

I Am Supreme

Chapter 36: What is This?

The guards felt outraged. It was certainly a humble gift, no doubt about it! He dared come up to the door of the Empire of Yutang's greatest military marshal with just five peaches and a self-satisfied look.

Young Master Yun was a brazen man indeed!

The guard went in to announce his arrival. Another guard came out instantly to invite the man in, wondering what would the Old Marshal's expression be once he saw the peaches. Now that he thought about it, he was certain that this was going to be an occasion worthy of much gossip.

Yun Yang thanked him and went straight in with his peaches. At the entrance of the foyer, Sir Wang smiled amicably. "Good, Young Master Yun is finally here. The Old Marshal is waiting in the hall."

With his status, it was impossible for Old Marshal Qiu to come welcome the man himself. In actual fact, with Yun Yang's second generation status, Sir Wang felt that the man had already been given too much honor when he sent to welcome the latter. However, it was an invitation initiated by the Old Marshal, Sir Wang could only humble himself and bite the bullet.

"Please, do come on in."

Yun Yang beamed as he entered the hall with high spirits. The sight of Old Marshal Qiu sitting regally in the host's seat greeted him, his intimidating aura welcoming the youth.

Yet Yun Yang's gaze was not on the old marshal but rather on the face of the other person in the room.

This person was in his mid-forties, his face square and jade-like. Although he was only dressed in a casual robe, he exuded an aura of natural authority and dignity. Even as he sat, it felt as if he had the whole world under his feet. Although the man was trying his hardest to keep his aura in check, it was still entirely exposed in Yun Yang's eyes. Moreover, Yun Yang had met this man, and more than once at that.

It was His Majesty the Emperor of the Empire of Yutang, Yu Peize!

Yun Yang didn't let his gaze linger and turned his head after a quick glance; maintaining his unaffected gaze and expression as he would have any other stranger – slightly curious, but cautious at the same time.

"Young Master Yun is indeed Marquis Yun's son; you both have the same charm," Qiu Jianhan broke the ice, in accordance with the duties of a host.

"It is my pleasure to meet Old Sir Qiu." Yun Yang bowed formally. "It is this one's honor to be invited by old sir. Regretfully, this one's home is incredibly poor and barren. I have heard my father mention that the Old Marshal enjoys peaches, so..."

Yun Yang raised the peaches in his hands.

"Uh..."

Although Old Marshal Qiu was as cunning as an old fox, he was still caught off guard by Yun Yang's actions. His thoughts ceased momentarily as he could only nod in stunned acceptance and forced a smile on his face, laughing dryly. "Ahem, truly, peaches are my favorite. Servant, come, keep these peaches away." His heart though, was saying, "I don't meet your rascal of a father that often, how would he know that I liked peaches? Isn't it amazing that I didn't even know that myself? I haven't so much as seen a peach for years! That little wretch."

Outwardly Old Marshal Qiu maintained a peacefully amicable expression. "As my guest, you are an outsider no longer. Come, allow me to introduce you to your... Uncle Yu. He is an old friend of your father."

"A pleasure to meet you, Uncle Yu." Yun Yang bowed courteously. "You look so much younger than my father. Just a single glance tells me that Uncle Yu is a powerful official who takes care of himself well. I am certain that you lead a happy life, filled with joyous moods, filial children, and a harmonious family."

His Majesty the Emperor did not know whether to laugh or cry upon hearing the youth's words as he said, "Please don't be nervous. We've asked for your presence today just to attend Old Marshal Qiu's ample feast; there is no other intention beyond that. Don't be an outsider, sit."

Yun Yang kept his arms wrapped around himself. "This nephew¹ is a good-for-nothing popinjay who has achieved nothing in both literature and martial arts. There is no place for this nephew in front of two distinguished elders such as yourselves..."

"Just sit when you're asked to sit!" Old Marshal Qiu hollered impatiently.

"Yes, yes. Right." Yun Yang shuddered in fright, chose stool timidly and sat down, half perched on the seat. He spoke nervously, "This... this nephew is afraid."

Seeing that he had finally sat down, Old Marshal Qiu and His Majesty the Emperor shared a look that expressed absolute disenchantment.

