

Nine Star 4161

Chapter 4161: Wanted Criminal

“Disciple?”

Even Long Chen was startled. When had he ever taken a disciple? That Heaven Venerate’s hair was already balding and graying. He clearly wasn’t young. But as soon as he saw Long Chen, he called himself his disciple and knelt to kowtow to his master.

“Senior, you are...?”

Long Chen hastily lifted him off. The moment he touched this old man’s arm, he instantly understood why the latter called himself his disciple.

“Senior? You can’t call me like that!” cried out the elder. “Back then, your explanation of the Starry River of the Sky Art has enlightened this disciple, allowing me to go from a World King into a Heaven Venerate. You gave me a new outlook on life. Disciple is Huang Hui. If you wish, you can directly call me by name.”

“The Starry River of the Sky Art?”

When they heard that name, the surrounding people were startled. That was an extremely domineering cultivation technique. One mistake would cripple or kill a person when cultivating it. Thus, essentially all sects viewed it as a forbidden technique, and they would not allow others to cultivate it. So, these people hadn’t expected to run into someone who actually trained in it here.

“No, that doesn’t make sense. The Starry River of the Sky Art is an incomplete cultivation technique. The absolute majority of people are limited to the Immortal King realm or before. It’s impossible for him to have been a World King!” cried out someone.

The name of the Starry River of the Sky Art was known to most people. Countless people had heard its legends.

Only people who were forced to the point of having no other choice were willing to train in this technique. As it cut off your future prospects, cultivating it was essentially deciding your upper limit.

However, this elder in front of them was actually a powerful Heaven Venerate. That was completely against common knowledge.

“Disciple greets senior.”

At this time, all the younger disciples who had come with this elder knelt on the ground and kowtowed toward Long Chen. All of their gazes were fervent and excited.

Long Chen instantly understood. Back then, he had left the Darklight Heaven and gone to the Violet Flame Heaven’s Starry River Palace.

The Starry River Palace was in ruins, but it was there that Long Chen comprehended the Starry River of the Sky Art and learned the full technique for drawing astral energy into his body. Furthermore, he

didn't conceal it to himself. He then shared it with the world, giving people an essential and comprehensive understanding of this technique.

When Long Chen discussed the Dao that day, countless people watched him. Countless people were taking notes, and those notes then spread throughout the world. As a result, countless experts who had been forced to cultivate the Starry River of the Sky Art once more saw hope.

Originally, their future paths were cut off, but Long Chen continued that path for them. With this, the Starry River of the Sky Art became a complete cultivation technique. As long as a person had the right aptitude and worked hard enough, they could even become a Heaven Venerate or even an Eternal.

Huang Hui was one such cultivator. He was extremely talented and had been stuck at the Immortal King bottleneck like everyone else, but he actually relied on his own intelligence to connect this broken path to the next step. He was the first person to break through to the World King realm with the Starry River of the Sky Art in the recent era.

After that, relying on his talent, he tried to help other cultivators of the Starry River of the Sky Art break through this limit as well. He even established his own Starry River Gate. Not accepting disciples, he only helped cultivators of the Starry River of the Sky Art break their limits.

However, his power was limited, and while he managed to reach the World King realm, he was unable to progress any further. No matter how hard he tried, he was unable to continue this path.

Later on, after Long Chen had explained the essence of the Starry River of the Sky Art and it reached his hands, Long Chen's comprehensive explanation instantly enlightened him. As a result, he directly broke through from the World King realm to the Divine Venerate realm.

Furthermore, he was originally a latent Triple Supreme. However, he had been harmed before his potential awakened and was forced to cultivate the Starry River of the Sky Art to protect his life.

Having been in the World King realm for countless years, his foundation was incredibly solid, allowing him to swiftly rise all the way to the Heaven Venerate realm. It could be said that there was no way for him to repay his gratitude toward Long Chen.

Just now, he was leading people on a stroll around the vicinity when he suddenly heard someone mention Long Chen's name, so he immediately ran over. He had seen what Long Chen looked like in photographic jades, so he instantly recognized Long Chen and kowtowed to him as a disciple to a master.

"Senior, it really is great that I can meet you!" Huang Hui looked at Long Chen emotionally. Long Chen had changed his fate. No... he had changed the sorrowful fate of all cultivators of the Starry River of the Sky Art. This favor was truly immense.

"If you're here, does it mean that there is a base for the Starry River inheritance here?" asked Long Chen.

"Yes, and we've already found it. Eight million cultivators of the Starry River line have arrived. Now that you're here too, if they learn about your presence, they'll definitely be overjoyed. Senior, please come back with us," said Huang Hui,

“Alright, we’ll take a look!”

Long Chen nodded. Huang Hui was delighted by his acceptance and hastily brought them deeper into the human race’s territory.

The area between the human race and the demonic beast race’s territories was a masterless land. Past this area, they saw that countless areas already had camps.

Those camps had people guarding them, and anyone who got too close would be warned. While passing by one camp in particular, Long Chen suddenly paused and looked at the entrance.

“An arrest warrant?”

Guo Ran and the others paused. There was a giant arrest warrant placed outside the entrance here, as well as an image of a person.

When Long Chen and the others saw that person, they almost laughed. It was a cloaked man of good proportions and a slightly chubby face. He had a sinister smile on his face that instantly made him seem like a bad person.

This person was precisely Mo Nian. However, this picture intentionally added a little bit of his baby fat and made his eyes even more wretched. It was a bit off the real Mo Nian, so Long Chen and the others hadn’t recognized him at first.

“Who are you?! You dare to laugh here? Scram! Don’t ask for trouble!” When Long Chen and the others laughed at the picture, the experts at the gate shouted at them.

“We can’t even laugh? Do you need to be so mean? Serves you right for having your graves robbed,” sneered Guo Ran.

Guo Ran instantly enraged those people. One of them waved his hand, and hundreds of experts flew out of their camp, blocking them.

“You’re definitely related to that fellow Mo Nian, aren’t you?!” shouted one of them.

Clearly, their ancestral graves really had been robbed. In an instant, Guo Ran’s words raised their suspicions.

“If you don’t want to die, then scram. Otherwise, the Starry River line will trample your Snow River Gate.” Huang Hui’s expression sank.

An elder amongst those people twitched upon hearing of the Starry River line. He hastily said, “It’s a misunderstanding, all a misunderstanding! Everyone, take care.”

Clearly, they were scared off by the name of the Starry River line. Long Chen was surprised. He could clearly sense the aura of an innate Heaven Venerate inside their camp, so why did they retreat just like that?

Only once they got out of the way did Huang Hui’s expression improve. He respectfully led the way for Long Chen, leaving this place.

On the way, they saw quite a few camps with this arrest warrant on their gates, making them rather speechless. It seemed that Mo Nian had not been slacking off.

The arrest warrants had huge rewards on them. Some people were even offering an Eternal divine weapon in exchange for Mo Nian's head. They clearly hated Mo Nian to the death.

After walking a while, heaven and earth suddenly began shaking, and a strange aura came out from the ground beneath their feet. A shocking scene then startled Long Chen and the others.

Chapter 4162: Unknown Power

Smoke began to gush out of the ground, and primal chaos qi was bursting out, causing the ruins to quiver.

As the Heavenly Daos rumbled, the very landscape was changing, and dirt swirled on top of the ruins, eventually solidifying into the foundations of the buildings.

"The Sage King Prefecture is awakening! Let's hurry!"

Huang Hui beckoned, and they sped up their pace. Rushing through this land, Long Chen saw countless sects cheering in their own camps.

The places that they were in had turned into solid building foundations, as if a pair of invisible hands were reconstructing this world.

Two hours later, they arrived at a giant camp, and the countless experts there immediately knelt toward Long Chen fervently when they saw him.

"Everyone, please rise. We are all heirs of the Starry River, and all I did was pass on the sacred teachings. I cannot accept this," said Long Chen hastily.

The gratitude that these people felt toward Long Chen could not be expressed in simple words. In the Violet Flame Heaven's Starry River ruins, Long Chen had managed to pass on the complete Starry River of the Sky Art, connecting these people to their future paths. It was no different than continuing their lives for them.

