

Spirit Realm #Chapter 121 —130

Let Him Come! - Read Spirit Realm Chapter 121 — Let Him Come!

Chapter 121: Let Him Come!

Numerous enchanting purple flowers formed by the purest of spirit energy fell from above like giant raindrops.

An aura that would freeze everything within range and seal the earth itself was imposed onto Qin Lie through the sky of flowers. They caused Qin Lie to freeze up and immobilized him immediately.

The enchanting and bright-colored flowers stabbed into his flesh like living roots the moment they fell onto his shoulders. The pain went deep into his bones!

In just a few seconds, Qin Lie had become an oddity with flowers blooming all over his body, the sole exception being his face. Even the surging evil energy in his eyes seemed to be suppressed by the fresh flowers, causing his gaze to turn dim.

There was not the slightest trace of emotions in Xie Jingxuan's pure as crystal eyes. The only thing present on her exquisite face was indifference. "The Soul Devouring Beast must not be allowed to exist on the Scarlet Tide Continent, or there countless lives will be lost on this land. There is a trace of the Soul Devouring Beast's aura on you, so even if it turns out to be a mistake, I will destroy you here."

The scythe in her jade white hand enlarged little by little. Its blade glittered with a cold sheen like the sharp teeth at the corner of a devil's lips.

Qin Lie's heart fell as he watched the scythe grow larger and larger. His body also gradually turned icy cold.

He knew very well how terrifying Xie Jingxuan's power was...

Once he was bound by the purple bewitching flower back at the stone forest, he had struggled with everything he had, but he could not break the bewitching flower's shackles at all.

His condition now was even worse than it was than that day, so how was he going to resist Xie Jingxuan's absolute determination to kill him?

"Miss Xie, how has my apprentice offended you?" Li Mu's lazy voice suddenly fled over.

Holding the scythe, Xie Jingxuan's expression quickly changed as a trace of absolute shock appeared inside those bright eyes of hers.

She still had her scythe lifted up high, but her body was strangely stiff, completely frozen. She wanted to move, but she discovered that she couldn't!

It was as if an invisible globe of shackles had chained her four limbs, layer after layer, preventing her from moving even a finger. It was to the point where she could do naught but stare straight at Qin Lie.

The bewitching blooming flowers on Qin Lie's body swiftly wilted at a swift rate.

Numerous petals dissolved into purple light even before they fell to the ground, dissipating just like smoke.

With that, Qin Lie regained his freedom.

"Milord, Qin Lie is over there!" The cries of Wei Xing's subordinates could be heard from behind.

"What are you standing around for? Get back to the shop already." Li Mu's voice fled over again as if he was right beside him, but no matter how Qin Lie tried, he could not detect even a trace of Li Mu's aura.

He frowned before staring oddly at the frozen Xie Jingxuan. After a pause, he said, "The Soul Devouring Beast really is dead."

Once finished, he left in a hurry.

After his figure disappeared, the mountain-like shackles on Xie Jingxuan's body promptly released her, and she subsequently regained her mobility.

Her pretty eyebrows were deeply locked against each other, and a deep sense of horror leaked out of her eyes. She thought on whether she should follow Qin Lie to Li's Shop after gazing in the direction of Commerce Street from afar.

"Lady Xie? Why are you here?" Wei Xing rushed over with tens of Nebula Pavilion martial practitioners.

"Qin Lie has gone to Li's Shop at Commerce Street." After a moment of thought, Xie Jingxuan coolly threw down those words before heading to Commerce Street without looking back.

"Commerce Street?" Wei Xing's eyes showed his surprise as he suddenly hesitated.

“Milord, about Commerce Street... Dark Asura Hall had previously given the order that no one is to fight there. Both Shattered Ice Manor and Nebula Pavilion have obeyed this rule for many years without fail.” A Nebula Pavilion martial practitioner looked solemn. “What should we do now?”

“It won’t be long before daybreak.” Wei Xing’s face was ugly as he stared at the sky. He abruptly yelled, “Return to the Pavilion at once! We will receive orders on the matter from the Pavilion Master!”

“Yes sir!”

.....

Qin Lie’s entire body was severely injured, and as blood flowed out one drop after another, his expression turned paler and paler.

He had made a mad dash the entire way until finally, just before his energy was completely exhausted, he arrived at Li’s Shop and entered inside.

There was only a single oil lamp lit inside the dark shop. Li Mu’s slightly shook in his rocking chair as if he had no idea that the entire city was shaken tonight.

Seeing that Qin Lie had returned, wounds covering his entire body, he nodded and smiled. “It’s good as long as you survived.”

“I was going to use my last Terminator Profound Bomb to blast a hole in the city wall before quietly slipping out.” Qin Lie entered with a bitter smile. “The city gates aside, I didn’t think that even the city walls would be stationed with Nebula Pavilion martial practitioners and people from Dark Asura Hall standing guard. My injuries are a bit severe, so I had no choice but to come back and hide in the shop for the moment. Once I recover a little, I will escape the city as originally planned and try my best not to implicate you...”

Just as he finished explaining, Qin Lie’s vision turned black as he fainted and fell onto the ground on the spot.

Li Mu’s expression changed as he abruptly appeared beside him and pressed a finger to his chest. After probing Qin Lie for a brief moment, he relaxed. “He just lost a bit too much blood.”

Without delay, he placed Qin Lie onto the table and stripped off the Beastskin Armor. Then, he picked up the jar of wine at the side and poured the spirits right onto Qin Lie’s body.

The sharp smell of alcohol immediately spread out. Soon afterward, blood stopped seeping out of the numerous wounds on Qin Lie's body as soon as the drink made contact with them.

Once finished, Li Mu returned back to his rocking chair and narrowed his eyes at Qin Lie. He whispered, "What a crazy kid..."

The large, snow-white wolfdog slipped out of the backyard and glanced inside the house with a pair of eyes filled with intelligence.

In a flash, his eyes brightened as he stared straight at the wooden sculpture the fainted Qin Lie was tightly holding onto. An indescribable emotion took surface inside those wolf eyes.

A while later, a strange wave of energy rippled from the big wolfdog.

Li Mu, who was narrowing his eyes at Qin Lie, suddenly froze as he frowned and took a closer look. After a while, he suddenly grinned and laughed while nodding. "Now ain't that a coincidence."

.....

"He went to Commerce Street?" Inside Nebula Pavilion, Liu Yuntao exclaimed with a scowl, "Wait right here!"

He passed through a quiet passage and arrived at Nebula Pavilion's VIP tower. He stopped in front of the five floor stone tower and did not say anything.

"What is the matter?" Yuan Tianya's voice came from the fifth floor of the stone tower.

"I hope I haven't disturbed your rest, Hall Master." Liu Yuntao bowed his head in shame. "That Qin Lie... has gone to a shop at Commerce Street. The higher ups had once laid down the order that no one is to fight on Commerce Street. Therefore, I have come to consult you on our next step."

"That order was laid down by Xuan Rui and I. Tu Shixiong is one of Xuan Rui's men, and Yan Wenyan is one of mine. We do not wish for Shattered Ice Manor and Nebula Pavilion's conflict to escalate and cause a loss to Armament Sect in Icestone City which is why the order was given," briefly explained Yuan Tianya before saying, "Nebula Pavilion is now under your control. Shattered Ice Manor and Nebula will no longer fight each other, so that order is now dispensable."

"In that case we may act on Commerce Street then?" Liu Yuntao's expression lit up.

"Naturally." Yuan Tianya smiled.

Liu Yuntao nodded his head and respectfully walked a few steps backwards. Only then did he swiftly walk away.

.....

“The Pavilion Master has given his word that we can kill on Commerce Street!” The martial practitioners who had gone to Nebula Pavilion for questioning excitedly returned to Wei Xing’s side and conveyed Liu Yuntao’s message, “He wants us to bring Qin Lie’s head and see him immediately!”

Wei Xing smiled eerily. “Very good!”

The group of men swiftly headed to Li’s Shop.

An hour later, Wei Xing and the others had arrived in front of Li’s Shop. They immediately noticed that Xie Jingxuan was also standing to the side.

“Lady Xie?” Wei Xing’s took a step forward, respectfully bowed, and said, “The Pavilion Master has consulted the First Hall Master, and the First Hall Master has given us the green light to kill on Commerce Street...”

Xie Jingxuan maintained her cold expression. “I’m just here to take a look.”

Wei Xing gave a smile and did not answer. He waved his hands and ordered, “Charge inside and kill Qin Lie!”

“This shop has closed and will not welcome any intruders.” From inside the house, Li Mu’s voice came unhurriedly, “Enter at your own risk.”

Shock clearly shone from Xie Jingxuan’s eyes as she subconsciously took a few steps backwards, lending space to Wei Xing’s subordinates.

Wei Xing cracked open an ugly grin. “Pretentious bastard! Commerce Street is no longer the safe haven of Icestone City, so I won’t mind seeing who can hold us responsible! Get inside and kill Qin Lie!”

The six ninth level of Refinement martial practitioners under the leadership of a Natal Opening Realm martial practitioner gripped their spirit artifacts and rushed into Li’s Shop with murderous intent.

“Crack Crack Crack!”

The sound of ice freezing suddenly rang out from all around Li’s Shop. A bone-deep chilliness suddenly spread out and seeped even into their marrows!

The seven Nebula Pavilion martial practitioners almost instantly turned into ice sculptures the moment the spreading cold energy touched them!

The thick and translucent hard ice covered their entire bodies in a most eerie fashion, turning them into living fossils sealed inside ice crystals.

With Li's Shop at the center, the cold energy spread out and froze the streets and stone floors, covering them with ice, and within less than half a minute everything within thirty meters of Li's Shop were all covered with a layer of solid ice!

An icy-cold aura from the snowy peaks in the depth of the Arctic Mountain Range came from inside Li's Shop, causing Wei Xing to shiver all over.

—He wasn't even within the range of the solid ice yet.

The light in Xie Jingxuan's eyes grew even more defined as she wordlessly retreated until she was at least fifty meters away from Li's Shop. Then, she stopped and continued looking at Li's Shop.

"My... my lord?" A hall master under Wei Xing stuttered out.

"It's already daybreak." Wei Xing lifted his head and looked to the sky that was as white as a fish's stomach. Then, with difficulty, he said, "Return to the pavilion and explain the situation here. Consult... Consult the Pavilion Master."

"Un... understood." The man looked at Li's shop like he had seen a ghost in broad daylight before departing in panic.

"Where have you come from, senior?" solemnly asked Xie Jingxuan, fifty meters away with a trace of awe after a moment's pause. "Is Qin Lie your disciple?"

"Girl, regardless of what happened today, Qin Lie did help you before. It may be a bit unreasonable for you to kill him just like that" coolly responded Li Mu.

"He has a trace of the Soul Devouring Beast on him. If the Soul Devouring Beast that had escaped from Nether Battlefield had stepped into Rank Four, then the situation will become completely unmanageable. My duty this time is to eliminate that Soul Devouring Beast, and I do not wish to be greeted with any surprises. So as long as I felt that Qin Lie's existence may contribute to the Soul Devouring Beast's growth, I will not show any mercy," explained Xie Jingxuan with a cool voice. "If he does not have a trace of the Soul Devouring Beast on him, then not only will I not kill him, I may even... lend him a hand."

"I see." Li Mu nodded his head and casually placed a hand on top of Qin Lie's head. Then, he said, "There is a trace of a Soul Devouring Beast on him, but that trace has lost its soul consciousness. All that is left is the pure energy of the soul. If I'm not

mistaken, then the Soul Devouring Beast's soul has been purified by him, so you can rest assured."

"Purified..." Xie Jingxuan's expression was strange. "Since senior has given his word, then I can relax now."

After a pause Xie Jingxuan started again, "Senior, your realm is unfathomable, and I know that I cannot match you. However, the Hall Master Yuan Tianya's true strength is just as unfathomable, and he is inside Icestone City right now. I ask senior to think twice on the matter."

Li Mu smiled coolly and said in a casual tone, "It's okay, let him come."

Xie Jingxuan no longer said anything and simply quietly watched from the side. While she quietly waited for Nebula Pavilion's movements, she also wanted to discover Li Mu's true depth.

.....

"What? Qin Lie has escaped into Li's Shop? Everything within thirty meters of Li's Shop has become frozen in ice?"

"Even the First Hall Master, Yuan Tianya, has been alerted?"

"My god, who on earth is living inside Li's Shop?"

"Yuan Tianya and Liu Yuntao have departed together to Commerce Street. Every elite in Nebula Pavilion and Shattered Ice Manor have also departed."

"I heard that Yuan Tianya has even summoned a few commanders with him!"

"This action, is he trying to kill Qin Lie or slaughter the entire city?"

"....."

The day was still dimly lit, but there were already countless voices like that in every corner within Icestone City.

Crimson Flame Association's Ge Hong and Xiong Ba; Water Moon Sect's Luo Wei and Na Nuo; Seven Fiends Valley's Lu Li and Li Zhongzheng; the former Pavilion Master Tu Mo and Elder Han Qingrui and Kanghui; Tu Ze, Zhuo Qian, and Kang Zhi; and even Armament Sect's Pan Jueming had been alerted by the commotion. They had all set out the first thing in the morning and rushed to Li's Shop.

For a time, the entire city was alerted as all kinds of characters gathered at Commerce Street and headed to the little secluded shop.

Thick layers of solid ice had frozen everything within thirty meters of Li's Shop. The streets, the stones, the trees, even the air itself seemed to be frozen solid!

The only thing that remained unchanged was Li's Shop. No signs of frost could be seen anywhere as it stood as an oddity at the center of the frozen land.

—The scene was so strange that it was practically unbelievable!

"Wh-what is this?" Many people could not help but cry out when they saw that the truth was even more shocking and exaggerated than the rumors they'd heard.

"What's going on? Since when did Nebula Pavilion dare to take a life on Commerce Street?" Upon recovering from deep shock after he arrived at the scene, Armament Sect's Pan Jueming immediately and coldly stared at Wei Xing. "Have you forgotten all about the rules of Dark Asura Hall?"

"Please calm your anger, Elder Pan." Wei Xing bowed and said with an embarrassed expression, "This is the order personally issued by the First Hall Master."

"Yuan Tianya?" Pan Jueming let out a hmp. "How dare he go back on his own words. What does he think Armament Sect is? Even if Yuan Tianya is the First Hall Master of Dark Asura Hall, he is not allowed to do whatever he wants in Armament Sect's domain! Otherwise, Armament Sect will cancel any standing agreements and refuse to cooperate with Dark Asura Hall in the future!"

Wei Xing's expression bloomed all sorts of colors in anger when he was scolded, but he dared not retort and just lowered his head in silence.

"Armament Sect? Isn't it Armament Pavilion?" someone interrupted.