How could this fellow be so weak?

Courses of scrumptiously cooked dishes were served like an endless flow of water, the aroma wafting over to greet everyone's noses. Just a moment later, the table was filled with over twenty dishes of unsurpassed excellence.

"Do you drink?" Old Marshal Qiu was disappointed, his tone becoming harsh as he eyed askance at the young master.

"No... This nephew doesn't... doesn't drink," Yun Yang replied softly with a nervous bow.

"Do you drink or not!" The Old Marshal hollered again.

"... yes, yes, I do!" Yun Yang lifted his sleeve to dab at his forehead.

"Pour it to the brim!" The Old Marshal waved an impatient hand at Yun Yang, ordering him to quickly fill up the goblet.

"Yes, most certainly." Yun Yang hastily lifted the wine jar and filled the Old Marshal's goblet before filling His Majesty the Emperor's. Since His Majesty did not reveal his identity here, Yun Yang had poured the wine for the Old Marshal first, to keep up the pretense.

"Hmph!" Old Marshal's expression was turning darker as he raised his goblet. "Bottoms up!"

"I believe that this nephew should eat something first..." Yun Yang looked terribly uncomfortable at having so much drink on an empty stomach.

"Are you a woman, to behave so squeamishly? When I say bottoms up, you drink it all!" Old Marshal spoke angrily and with heat.

"Yes, yes..." Yun Yang raised the goblet with trembling hands and emptied it. He immediately choked on the fiery liquid, and began to cough and splutter. The Old Marshal and His Majesty the Emperor looked at each other in disappointment. These two figureheads of paramount importance had taken the effort and time out of their demanding schedules to evaluate this mysterious young man, but they were sorely disillusioned to observe the revolting spectacle before them.

"Eat something," Old Marshal said in disgust.

"Yes, yes... elder one, please eat as well; Uncle Yu, please eat... This nephew... this nephew has not been courteous." Yun Yang was obviously putting up a false front that belied his nervousness as he stretched his arm out and grabbed a big piece of meat that was about half a catty. With a large chomp, half of the half-catty meat had disappeared. Chewing twice, he stretched his neck like a giraffe's before he swallowed it and said in an unconvincing attempt at flattery, "It's really delicious!"

The veins on the Old Marshal's forehead were about to pop as His Majesty the Emperor lowered his head, his expression dark. The Old Marshal sighed and emptied his goblet, attempting to drown his sorrows in alcohol.

"Bottoms up!" Yun Yang raised his goblet stupidly, emulating the marshal's large swig to empty the liquid in his own goblet as well.

"This child is a simpleton." His Majesty the Emperor was crestfallen at the realization.

The Old Marshal sighed in response, "Yes, since Marquis Yun is rarely at home, this child..."

Halfway through his observation, he suddenly remembered, "Innocent? This fellow just insolently wrecked the residence of the Board of War's Deputy Minister yesterday, and beat up the father and son duo in the process!"

"How could such a person be so innocent?"

"Yun Yang."

"This nephew is here."

"Let me ask you something."

"Please ask all you wish, Old Marshal. This nephew will answer what this nephew knows without hiding anything."

"Why did you beat up the family of the Board of War's Deputy Minister Xie Wuyuan yesterday?" The Old Marshal was making only a marginal effort to keep his anger tamped down.

"Well..." Yun Yang was hesitant in answering the question and looked immensely troubled that it had been asked.

His Majesty the Emperor glanced at the Old Marshal and an unspoken agreement flashed between them. Let us ask him again after the alcohol loosens his tongue..

"Let's drink!" The Old Marshal caught on immediately as he lifted his goblet in a toast.

“Yes, yes.” Yun Yang emptied his goblet, wiping his mouth surreptitiously.

“Here’s another three more... Drink up!”

“Another three? Alright, alright.”

Clink! Clink! Clink!

“Look, our goblets are still full. Let’s do another three!”

Clink! Clink! Clink!

“Come, Uncle Yu will drink another three goblets with you!”

Clink! Clink! Clink!

Yun Yang ate ravenously as he drank the copious amounts of wine. With the increasing amount of alcohol that he had consumed, his actions grew unrestrained as he began to chortle and joke.