These people would have been stuck in the Immortal King realm for the rest of their lives. But now, they had broken through their limits. This was all thanks to Long Chen.

What Long Chen hadn't expected was that amongst the millions of the Starry River experts here, there were hundreds of thousands of World Kings and thousands of Divine Venerates.

When he asked, he learned that they weren't here to attend the Sage King Convention, but to protect the ones who could participate in it.

If the ones coming were just Immortal Kings, the seniors were worried about them being bullied. Thus, upon arriving here, they immediately announced that they would fight to the death against anyone who dared to bully the Starry River line's disciples.

However, when they first arrived, countless people looked down on them, viewing them as a broken inheritance that had purely come for fun.

As a result, within one month, over ten large battles were fought, and quite a few disciples of the Starry River line were killed.

However, more and more of their disciples continued to arrive, as well as more of their powerful experts. All of them were fearless toward death.

When Huang Hui in particular arrived, he led them to have their vengeance, annihilating the powers that had bullied the Starry River line.

In fact, an innate Heaven Venerate was severely wounded by them and fled. At that time, over a million disciples of the Starry River line had gathered.

Against so many fearless people, even an innate Heaven Venerate could only flee for his life.

That battle finally intimidated the surrounding people, so none of them dared to look down on the Starry River line any longer.

Furthermore, after that battle, even more disciples of the Starry River line appeared. Toward the end, they had gathered over eight million of them. They had the most people of any power.

Their force was so enormous that even the neighboring factions, with innate Heaven Venerates standing guard over them, couldn't help but feel a sense of unease.

What truly unnerved them wasn't the sheer quantity, but rather the unwavering fearlessness displayed by these people. They had never seen such ferocious warriors before.

At first, when they hadn't had so many people here, people from the Starry River line had even self-detonated to drag their enemies down with them. That courage was astonishing.

And with so many of them now gathered, anyone with a brain refused to provoke this group of madmen.

Thus, the previous group that had been offended by their mention of Mo Nian immediately retreated upon hearing of the Starry River line. They really didn't dare to provoke them.

"Senior, since you're here for the Sage King Convention, you can represent our Starry River line! With you here, we'll definitely get a good ranking! As long as we can get into the top ten thousand, the Starry River line will have hope of reviving. With the support of the world's karmic luck, we will definitely rebuild the Starry River Sect!" said an Earth Venerate, his elderly face filled with excitement.

The rankings on the Sage King Convention related to the karmic luck support of the world. This was why so many powers had come out in full force and brought their most outstanding disciples.

"I'm sorry, but I can't represent the Starry River line," said Long Chen awkwardly.

"Then you...?"

In an instant, countless disciples of the Starry River line were disappointed.

"I'm a dean of the High Firmament Academy. I... I can't represent other factions," said Long Chen a bit helplessly.

That elder immediately clapped his forehead. "I'm so sorry! I forgot about this. You're from the High Firmament Academy, so naturally you must represent them."

"It's fine. Just look at our numbers. We have over six million Immortal King disciples. There's no worry that we won't get into the top ten thousand!" Huang Hui laughed confidently.

Just as they were speaking, a giant palace grew out of the ground next to their camp. This magnificent structure, which was made entirely of earth, bore a massive signboard in Jiuli immortal characters that read "Starry River".

Upon closer inspection, these two characters seemed to be formed by countless flowing stars, with each star exuding an ancient air. Within these characters, it felt as if you could see the workings of the universe.

"This was personally written by the Starry River Sage," said Long Chen.

Hearing this, everyone was shaken. This was their first time attending the Sage King Convention and their first time seeing this spectacle.

When Long Chen said that the Starry River characters were written by the Starry River Sage, they immediately kowtowed toward it. The human race cared deeply about inheritances. Without the Starry River Sage, there would be no Starry River of the Sky Art. And without the Starry River of the Sky Art, they would not have their current accomplishments.

As time passed, one palace after another slowly rose out of the ground. However, those were all side palaces. The main palace was still in the midst of forming, and this strange sight surprised Long Chen.

This was the most incomprehensible energy that Long Chen had ever encountered. Based on what he was seeing, these buildings were growing out of every power's inherited territory.

But when the Sage King Convention ended, these palaces would once more turn to ruins? Would they reform at the next Sage King Convention?

Long Chen was stunned thinking of this, and Xia Chen and Guo Ran were even more so. As a forger and a formation master, they had never seen this kind of concept before. It was the power of creation.

Touching the runes on the palace, they sense their immense power, stupefied. They didn't know what these runes were, but hitting them resulted only in their fists hurting. The wall was incomparably hard.

Time continued to pass, and other than the main palace, all the others had fully formed.

These palaces had all kinds of murals hanging in them, and there were various strange sights within those carvings.

Long Chen's heart shook when he examined those murals. Perhaps some of them were related to the secrets of the Nine Star Hegemon Body Art.

Just as he was about to examine them more closely, Huang Hui ran over anxiously.

"Senior, not good! Come and take a look!"

Chapter 4163: Incomparable Genius, Starry River Sage

“How can this be?!”

When Long Chen saw countless people collapsing on the ground in the palace, clutching their heads and howling in pain, he was completely stunned.

“I don’t know either. They looked at the starry sea diagram at the heart of the palace and immediately collapsed like this. I’ve already forbidden others from entering the palace!” said Huang Hui hastily.

“Starry sea diagram?”

Long Chen immediately ran into the palace that was still growing out of the ground. Now, there was a divine pool at the heart of the palace, and you could see stars within the divine pool that moved like the workings of the cosmos.

Actually, the star diagram did not look like a diagram and more like a true starry river. The more Long Chen looked, the deeper and further it seemed, giving him a hair-raising feeling.

It felt like he was lost deep in the sea, as if some monster would devour him whole at any possible moment.

“They looked at the star diagram and then turned into this state. They said that it made their heads feel like exploding,” said Huang Hui. Contrary to Long Chen, his head was lowered, as he didn’t dare to look at the divine pool.

“This is the true divine diagram of the Starry River. The Starry River Sage probably created the Starry River of the Sky Art based on it. This is the true beginning and the true end. Also, the star diagrams in the side palaces are steps toward this divine diagram. Without taking those first steps, jumping straight to the final step results in this,” said Long Chen, beckoning to the fallen disciples.

Long Chen checked their bodies and found that their astral energy was in disarray. However, it wasn’t too serious; only their souls were shaken.

Long Chen then took out some medicinal pills and had people distribute them. After consuming those pills, these people slowly recovered from the pain.

With this lesson, everyone became much more careful and didn’t dare to randomly look around. Long Chen then directed them to start with the two characters on the gate, the Starry River characters.

Whether or not they could comprehend these two characters was not that important. Long Chen would give them a more detailed explanation later. The main thing was not to mess up the order of starting from the basics before going into deeper waters.

It would be best if they could comprehend things themselves. But if they couldn’t, it wasn’t a huge deal either. It was just that they could not vainly try to continue onward without comprehending the steps before it.

Long Chen also started off with the Starry River characters, which was the most foundational entry point. It was also the simplest to comprehend. With one look, you would understand.

However, the actual realm inside of it was not so simple. Compared to the ruins of the Starry River Palace, the inheritance here was actually more complete. Even Long Chen was benefitting immensely after observing it.

After looking at the Starry River characters, Long Chen went into the first side palace and looked at the first mural, then the second mural, and the third.

Every side palace had nine murals, and there were a total of nine side palaces. Overall, there were a total of eighty-one starry murals to look over.

The star diagrams started off simple but gradually grew more complex. At first, they were clear, but then they grew seemingly messy. By the ninth palace, the star diagrams were chaotic, giving people a headache with just a look.

Huang Hui managed to follow Long Chen all the way to the fifth palace before he was forced to stop. Here, he was unable to instantly comprehend the diagrams any longer.

As for the ordinary people, they were still stuck at the first palace. Fortunately, the palace was big enough to fit them all.

