

## Resonance 711

Chapter 0711: Devil Resonance

"Enemy attack!"

When Shen Jinxiao appeared from the fog, the guards of the House Luolan convoy immediately prepared to attack. Led by Yuan Qing, the expressions of all of the elites of House Luolan changed as his stern warning alerted all of them.

Shing!

All of the House Luolan's guards immediately drew their weapons, and resonant power of all kinds blazed like lit lamps, lighting up the entire road. From a bird's eye view, it was a beautiful spectacle.

Li Luo and Jiang Qing'e had calm expressions on their faces as the two glared at the figure that had just appeared with all the killing intent they could muster.

"Beast Shen, you've actually appeared," Li Luo said.

Shen Jinxiao gave a slight smile. "Student Li Luo, being disrespectful to a mentor leads to punishment, you know?"

Li Luo looked at Shen Jinxiao with a despising gaze. "You still have the cheek to call yourself a mentor? If Vice Principal Su Xin were here, I'm afraid she would tear your mouth off directly. The college has never mistreated you, and they even provided you with ample amounts of cultivation resources. In the end, you joined the Origin Reversion Institute and even destroyed the college's Tree of Resonant Power, causing everyone to migrate in fear. You are truly the most evil and despicable person I have ever seen."

Faced with Li Luo's piercing words, Shen Jinxiao took them in stride, not denying any of them as he gave a gentle smile and shook his head. "I remained in the college not to merely enjoy their resources... I have similarly worked hard, so this has just been a transaction of benefits between me and the college. Talking about betrayal isn't appropriate! The Origin Reversion Institute gave me an irresistible offer, so it was only natural that I chose to abandon ship. The school being destroyed...?" Shen Jinxiao grinned.

"That was just the college being incapable. What does that have to do with me? Enough, Li Luo. Lets stop spouting these useless words."

His gaze then landed on Li Luo before turning to Jiang Qing'e. At this point, an incomparably passionate and greedy expression could be seen in his eyes. He had always suppressed himself in the college as he would have been exposed the moment his lust for Jiang Qing'e was revealed.

But things were different today—he no longer had to hide it.

"Student Qing'e, do you know how long I've waited for this day?" Shen Jinxiao gently asked.

"From the day I met you... your holy and unblemished heart of light had given birth to an insatiable desire which I never knew was within me. I can barely think of anything else that could possibly be more perfect in this world..."

Jiang Qing'e stared at the raving and excited Shen Jinxiao, who was expressing his undisguised and warped desire for her as she indifferently replied, "So what you really want is my Heart of Light."

It was no wonder she could always keenly feel a discreet hint of covetousness towards her from Shen Jinxiao. This sort of desire was a little different in that it wasn't one of wanton lust towards her body, it was actually the desire for her Heart of Light, which had been formed by her light resonant energy.

It was this very same Heart of Light that allowed Jiang Qing'e to keenly feel others' intentions and thoughts. This was why she could keenly sense Shen Jinxiao's desire and also the malicious intent he had towards her. Eventually, she had chosen a different mentor as a result.

"A ninth-grade light resonance's Heart of Light is the purest object in the world. It is also an incomparable delicacy! However, I don't merely want a pure Heart of Light, what I want is one without a hint of negative emotions!" Shen Jinxiao's voice turned gentle once again. "When a strong negative emotion appears within a pristine Heart of Light, the combination of the two is the most wondrous thing in the world. Do you know why this is the case?" When he finished his sentence, shadows and light intertwined behind him, taking the shape of a strange creature with a white, mouse-like head.

When it appeared, all of the people present seemed to have seen an illusion that stole their spirits away.

"This is Shen Jinxiao's second resonance, the Heart Beast resonance." Mentor Chi Chan's cold voice echoed throughout the ears of everyone present as she placed herself between the two and Shen Jinxiao.

"This resonance has a strange ability to beguile and confuse one's heart. To resist it, one has to keep their heart clear at all times." Mentor Chi Chan stared daggers at Shen Jinxiao. "But I have never heard of the Heart Beast resonance coveting the Heart of Light."

"Heart Beast resonance?" Shen Jinxiao's lips curved into a mocking smile. "Chi Chan, what you know is what I chose to let the college know. From the very beginning, my second resonance was not the Heart Beast resonance."

As he spoke, Li Luo and the rest saw the mouse-like creature's figure begin to tremble, then its flesh and blood were torn apart and a black liquid flowed forth. At the same time, the flesh and blood churned, gradually turning into a pitch-black, distorted object.

It looked like a grotesque heart that was made of black blood and flesh. Embedded into it were four dark-red pupils that blinked, and below it was a gigantic mouth akin to an abyss that leaked black liquid. A thick and strange smell wafted from it.

When Chi Chan saw this, a trace of surprise arose in her eyes.

"Is that a devil resonance?!"

Li Luo and Jiang Qing'e were taken aback by this statement. "Mentor, what is a devil resonance?"

Mentor Chi Chan's voice turned heavy. "Amongst the myriad of different resonances, most can be sorted into one of two kinds: elemental resonances and beast resonances... However, there is a sort of acquired resonance called devil resonance. This seems to be the pursuit and aim of the Origin Reversion Institute. Their aim is to assimilate with Others, the ultimate goal being to obtain a new type of

resonance, one that has been corrupted and sublimated, known as a devil resonance. Shen Jinxiao's Heart Beast resonance has undergone this change, so it should now be a Heart Devil resonance. It is no wonder why he has always targeted you, finding all sorts of methods to set you back. His aim was to use you as a medium to create flaws in Jiang Qing'e's unblemished heart, to plant seeds of corruption that he would corrupt over time. Eventually, the Heart of Light would be polluted by it and he would then be able to devour it, elevating his devil resonance."

Li Luo squinted upon hearing the entire explanation. Everything made sense now. Shen Jinxiao had targeted him specifically from the moment he had entered the college. From an outsider's perspective, it looked as though he was simply jealous of the engagement agreement with Jiang Qing'e. The truth of the matter was that he wanted to deliver a blow to her Heart of Light and insidiously corrupt it.

"It looks like he truly was the mastermind behind Pei Hao." Li Luo's expression turned stormy.

Shen Jinxiao smiled and nodded as he frankly answered, "Indeed. I wanted to use him to defeat you and take over House Luolan, dealing a blow to Jiang Qing'e. It was a pity that that piece of trash was even more useless than I had expected. Either way, it doesn't matter. After so long, I've realized that you, Li Luo, are the flaw in Jiang Qing'e's heart." He grinned happily as he stared at Li Luo, an unsettling and cold look in his eyes.

"Thus, today... I will kill you right before her."

Weng!

A frightening blade light exploded forth from the last carriage. It possessed unimaginable amounts of fiendish energy, and it seemed as though all of the corruption in the world had been blown away and shredded into pieces by its presence.

A single blade chopped out. The skies and the earth were rent apart.

This strike was aimed directly at Shen Jinxiao.

### **Chapter 0712: Battle at Southwind**

When the fiendish blade light arced across the sky, countless people in House Luolan's convoy were completely taken aback. The road before them had been split into half, and the blade scar left in the wake of the strike stretched endlessly before them.

Shen Jinxiao's figure was similarly split into two, but when his bisected body collapsed, it turned into a wisp of black gas that dissipated into the air.

Ox Biaobiao then walked out of the last carriage, wielding his pig-butcher knife. His ferocious gaze was focused upon where Shen Jinxiao's body had disappeared. At the same time, he reminded Li Luo, "Be careful, this person is crafty and extremely difficult to deal with."

When he launched his previous attack, he could distinctly feel a massive and subtle fluctuation stemming from Shen Jinxiao's body. Clearly, the ex-Violet Vibrance mentor from the Astral Sage College was not a simple individual.

"Keke. So you're the mysterious Duke hiding within House Luolan? You actually managed to retain your strength despite leaving the headquarters?" At this point, Shen Jinxiao's raucous laughter echoed throughout the sky. Then he reappeared floating in the air, his gaze focused upon Ox Biaobiao with a look of confusion.

Ox Biaobiao, on the other hand, was staring fiendishly at him, clearly uninterested in further banter.

Shen Jinxiao sized Ox Biaobiao up before throwing out a guess. "From the news I've heard, your body has suffered from severe injuries and all of your Duke Bergfrieds have been shattered. Currently, you have the strength of a fourth-grade Duke, but the source of it should not be coming from you... Could it be that you borrowed the power of House Luolan's Divine Matter? Well, it doesn't matter." He then turned to look at Li Luo as he grinned. "Li Luo, I know you're waiting for reinforcements, but do you really think I came without preparations? During the Housemeet, I used Pei Hao as a puppet, but this time I've come in the flesh... I won't lose this opportunity again." He then raised a palm, and gray-white substance suddenly started to descend from the skies like falling snow, covering the entire area.

In a way, it reminded one of bone ash falling from the skies and Li Luo could feel that the area they were in was suddenly isolated from the rest of the world.

...

At the same time.

On another road just a hundred meters away from House Luolan's convoy.

Countless students were grouped up and moving forward with dull expressions on their faces amidst a gloomy atmosphere. Their blank emotions represented the despondence deep in their hearts as they all understood that the Astral Sage College was no more.

The prized Tree of Resonant Power was a symbolic representation of the students' belief in the college. With that destroyed, they had naturally lost all vigor as well.

The gray and overcast weather only accentuated feelings of moroseness.

Vice Principal Su Xin was flying in the air, constantly scanning in every direction. She could sense the downcast feelings of the students. However, she was helpless to solve it. These students were the best and the brightest youths of the younger generation, and yet despite their young age, they had experienced numerous setbacks. Even she felt dismayed despite having weathered through numerous situations over the years, much less these youths. The destruction of the Astral Sage College had significantly affected them all.

Their attempts to reassure them did not seem to work, and thus they had to rely on the passing of time to eventually heal these wounds.

When the college was rebuilt, they would gradually regain their motivation and fighting spirit.

"Hmm?"

At this point, Vice Principal Su Xin's eyes froze and she turned towards the southwest. She could feel that the signaling jade talisman she had provided to Li Luo had activated.