He had a mystical beast thigh in his left hand and a big piece of mystical beast drumstick in his right; he took a bite from both sides respectively as he relished the delicacy. His eyes were squinted as he grew increasingly tipsy and said, “Honestly... Old Marshal, this meat is really good! The dishes and drink tonight are really gratifying. This wine is simply... superb!”

Clink! He tossed down a goblet of wine without anyone prompting him to do so; his handsome face was already flushed as his body refused to respond properly to his instructions.

Well, it is about time.

Both old men nodded in agreement.

“Now, let me ask you again Yun Yang. Why did you beat people up yesterday?” The Old Marshal repeated his earlier question.

Yun Yang was already drunk and his head was tipped over as he spoke loudly, “Beat him? So what about it? It’s a pity I didn’t go all out! Hmph... such trash, the world will be a much cleaner place the faster he dies!”

“Why?” old marshal asked frowning.

“Why?” Yun Yang’s eyes took on a glazed quality as he forced himself to sit upright and spoke in a loud voice, “Old Marshal, you know as well as I do that this nephew is a good-for-nothing popinjay; this nephew...”

Old Marshal fell speechless while His Majesty the Emperor came close to spitting out all that he had eaten.

“But this nephew keeps score in his heart!” Yun Yang was swaying drunkenly.
“Yesterday, your father was prepared to keep his nose out of other people’s affairs.”

He had been using ‘this nephew’ earlier but now he had begun to lace it with lines of ‘your father’, causing both His Majesty the Emperor and the Old Marshal to look at each other in exasperation upon hearing it.

This is f*cking outrageous! In all the Empire of Yutang, no else but this fellow would dare to address himself as ‘your father’ in front of us!

Qiu Jianhan, with his long face, looked at His Majesty the Emperor with barely hidden resentment. “I said no, but your majesty insisted on having a look at him yourself. Look at what good it’s done us, look at what I’ve gotten out of this!”

“But Old Marshal, did you know? The person they harassed was actually a veteran! A handicapped veteran!” Yun Yang spoke with righteousness, his entire being lusted for justice, “This veteran had gone to the war for this nation; his living was already made difficult with his handicap. That f*cking son of Xie Wuyuan actually wanted to get his hands on his wife, by accusing him of theft.”

“This nephew is a good-for-nothing!” Yun Yang spoke loudly as his arms waved, the juicy drumstick in his hand spurted sauce everywhere; His Majesty the Emperor and the Old Marshal were both trying to avoid the drips with humorless smiles but Yun Yang did not notice. “But at least this nephew has a conscience! I know that soldiers went to the war for the country; they’re still heroes even when they’re handicapped!”

“It would be bad enough if they were harassing people and ordinary citizens, your father doesn’t have time to argue with them!” Yun Yang howled, “But how could they terrorize veterans? Since words were useless, your father had to intervene and take charge of the situation!”

“Therefore, your father helps in the name of justice! I charged into the doors of the Xie family and valiantly showered them with my kicks and punches!” Yun Yang’s eyes grew increasingly glazed. “... This is for... err... justice!”

He burped a few times then roared again, flailing his arms, “For justice! For heroes! It’s too bad I didn’t have a saber in my hands!”

He appeared to be slightly soberer as he sat down like a heap of potatoes and laughed in an ingratiating way, “Well, even if I did have a saber, I wouldn’t dare kill anyone with it anyway...”

His Majesty and the Old Marshal were flustered to the point of silence; sauces that had flown from Yun Yang's wild gesturing stained their robes. Although they had tried their best to avoid the splattering juices, the table was rather small, and they had no way shield themselves from the onslaught. The Old Marshal had sauce in his hair and beard; His Majesty the Emperor didn't fare much better as a lump of gravy dripped from his neck.

"These dishes are no longer edible." The marshal heaved a loud sigh but both of their jaws dropped in shock when they finally took a look at the spread in front of them.

Where did the dishes go?

What had happened to the meat?

Miraculously, the table was empty.

Translator Note:

1This nephew (小侄xiǎo zhí): first person pronoun to humbly address self as someone's nephew.