"Armament Pavilion is the business created by Armament Sect, and Armament Sect is a... Black Iron force. Moreover, this force is formed by Artificers with the purpose of providing spirit artifacts to all forces. To anger Armament Sect is to refuse any further trade of spirit artifacts because no Artificers will be willing to forge artifacts for you anymore. It is not a consequence that even Yuan Tianya can bear," someone faintly said.

Pan Jueming went on a rampage, blowing his beard and glaring at everyone. On the side, all the people from Nebula Pavilion and Shattered Ice Manor kept quiet and did not dare to look at him.

"How incredibly horrifying. Who on earth is the owner of Li's Shop?" Lu Li came over and took a glance at the snowy lands, then at the lonely Li's Shop sitting at a secluded corner of Commerce Street, exclaiming in surprise, "I wonder why, but I feel like I'm standing at the deepest depths beneath the snowy peaks and glaciers of the Arctic Mountain Range. This is a... most terrifying feeling."

“Who is inside that house?” evasively asked as Li Zhongzheng’s lips shivered with chattering teeth.

“Whoever he is, he is not someone you and I can face.” Lu Li’s expression was complicated. “How on earth did a small character like Qin Lie know someone like this? How strange...”

“Little Ze, do you know the background of this shop’s owner?” Tu Mo asked.

Tu Ze shook his head with an expression filled with utmost shock. “We only knew that Qin Lie is working as an apprentice in this shop. We have never had any contact with the owner. I cannot believe that such a godly person is hiding inside Icestone City!”

Zhuo Qian, Kang Zhi, and Han Feng’s faces were completely red, and they looked absolutely excited at the snowy scene before them.

“Qin Lie may be able to live!” they screamed inside their hearts.

“Miss...” Liang Zhong quietly arrived at Xie Jingxuan’s side. “What happened? Who on earth is inside that shop?”

“I don’t know.” Xie Jingxuan shook her head.

“The First Hall Master is here!”

“The First Hall Master has come!”

“Pavilion Master Liu and Manor Lord Yan are here as well!”

Suddenly, noise flared up in the area around them.

Amidst the countless soft exclamations, Dark Asura Hall’s First Hall Master, Yuan Tianya, arrived with Liu Yuntao, Yan Wenyan, and five imposing men clad in black iron battle armor. The crowd had parted on their own to allow their passage, and they stood in front of everyone on the frozen-solid, icy road.

Chapter 122: Suffer the Consequences

Originally, Yuan Tianya had no intentions of interfering with this small matter. He wasn’t concerned with Du Haitian’s death, and naturally, he cared even less about Qin Lie.

However, now that an anomaly has happened at Li’s Shop and everything within thirty meters of it was frozen in ice, the matter now had his complete attention.

He stood on the streets covered in thick ice, looked to Li’s Shop, and asked, “Who are you, sir?”

Xie Jingxuan, Lu Li, Tu Mo, Pan Jueming, and many characters of all kinds were scattered on the outer edge of Li's Shop. All of them gazed at the shop with an attentive expression.

They all wanted to know the answer.

Inside the shop, Li Mu leisurely laid on the rocking chair, slowly shaking and ignoring the Nebula Pavilion martial practitioners around him.

The snow-white wolfdog knelt quietly beside him with equally indifferent eyes. It seemed like it didn't mind about the threat outside at all.

Meanwhile, Qin Lie had been placed on the table. His body stank of thick alcohol as his breathing gradually turned even.

"May I ask who you really are?" Outside, Yuan Tianya frowned and asked again with a solemn voice.

"What do you care," Li Mu replied impatiently.

At the end of the sentence, the tightly shut door suddenly opened wide, showing his figure.

Everyone's pupils became locked as they all gazed at him. Some of them even lifted their heads up high in a hurry to see Li Mu, wanting to know what he looked like.

There were many people who frequented Commerce Street, and there were also plenty that walked passed Li's Shop, but there were very few people who actually entered the shop before.

Therefore, there weren't many people who had actually seen Li Mu yet.

"Qin Lie has disobeyed Nebula Pavilion's rules and murdered Du Haitian in a challenge. While he was to be detained by Nebula Pavilion, he had then went to the Du Family's courtyard to commit murder, killing both mother and son, Du Jiaolan and Du Fei. Then, he returned to the street and shot Du Heng to death. These cruelties have greatly exceeded Nebula Pavilion's tolerance!"

Liu Yuntao took one step forward and, with a dark face, yelled, "While he was escaping, he also killed Fang Tong, Pei An, and dozens of Nebula Pavilion personnel. He should be eliminated immediately in accordance with Nebula Pavilion's laws!"

"What? Du Jiaolan, Du Fei, and Du Heng were also killed?" many people cried out.

Many of those who had come here did not know what happened during the latter half of the night. Now they heard that after Qin Lie had taken Du Haitian's head, he actually

went to the Du Family to kill Du Jiaolan and Du Fei instead of immediately fleeing. In the end, he even returned to the where he had first committed murder and shot the remaining Du Heng to death...

Everyone who was hearing about this for the first time was shocked due to how brutal and insane the killings were. It was almost unbelievable to think that the low key Qin Lie would have such a violent side to him.

“What has been killed has been killed. If you plan to carry out your punishment in accordance with Nebula Pavilion’s laws, then why don’t you come in and try.” Li Mu narrowed his eyes and glanced once at Liu Yuntao while standing thirty meters away, smiling. “I’ll be right here. Anyone who plans to commit murder in my shop shall suffer the consequences.”

Dark Asura Hall’s First Hall Master, Yuan Tianya, did not continue to speak after the shop’s door had flung open.

He simply looked deeply at Li Mu, focused his mind, and observed Li Mu’s every move. In addition, he had even quietly let out his mind consciousness in an attempt to detect Li Mu’s true realm.

However, when his mind consciousness spread out, he felt as if he was trapped amidst clouds; it was as if his perception was stumped by thick fog, and no matter how hard he tried, he couldn’t enter Li Mu’s surroundings.

Naturally, he could not determine Li Mu’s cultivation.

Therefore, Yuan Tianya continued to keep silent. He dared not act rashly, and instead, motioned to Liu Yuntao to test Li Mu’s depths and probe deeper before deciding on his next course of action.

“Elder Ye!” Liu Yuntao exclaimed before looking for Ye Yangqiu.

Ye Yangqiu, Gao Yu, and the group from Discipline Hall were also in the crowd. At the moment, Gao Yu was telling Ye Yangqiu something with a dark expression and his head bowed.

Ye Yangqiu nodded again and again with locked eyebrows. He appeared to be troubled by something.

Hearing Liu Yuntao’s yell, Ye Yangqiu steeled himself and walked out. He glanced once at the bodies that were frozen into ice sculptures, bowed slightly, and said, “Discipline Hall’s Ye Yangqiu, at your service.”

“What is Qin Lie’s punishment according to the penal code of Nebula Pavilion?” coldly asked Liu Yuntao.

“Death,” Ye Yangqiu answered.

“Then why has the Discipline Hall not acted yet?” Liu Yuntao glared.

“We do not wish to be completely destroyed.” Ye Yangqiu paused for a moment as his expression grew colder. “If the Pavilion Master insists that the Discipline Hall should walk to their own deaths, then I will lead the sons of Discipline Hall myself and detach us from Nebula Pavilion!”

The moment he said those words, noise filled the field.

No one had expected that Ye Yangqiu would directly disobey his orders, with the price of leaving Nebula Pavilion resist the operation to enter the shop no less.

At this moment Pan Jueming’s cynical voice leisurely came over, “Elder Ye, if you can’t stay in Nebula Pavilion any longer, you can always come to Armament Sect. I can introduce you.” He then looked at Han Qingrui and Kang Hui before smiling, “Elder Han and Vice Pavilion Master Kang, both of you are welcome as well. Armament Sect has always been looking for talent, and you are just the kind of people we’re lacking.”

“Mister Pan, isn’t it a little disrespectful of you to try to poach right in front of me?” Yuan Tianya frowned.

After Chu Yan died, Nebula Pavilion’s influence had declined, and now that Du Haitian had also been killed, if Kang Hui, Han Qingrui, and Ye Yangqiu all left Nebula Pavilion as well, then Nebula Pavilion’s true strength would take a massive hit and might not even be qualified as a Limestone power anymore. This wasn’t a good thing for Yuan Tianya.

“Armament Pavilion is right here in Commerce Street. Isn’t it a little disrespectful of you to have people fight here?” Pan Jueming snorted once.

“I will give you a proper account of the matter later.” Yuan Tianya seemed to be wary of the Armament Sect behind Armament Pavilion as well. “From today onwards, there will no longer be any fights in Icestone City, and the business in Commerce Street will be even better than before. Conflicts will definitely not arise on the streets any longer, and I can also guarantee Armament Pavilion’s safety.”

While they were negotiating, Li Mu suddenly stood up from his rocking chair, causing the people at the surroundings to tense up in response.

“Don’t worry, I’m just making something to eat.” Li Mu’s expression was indifferent as he headed straight to the backyard. His voice came out leisurely, “As long as you don’t enter my shop, I couldn’t care less about your sheet...” He really did go to the kitchen and busy himself with culinary stuff, leaving the onlookers stunned.

“First Hall Master?” Liu Yuntao found it difficult to stop halfway, and he did not know Li Mu’s true depths. Therefore, he had no choice but to consult him again.

Yuan Tianya turned his head and glanced once behind him.

A black-iron, heavy-armored commander at his back suddenly pointed at a general. “Hu Chi, go over and have a look!” That person was a martial practitioner in the early stage of the Manifestation Realm.

“Yes sir!” The general had a rough-looking face, was about two meters tall, and was clad in Beastskin Armor.

His tiger-patterned, spirit light barrier covered his entire body as he stepped onto the stone floor covered in solid ice and walked towards Li’s Shop one step at a time.

“Twenty meters!”

“Ten meters!”

“Eight meters!”

Someone kept softly shouting and accurately reporting the distance between him and the shop. Everyone’s gaze was focused on this Dark Asura general named Hu Chi.

A cold, white frost abruptly spread out from the solid ice underneath his feet. It flooded him in an instant.

“Crack Crack Crack!”

The tiger-patterned, spirit light barrier on Hu Chi’s body broke apart like an egg shell, and wisps of cold, white frost slipped in through the cracks.

A layer of thin ice first formed on Hu Chi’s chest area before rapidly spreading out. Even more layers of ice began to form on his feet, arms, neck and face.

Light waves exploded and wildly shot from Hu Chi as he attempted to break through the ice with force. But he could not overtake the rate at which the frost froze him.

Seven seconds later, Hu Chi, in the early stages of the Manifestation Realm, had transformed into a fresh ice sculpture!

Under the glory of the rising sun, the many glistening ice sculptures refracted countless shiny rays of cold light.

The cold light was like needles inside every onlookers' heart, causing them to feel chilled from the bottom of their hearts. Seeing that, the crowd's murmurs were abruptly silenced.

All the martial practitioners gathered around Li's Shop seemed to have turned into mutes. They were all quiet and kept their mouths tightly shut.

"Stop looking already; leave and do what you're supposed to do." Li Mu's tone was impatient. "Qin Lie is about to wake up, and once we've eaten some food, we'll be leaving Icestone City."

"You killed my men!" Severeness shone in the commander's eyes who had ordered Hu Chi to move in. "How can someone who has killed my, Pu Jiao's, men leave Icestone City!"

"Then I'll kill you as well." Li Mu raised his hand and pointed from afar at commander Pu Jiao's forehead.

Everyone looked at Li Mu, carefully looking for even the slightest changes in the energy of the world in attempt to understand the origin of the killing blow.

However, they could not detect anything.

On the other hand, a new bloody hole had been added to Pu Jiao's forehead out of nowhere, and when a drop of blood dripped out of it, Pu Jiao's tall and wide body crashed to the ground.

In an instant, Commerce Street had fallen silent.

All that was left were simply the numerous slightly-heavy breaths.

"Uncle Li..." It was at this moment, Qin Lie slowly woke up and weakly called out.

"I made you some porridge, it will be done in just a moment." Li Mu cracked open a grin. "Once you've finished the porridge, we'll leave."

Qin Lie no longer said anything.

He saw the parade outside the shop; saw the familiar faces of Lu Li, Xie Jingxuan, Tu Ze and Zhuo Qian; and saw the countless expressions that showed how they had been shocked to the very core...

"What happened?" asked Qin Lie in shock after a while.

"It's nothing." Li Mu's expression was cool as he went to the backyard and brought out a bowl of steaming hot porridge. "Eat something first. We'll be leaving Icestone City soon. This place is no longer fun anyway."

Qin Lie was dazed.

"Sir!" Dark Asura Hall's First Hall Master, Yuan Tianya, yelled coldly.

Li Mu frowned and said impatiently, "What are you nagging about? If you want to take revenge for your subordinate, then get over here already. There isn't too much of a difference between killing a commander and a hall master anyway."

Yuan Tianya's expression turned cold, but he dared not take a step closer.

The others' expression had also changed.

After that, the crowd could only look in shock and fear towards Li's Shop, helplessly watching Qin Lie restlessly drink his bowl of thin porridge and Li Mu's perfectly indifferent look.

"Let's go." A while later, Li Mu walked out of Li's Shop with the snow-white wolfdog following close behind.

Although Qin Lie had a whole bunch of questions he wanted to ask, the only thing he could do now was to keep quiet. Just like that, he followed behind Li Mu and the large wolfdog, taking step after step towards the front.

The martial practitioners from all forces surrounding Li's Shop subconsciously moved away the moment they saw Li Mu coming out.

A grand path towards the outside was made by the crowd on their own, and Yuan Tianya and his subordinates were the only ones still standing unmoving at the center.

Yuan Tianya's expression was ugly as he stared straight at Li Mu as Li Mu walked in his direction. He experienced a great internal struggle inside him.

"Give way, or die." Li Mu's footsteps never stopped as every step pressed hard against the ground as he leisurely walked towards them.

Qin Lie closely followed in tow.

Chapter 123: You Have Ten Steps, Withdraw, or Die!

Step by step, Li Mu walked closer. His eyes were cool, his expression confident.

Blocking his path, the facial expression of Dark Asura Hall's First Hall Master, Yuan Tianya, grew uglier and uglier. Sweat began to quietly gather on his forehead.

Right now, to withdraw or not had become his biggest conundrum. It was a most miserable position.

Hu Chi had died; Pu Jiao had also died, and what was worse was that they were killed in an instant. He didn't even see what Li Mu did or feel any terrific waves of energy coming from him...

He still couldn't detect Li Mu's true realm!

That was why he didn't dare act recklessly.

If he didn't withdraw, he would face Li Mu's unknown attack and possibly die...

However, if he did withdraw, then Icestone City would become a mark of shame for the rest of his life!

