

I Am Overlord

#Chapter 41: I've Actually Run Into a Dead End! - Read I Am Overlord Chapter 41: I've Actually Run Into a Dead End!

Chapter 41: I've Actually Run Into a Dead End!

Taking the long path out, Xiang Shaoyun conveniently picked the golden flood snake flower as he left, along with several other old medicines. When he finally returned to where Little White was, he found that Little White's beast aura was already converging. Furthermore, Little White had a ferociousness that terrified people. Even Xiang Shaoyun found it hard to withstand.

"Little White, if you're able to suppress the power of the demonic core, please do so! The king kong giant ape is coming! If it senses our presence, we'll have to leave at once," Xiang Shaoyun urgently pleaded Little White.

Little White understood what Xiang Shaoyun was saying. Almost at once, he retracted all his beast aura and shrunk in size, returning to his cute form.

"Let's go!" Xiang Shaoyun waited for Little White to leap onto his shoulder before escaping without a second thought. As he swiftly made his escape, he picked all the blood mushrooms on the way, not leaving a single one in the cave. In the past, he would not have cared one bit for these low-grade goods. Now, however, every single one of them was a great harvest. He had learned how to treasure every single item he came across. After plucking all the mushrooms, he and Little White exited the cave from where they had entered.

After exiting the cave, they started descending the mountain. However, Xiang Shaoyun had not run far when he felt an immense pressure at his back.

"Roar! Roar!"

It was the roar of the king kong giant ape! It had actually caught up to him by circling the whole way around!

"This can't be! It's actually caught up to us already?!" Xiang Shaoyun cried out in despair.

A Great Demon beast was comparable to a human Transformation Realm expert, an existence Xiang Shaoyun could not hope to contend with. That giant ape had probably sent even all the members of the Mad Lion Hunting Group running, much less him, who had just entered the Astral Realm!

The king kong giant ape was surprisingly agile, closing the gap between the two of them with just a few leaps. Xiang Shaoyun's heart was full of unwillingness. In that very moment, he thought to himself, I'm done for now! How can this young master die in the very prime of youth?

Just as Xiang Shaoyun was readying himself to meet his maker, several people leaped out of the bushes nearby and came rushing over to the king kong giant ape.

"King kong giant ape, go to hell!" The person leading the charge was none other than the leader of the group, Mad Lion himself.

It seemed that a victor had yet to be decided between the king kong giant ape and the Mad Lion Hunting Group, with neither side gaining a noticeable advantage. Aside from Mad Lion himself, several other vice-captains of the Mad Lion Hunting Group were also joining hands to take down the king kong giant ape.

To Transformation Realm experts such as them, the Earth Star Spring would not aid them in increasing their combat power. However, it did have the ability to cleanse their systems, which was why it was so highly sought after.

Most importantly, if they managed to get ahold of the Earth Star Spring, it would provide them a huge boost in training their successors. Aside from the Earth Star Spring, it was rumoured that a top-tier spirit medicine was growing in the king kong giant ape's territory, a piece of news that left all of them reeling.

Since that was the case, they were all prepared to fight the king kong giant ape to the very end. Xiang Shaoyun took the opportunity to escape as fast as he possibly could.

"Stop that brat! He must've gotten ahold of the spirit medicine! Otherwise, why would the king kong giant ape chase him so furiously?" Mad Lion's roar alerted his subordinates of Xiang Shaoyun.

"Damned old man!" Xiang Shaoyun cursed to himself.

Overlord's Nine Nether Steps!

With the explosive growth of Xiang Shaoyun's overall power, the Overlord's Nine Nether Steps could now display a sliver of its full potential. Top-tier movement techniques such as this one would usually be unravelled more and more as its user's strength correspondingly increased.

In the past, Xiang Shaoyun was a mere Basic Realm cultivator. Now that he had reached the Astral Realm, the Astral Energy in his body flowed endlessly out of his natal chart, substantially strengthening his legs. Like a gale of wind, he dashed to a place no one was blocking.

“Chase after that brat!” Although Mad Lion had been heavily injured in his exchange with the king kong giant ape, he still had numerous people by his side.

All of them rushed straight for Xiang Shaoyun, each of them riding a demonic beast. Thankfully for Xiang Shaoyun, he had already opened up a considerable distance between himself and his pursuers. Otherwise, they would’ve captured him long ago.

Seeing Xiang Shaoyun get faster the more they chased him, one of the men could not help but leap off his mount and rush towards Xiang Shaoyun. This was a late Astral Realm expert; hence, chasing him by foot was actually faster than riding a mount.

“It’s the brat that killed Li Hui! Looks like I’ll have the chance to avenge him!” the late Astral Realm expert muttered to himself, a savage glint in his eye.

“Brat, you can’t escape!” This particular pursuer was indeed quick. After he yelled at Xiang Shaoyun, he drew a long spear and flung it straight at him.

