take all the damage. Moreover, we will focus our attacks on one person. When we attack, everyone must use their most powerful abilities to kill them. Grouping them and defeating them one by one is the only way we will win this fight. We are much stronger than when we entered this experiment, but not only have we gained power. Each of our energy clones is at least as powerful as us."

"Our first target is Julong's energy clone. We can't let her heal any of her allies. After Julong, we will go after Qiao and Lao. Although they aren't the ones causing the most damage, they may pose some trouble for us. After dealing with these two, we'll cancel out Deng Wu, followed by Sha Yun."

"Although Deng Wu has soul shadow and Sha Yun has magma, these shouldn't pose too much of a threat to us, but we need them to allow us to focus on Jie and my shadow."

Upon hearing Yan Xiaobao's orders, everyone nodded. Their expressions weren't cheerful nor overly excited. All were filled with determination, showing serious expressions. It was clear they had been

battling these clones for a long time, and none felt victory was assured. If they truly hoped to achieve victory, they would have to give it their all.

With grim expressions and energy coursing through them, Yan Xiaobao's team stepped forward. Over the past three months, whenever they needed to recover energy, they would see everyone's battles, hence they had a good understanding of each other's strengths and weaknesses.

"Attack!" Yan Xiaobao shouted, but didn't rush forward, instead, he and Cai Jie drew their swords, taking a few steps backward.

Yan Xiaobao held the cold Storm Sword in one hand and drew his Blood Sword from the Cou Ling with the other. Cai Jie was already prepared with two bloody swords, and together they skillfully blocked any attacks targeting their group.

Behind them, they could feel the air pulsating with energy waves from the released attacks. As the battle commenced, Deng Wu summoned soul shadow; however, they didn't directly attack Wang Julong's energy clone, instead blocking other soul shadows of Deng Wu.

"We can't lose! Give your all to them, and show how outstanding our team coordination has become!" Yan Xiaobao encouraged, as Qiao and Lao's attacks descended on Wang Julong's energy clone, rendering her unable to perform any abilities. Her energy rushed out from her body and formed a protective barrier around her, yet even so, within the barrier, cracks appeared from everyone's collective attacks. Everyone was filled with determination as they started employing stronger and stronger abilities while still retaining as much strength as possible. It's important to quickly defeat Wang Julong's energy clone so they have enough energy to defeat the others! Wang Julong's energy clone couldn't withstand the downpour striking her attack, and soon her clone turned to shadow, then completely vanished from the battlefield.

As their attacks descended on Wang Julong's clone, other clones relentlessly attacked them; however, while Yan Xiaobao's group unified against one person, many of the clones' attacks were aimed at everyone. All these attacks were blocked by Yan Xiaobao and Cai Jie.

Blocking all clone combination attacks proved to be much more difficult than attacking. Cai Jie and Yan Xiaobao both found that while their offensive strength was excellent, their defense was lacking.

Fortunately, since they began fighting, they have become stronger in attacking others and defending themselves, and they managed to rely on a hair's breadth.

"Next target!" Yan Xiaobao roared as the first clone disappeared. He shifted focus to Lao's clone, investing more and more effort into both attack and defense. Although he would normally avoid many attacks happening on him, now evasion is no longer an option, as there are people behind him. The only attacks he can avoid are the direct attacks of his own clone, which he can slightly dodge without endangering his friends and family.

Since he used the Phoenix Descendant, Yan Xiaobao created a protective barrier around his body for the first time using his Ancestor World Power. This helped protect him and his friends while he launched his martial power attack on the targeted clone.

"Now is the good time for you to utilize your self-created abilities." Lan Feng commented from inside, excited for their first real team fight, as he hoped they would succeed.

Thinking of Lan Feng's words, Yan Xiaobao clenched his teeth and nodded. He indeed possesses energy more powerful than Wu Wei, which is the mixed energy he created in an unknown tomb. Since Yan Xiaobao became a Saint, this fusion of black energy seems to have grown even more powerful, making it a perfect time to use it.

#### Chapter 950: Soul Shadow

Yan Xiaobao needed a lot of time to create this black energy, but since the unknown tomb, he hadn't engaged in such a serious battle. Since he hadn't needed to use it recently, he slowly created and accumulated more of this destructive energy. Although it harmed his heart, he also understood that it was one of his trump cards, and if their trial continued in this manner, they were likely to lose this battle.

"If we need it, I'll use it." Yan Xiaobao said decisively to Lan Feng; if possible, he would rather avoid exhausting his energy. His clone was also likely to use the black energy. If he indeed possessed it, then it was likely he would use it simultaneously without giving it an edge. Although he could use this black energy, he wasn't sure if he could defend against it.

After thinking it over, Lan Feng felt that his suggestion wasn't so great after all, as he realized that Yue's clone might also use the energy. Instead of overthinking the issue, the two of them pulled themselves together and focused their attention, as Lao's energy clone slowly disappeared from the battlefield.

"Qiao attack!" Yan Xiaobao ordered, this time he no longer dwelled on those thoughts, but fully focused on the battle. As more attacks fell on Qiao's clone, his martial power was used steadily. Despite this, she was still quite skillful and managed to launch some attacks before she was overwhelmed. So far, the most difficult to defeat was Wang Julong, but she was quite adept in defense and had a higher cultivation ability than others.

"Attack Deng Wu!" Yan Xiaobao shouted. Throughout the battle, Deng Wu and his clone's soul shadow were continuously quarreling, occasionally using martial power attacks on other groups. The clone's direct attacks were all blocked by Yan Xiaobao and Cai Jie, while the real Deng Wu's attacks helped defeat one clone after another.