Long Chen stayed in the ninth palace for three full days. In the end, he found that the nine starry murals were nine kinds of divine arts.

However, these nine divine arts had many problematic areas. With the Nine Star Hegemon Body Art, Long Chen was able to understand the Starry River Sage's intent. But after examining these nine murals for a long time, he came to the conclusion that these nine divine arts were actually incomplete.

In other words, the Starry River Sage himself was unable to use these nine divine arts. He hadn't reached that height and had relied entirely on his intelligence to deduce these techniques.

"The Starry River Sage's intelligence really is unfathomable. He clearly had only taken three steps, but managed to deduce all the way to the ninth step. This kind of intelligence is something that I will never be able to reach." Long Chen couldn't help sighing in amazement.

Although there were some mistakes in the ninth step, the first eight steps were perfect, and the ninth step was also mostly correct. After seeing it, Long Chen was filled with admiration.

Long Chen then summoned his own starry sea manifestation. Using the Nine Star Hegemon Body Art as the foundation, he corrected the Starry River of the Sage Art. In the end, he managed to deduce these nine techniques.

As Long Chen raised his hand, a star diagram appeared on his palm. In this state, his hand almost couldn't be seen because it was entirely covered in tiny stars.

"What power. Although it's not on the same level as the Dragon King Battle Armor, it's only one level weaker." Looking at this starry palm, Long Chen was amazed. "The Heavenly Daos change, but astral energy remains eternal. It is more reliable than Heavenly Dao energy."

Long Chen slowly reached out and clenched his hand, causing cracks to appear in the void. This high concentration of power shocked Long Chen, and he felt even greater admiration for the Starry River Sage.

Moreover, this was only one technique of the star diagrams. The rest of them could unleash astral energy through fists, feet, elbows, heads, and other areas.

Some were offensive and some were defensive. But coming up with these divine arts was the Starry River Sage's limit, and these techniques still had many flaws. If they could all be merged into one technique, then it would be perfect.

Even so, getting this far on his own was already very amazing. If Long Chen wanted to connect all these moves into one, he would have to think about it himself. After all, the Starry River Sage had opened up a path that was unimaginable for him.

The Starry River of the Sky Art was created based on the Nine Star Hegemon Body Art, so it was at least a good consultation point for Long Chen.

However, if this powerful technique came from the Nine Star Hegemon Body Art, then where did the Nine Star Hegemon Body Art come from? The Starry River Sage was already so incredible, so what about the Nine Star Master?

Long Chen was almost unable to believe it. Compared to these seniors, he felt miniscule.

When Long Chen arrived at the main palace, he found that it was already erected nicely. The central divine pool had the divine radiance of a starry river flowing within it, illuminating the ceiling above.

The ceiling had no designs on it, but when the divine radiance illuminated it, Long Chen could see a starry river slowly flowing. It was as if it was following a set path, flowing in an endless loop.

"So that's the case. This is the original form of the starry river. To go from one to nine, and then back to one. However, this one is not the old one. The Grand Dao is simple. You start at one, end at nine, and return to one. But without going through the first one, you cannot understand the last one. Cycle after cycle, you understand more and more layers. Although it looks like you're just repeating the same thing, the height is different. The Starry River of the Sky Art is like this, and the Nine Star Hegemon Body Art should be the same. Does that mean that there is a return to the start after cultivating the nine stars? But what is the start?" Long Chen was lost in thought.

The final mural was actually the beginning of the Starry River of the Sky Art, and it was also a new starting point. After all, the Starry River repeated itself in an endless loop, giving Long Chen some inspiration.

"Boss, the Soaring Dragon Company's people have come."

Long Chen was in the midst of pondering this new enlightenment when Guo Ran came running in.

Chapter 4164: Who Are You Trying to Scare?

Outside the Starry River line's land, seven elders had arrived. Other than one human, the rest were all from different races.

One of them was wearing a cloak all around their body with black qi swirling around them. However, upon closer examination, it became evident that beneath the cloak lay a skeletal figure, devoid of flesh and blood.

These seven people were all innate Heaven Venerates, and only the human expert was wearing robes of the Soaring Dragon Company.

Although these seven Heaven Venerates weren't intentionally emitting their pressure, their auras still shook people's hearts.

Normally, a single Heaven Venerate would be enough to shake an army. But now, seven had appeared at once.

Guo Ran might normally act as if all his enemies were beneath him, but now he couldn't. He could only obediently follow behind Long Chen. Although he wanted to act like he wasn't nervous, it wasn't possible for him.

Other than him and Xia Chen, Huang Hui had also come, as well as a dozen Earth Venerates of the Starry River line. They were the pillars of this territory.

Seeing that so many Heaven Venerates had come, their expressions changed. It seemed that these people did not come with good intentions.

"What? After finding a few helpers, you want to settle our debts?" Long Chen appraised those people and curled his lips.

Other than the Soaring Dragon Company's expert, it seemed that Long Chen couldn't beat a single one of these Heaven Venerates. But he wasn't afraid because he knew that none of them would dare to touch him at this time.

The elder of the Soaring Dragon Company cleared his throat and said, "This old man is here not to settle our personal grievances. Actually, the Soaring Dragon Company wishes to conduct some business with you."

His voice was rather dry, and his expression was a bit nervous. In an instant, Long Chen understood their intention.

It seemed that this elder was forced to come here by these people who were after his Heaven Earth Cauldron.

"You wish to buy my bronze cauldron?" Long Chen's gaze swept over those experts.

"Do you truly have the Heaven Earth Cauldron?"

The skeletal lifeform spoke with an inhuman voice, sounding like white bones rubbing against each other, and it stabbed into people's souls.

Long Chen glanced at that lifeform. "What a lacking question. How am I supposed to know if that bronze cauldron is the Heaven Earth Cauldron? When I obtained it, I had no idea what its origins were. It was the Soaring Dragon Company that swore it was the Heaven Earth Cauldron. And what kind of existence is the Soaring Dragon Company? They are renowned businessmen. How could they possibly lie about such a thing? If you offer a decent price, I'll sell it. Truly, I really am sincere. Why would you even worry about it? In any case, there's the Soaring Dragon Company as a guarantee. If the Soaring Dragon Company really did lie to you, couldn't you just join forces and smash the Soaring Dragon Company?"

Their business is spread far and wide. As long as you do the same thing as me, I guarantee you'll profit immensely. There's more than enough for us to share."

That elder from the Soaring Dragon Company was horrified by Long Chen's words, so he hastily said, "Don't spout nonsense! When did we ever say that we would guarantee anything?"

"You refuse to guarantee it? Then why would you spread word of it so far and wide? In the Violet Flame Heaven, you repeatedly said that my bronze cauldron was the Heaven Earth Cauldron. What, now you're changing the story? How can anyone believe you when you say that you're not an idiot then?" demanded Long Chen.

"Who are you calling an idiot?!"

"So you're not an idiot? Then as businessmen, if you say things without confirming their veracity, who would do business with you? How can you say that you're trying to do business with me? Either you guarantee that my cauldron is the Heaven Earth Cauldron, or you're not trustworthy a businessman. Scram." Long Chen pointed at the elder and cursed so wildly that saliva was spurting toward the latter.

Hearing this, the elder was enraged yet was left too stunned to retort. Back in the Violet Flame Heaven, they had insisted that Long Chen had the Heaven Earth Cauldron. It was only later on that they grew afraid of the consequences and switched to saying that they 'suspected' Long Chen of having the Heaven Earth Cauldron, not knowing the real origins of the bronze cauldron.

After that, Long Chen used that cauldron to shake an Eternal divine weapon, freeing the Great Desolate Winged Devil's corpse. That was something seen by countless people. Now, people truly began to wonder if it was the Heaven Earth Cauldron.

Because of that, six experts from different races got in touch with the Soaring Dragon Company, forcing them to say whether or not Long Chen really had the Heaven Earth Cauldron.

The Soaring Dragon Company was left dumbfounded. How would they know whether it was real or not? If they said it was true and it turned out to be false, they would offend countless people. But if they said it was fake, they would have been scamming people, which would also offend countless people.