Seeing all that was happening, Little White frantically yelped as he tried to warn Xiang Shaoyun. Xiang Shaoyun understood what Little White was trying to tell him and leaped to the right, dangerously avoiding the oncoming spear.

However, the dodge forced Xiang Shaoyun to tumble in an awkward direction, significantly affecting his speed. The Astral Realm expert behind him was now merely 50 meters from him!

“Dammit! I need more power! I’m still not strong enough!” Xiang Shaoyun bitterly smiled to himself.

Simultaneously, he began expending all the energy he possibly could, revolving the Heaven Conquering Overlord Manual to its very limit. His nine stars began to glow as his speed increased once again. The moment his pursuer thought he had caught the brat, he found that Xiang Shaoyun’s speed had increased yet again!

This brat really is strange! He is only a first-stage Astral Realm cultivator, but his speed is comparable to that of a third-stage or even a fourth-stage cultivator! the Astral Realm expert pondered to himself.

The Astral Realm expert had to give it his all in chasing Xiang Shaoyun. After running a while further, however, Xiang Shaoyun found that he had nowhere else to run. To be more precise, he had come to a cliff’s edge.

“Oh no! I’ve actually run into a dead end!” Xiang Shaoyun was on the verge of despair. Looking downwards, he estimated that it would be a fall at least a hundred meters high. Even a peak Astral Realm expert would find it hard to survive if they fell from that height!

“Hahaha! Brat! Keep running won’t you? You’re a slippery one, but I’ve caught you in the end!” The Astral Realm expert sneered at Xiang Shaoyun and slowly drew closer to him.

“I’ll go where I want to go! You think I’m scared of you?” After Xiang Shaoyun stared daggers at the late-phase Astral Realm expert, he dove off the cliff without a second thought.

“Bastard!” the late-phase Astral Realm expert cursed, his eyes wide open in astonishment. Intending to grab Xiang Shaoyun, he rushed forward but found he was slightly too late to catch him.

Looking down from the cliff, the late-phase Astral Realm expert could still see Xiang Shaoyun’s falling figure.

Falling from this height, this brat is a goner, no doubt about it. But the captain said the brat might have some spirit medicine on him...looks like I’ll have to find his dead body and retrieve it. After pondering to himself, the late-phase Astral Realm expert returned to gather reinforcements before heading to the base of the cliff.

Unbeknownst to him, however, Xiang Shaoyun was actually still alive. At the bottom of the sheer fall was a lake naturally formed from the outflowing of the waterfall. Before leaping down the cliff, Xiang Shaoyun had used his outstanding eyesight to ascertain that there was a lake below before daring to jump. Otherwise, he would have just delivered himself to hell’s gates. Although this was the case, the moment he slammed into the surface of the water, his body felt like it was ready to split apart.

Chapter 42: Gong Qinyin!

Xiang Shaoyun’s landing sent him straight to the bottom of the lake, and he spat out a mouthful of fresh blood as he plunged straight into its depths. Luckily, he was prepared beforehand. Revolving the Heaven Conquering Overlord Manual, he managed to preserve his consciousness and stay awake. He also held on tightly to the bag on his back, not letting it slip away from him. The bag consisted of all his harvests from the trip. He could not afford to lose it.

Xiang Shaoyun surfaced as fast as he possibly could, afraid that there would be some ferocious creature hidden within the lake. However, the moment he emerged from the water, the sight that greeted him left him bleeding from his nose.

A graceful figure slowly arose from beneath the surface of the water. Stark naked, her most private parts were fully exposed to his lustful eyes. Although her waist was slender, her breasts and bottom were all extremely well-endowed, posing a deadly allure for both men and even some women. Furthermore, glistening water droplets bounced off her porcelain-like skin, as if fervently teasing a man’s most primal instincts.

Although Xiang Shaoyun felt a warm liquid trickle from his nose, he was unable to pull his eyes away from the beautiful scene, continuing to stare straight at the sight before him. Feeling Xiang Shaoyun's unwavering gazer, the person could not help but curse, "Bastard!"

Dipping beneath the surface of the water again, she swiftly swam back to dry land before covering her exquisite body with a light gown. Out of nowhere, she suddenly took out a bow and nocked an arrow, aiming it in Xiang Shaoyun's direction.

"Go to hell you pervert!" the girl yelled before condensing all her strength into the arrow and sending an arrow imbued with Astral Energy flying towards him. The swift and merciless arrow whistled through the air, carrying behind it the strength of at least a third-stage Astral Realm cultivator. The arrow arrived in front of Xiang Shaoyun in a matter of mere moments, startling and forcing him to dive under the water again.

Boom!

The moment the arrow hit the water, a column of water immediately flew up from the lake along with the sound of an explosion. Xiang Shaoyun could even feel the wind from the arrow across his face. The arrow from the beautiful girl gave him an even greater sense of danger than falling from the top of the cliff.

"Damn it, just why is my luck so rotten? I've only just escaped from the verge of sure death, and now I'm being pursued by this little girl!" Xiang Shaoyun groaned to himself.