It would become the most shameful memory in his life, and it might even eat at his heart in the future and become a demonic barrier that will obstruct him from progressing further on the martial way!

A great struggle was taking place in his heart.

Countless gazes were focused on Yuan Tianya, watching his every move.

Li Mu's strength was now deeply rooted inside the hearts of everyone present, causing all bystanders to shudder. No one dared to stand in his way, and they could only move as much as possible.

As the First Hall Master of Dark Asura Hall, Yuan Tianya was the next most likely contender for the position of Grand Hall Master. His strength was just as unfathomable, and as of late, he was on the rise, faintly displaying the atmosphere of an aspiring Grand Hall Master.

Now, the two characters were about to clash with each other and spark a violent collision. The mere thought caused everyone to feel excitement.

While following behind Li Mu, Qin Lie calmly looked at the crowd around them and read the many stunned expressions on their faces...

At this moment, he realized just how important it was to have the power to sweep through everything during a critical moment!

He also finally understood that every difficult obstacle and heavy restrictions could be broken apart with absolute power!

Li Mu continued forward with a jestful look in his eyes, casually looking at Yuan Tianya.

His expression was perfectly calm, causing everyone to feel as pressured as having a mountain sitting on top of them. It seemed that Yuan Tianya was nothing to him; he did not treat Yuan Tianya as a worthy opponent.

Yuan Tianya had the exact same feeling; in fact, he understood this better than anyone else. This caused a trace of bitterness to develop within his heart.

“You have ten steps. Withdraw, or die.” Li Mu suddenly grinned and slightly slowed down. His expression grew more relaxed as time passed.

The sweat on Yuan Tianya’s face grew more obvious with each passing moment. Everyone could see his tension and began to feel conflicted in his place.

To retreat, or not to retreat. It was just as hard a choice as ever.

It was then that Yuan Tianya saw the big wolfdog behind Li Mu; he saw a pair of icy-cold eyes with not a trace of humanity in it. The light in those cold and ruthless wolf eyes caused Yuan Tianya to abruptly shudder.

He suddenly recalled something...

“Move away! All of you, get out of the way!” Yuan Tianya’s expression changed massively in an instant as sweat poured from his face like rain. While urging his subordinates, he too quickly moved out of the way while Li Mu continued proceed, step by step.

—He had backed down without a fight.

“Hehe.” Li Mu smiled before passing through the passage opened by Yuan Tianya’s group with Qin Lie and the big wolfdog. With that, they headed to the nearest city gate.

“Open the city gates and let them go!” instructed Yuan Tianya as he grit his teeth .

Yan Wenyan and Liu Yuntao were chilled from the bottom of their hearts. Immediately after, they ordered for the people by the side to report to the city gate as soon as possible. In addition, they forbade anyone from blocking Li Mu on his way out.

And just like that, bringing one man and one dog with him, Li Mu passed through the center of the onlookers and leisurely made his way to the city gate.

“Hall... Hall Master.” Liu Yuntao’s tone was bitter.

Yuan Tianya's expression was just as ugly. Staring at Li Mu's back from afar, it took him a long while before he finally said, "That big wolfdog is the true king of beasts of the Arctic Mountain Range—the Icestone Snow Wolf King."

The moment the words came out, every single one of their expressions changed.

"BOOM!"

It was at this very moment that Li's Shop suddenly exploded into smithereens, instantly turning into a ruin.

The thick, solid ice that had frozen everything within thirty meters also turned into wisps of snow-white frost, flying towards the sky. The solid ice did not melt to become water, but instead, it somehow miraculously became thinner and thinner until it disappeared altogether.

"The Icestone Snow Wolf King!" Lu Li's body shuddered slightly, and the strange light in her beautiful eyes was piercing.

"Miss?" Liang Zhong was a little unsure. "Is it as the First Hall Master claims? That big wolfdog... is really the Icestone Snow Wolf King that suddenly disappeared from the Arctic Mountain Range?"

"It is." Xie Jingxuan nodded.

"Heavens..." Liang Zhong looked stunned. "Just who in the world is Li Mu?"

"God knows." Xie Jingxuan spaced out, staring in the direction the two men and dog disappeared to.

"This Qin Lie you've bonded with probably has quite the background," said Tu Mo without warning after a long pause.

Tu Ze, Zhuo Qian, Kang Zhi, and the others were still wallowing in deep shock. They had also been intimidated by Li Mu.

...The master of the Icestone Snow Wolf King. Who exactly was Li Mu?

No would could provide an answer.

All the onlookers were completely shocked as they discussed in private, making their respective guesses about Li Mu's true identity. And yet, they could not figure out even a trace of it.

"Hall Master, are we going to just let go just like that? Even though a lot of my people died?" helplessly asked Nebula Pavilion's Wei Xing.

“What are you saying?” Yuan Tianya glanced at him. “I lost a general and a commander, and I have no choice but to endure it. What do you think?”

“Forgive me, Hall Master. This subordinate knows his mistake.” Wei Xing looked fearful.

“Let’s leave it at this.” Yuan Tianya’s scowled. “We’ll return to Dark Asura Hall first. Once we’ve reached there, I will inquire about this Li Mu’s background and figure out what kind of person he really is.”

Once finished, Yuan Tianya led his subordinate commanders in the direction of Nebula Pavilion. It was as if he was afraid of running into Li Mu again along the way.

Once he left, Liu Yuntao and Yan Wenyan’s group also immediately dispersed. No one dared to investigate what was inside the shop’s ruins.

“Miss?” Liang Zhong bowed.

“With such an influential person like Li Mu watching over him, there is no need to worry about Qin Lie’s path in the future.” Xie Jingxuan frowned. “Let us return to Dark Asura Hall as well.”

“Mn.”

“Senior Sister Lu, should we be leaving now?” The arrogance on Li Zhongzheng’s face had dissipated a great deal.

“Let’s first go to the Ling Family and bring their clansmen along. We will use this opportunity to leave the city.” Lu Li’s mind was incredibly clear. “Right now, Liu Yuntao and his men’s courage has been completely shattered thanks to the shop owner, and they would definitely not dare to cause more problems at the moment. We can borrow Li Mu’s intimidation and exit Icestone City with ease.”

“Senior Sister Lu is most wise,” praised someone .

Lu Li no longer said anything, and while still wearing a cold expression, she went straight in the direction of Ling Family.

She was still experiencing the huge shock inside her heart...

Two years ago at Ling Town, she had once given Qin Lie a Natal Ordering Pill to make him forget about Ling Yushi. She said that they would no longer belong in the same world.

She could still remember Qin Lie’s aggressive reactions. Furthermore, she could also remember his stubbornness when he opened the door and angrily threw the pill back at her.

When she saw Qin Lie again, she thought that the reason he was able to reach the Natal Opening Realm was all thanks to the effects of Ling Yushi's secretly stashed away pills.

This caused her to grow more and more disdainful towards Qin Lie. She had assumed that he was the kind of person who was tough on the outside, but was actually a useless person who relied on a woman to aid in his breakthrough.

It wasn't until the scene on the street where Qin Lie suddenly leaped down the window and, from out of nowhere, challenged Du Haitian to a fight even though there was a huge gap between their realms that she truly looked upon Qin Lie with admiration.

Later, he managed to kill mother and son, Du Jiaolan and Du Fei, and even killed Du Heng. Moreover, along the way, he slaughtered more than twenty Nebula Pavilion martial practitioners.

Qin Lie's series of crazy actions not only shocked everyone in Icestone City, but her as well.

Now, she finally realized that there was no possibility that Qin Lie relied on Dark Fiend Valley's pills to break through to the Natal Opening Realm. She could also now see that the person Ling Yushi could never forget was such a charismatic and spirited individual!

"She was right." She couldn't help but whisper to herself, "This Qin Lie... was definitely a someone special."

At the city gate of Icestone City.

With a man and dog in tow, when Li Mu arrived at the city gates, it was opened wide, and every guard stayed far, far away from the entrance.

Li Mu gave a cool smile and walked right through with the big wolfdog and Qin Lie. They easily exited Icestone City.

Once outside, Li Mu confirmed where he was going and led Qin Lie and the wolfdog onward.

"Uncle Li, why were you in Icestone City?" asked Qin Lie after a long period of time where he could no longer hold it in and finally came clear with the doubts inside his heart.

"I'm here for him." Lu Mu glanced once at the big wolfdog.

Qin Lie grew more and more surprised. "Him?"

“Mn.” Li Mu nodded, and as he steadily walked forward, he explained in a casual note, “When I was younger, I once honed myself inside the Arctic Mountain Range. At the time, he was just a normal snow wolf. He was my... friend during those years.”

“Later when I left the Arctic Mountain Range, he had stayed behind to continue his cultivation. In an instant, many years had passed, and I traveled to many continents and experienced many important things in life. However, I came back because I promised him before that if I became accomplished one day, I would definitely come back to the Arctic Mountain Range for him.”

“So, after many years, I’ve returned yet again to fulfill my promise.”

“However, I did not expect that, after so many years, I wasn’t the only person who had become accomplished. He too had become the indisputable king of the Arctic Mountain Range...”

“He was a bit hesitant about leaving with me and said that he needed time to think. So I temporarily stayed behind at Commerce Street to wait for him to come around.”

Li Mu smiled and looked at the big wolfdog behind him. “Now that he has finally figured it out, naturally, I no longer needed to stay in Commerce Street.”

A trace of affection leaked out of the big wolfdog’s eyes. There even seemed to be a smile on the wolf’s face.

“...The indisputable king of the Arctic Mountain Range, Little Ice, the Icestone Snow Wolf King!” Qin Lie was shocked as he abruptly looked at the big wolfdog. He connected it with the thick, solid ice outside the shop and finally understood. “He’s actually the Icestone Snow Wolf King?!”

Li Mu smiled and nodded. “Exactly right.”

Qin Lie was dumbstruck.

He could not have possibly imagined that the big wolfdog that always appeared inside the shop and drank wine just like a person would be the true king of the Arctic Mountain Range—the Icestone Snow Wolf King.

“So the reason he suddenly disappeared was because he found his master. The reason he left gave birth to a new beast king in the Arctic Mountain Range, causing the spirit beasts and martial practitioners to fight each other for over a year.” After a long while, Qin Lie bitterly shook his head. “I could not have imagined that the true culprit behind these big changes was inside the yard right beneath my nose.”

“No, there is someone else who is the true culprit you’re referring to,” said Li Mu.

“Who is it?” Qin Lie exclaimed.

“The person you’re holding in your hand.” Li Mu turned around and looked at the wooden sculpture in his hand. “The person who gave you that wood carving is the true culprit that caused the massive change in the Arctic Mountain Range. He is the one who gave Little Ice the true determination to leave!”

Chapter 124: Ice Crystal World

Wood carving? Grandpa!

Qin Lie’s expression shook as he suddenly looked at the carving in his hand. His breathing suddenly sped up. “Uncle Li, he’s my grandpa, I want to know. What happened?”

“Your grandpa?” Li Mu’s eyes lit up as he quietly said, “Your grandpa is a capable person...”

Right as Qin Lie’s desire to know more flared up, Li Mu told the Icestone Snow Wolf King, “We’re far enough away from Icestone City. Mn, go ahead.”

The large wolfdog the Icestone Snow Wolf King had transformed into nodded like a person and then spat out a mouthful of silver-white mist.

The cold mist was like a tent that wrapped around Qin Lie and Li Mu. Under the bright sun, Qin Lie, Li Mu, and the wolfdog quickly became covered in ice.

A short time later, the ice evaporated without turning into water and simply dissipated like mist.

Qin Lie, Li Mu and the large wolfdog had disappeared without leaving behind a single trace.

.....

Qin Lie seemed to come to in a cold and quiet crevasse. When he opened his eyes, his expression changed as he shouted, “Where is this?”

What he saw were thick ice blocks. He seemed to be at the bottom of a glacial world with glaciers that were tens of meters, even hundreds of meters high stood tall. In addition, it was possible to discern that something was sealed inside the glacier.

The cold stones under his feet and the hard ice were everywhere. He was constrained to this narrow passage of ice, and it was difficult to move about.

“Come this way.” Li Mu’s voice came from in front of him. He and the Icestone Snow Wolf King were idly strolling along one of the passages of ice.

When Qin Lie stepped out, he suddenly froze in place. He found that there was an invisible ripple around him that was layered and seemed to help him deflect the iciness of the environment.

Puzzled, Qin Lie’s brow creased, but he proceeded to chase after Li Mu and the Icestone Snow Wolf King.

Walking like this, they slowly climbed up an ice mountain. After traveling for more than an hour, he followed Li Mu and the Icestone Snow Wolf King up to a glowing glacier and stepped onto its peak.

“Look closely at the side,” said Li Mu, pointing it out in a serious manner.

Qin Lie closely examined a little ice mountain nearby and looked inside it...

There was a terrifying spirit beast that was similar to a Golden Crag Beast, but the one sealed within the ice mountain was more than fifty times larger!

This Golden Crag Beast that was fifty times larger than a regular one was ten meters tall and as vast as a mountain. Gold light flashed across its body, completely covered in thick ice. Its position seemed to be one of howling to the skies in discontent.

“Look at the other ice glaciers,” reminded Li Mu.

Qin Lie’s heart shook, and as he went to inspect the other surrounding glaciers, the shock on his face and in his eyes grew even more pronounced.

An enormous Ice Soul Python like a dragon. Its coiled body was thirty meters tall with layers of ice circling around the python’s body, so it appeared as though it was floating on a cloud.

This Ice Soul Python was also frozen by the glaciers and unable to move.

At the other end, inside a glacier, was an enormous lion was staring with its eyes wide open. Its eyes still glowed with a purple-blue light.

When Qin Lie glanced at it, it felt as though his heart was going to stop beating. The terror was so great it was like he was being chased down by a titanic monster.

“I do not know the names of these three spirit beasts. The Golden Crag Beast, the Ice Soul Python, and the present beast king, the Purple-eyed Flame Lion King probably descended from them,” Li Mu commented as he pointed to the more distant glaciers.

“There are also enormous spirit beasts similar to these ones frozen inside those glaciers...”

“These are the ice mountains deep inside the Arctic Mountain Range?” Qin Lie took a deep breath and shouted, “Is this the place that the Icestone Snow Wolf King and the Purple-eyed Flame Lion King cultivate? The glaciers here are not as high as the rumors say?”

“You are correct but also not.” Li Mu smiled. “While we are in the depths of the Arctic Mountain Range, these are not the glaciers of the outside but a world hundreds of meters below the earth’s surface.”

“What? We’re underground? Hundreds of meters under the Arctic Mountain Range?” Qin Lie was astounded.

“Yes.” Li Mu pointed above his head. “Can’t you look for yourself?”

Qin Lie abruptly raised his head. He saw there were stalactites hanging down hundreds of meters above him.