Having not expected things to develop to this point, the Soaring Dragon Company came up with all kinds of excuses, brushing off any attempts to get to the bottom of the matter.

As a result, some people lost their patience and directly flipped the table, forcing the Soaring Dragon Company to give them an answer.

But what answer could the Soaring Dragon Company give them? Forced to this extent, they agreed to send someone to ask Long Chen for verification.

Considering that the Soaring Dragon Company was mortal enemies with Long Chen, for them to come to his door like this was an extremely humiliating thing for them.

So, this elder was the unlucky fellow who was forced to take this mission, burdened not only with the humiliation it entailed but also the looming fear of incurring the wrath of the six others who had forced him to come. He was in an extremely precarious position.

"Show us your bronze cauldron," demanded the skeletal lifeform.

“Do you think I’ll take it out just because you want it? Who do you think you are?” sneered Long Chen.

“I’m from the Bone Devil Desolate Domain.”

This lifeform actually answered, not understanding Long Chen’s intention. He actually thought that Long Chen was asking about his origins.

“Don’t waste my time with this bullshit. It’s you who sought to purchase my goods, not the other way around, alright? Keep in mind, you approached me, so you have to show your sincerity by coming from a lower position. I don’t care what your status or cultivation base is. I’ll say it again: fix your attitude or else forget it.” Long Chen looked down on that skeletal lifeform.

Hearing such disrespect, that lifeform was enraged. Black qi swirled out of him as if he was about to explode.

“Who do you think you’re trying to scare? Why don’t you just try and touch me?” sneered Long Chen.

As expected, that lifeform ultimately didn’t dare to do so, afraid of the curse. The curtains to the Sage King Convention had formally opened, so it was almost a sure thing for him to be cursed if he were to attack now.

“Hehe, that’s right. We’re doing business, right? We should get along better. That’s the only way to pull off our business successfully,” chortled Long Chen.

Long Chen then turned to the Soaring Dragon Company’s elder. “If you want to buy my bronze cauldron, it’s not outside the realm of question. However, I have a condition.”

Hearing that, the elder was delighted and hastily asked, “What is the condition?”

Chapter 4165: Commission Fee

Long Chen leisurely said, “Your Soaring Dragon Company can hold an auction. In this auction, you can gather appraisers and other sellers. To tell the truth, your Soaring Dragon Company really is despicable. You tried to use the name of the Heaven Earth Cauldron to get me killed. Truthfully, neither of us knows the origins of this bronze cauldron. But with my current power, I’m unable to use it, so it’s a waste. That is why I am hoping to get rid of this hot potato while I can. If it is the real thing, I’m hoping to get some items that I need. If it’s fake, I want your Soaring Dragon Company to kneel on the ground and apologize to me.”

“You... you’ve gone too far!” roared the elder from the Soaring Dragon Company. How was he supposed to accept this condition? If it really was fake, would the Soaring Dragon Company have any face left to exist?

“You’re the one who went too far. You kept saying that my bronze cauldron is the Heaven Earth Cauldron. You tried to get me killed, so don’t talk to me about going too far. My time is precious, so hurry up. If you do not have the authority to decide, go and ask. I’ll give you three days. If you can’t give me an answer within that period, I will ask the Huayun Trading Company to hold this auction. If it weren’t for my close relationship with the Huayun Trading Company, which might cause rumors that

we're colluding to sell a fake item, do you think I'd be willing to let you bastards get anything? Scram!" sneered Long Chen.

"Fine, I'll ask. Just wait for our reply," said the elder gloomily.

"Brat, if the Soaring Dragon Company agrees and you back out of the deal, I guarantee that you will regret coming to this world," said one of the other Heaven Venerates who hadn't spoken yet.

Being threatened, Long Chen immediately slapped him in the face, striking him solidly and sending him flying.

"Who do you think you're talking to? Make sure to be more polite in the future!"

That innate Heaven Venerate had never expected a lowly human to dare to slap him. He was sent tumbling into the distance. The next moment, blood Qi exploded out of him.

"Blood race?"

Long Chen was startled. This expert who looked similar to the human race was actually from the Blood race.

"I'll kill you!" Blood Qi and killing intent erupted from that Heaven Venerate.

"Come, I'll stick out my neck and let you kill me. Well?"

Long Chen really did stick out his neck as though he was begging for a beating. He even pointed at his own nose.

That Blood race expert quivered with rage, his veins throbbing on his forehead. He was an overlord in his domain, a respected innate Heaven Venerate, but he was actually slapped in the face by a human? That was an absolute humiliation.

However, when Long Chen really stuck out his neck and asked to be killed, he instantly calmed down. If he were to attack Long Chen, perhaps the curse of misfortune would strike him even before Long Chen died.

In the past few days, dozens of innate Heaven Venerates had been struck by the curse of misfortune, becoming lessons for the others. Thus, although he was infuriated, he still had a trace of rationality left, so he didn't dare to actually attack.

"Scram!"

Long Chen snorted, and seven innate Heaven Venerates could only leave while clenching their teeth.

Seeing Long Chen shout away seven innate Heaven Venerates, Guo Ran looked at him worshipfully. Just when would he have his boss's daring?

"Boss is mighty!"

Xia Chen also raised his thumb. "However, boss. The Soaring Dragon Company's old ghosts have no shame. Your condition probably won't bind them."

"Tch, who is trying to bind them? When the time comes and they inspect it, they'll say that it could still be the real thing or fake, and then they wouldn't need to kowtow to me. This way, even if they realize that it is fake, they won't dare to say it. That's my goal," laughed Long Chen.

"Haha, boss is wise. Now, we're in an unbeatable position!" Guo Ran also laughed after he understood Long Chen's plan.

The Soaring Dragon Company would not dare to say that it was fake, as it was their only way out. At the very least, they had proof that it wasn't a definite fake because Long Chen had used it to strike an Eternal divine weapon. Thus, it might really sell for the price of at least an Eternal divine weapon.

If the one betting was unlucky, perhaps it might even be sold for a sky-high price. As this bronze cauldron was nothing more than a counterfeit that Guo Ran and Xia Chen had made, they were even more excited than Long Chen.

"If the two of you have time, help me create another bronze cauldron," said Long Chen.

"Another one?" The two of them were startled.

"Just do it if you have time. Last time, striking the Eternal spear let me gather some more rust. As long as you can create it, there will be a use for it," said Long Chen with an evil smile.

"Alright, if we hurry, we can make another one." Although they weren't sure what Long Chen was planning, that smile of his made them feel incredibly excited.

Time was pressing, so Long Chen quickly gathered the Starry River line's experts. Starting from the first star diagram, he began to explain all the way to the final starry river divine pool.

He even showed them how to use the divine astral techniques. When they saw an entire arm covered in small stars, they were stunned.

Although they already knew that the Starry River of the Sky Art was a terrifying technique and they still had a long path in front of them, they hadn't expected that when trained to the pinnacle, they could even use stars to strengthen their body.

Long Chen's starry arm possessed an immense power that excited them. They knew that as long as they worked hard, sooner or later, they could also possess such power.

Feeling extremely grateful to Long Chen for his generosity in sharing this technique, they started to look at him like a god. As long as Long Chen gave the order, they would be willing to run into boiling oil for him or cut themselves to the bone by charging through a mountain of blades.

For Long Chen, comprehending this technique was very easy. But explaining it was a bit more taxing, especially in a way that everyone could understand.

However, he knew that comprehension needed time, as well as a certain amount of luck. Not comprehending immediately was not a problem. They just had to remember what he said and slowly think about it in the future.

Long Chen then spent two and a half days explaining everything he could. Originally, he was planning on checking the territory of the High Firmament Academy in this place, but there wasn't enough time. The Soaring Dragon Company had been kept outside for a full day with their reply.

"Oh, how coincidental. We meet again! So, what does your Soaring Dragon Company want?" Long Chen went to see the same elder.

The elder had been kept out for a full day by Long Chen and had been nursing a belly of fire. However, he didn't dare to unleash it on Long Chen and could only clench his teeth.