Not daring to stay a moment longer, he swiftly swam away as quickly as he could, avoiding the girl's shots. The girl on the shore took the opportunity to swiftly dress herself. Looking carefully, the girl was around fifteen to sixteen years of age. She had a face as beautiful as a lotus flower. Her silky black hair flowed softly in the wind, accentuating her charming features. Furthermore, the bow and sword on her back gave her a heroic aura.

"Perv, get out of there! I, Gong Qinyin, must kill you today!" the girl named Gong Qinyin shrieked.

At this moment, Xiang Shaoyun surfaced at an entirely new spot. Upon hearing the girl's voice, he muttered to himself, "Why does the name Gong Qinyin sound so familiar?"

If it was any other Martial Hall Palace disciple who was in his place, they would have known at once who Gong Qinyin was. She was Martial Hall Palace's first ever genius to trigger five stars illuminating the sky, and she was also known as the Divine Arrow Maiden, Gong Qinyin.

Back then, the moment she stepped into Martial Hall Palace, she had triggered the phenomenon of five stars illuminating the sky. Furthermore, her cultivation had improved in leaps and bounds, reaching the Astral Realm within a matter of two months.

Not just that, in just slightly over a year, she had improved and was now at the late phase of third-stage Astral Realm. One could not help but admire her talent.

Upon seeing Xiang Shaoyun resurface from the water, she shot yet another arrow at him, not even giving him the chance to explain himself. This forced Xiang Shaoyun to once again duck back into the water, leaving him rather depressed.

This young master didn't do it on purpose! At the very most, this young master will take full responsibility for having seen your body! Xiang Shaoyun thought to himself. Unable to hold his breath underwater indefinitely, he swam as fast as he could to shore. As long as he got to dry land, he would have a chance at escaping.

Little White, who had fallen off the cliff with Xiang Shaoyun, was not very injured either. Grabbing tightly onto him, Xiang Shaoyun swam towards the nearest shore he could find. Completely focused on escaping, he swam as fast as he possibly could. Immediately after drawing close to a relatively far away shore, he leapt out of the water.

Gong Qinyin monitored the lake like a hawk. The moment she saw Xiang Shaoyun rushing out from the lake, she charged at him without a second thought, nocking yet another arrow on her bow. Given that her nickname was the "Divine Arrow Maiden", her bow technique was naturally nothing to scoff at.

With a single arrow, astral energy rushed at Xiang Shaoyun like a sea of shooting stars, quickly and viciously. Although he did not have water to conceal himself in, he had the Overlord's Nine Nether Steps. As nimble as a nether spirit, it would be hard for people at the same cultivation to even notice him. Gong Qinyin's surefire shot actually ended up missing him completely.

"So fast!" Gong Qinyin lightly gasped to herself. A while later, she nocked yet another arrow as she muttered, "But he can't possibly be faster than my arrows!"

The second arrow flew forward.

This time, she simultaneously shot two arrows. The two arrows were launched in different directions, cutting off either path for Xiang Shaoyun. Hearing the sound of rushing wind swiftly closing in on him, Xiang Shaoyun immediately ducked. The very moment he lowered himself, a swift arrow sliced across his hair and crashed heavily into the ground in front of him.

Xiang Shaoyun broke out in cold sweat. Drawing the Golden Wolf Sword, he turned around and bellowed, "Little girl, I've had enough of you!"

Before he had even finished speaking, an arrow flew straight straight for his face. Without a second thought, Xiang Shaoyun slashed to block the arrow.

Clink!

Xiang Shaoyun managed to deflect the arrow, but the raw power behind it left his hand trembling after forcefully countering it. If not for the fact that he had already broken through to the Astral Realm, this arrow would have been enough to knock the Golden Wolf Sword directly out of his hand.

Swish! Swish!

Arrow after arrow came flying straight at Xiang Shaoyun, each arrow stronger than the previous. In the face of such danger, Xiang Shaoyun did not dare hold back. Invigorating his astral energy, the Golden Wolf Sword glowed with astral energy, cutting down arrow after arrow. Even so, he still sustained two arrow wounds.

"I must get closer to her position!" Xiang Shaoyun decided. With the Overlord's Nine Nether Steps, he rushed towards Gong Qinyin while dodging the incoming arrows.

"You've finally grown some balls, you pervert! If I don't kill you today, I'm not worthy of being called Gong Qinyin!" Releasing her bow, she immediately drew the sword on her back and sent a flurry of slashes straight at Xiang Shaoyun.

Not only was Gong Qinyin adept at the bow, her swordsmanship was equally outstanding. Xiang Shaoyun met her head on, resulting in a violent clash of swords. Sparks flew as Astral Energy violently spread throughout the area. Xiang Shaoyun was obviously at a disadvantage, being continuously forced back by Gong Qinyin.