"Shen Jinxiao!" A murderous, cold glint surfaced within the depths of her eyes as she gritted her teeth and spat out this hated name. Although the college's situation was mostly a result of the hidden machinations caused by the Origin Reversion Institute, it would have been difficult to breach the defenses of the school and burn down the Tree of Resonant Power without Shen Jinxiao's involvement and insidiously causing issues from within the school!

The fact that she had been unable to detect Shen Jinxiao's ulterior motives in advance was something she greatly blamed herself over, and this only brought greater feelings of hatred towards that man.

"You actually dared to show yourself?!" Vice Principal Su Xin surged with killing intent as her figure flashed forward towards the direction of House Luolan's convoy.

Uuuuu!

At this point in time, the entire sky reverberated with a humming sound, and something in the downcast sky started to release endless amounts of corruption like a tide.

The thing then rushed towards the college's squads.

When Vice Principal Su Xin saw this, her expression changed as it was clearly an innumerable horde of Others rushing towards them!

"Fend off the enemy!" she quickly yelled.

The Violet Vibrance and Gold Gleam mentors who were guarding the students quickly formed a perimeter, and their resonant power surged into the skies.

Vice Principal Su Xin retracted her gaze after she glanced coldly at a location not too far away. There was a small lake there that was permeated with gray fog. Suddenly, the fog rippled and a male with dual pupils of gold and silver stood atop the surface, smiling right back at her.

"A ploy of the Origin Reversion Institute!" Vice Principal Su Xin's gaze turned frigid as she taunted, "You still dare to show yourself after being grievously injured by the Principal?"

The youth grinned. "Don't you think my appearance was out of your expectations? Weren't you waiting for me anyway?"

"Indeed! We were waiting for you!" Vice Principal Su Xin's killing intent seemed to have materialized tangibly as it soared into the air. Shen Jinxiao was in cahoots with this person, Xuan Chen, and now that Shen Jinxiao had taken action, there was no way Xuan Chen would merely observe from the side. He would definitely take part and target the Astral Sage College!

Thus, Vice Principal Su Xin had been awaiting Xuan Chen's appearance.

She knew that Xuan Chen had been injured severely during the last battle, and this was the best chance for her to take revenge.

As she spoke, beams of light near the college's squads shot into the sky, causing the sky to tremble. Duke Bergfried manifested one after another, like stars hanging in the sky, radiating an immense sense of oppression.

Vice Principal Su Xin coldly locked onto Xuan Chen.

"Evil thief who destroyed my college, today I will execute you as penance!"

Vice Principal Su Xin took a step forward as she ascended into the air, and four Duke Bergfries appeared behind her. They began to swallow boundless amounts of worldly natural energy, and she then executed a hand seal. The four Bergfries were engraved with countless golden light runes that began to float into the air, shining resplendently and illuminating everything within a hundred meters.

"Duke's Spirit Insignia, Golden Deer's Abstruse Mark!"

The four golden lights converged and condensed into the shape of a gigantic, godly, golden deer. This creature could tread through the air, and ice condensed beneath each hoof, freezing the void.

All of a sudden, the icy golden deer then smashed through the void, rushing at Xuan Chen.

"Wow! You've even activated your spirit insignia. It looks like you REALLY hate me, huh?" Xuan Chen smirked. The Duke's Spirit Insignia was a unique power fourth-grade Dukes were able to utilize, similar to the Worldspace Domain which high-grade Dukes had.

Vice Principal Su Xin was at the fourth-grade, and she had mustered up her Duke's Spirit Insignia for the very first attack, demonstrating her desire to kill.

Xuan Chen shook his head. Still, when faced with the college's countless Dukes, he did not dare to be lax. He clasped his hands together, directly mobilizing his Worldspace Domain. At the same time, the entire sky seemed to be covered by his mystical domain.

...

At the same time.

The Golden Dragon Bank's convoy was even larger with a long line of carriages.

Yu Hongxi rushed into the air, and her eyes shrunk when she glanced towards the north. She gave a quick command. "All of you remain and guard the carriages. I will go and check things out."

Some of the higher level executives of the Golden Dragon Bank glanced at each other and could already guess what Yu Hongxi was about to do. Strictly speaking, as a neutral party, they should not be involving themselves in such matters. However, she was the president and had tightly controlled the bank for countless years, her majesty already deeply imprinted in all of their hearts.

Thus, no one dared to question her actions, only nodding in agreement.

Her figure turned into a stream of light as she zoomed tens of kilometers in an instant.

FWOOM!

However, right at this point in time, the sky seemed to have been lit ablaze. Fire lotuses began to form one after another, directly blocking off Yu Hongxi's path as the temperature in the area began to ascend rapidly, causing even the air to warp and distort.

Yu Hongxi was forced to a halt, and a frosty countenance formed on her beautiful face.

She stared into one particular part of the void as her indifferent voice rang out.

"Zhu Qinghuo, Shen Jinxiao is the nemesis of the Xia Kingdom. Since you've taken the initiative to restrain me, do I have reason to suspect that House Jiyan is in cahoots with the Origin Reversion Institute?"

### **Chapter 0713: Shen Jinxiao's True Strength**

"Hehe. President Yu, how can you use such harsh words on me? I don't want to have anything to do with the Origin Reversion Institute."

When faced with Yu Hongxi's grating words, Zhu Qinghuo smiled and shook his head before he continued, "I'm sure you can guess my reasons for doing so. I won't hide it—I want to see House Luolan be destroyed."

His gaze turned emotionless at this point. Due to his actions at the Housemeet, he basically had a blood feud with Li Taixuan and Tan Tailan. As a result, he would not hesitate to throw stones when they were down.

Furthermore, the one directly dealing with House Luolan was Shen Jinxiao, who had ties with the Origin Reversion Institute. If House Luolan did get wiped off the face of the earth and Li Luo and Jiang Qing'e both died, Li Taixuan and Tan Tailan's largest target would be Shen Jinxiao if they ever returned. As a result, he might even be able to fish up some benefits from their struggle. Thus, he would happily watch Shen Jinxiao destroy House Luolan.

At this point in time, he definitely did not wish to see Yu Hongxi assist House Luolan.

"President Yu, the Golden Dragon Bank has always been neutral. There is no need to muddy the waters. If you retreat here, I'm willing to apologize for any past transgressions," Zhu Qinghuo sincerely said.

Yu Hongxi was unmoved, only coldly watching him. "Are you sure you want to restrain me? Zhu Qinghuo, if you anger me, I won't stop till I make you pay a price."

Her threatening words caused Zhu Qinghuo's eyebrows to twitch in surprise. Frankly speaking, he had always somewhat feared Yu Hongxi. Just because she was always kind and amiable didn't mean that anyone should underestimate her. Whoever did so was the true fool.

The Golden Dragon Bank had countless factions internally, but all of them had been reined in tightly by the woman before him. This not only showed how effective her methods were, it was also testament to her own strength.

She had rarely exchanged blows personally in recent years, so Zhu Qinghuo was unaware of how strong she was. However, he understood that the combination of Golden Dragon Bank's resources and her talent would mean that it was unlikely that she was any weaker than he was.

Even though he had entered the fourth-grade, it did not mean that he was sure to win.

However... If he wanted to buy time, that was something that could be done.

With these thoughts in mind, Zhu Qinghuo no longer hesitated. He waved his hand, and a cyan feather fan appeared in his grasp. A deep, red flame was slowly ascending into the air above the fan. As the flame condensed, it seemed to form the figure of a vermillion bird that swallowed up the flame before letting out a clear cry throughout the sky.

A violet eye mark could be seen on the handle of the fan.

This was his violet-eye treasured artifact.

"You were the one who helped me obtain the Vermillion Bird Treasure Fan all those years ago. Who would have expected that many years later, it would be used to restrain you? This truly is the heavens playing tricks on us." The void behind Zhu Qinghuo trembled as four mountainous Duke Bergfries manifested, absorbing endless amounts of worldly natural energy.

Zhu Qinghuo waved the Vermillion Bird Treasure Fan, and deep, red flames endlessly gushed out, forming four gigantic flame pillars.

Yu Hongxi remained standing in the air, her gaze turning colder and colder as a mocking smile formed on her lips.

"Zhu Qinghuo, you might not know this, but I have a very particular habit. That is, if a person I'm wary of purchases a violet-eye treasured artifact from the Golden Dragon Bank, I find a way to counter it in order to protect myself from any future trouble. Unlucky for you, Zhu Qinghuo, you were precisely on that list." Afterwards, she flicked her wrist, and a jade bottle appeared in her hand. She uncorked the bottle, and a white snowflake gradually floated into the air.

The temperature, which had been rapidly climbing, plummeted instantly and even the ground froze over.

The snowflake directly fused with the void, and the drastic change in weather made it seem like the coldest of winters had come.

At the same time, Zhu Qinghuo's four flame pillars began to dissipate rapidly, eventually completely extinguishing.

This scene immediately caused Zhu Qinghuo to become disheartened, and an incomparably ugly expression formed on his face.

The mysterious snowflake was definitely some sort of treasure. It had transformed the environment into a battlefield that was disadvantageous to him. The Vermillion Bird Treasure Fan, which he had spent a hefty sum to purchase from the Golden Dragon Bank, was completely unable to demonstrate its strength.

What was most frustrating to him was Yu Hongxi herself! She had concealed her intentions deeply and had even kept such a trump card in reserve.

However, Yu Hongxi ignored Zhu Qinghuo's gloomy expression as she took a step forward with the void rippling behind her. Similarly, her own four Duke Bergfries manifested and her resonant power rippled explosively, like a tempest descending upon the world.

Zhu Qinghuo's heart sank. Yu Hongxi had become a fourth-grade Duke some time ago, and judging by the resonant power undulations, she was even stronger than him!

It seemed as though Yu Hongxi was determined to rescue Li Luo. He would just do his best to buy time and hope that Shen Jinxiao could complete the task.

With this in mind, he no longer spent time mulling over what could not be changed. Crimson runes surfaced on his Duke Bergfries, manifesting into an erupting volcano.

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As the grayish-white bone ash continued to scatter...

House Luolan's convoy was in a state of chaos. Everyone seemed a little panicked, but with senior elders like Yuan Qing and Lei Zhang doing their utmost to pacify everyone, the situation didn't deteriorate much further.