"Our Soaring Dragon Company can do this business with you, but we also have a condition."

"Oh? You also have a condition? How novel. What is your condition?" asked Long Chen.

The elder raised a finger. "A ten percent commission."

"Ten percent? So little? Ugh, fine, I don't want to bother haggling with you too much. If the auction does pan out, you can just pay me the fee on the spot," said Long Chen.

"What?"

Chapter 4166: Ruins of the Academy

The elder from the Soaring Dragon Company left while clenching his teeth furiously. He looked like he wanted to bite Long Chen to death.

If an auction house assisted someone in selling an item, they typically charged a minimum commission fee of ten percent. Some particularly audacious ones might even demand as much as thirty percent.

However, Long Chen actually wanted them to pay him a commission fee instead. In all the elder's years, it was his first time encountering such a thing.

It had to be known that the Soaring Dragon Company had actually told him to ask for a twenty percent commission fee.

However, this elder lacked confidence and didn't dare to ask for such an amount, fearing that it might upset Long Chen. Thus, he opted for the minimum acceptable commission fee.

But surprisingly, Long Chen actually countered by requesting an extra ten percent of the final sale price.

The reason he gave was that they were using his item to draw many people to the auction. Since the auction house wouldn't be just auctioning one item, they could profit from the other items as well.

Moreover, considering that it would attract countless experts, they might be so shameless as to charge an entrance fee, right?

What? Would they really be so rude as to not show their appreciation for Long Chen, considering that he had helped them generate substantial profits by offering the Heaven Earth Cauldron?

That little speech left the elder speechless. In the end, Long Chen got impatient and said that if the elder wanted to collaborate, they could. Otherwise, he could scram. If they really refused to accept, he would just hold his own auction on it.

The elder quivered with fury, but with no other choice, he simply said that he didn't have the authority to make such a decision and would have to report it.

However, Long Chen knew that they would accept. Otherwise, they wouldn't be able to explain themselves to their clients.

As expected, the elder returned in half a day, his face resembling a ripe melon. There was such intense hatred in his eyes that it seemed like Long Chen had robbed his ancestor's tombs.

In the end, it was decided that the auction would be carried out seven days later, and the Heaven Earth Cauldron would be the ultimate item.

Furthermore, everything really did go as Long Chen had expected. The Soaring Dragon Company shamelessly began to sell tickets for the auction, and they weren't cheap either. It was a hundred world king crystals for a single ticket, and that was only the lowest level.

The better tickets were hundreds of world king crystals, and the VIP tickets cost thousands of world king crystals.

"I'm starting to regret it. Ten percent commission is a bit..." started Long Chen.

"Don't go too far!" That elder from the Soaring Dragon Company jumped like a cat whose tail was stepped on.

"Fine, I can't be bothered to haggle. We'll leave it at that," said Long Chen. These words were said under the recording of a photographic jade, so their agreement was set.

The Soaring Dragon Company then proposed that Long Chen entrust the Heaven Earth Cauldron to them for safekeeping, but he promptly declined. He naturally didn't trust them.

They also knew that this was too unrealistic, so they didn't argue much about it. After settling things, the elder left.

After this matter was handled, Long Chen found that the Starry River Sect was also doing fine. Seeing the disciples busy comprehending the Starry River of the Sky Art, he just said goodbye and set off.

Long Chen left on his own, as Xia Chen and Guo Ran were busy creating a second Heaven Earth Cauldron, while the Dragonblood warriors were spreading word and looking for others from the Dragonblood Legion. They were all to meet up in the Starry River Sect.

In order to be safe, Long Chen had them stick in groups of a hundred people. That way, even against peak experts, they would still have some ability to fight. Moreover, they all had communication tools so that they could reinforce each other the moment they encountered danger.

The good news was that the Sage King Convention still needed a bit more time to get started.

During this time, Long Chen found that many sect buildings had been constructed, with some still in the process of expansion. However, he also noticed many areas where the buildings had sprung up, but there were no signs of people in sight.

“Their inheritance remains, but no one inherits it...” Looking at those empty buildings, Long Chen couldn’t help but sigh.

Each of those buildings represented the inheritance of some sect or power. Since the palaces remained, it meant that those inheritances were not fully severed yet.

However, the Sage King Convention required the attendees to be at the Immortal King realm. Currently, the Sage King Prefecture was bustling with Immortal Kings from various sects. Yet, there were certain inheritances that lacked even a single Immortal King in attendance, leaving their palaces vacant.

In certain locations, the ruins remained ruins, signifying that these inheritances had been completely severed.

As Long Chen walked through this place, he drew numerous curious glances. People just whispered amongst themselves as he passed by.

The current Long Chen could count as having some fame within the entire human race, and most of this fame stemmed from the Heaven Earth Cauldron.

To maximize their profit, the Soaring Dragon Company was disseminating information about this auction as hard as they could, spreading Long Chen’s name along with it.

Thus, when these people looked at Long Chen, it was like they were looking at the Heaven Earth Cauldron. Countless people were filled with greed, and some people even wanted to take it. But no one actually dared to attack or even provoke him.

Long Chen paid them no heed. He continued in his chosen direction, quickening his pace with each step. The farther he ventured, the more he noticed buildings that were gradually taking shape at a slow pace.

Some buildings still had no roofs, but the auras of the people within them shook his heart.

He also saw Supremes far beyond other Supremes which gave him a sense of immense pressure.

When he walked past their gates, he drew their attention, so those heavenly geniuses eyed Long Chen coldly. If it weren’t for their elders shouting at them, they might really have tried to attack Long Chen just to test him.

Long Chen had the Minghong Saber on his back, his brows furrowing as an invisible killing intent slowly rose out of him. Originally, he had thought that only the beast race’s heads were so simple.

However, in the human race’s territory, this kind of thing was even more common. Just what was with these people’s heads?

All of them were like angry bulls that had encountered another bull. They wanted to fight for no reason at all. It was like only by killing the other side could they find meaning in their lives.

He had been provoked several times now. Their greedy gazes were like they were far above others, as if everyone else was just an ant and could be wiped out whenever they wanted, completely infuriating Long Chen.

If those people dared to attack him, he guaranteed that not one of them would live to see tomorrow's sun.

Long Chen was so incredibly enraged that he didn't even know why he was so angry. But that anger came from the depths of his soul and could not be contained.

Fortunately, they didn't attack him. After a while of walking, Long Chen eventually saw a vast sea up ahead.

There was a large mass of ruins on the coast. Just as Long Chen arrived at the edge of the ruins, he suddenly heard Bai Shishi's voice.

"You're late. I thought that you had forgotten about the High Firmament Academy!"

Chapter 4167: Hero, Spare Me

Long Chen heard Bai Shishi's voice the moment he set foot into those ruins. Following that voice, he saw the beautiful Bai Shishi in a golden dress standing not too far away.

A golden divine radiance enveloped her, and even amidst the ruins, these dilapidated structures seemed to exude a hint of grandeur solely because of her presence.

What was different from before was that Bai Shishi now had a sword on her back. That was the sword that Long Chen had taken from the strange lifeform on the Ghost Ship.

Her golden dress billowed gracefully around her. She was already a peerless beauty, but the divine light that enveloped her enhanced her regal aura, leaving those who saw her feeling inherently inferior by mere comparison.

As Bai Shishi cast a cold gaze upon Long Chen, he responded with a gradual, warm smile. Their eyes locked in a silent exchange, and in no time at all, Bai Shishi found herself unable to restrain a blush from creeping onto her cheeks.

She wanted to turn away and not look at him, but that would be admitting that she had lost. Thus, she continued to stubbornly stare at Long Chen.

Seeing that she couldn't last, Long Chen spoke first, "I'm sorry. I had too many things to deal with. But as soon as I finished, I came here as quickly as possible. Where are Xiaole and the others?"

"Don't change the subject. Why didn't you bring Qingxuan?" demanded Bai Shishi.

Long Chen instantly felt a headache. "Her... Qingxuan is refining pills and in seclusion. I didn't want to call her out."

"Are you sure that's the reason? Is it not because you were afraid that I would do something to her?"