Gong Qinyin was obviously stronger than Xiang Shaoyun, even in terms of physical prowess. Although Xiang Shaoyun had unlimited potential lying within him, he could not hold a candle in terms of combat power and experience to Gong Qinyin. If this continued, he would most certainly end up defeated.

"Pervert, go to hell!" Gong Qinyin suppressed Xiang Shaoyun to that point that he was completely frazzled. Taking advantage of Xiang Shaoyun's confusion, she thrust her sword toward his heart. This little girl really wanted to take his life!

Chapter 43: I'll Let Her See Me Next Time!

In that critical moment, Xiang Shaoyun suddenly recalled his gift of insight. His eyes began to glow as the world around him began to slow down. The angle and speed at which Gong Qinyin's sword was coming at him became extremely clear, as if he was watching her in slow motion. This gave him the opportunity to dodge her attack.

Overlord's Nine Nether Steps!

Xiang Shaoyun barely dodged her sword with the help of the Overlord's Nine Nether Steps. Without wasting a breath, he counterattacked immediately.

Golden Wolf Sword Technique!

The sword qi condensed into a wolf, rushing straight for Gong Qinyin's throat. Gong Qinyin was badly startled, backing off at once. If she had been slower by just a step, Xiang Shaoyun's sword qi would have ripped out her throat.

Of course, Xiang Shaoyun could have chosen to press his advantage by externally manifesting his astral energy to attack her. However, he chose not to do so. Even if it was an accident, he had indeed seen a maiden's fully naked body.

"Enough! Don't force my hand. This was all a misunderstanding," Xiang Shaoyun took the opportunity to communicate his intentions to Gong Qinyin.

"Can claiming that it's a misunderstanding resolve this just like that?" Gong Qinyin coldly replied.

"Then what is it that you want? Don't tell me that you really want this young master to take responsibility for this? Although your looks aren't bad at all, when compared to the maidservants in my palace, you're still lacking," Xiang Shaoyun casually said as he looked Gong Qinyin's body up and down.

It went without saying that the current Gong Qinyin possessed quite the womanly charm. Adding on the fact that her clothes were not properly worn due to her rush, there was yet another distinct charm to her. However, Xiang Shaoyun saying these words did not help to appease her at all. On the contrary, he added fuel to the fire, causing Gong Qinyin to explode in rage!

"You f*cking pervert! I'll f*cking kill you!" Gong Qinyin's expression became clouded with fury. An enormous amount of Astral Energy cloaked her sword, sending bright light all around her.

Crashing Wave Slash!

The light from Gong Qinyin's sword transformed into several huge waves, attacking Xiang Shaoyun from all around. This was a technique Gong Qinyin used to blow off stress. An extremely tyrannical technique, even a fourth-stage Astral Realm expert would find it difficult to deal with.

Seeing such a terrifying display of might before him, Xiang Shaoyun did not dare to pull his punches either. The might of his nine stars flared up as his astral energy surged. He slashed out furiously with the Golden Wolf Sword.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

In the moment that the two relentless forces clashed with each other, an ear-shattering sound pierced the air, and the aftershock decimated several nearby trees. Even with the two of them fighting at full power, Xiang Shaoyun still came out slightly behind, and he was forcefully pushed back several steps.

However, just as Gong Qinyin was about to continue to press her assault, Xiang Shaoyun turned around and sprinted for the hills. This time, Xiang Shaoyun did not try to preserve his strength. He pushed the Overlord's Nine Nether Steps to its very limit and ran straight into the densely packed woods. As long as he managed to enter the cover of the woods, Gong Qinyin's arrows would lose their effect.

Sure enough, by the time Gong Qinyin realized that she was unable to match Xiang Shaoyun in terms of pure speed, he had already fled deep into the forest. The numerous trees inside the forest meant that it would be impossible for her to hit him with her arrows.

"Damn it! Even if you run to the four corners of the earth, I must still kill you!" Gong Qinyin hysterically shrieked, rushing in the direction where Xiang Shaoyun disappeared with her bow still in hand.

As Xiang Shaoyun sprinted at full speed, he startled numerous demonic beasts, causing many a beast to chase him. Luckily for him, his raw power had risen exponentially since he had broken through to the astral realm. His speed right now could not be compared to his speed when he was still in the Basic Realm, and he was not caught by any of the beasts.

Moreover, it was Gong Qinyin behind him who was suffering the most from these accursed beasts. As she tried to catch up to Xiang Shaoyun, she found the demonic beasts constantly attacking her, forcing her to slow down to deal with them. Those that she could not deal with, she could only run away from.

Meanwhile, the Mad Lion Hunting Group was rushing down the mountain as fast as they humanly could. That being said, they were not immortals. By the time they reached the lake, Xiang Shaoyun had long disappeared.

Xiang Shaoyun, who was already far from the scene of the crime, was still running with all his might. However, he quietly muttered to himself, "The Mad Lion Hunting Group, eh? This young master has remembered your sins. Next time, I will wash your group with blood!"