Cai Wei and Yan Lingqing were standing together, both staring at Shen Jinxiao, who was blocking the road. When they turned to face each other, they could see traces of worry in each other's eyes.

Ox Biaobiao's figure slowly ascended into the sky. The bloodstained pig-butcher knife gradually lengthened, eventually transforming into a massive blade that radiated shocking amounts of fiendish air.

Chi Chan's gaze was frigid. The void behind her rippled, and three Duke Bergfries appeared, sucking in vast amounts of worldly natural energy and radiating a sense of majesty.

However, they were slightly smaller when compared to the previous two she had shown. It seemed as though they had been formed not too long ago.

"Oh? You've become a third-grade Duke, Chi Chan?" A look of surprise surfaced on Shen Jinxiao's face. Based on his sources, Chi Chan was a second-grade Duke, and it seemed as though she had just broken through.

"Did Vice principal Su Xin give you some sort of treasure?" Shen Jinxiao smirked.

"It looks like you should thank me after all. If I had not ruined the college, how could Su Xin bear to use up the treasures of the college?"

Chi Chan's gaze was frosty as she stared daggers at Shen Jinxiao with unmasked killing intent. "Shen Jinxiao! The Ichthyic curse that was inflicted upon me must have been your doing! Now that I think about it, when the clone of the Ichthyian King descended, it must have been because of you!"

Shen Jinxiao did not continue making excuses like he had done in the past, only attentively nodding. "You guessed correctly. I summoned the Ichthyian King that day, and the goal was to ensure that even more Violet Vibrance mentors would be afflicted by his Ichthyic curse."

Chi Chan clenched her fist as she venomously glowered at Shen Jinxiao. If looks could kill, she would have torn Shen Jinxiao into bloody shreds at that very moment.

On the other hand, Shen Jinxiao seemed unfazed as he prepared to face Ox Biaobiao and Chi Chan together. He didn't seem to show any hesitation or timidity when facing two Dukes. He beamed at Li Luo. "Is this everything you've prepared for today? If you are hoping that the college or the Golden Dragon Bank will come to your timely aid, I'm afraid there won't be enough time. These two Dukes can't stop me."

Li Luo frostily exchanged glances with Shen Jinxiao. Just as he was about to speak, a voice piped up from the midst of House Luolan's convoy.

"What if you add me to the equation?"

Countless looks shot over at a figure who had unknowingly been standing on the roof of one of the carriages.

This person... was House Duze's Duze Yan! When faced with the sudden appearance of Duze Yan, even Jiang Qing'e seemed to be flabbergasted at the sudden development. She turned to Li Luo and asked, "You actually invited him along?"

She knew that Li Luo had been making preparations to deal with Shen Jinxiao all this time and had similarly sought assistance from others. However, she could never have imagined that Duze Yan would arrive, as the two houses could barely even be considered friends. Even during the Housemeet, Duze Yan had only restrained Si Qing. After which, he had remained relatively distant.

"House Lord Duze said that the only reason he agreed was because Shen Jinxiao ruined House Duze, to the point where they had to migrate reluctantly. Now that they have enmity between them, he is willing to act." Li Luo smiled.

Jiang Qing'e did not say much in response. She knew that this was just Duze Yan's excuse. He had a proud personality and would never admit to coming to House Luolan's assistance... The only thing was that House Luolan now owed a huge favor to them as well.

"Duze Yan, it looks like you've been conquered by Li Taixuan after all." Shen Jinxiao quietly observed Duze Yan as he shook his head. He had never expected him to assist House Luolan.

"In any case, your assistance is meaningless. You're just a second-grade Duke." Shen Jinxiao smiled and his eyes turned endlessly cold, like he had become a glacier.

"Now that all of your trump cards have been revealed, it should be my turn now."

Shen Jinxiao raised his hand, and the void behind him rippled.

"After hiding myself for so many years, I can finally release myself unrestrainedly. Ah, I've truly looked forward to this day." Shen Jinxiao's grinned deeply as his hands formed a hand seal.

Immediately after, six Duke Bergfries the size of massive mountains smashed through the void, releasing a horrifying, suppressive aura that washed over everyone like a raging tsunami, sweeping across the earth and the sky.

Six Duke Bergfries!

Shen Jinxiao was actually a sixth-grade Duke!

## Chapter 0714: Four Dukes Battle!

A sixth-grade Duke!

When six Duke Bergfries appeared behind Shen Jinxiao, everyone's expressions changed. Even Ox Biaobiao, Chi Chan, and Duze Yan had solemn gazes with this new development.

A sixth-grade Duke was someone that surpassed even the Regent and Vice Principal Su Xin. He was truly the mightiest in the Xia Kingdom!

Who would have ever expected that Shen Jinxiao had been hiding such terrifying strength?

Li Luo's expression turned heavy when Shen Jinxiao revealed his sixth-grade Duke strength. He knew that today's battle would definitely surpass the one at the Housemeet in both intensity and danger.

He swept his gaze over his side to assess the situation. Amongst the three Dukes, Ox Biaobiao was the strongest with fourth-grade strength. Chi Chan was third-grade and Duze Yan was second-grade. Although they had numbers, was this really enough to triumph over the disparity in grades?

Li Luo didn't know the answer, but what he did know was that no matter the result, it would be an inescapable battle to the death.

He could not idly sit by and watch Shen Jinxiao steal away Jiang Qing'e's Heart of Light. Thus, there was no other option in this matter. One of them had to die.

This cataclysmic battle started at that very instant.

Ox Biaobiao took action first. His fingers clenched into a fist as he struck out, mobilizing all of the worldly natural energy around him. This caused a ten-thousand-meter demonic bull phantasm to manifest, roaring with deafening force and shaking the entire world.

The fist shadow that followed behind possessed a sense of incomparable tyranny, directly ripping through the void and flying in Shen Jinxiao's direction.

Duke Art, Demon Bull's Godly Fist!

This Duke Art was demonstrated by Ox Biaobiao when he crossed blows with Zhu Qinghuo during the Housemeet. Perhaps it was due to borrowing the influence of the Divine Matter but the might of the art had vastly increased in both sheer power and tyrannicalness.

Faced with Ox Biaobiao's direct assault, Shen Jinxiao remained calm as he formed a hand seal. The next moment, the void behind him seemed to have ignited, turning fiery red. A gigantic manifestation of a flame appeared, and on its head was a curved horn, constantly surging with fire.

This was Shen Jinxiao's first resonance, the Ifrit resonance.

The flame manifestation swatted downwards with a massive palm, almost akin to seeing a meteorite falling from the sky. The entire world seemed to have ignited into flames, and even the air distorted from the sheer heat.

Bang!

The two attacks collided in the middle of the sky, sending reverberations throughout the ground, and a tempestuous wave of berserk energy swept across the area like a hurricane. The sheer aftereffects caused the House Luolan convoy to be blown apart and scattered as countless frightened individuals watched the battle unfold.

Alas, in that direct confrontation, Shen Jinxiao's gigantic flaming palm was superior. But there was nothing surprising since he was a sixth-grade Duke and was simply stronger.

Ox Biaobiao's Demon Bull's Godly fist evaporated with a puff, and the remaining clump of flames swept towards him.

Roar!

At this point, a tiger's roar was heard as a gigantic, light-blue tiger manifestation leapt into the air. With each paw treading upon the air, water waves seemed to ripple beneath it. It seemed to be created from the most pristine of waters, directly colliding with the fiery aftermath of Shen Jinxiao's attack, spraying a scalding mist upon impact.

Mentor Chi Chan had taken action.

Her eyes coldly locked onto Shen Jinxiao as her hands formed yet another hand seal. Light blue resonant power gushed forth, forming an ocean in the sky in a blink. Tens of thousands of massive waves began to churn and violently crash towards Shen Jinxiao.

"Chi Chan, you're a mere third-grade and you dare to act against me? If not for the fact that I didn't want to reveal myself in the college, did you really think you could have lived till today?" Shen Jinxiao gave a wry smile as he waved his sleeve and roiling flames blanketed the sky, forming a sea of flames that collided directly with the ocean created by Chi Chan. The ocean immediately began to recede, evaporating extremely quickly.

Chi Chan's eyes turned frigid as she removed the gauze covering her face, revealing her pristine and beautiful face. She opened her mouth and spat out a dark blue pearl of light. The pearl radiated with layers of light, and a violet eye mark was in the very core.

The dark blue pearl of light soared into the sky, submerging into the ocean made of water resonant power. At the same time, it began to ripple with waves of light.

The ocean was roused once again with renewed fury, crashing against the sea of flames. However, this time, the once victorious fire began to extinguish at an astonishing speed, as though it had met its bane.

This sudden change caused a look of surprise to surface on Shen Jinxiao's face as he observed the dark blue pearl of light.

"Is that the college's Primordial Ruins Dewdrop? It looks like Su Xin entrusted you with quite the treasure. They really spared no expense in dealing with me." As an ex-Violet Vibrance mentor, Shen Jinxiao had a good understanding of the different treasured artifacts held by the college. The aforementioned Primordial Ruins Dewdrop was a top-tier violet-eye treasured artifact. When utilized by a water resonance cultivator, it was able to greatly elevate their resonant power and endow it with strong corrosive properties.

It was greatly able to augment Chi Chan's third-grade resonant power and suppress his fire resonant power with a suppressive element.

Chi Chan quickly formed a series of hand seals, and the dark blue ocean quickly receded.

"Duke Art, Water Tiger's Encircling Suppression."

As the ocean dissipated, a gigantic, dark-blue ring of water appeared around Shen Jinxiao. It was roughly a hundred meters in diameter, but it was quickly shrinking and forming a sealing space.

The ring possessed a certain degree of sealing strength, so the flame manifestation behind Shen Jinxiao shrank.

Just as Chi Chan's Duke Art took effect to debuff Shen Jinxiao's Ifrit resonance, the void shattered and another figure shot over.

This person who was wreathed in berserk fire and lightning resonant power was none other than Duze Yan.

He quickly executed a hand seal, and his fire and lightning resonant powers condensed between his palms, crackling with explosive power.

Duke Art, Lightning Flame Heavenly Shuttle!