"The main reason was because I thought that it would be a bit awkward," said Long Chen, his awkwardness quite palpable in his words.

"Awkward? Why? Are you afraid of me bullying her?" demanded Bai Shishi.

"How could that be? Why would you bully her? You're a kind person," said Long Chen hastily.

"You're a bad guy. I knew that you arrived earlier, so I spent days guarding this place because I was worried about being rude to Qingxuan and making a bad impression if she came while I wasn't here, and you... you..." Bai Shishi's eyes reddened, and a few tears leaked out.

Long Chen was startled. Bai Shishi had actually come here much earlier? It seemed it was all to express her goodwill to Yu Qingxuan.

Long Chen knew Bai Shishi's character. She was someone who cared more about face and pride than her own life. But for him, she was willing to suffer this kind of grievance. Knowing this, Long Chen felt both moved and ashamed.

"I'm sorry. I've made you suffer." Long Chen walked over to Bai Shishi and held her hands.

"Stop. Others will see." Bai Shishi hastily pulled her hands out of Long Chen's grasp, feeling both shy and angry.

The tears in her eyes were like crystals, and she was like the lofty pear flower that stood proudly against the rain. Her appearance was beautiful yet heartbreaking.

"Who cares if someone sees? I like you. I'm not afraid of others knowing," said Long Chen.

Hearing this, Bai Shishi blushed even harder, but she was deeply moved inside. Although she had known Long Chen for so long, and even shared life and death with him, it was his first time making such a frank declaration.

While it wasn't an overly serious declaration, it did reveal his true feelings to her. But although she liked it, she glared at him. "Who has a face as thick as yours?"

Hehe, success!

Looking into her rebuking gaze, Long Chen smiled inside. Finally, the sky was clear after the tempest, and he had passed this point.

"Shishi, you get more beautiful every time I see you. How did you do it?"

"Scram, bastard! Don't try talking to me like that! You think saying a few nice words will make me forgive you? And what do you mean, how did I do it?!" demanded Bai Shishi.

Although she knew that Long Chen was attempting to ease her anger with his charming words, her current display of anger was feigned. In truth, the moment that she saw Long Chen, she was no longer angry.

In fact, she almost hated herself. Originally, she had been planning on tormenting him for not coming to see her after so long. However, she found that she couldn't even muster up the energy to be angry. Was

this the fate that her mother had warned her about? When a woman fell for a man, would she really no longer have the ability to struggle?

"You're increasingly beautiful, but I haven't made the slightest improvement. I'm still the same as before. When I'm with you, it's like a swan standing next to a toad, a phoenix beside a crow. The pressure is great!" Long Chen shrugged helplessly, winking.

Despite knowing that he was intentionally teasing her, Bai Shishi couldn't help but laugh, feeling both embarrassed and angry. She knew that she had lost this time.

Bai Shishi then reached out and viciously pinched the soft flesh of Long Chen's waist.

"Aiya!" Long Chen cried out. Bai Shishi was truly vicious this time. That soft hand of hers instantly became a metal pincer, breaking even Long Chen's defenses.

"Hero, spare me!" pleaded Long Chen.

"Who is a hero? Are you mocking me for not being womanly enough?" raged Bai Shishi.

"No, no, it was a slip of the tongue! Heroine, spare me!" Long Chen hastily corrected himself.

Only then did Bai Shishi glare at him and pull back her hand. She finally smiled with a pleased expression as her resentment faded away.

If she wasn't a hero, what was she? Only a hero would have that much power. Long Chen rubbed his waist and saw that the pinched skin was already purple.

"Congratulations, fairy Shishi. Your power has advanced yet again. Perhaps I'll need to rely on your protection in the future. I hope senior can be magnanimous and keep me in your care," said Long Chen shamelessly.

"Why don't you heal? Doesn't it hurt?" asked Bai Shishi.

"It was my bad, so a punishment is only natural. Only with a bit of pain will I remember the lesson," said Long Chen. "Furthermore, compared to what you went through, this is nothing. Although you never told me what price you paid, I know it."

With this, Bai Shishi suddenly threw herself into Long Chen's embrace. Her fists repeatedly struck his chest as she wept.

"You bastard, are you trying to take my life with those words?"

Bai Shishi was like an aggrieved child who had finally found an outlet.

Someone as prideful as her had given up her pride. How could she not? She had previously looked down on her mother who was willing to share a man with another woman, but now she was even worse.

Sometimes, she felt terrified and helpless. She didn't know why she put herself through this.

Love was the curse with no cure. No matter how she struggled, she could not extricate herself from it. No matter how strong someone was, in front of love, they could only admit defeat.

And yes, just those simple words from Long Chen caused her to feel like she had lost. She was gratified and panicked, while also feeling happy and bitter.

In Long Chen's embrace, she finally felt true peace. Long Chen also let her vent, knowing just how much pain this prideful fairy had in her heart.

"Oh? When did the High Firmament Academy become a hookup place?"

Just then, a sinister voice rang out. Unbeknownst to them, a group of people had appeared near them.

Chapter 4168: Specialized in Treating Arrogance

Long Chen was in the midst of grappling with guilt, so when someone hurled insults at him, his fury erupted instantly. On the other hand, Bai Shishi, who had just realized their presence, swiftly averted her gaze and wiped away the tear stains on her face.

Long Chen saw that the newcomers were an elder plus over ten disciples trailing behind him. Some of the male disciples were breath-taken by Bai Shishi's appearance, so they cast jealous and disdainful gazes at Long Chen.

"This is the High Firmament Academy's territory, and you are not welcome. Scram!" said Long Chen coldly.

"Who do you think you are to dare be presumptuous here?" sneered one of the disciples.

When that man spoke, Long Chen instantly recognized him to be the one to previously speak as well.

"You should keep your crap hole closed. I don't like you. Keep spouting crap, and I'll knock out your teeth," said Long Chen impatiently.

"Brat, you're courting death!"

That person was enraged. Seeing that Bai Shishi's dress bore the specific emblem of the High Firmament Academy on the sleeves and collar, he knew that she was a disciple of the High Firmament Academy.

In contrast, Long Chen was wearing black robes with no visible markings at all, so he assumed that Long Chen was clearly someone from some lowly power.

After all, any disciples that came from strong powers would clearly display their status. That would scare off more people and save them trouble.

Seeing Bai Shishi embracing some black-robed man, they thought that a disciple from the High Firmament Academy was colluding with someone from a foreign power, so they mocked them.

Perhaps they felt a bit of trepidation when it came to the High Firmament Academy. But some disciples with no status marker on them? Even if such disciples were slain, the faction behind them would not be able to blame anyone.

There was an unspoken rule. If you didn't reveal your status, then if you were slain, the killer couldn't be blamed for killing you. If you were trying to be deliberately mysterious and were slain because the other side didn't know who you were or what faction you were from, you could only blame yourself.

Thus, people who didn't expose their status were usually killed for nothing. No matter how powerful the faction behind them was, it was very difficult for them to punish the killer.

Long Chen's robes had no marker at all, so they didn't place him in their eyes. Furthermore, there were so many of them, and Long Chen was just one person.

"Don't. You shouldn't kill them," advised Bai Shishi, pulling his hand.

However, Bai Shishi's judgment was not good. This was a slap in the faces of these people.

"Don't kill us?! I'll kill you!"

The first speaker was enraged and suddenly appeared behind Long Chen like a specter. He was bizarrely fast.

Unexpectedly, a streak of golden light flashed, and that person's arm was cut off by a golden sword. With a shriek, he retreated.

"What?!"

All those people who had come with him were shocked, including the innate Heaven Venerate. Even with his cultivation base, he didn't see how Bai Shishi had just moved.

"Do you know who he is? He is the youngest dean in the High Firmament Academy's history! Why don't you tell me whether or not he is qualified to tell you to scram?" said Bai Shishi icily.

"He is Long Chen?"

They had heard of his name but hadn't known what he looked like.

"The High Firmament Academy is quite arrogant! Is this how you treat guests?!" The innate Heaven Venerate finally spoke.

