

## Star Gate 53

### Chapter 53: Displaying Just A Small Portion of One's Talent (II)

The quiet Yun Yao suddenly whispered, “Can you guys sense the mysterious power in his body?”

Under normal circumstances, energy constantly seeped out of the body after absorption by a newbie like Li Hao. Even Liu Long had a faint sheen of mysterious power around him—everyone in the Demon Hunters did. It was why Li Hao could see a halo of starlight for each team member, but he didn't see any around his teacher.

Liu Long's gaze sharpened when he heard the team doctor and he snorted. “Yuan Shuo's disciple is indeed different! The old man keeps things to himself even though martial masters are almost extinct. He's not even willing to extend a helping hand to those of the same path!”

Li Hao's status came as no surprise, just look at Yuan Shuo's usual condition! There was never any mysterious power to be sensed from the professor after he absorbed energy—it was as if the old man fully digested everything.

The Night Watchers knew about this peculiarity; all suspected that Yuan Shuo possessed an unmatched induction method. But no one was able to make the old man open his mouth if he was unwilling to speak of it.

Perhaps the lack of seepage was also due to his personal strength. Today, however, there was likewise no mysterious power sensed outside Li Hao's body. The implications were very clear to Liu Long.

“The kid visited Yuan Shuo twice yesterday—once in the afternoon and once at night. I wonder if he just learned this method, or if he knew it all along and needed to discuss some details. Yuan Shuo apparently taught him another secret art and didn't show face to even the Night Watchers. He gravely injured one of them!” Liu Long's sources of information were quick and vast—he knew of what'd happened at the Veteris Institute.

“Chief, do you mean that Li Hao’s learned the elder’s secret art?” Liu Yan muttered. An incredibly strong absorption method? This was probably the secret knowledge that everyone wanted!

Typically speaking, a precious treasure landed its innocent owner in jail. Even though Yuan Shuo was an unparalleled expert in the field of ancient civilization, he still drew attention from all fronts for his exclusive knowledge. Yet there he was, perfectly fine and in possession of his secret art. Plainly, the old man had certain tricks up his sleeve.

“Mmhmm!” Liu Long nodded. This was the only possible explanation. He held both admiration and slight dislike for Yuan Shuo.

They were old acquaintances as his father used to be friends with Yuan Shuo. Liu Long had even been brought to meet the professor in hopes that the elder would take a new disciple. However, the child was rejected.

Yuan Shuo had refused on basis of a preference to teach those who were smart. Even though smart people entertained too many of their own thoughts and weren’t too biddable, that was still better than teaching fools!

Essentially, he meant that Liu Long was an idiot.

And so, a young Liu Long formed a grudge against Yuan Shuo.

With martial masters on their way to extinction, Liu Long deeply wished to revitalize Silver City’s martial dao. It would give the city a modicum of protection since the Night Watchers were unwilling to take up residence in such a small city. Yet old man Yuan Shuo with his lifetime of untold riches wasn’t willing to share a single gold shaving!

The old fart didn’t want to donate a book of regular martial dao theory, to say nothing of incredibly strong secret arts! He was impossible to understand sometimes!

Was this necessary??

Those things weren't useful to him, so wouldn't it be good to employ them in enhancing martial dao? Silver City was too small and its experts too few. It would only add to Yuan Shuo's personal glory if more talents emerged!

In all his years instructing at the Veteris Institute, Yuan Shuo never taught martial dao in his general classes. His adherence to pure academia was a primary reason for why many pointed fingers at him. He accepted few disciples over the years and some of them never even learned martial dao.

Li Hao was among the rare ones bequeathed part of the professor's skill since he learned the New Book of Five Styles. If the young man hadn't joined the Demon Hunters, he might continue to use the method for simple physical training. It wouldn't amount to much in the end.

There was nothing else for the rest of the team to say. They fixated on the fight in which Li Hao mounted a furious offensive and Chen Jian remained on defense, occasionally throwing a counterattack. It was a dramatic and impressive clash.

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"Be careful, Brother Jian!" Li Hao caught Chen Jian's attention with a sudden shout. A tiger roar filled the basement! The sound attack of the tiger style!

One drawback was that the young man had only ever seen a tiger in a cage. He'd never seen one in the wild nor heard the true roar of a ferocious tiger. Thus, his sound attack was far below what Yuan Shuo brought to bear.

The professor's roar was one garnered from struggles with a tiger roaming the mountains. His brimmed with the air of slaughter and menace. Yet despite being the roar of a captive tiger, Li Hao's sudden attack still shook Chen Jian and assaulted his ear drums.

In the split second that Chen Jian spent reeling from the sound, Li Hao wrapped his arms around his opponent like he was a black bear. Chen Jian was much taller and larger than the young man—he was the one who seemed more like a bear, but he was the one yanked up from the ground!

“Off you go!” Li Hao bellowed and lifted Chen Jian with every fiber of strength in his body. He flung his portly opponent out with a shake of his arms!

Bam!

Chen Jian smashed into a wall and left a clear mark on the concrete. Pieces of it cascaded to the ground, leaving a dusty Chen Jian behind. Unharmed, he was just stunned and surprised. The rotund man regarded Li Hao with incredulity.

“Hoo!” the young man panted heavily, likewise looking at Chen Jian with astonishment. Hot damn! There was a long sparring session and the man showed no injuries other than a few bloody trails on his arm. Is this guy even human?