The only grudge he bore was against the Mad Lion Hunting Group. As for Gong Qinyin, the girl was not in the wrong. No matter who it might have been, being seen stark naked would be a huge humiliation.

"Forget it, I'll let her see me naked the next time we meet. If it's not enough, I'll just take a loss and let her see me another two or three times. We'll be even then," Xiang Shaoyun shamelessly said to himself.

If Gong Qinyin was around to hear his words, she would've once again chased him and killed him on the spot. Xiang Shaoyun did not dally around. Only after running for a considerable distance did he finally slow down to catch his breath. He hunted a nearby

medium monstrous beast and cooked its meat for nourishment. He and Little White decided to rest at that very spot.

The Hundred Beasts Mountain Range was so vast; anybody who was still looking for Xiang Shaoyun would have a hard time finding him. As for why he did not just leave the Hundred Beasts Mountain Range outright, it was because he still did not wish to return. He wished to further raise his strength before returning to Martial Hall Palace.

Xiang Shaoyun fervently wished to become stronger so that he would be able to regain all that he had lost and be able to return to his home after 10 years. The prerequisite to all this was that he needed to have sufficient power to do so. The Mad Lion Hunting Group, as well as the Wu Clan, were mere stepping stones on his path to greatness.

“Bringing this bag along really is troublesome. Little White, help me watch over it! Don’t lose it, okay?” Xiang Shaoyun instructed Little White after they both had had their fill. Following that, he assumed a meditative position and revolved the Heaven Conquering Overlord Manual. Strands of energy flowed throughout his body, constantly thickening his internal energy.

The Heaven Conquering Overlord Manual was worthy of its title as a high-tier ancient cultivation method. It increased Xiang Shaoyun’s overall strength at a staggering rate, and most importantly, it could split his power into nine and disseminate them into his nine stars.

“Stars to contain the heaven and earth. If I’m able to condense my astral energy to form an astral sea, I’ll be able to store anything of my desire inside it! If so, I won’t have to constantly carry around a huge load of objects whenever I’m travelling. Most importantly, I’ll be able to refine my own fate weapon! A pity that reaching this stage isn’t easy.”

At that moment, Xiang Shaoyun suddenly thought of a very important matter—an astral cosmos sea. It was something formed through the transformation of astral energy into qi and the conversion of qi into liquid form. By accumulating enough of this liquid, a sea with a world within it would be created, one which anything could be stored within.

This was one of the ways in which humans tapped into their full potential. Only, one needed to possess a rather high cultivation before being able to reach such a stage. For the current Xiang Shaoyun to consider, he was either looking extremely far ahead or was full of confidence.

“Screw it. This young master is exceptionally talented. Perhaps I will surpass all others in this as well. I’ll give it a try.” Xiang Shaoyun immediately acted on his thought and directly entered a state of cultivation.

Refining one’s astral sea to contain a world within. This required one to possess an ancient, special technique to accomplish. No ordinary man could achieve this stage by

himself. Xiang Shaoyun had read through hundreds of ancient manuals and scrolls, long acquiring the method to refine an astral cosmos sea. He started using several ancient techniques to complement the Heaven Conquering Overlord Manual in invigorating his nine stars.

Shing! Shing!

The nine stars within Xiang Shaoyun's body resplendently glowed as strands of light started congealing together, slowly forming a single body. However, he currently lacked the strength required to refine the energy needed to form the astral cosmos sea. When he felt like energy had stopped flowing into the body of light, he retrieved a gourd from his bag and drank from it.

Chapter 44: Lightning Bolt Fist!

The water in the gourd was naturally water from the Earth Star Spring. Every single drop of this water was pure liquid spirit essence, and it was widely sought after no matter where one went. However, Xiang Shaoyun was drinking it like a thirsty beggar at an oasis. How wasteful indeed! Any spirit produce repeatedly consumed would see diminished returns in its effects. This was common knowledge.

That being said, Xiang Shaoyun currently was not drinking water in order to raise his strength. Rather, he wished to store its power inside his body to see if it could assist him in swiftly forming his astral cosmos sea.

Xiang Shaoyun carefully made the Earth Star Spring's power into a ball, and then the power rushed to where his nine stars were. The body of light, which was initially about to disperse, became vibrant all of a sudden. Furthermore, a small portion of it was beginning to form a solid body, giving it a very mystical feeling.

After an unknown period of time, Xiang Shaoyun's nine stars completely refined the strength from the Earth Star Spring, allowing him to form a tiny drop of astral liquid. Although Xiang Shaoyun had yet to gain the ability to examine the inside of his own body, he felt a strong connection to this drop of liquid, roughly allowing him to understand its shape and size.

"This...this isn't even the size of a pinkie! Is this really the astral cosmos sea? Or did I fail?" Xiang Shaoyun began worrying. From the ancient texts he had read, forming the astral cosmos sea would be like having an ocean within one's body, allowing one to store whatever one desired. However, as of now, he had only been able to form astral liquid barely the size of a water droplet! This was too different from what he had previously read!