"Are you behaving like guests? You seem more like bandits, and it just so happens that my studies specialize in treating all kinds of arrogant people. If I tell you to scram, then scram. If you refuse to listen, then go ahead and attack me. It just so happens that I have a great deal of anger to vent," sneered Long Chen.

Long Chen couldn't be bothered to be polite to these people. He found that whether it was the human race or the demonic beast race, if he wanted to get respect, he needed to be tough.

The more courteous he was, the more people would climb all over him, thinking that he was afraid of them.

"Alright, is this the attitude of your High Firmament Academy? Are you sure you can represent the High Firmament Academy?" demanded the elder darkly.

"That's right. His attitude represents the attitude of the High Firmament Academy."

Just then, an elderly voice rang out, delighting Long Chen with just its presence. It was the true dean of the High Firmament Academy, Bai Letian.

“Hahaha, why spout nonsense about humility and etiquette? The current High Firmament Academy is no longer the old High Firmament Academy. Even your attitude has changed. The world’s number one academy? Hehe, you’ve completely declined. We’re leaving.” The elder sneered and waved his hand, leading his people away.

“But my arm!” The man whose arm was severed by Bai Shishi’s sword was unwilling to leave just like that. He glared at Bai Shishi hatefully.

“Having an arm cut off is better than having your life ended. If it was me, you’d be on the path to reincarnation now. Having escaped with your life, you still aren’t grateful. Are you a pig?” snorted Long Chen.

In truth, he had decided to kill them. If it weren’t for Bai Shishi attacking first, this idiot would already be dead and wouldn’t be able to prattle now.

In the end, that man was dragged away by his companions. However, his gaze was filled with rancor as he left. This grudge would be remembered.

After they left, Long Chen turned back to Bai Shishi and gave her a thumbs-up. “How amazing. That last strike of yours was incredible. Have you merged with your sword?”

Bai Shishi smiled and a rare crafty light appeared in her eyes.

“Were you also deceived?”

Long Chen nodded. “Yes. That sword on your back is a fake. You don’t even need to draw your sword to attack with it.”

Bai Shishi’s previous blow was so bizarre that even Long Chen didn’t see it clearly. It was only later that he figured it out. When Bai Shishi attacked, her sword appeared in her hand and then returned to her body after she finished.

Thus, Long Chen guessed that Bai Shishi had managed to merge with this sword. Otherwise, there was no way to do such a thing.

“This sword’s origins are shocking. I only managed to merge with it after returning from the three thousand worlds. And once I merged with it, I realized that it is very likely an Eternal divine weapon. I once used it to strike an Eternal divine weapon, and it wasn’t harmed in the slightest. I really have to thank you. This sword was the turning point of my life. Now, I have the confidence to get an outstanding ranking in the Sage King Convention.”

Bai Shishi’s face glowed with confidence, her eyes full of excitement. She truly was confident in herself.

“There’s no need for courteous words between us. Ah, that’s right, I have to greet the dean!” Long Chen clapped his forehead. He had actually forgotten about the dean.

When Long Chen and Bai Shishi walked into the High Firmament Academy’s camp, they found countless unfriendly gazes turning their way. No, it should be said turning toward him.

Chapter 4169: Who is The Strongest?

“Who are they?”

Long Chen entered the camp and saw many experts in foreign robes. Their gazes lit up when they saw Bai Shishi but darkened when they saw Long Chen with her. After that, they examined Long Chen without the slightest restraint, with some even using their souls to probe him.

Long Chen was disgusted by them as this kind of conduct was extremely rude. Although it couldn't count as a humiliation, it was extremely uncomfortable.

“They came to study,” answered Bai Shishi.

“To study?”

Bai Shishi helplessly said, “After all, the High Firmament Academy is the oldest academy of the nine heavens and ten lands. It is a treasure of the human race. It is said that the founder swore to use the Dao and reason to bring living beings to the correct path, allowing everyone to differentiate between right and wrong, good and evil. Then everyone could escape the sea of bitterness. Because of this oath, the gates of the High Firmament Academy are open to all, and any lifeform is qualified to study in the High Firmament Academy. However, later on, it is said that the human race was targeted by other races, and battles were fought for many years. Some of them were even once disciples of the academy, but they still attacked the academy. “I don't know which generation's dean started it, but eventually, they set a rule that the academy would only be open to humans, and other races would have to go through tests if they wanted to enter. Due to this, the academy declined even more, looking like it would be destroyed eventually. Thus, not many people wanted to join the academy. The High Firmament Academy couldn't even save itself, so as it declined, people no longer believed that the academy could rise again. Some powers even began to eye the academy as a large meal. You also saw how we were treated in the Darklight Heaven. It has been many generations since the High Firmament Academy attended the Sage King Convention. Without us coming, the academy's ruins also stopped appearing. It was only a few days ago that we arrived and the ruins once more appeared. As a result, some people were attracted by our name. To put it frankly, they just came to take advantage of the situation. As for the academy, due to our ancestor's wishes, we could only allow them to enter,” said Bai Shishi, eyeing these people with a touch of disgust.

She had been standing at the gate for several days, waiting for Long Chen. Thus, quite a few people who viewed themselves as handsome geniuses came to ingratiate themselves with her. Bai Shishi was patient, but in the end, she had to cut off a few hands before they learned their lesson and distanced themselves from her. But even though they stayed away from her, they still talked about her behind her back.

She was naturally disgusted by that as she was an extremely prideful person. Other than Long Chen, no one else could enter her eyes. These people were practically like peacocks flashing their feathers at her, so she found herself thinking that they were particularly childish and disgusting.

However, as long as these people didn't provoke her, she didn't have a reason to attack them. So she could only endure it.

These young disciples were all brimming with arrogance, believing that the one who could engage Bai Shishi in conversation would be seen as the boldest among them, akin to a crane amidst a flock of chickens.

Bai Shishi naturally ignored this group of immature fellows, only waiting for Long Chen. Now that Long Chen had appeared, the previous iciness of her face was gone. She was even smiling.

This scene caused these fellows to feel extremely unnatural. They had done everything they could to draw her attention, but Bai Shishi hadn't even looked at them.

After all, they were all arrogant and conceited heavenly geniuses, so such a blow was quite painful to them.

The only thing that made them feel better about themselves was that all of them had failed to draw Bai Shishi's attention. But as soon as Long Chen appeared, he was walking right beside Bai Shishi while she was smiling, the very picture of a young maiden in love. As they weren't blind, they could see that Bai Shishi liked this black-robed fellow.

"I see now. The academy's founder must have been a truly benevolent individual. Perhaps he sought a path that could bring about universal harmony among all people," Long Chen remarked with a nod. The notion that the founder wished to disseminate the academy's knowledge for the greater good deeply touched Long Chen.

After all, knowledge belonged to everyone. It came from everyone, and now it was specifically provided to everyone. That was a bit like the sea whale returning its corpse back to the sea. Knowledge was like a mirror. Perhaps through it, you could see yourself clearly. However, it seemed that such a thing was difficult to carry out in reality.

In an instant, Long Chen and Bai Shishi drew everyone's attention. Many of those people were looking at some stone tablets when their attention was drawn to them.

Long Chen simply ignored them and continued walking with Bai Shishi. He found that the High Firmament Academy's buildings here were still incomplete. Even the foundations had yet to be built.

However, various runes had appeared throughout the foundations. All kinds of murals could be seen, and these were things that Long Chen had not seen in the actual academy.

"The oldest academy of the nine heavens and ten lands. Could it be that the Sage King Convention's buildings are restored based on the age of the inheritance?" wondered Long Chen.

Long Chen came up with such a theory because the Starry River Sect had long since finished rebuilding. After all, the Starry River Sect's inheritance couldn't be considered too ancient in the immortal world.

"The dean said that one aspect was the age of the inheritance. But the members of that inheritance, the influence of the Heavenly Daos, the rise and fall of karmic luck, and many other aspects cause the building rate to be different," explained Bai Shishi.

"Then does that mean the High Firmament Academy is the strongest of the human forces here?" asked Long Chen with a smile.