There was no sky above, only the sharp icicles. Only an endless expanse of glaciers and ice could be seen, without any signs of life.

This was the world at the bottom of the Arctic Mountain Range!

“In the past, I once stayed in the Arctic Mountain Range. It is a pity that I did not know the wonders underground then,” Li Mu said quietly. “After I left, Little Ice was fortunate enough to have stumbled on this place. It was a snow wolf back then and could borrow the cold energy in this place to cultivate. With that, many years later when I came back, it had become the Icestone Snow Wolf King, the beast king of the Arctic Mountain Range.”

Li Mu looked at Qin Lie. “The achievements that Little Ice have made are all due to this wondrous place that is shrouded in extreme cold.

Qin Lie looked in wonder at the Icestone Snow Wolf King.

“Your grandpa also came here.” Li Mu changed topics. “He waited for a few years in the Arctic Mountain Range. Furthermore, he seemed to have already known that there was a place like this and searched for it for several years. According to Little Ice, your grandpa is a very ethical person. When he found this, he did not carelessly kill the spirit beasts of the Arctic Mountain Range, nor did he destroy the Arctic Mountain Range’s environment...”

Qin Lie listened attentively.

“You grandpa finally arrived at the glacier above us. He found the entrance, and the entrance... has always been guarded by Little Ice.” A thread of wonder flashed through Li Mu’s eyes. “He defeated Little Ice at the entrance and came into here. He came to this glacial world deep within the earth and also saw these sealed spirit beasts.”

At this time, the Icestone Snow Wolf King also had respect in its eyes.

“Your grandpa toured this place. He did not move or take anything. When he came out, he seemed very disappointed as though this was not the place he was searching for. Because he seemed to have found the wrong place... he came out empty-handed.” Li Mu looked deeply at Qin Lie. “He talked for a while with Little Ice and then left the Arctic Mountain Range. Since then, he has never returned.”

“Where did he go?” Qin Lie asked urgently.

“Haha, that is something we don’t know.” Li Mu shook his head. “It was Little Ice that told me everything about him.”

“In the past, Little Ice thought it was the beast king of the Arctic Mountain Range, and felt it was strong enough. He could also continue to use the cold energy underground to cultivate, so he hesitated about leaving with me. After it was defeated by your grandpa, it knew that it was not as powerful as it imagined, so it decided to leave with me. After that, the Purple-eyed Flame Lion King became the new beast king, so there was the fight between spirit beasts and martial practitioners this time.

Li Mu smiled freely. “So if we have to talk about the culprits, your grandpa is the main one. He pushed Little Ice into leaving.”

“What was he searching for? He was also searching for several years...”

Qin Lie’s brow was tightly locked. He suddenly realized that Qin Shan had taken him to Ling Town and settled down at the Ling Family so he could enter the Arctic Mountain Range and search for something.

But even this wondrous glacial world was not what he was searching for. What in the world did he want?

Where did he go after this?

A mystery was solved, but more mysteries arose. Now, Qin Lie had even more questions. He wanted to grab Qin Shan and ask all of his questions at once.

“Your grandpa once helped many spirit beasts in the Arctic Mountain Range, that wood carving... is the symbol of his identity. Many spirit beasts of the Arctic Mountain Range recognize the carving. Of course, the spirit beasts that recognize the carving are of high rank, the kind that have intelligence.” Li Mu was slightly regretful. “After I heard about

your grandpa from Little Ice, I went to the mountain to see if I could meet him. It is a pity that I did not have the chance."

Qin Lie became quiet. Long after, he asked, "Uncle Li, why have you taken me here? Just to resolve one of the things puzzling me?"

Li Mu grinned. "Your grandpa did not destroy this place. He clearly could kill Little Ice but chose not to. He also conversed with Little Ice about cultivation... Little Ice is grateful to him, so it wanted to show you its gratitude. So I have taken you here to let you comprehend frost concept."

"Frost concept?" Qin Lie was dumbstruck.

"Yes, frost concept!" Li Mu's expression became serious. "A long time ago, the Arctic Mountain Range should have been a rich forest with numerous ancient spirit beasts residing here. The reason that this place turned to the present Arctic Mountain Range, why there are so many ice glaciers underground, why there are so many ancient era spirit beasts frozen here, is all due someone pressing a palm down from a distance above..."

"Pressing a palm?" Qin Lie shouted in shock.

"Mn, a palm pressed down from a distance above. The land a hundred miles around the mountain range sank hundreds of meters below the surface. The cold spread and froze all the spirit beasts. The ice sealed the world under the ground, causing the mountains to become ice mountains, causing this place to remain as the Arctic Mountain Range." Li Mu's respect rose. "This palm truly upended the earth and caused the sky to change color. The frost concept contained in this palm is eternal and has stayed in this ice crystal world."

He looked at Qin Lie and said, "Little Ice wants you to feel the frost concept here. As to whether you can comprehend it, that will be up to you."

The gears in Qin Lie's mind turned as he listened. He didn't know if Li Mu's words were true or not, but just thinking of the scene caused excitement to rise within him.

A palm that upturned the laws of the world, caused mountains to be covered in ice, resulted in the land within a hundred miles to sink deep into the earth. The frost concept never dissipated and was eternal. Could a person really do this?

"Un-Uncle Li, how... do you know this was formed by a palm?" Qin Lie stammered out.

"Because the handprint is still here," Li Mu said haltingly. "The handprint is covered by thick ice and snow. You cannot see it now. Gather your mind and use your heart to comprehend the frost concept here."

“How much time do I have?” Qin Lie asked.

“Three months,” answered Li Mu. “Three months later, Little Ice and I will leave the Arctic Mountain Range. I have other arrangements for you.”

“How do I comprehend the frost concept here?”

“Simple.” Li Mu snickered.

The next moment, the invisible barrier around Qin Li suddenly disappeared.

Bone-chilling cold instantly came from all directions. Qin Lie felt as though he was suddenly pulled into ice, his entire body numbed from the cold as the bones in his body cracked.

.....

Chapter 125: Frost Concept

The dark cold energy spread and coiled around his body like ice snakes, and the surface of Qin Lie’s body was rapidly frozen.

“Crack crack!”

Strange sounds came from inside his body as thick ice formed and covered him.

Seconds later, he became sealed in ice. He was trapped inside and couldn’t even move a finger.

The only thing that remained was his soul that could still feel the bone-chilling cold. His body gradually became numb and had almost lost all sensation. He could not detect his surroundings any longer.

“Frost concept...”

Inside the ice, Qin Lie’s soul floated as his thoughts almost froze to a stop.

Cold energy gradually permeated his very being and was about to corrode his mind, freezing even his soul!

At this time, the Icestone Snow Wolf King that had turned into a wolfdog had a puzzled look in his eyes as though he was asking if this would work.

Li Mu smiled. “I don’t know if this will work either. One handprint to seal the sky and earth, the person that sealed these hundreds of beasts deliberately left behind this frost concept. Maybe they intended for others to make a breakthrough and feel the

profoundness of their spirit art. I'm extremely confident that if Qin Lie can comprehend the wonders of this frost concept, he can definitely step over the doorway and achieve this kind of frost spirit art."

He shook his head and said regretfully, "You are a snow wolf, a creature of this land of snow and ice. What you have is a cultivation method imprinted on your soul. Even though you can use this place to help you cultivate, you can never comprehend the frost concept here and cultivate the wonders of that person's spirit art."

"And I... if I could have entered this place back then, I would have thrown myself completely into this. I would have used all my energy to comprehend the frost concept here to feel that domineering spirit art." Li Mu sighed. "It is a pity that I am past that age. My spirit arts and techniques have formed, and it is very difficult for me to accept a completely new spirit art."

As he talked, he looked at Qin Lie for a while and then said, "He won't die. Let's go out for now. We will come back for him in three months."

The Icestone Snow Wolf King nodded.

Two balls of icy light wrapped around him and Li Mu. Once the icy light suddenly became blinding, the two figures disappeared.

.....

Dark Fiend Valley.

Ling Yushi's clothing was wet while her beautiful body was immersed in the water as she practiced her spirit art.

Drops of sparkling water formed and spun around her like crystals as they gathered the moisture around her. They caused Ling Yushi's face to glow and become tender, almost like there was an otherworldly presence on her body.

A fire red figure flew close like the red sunset and landed next to Ling Yushi's pond.

"Sis!" Ling Xuanxuan's face was covered in tears, and her eyes were swollen. "Senior Sister Lu has come back. Sh-she returned with news about our family..."

"Xuanxuan, what happened?" Ling Yushi's expression changed.

"Daddy's dead!" cried Ling Xuanxuan as she burst into tears.

Ling Yushi's body shook. The crystal-like water droplets all exploded.

"Third Uncle is outside the valley," Ling Xuanxuan said.

Ling Yushi instantly came ashore. She quickly changed clothes and went with Ling Xuanxuan to the forest outside the valley. At first glance, she saw the members of the Ling Family covered in dust as she and Ling Xuanxuan approached them.

“Third Uncle! Ling Feng!” Ling Yushi went forward, her eyes glistening with tears as she shouted, “What happened?”

Lu Li’s expression was indifferent as she stood at the front of the group. Seeing Ling Yushi and Ling Xuanxuan crying, her brow furrowed slightly. “That Du Haitian’s scheme killed your father.”

Separated for two years, Ling Chengzhi also teared up when he saw the two sisters. With red eyes, he explained the situation.

“Liu Yuntao, Du Haitian, and Wei Xing had Big Brother and the others go to that mountain valley. They didn’t explain beforehand, so when Big Brother and the others encountered a great number of spirit beasts... they died due to that scheme.”

“Liu Yuntao was promoted to become the Pavilion Master, and Du Haitian became the Vice Pavilion Master. Yuan Tianya of Dark Asura Hall thinks highly of them.”

“Our Ling Family were helpless and could not get in contact with you. Even Pavilion Master Tu Mo was forced to abdicate. No one was going to get justice for the Ling Family.”

“There was only Qin Lie!”

“He challenged Du Haitian on the street and cut off his head! He killed Du Jiaolan and her son! He even killed Du Heng! And he continued to kill!”

Ling Chengzhi’s eyes were red as he narrated everything that happened in detail.

“Qin Lie!” The two Ling sisters shook as they asked in unison, “Where is he?”

“No one knows,” Lu Li interjected. She paused, and then, a strange expression showed on her face. She nodded and said, “This guy that Junior Sister likes... isn’t bad.”

“Senior Sister, I need to leave the valley!” Ling Yushi suddenly exclaimed after having remained in silence for a while with her head down. “While Master is not in the valley, I need to leave. Senior Sister, please let me go!”

“What are you going to do?” Li Lu’s brow creased. “Du Haitian’s entire family has already been killed, justice has been achieved. Qin Lie has been taken away by that shop owner, and no one knows where he is. What point is there in leaving the valley at this time?”

“Senior Sister, please let me!” Ling Yushi did not explain and persisted.

“Do not beg me, I will not agree.” Lu Li’s expression was frosty. “If you are going to sneak out during the night, I will not be able to guard you every day, take care of yourself...”

Ling Yushi’s eyes lit up.

That night, she helped Ling Chengzhi, Ling Feng, and the Ling Family settle down. After asking for more details from Ling Chengzhi, she disappeared from Dark Fiend Valley.

.....

In the land of ice.

Qin Lie was a statue of ice that stood at the peak of a glacier. There weren’t any signs of life on his body, just extremely faint spirit energy vibrations.

Wisps of cold energy spread from the ice and permeated his bones and tendons, causing even his bones to produce coldness.

His dantian’s spirit sea seemed to also have frozen over. There wasn’t a single wisp of spirit energy that could circulate. Even the thunder and lightning power inside his Natal Palace had been frozen.

Other than his thoughts and soul which could still move, he could do nothing else.

“Frost concept, frost concept, frost concept...”

These words continuously echoed in his mind. He used his soul to feel the cruel coldness which resulted in the trembling of his soul.

When he used his perception to feel the cold, his thoughts would gradually slow as though they were being frozen.

The coldness here seemed to be able to even freeze thoughts. Even something that was intangible could not escape being filled with this coldness!

He didn’t know how much time had passed, nor did he know of the changes of the outside world. He maintained this state and used his soul to feel the existence of this icy-cold energy, to feel the cruel coldness of this land of ice and snow.

Days passed by, but he did not gain anything. He still could not discover the crux of the frost concept.

His body had lost all feeling long ago. Only his soul and mind were still active and told him how cold the environment he existed in was.

The wisps of cold energy were like strands that filled this land of ice. They were omnipresent and numbered in the billions. Each strand of cold energy would reach his bone marrow and swim as though they were fish...

They were moving in every piece of ice, every crag, every inch of frozen ground, every corner of this world!

The cold energy was alive...

It was like an unique lifeform, a special race. It lived in this land and was born relying on this land.

"Spirit energy... animation?"

A beam of spirit light was released, and when the spirit light touched the ground, life was bestowed upon it. It quickly turned to a new lifeform. This was spirit energy animation; it was a divine technique that belonged to the legends, a divine act...

The frost concept was active cold energy that seemed to possess life. Was this... spirit energy animation?

Under the effects of the cold energy, Qin Lie's thoughts were slow. Every problem was difficult to think about, but he still tried hard to think through it.

The actively moving cold energy was like billions of lines that filled every corner of the world. Lines... spirit lines!

A light flashed through his head. Qin Lie suddenly caught the crux. His soul consciousness instantly scattered.

He went to feel the wisps of cold energy, to look at the distance between the wisps of cold energy, to see the minuscule vibrations of the cold energy, and to see the responses between them...

He treated the strands of cold energy in the world as spirit lines of a spirit diagram. With that method of comprehending spirit diagrams, he felt the profoundness here!

"All things are diagrams. The channels of the great earth, the veins of the human body, the path of the stars, and the changes of the world, each of these are all spirit diagrams!" He suddenly recalled what Qin Shan had taught him before.

His soul quieted down, and he used the method he initially used to study spirit diagrams to feel the omnipresent cold energy, detect the flow of every strand of cold energy, and grasp their minuscule movements.

He threw himself in.

Gradually, he forgot himself and entered the state of Thoughtless Tranquility to use all of his mind to feel the changes in cold energy around him.

The strands of cold energy were like the most complex spirit diagram in the world that crisscrossed this place and every corner around him.

Then, they slowly wrapped onto his body!

He didn't know how long it had been when he felt coldness, coldness from his body!

Then, he suddenly found that, inside the frozen spirit sea of his dantian, a new Natal Palace was taking form!

This Natal Palace appeared to be an enormous glowing ball of ice, and as the ball of ice slowly rolled, The strands of cold energy tangled onto it and slowly became thicker and increased in size.

He didn't know where the cold energy came from. All he knew was that it passed into the spirit sea in his dantian and gradually formed a new Natal Palace.