The next moment, the combination of fire and lightning burst forth from his palm and formed the shape of a shuttle which blasted towards Shen Jinxiao's back.

"Ants trying to shake a tree." Upon seeing Duze Yan's assault, Shen Jinxiao cackled coldly. This was a second-grade Duke, and he didn't even possess a top grade violet-eye treasured artifact. Just how was he going to mount a successful ambush?

With that thought in mind, a single Duke Bergfried pierced through the void and shrunk with utmost speed, turning into a red shield that protected his back.

Duze Yan was nothing in Shen Jinxiao's eyes. A slight defense would be sufficient as the opponent did not possess the power to threaten him. The one that was perhaps marginally deserving of attention was Ox Biaobiao, a fourth-grade Duke.

BOOM!

As these thoughts went through his mind, Duze Yan's assault landed upon the red shield.

At the same time, Shen Jinxiao felt like something was not right. Duze Yan seemed to be much stronger than he had expected.

"You've hidden your true strength!" Shen Jinxiao's felt a little shocked, and his voice turned gloomy. He had never expected Duze Yan's resonant power fluctuations to suddenly surpass the second-grade and step into the third-grade!

A third Duke Bergfried had appeared in the void right behind Duze Yan, swallowing up copious amounts of worldly natural energy and supplementing his attack.

"What a treacherous House Lord!" Shen Jinxiao angrily smiled. This fellow was able to become a House Lord and step into the ranks of the powerhouses of the Xia Kingdom and thus should never have been underestimated. Judging by the sheer majesty coming from his Duke Bergfries, it seemed as though he was stronger than Chi Chan by quite a bit, showing that he had stepped into the third-grade countless years ago. However, he had never chosen to reveal this, only quietly biding his strength.

This subterfuge had been revealed when Shen Jinxiao's guard was down, allowing him to gain the element of surprise.

Bang!

The red shield formed by a single Duke Bergfried had been penetrated, then berserk fire and lightning washed over Shen Jinxiao's body in a magnificent strike.

Boom! Rumble!

Deafening booms echoed throughout the sky before them.

Chapter 0715: Devil Resonance

Bang!

The lightning flame thunderously exploded, and billowing clouds of fire expanded upon impact, creating booming thunderclaps. It was like a natural disaster had come to life.

Under the ecstatic gazes of the people of House Luolan, Shen Jinxiao was sent flying hundreds of meters away. The void oscillated wherever he flew through, and only after the brunt of the blow was finally absorbed did he manage to stabilize himself.

At this point in time, the back of Shen Jinxiao's robes had been split apart and a fist-sized, gaping wound could be seen. The wound crackled with lightning, and hints of flames danced within, eroding away his blood and flesh.

However, the erosion did not continue for long. A strange, black substance appeared within the bloody hole, quickly spreading and engulfing the elements ravaging the inside of his body and patching up the entire wound.

This terrifying sight caused the scalp of the people watching to go numb.

"What a tricky House Lord..." Shen Jinxiao emotionlessly watched Duze Yan with a hint of gloominess.

He had never expected that these three insignificant ants would actually manage to injure him!

When faced with Shen Jinxiao's cold glint, Duze Yan remained taciturn, uninterested in bickering with him. Three Duke Bergfries descended from the sky, and berserk flames and crackling lightning intertwined like the dawn of a natural disaster, covering the skies and striking right at Shen Jinxiao.

Shen Jinxiao remained emotionless. The Ifrit behind him opened its mouth and spewed out rings of flames. The flames surrounded his body and walled off not only Duze Yan's offensive, but also the dark blue ring of water that had been originally cast by Chi Chan, which was now showing signs of rapid evaporation.

If not for Chi Chan borrowing the aid of the Primordial Ruins Dewdrop, her Duke Art would have long turned into fine mist thanks to the stark difference in resonant power.

During this short exchange, Shen Jinxiao had revealed his sixth-grade Duke might and casually demonstrated how easily he could deal with Chi Chan and Duze Yan.

However, at this point, it was Ox Biao Biao's attack that caused him to turn all his attention onto him.

Ox Biaobiao wielded his massive blade and chopped outwards, launching copious amounts of fiendish energy from within his body into the skies. He seemed even more intimidating than Shen Jinxiao and the baleful aura that surrounded him seemed even more terrifying than a spirit beast.

A blade light that shredded the void sliced towards Shen Jinxiao.

Flame gouts spewed from Shen Jinxiao's body, constantly seeking to erode the blade light that was flying towards him.

Ox Biaobiao watched him fend off their triple assault with ease, and he understood that amongst the three, Chi Chan and Duze Yan could only seek to contain him slightly. Only he had the strength to fend him off.

With this in mind, his gaze turned even more cruel.

He let out a long howl like a thunderclap that could be heard hundreds of kilometers away.

The gigantic, beheading blade he held began to tremble faintly. The void seemed unable to resist the pressure exuded by the blade, shuddering and shattering into pieces before it.

Frightening amounts of blade energy manifested between the heavens and the earth.

Shen Jinxiao could distinctly feel the tyrannical blade energy that was forming, and his gaze shrank. Ox Biaobiao was finally using it. During the Housemeet, he had utilized this Soul Ascension-grade Duke Art that had caused all of the Dukes of the Xia Kingdom to shudder.

A Duke Art of this grade was rarely seen in the likes of the Xia Kingdom.

Ox Biaobiao was a decisive individual. Once the blade energy had reached its peak, he slashed his sword downwards towards Shen Jinxiao.

"Mad God's Blade!" A low voice rumbled.

This Soul Ascension-grade Duke Art had once again been revealed in the Xia Kingdom.

Weng!

The clouds that floated above the nine heavens seemed to have been split apart at this very instant as a dazzling blade light streaked across the sky and the earth, rending everything before it into nothingness.

Even Chi Chan and Duze Yan were moved by the domineering display.

Although Ox Biaobiao was a fourth-grade Duke, this single strike was so mighty even a fifth-grade Duke could only look to avoid it. That was how scary it truly was.

However, Chi Chan and Duze Yan continued to suppress Shen Jinxiao as best they could, ensuring he had no space to escape.

Still, Shen Jinxiao was uninterested in escaping.

He had spent all these years suppressing his strength, and today was the day he could finally let himself loose.

A sixth-grade Duke was the mightiest in the Xia Kingdom!

If not for Xuan Chen, then he would be stronger than everyone except for Pang Qianyuan.

Shen Jinxiao's expression was calm as he executed a series of hand seals with lightning speed. After which, a small, fiery-red light condensed between his palms, and everyone could suddenly feel the temperature rapidly rise.

It was as though the world had turned into a blazing furnace.

The small, fiery-red light began to expand in size with frightening speed. In just a few breaths of time, it turned into a giant star that was a hundred meters wide with innumerable runes flowing across its surface.

Horrifying amounts of fire resonant power radiated from it.

"Duke Art, Titanic Blazing Sun!" Shen Jinxiao watched as the domineering blade light that could carve apart the skies collided with the blazing sun which crashed towards it like a meteor.

Boom!

At that very moment, frightening amounts of heat and the tyrannical blade light sought to erode and destroy the other. The energy wave that blasted outwards was like being in the presence of a hurricane, and even Chi Chan and Duze Yan were sent flying. Their respective Duke Bergfries quickly released a majestic force that sought to dissolve the aftershock of that clash.

House Luolan's convoy was only struck by minor amounts of collateral force, but everything was still thrown upside down and chaos ensued.

However, no one was concerned about it as they continued to watch the battle unfolding above.

At this point, Ox Biaobiao's figure was revealed. His upper shirt had been burned to ashes, revealing a body full of scars. The skin on his entire body was burnt red and he spat out a mouthful of blood.

Shen Jinxiao, on the other hand, froze for a moment before he snorted coldly. A massive gash had appeared on his body from his shoulders to the waist, almost bisecting him.

Endless amounts of fresh blood leaked from the wound, and even his organs could be seen.

At that moment, a black substance appeared once again, completely covering up his injury. The residual blade energy wreaking havoc in his wound was also eaten up by the black substance.

It looked as though both sides had received considerable injuries from that last exchange.

"Hehe... as expected of a Soul Ascension-grade Duke Art. Its might is truly frightening—even a sixth-grade Duke like myself wouldn't be able to handle more than a couple of hits," Shen Jinxiao begrudgingly admitted with a gloomy smile after being struck by Mad God's Blade.

"If you want more, I'll give you two more!!" Ox Biaobiao roared ferociously.

Shen Jinxiao smiled and shook his head as he indifferently replied, "Alas, you won't have any more chances."

When Ox Biaobiao heard those words, his eyes froze.

Shen Jinxiao raised his hand, and in the middle of his palm was a single drop of blood.

"It took quite some effort to obtain this drop of blood." Shen Jinxiao's Duke Bergfries began to shudder and countless ancient runes began to reveal themselves.

Chi Chan and Duze Yan immediately launched a vicious counterattack against Shen Jinxiao. Although they didn't know what he was going to do next, judging from his actions and words, he was going to launch a decisive attack!

However, the duo's assault was inconsequential to Shen Jinxiao. The six Duke Bergfries spewed out a few fiery torrents to nullify their attacks.

"Weren't you curious as to what my Heart Demon resonance could do? Well, I'll put on a show for you right now." Shen Jinxiao grinned. He formed another hand seal, and the fresh drop of blood that had come from Ox Biaobiao trembled before transforming into a small, bloody figure that was roughly the size of a thumb.

The blood effigy looked just like Ox Biaobiao.

The runes on his six Duke Bergfries assimilated into the blood effigy.

At the same time, Shen Jinxiao's gloomy laughter echoed throughout the skies.

"Duke's Spirit Insignia, Heart Demon Calamity."

As soon as he finished speaking, Ox Biaobiao, who was about to execute yet another Mad God's Blade, suddenly froze. His eyes suddenly turned empty and he seemed to have unwillingly fallen into the depths of an illusion.

Chi Chan and Duze Yan's expressions changed.

Li Luo's heart sank as well.

Shen Jinxiao grinned as he turned to face Li Luo with a gaze of pity.

"How do you plan to deal with me without Ox Biaobiao?"

Chapter 0716: The Final Move

Ox Biaobiao falling into some sort of illusion was Shen Jinxiao's final ploy.