Li Hao had kicked a metal pipe in half, but Chen Jian was completely unscathed. The young man wouldn’t kill his opponent even if he spent the entire night fighting. He’d die of exhaustion first!

“Brother Chen is amazing!”

Chen Jian, however, flushed beet red at the praise. This was over the line for Li Hao, the lad was making fun of him, wasn’t he!

Clap clap clap! Applause sounded by the door. Liu Yan dimpled with staggering allure and looked ardently at the panting Li Hao. She swiftly approached the dazed young man and grabbed his neck, breathing in an overly sweet voice, “Little Hao Hao is so amazing!”

“.....” Li Hao shifted his body without a flicker of change in his expression, but couldn’t shake off his new fan. A faint fragrance drifted into his nostrils. He rubbed his nose and said shyly, “Sis Liu, will you let go of me first?”

“Oh? Someone’s shy!” Liu Yan tittered madly. Instead of letting go, she drew Li Hao even closer and whispered, “Little Hao Hao, can you teach big sis how to absorb mysterious power as fast as you?”

“I can ask my teacher, Sis Liu,” Li Hao said hesitantly. “I don’t know if teaching someone will result in wholesale banishment or worse.”

“.....” Liu Yan’s beguiling expression froze and she shoved the young man away with complaint. “Where’s your consideration for the fairer sex?”

The boy sure knew how to talk, huh! She couldn’t afford to offend that one. Who could she go to if retribution came for her head? A Night Watcher was almost beaten to death yesterday for simply wanting to peek into what Yuan Shuo was teaching!

It was best to stay away from old fellows like that!

In the meantime, Li Hao didn’t intend to conceal his strength after displaying the capabilities of a Slayer of Tens. It would be difficult to hide the Breathing Method of the Five Styles regardless as there was no mysterious power around his body. It was apparent with a single glance that he’d fully digested the energy.

Yuan Shuo had mentioned this was fine—this was how he was as well. It wasn’t an issue for the Night Watchers to be aware of it. All that mattered was that they didn’t know how to practice it.

Liu Long strode forward, rare admiration softening his tone.

“Not bad, you exceed my expectations! I was thinking that it wouldn’t be long before you become a Slayer after absorbing mysterious power, but that you’d still need more than a month!”

Li Hao had used only one day!

“This is all teacher’s credit, not mine!” responded a humble Li Hao. “When I visited teacher yesterday, I understood how truly strong he is! He was irate when someone tried to sneak a peek into his training and utilized strength he should’ve left alone. Teacher said he felt the advent of consciousness in that moment, that he was close to his old peak condition! It was then that he led me to comprehending the secret art of the Five Styles and used his mental strength to lead me to Slayer of Tens...”

Sorrow appeared on the young man’s face. “But teacher vomited blood after helping me break through and I’m afraid that... ai!”

Liu Long sighed as well; parts of his grudge suddenly faded away.

“This might be the end of the foremost grandmaster of martial dao in Silver Moon!” he offered with equal parts self-deprecation and grief. “I heard about what happened yesterday. Yuan Shuo suffered grave injuries a few years ago and someone tried to invade his privacy in his home. He utilized the full battle strength of a Sunderer of Hundreds in his rage and defeated two Darkmoon with a single blow...

“Ai! What a pity! He was probably very close to Dominator of Thousands in that moment and his consciousness was upon him. It’s a cultivation realm I’ve always yearned for—to think that you would see it before me!”

Liu Long was no longer surprised that Li Hao had set foot into Slayer of Tens. A peak Sunderer had once more sensed the consciousness in his final strike—a personage like that should’ve ascended to Dominator!

Unfortunately, Yuan Shuo was too old and his wounds too severe. All that resulted was a disciple reaching Slayer. It was such a damned shame when one mulled this matter over! Even Night Watcher experts would sigh with emotion when they heard of it.

Li Hao was still small fry after becoming a Slayer. It would've been a feat worthy of note only if Yuan Shuo set foot into Dominator.

The rest of the Demon Hunters looked oddly at Li Hao. The consciousness!

“The advent of the consciousness...” Liu Yan exclaimed. “That’s a hallmark of the Dominators! If Elder Yuan hadn’t been injured a few years ago, he would’ve taken another step forward and become a walking god in martial dao!”

How incredible, how amazing, how lucky, and how... pitiful!

Indeed, pitiful!

Such a grandmaster like him would never repeat the accomplishment.

Li Hao sighed as well and chuckled ruefully. “That’s why I wanted to try out my strength today and see if I live up to my teacher’s care! My heart won’t rest easy otherwise!”

“You’re good enough!” Liu Long inclined his head. “Chen Jian is mid Slayer, not a novice. Strictly speaking, if Slayer runs from ten to ninety-nine, he should be in the thirties! Of course, since he focuses on defense, it means you’re stronger than regular Slayers if you can beat him like this...”

This was only in terms of offensive power! The estimate was less obvious in terms of practical combat. There might be those weaker than Li Hao who could kill him.

“Brother Jian isn’t even hurt,” expressed a disappointed Li Hao. “I pulled out all the stops!”

“You want to injure him?” Liu Long chuckled. “Would we be who we are if you could hurt him? Chen Jian won’t be badly wounded by even a Sunderer. He didn’t utilize his Iron Shirt technique earlier. Do you actually think that’s all there is to him?”