"It seems I have failed. I simply forced it when I did not have sufficient strength," Xiang Shaoyun gloomily sighed. Deciding not to remain fixated on the matter, he remained in a meditative stance for another four hours before he awoke once again.

“Even though I’ve reached the Astral Realm, I must continue to build up my physical body. The stronger my physical body is, the more astral energy I will be able to store within me. Apart from that, I still need to learn more powerful battle techniques, which will allow me to have even greater combat potential! Right now, apart from the Golden Wolf Sword Technique, the only other considerable battle technique I have right now is the Star Destroying Finger. All the other tier-1 battle techniques I’ve previously learned are now lagging behind,” Xiang Shaoyun muttered to himself.

After deciding what to do next, he once again went through the various battle techniques he had committed to memory. These were all techniques that his family had kept well hidden. Each and every one of them was much more valuable than any Martial Hall Palace technique.

After a brief period, he recalled a special technique called the Lightning Bolt Fist.

Lightning Bolt Fist—convert energy into lightning, attack like a lightning bolt; vicious and cruel, destroying all in its path.

What was so special about this particular technique was that it could evolve. How could a technique evolve?

A technique that could evolve would be a technique with multiple stages. Its weakest stage would have power equivalent to a tier-3 battle technique, whereas its strongest stage would be comparable to a tier-7 battle technique at the very least, possibly even higher. The higher the stage, the stronger its prowess in battle.

This was what was so special about the Lightning Bolt Fist.

The Lightning Bolt Fist was split into the following stages:

Stage one—converting one’s energy into lightning usable for offense, manifesting as bamboo-like strands.

Stage two—having pure lightning imbued into one’s fists, borrowing the power of nature to empower one’s two fists. This would allow one to strike out with the power of lightning at any given time, giving one a substantial increase in combat power.

Stage three—empower one’s body with the power of lightning, allowing one to borrow the power of the heavens to strike their foes at will.

With Xiang Shaoyun’s current strength, he was already more than qualified to practice the first stage of the Lightning Bolt Fist.

However, to practice it to large completion would require Xiang Shaoyun to at least reach the Transformation Realm. Since he really did not have any weaker battle techniques, he could only learn this one for now. He started committing the method to

practicing the Lightning Bolt Fist to heart. Using his gift of visualization, he was also able to visualize the process of practicing the Lightning Bolt Fist, very quickly grasping its key aspects to do so.

Following that, Xiang Shaoyun began to practice his punching technique. If he wanted to thoroughly practice the Lightning Bolt Fist, his fists needed to be sufficiently tough. Otherwise, in the near future, he would suffer a backlash from attempting to control the thunder of the heavens and the earth.

Swosh! Swosh!

According to what he had learned from visualising the Lightning Bolt Fist, Xiang Shaoyun did his best to emulate what he could and sent punch after punch at a nearby tree. The latent energy within his body was also tapped into ever so slightly, making it such that his physical body was no less powerful than a tier-2 weapon.

As such, even repeatedly punching the tree bark did not give Xiang Shaoyun any sense of pain. Not only that, the moment he began integrating astral energy into his attacks, he found himself punching hole after hole into the bark, quickly destroying the tree itself.

“Looks like trees aren’t sturdy enough. I’ll have to train on rocks if I want to improve quickly!” Xiang Shaoyun briefly mused to himself before going to find a suitable rock. The hardness of trees could indeed not be compared to that of rocks. Every punch he landed on a rock would cause his hand to hurt. Furthermore, he chose not to imbue his punches with astral energy, causing spots of blood to appear all over his fists.

If it was anybody else at the same cultivation realm, their fists would have long turned into a bloody pulp. The way Xiang Shaoyun gained strength could be described as nothing less than pure masochism, a frightening level of it at that.

“Only with strong fists will I be able to better convert my energy into thunder,” Xiang Shaoyun constantly thought to himself.

After a day of practice, Xiang Shaoyun’s fists were both completely bruised. Once he finished his practice, he immediately administered medicine to his wounds and swallowed a blood mushroom to replenish his vitality. Following that, he adopted a meditative stance.

With nothing to do, Little White helped guard the area for Xiang Shaoyun, even hunting several small demonic beasts as food for the two of them. Xiang Shaoyun was very trusting towards Little White. One should never look down on Little White because of his tiny size—he was, at the very least, an Intermediate Demon beast. As long as the two of them did not encounter any Great Demons, they would not be in any danger whatsoever.

And just like that, Xiang Shaoyun remained at the Hundred Beasts Mountain Range for about half a month. He practiced his technique and cultivated during the day; during the night, he meditated and rested to recover. Occasionally, he would go out and hunt a few demonic beasts to consolidate his understandings and gain more combat experience.