"Tch, how ignorant!"

Bai Shishi didn't have a chance to respond before someone from the side let out a disdainful scoff at Long Chen.

"Oh? How am I ignorant?" Long Chen looked at this guy and found that he was a Supreme expert with a very powerful aura.

That Supreme expert sneered, "When it comes to being the strongest, when has it ever been your High Firmament Academy's turn? The building rate has nothing to do with how strong a faction is. Little fellow, words can't be randomly spoken, or you'll just slap yourself in the face. Well, that would be interesting as well."

Upon hearing his words, Bai Shishi's expression sank. She was about to speak when Long Chen pulled her hand, indicating her to leave it to him.

Seeing this, those heavenly geniuses were even more enraged. Someone as prideful as Bai Shishi actually listened after Long Chen pulled her hand? They felt a profound feeling of defeat.

In their eyes, Long Chen might possess a powerful Blood Qi, but he had no Supreme aura. He could only be considered as a below-average disciple compared to them.

Someone like this had won the favor of a heavenly fairy? They all thought that it was only due to Long Chen's looks. He was just a little pretty boy with no substance.

Long Chen still smiled pleasantly after hearing that Supreme heavenly genius's mocking. He came up to him and said, "It seems I really was ignorant. Then please tell me what faction of the human race is the strongest in your opinion?"

That person arrogantly said, "Of course it's our Heavenly Gate Profound Sect."

That was precisely what Long Chen was waiting for. The moment he said it, Long Chen's expression sank and he viciously swung his hand at his face.

"If you're the strongest, what the fuck are you doing here?"

Chapter 4170: The Battle God Palace's Master

This heavenly genius had not expected Long Chen to get right up next to him just to slap him.

Furthermore, Long Chen had laid a trap with his words. He was precisely waiting for this response.

The next moment, Long Chen's slap sent him tumbling into the distance, leaving him dazed. As he struggled to regain his footing, he raised a trembling finger to point at Long Chen, intending to unleash a barrage of curses. However, before he could utter a single word, a sudden burst of blood sprayed from his mouth. He then felt the world spinning around him, and his eyes rolled back, causing him to collapse on the group.

"You...! How despicable! This was a sneak attack!" One of his friends hastily went to support him and shouted at Long Chen angrily.

“Even without sneak attacks, none of you are my match. I can’t be bothered to waste words with you. You think you’re a badass? Then why did you come to the High Firmament Academy? Who granted you the audacity to display such arrogance while seeking our knowledge? If you really were a badass, you wouldn’t have come to our High Firmament Academy. Since you’ve come to learn, then you better cultivate some humility. If you can manage that, then you can stay. Otherwise, scram. Slapping you is a light punishment. If you really anger me, you won’t get to live another day.” Long Chen smiled coldly at those arrogant heavenly geniuses.

Those people had to be stupid. They had come here to learn but still had such an attitude? Were their brains replaced with crap?

“Who are you?! Do you think the High Firmament Academy is your home?!” shouted someone stubbornly.

“Correct, this is our home. You don’t like it? Even if you don’t like it, you have to accept it. If you want to study in the High Firmament Academy, you have to take the attitude of a student and respect the rules here. Starting now, anyone who disobeys the academy’s rules will be kicked out. Mercy will not be given. If anyone from a certain faction breaks the academy’s rules, then they will all be kicked out,” declared Long Chen. He then ignored these people and continued on with Bai Shishi.

These heavenly geniuses were all shaken, unable to imagine just what kind of status this black-robed fellow had to say such big words.

Walking alongside Bai Shishi, Long Chen eventually reached the core of the ruins. He saw quite a few disciples from other factions and not many from the actual academy.

“What is going on? Has the High Firmament Academy been occupied by other factions?” Long Chen couldn’t help frowning.

Long Chen saw quite a few jealous gazes on the way, as well as quite a few provoking ones. He truly did want to kick them all out.

However, before understanding what was going on, he should endure for a bit. But his patience was wearing thin.

“It doesn’t count as ‘occupied’ yet!”

Just then, the kindly-looking Bai Letian appeared in front of Long Chen. Long Chen and Bai Shishi immediately bowed.

Bai Letian laughed and said, “When the High Firmament Academy was founded, we had the support of various major powers. Like rolling a snowball, the academy grew stronger and stronger. Only then did it come to possess its vast sea of knowledge. So, it could be said that the High Firmament Academy belongs to the entire world, and we can’t be selfish. Our hearts have to be a bit wider.”

“But these people are taking advantage of our kindness. I’m not happy about it.” Long Chen couldn’t help but frown.

“You’re not happy about it? Haha, I share your sentiment, but I must abide by our founder’s will. My authority is limited. However, you earned your position through merit rather than inheritance, so you

aren't bound by our ancestral traditions. Also, I'm not here for the Sage King Convention; I have a separate mission. Therefore, everything here is up to you," said Bai Letian with a smile.

"You're saying...?" probed Long Chen.

"I'm not saying anything. It's all up to you." Bai Letian smiled profoundly.

Long Chen's jaw dropped suddenly. He recalled that Bai Letian had the aura of an Immortal King, and the latter had even fought Enpuda's clone like that. However, now he noticed that Bai Letian not only had the Immortal King's aura but also the aura of a World King and a Heaven Venerate. Long Chen was utterly incapable of discerning Bai Letian's true cultivation level. It was his first time encountering such a thing.

Seeming to grasp Long Chen's thought, Bai Letian said, "Sometimes, what you see in this world is only what other people want you to see. Your eyes might not see reality. This time, the Sage King Convention descended rather suddenly. It's a bit odd, so I had no choice but to personally take a trip. But now that you're here, I feel good about leaving. Everything here will be up to you."

"Dean, you can't! I still have a great deal of affairs to deal with!" Long Chen jumped in shock. Before the convention actually started, he still had a lot of work to do.

"No problem. The Battle God Palace's master is overseeing this place personally, so the High Firmament Academy is in no danger. However, the palace master doesn't like to deal with politics and is only in charge of the safety here. He won't meddle in other matters, so your main duty is to maintain order here. Feel free to pursue your own objectives!" said Bai Letian.

"But..." Long Chen still didn't want this burden. He was very busy with the matter of the auction right now.

If he were to be here, he would be acting as a dean of the High Firmament Academy. Then it wouldn't be convenient for him to scam people.

"No buts. Youngsters should follow their desires instead of becoming like us, always burdened by excessive caution and worry. If a youngster doesn't have a youngster's drive and daring, they wouldn't be called a youngster. Do what you want. Status and position are nonsensical constructs. Since I still have matters to deal with, I'll take my leave. Go greet the palace master." Bai Letian left and directly sent them off.

Long Chen and Bai Shishi could only leave. Looking at Long Chen's bitter expression, Bai Shishi couldn't help but laugh.

"What is it? You're not the Long Chen I know. What happened to that fearlessness of yours?"

"Shishi, I'm about to do something very bad. I'm worried about damaging the academy's reputation," said Long Chen finally.

Bai Shishi laughed. "As if you've ever done anything good."

Long Chen was speechless. But thinking back, it truly did seem as if he had never done anything good in the presence of Bai Shishi.

“It’s fine. Whatever you do, I’ll be with you. Whether you become a hero or a villain, I’m not afraid, so what are you afraid of?” Bai Shishi blushed slightly after saying that. It was embarrassing for her to disclose the words of her heart.

“Hehe, is this the saying if you marry a chicken, you must follow the chicken, if you marry a dog, you must follow the dog?” laughed Long Chen.

“Who said that I’d marry you?! Shameless!” Bai Shishi snorted and turned away.

“Cough...”

Just as the two were talking and laughing, they heard some awkward coughing sound. Unbeknownst to them, three people had silently appeared before them.

One of them was Bai Shishi’s father, Bai Zhantang, while the second one was a large, muscular man. However, it was the person standing between them that caused Long Chen to startle.

“Greetings, palace master!”

Bai Shishi dragged Long Chen to bow toward this person together.

“Palace master?”

Long Chen was shaken. The palace master was actually an expert of the dragon race.