As he looked at the changes within his spirit sea, he was completely dumbfounded. In his state of Thoughtless Tranquility, he was like an outside observer, and nothing could affect his mind.

He continued to use his mind and soul to feel the changes in flow of the cold energy outside.

More cold energy came in and gathered on the ball of ice. It continued to slowly cause the ball to grow and also started filling it as well.

The amount of spirit energy in this land of ice seemed to lessen as his understanding of the strands of cold energy formed as though the land of ice had lost its soul...

In silence, time continued to move forward.

Gradually, the insides of the ball of ice in his spirit sea became completely filled with flowing cold energy, yet more still seeped in!

Then, his third Natal Palace started to form...

Three months later.

When Li Mu and the Icestone Snow Wolf King appeared again in this land of ice, Li Mu's expression shifted as he exclaimed, "The frost concept has almost disappeared!"

The eyes of the Icestone Snow Wolf King also showed shock as though it could not currently accept that.

"Was Qin Lie the one who did this?" Even Li Mu was in disbelief. "Comprehending frost concept is one thing, but directly absorbing it is a completely different matter!"

Li Mu and the Icestone Snow Wolf King quickly rushed to Qin Lie.

Chapter 126: Armament City

On top of the glacier, Qin Lie's expression was icy as a cold and intimidating presence came from all over his body.

Li Mu could see, through his narrowed eyes, icy strands that came from all directions and coiled around Qin Lie, seeping into his body like water.

"Th-the frost concept is gradually disappearing, disappearing into Qin Lie's body!" A moment later, Li Mu's expression shifted in shock.

The Icestone Snow Wolf King's eyes lit up. He deeply looked at Qin Lie and then looked at the strange changes of the frost concept in the surroundings.

It felt like this land of ice and snow seemed to have lost its soul, lost something extremely fundamental...

Li Mu said nothing more and observed with the Icestone Snow Wolf King from the side. Seven days later, the frost concept that had shrouded this land and never dissipated finally disappeared.

Qin Lie opened his eyes shortly after.

His eyes were cold, and his presence had changed tremendously. An uncomfortable coldness was emitted from his body.

"Crack!"

Moving an arm, the thick ice suddenly shattered and fell off from his body, piece after piece.

"Uncle Li," quietly said Qin Lie.

He had woken up from his long state of comprehension...

Focusing and thinking, he felt there was a new diagram inside the Soul Suppressing Orb inside his body along with the Spirit Storage, Spirit Gathering, Amplification and Strengthening spirit diagrams.

Rather than calling it a diagram, it was more like a picture scroll.

A picture scroll of gleaming cold, filled with a cold and harsh concept, and made from ice—the land of ice and snow.

The picture scroll was composed from lines of glowing light, white snow, and towering ice crystals. The sky and earth were full of white frost and ice, filled with a cold and desolate aura.

With just a glance, Qin Lie felt as though his bones had frozen.

The picture scroll of the land of ice and snow inside the Soul Suppressing Orb was formed from the frost concept in this underground glacial world. The frost concept that had clouded this land for many years had dissipated, and a picture had appeared in the Soul Suppressing Orb in his mind...

Qin Lie slowly understood.

His mind consciousness moved. Then, he discovered the spirit energy flowing in his dantian's spirit sea, and found the formation of two new Natal Palaces.

The two Natal Palaces that were shaped like enormous balls of ice moved around his spirit sea, and within one of the ice balls, the frost concept was pure and strong. The other ice ball had just formed, so its frost power was not at its strongest.

He tried to channel power and instantly heard the rumble of thunder. Thunder power moved from the thunder and lightning Natal Palace into the acupoints of his body.

There wasn't any change in the frost power inside the ice ball. They clearly did not listen to the direction of his Heavenly Thunder Eradication.

He gathered his spirit energy and discovered the power of the frost inside the ice ball still did not move...

Unable to direct the frost power, he was unable to use the power of the two new Natal Palaces. His brow creased slightly and quickly realized that he hadn't completely grasped the frost concept, so he could not control the frost power inside the Natal Palaces.

“The frost concept here has disappeared, and your presence has suddenly changed as though you are now another person.” Li Mu looked deeply at him. “As to what happened to your body, I do not want to inspect it. However, your presence’s sudden change will be beneficial in the days to come...”

“Uncle Li, the frost concept in this glacial land has formed a picture scroll in my mind, it’s like a spirit diagram.”

After the two ice ball-shaped Natal Palaces formed in his dantian’s spirit sea, his presence became cold and his attitude became more frigid than it had been before. He now possessed a cold atmosphere.

His expression was distant which he was not accustomed to. Commenting on his new circumstances, he said, “There are two ice Natal Palaces in my dantian’s spirit sea as well, it feels... slightly strange. I’ve just woken up, so I don’t know what the situation is.”

Li Mu nodded. “No worries. You will have time to accustom yourself.”

Pausing, he then said, “...The frost concept has formed a picture scroll imprinted in your mind, it seems that you have many secrets.”

Finished speaking, Li Mu motioned to the Icestone Snow Wolf King.

The Icestone Snow Wolf King spat out a ball of ice, and the ball was the size of a fist, glowing and clear. Layers of icy light flowed and released an extremely cold power.

Qin Lie, Li Mu, and it were quickly frozen and covered in ice. A while later, the cold energy dissipated, and the three people had disappeared.

When they reappeared again, the three were in a small yard. Outside the yard was a city that was many times more busy and prosperous than Icestone City—Armament City!

The shop appeared to be exactly the same as the original Li’s Shop.

“This is Armament City, the city that belongs to Armament Sect. It is the transaction center for Black Iron factions like Dark Asura Hall, Seven Fiends Valley and Dark Shadow Tower.” Li Mu pointed at a spot behind him. There was an enormous crimson volcano behind him that produced thick smoke. Fire occasionally spouted out. “Armament Sect is on the volcano behind us.”

There were many caves of various sizes that could be seen along the side of the crimson volcano. In addition, there seemed to be many people moving in the caves.

“Armament Sect is the same as Dark Asura Hall and Seven Fiends Valley, it is also a Black Iron power, but they are a force composed of artificers. This sect’s primary focus

is artifact forging, and many famed artificers have come from the sect.” Li Mu introduced, “The spirit artifacts of the nearby forces, such as Dark Asura Hall, Seven Fiends Valley and Dark Shadow Pavilion, are almost completely produced by Armament Sect. Due to this, Armament Sect’s status among the forces is superior.”

Qin Lie was muddle-headed and did not focus too much on Li Mu’s words. He was instead overtaken by great surprise.

The first time he was frozen by ice outside Icestone City, even his thoughts had stopped. When he woke up, he had been in the glaciers at the bottom of the Arctic Mountain Range.

He had thought at the time that Li Mu and the Icestone Snow Wolf King had taken a long time to take him under the Arctic Mountain Range.

This time when he was frozen by ice, his soul and consciousness had not been frozen, so he knew... only a moment had passed.

He naturally had heard of Armament Sect, knew of this great sect, and knew the general location of Armament Sect.

—It was thousands of miles away from the Arctic Mountain Range!

In other words, in that instant, he had moved from the glacial world under the Arctic Mountain Range directly to Armament City under Armament Sect.

He suddenly shook and shouted, “Uncle Li! We-we came directly from under Arctic Mountain Range?”

Li Mu nodded.

Qin Lie looked completely dumbfounded. He tried to say something but was unable to produce a single word.

“Don’t ask. I’ll talk and you’ll listen.” Li Mu smiled and indicated for him to sit. He then continued, “The Li’s Shop in Icestone City was just for Little Ice to make a decision, it wasn’t for you. When you came to my shop to sell the Spirit Gathering Boards, the reason I took you in was because the Spirit Gathering spirit diagram on your Spirit Gathering Boards were the most complex I have ever seen. I took you in out of curiosity.

“Afterwards, I took a liking to you and found that you have exceptional potential to be an artificer, so I spoke to guide you a bit. The main reason I took you out of the city was because I did not want you to be killed so easily, and the other reason is because your grandpa helped Little Ice a bit.

“Allowing you to comprehend the frost concept is Little Ice repaying your grandpa for explaining things about cultivation to him in the past. It is also for you to help protect that place after he leaves.”

When this was said, the Icestone Snow Wolf King spat out an ice ball. Li Mu took the ice ball and handed it to Qin Lie. “This is the Eye of Frost, the key to enter that place. In the future, you can go there to cultivate the frost concept that you comprehended.”

Qin Lie took the Eye of Frost. Strangely, the ball of ice was only slightly cold in his hand and was not as bone-achingly cold as he imagined.

“The method to activate the Eye of Frost is very simple. Use the power of frost to activate the crux inside and the cold energy will freeze your body to take you in or out of the land of ice.” After Li Mu explained, he smiled freely and said, “The reason I am saying so much is because Little Ice and I are leaving. We might return after a long time, or we might not return at all...”

“Uncle Li...” Qin Lie exclaimed softly.

“This thin ice mask is for you. If you stick this on your cheeks, your appearance will change greatly. Since your presence has become much colder, even if your friends come to Armament City to buy materials in the future, they will probably not recognize you.” Li Mu handed him the mask. “You really have to use this. The martial practitioners of Dark Asura Hall, Seven Fiends Valley, and other factions will frequently visit Armament City. Maybe Yuan Tianya will also show up and you’ll encounter him.”

Seeing Qin Lie about to speak, Li Mu raised a hand to stop him and continued, “The spirit diagrams that you have grasped are very profound and contain the ultimate understanding of the world. If you can understand them on an even deeper level, you might be able to comprehend the spirit arts and techniques of ancient times. The picture scroll you have spoken of that was formed from the frost concept also has profound wonders imprinted in it. If you can really comprehend it, you will have mastered the essence of the frost power.”

“Armament Sect is a good place. You need to practice forging, so becoming an outer disciple of Armament Sect is a good choice. As long as you are not over twenty and have a certain amount of forging knowledge, it should not be too difficult of a test. Haha, I had told you to study with Yao Tai with the hope that you could enter Armament Sect. I think you will no issues.”

“Qin Lie, change your name and identity first. Stay awhile in Armament Sect. You can study forging and cultivate in the land of ice at the same time to comprehend the frost concept. If there is a day that you become a core disciple of Armament Sect, you can resume your true name. Even if Yuan Tianya wants to move against you then, it will not be so easy.”

Li Mu did not allow Qin Lie to interrupt. After giving many pieces of advice and a good number of warnings, he said he was tired which meant he was finished.

“I’ve said everything that I should say. It is probably fate that you and I encountered each other at Li’s Shop. I’ve taken a liking to you, and because of that, I said a bit more on your growth. Mn, that’s it.” Li Mu nonchalantly waved his hand. “I’ve left this little residence for you. Little Ice and I will be leaving now. In the future, if you really do become as great an artificer as I hope, maybe Uncle Li will have to ask you for help one day.”

Finished, he stopped Qin Lie from sending him off. The man and the dog strolled out and gradually moved away within the crowds in front of the door.

Qin Lie looked on silently and watched as he disappeared. A long time later, he murmured, “Uncle Li, in the future, if I, Qin Lie, accomplish something, I will definitely return the kindness you have given me today.”

Chapter 127: Cutting the Line

Armament Sect was divided into an outer sect and inner sect. The inner sect rested atop a Flame Volcano and was thus able to use the natural flames from within its depths.

Each of the Armament Sect’s inner disciples were bestowed a little cavern, and within each of these was a smelting room which contained a furnace. Of course, the fire source for these furnaces were gathered from the volcano’s natural flames.

The foot of the Flame Volcano, called Armament City, was divided into four districts, the Earth, Fire, Water, and Wind Districts.

Armament City sold all sorts of spirit materials, spirit herbs, spirit pills, spirit stones, spirit artifacts, and other various cultivation materials. The entire city was governed by Armament Sect.

Armament Sect’s outer sect was situated here.

Generally speaking, Armament Sect’s inner sect was specifically responsible for forging artifacts. Thus, the status of the inner sect disciples was rather high, and there weren’t very many of them. Each one was a true, ranked Artificer.

The inner sect was what truly controlled Armament Sect and gave it its high status.

On the other hand, the main responsibility of the outer sect was to sell spirit artifacts and manage the Armament Pavilions scattered in the various major cities as well as assisting the inner sect disciples with simple tasks. Tasks such as grinding and cutting up spirit materials so the inner sect disciples could more efficiently forge the spirit

artifact, inscribe spirit diagrams, and infuse spirit into the “artifact” to turn it into a spirit artifact.

Armament Sect’s outer sect would recruit new disciples every year. As long as one had enough knowledge about forging artifacts, passed the examination, and was no older than twenty, one would become an outer sect disciple.

After becoming an outer sect disciple of Armament Sect, one would be assigned a personal teacher who would teach them about forging artifacts and guide them through the various smelting processes so that they would be able to assist inner sect disciples with simple tasks such as grinding and discarding spirit materials. Through two years of study, this would gradually reveal the talented practitioners amongst them.

At this time, the inner sect would arrange for specific people to go over and evaluate. Upon discovering a seedling who truly had the potential to become an Artificer, they would immediately be brought into the inner sect so that real Artificers could impart their fine, ingenious wisdom of spirit diagrams upon them.

This was the only way for an outer sect disciple to advance to become an inner sect disciple. Many outer sect disciples longed for this opportunity, and it was the true reason for why most people entered the outer sect.

Upon becoming an inner sect disciple, one’s status within Armament Sect would immediately rise an entire class. Not only would one be bestowed with their own refining cavern, one would also gain the guidance of a true Artificer and be supplied with a certain amount of spirit materials every month. Furthermore, one would be imparted with the core technique of inscribing spirit diagrams.

Upon becoming a true Artificer in the future, one could then occupy a position within Armament Sect and curry favor with various forces.

Today was the day when Armament Sect recruited new outer sect disciples every year. It was a fine, early morning, and the plaza in front of the outer sect was already filled with the faces of young people.

The great gate had still yet to open, but many youths had already arrived early to seize their spots. Surprisingly, amongst these youths, many wore the uniforms of the five great Black Iron Rank forces—Seven Fiends Valley, Dark Asura Hall, Dark Shadow Tower, Purple Mist Sea, and Cloud Sky Mountain. The brows of the people all carried a proud arrogance, and there were generally servants following around beside them.

“Yi Yuan, isn’t that the Purple Mist Sea’s Yi Yuan? Why would he also have come?” A shocked cry abruptly emanated from the crowd. Another person softly shouted, “Yi Yuan, this kid broke through into the Natal Opening Realm at the age of seventeen. This year, he is nineteen, and he should have already broken into the late stage of the

Natal Opening Realm. His cultivation along the martial path is going along so well, so why would he want to participate in Armament Sect's outer sect disciple exam?"

"Only the devil knows," someone muttered.