His cultivation steadily rose, rising from the middle phase to the late phase of first-stage Astral Realm. This was one of the benefits of having a nine-star physique along with the miraculous nature of Overlord Conquers the Heavens. Working in tandem with each other, they greatly reduced the work required to ascend levels. Otherwise, ascending so quickly would be but a pipe dream.

If an ordinary person wanted to achieve great things in the future, they needed to put in 99 percent sweat and blood, with the remaining 1 percent left up to luck. Geniuses, on the other hand, worked with a ratio closer to 70 percent sweat and blood and 30 percent luck.

Thus, when a genius decided to put in 100 percent effort, it would be hard for them to not have any accomplishments even if they did not desire them. Xiang Shaoyun no doubt belonged to such a group of geniuses, desiring to wholeheartedly raise his strength to the best of his ability.

In order to swiftly raise his strength, Xiang Shaoyun had destroyed his fists numerous times over the course of the past half a month. Luckily, with his knowledge of how to concoct medicines, in addition to the water from the Earth Star Spring, his wounds would heal extremely quickly and effectively.

Today, as he went about his usual routine of practicing on rocks, one could faintly make out the movement of purple qi when he practiced. A wave of terrifying might rushed out of his fists like lightning—quite a sight to behold.

Bang!

The moment the clump of purple qi landed on the rock, it utterly shattered the rock into smithereens. Such raw power would be difficult to defend against even for a third-stage Astral Realm cultivator.

This was a sign that Xiang Shaoyun had attained small success with the Lightning Bolt Fist. Although he was capable of unleashing such a powerful punch, he was still left severely weakened after doing so. This went to show that forcefully trying to use high-grade battle techniques at his current strength was pushing it, even for him. If not for his solid foundation, he would not have been able to learn the skill at all.

“Two punches. At my current strength, I can only use at most two Lightning Bolt Fists. However, one fist should be enough to deal with a fourth-stage Astral Realm cultivator,” Xiang Shaoyun pondered to himself as he lay on the ground. Just as he was preparing

to pack up his bag and head back to Martial Hall Palace, all of a sudden, he felt a group of people drawing close to him.

Chapter 45: Fighting Head-On!

Just as Xiang Shaoyun was about to grab Little White and hide, the other party appeared right in front of him.

“It’s the brat! So he never left the Hundred Beasts Mountain Range after all! No wonder we didn’t find him even after waiting half a month outside the mountain range. We’d even thought that a demonic beast had eaten him!” the person at the forefront shouted and glared at Xiang Shaoyun.

Before Xiang Shaoyun were four men, each riding a fearsome mount. The person who spotted Xiang Shaoyun was called Yan Tianming. He rode on a tier-2 Intermediate Demon lion.

“Damn it! It’s the Mad Lion Hunting Group!” Xiang Shaoyun immediately took off. Watching the four men advancing to surround him, there was no other realistic action to take. As he did not know the strength of the four, he was unwilling to take any unnecessary risks in attempting to fight them.

“Where can you run? After him!” Yan Tianming bellowed, pointing towards the fleeing Xiang Shaoyun. As he gave his orders, he hurled a spear at the fleeing Xiang Shaoyun.

The spear furiously cut through the air, landing right in front of Xiang Shaoyun. Badly startled, he was forced to come to a stop. The very instant that he came to a stop, two people caught up to him on their mounts. A sword and a saber came flying straight for his back.

These two people were both Astral Realm cultivators. With both saber and sword energy heading straight for his back, Xiang Shaoyun could not help but feel threatened. Luckily for him, his power had improved tremendously since he and the Mad Lion Hunting Group last met. His reactions were also astoundingly fast—by pushing forward just a bit, he dodged both of the saber and sword lights.

While his opponents were still recovering from the missed attacks, he focused his energy into his fists and sent two packed punches at the bodies of the demonic beasts.

“Roar! Roar!”

Xiang Shaoyun’s punches left the two beasts roaring and reeling in pain. The two beasts sped up, wanting to get away from Xiang Shaoyun as fast as they possibly could. The two people riding those two beasts were the least fortunate of the bunch—in their attempt to escape, the beasts violently flung them off their backs!

“Die!” Xiang Shaoyun’s eyes gleamed with fury. Seizing his opportunity, the Heavy Cleave Saber slashed out, sending a blindingly bright light of saber energy straight at the two men!

Swish!

One of the men’s heads was cleanly sliced off, and it flew far away from its body. Just as Xiang Shaoyun was about to slash the second person, Yan Tianming came between the two of them.

“What a ferocious brat! However, I will take you down today!” Yan Tianming growled before hurling the spear in his hand. A trail of three to four meters of astral energy trailed behind it.

Yan Tianming was indeed worthy of having reached the fourth stage of the Astral Realm. Xiang Shaoyun immediately slashed out once again with the saber in hand, sending out yet another burst of saber energy.

Clang!

A violent burst of energy erupted from where the two weapons collided. Xiang Shaoyun was forced back significantly. Furthermore, several cracks appeared on the Heavy Cleave Saber.