Seeing Deng Wu taking on most of the opponent's attacks, Yan Xiaobao and Cai Jie thought they could take a slight break, as they were defending many attacks and their defensive power was very strong. However, they soon realized how wrong they were.

The more allies they had, the more desperate they became, as the remaining clones grew increasingly desperate because the attacks they had to defend against became more powerful.

"I'm going to try it." Yan Xiaobao said through gritted teeth, looking at his clone. Suddenly, a black mist emerged from his body, forming a protective layer around him and Cai Jie. This made it easier for them to withstand the rain impacting them.

As Yan Xiaobao released the black energy, he kept observing his other self, waiting for it to release its own black cloud to attack him and Cai Jie, but nothing happened.

Though Yan Xiaobao was surprised, the Bull was filled with shock. By now, the Bull was numbed by all the surprises they had created, but even so, his mind felt chaotic, feeling as if it stopped working as he watched the black energy.

What is this? he thought. I know the energy of Magic Creatures, I know the energy Humans use, but this energy is neither, and yet it is very similar. How can this be?

Though the Bull was shocked, Yan Xiaobao was delighted. It seemed that this black energy wasn't something his clone could utilize, allowing him to use it for protection. This would allow the two in front to breathe a bit more.

Seeing Yan Xiaobao releasing a black mist, everyone was initially surprised. This was because they had never seen Yan Xiaobao use this energy before, but they quickly adapted. Everyone relentlessly attacked Deng Wu's clone, and this clone slowly lost ground and became overwhelmed, disappearing into a shadow like all the others.

By now, only Sha Yun, Cai Jie, and Yan Xiaobao's clones remained, but they were filled with ferocity. They displayed their most outstanding abilities.

The entire ground where Yan Xiaobao and his friends stood had long turned to lava; the heat was intense but it also reflected their desperation. Although Sha Yun's energy clone could use the lava, it was useless for the group who had traversed the wasteland and acquired Ancestor World Power to protect their bodies from the heat. Because they had learned the incomplete Phoenix Descendant, they even learned how to give their Ancestor World Power fiery properties. For these reasons, fire was now useless against them, unless the firepower was much stronger than it currently was.

Standing on the lava and still covered by black energy, Yan Xiaobao launched a martial power attack on Sha Yun's clone, and everyone followed his lead. Cai Jie used martial power attacks more than Wu Yue, his life depended on it.

Now surrounded by black energy, no martial power attack could touch them, but suddenly, Yan Xiaobao shouted in surprise. It wasn't Sha Yun that made him cry out, but his own clone, as he saw a fiery aura enveloping this clone. His entire body turned red and blurry. It was clear he was preparing to use Phoenix Descent.

"Everyone back up!" Yan Xiaobao shouted, although everyone else was concerned about Yan Xiaobao, there was nothing they could do but comply. This ensured he not only had to protect himself but also the friends behind him.

The black cover over Cai Jie disappeared, and the thickness around Yan Xiaobao increased. Without any reservation, he exerted all his strength to shield in front of him. As he did so, he noticed that Sha Yun's and Cai Jie's clones had vanished. This would be the final clash and the last fight to determine the victor.

Indeed, if they failed now, they could try again, but none of these experts had the concept of failure in their minds. Watching all surrounding energy being completely absorbed by Yan Xiaobao's black energy, the Bull became very alarmed. Yan Xiaobao turned into a vortex continuously absorbing energy. Even

the Ancestor World Power from his clone's attack was drawn in and devoured. This energy entered his body, propelling his strength to sky-high levels.

The Phoenix Descent his energy clone planned to use quickly lost all its power. Instead, it was absorbed by Yan Xiaobao, who felt his body growing stronger. As the last drop of Ancestor World Power disappeared from his clone, it turned into a shadow that slowly vanished.

Yan Xiaobao won the victory for his team. However, as he still stood, the black energy swirled violently. When it eventually faded away, they noticed blood slowly trickling from the corner of his mouth, and the aura around his body was too chaotic to comprehend.

Rushing to Yan Xiaobao, all his friends were concerned for him. As they reached his side, Yan Xiaobao looked at them with a weary smile. "I'll rest now." He said, before collapsing into Sha Yun's arms, who gently lowered him to the ground.

"You will all stay here until he recovers, then we will proceed to the next trial." The Bull said in a stern voice. He had never seen such black energy before, and seeing such a low technically skilled expert execute such a skill worried him greatly.

Before proceeding to the next trial, he hoped to question this person. Not because he felt deceived, but because what Yan Xiaobao had used was something even the Holy Masters could not replicate. Clearly, this was beyond their understanding. How could Yan Xiaobao comprehend something even the Holy Masters could not? Pondering this, the Bull felt uneasy.

Yan Xiaobao slept soundly, and while he slept, the chaotic aura around his body slowly relaxed, becoming more stable again. When he opened his eyes, Yan Xiaobao felt he had absorbed all the energy from the clones, doubling the Ancestor World Power flowing within him. He could also sense slight changes within his body. His body felt much lighter than before, yet his strength had increased. His physical defenses had improved, and his control over the Ancestor World Power had become more proficient.

Yan Xiaobao felt very shocked at his sudden surge in power. He never knew the black energy he created had such a potent ability to devour the world around him. Looking inward, he found that the black energy he had stored for a long time had decreased by more than half, weighing heavily on his mind, he slowly began to cultivate and create more.