Such a development triggered shockwaves through the people present.

Ox Biaobiao's fourth-grade Duke strength was the foundation of their team—Chi Chan and Duze Yan were simply not sufficient to stop Shen Jinxiao.

Cai Wei and Yan Lingqing had pale expressions, not knowing what to do.

The people in the convoy were also at a loss, and things turned hectic.

Yuan Qing raised House Luolan's banner as he heroically roared, "Pledge your life to protect the two House Lords!"

Even though they were facing off against a sixth-grade Duke and his Heavenly Resonance Stage strength was akin to an ant before Shen Jinxiao, he did not escape in fear, instead rallying the soldiers at the first instant.

Pavilion Master Lei Zhang was similarly determined. If a sixth-grade Duke wanted to kill them, it was impossible to run away. Since that was the case, why not die in a heroic blaze?

The atmosphere of the entire convoy had turned sorrowful.

Li Luo's expression, on the other hand, was calm. Perhaps the current situation was also not completely out of his expectations.

The college and Yu Hongxi's side had not arrived yet, indicating that they had been entangled with issues of their own. Shen Jinxiao had amply prepared for this day.

He turned his head and glanced back at Jiang Qing'e, still mounted atop her wildebeest. Her goddess-like face was similarly composed and her golden eyes were clear and deep, seemingly able to reflect everything that the world had to throw at them.

"Sister Qing'e..." Li Luo softly said.

Jiang Qing'e looked at him intently.

"Are you afraid?" Li Luo asked.

Jiang Qing'e slightly smiled and shook her head. "We will not die here today."

"Yeah, I feel the same way as well." Li Luo grinned. "However, Sister Qing'e, let me take the lead. You have always done your best to help me solve my problems, so it's my turn now. In any case, protecting my fiancee is my responsibility."

Jiang Qing'e took in Li Luo's handsome features and realized that his gaze was unwavering, full of self-confidence and determination.

As a result, she chuckled and warmly replied, "Alright, I'll listen to you this time."

She did not ask how he was planning to do so. Li Luo was merely a Fiend Palace Tier cultivator, while Shen Jinxiao was a sixth-grade Duke! However, what she did know was that with his determination and resolve, he would not let anyone harm her before his very eyes, no matter how mighty the opponent was.

A warm smile seemed to flow through Jiang Qing'e's golden eyes as she watched the handsome youth before her. He was the one she had spent the most time with during this short life of hers. Gradually, he had grown up and lost some of that naive youthfulness. Now he had become reliable.

This was no longer the child that would cry on a whim.

In the sky above, Shen Jinxiao was focusing his attention on the unmoving Ox Biaobiao. He had fallen to his Heart Devil Calamity and should not be able to extricate himself any time soon. Without Ox Biaobiao restricting him, the rest would be straightforward.

He then turned his focus upon Chi Chan and Duze Yan.

He stretched out his fingers, and boundless flames roared out from his fingertips, turning into two gigantic, flaming pythons that one simply could not see the ends of. They coiled up within the void and gradually turned into two furnaces, sealing up the duo.

Chi Chan and Duze Yan resisted with all their strength, summoning their Duke Bergfries to strike against the flaming python furnaces that had enveloped them.

Still, when faced with the absolute difference in strength, they were unable to escape in a short amount of time.

Without Ox Biaobiao restraining him, Shen Jinxiao was allowed to control the situation unhindered and easily.

After restricting the duo, he did not take the opportunity to strike them down. Dukes were intrinsically resilient with a strong life force, so taking one down would take quite some time, time he didn't have. If reinforcements from the college and Yu Hongxi arrived, the situation would spiral out of control.

Thus, his figure flickered as he walked through the sky towards Li Luo and Jiang Qing'e.

When they saw him approach, Yuan Qing, Lei Zhang, and the rest of House Luolan's elders were filled with abject terror. The terrifying power that a Duke exuded washed over their bodies like a torrent, forcing them to tremble involuntarily in fear.

Despite all of this, they drummed up their courage and circulated all the resonant power in their bodies with an intent to resist.

"You guys should go," Li Luo commanded.

Yuan Qing, Lei Zhang, and the rest turned to face him and saw their house lord looking extremely calm and at ease.

Thoughts filled their mind, but they eventually relented and backed off.

"What? Did you choose to give up?" Shen Jinxiao appeared roughly ten meters away from the two with a surprised tone.

"Well, even if you choose to give up, I will still get rid of you. Plus, you're a triple resonance genius, and I wouldn't dare to let you grow." He smiled as he glared at Li Luo with killing intent.

"Well, we'll see if you can do that," Li Luo retorted.

Shen Jinxiao gave a surprised laugh. "It sounds like you still have something up your sleeve. Your reinforcements won't arrive in time, you know?" He continued to watch the abnormally calm Li Luo. For some reason, something felt off in his heart. "Forget it, you're just blustering. I won't waste time with you. We can speak after you're dead."

As soon as he finished speaking, Li Luo suddenly held up a black plaque.

Atop the plaque was an ancient "Li" character, and it exuded an aura of mystery and majesty.

When Shen Jinxiao saw the plaque, his expression inadvertently changed. During the attack on the college, he had personally seen Pang Qianyuan borrow this from Li Luo, and it was this very same black plaque that had grievously injured Xuan Chen, a seventh-grade Duke.

"Are you trying to use this phony object to frighten me? The energy that Pang Qianyuan left behind has already dissipated. Even if this is a rare object, how do you plan to rouse it?" Shen Jinxiao gloomily said with a trace of caution.

At the same time, fire gushed out of his fingers, melting the earth with such intensity that if Li Luo were to make contact with it, he would be burnt to ashes with nothing remaining.

Li Luo closed his eyes at this moment. Even though the sea of flames was covering both the sky and the earth, his heart remained unmoved, tightly clutching the black plaque and focusing upon it.

When Pang Qianyuan had returned the black plaque, he felt like something had been unlocked within it, and he naturally understood how it could be used.

Utilizing it would require extreme means, and as a result, Li Luo was not willing to use it unless utterly necessary.

Of course, this situation was exactly so.

The bloodline within him seemed to be aroused at this point in time, roaring with life. As his blood boiled, all of it surged into the black plaque.

Lines of blood began to spread throughout the black plaque, very quickly coming into contact with the "Li" character.

For a brief moment, Li Luo heard a draconic roar transcending through space and time.

His gaze turned bloodshot and blood vessels started to protrude from his face, making him look both hideous and terrifying.

However, the pain did not come without result. At the same time, the ancient "Li" character began to separate itself from the black plaque, floating into the air.

Shen Jinxiao's torrent of flames then collided directly with the ancient character, but what happened surprised everyone. The flames dissipated immediately and the boiling temperature vanished.

The ancient character continued to float unobstructed and unassuming in the air. It did not radiate with resplendent light nor absorb copious amounts of worldly natural energy. However, the moment it appeared, Shen Jinxiao's domineering aura seemed to have vanished like the wind.

Shen Jinxiao, on the other hand, felt the hairs on his back standing on end right at this instant.

He could feel an indescribable sense of danger exuding from it.

As a result, he retreated without hesitation, his figure ethereal and flickering into countless afterimages, hiding in the void.

Li Luo remained unfazed by his theatrics. Currently, he looked like a man made of blood, trembling as he raised his hand and pointed towards Shen Jinxiao.

What was required to activate the black plaque was not his body's resonant power, but his bloodline! He also could feel that the exhaustion of his blood essence was ten times greater than when he had given ten drops of blood essence to the Three-tailed Heavenly Wolf.

The ancient character transformed into a beam of bright light, arcing forward.

When the blurry, black light shot past, it shattered all of Shen Jinxiao's countless afterimages.

In the end, all of the afterimages returned to the same location, revealing Shen Jinxiao's true body with the ugliest expression he could muster.

He could feel that the ancient "Li" character had locked onto his main body, and no matter how he tried to hide, it would always find him. In fact, it was destined to strike him. If it could not do so immediately, it would forever be locked upon him, constantly searching for him until the moment it could.

Shen Jinxiao simply could not comprehend how this was possible. Perhaps even a King was unable to do this!

"Just where did Li Luo find such a damned artifact?"

Thoughts flashed through his mind and a ruthless look flashed through Shen Jinxiao's eyes. Six Duke Bergfries smashed through the void to appear before him, forming a unique formation that allowed each Bergfried to mutually supplement and strengthen each other. At the same time, they were connected as a singular defensive entity that protected Shen Jinxiao.

"No matter how strong the ancient plaque is, Li Luo is only at the Fiend Palace Tier!"

"Furthermore, such unimaginable power couldn't have come from nowhere. Someone as weak as Li Luo must have paid a crippling price!"

"This must definitely be his final move."

With that in mind, Shen Jinxiao looked up and roared as worldly natural energy turbulently roiled in the sky above. His six Duke Bergfries began to shine with blinding light and waves of tempestuous energy buffeted the area.

The unassuming ancient character turned into a thin ray of black light that then collided directly with his six Duke Bergfries.

Weng!

There was no large explosion, just a faint ripple through the void that was barely perceptible.

After which, the black light vanished.

The "Li" character then reappeared on the black plaque in Li Luo's hand.

The world seemed to be frozen in time for a brief moment.

Right after, everyone was completely shocked by what they saw.

Out of the six Duke Bergfriesds Shen Jinxiao had summoned... three had shattered into dust in that very instant.

Chapter 0717: Shattering Your Three Duke Bergfriesds

Everyone was shocked when the three Duke Bergfriesds shattered!

Yuan Qing, Lei Zhang, and the rest had eyes that were literally popping out of their sockets, completely terrified. Frankly speaking, this was a completely unimaginable event. They had no idea how someone like Shen Jinxiao, who was able to fend off the combined assault of three Dukes, had three of his Duke Bergfriesds ruined by the Fiend Palace Tier Li Luo.

These were Duke Bergfriesds!

Every single one of them was formed through a long period of accumulation and effort of a Duke. It was also their strongest source of strength.

This was definitely a crippling injury for Shen Jinxiao!

As expected, when the three Duke Bergfriesds collapsed, Shen Jinxiao's face turned flush and he spat out several mouths of fresh, crimson blood. Meanwhile, the previously surging resonant power within him turned chaotic.