“An expert of the third or fourth stage!” Xiang Shaoyun wavered.

Seizing the opportunity, the other attacker once again charged murderously at Xiang Shaoyun.

Xiang Shaoyun immediately reacted, yet a long wound was still left on his arm, causing his blood to spill. As for the attacker, he spun his weapon and stabbed straight at one of Xiang Shaoyun’s vitals. Coming from a primary-phase, third-stage Astral Realm expert, this thin strain of incoming light was a fatal attack.

Xiang Shaoyun activated his gift of instincts and clearly saw the trajectory of the incoming attack. Not only that, even Yan Tianming’s attack, which was coming from the opposite direction, fell clearly within his vision.

Ordinary first-stage Astral Realm experts would be hard-pressed to survive such a pincer attack. But Xiang Shaoyun used an extremely ingenious body movement to evade both attacks. At the same time, he yelled, “Little White, attack!”

The moment Xiang Shaoyun yelled, Little White, who had been hanging on his shoulder, moved.

“Meow!”

Little White moved like an agile cat, and in the blink of an eye, he landed on the third-stage Astral Realm expert's face.

"Ahhh! Ahhh!"

The person wailed miserably as Little White's clawed furiously on his face. This person's looks were most likely ruined forever. While Little White was keeping the person busy, Xiang Shaoyun's Heavy Cleave Saber swept toward Yan Tianming with full power.

Heavy Cleave Technique!

A saber energy that seemed slow yet was in fact fast moved straight at the tiny opening Yan Tianming had revealed.

Meanwhile, Yan Tianming was only halfway done releasing his attacking technique when he sensed the threat Xiang Shaoyun's attack posed him. He was thus forced to shift his technique into a defensive technique. After blocking the attack, he sent a brand new attack at Xiang Shaoyun, vowing to get rid of this enemy as soon as possible. However, he was only halfway done releasing his attack before Xiang Shaoyun once again attacked his opening, forcing him to retreat repeatedly.

Such a weird kid. Why is he able to see through my attacks? Yan Tianming thought to himself. He bellowed, "I refuse to believe you will be able to see through my moves every time! Die!"

Yan Tianming finally took everything seriously and decided to kill Xiang Shaoyun as soon as possible. He was finally going to show his true power. A golden radiance rippled out from his long spear, the dots of radiance akin to shining stars in the night sky. The spear moved speedily, and coupled with the bright radiance it was emanating, one would have difficulties looking directly at it.

Xiang Shaoyun's gift of insights was unable to keep up with this new move, and he was forced into the defensive.

Clang! Clang!

They clashed, sending astral energy spraying everywhere, destroying all the plants around them. Even Xiang Shaoyun's Heavy Cleave Saber was broken during the clash.

"Without a weapon, it's time for you to die!" Yan Tianming grinned as he yelled and continued attacking Xiang Shaoyun. But inwardly, he was flabbergasted. This kid is obviously only a first-stage Astral Realm cultivator. How is he capable of blocking me? I must kill him! He can't be allowed to grow!

Yan Tianming lived up to his reputation as a hunter who had spent the majority of his time in the forest. The moment he caught on to an opening, he attacked relentlessly, not giving Xiang Shaoyun the time to even draw his sword.

Xiang Shaoyun relied on Overlord's Nine Nether Steps to avoid the attacks, yet many wounds were still left on his body.

"Since I can't escape, I might as well throw all caution to the wind!" Xiang Shaoyun muttered as a ruthless glint surfaced in his eyes. He pushed his eyes to the limits and was finally able to see the trajectory of Yan Tianming's spear. He directly reached for the spear and clasped it under his armpit.

That gave off an impression that the spear had stabbed Xiang Shaoyun, and even Yan Tianming was none the wiser. It was right this moment that Xiang Shaoyun unleashed all his strength and punched with his other hand. Purple qi swirled around the tyrannical fist as it shot forward.

Lightning Bolt Fist!

The fist surged violently, carrying the power of lightning! Yan Tianming had never expected Xiang Shaoyun to suddenly erupt with such power. But he was still a fourth-stage Astral Realm expert. He immediately countered with a punch.

Bang!

The two fists connected, creating a loud sound of collision. The impact directly sent Yan Tianming flying from his mount. An intense pain assailed his hand, as if lightning had struck him. Xiang Shaoyun seemed to have turned into a phantom as he immediately caught up to Yan Tianming and drew his sword. The sword sliced forward, and its energy ripped through the air like a rainbow.

"NO!" Yan Tianming stared at the incoming sword, his eyes wide. He couldn't even protect himself in time. The sword whistled through the air. A head separated from its body. Just like that, a fourth-stage Astral Realm expert died.

When Yan Tianming's companion saw this, he trembled in fear. And when Xiang Shaoyun glanced at him, he started stepping backward. He did not even have the courage to face Xiang Shaoyun.

"Y-you can't kill me! I-I'm a member of the Mad Lion Hunting Group!" he stuttered as he retreated.