Chapter 37: Disappointment, Verification, and a Dispatch of Undercover Guards

The Old Marshal and His Majesty the Emperor stared incredulously at Yun yang who was devouring his mystical beast drumstick with relish, oil dripping from his mouth. For these two stalwarts who had already seen a great deal in life, it was all they could do to refrain from awarding the uncouth fellow a solid slap across the face for his insolence.

There were at least f*cking twenty-eight courses and sixteen meat dishes among those. We've only managed to eat one or two portions of vegetables, how in the world did this child eat all of the rest? How many years has it been since he's eaten a full meal?

"You may eat slowly," His Majesty the Emperor felt a sudden rush of sympathy for this young man who had clearly seen some hard times in his life. "You don't have to rush," he continued with a slightly less harsh tone.

"Ooh!... it's okay, ooh, ooh!... This meat is absolutely delicious!" Yun Yang mumbled with a mouth full of food, his words almost inaudible. "Our family is poor... I haven't had a chance to eat meat for the longest time ever!"

His Majesty stared at the walls while the Old Marshal kept his gaze lowered; both avoiding direct eye contact with Yun Yang. They certain that they would slap him if they continued to observe his boorish behavior. How f*cking old are you now? Haven't eaten meat for some years? Is your family poor? Don't you realize thaw we know you've just won a nation's fortune just days before?

This rascal!

"I beg your pardon, but what about that immense fortune that you have so fortuitously won just days ago?" The Old Marshal had his hackles raised, his suspicions beginning to surface again.

"I asked someone to sell them off." Yun Yang picked up a large bowl of sauce and gulped it down. "I haven't gotten the gold or silver taels from the just yet."

If he wasn't in his own home, the Old Marshal would have run off with his face in his hands. Do you think you're eating a big pot dish¹? Don't you realize that it's improper to eat in such a manner?

"Let's have a few more dishes served!" The Old Marshal's expression was as dark as it could possibly get.

"How scrumptious!"

...

"Looks like it's just a coincidence."

...

Could this all be just a pretense?

His Majesty the Emperor pondered upon the possibility. With his eyes darting about, he turned towards the Old Marshal and said, "Old Qiu, about the political affairs of our empire currently..."

Old Marshal Qiu was quick enough to be able to catch up and keep the ball rolling. "Yes, yes, it has been a very difficult time."

"Unrest on the inside and chaos on the outside."

"Indeed..."

"I think His Majesty does not feel at ease with this situation."

"Absolutely agreed."

“Among the descendants of His Majesty, which one does Old Qiu think... could bear the grand responsibility?” His Majesty the Emperor asked succinctly.

Old Marshal Qiu was struck a sudden blow by the unexpected question, almost frightened off his seat.

Why the f*ck are you bringing this up now? Your identity is being kept a secret, but I know that you're the Emperor. How am I supposed to answer your question?

It was a dead-end road; bound to be incorrect either way. The Old Marshal's forehead was dotted with sweat.

His Majesty laughed and redirected his question to Yun Yang, “Nephew from Yun Family, do you know the princes of His Majesty? Let us hear your opinion on them!”

The Old Marshal wiped off the sweat beaded on his forehead, visibly relieved to be let off the hook.

Of course, the question is meant to test this cretin. Have pity, your father, with his slow mind, almost ruined it all. As an Emperor of the dynasty, it would never be an officials' place to give any advice regarding this question. Any suggestion, logical or otherwise, would still be deemed inappropriate.

His Majesty's sudden attack was not only targeted towards Yun Yang but was also meant to test the Old Marshal's mettle. The Emperor seemed pleased with the Old Marshal's performance, or lack thereof.

When Yun Yang heard the question, he could not help but scratch his head and replied, “His Majesty the emperor's sons... I have absolutely no clue.” He burped grossly before continuing, “No matter who becomes the Emperor in the future, it's got nothing to do with me. This nephew is incompetent, I will never be an official. If I make a small fortune every now and then, I'm certain it won't offend the Emperor... so...”

“I don't really care who takes the throne.”

Yun Yang spoke in an indolent tone, “Whoever the f*ck feels like being an emperor, he can go f*cking go ahead and be one!”

Slap!