Seeing three of his prized Duke Bergfriesds ruined before his very eyes sent him into a temporary daze.

Gradually, he came to a realization, and his face contorted in fury.

"My Duke Bergfriesds!" he roared with both anger and frustration.

Terrifying amounts of killing intent surged forth from Shen Jinxiao as his body shook, demonstrating the absolute anger flooding his mind.

They were the foundations and culmination of a Duke's strength. Could one even fathom how difficult creating one Bergfriend was? On top of that, not even Chi Chan and Duze Yan could shatter his Duke Bergfriesds so easily!

However, the fact was that Li Luo, a Fiend Palace Tier cultivator, had smashed three of them.

This was incomprehensible.

His potential had now been affected, and this was a price that was painful beyond comparison.

Ox Biaobiao was a living example of someone who had been ruined by the loss of his Duke Bergfriesds. He was definitely no weaker than Shen Jinxiao at one point in time, yet he had to spend decades hiding

in House Luolan as a mere chef. Although this was partially his choice, it showed how significantly a Duke was affected by this.

Shen Jinxiao had not reached the same depths as Ox Biaobiao. At the very least, he still had three Duke Bergfries remaining, but this was still a significant blow to him.

"Li Luo! You deserve to die!" Shen Jinxiao viciously glared at Li Luo. This hateful little brat had forced him to pay a hefty price every time.

Faced with his furious gaze, Li Luo pouted and grinned. Blood was still seeping out from every pore of his body, turning him into a bloody figure. But when he grinned, his pearly-white teeth were exposed.

His figure swayed with fatigue, but unconcealable delight could be seen within his eyes.

"Beast Shen! House Luolan is a hard rock to chew. If you want to take a bite out of us, then you'd best be prepared to have your teeth shattered!" The veins on Li Luo's face were twitching, looking almost like earthworms squirming in the mud. He was definitely in great pain at this moment as his blood essence had been overdrawn immensely.

He had a feeling that if he were to continue the assault and do this once more, he might very well damage his blood essence irreversibly. Despite such a high price, Li Luo still felt that it was worth it to completely infuriate Shen Jinxiao.

When the three Duke Bergfries crumbled, energy flooded in every direction, forming an energy typhoon of sorts.

Shen Jinxiao wiped the traces of blood from the side of his mouth, his eyes overflowing with murderous intent. Then he slowly walked towards Li Luo with a twisted expression. "Is this your last ploy? What can you do next?" Despite the false bravado he was showing, Shen Jinxiao was truly a little anxious at the moment. Li Luo's sudden retaliation had injured him immensely, and he had to quickly resolve the situation.

Although three Duke Bergfries had been shattered, he could still control the situation.

However, he had to swiftly take action as he would have difficulty suppressing both Chi Chan and Duze Yan.

He hastened his footsteps, leaving behind innumerable afterimages in his wake. Blazing berserk flames condensed in the middle of his palm, causing the void to burn and warp from the sheer heat.

His killing intent had surged to untold heights.

Yuan Qing and the rest had ugly expressions as they took the initiative to attempt to stop Shen Jinxiao. Still, a Duke was no easy opponent. Just the suppressive aura he leaked from his mere presence was like a mountain pressing down upon them, almost crushing their bones and flesh.

Naturally, they were unable to restrain him.

Shen Jinxiao's figure continued to grow in size in Li Luo's eyes, the blazing tool of murder in his palm growing brighter with each step.

Li Luo's face was still covered with fresh blood, but he remained unafraid, only giving a confident grin. His fingers were still tightly clutching the black plaque.

"If you want to play, I'm game all the way! If I can kill a sixth-grade Duke today, that would be a wonderful record."

Li Luo knew that the cost of activating the black plaque a second time would be no different from giving up a pound of flesh, but he did not feel dismayed at all. He knew that if he were to retreat even a single step, Shen Jinxiao would forcefully seize Jiang Qing'e's Heart of Light. He would never let that happen, even if he had to give up his life for it.

Some things were always worth protecting. Even at the cost of his own life.

The scorching sun in Shen Jinxiao's hand distorted the void, and right at the moment Li Luo was about to ignite his own bloodline yet again, five slender fingers grasped his shoulder and a sacred and pure light resonant energy flooded into his body, calming down the blood essence within him.

A look of astonishment surfaced in Li Luo's eyes as he turned his head.

The one who had sent light resonant energy to soothe his body was none other than Jiang Qing'e.

However, something was different about her.

Her originally long, flowing hair which cascaded down her back seemed to be floating on its own behind her. Her exquisite facial features that seemed to have been carved by the gods were now full of a dazzling charm, and her previously fair skin was glowing radiantly with light resonant energy. Her golden eyes were flowing with brilliant light, giving off a mysterious feeling.

She was exuding a certain sense of majesty, as though a goddess of light had descended in the flesh.

What surprised Li Luo the most was the amount of light resonant energy that she was emitting. Frankly speaking, it was terrifying.

"Sister Qing'e, what... what have you done?" Li Luo stuttered. He could feel that she had hidden many of her own trump cards as well. In a way, it probably wasn't that much less amazing than his.

Jiang Qing'e's abstruse, golden eyes looked deeply at Li Luo as she lightly smiled. "Li Luo, you've done it once, and it's enough. Don't you think it's my turn now?"

Li Luo frowned slightly. The light resonant energy she was emitting was simply too intense, so much so that it gave him a sense of unease. Additionally, he was clear that there was no power in this world that came without equivalent cost. Shattering Shen Jinxiao's three Duke Bergfries required him to borrow the aid of the ancient plaque and sacrifice a good chunk of his blood essence as the price.

Comparatively, Jiang Qing'e's sudden rise in strength should have also come with a price to be paid.

"Sister Qing'e, don't mess around! I will protect you this time," Li Luo said with a heavy tone.

She smiled yet again. "I'm a little older than you and thus I'm the older sibling. Protecting my younger brother is my responsibility, you know?"

Li Luo angrily glared at her. "Hey! Don't forget! You're my fiancee!"

This was met with a sweet smile, and she blinked innocently. "How can I be someone's fiancee if all the fiance wants is to back out of their engagement? Hmm?"

Li Luo froze up, his internal injuries almost erupting again...

The smile on her face deepened as her hand gingerly brushed Li Luo's face. Although his face was still oozing with fresh blood, she, who was usually obsessed with cleanliness, was unperturbed. Instead, she gently wiped the blood off his face with her fingers.

Then she gently said, "This is nothing, you don't need to worry. As I said, none of us will die today. Someone as insignificant as Shen Jinxiao can't end our lives here..."

After she spoke, she took a step forward before staring right at Shen Jinxiao.

"Jiang Qing'e... your strength...?" Shen Jinxiao could also feel the surging momentum coming from the light resonant energy undulations emitted by her. At the same time, the pupils of his eyes shrank indelibly as he couldn't believe what he was seeing.

"Oh... do you mean this? Weren't you after this to begin with?" Jiang Qing'e smirked with a frostiness that could chill nations, no longer hiding her own murderous intent. She lightly tapped her heart, and one could see a luminous organ pulsating.

Within the Heart of Light was a flame that burned from the inside, covering the entire heart with a shroud of fire. Shen Jinxiao trembled, and his face became aghast and furious like a vengeful ghost. "You... you actually ignited your Heart of Light? You actually dared to do so?! You can't! It belongs to me!" This made Shen Jinxiao go even more berserk than when Li Luo had destroyed three of his Duke Bergfries. He had schemed for countless years to take the Heart of Light! He had shed endless amounts of blood, sweat, and tears to try to obtain it!

And yet Jiang Qing'e simply had used a sacrificial ignition upon it. "Noisy." Jiang Qing'e smiled as she waved her hand and her trusty golden sword appeared within her grasp.

At the same time, overflowing murderous intent leaked from her.

"Since Li Luo wrecked three of your Duke Bergfries, then I'll finish the task with the remaining three." When she finished her sentence, she struck downwards mercilessly.

At that moment, blinding light flooded everything within three thousand kilometers.

#### Chapter 0718: Igniting the Heart of Light

Bright light washed over everything, as if to cleanse away all of the filth and uncleanliness in the world.

Everyone could feel light filling up their vision, and even worldly natural energy was being assimilated at that very moment.

The experience felt like a lifetime had passed, despite only lasting a mere moment.

When everyone's vision finally recovered, they were greeted with the sight of a bright and cleansed world. All of the corruption that previously defiled the lands had been washed away, allowing everyone to feel a sudden sense of purity.

Immediately after, looks were turned towards Shen Jinxiao's position.

He was quietly standing there.

He seemed to be in a daze as he raised his head, silently staring at the void where his three remaining Duke Bergfries were. At this instant, all three of them were melting away swiftly, akin to mountains of snow being exposed to the hottest inferno.

Layer after layer of condensed energy collapsed, creating a wild, windy storm that buffeted everyone present.

As each layer of his Duke Bergfries melted away, Shen Jinxiao's expression turned paler, and the majestic aura of resonant power he possessed as a Duke weakened correspondingly.

In the short span of a few breaths, the remaining three Duke Bergfries shattered.

Shen Jinxiao spat out a mouth of fresh blood as he reached the peak of fury. His strong emotions eclipsed any remaining sense of rationality.

It was hard to fathom that a situation he was previously in control of had turned out this way!

He was a sixth-grade Duke, someone who could fend off the combined assault of three Dukes and soundly beat them. Yet his downfall came at the hands of two brats that had yet to mature, directly resulting in all six of his Duke Bergfries being destroyed.

Could anyone comprehend how crippling a blow this was?

Most importantly, the Heart of Light which he had long plotted for did not land in his hands either!

He simply could not understand how Jiang Qing'e had managed to explode with such terrifying power, even with the sacrificial ignition of her Heart of Light. Could a ninth-grade Heart of Light actually reach such levels of strength?

Shen Jinxiao gloomily glared at Jiang Qing'e. Her body was still radiating a terrifying amount of light resonant energy as the Heart of Light blazed atop her chest.

He smeared away the bloody trail on his lips, taking note of the quickly weakening resonant power in his body. He knew that it was his complete loss.