As everyone conversed, a youth with a warm smile on his face who wore purple clothes walked over from the street in front of them.

The youth looked ordinary and couldn't be considered outstandingly handsome. He also exuded an exceedingly comfortable aura. No matter who he looked at, it was always with a smile, causing everyone to feel favorable towards him.

"Yi Yuan, why have you also come?" asked a youth who was clearly also from Purple Mist Sea as he wore the same uniform as Yi Yuan. Upon seeing Yi Yuan walk over, a look of surprise made its way onto his face.

"Breaking through to the Manifestation Realm is too difficult, I haven't accumulated enough experience. Thus, I have come to Armament Sect to learn about forging artifacts and take my mind off of it for a while while also trying to see whether or not I can find some other road to take. Perhaps the people that I meet through forging artifacts will be able to help me take this step along the martial path." Yi Yuan treated everyone politely and didn't conceal his true intentions, explaining them outright.

"Liang Shaoyang! Isn't that Liang Shaoyang? Heavens, why did he also come?" Another shocked cry emanated over.

There were many youths scattered across the courtyard. Upon hearing Liang Shaoyang's name, their expressions all slightly changed.

Many people subconsciously moved out of the way, allowing a youth to quickly walk straight to the gate of the Armament Sect's outer sect unhindered. Those youths who had lined up at the front, upon seeing him walking over, all subconsciously moved out of the way.

Liang Shaoyang, who had clearly arrived late, reached the front of the line in this manner, becoming the first person to take a spot in the outer sect examination.

"Who is he?" whispered some people quietly.

"He's Liang Shaoyang of Dark Shadow Tower. Everyone knows what kind of place Dark Shadow Tower is, right? They take spirit stones to assassinate people. As long as the reward is high enough, Dark Shadow Tower's people will take charge of helping you kill as many people as you want," quietly explained someone. "Liang Shaoyang grew up in Dark Shadow Tower, and it's rumored that he began assassinating people at the age of twelve. As of today, he just turned nineteen, and yet he already has at least several hundred lives on his hands..."

After this explanation, the expressions of many people inwardly changed as they all quietly moved a few more steps away from Liang Shaoyang.

Purple Mist Sea's Yi Yuan was also amongst this crowd. Raising his head, he looked in the direction of Liang Shaoyang, his expression showing a strange smile. However, as he shook his head, he didn't say anything.

Even though Liang Shaoyang had just cut in front of him, he didn't seem to take it to heart and show no intention contesting Liang Shaoyang.

"Miss, please come inside." At this time, more people came in from outside. A bowed, old servant and an eye-catching beautiful young girl entered.

The young girl looked to be around eighteen or nineteen. Just from glancing at her phoenix-like eyes, willowy brows, and highly held jade-like nose, it was clear that she was used to having everyone's attention on her.

She wore a light blue dress, and at the corners of her clothes, strands of ice swirled like willow trees as her legs moved and caused her dress to swish.

She ignored all of the lustful gazes of the young men within the crowd as she naturally cut in line, directly moving in the direction of Liang Shaoyang.

"It's Mystical Fiend Valley's Ouyang Jingjing!" softly whispered some people as they backed out of the way.

Upon hearing that this girl's origin was from the first ranked Mystical Fiend Valley of Seven Fiends Valley and also that she was surnamed Ouyang, even more people's hearts moved as they took initiative to make way for her.

The girl's expression was natural as she walked forward amidst the separated crowd. When she reached Yi Yuan's side, her footsteps paused as a trace of uncertainty flickered through her phoenix eyes. She said, "It seems like we have met before?"

Yi Yuan warmly laughed as he nodded, saying, "Haha, three years ago, when your father brought you to Purple Mist Sea, I was the one responsible for leading the way."

"Ah, so it's you," suddenly said Ouyang Jingjing. Afterwards, she slightly nodded, then passed Yi Yuan and continued forward.

She continued until she arrived behind Liang Shaoyang. Only then did she stop.

Liang Shaoyang's had his back turned towards her. From start to finish, he hadn't turned around and glanced once, only ever looking at the gate to Armament Sect's outer sect as he intently waited for the moment it would open.

“Hmph, there’s actually still a foul guy...” muttered Ouyang Jingjing while narrowing her brows as she looked at Liang Shaoyang’s back after she had stopped moving.

Upon seeing that Liang Shaoyang and Ouyang Jingjing were now at the front of the line, those who had moved out of the way earlier promptly retook their positions, reforming the long, winding line.

Standing towards the back of the line, Yi Yuan heartily laughed, not minding it at all.

At this time, there were more and more young men and women constantly arriving one after another. After arriving, they all orderly took their place in the line. No one else cut in line.

A youth with an indifferent expression and an ice-cold aura quietly entered from the long street and lined up at the end of the line.

The two people who had arrived before him, upon him taking his spot, all of a sudden felt that the temperature had just plummeted as they instantly grew goosebumps in response.

They narrowed their brows as they shot several glares at the youth behind them who seemed to be exuding cold air from his body. Afterwards, they silently put a bit of distance between him and them.

As the sun’s rays slowly but surely heated up and the time till the opening of Armament Sect’s outer sect gate neared, the line atop the courtyard also gradually grew longer.

A robust, sturdy youth, wearing Dark Asura Hall’s uniform , suddenly emerged from the long street behind the courtyard with a grin, laughing.

After he arrived, he glanced at the long, winding line. Looking around, he saw that there was surprisingly just enough space for a person to cut in both in front and behind a youth that had an indifferent expression on his face.

He couldn’t help but show an expression of joy as he inwardly thanked the heavens and immediately rushed over.

There were spots both in front of and behind the indifferent youth. Thus, without even thinking, he chuckled and swiftly went to cut in front of the indifferent youth.

Right when he cut in and before he could even relax, a cold voice suddenly emanated out from behind, “Scram!”

An ice-cold, bone-chilling hand suddenly grabbed his shoulder, and a chill as cold as a severe winter frost directly infiltrated his body.

The former person began to incite his spirit as he fiercely turned his head, his face showing a fierce expression. "Kid, you're seeking death!"

"I told you to scram!" The indifferent youth's eyes began to show an obvious violent light as his other hand unexpectedly moved like lightning, grabbing the person by their neck in almost an instant. With a casual toss, the former was promptly thrown out.

"Boom!" The sound of a heavy landing accompanied by a miserable scream could be heard at the same time.

The gazes of people everyone on the long, winding line all cast over as they looked at the youth from the Dark Asura Hall who had landed on the ground.

Someone couldn't help but shout, "That's Dark Asura Hall's Tian Jianhao! He has a cultivation at the early stage of the Natal Opening Realm, and his father is a commander under one of the Hall Masters. How could he have been thrown out by someone?"

After that statement, everyone's curiosity rose as they subconsciously tried to find the one who had done such a thing.

Even Liang Shaoyang and Ouyang Jingjing, who were at the front of the line, along with Yi Yuan, who was at the middle of the line, curiously turned their heads to observe the disturbance behind them.

The expressions two youths who had originally been standing in front of and behind the indifferent youth, upon seeing Tian Jianhao be thrown out in one move as he attempted to cut in line, slightly changed.

The two of them subconsciously lumped together and then opened up another bit of distance between them and the indifferent youth. They seemed to be afraid of causing unnecessary conflict and trouble.

"You f*cking dared to throw me?" angrily shouted Tian Jianhao as he stood up. Extremely angry, he rushed over again.

"Scram!"

The indifferent youth narrowed his brows, waiting for Tian Jianhao to approach him before suddenly kicking again with his foot.

It directly hit Tian Jianhao's chest.

Tian Jianhao had a robust, sturdy body which could be compared to an artillery shell. Regardless, he was sent flying once more, landing back onto the ground with a bang.

After he fell this time, Tian Jianhao's entire body began to shiver. On top of his chest, there was surprisingly a thin layer of ice. The raging flames within his heart had seemingly been frozen in but an instant.

This time, he didn't speak again; instead, his eyes still showed an obvious trace of fear.

After a while, Tian Jianhao stood up again and obediently took a spot at the very back of the line.

Everyone naturally began to snicker as they were all well aware that he had been honestly beaten.

Chapter 128: Examination

That indifferent youth was none other than Qin Lie.

After Li Mu and the Icestone Snow Wolf King left, Qin Lie started living by himself within the small residence and begun relying on the Eye of Frost to enter and exit the depths of the Arctic Mountain Range's frozen earth.

During this time, he contemplated the picture of the ice crystal world within the Soul Suppressing Orb, using his soul to sense the frozen essence within it.

Each time he sent his soul into the picture scroll of the ice crystal world while within the frozen earth, a dense, cold frost energy of nature would begin to gather up near him.

Cold energy began to gradually gather within the other ice, sphere-shaped Natal Palace within him, rushing in until the Natal Palace was completely filled with frozen ice energy.

The cold energy even began to gather around his various limbs and organs, lingering around them and causing his aura to suddenly change to one which gave others a kind of piercing, cold feeling.

Because he had still yet to fully comprehend the picture scroll formed from the frost concept, it was still impossible for him to use the frost energy within his ice ball-shaped Natal Palace. Thus, he also wasn't able to disperse the cold energy which had converged upon his bones, muscles, and veins. This made it very hard for him to control his body's aura and condition.

Furthermore, as cold energy fluctuated around his entire body, currents of cold energy would surge out whenever he moved.

This made it so when he fought his enemies, even his most basic moves would accompanied by the cold energy that filled his body, empowering his attacks with the effects of frost.

After being hit by Qin Lie's most basic attack, Dark Asura Hall's Tian Jianhao had felt chills run through his entire body. This was why fear had blossomed in his heart.

Perhaps it was because of his recent daily study of the mysteries of the frost concept, Qin Lie's aura and temperament had also gradually become affected as his heart slowly became cold...

"Creak!"

Armament Sect's outer sect gate opened, and Tong Jihua walked out from within to the registration point while accompanied by six Armament Sect disciples.

His gaze swept across all of the youths within the square as he said with a bit of surprise, "There are quite a few of you this time, I wonder how many of you will pass the examination in the end."

Tong Jihua was an elder of the outer sect and was specifically responsible for the annual recruitment of new disciples. He was quite accustomed to the scene in front of him within the square and knew rather well how alluring being a true Artificer was to these youths.

Thus, even though this was just the recruitment for outer sect disciples, it was still rather harsh and difficult.

For every ten or so applicants, only one or two would pass the exam. The rest would all be eliminated.

Even after one passed the exam, if one couldn't show the potential of an Artificer within a certain period of time, one would also be directly dismissed.

Every year, several hundred young men and women from various forces in various places would all come to Armament Sect to register, but in the end, at most, only twenty to thirty of them would pass the exam.

Out of these twenty to thirty youths, the greater half of them would be dismissed within the next few months of observation. At the very end, the number of youths who could truly enter into the outer sect would number no more than ten.

Out of the few that remained, it was considered good if one or two of them demonstrated talent and were chosen to enter the inner sect.

Thus, although Armament Sect's outer sect held yearly recruitments for new disciples, they were always left with vacancies.

"Everyone should be clear with the rules, thus I won't elaborate on them. In order to prevent people from wasting time, everyone who registers has to pay a Profound Grade

One spirit stone. Regardless of whether you pass or not, this spirit stone will not be return. Mn. If there are no questions, then registration will begin from the start of the line. First person!"

"Liang Shaoyang!"

"Second person!"

"Ouyang Jingjing!"

"....."

Tong Jihua sat in front of the gate and asked for each participant's name. Upon receiving a Profound Grade One spirit stone, he allowed them to enter into the sect.

He didn't ask about their identity or cultivation progress, nor did he ask about their origin or background. It seemed as if he didn't care about these things.

The long, long line, in the wake of Tong Jihua's cries, slowly thinned out. After about an hour, it was finally Qin Lie's turn.

"Name!"

"Qin Bing!"

Qin Lie replied with the pseudonym that he had prepared a while back and handed over a Profound Grade One spirit stone.

Tong Jihua grabbed it and casually tossed it into the basket behind him.

He recorded down the name and threw a numbered stone tablet to Qin Lie. Not asking anything else, Tong Jihua nodded, indicating for Qin Lie to go ahead and walk straight in.

"Number two hundred and thirty," commented Qin Lie as he glanced over the tablet and entered through Armament Sect's outer sect gate.

"This way." Within a vast, large courtyard, several Armament Sect practitioners who were responsible for receiving and guiding exam takers brought Qin Lie into a nearby room and arranged for him to sit at a long table. Afterwards, they gave him a brush and paper.

Qin Lie didn't reply. Sitting down, he looked at the paper scrolls and discovered that they all contained questions which pertained to the distinct characteristics of various spirit materials.

What spirit material, when combined with Fiery Solar Jade, will cause the fire energy within the jade stone to quickly become volatile? What is the main distinguishing characteristic of Heavenly Cloud Crystal? Explain the three ways to use Dragon Bone Jade...

All of them were questions along those lines.

After having followed Yao Tai around for the greater half of the year and carefully studying Yao Tai when he forged spirit artifacts, he had become familiar with these basic materials like they were a part of him.

He took up the brush and began to rapidly write, quickly answering all of the various questions which pertained to spirit materials. His brush seemingly never stopped moving. When he finished, after looking it over once, he called over Armament Sect's proctor and returned the paper scrolls.

"Your speed is indeed rather quick." The young Armament Sect disciple nodded as they pointed to another room, saying, "Go over there and wait for instructions."

Qin Lie indifferently began to walk towards the other large room, quickly entering it without a word. Upon entering, he immediately felt several gazes land on him.

Liang Shaoyang, Ouyang Jingjing, and Yi Yuan. The three of them were surprisingly also within the room and were all seated atop a long bench.

Liang Shaoyang and Ouyang Jingjing glanced at Qin Lie, then retracted their gazes, cold and indifferent.

Only Purple Mist Sea's Yi Yuan was the only one to not only smile at Qin Lie, but took initiative to scoot sideways and make room for Qin Lie atop the bench.

Qin Lie indifferently nodded and directly sat beside Yi Yuan as he observed the insides of the room.

Other than Liang Shaoyang, Ouyang Jingjing, and Yi Yuan, there were seven other youths within the room. All of them wore rather luxurious and magnificent clothes, making it clear that their backgrounds weren't ordinary.

The other seven were scattered all over. Some were familiar with another, quietly conversing in hushed tones, while others lowered their heads and remained silent.

"I'm from Purple Mist Sea. My name is Yi Yuan. Friend, where did you come from?" Yi Yuan turned his head, smiling at Qin Lie.

"I'm Qin Bing. I came from a little place that's not worth mentioning," answered Qin Lie indifferently.

With a warm smile, Yi Yuan said, "Your origins don't matter. As long as you are able to become an Armament Sect outer sect disciple, your future will be vast."