"Li Luo... Jiang Qing'e... I've truly underestimated you two. However, you shouldn't feel proud of yourselves. Jiang Qing'e... now that you've ignited your Heart of Light, you've paid a price far greater than you can ever imagine. Hehe. So be it. If I can't have it, then I'd rather it be ruined! Even without the Heart of Light, I have other methods at my disposal. The Xia Kingdom is now in chaos, which gives me the opportunity to rise to greatness in the future. I will become even stronger, and believe me, I will make the both of you repay this grievance a hundred fold in the future!" Shen Jinxiao's voice had turned slightly hoarse at this point as he maliciously stared at them.

His heart was full of raging fury. The ninth-grade Heart of Light he had coveted for so many years had been snatched from right beneath his nose! In the end, she had torched everything to the ground, completely thwarting his plan.

Unsurprisingly, Jiang Qing'e was completely indifferent to his old fashioned and villainous lines, only coolly responding, "You wish to escape?"

She hefted her heavy sword, a beam of sword light hacking at him.

Shen Jinxiao was acutely injured, whilst Ox Biaobiao, Chi Chan, and Duze Yan had escaped their cages. If they surrounded him, he would definitely be encircled and destroyed.

At the moment the sword light descended upon him, Shen Jinxiao's body began to melt and his face collapsed, looking like a melted wax figure. A moment later, his entire body had turned into a pile of fleshy mud.

"Jiang Qing'e, the sacrificial ignition of your Heart of Light is irreversible. Once it runs out of fuel, you will die! Li Luo, I'll let you watch on in despair as she dies before your very eyes!" The pile of fleshy mud which was Shen Jinxiao's body hatefully uttered these last words.

The expression on Li Luo's bloody face similarly changed upon hearing this.

On the other hand, Jiang Qing'e emotionlessly summoned her light resonant energy to completely eradicate any last traces of the fleshy mud that used to be Shen Jinxiao. Alas, she could not feel any trace of Shen Jinxiao's presence within it. Clearly, that villainous fellow had made his escape a moment ago.

Although he had escaped, he had similarly paid a colossal price. Six Duke Bergfriesds ruined—this was a crippling injury to any Duke. Even if he could escape, it didn't mean he could continue to live as he had.

Of course... the price she had paid was similarly grave.

The gap that had to be surmounted for a Heavenly Pearl Stage cultivator to destroy a sixth-grade Duke was akin to a massive chasm. No ordinary means could have bridged this gap.

"Sister Qing'e... are you alright?" Li Luo's current condition wasn't exactly positive either, but he endured the wracking pain coursing through his body, anxiously clutching Qing'e's arm as he remained fixated upon the burning Heart of Light atop her chest.

He could feel the majestic stream of light resonant energy coming from her body as he forced a smile. "Sister Qing'e, can you hurry and put this out now? That beastly fellow has already run away, there's no need to push yourself anymore."

This was met with silence as her golden eyes watched him meaningfully with a hint of a smile.

"Did you not hear me?!" Li Luo suddenly bellowed.

Jiang Qing'e stretched out her jade-like hand and grasped Li Luo's trembling palm.

Feeling her tender and cool grasp, Li Luo calmed down a little as he whispered almost sadly, "Can this not be stopped?"

His heart was in a mess. Faced with Jiang Qing'e's current situation, his pitiful Fiend Palace Tier strength was unable to do anything to help.

"Compose yourself, Li Luo," Jiang Qing'e lightly replied.

He was completely taken aback. How could he remain calm and composed in such a situation? If he had known that this sacrificial technique would have taken her life, he would have rather activated his black plaque a second time.

At the same time, Yan Lingqing, Cai Wei, and the rest hurried over and anxiously looked at Jiang Qing'e. They had all heard Shen Jinxiao's words.

Jiang Qing'e had used a sacrificial ignition on her Heart of Light. It was an unstoppable process, and did it mean her time was up?

At the same time, resonant power surged within the skies above.

Ox Biaobiao, Chi Chan, and Duze Yan had extricated themselves and rushed over as well.

"Uncle Biao, hurry! Hurry and rescue Sister Qing'e! She ignited her Heart of Light for the sake of chasing away Shen Jinxiao!" Li Luo summarized the situation succinctly as he grasped at any remaining life saving straws.

"She sacrificially ignited her Heart of Light?!" These words caused the expressions of the three Dukes to change.

Ox Biaobiao and Chi Chan hastened their steps forward and started to observe the area around Jiang Qing'e's heart. The Heart of Light was still radiating frightening amounts of light resonant energy.

The light resonant energy also held significant traces of life force, and Jiang Qing'e's complexion seemed to be even more rosy, as though she was in peak condition.

Alas, they all understood that this was the result brought about by the sacrificial ignition of the Heart of Light. Once it finished burning, her life would similarly end.

"The Heart of Light is also known as an energy heart. All those who possess high-grade resonances have their hearts tempered by the body's resonant power day and night, eventually transforming their physical hearts into these so-called energy hearts. Frankly speaking, even those of us at the Duke Stage have rarely seen anyone refine such energy hearts... much less seen someone sacrificially ignite it. Thus, I don't know how we can stop this." Chi Chan frowned as she felt that this problem was extremely thorny.

Ox Biaobiao had a solemn expression as well, his brows similarly furrowed.

These words caused Li Luo's heart to sink. Even Ox Biaobiao and the rest had no solution to resolve the sacrificial ignition of Qing'e's Heart of Light?

Endless frustration swamped his heart, and his body trembled.

The atmosphere had turned bleak and expressions had turned ugly.

Although they had repelled Shen Jinxiao, things had become even more depressing than before.

Jiang Qing'e lightly sighed as she tightly gripped Li Luo's palm. Just as she was about to speak, her expression changed and she glared at the void before them with cold eyes.

"Who's there?!" Her sharp voice echoed out as she slapped out with a palm. Blinding light resonant energy arced forth and blasted a spot in the void.

Following her palm strike, everyone present was shocked to see that the void before them rippled, as though a layer of foam was dissipating.

An unfamiliar figure appeared, similarly looking down at everyone with condescending eyes.

"Heh. How interesting... someone who sacrificially ignited their Heart of Light? And your perception has grown sharp enough to discover me after I've spent almost half a day watching..."

#### Chapter 0719: Mysterious Man

A figure had appeared from the void, one that had been hidden from the senses of everyone present. Even Ox Biaobiao, Chi Chan, and Duze Yan, Dukes, had a complete change in expression. At the very next moment, a look of wariness surfaced in their eyes.

This fellow was foreign to them, and definitely not one of the Dukes they were familiar with in the Xia Kingdom.

Could it be another collaborator with the Origin Reversion Institute?

Even Li Luo was taken aback by the scene, partially because he was unsettled by Jiang Qing'e's ignited Heart of Light. He turned to glance into the air.

This was a man that was not familiar to any of them. As he stood in the void with his hands behind his back, he seemed quite handsome at first glance as he was garbed in a starlight embroidered robe, giving off an extraordinary temperament. On his ear hung a golden, dragon-shaped earring that seemed to be swimming in the air, shining with strange light.

What surprised everyone was the mighty fluctuations coming from his body. This was a feeling that definitely was not inferior to that which Shen Jinxiao previously exuded.

Chi Chan frowned as she asked sternly, "Who are you?"

Based on the intel she had, the Xia Kingdom definitely did not possess such a sixth-grade Duke.

From the person's previously uttered words, he had arrived at the scene long ago and concealed himself. This meant that he had watched the entire battle against Shen Jinxiao. He had not chosen to assist either side, only treating this as mere entertainment, which shrouded his intentions from the rest of them.

When faced with Chi Chan's direct question, the man smiled as he squinted at Li Luo. "You... are you Li Taixuan's son?"

These words caused Li Luo's gaze to flicker as he looked at the newcomer with a look of surprise. "You know my dad?"

"Know him? Of course I know him." A mischievous smile formed on his face.

However, Li Luo instinctively felt a sense of caution towards the strange man. "Greetings, elder. I don't seem to recognize you and currently I'm not free to chat. If you have nothing to add, could I suggest that

you take your leave? Some of my friends are rushing over, and if they get the wrong idea and you accidentally confront each other, things would be troublesome for you."

"Just what could be troublesome to me in this backwater and desolate place?" the man indifferently replied.

Seeing how secretive the other party was also made him feel a sense of unrest. Jiang Qing'e's Heart of Light was blazing to an end and time was tight. He was in no mood to continue dragging this conversation out.

Thus, he shot a glance at Chi Chan, planning to have her take Jiang Qing'e away quickly.

At this point the mysterious man laughed. "Brat, do you want to save her?"

Li Luo's gaze flashed. "Do you have a solution, elder?"

"Well, there is a solution..." The man smiled wryly.

When Li Luo heard those words, a massive smile broke out on his face even though he didn't know whether the man was telling the truth.

Just as Li Luo was about to beg him, the man continued, "However, my solution will require you to pay a price."

Li Luo replied without hesitation, "If you are able to save Sister Qing'e, I'm willing to pay any price. Even if it's at the cost of my life!"

"Haha. Li Taixuan has given birth to a love-addled boy." The man showed an ineffable smile.

"I don't need your life. If you are willing to give me the Heavenly Emperor's Writ, I will tell you of a solution."

"Heavenly Emperor's Writ?" Li Luo was dazed for a moment, but he was suddenly reminded of something. He unclenched his fist, and the black plaque appeared in his palm. "Are you referring to this?"

Staring at the black plaque in Li Luo's hand, a burning fervor appeared in the mysterious man's eyes. "Indeed. This is the item."

Li Luo's eyes flickered as he grasped the ancient and mottled black plaque.

This mysterious expert unknown to the Xia Kingdom not only knew his father, he also held great desire towards the black plaque that had to do with the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Li... From these facts, Li Luo could guess the identity of this individual.

"Elder... would you happen to be someone with the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Li?" Li Luo asked tentatively.

After hearing Li Luo's words, the mysterious man was taken aback and grinned. "You're a smart one. I am indeed from the Heavenly Origin Divine Continent's Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Li. My name is Li Zhiqiu. From a certain point of view, you should call me 'uncle.'"