Qin Lie furrowed his brows, not answering.

Soon, more and more youths entered. Each person who entered would glance around and then take whatever seat they found.

However, there were three clearly empty spots which none of the later arriving youths dared to take. They were the ones by Liang Shaoyang, Ouyang Jingjing, and Qin Lie...

Even when the room became crowded, there were still open spots beside the three as the other late comers would rather stand than sit down.

Four hours later, noontime.

Tong Jihua's voice was suddenly transmitted from within the courtyard, "Those who have their tablet number called may continue to the second round of exams. Those whose numbers are not called, please leave. One, two, nine, seventeen..."

Liang Shaoyang, Ouyang Jingjing, and several other youths who registered early proudly stood up as they followed behind each other to the courtyard behind them.

"Ninety."

Yi Yuan stood up from beside Qin Lie and politely smiled at Qin Lie, stating, "I shall leave first."

Tong Jihua continued calling numbers.

"Two hundred thirty."

Qin Lie got up when his number was called out.

Within the second courtyard, many small smelting furnaces had been stationed there. Spread out below were several fire crystals of the lowest level, and on a nearby table various types of low level spirit materials had been placed there.

Qin Lie, holding his stone tablet, was lead to one of the furnaces. Afterwards, he discovered that Liang Shaoyang, Ouyang Jingjing, and Yi Yuan were all standing not far in front of him. They were all seemingly waiting for something.

Ten Armament Sect outer sect disciples were scattered across the edges of the courtyard, looking at the group within with serious expressions.

Those whose numbers had been called filed in one by one, each of them being directed to a different spot, waiting in silence afterward.

The sound of Tong Jihua's voice eventually stopped. He also arrived. Afterwards, the gate to the second courtyard was heartlessly closed, directly eliminating those whose numbers had not been called as they didn't have the qualifications to take this second round of assessments.

This time, over four hundred youths had registered. After the first round of assessment, only one hundred people had the necessary qualifications to continue on. Three quarters of them had already been eliminated.

"Everything has already been prepared for you all. I presume that you all have already guessed what we want you to do. That's right, you will have to refine an artifact. Metal, wood, water, fire, and earth; the five elements. Of them, metal artifacts are the easiest to forge as the smelting and combining of metal is the easiest. Use those spirit materials however you want to create whatever kind of artifact you can. Forks and knives, swords, hammers, anything is fine as long as it can be created!"

Tong Jihua walked to the center of everyone and loudly shouted, "It starts now!"

Liang Shaoyang, Yi Yuan, and Ouyang Jingjing all seemingly moved in the same instant, becoming the first ones to ignite their fire crystals and fire up their furnaces.

Everyone else acted moments later, also beginning to take action as they ignited their fire crystals.

Meanwhile, Qin Lie who had mixed into the crowd was in no hurry to ignite a fire. Instead, he first picked up and identified each and every spirit material.

"Quicksand Gold, Bluelight Copper, Quicksilver..."

As he silently recited their names, the forging process of the Terminator Profound Bomb was the first thought to emerge within his mind as it was the only artifact that he had forged so far.

The spirit materials provided by Armament Sect naturally weren't specifically for the forging of a Terminator Profound Bomb, but it was extremely easy to smelt metal element spirit materials and thus it wasn't difficult to make an artifact into a specific shape.

After silently pondering for this moment, Qin Lie didn't dare be rash and decided to forge a Terminator Profound Bomb shaped artifact, lest he failed and lost this opportunity.

In his mind, he thought over the several critical junctures of forging the Terminator Profound Bomb until they became clear. Only then did he ignite a fire crystal with the indifferent expression on his face gradually becoming solemn and focused.

Tong Jihua wandered amidst the group, observing this year's batch of examinees. He closely observed Jiang Shaoyang, Ouyang Jingjing, and Yi Yuan, making sure to never stray too far away from them.

Not only did these three have the highest martial cultivations of the examinees, their backgrounds were also not ordinary. Within their own sects, they had probably carefully studied the art of artifact forging before.

Thus, regardless of whether it was their experience or their movements, they were remarkable in all areas. Tong Jihua couldn't help but inwardly nod.

He was certain that not only would these three smoothly pass the examination, they would also be this year's cream of the crop, perhaps even obtaining the opportunity to enter the inner sect.

To those who could possibly become inner sect disciples, Tong Jihua would naturally pay a bit more attention so that he could make preparations in advance...

"Senior Sister Tang!"

"Senior Sister Tang, why have you come?"

"Senior Sister Tang!"

A fiery red figure suddenly floated over. It was as if a blazing ball of fire had appeared within the courtyard.

It was a beautiful, twenty or so year old girl. Even the loose Artificer Robe that she wore seemed to be unable to hide the seductive curves of her body. Her perky twin peaks, lithe waist, and slightly flared out buttocks created a heart-moving, soul-stirring figure which seemed to be able to entice any man.

As soon as she appeared within the courtyard, all eyes of the Armament Sect disciples became filled with an apparent fervor as they each stared while greeting her.

Even the minds of the many of the examinees who were focused on refining became restless. Their concentration suddenly dissipated as they began to occasionally glance at her figure while they forged their artifact...

"Siqi, why have you come today?" asked Tong Jihua with a bright smile. Greeting her with a wave, he continued, "It's good that you have come. In a while, help me grade them. There are quite a few outstanding youths this time, so you can take note of them

in your mind now. Then it will be easier for you directly request for them in the next few days...

"Uncle Tong, I came just so I could pick out people. All the good seeds from the previous few times were all taken away by my fellow disciples. This time, I will look closely. I must not lose out again." Tang Siqu's beautiful eyes sparkled with a radiance as a smile emerged on her beautiful, blushing face, resulting in an extremely moving yet faint charm.

"Haha, who told you to act so conceited the last few times?" said Tong Jihua with a great laugh. "You thought that there weren't good seeds each time and treated it like a joke. In the end, there were several outstanding ones who helped your fellow disciples properly separate and smelt basic spirit materials. Just how much energy did they save?"

"As if it wasn't because there were only crooked melons and split dates before that? There wasn't even a single usable one, causing me to give up on all of these new recruits. That's why I didn't pay any attention," responded Tang Siqu.

"Then you must pay careful attention this time," said Tong Jihua, chuckling.

Tang Siqu nodded with a smile and began to move through the courtyard like a blazing ball of fire, wandering next to each of the examinees to observe their artifact forging process.

Each examinee, upon being approached by her, would all smell an intoxicating fragrance, resulting in their mind immediately being thrown into a mess, slowing their movements.

At these times, Tang Siqu would always shake her head, crestfallen, and would immediately leave without hesitation.

Chapter 129: I'm on Fire!

A fiery red figure zipped through the many examinees in the courtyard like a lithely-dancing red butterfly.

There were many Armament Sect disciples around whose eyes were hot with passion and could not help but look to the side to pursue the beautiful figure. It did seem that they were slowly forgetting the reason they had come here in the first place.

"Yet another useless person who cannot affirm his mind and focus on forging artifacts..."

Tang Siqu's hot figure fluttered about as a drunken fragrance spread about and shook the minds of countless, hopeful artificers, causing them to be unable to focus.

Tang Siqi shook her head repeatedly. Her coquettish and seductive face was filled with disappointment.

“Siqi, there are three people that you should pay serious attention to. They may be able to reach your expectations.” When she had returned to Tong Jihua’s side again, Tong Jihua smiled lightly and pointed, from afar, at Liang Shaoyang, Ouyang Jingjing, and Yi Yuan, quietly saying, “Their backgrounds are all extraordinary, and they have a certain amount of experience with artifact forging. They will definitely pass the examination.”

Liang Shaoyang and the other two were at the front part of the courtyard. Tang Siqi had previously wandered that place for a lap; those three were all at the center of the crowd.

After being reminded by Tong Jihua, she lightly smiled in thanks with her head lowered before dropping right beside Liang Shaoyang in a whisk of fragrant wind.

An obvious air of murder surrounded Liang Shaoyang. The moment Tang Siqi stood still, her eyes lit up.

Cheerfully, she closed in on the furnace. Her eyes suddenly turned passionate, and she stared at Liang Shaoyang while her expression turned into one of worship and obsessiveness.

—This was one of her usual methods.

A fiery, soulful stare and an obsessive gaze of worship. She had not failed once up until this day whenever she unleashed them on a man. There were very few men who could resist her charms.

When forging an artifact, a person could not be distracted for even a moment. If there was a single slight ripple in their hearts, then it would reflect through minuscule movements...

She observed Liang Shaoyang’s every move.

Compared to the other competitors, Liang Shaoyang was far calmer. Under her passionate stare, Liang Shaoyang continued to intently stare at the small furnace before him and handle the spirit materials without the slightest bit of impatience. He was always able to throw the correct spirit material into the furnace at the critical moment it was needed.

There was not the slightest mistake in his skill or movements.

Tang Siqi nodded on the inside as her heart turned mildly surprised. The seductive smile on her face grew brighter and brighter, causing all the onlookers from Armament Sect to feel hot all over.

Still facing Liang Shaoyang, she pursed her lips and let out a seductive smile. Moving lithely, she abruptly appeared on Liang Shaoyang's left.

Her hot and attractive body unwittingly pressed closer, as she let out a sweet breath and breathily said, "You're a little different from the other men, aren't you..."

Liang Shaoyang's eyebrows jumped as a ripple suddenly appeared in his heart. His left pinky could not help but shudder just a little.

"Crunch."

He accidentally crushed a piece of Bluelight Copper about the size of a fingernail, splitting it into many tiny bits.

Tang Siqi glanced at him once before suddenly pulling away from him, her graceful lips curling into scorn as she smiled lightly. "But you're not that different..." Once finished, she no longer took even a single glance at Liang Shaoyang before changing her target yet again, heading towards Yi Yuan this time.

"And here I thought he could ignore Senior Sister Tang's charm, but in the end, that is all he is. This is normal though. There... aren't actually that many people in Armament Sect who are completely immune to her charm."

"Of course, Senior Sister Tang has been the sect's most talented disciple for the past ten years. She has... also been the most beautiful one for the past ten years."

"If she weren't so young, then she will definitely be the number one person in the inner sect. She is practically a genius when it comes to artifact forging."

"Sigh, I really wish I would be chosen by Senior Sister Tang. I would be satisfied even if the only thing I do everyday is to polish spirit materials for her."

"Me too."

The few outer sect disciples close to each other and standing at the edges of the yard were whispering to each other, all looking at Tang Siqi with infatuation.

While they were whispering, the beautiful, tall, and hot Tang Siqi had suddenly appeared beside Yi Yuan.

Yi Yuan had originally been focused on smelting the artifact. At this point, he suddenly stopped his movements, lifted his head, and smiled at Tang Siqi before immediately closing his eyes and temporarily pausing the smelting process.

He chose to stop everything.

Tang Siqi had just adjusted her state of mind and was getting ready to test Yi Yuan's inner fortitude. Just as she pushed a bright smile onto a face, she then saw Yi Yuan closing his eyes, not moving a muscle. She immediately froze on the spot.

"This brat..." On the other side, Tong Jihua could only laugh at the scene.

Since Yi Yuan had closed his eyes and stopped forging, naturally, Tang Siqi had no way of affecting him. She would just be wasting her effort if she stood there doing nothing. Therefore, she had no choice but to harshly glare at Yi Yuan before helplessly giving up.

Tang Siqi then turned to look at Ouyang Jingjing before shaking her head slightly and quietly whispering, "She's a girl. There's nothing I can do then..."

She returned to Tong Jihua's side and commented in a low tone of voice, "Liang Shaoyang is still useful I suppose."

"How about the other two?" Tong Jihua asked with a smile.

"We have no choice but to wait until they finish forging to see how well they will do." Tang Siqi had on a disappointed expression. "When that happens, the rest of the seniors might have arrived and it wouldn't be as convenient to pick someone anymore."

"Should I... book Liang Shaoyang for you first then?"

"Give it a while longer. I'll take another look. If there really isn't anyone suitable, then I can only pick Liang Shaoyang."

Tang Siqi frowned beautifully. She was obviously not truly satisfied with Liang Shaoyang, and after interacting with Tong Jihua for a brief moment, she returned again to the center of those hundreds of hopeful artificers and headed towards the few corners she hadn't wandered to before. She wanted to test her luck and see if she might run into an unexpected boon.

While wandering at the corners, her eyes examined the many youths one at a time, and occasionally she would even close in and passionately stare at her target.

A few seconds later, she realized that her target's eyes would always avoid hers and their actions would always slow down by just a fraction right before they made a mistake.

She would then immediately leave and choose a new target to test. However, she continued to be disappointed every time she selected her next target...

Icy cold energy suddenly spread from a figure at the front, and amidst the burning yard, that very energy caused her to sneeze.

“There are only a few people left. If it still doesn’t work. then I guess I have no choice but to pick Liang Shaoyang,” she whispered once as she headed over to the youth with cold energy emanating from his body. She circled the young man’s back and arrived at his front.

With that, she glanced at the expressionless youth.

“His looks are still fine, but his temperament is way too cold. To think there would be a person who cultivates a cold spirit art that would want to become an artificer. It really is a bit strange...”

Or so she thought inside her head while observing Qin Lie. After that thought had finished, her gaze fell upon the artifact inside the furnace.

“A ball-shaped artifact...” In response, her eyes lit up a bit.

The uneven and miniature shape of a metallic ball had already been formed inside the small furnace before Qin Lie. There were many round holes on its surface.

At this moment, Qin Lie was melting even more spirit materials into liquid form. He was injecting a liquid that could enhance the metallic ball’s endurance little by little.

A ball-shaped artifact was far more difficult to forge than a knife, fork, or spear. It tested an artificer’s skill greatly. The shaping of a ball-shaped artifact was often incredibly difficult, and during the latter stages, it also required more effort and attention to polish and perfect the surface of the ball...

When Tang Siqi saw that Qin Lie’s artifact was a ball, she was surprised a little on the inside and could not help but view him in a better light.

Then, a thin but seductive smile appeared on her beautiful face. Her eyes burned with passion as she stared soulfully at Qin Lie. She began to exude a most crime-inducing charm from her body...

Qin Lie’s cold eyes did not glance at Tang Siqi for even a second. All of his attention was placed on the ball in his small furnace.

“These aren’t the materials needed to forge Terminator Profound Bomb, so they don’t fit well enough with each other. If they can’t merge with each other properly, then it will break easily...”

He frowned heavily as his fingers unconsciously slid across the spirit materials. Quickly, his mind spun, “Which one of my current spirit materials has the right properties to thoroughly stabilize a ball-shaped artifact?” He was sunk in deep thought.

In his eyes, it was as if there wasn't a beautiful woman standing in front of him. He had completely ignored Tang Siqu's passionate gaze.

"A bit interesting..."