At the same time, he stretched his hand out. "Give the Heavenly Emperor's Writ to me. On behalf of us being from the same clan, I will help you."

Li Luo hesitated for a moment. He did not know what other uses the Heavenly Emperor's Writ had, but it definitely was not equal to Jiang Qing'e's life.

Thus, he passed the black plaque over without hesitation.

Upon seeing Li Luo's actions, Li Zhiqiu beamed even more as he reached his hand out to receive it.

However, right at this very instant, a jade-like hand blocked Li Luo. It was none other than Jiang Qing'e.

Li Luo curiously looked at her.

She shook her head and said in a low voice, "His intentions aren't good. He holds a trace of malice towards you. You cannot give it to him."

Li Luo was startled when he heard this. He knew that Jiang Qing'e's Heart of Light allowed her to discern other's intentions, especially now that she had ignited it. Her sensitivity towards such matters was sharper than ever, and if she said so, then this person before them wasn't any saint.

Thus, he quickly retracted his hand, retrieving his black plaque as he warily stared at Li Zhiqiu.

The smile on Li Zhiqiu's face receded slightly as he batted Jiang Qing'e a glance, indifferently saying, "Little girl, being talkative is a bad habit to have."

With that, a golden light shot out of his pupils. It resembled a tiny, golden dragon silhouette, emanating an air of majesty, directly attempting to suppress Jiang Qing'e.

Jiang Qing'e remained ambivalent. She was currently empowered by the sacrificial ignition of her Heart of Light, so she was unafraid. She summoned the light resonant energy from within her like a tide, turning it into a barrier of light that merged into the void.

Bang!

The void trembled.

Ridiculous amounts of energy scattered upon the collision, causing even the void to distort violently.

Jiang Qing'e's delicate body trembled and was knocked backwards countless steps. A rosy tinge could be seen on her beautiful face. An idea floated to mind, but she quickly squashed it.

"Qing'e, don't push your Heart of Light any further. It will only cause the sacrificial ignition to occur more quickly, and hasten its exhaustion!" Chi Chan somberly reminded her as she moved between them, blocking Li Zhiqiu off from her.

Li Luo's expression changed. He could see that the burning of the Heart of Light on her chest had intensified. And it could be seen that Li Zhiqiu's actions had caused yet another portion of the Heart of Light to be ignited.

This immediately caused Li Luo to burst out in fiery anger.

"You bastard! What are you trying to do!?" Li Luo gloomily stared at Li Zhiqiu.

"How rude. Is this how Li Taixuan raised his son?" Li Zhiqiu's face similarly turned overcast as he raised a palm. Golden light resonant power surged out, manifesting in the form of a gigantic, golden dragon claw, complete with scales that radiated with scintillating light.

"I can't be bothered to talk any more with you. I'll just take you away now." As the dragon claw blotted out the sun, Ox Biaobiao, Chi Chan, and Duze Yan were equally aggravated by the audacity of this man. They erupt with majestic amounts of resonant power, preparing themselves to resist.

Just as the golden dragon claw was about to descend, a deafening boom could be heard. Then a peerlessly sharp beam of sword light swept over, slicing through the void.

This also included the golden dragon claw.

The claw shattered, and an icy voice belonging to a female thundered.

"Li Zhiqiu, you have balls! Who gave an outsider like you the right to interfere with matters of the Dragon's Fang Lineage?"

Chapter 0720: Li Rouyun

This ferocious streak of sword light tore the void to shreds like a hot knife through butter. As the sword light descended, it annihilated the golden dragon claw, turning it into golden motes of light.

The sudden change caused Li Luo and the rest to turn pale. At this instant, they could distinctly feel a mighty resonant power undulation rushing from afar, and they turned to face the source.

Another ray of sword light raced across the sky at an indescribable speed from the edge of the horizon.

As it approached, one could see that the sword light had been formed by a longsword with a figure standing atop it. Majestic sword energy swept across everything, filling all of the space between the sky and the earth.

This person was a female with a beautiful face. She was garbed in a green dress and her long hair was tied up, revealing her slender, snow-white neck. Her figure was excellent and possessed a mature charm. However, what was most outstanding was her eyebrows, which were as thin as willow leaves, giving off a sharp aura.

When this lady appeared, the entire sky seemed to resound with the cries of sword chants.

Chi Chan, Duze Yan, and the rest looked at the new individual with solemn expressions. Based on the pressure that she was radiating, she was no weaker than the mysterious man. She was a sixth-grade Duke too!

This spawned a thought in their heads. Why were so many foreign Dukes rampaging around the Xia Kingdom recently?

However, what allowed them to heave a sigh of relief was that this lady had stopped Li Zhiqiu's assault. Although they did not know who she was or who she represented, it seemed to be a positive development.

Additionally, Li Zhiqiu having taken action against them meant that he didn't have any intentions of making friends with them.

Li Luo frowned as he glanced at the lady. Just because she had stepped into assist did not mean that he would lower his guard.

It was just that he had heard her thundering words shortly before she arrived.

"Is she also from the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Li? What is the Dragon's Fang Lineage and what does that mean?" Li Luo then turned towards Ox Biaobiao. Perhaps only Ox Biaobiao had an understanding of the situation amongst the people present, with the exception of the two newcomers.

Ox Biaobiao glared at the lady and his expression turned complicated. "The influence and significance of the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Li far surpasses your imagination. Nothing in the Xia Kingdom can compare with them. The Dragon's Fang Lineage is one lineage amongst many within the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Li. Your father, Li Taixuan, is from the Dragon's Fang Lineage. And this lady before you... I recognize her. Her name is Li Rouyun and she is from the same lineage. In terms of seniority... you can refer to her as your aunt."

Li Luo was slightly taken aback. "Li Rouyun... my aunt?"

He stared at the green-robed lady who resembled a sword saint exuding fearsome sword energy that could sever the world in half. Clearly, she was a mighty Duke as well.

However, he was unfamiliar with the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Li. Even though this lady was his aunt, he didn't have a good feeling about this, only frowning as he continued, "Why are the people from the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Li appearing in the Xia Kingdom?"

First it was Li Zhiqiu and now Li Rouyun. Furthermore, it looked like they were rushing towards him.

Ox Biaobiao sighed heavily as he glanced at the black plaque in Li Luo's hand. "My guess is that it has to do with this item. It is possible that those from the Bloodline of Heavenly Emperor Li sensed it when Pang Qianyuan activated it and were able to lock onto your position. However, you don't need to be too concerned. This should have been something that Li Taixuan expected and perhaps left it as a measure of last resort. Plus, utilizing the black plaque means that you were in an exceedingly perilous situation. It might have sent a message to the bloodline, and they dispatched experts that could possibly rescue you."

Li Luo pondered over this as he glanced at the black plaque in his hand. This thing was known as a Heavenly Emperor's Writ? Even its name seemed impressive. It was clearly no simple item; otherwise, Li Zhiqiu wouldn't have tried to trick him for it.

As numerous thoughts whizzed through his mind, Li Rouyun had already arrived atop her sword. Her icy tone was as sharp as the aura she gave off as she questioned the man. "Li Zhiqiu, what are you trying to do? You located him, but you did not choose to inform me?"

Li Zhiqiu remained nonchalant, only smiling. "I'm sorry, it slipped my mind. Didn't you get here in time anyway?"

"I'm afraid you didn't forget. You are just avaricious, coveting the Heavenly Emperor's Writ, wanting to steal it from the younger generation." Li Rouyun's grating words sliced straight to the point.

Li Zhiqiu slowly replied, "I'm simply following the clan's rules. The Heavenly Emperor's Writ can only be possessed by those who are capable. Li Taixuan must have known that others would covet it when he passed it on to his son. If his son was unable to protect the Heavenly Emperor's Writ, then it can only be said that it was not destined for him."

"The Heavenly Emperor's Writ was given to Li Taixuan by the ancestor because he appreciated his talent. If you have the ability to do so, why don't you go and beg the ancestor for one, then?" Li Rouyun retorted.

Li Zhiqiu's expression stiffened as he replied in an unpleasant tone, "You're such an annoying troublemaker."

"Li Zhiqiu, Li Taixuan is a member of the Dragon's Fang Lineage. His bloodline naturally also belongs to us. You can shelve the thought of trying to bully the younger generation, lest you want to be held in contempt by everyone who hears about this," Li Rouyun coolly replied. She then turned away, no longer bothering with him. Now she looked at the other group that was here.

She swept her gaze through the crowd and her eyes landed on Li Luo.

The youth was still drenched in blood and seemed a little miserable. However, his features reminded her a little of Li Taixuan. Although he still seemed a little green due to his youth, he still possessed an extraordinary demeanor... Perhaps the most important part was that he was even more good-looking than his father.

Li Rouyun's pointed gaze softened a little as her figure flashed forward to where Li Luo was standing.

"What is your name?" A slight smile formed on her beautiful face as she did her best to seem more friendly.

Being subject to the lady's benevolent gaze caused Li Luo to pause for a moment, but he eventually replied, "Li Luo."

"My name is Li Rouyun. I'm from the same lineage as your father, and in a certain way... I could be called your aunt," Li Rouyun softly replied.

Li Luo's gaze flickered. Unfortunately, the first interaction with Li Zhiqiu had left an indelible mark on him and he now had a bad impression of the entire bloodline. Even though this lady had tried to form a closer tie with him, he remained guarded, only tightly clutching the Heavenly Emperor's Writ. If the situation took a turn for the worse, he might very well have to struggle for his life.

Li Rouyun could clearly sense his guardedness, and a hint of fury could be seen in her eyes. However, it was not directed towards Li Luo but rather Li Zhiqiu!

That bastard's previous attempt to hoodwink the Heavenly Emperor's Writ had caused him to feel defensive, even towards her.

As she observed Li Luo, she could see that he was moving somewhat sluggishly. Because they were of the same bloodline, she could distinctly sense the loss of his bloodline power. It seemed that he had

activated the Heavenly Emperor's Writ before this. What could force a child to utilize such a drastic measure to protect himself? It seemed he had just undergone quite a vicious and life-threatening situation.

As a result, her gaze became even more warm as she softly reassured him, "Child, I'm sorry for arriving late. However, you can rest assured. Now I'm here, no one will dare to bully you anymore."