The curl on Tang Siqu's lips deepened as the smile on her beautiful face grew brighter and brighter. It was as if she had found a new toy, and her eyes started glittering at Qin Lie.

"An interesting one just like Liang Shaoyang, I see. Let's hope that you won't disappoint me; let's hope that you can... hold out for a while longer."

Suddenly, she giggled, and in a flash, her voluptuous figure had arrived on Qin Lie's left.

Then, with a smile, she closed in and prettily said, "It's pretty hard to forge a ball-shaped artifact. When I first started forging, I also made quite a lot mistakes and could not succeed no matter what, you know?"

Her firm breasts were just three fingers away from Qin Lie's left arm, and the heat on those plump and seductive breasts seemed to radiate from that thin veil of hers...

Her plump and red lips, the fragrance that emanated from her as she moved, her fiery eyes, glittering with waves of passion, the attractive figure that closed in on his shirt, and a heart-melting voice... at this moment, her charm and allure became limitless, and she could practically melt even a hard stone.

"Gulp..."

The Armament Sect disciples on the side could not help but swallow their saliva as they watched Tang Siqu's alluring appearance and intentionally displayed seductiveness. An evil flame rose uncontrollably from the bottom of their hearts.

Many people who were originally standing straight had no choice but to bow into hunchbacks in order to disguise a certain protrusion on their bodies.

"A bunch of useless crap!" Tong Jihua glared and scolded on the inside as he watched the surrounding outer sect disciples. "You all totally deserve to stay in the outer sect for the rest of your lives. Without even the slightest bit of mental fortitude, you all would only be qualified to sell spirit artifacts at Armament Sect's many branches. You will never truly enter the artificer's hall."

If these outer sect disciples in Armament Sect failed to display a talent in artifact forging after a long period of time or failed to be chosen by an inner sect disciple as assistant, then they would be assigned somewhere a year or two later to work at a spirit material shop similar to Armament Pavilion in Icestone City. They would specialize in selling all kinds of spirit materials for Armament Sect.

Most, if not all of the outer sect disciple today would be facing such a fate and would be let go by Armament Sect.

Qin Lie did not know that Tang Siqi had come to specifically choose someone. He had only assumed that she was intentionally creating trouble, and seeing that she just had to press closer and begin slowly affecting his next step of merging his artifact, his expression grew colder and colder.

“Judging from the level of your practice, you should have experience in artifact forging. I’m really curious, who did you learn artifact forging from?” Tang Siqi’s smile was as bright as a flower as her hot body pressed closer and closer. Judging from her pose, it was as if she couldn’t wait to lie on top of Qin Lie already.

The eyes of all the surrounding onlookers had become fixated on that very figure.

Qin Lie frowned and grew impatient. When he pushed the spirit materials inside the furnace in his left hand, he did it with slightly larger movements.

“Bang!”

A few sparks flew out from the furnace, and as if they had grown a mind of their own, they all flew at Tang Siqi on the side.

Meanwhile, Tang Siqi continued to ease into Qin Lie as she thought: How dare you play a fool in front of me. See if I’ll play you to death!

Suddenly, she heard a strange noise, and after she turned around to look, her expression turned horrific.

The thin clothes at her waist were actually burning!

“Ah, I’m on fire!” Tang Siqi screamed out in panic.

Chapter 130: Bearing Curses...

“Senior Sister Tang!”

“Senior Sister Tang!”

The Armament Sect outer disciples standing at the edges of the courtyard all shouted in unison as they flusteredly rushed over.

Tong Jihua’s expression also gradually changed as he sternly shouted, “Dumbasses, go fetch a bucket of water!”

Liang Shaoyang, Ouyang Jingjing, Yi Yuan, and the rest of the examinees' attention was all attracted by the commotion as each and every one of them from the front of the courtyard to the back turned their heads in the same direction.

Tang Siqi's beautiful face no long possessed a charming smile. Instead, there was only a look of panic as she beat at the fire on her waist with her jade hand. Her eyes stricken with horror, she repeatedly shouted, "I'm on fire!"

A spark had ignited between her lower abdomen and waist, and a burning pain seared over her flat, fat-less lower abdomen. Her thin robes couldn't help but catch on fire as the flames began to ferociously burn.

All of the Artificer Robes she wore had been custom made so that, while the outside was loose, the inside was a tight-fitting silk dress which flaunted her curves.

Now that the outer layer of robes had caught on fire, the inner layer of silk was immediately revealed. The flames continued burning, and soon, her entire waist was on fire.

Tang Siqi was considered a genius Artificer by Armament Pavilion and cultivated a fire type spirit art. If she were to circulate her spirit energy, it would increase the fire spirit energy around her which would only nourish the flames. It would definitely not help extinguish them.

She knew this extremely well, and thus, she didn't dare circulate her spirit energy. All she could do was hope that the outer sect disciples would be quick at fetching water.

Of those who had come to participate in Armament Sect's examination, the majority of them cultivated fire type spirit arts as well, and thus, there wasn't a single one who was able to help her extinguish the flames.

The sparks which had shot onto her were flames which had exploded off of Fiery Solar Jade. After landing on her body, it was actually quite difficult to extinguish.

Previously, Tang Siqi had been wandering from one furnace to the next, teasing the examinees. Thus, the robes that she wore had long since been roasted until they were extremely flammable. Thus, as soon as the clothes at her waist had caught on fire, it had immediately gone out of control...

Burned by the flames, Tang Siqi felt extreme pain on her lower abdomen as her eyes closely watched the flame spread above and below her waist.

She could only beat at the flames on the clothes over her waist and loudly cry for the Armament Sect disciples to bring water.

Her mind was as anxious as the fire, having long since lost her earlier calmness. As she embarrassedly jumped and hopped around, she loudly swore about Qin Lie's shamelessness.

—She naturally had already figured out that the sparks had come from Qin Lie's furnace.

At this time, Qin Lie finally turned his head around. A look of surprise arose on his gloomy, cold face as he quickly stuck out his hand to beat at the flames on Tang Siqi's abdomen.

The reason he had created sparks was because he wanted Tang Siqi to leave and stop distracting him. He had never intended to cause any actual harm.

Moreover, he hadn't expected that Tang Siqi would be so wholeheartedly focused on trying to tease him that she wouldn't notice the sparks when they made contact with her... which was how the current scenario had unfolded.

"Get away from me!" repeatedly screeched Tang Siqi when she saw Qin Lie raise his hand. Her stunningly beautiful face was full of anger.

"The clothes over your chest and lower half are just about to catch on fire..." coldly reminded Qin Lie.

Tang Siqi lowered her head, looked, and then began to loudly screech again. Seeing that the people who had gone to fetch water were nowhere to be seen, her bright eyes reddened as she shouted, "I'm going to kill you!"

She suddenly rushed at Qin Lie.

A current of ice cold energy, like a severe winter frost, spilled out from Qin Lie's body.

As soon as she approached Qin Lie, she discovered the raging flames strangely began to be immediately suppressed, as if they were they were about to be extinguished.

The current of frigid, ice-cold energy which was released from Qin Lie's body was actually able to extinguish the flames!

At this time, the pain from the skin on her waist being burned by the flames had almost caused her tears to start flowing. Once the clothes over her waist were burned, if the clothes over her chest and below her waist were also burned... then wouldn't she be completely naked?

Currently, there were over a hundred people within the courtyard watching her. If her clothes were all burned, then how could she possibly meet people in the future?

"I-I won't let go of you!" screeched Tang Siqi. With her waist still on fire, she surprisingly threw herself head first into Qin Lie's chest, tightly hugging him while looking at him face to face.

The nearby observers all became petrified.

"This..." Tong Jihua also showed astonishment as an extremely strange look emerged on his face. He secretly thought to himself: This method of not letting go of him, isn't it a little too stimulating?

"Uhh..." Qin Lie returned the embrace.

A sumptuous, arousing body, under the gazes of more than a hundred people, had suddenly thrown itself into Qin Lie's chest and tightly hugged him.

Qin Lie sensed the astonishing heat and elasticity of the seductive body, as well as... the burnt, charred scent. He became dazed, blank as he stood on the spot, not moving.

"Sssssss!"

As soon as Tang Siqi tightly hugged Qin Lie, she immediately saw smoke rise from her charred clothes as the flames were assaulted by the cold energy and quickly extinguished.

She instantly knew she had made the right choice by closely pasting herself onto Qin Lie as the ice cold energy which was released by Qin Lie's body was able to extinguish all of the flames on her clothes.

Continuing on, she hugged Qin Lie even more tightly, using the bone chilling cold energy which emanated off Qin Lie's body to reduce the stinging pain from the burn on her abdomen.

Glancing at the number on the table, her chattering teeth and eyes filled with a copious amount of hate. She shouted, "Number two hundred and thirty, I won't let go of you!" Still hugging Qin Lie, she loudly threatened, "Just you wait number two hundred and thirty. I will definitely let you know what happens when you aggravate me!"

"The water's here! The water's here!"

Three Armament Sect outer sect disciples, carrying a bucket of water, sprinted over. Not even sparing a moment to look at the situation, they scooped out a ladle of water and tossed it over.

"Splash splash splash!"

Three ladles of water were thrown, turning Tang Siqi and Qin Lie into drowned chickens, instantly drenching their clothes.

“Senior Sister Tang, you, what are you doing?” One of them, after throwing their ladle of water, finally took a clear look at the situation and asked in shock, “Why are you hugging him so tightly?”

Tang Siqi felt as if she wanted to climb into a hole and die. Her eyes seemed to be shooting flames as she loudly swore, “F*ck off for me however far away you can f*ck off!”

Only after swearing did she realize that her thin robes were completely drenched and were now closely sticking to her, clearly presenting every mountain and valley on her body.

What made her feel even more embarrassed was that—she was still tightly hugging Qin Lie at this time, her towering twin peaks pasted to Qin Lie’s chest and her abdomen pasted to his abdomen.

After a terrifying cry, Tang Siqi, instantly ran away like an electrocuted wildcat, leaving no trace of her behind.

Qin Lie’s expression was indifferent even though his entire body was also drenched. The fire within the small furnace behind him itself had become weak like a candle in the wind, about to go out at any time.

He furrowed his brow as he just stood there. As he looked in the direction that Tang Siqi had disappeared in, a strange light appeared in his eyes.

“This girl, although she lacks common sense and her head seemingly isn’t screwed on properly, she still... is the real thing.” Thinking back over the sensations from just now when Tang Siqi had pasted her body on him, Qin Lie couldn’t help but inwardly appraise them. Afterwards, he looked at Tong Jihua and shrugged, saying, “I need to change clothes and also need a few more fire crystals. It was one of your people who got me wet.”

Tong Jihua’s face twitched. Then, he waved his hand, beckoning someone over and instructing them, “Help him get it done.”

“You burned Senior Sister Tang, yet you actually dare to complain? Do you not want to f*cking live anymore?” shouted the Armament Sect disciple, their expression ruthless as they rushed over seemingly about to take action.

Qin Lie’s expression turned cold as he replied, “It was she who tried to distract me first!”

“Liu Ke!” sternly reprimanded Tong Jihua as he coldly instructed, “You are to do what you are told!”

The disciple immediately shut his mouth, still hatefully staring at Qin Lie. However, he no longer dared to take action. He angrily led Qin Lie to a nearby side room and let Qin Lie change his clothes.

All of the Armament Sect outer sect disciples stared in Qin Lie’s direction with red eyes. It seemed as if they all wanted to help Tang Siqi by killing Qin Lie on the spot.

The examinees on the other hand had strange looks on their face as they all envied Qin Lie, their hearts relishing the images they had just seen.

“Whether it was intentional or not, for such a stunningly beautiful girl to willingly throw herself into my arms—to just be able to hug her for a while—my life would have been worth it!”

Even Liang Shaoyang’s gaze in Qin Lie’s direction was filled with jealousy.

“Don’t think that you’ll safely making out of this. After offending Senior Sister Tang, even if you enter Armament Sect, you won’t be able to rest even for a day!” After the Armament Sect disciple named Liu Ke brought Qin Lie into the side room, his expression turned cold as he angrily said, “I advise you to scram out of Armament Sect as early as possible and f*ck off as far as possible from Armament City. Otherwise, else you’re gonna get it!”

“Don’t waste your breath.” With an indifferent expression, Qin Lie completely ignored Liu Ke’s threats, focusing only on changing his clothes.

Behind this courtyard, several exquisite small buildings were situated within a bamboo forest in the depths of Armament Sect’s outer sect.

At the moment, Tang Siqi was within one of these small buildings. By this time, she had already changed into another red dress and was currently lifting the area of the dress over her abdomen and spreading green ointment over her injured skin. As she applied it, she grit her teeth and swore, “Number two hundred and thirty, two hundred and thirty, if you have any happy days in the future, my name isn’t Tang Siqi!

“Siqi, when did you return?” A clear and gentle voice could suddenly be heard from outside the door. Afterwards, Lian Rou directly barged in.

Lian Rou was also an Armament Sect inner sect disciple. Moreover, she was Tang Siqi’s roommate. Her appearance, when compared to Tang Siqi’s, clearly seemed to be extremely ordinary. She looked just like a girl next door as she had no eye catching characteristics. Only her clear, gentle personality was unique.

That was to say, whenever she was together with Tang Siqu, she was eternally just a foil, a green leaf to complement the flower which was Tang Siqu.

"Sister Rou! I-I suffered a big loss!" miserably cried Tang Siqu as she wiped ointment on her burns and swore at Qin Lie. "Within the front courtyard, I was plotted against by a despicable bastard. I was almost burned to death! That bastard was number two hundred and thirty, but I don't know his name. I only know his tablet number. I... right now I don't have the face to return. I would like you to go and tell Uncle Tong that I want him to book that bastard for me so that I can happily mess with him for a while!"

Lian Rou's black brows narrowed as she looked at Tang Siqu's abdomen. Afterwards, she sternly said, "Your burns are not light. Mn, it's good that you didn't die, but you deserved it!"

After speaking, Lian Rou couldn't hold back any longer, suddenly laughing as she mocked, "Even without thinking I can guess what happened earlier over there. Just what were you doing? It's the same as before, right? You tried to distract people while they were forging their artifacts? Haha, only you didn't expect that this time you would encounter a wolf who not only ignored your charm but actually steeled their heart to use such a cruel tactic to hurt a flower like you. Even I feel some admiration for this guy."

By the end of Lian Rou's remarks, Tang Siqu's face had already turned green as she said, "Stupid Lian, is this how you console a fellow sister?"

"I'm joking, hee hee, I'm joking." Lian Rou gently smiled as she said, "Okay, I will go to the front courtyard and meet this hero who dared to use such cruel methods to hurt Armament Sect's most beautiful flower."

Lian Rou walked out, laughing the entire way as she completely ignored the livid expression on Tang Siqu's face.