The Old Marshal could no longer tolerate the young man's insolence and slapped his face into a dish of fish soup on the table. How dare the little rascal speak like this! The corners of His Majesty's lips twitched in horrified amusement as well. This little rascal was incredibly tactless.

They then probed him with a few more questions but Yun Yang's innocent and utterly moronic act had them completely fooled into believing that he was a good-for-nothing popinjay. Both His Majesty the Emperor and Old Marshal Qiu were helpless; both of them had brought themselves low to hold this feast and invited this young man in hopes of finding a hint of the enormous force that was the Nine Supremes' subordinates. It was also partially due to their curiosity regarding Marquis Yun's son.

However, it seemed now that everything they had hoped for had been too good to be true. This fellow would never have anything to do with the Nine Heavens Dictum.

It was impossible that the Nine Heavens Dictum would ever recruit such a person. Thinking about this, both His Majesty and the Old Marshal lost their interest all at once. It was such a terrible waste that both of them had invited him over so cordially and had everyone retreat in preparation to hear secrets being told.

By the look of things now, they had gotten nothing out of this whole endeavor other than frustration!

Exchanging disappointed looks, His Majesty stood up first. "Marshal, I suddenly recall something that needs my attention elsewhere." His Majesty was indeed a certified champion for being able to conjure undone chores in the midst of drinking but of course, he did not care how others viewed him, especially not this Young Master Yun.

It was already an incredible opportunity for this young man to be able to sneak a peek at the Emperor's face. It would be impossible for him to do so again, in future.

"Then, Brother Yu you must, of course, take your leave."

The Old Marshal naturally knew how to respond appropriately and stood up politely. Inwardly, he felt a keen sense of abandonment. "You're the Emperor, the most powerful individual here! How could you just leave me to face this popinjay all by myself?"

Yun Yang stood up in surprise as well. "Uncle Yu is leaving already?"

"Yes, I am." His Majesty forced a smile and said, "Young man, continue to learn more from the Old Marshal."

With that, His Majesty the Emperor left, almost running in his haste to be away.

He was afraid his patience would crumble altogether if he were to continue to face this young fellow. Besides, he had barely eaten throughout the meal. I will have to find some food once I reach the palace!

...

Without outsiders anywhere, the Old Marshal's expression turned sour.

“Yun Yang, have you eaten your fill?” Of course, the Old Marshal fully intended to send him packing the moment he agreed that he was full.

“Well, not really,” Yun Yang answered truthfully, the very picture of innocence. When a guest heard this from a host, one would immediately know that the host intended to call it a night. Obviously, Young Master Yun was completely oblivious to decorum.

“Serve another ten dishes!” The old marshal hollered to the servants, the anger apparent in his tone.

Not yet full?

Your father will make sure you leave this place bloated!

“Oh, but there’s something else,” Yun Yang wiped his mouth and said, “This nephew has almost forgotten...”

“What is it?” the marshal asked irately.

“Someone came up to me when I was on my way here, and asked me to bring something to you. I’ve completely forgotten about it,” Yun Yang replied, his brow furrowed in concentration.

“Bring me something?” The marshal frowned, “Who was it?”

Yun Yang managed to invoke a terrified expression as he answered, “Someone really fierce. He said he would kill me if I didn’t pass it to you.”

The Old Marshal was almost beside himself with impatience, “Get to the point, what was it?”

Yun Yang took a small package out of his robe and said guiltily, “I almost forgot about it.”

The Old Marshal’s eye widened in shock.

On the small cloth package lay the symbol of nine stars surrounding a flame in the center. The Old Marshal’s heart began to beat faster and moisture began to gather in his eyes. Holding the package tightly in his hands, he asked in a trembling voice, “What did the person look like?”

Yun Yang helpfully described the mysterious individual, “Seems like a very short man, but strongly built. I can’t tell beyond that. I... I didn’t look properly.”

The Old Marshal almost slapped the man. You didn’t carefully look at such an important messenger?

Yun Yang's heart was calm like an old, quiet, well.

He knew of his feelings and his situation now. Other than himself, Yun Yang dared not trust anymore – not even the Emperor!

The Nine Supremes' death was filled with too many mysteries!

Did the Emperor have a motive to kill them? Most certainly.

Even towards the Old Marshal, Yun Yang was only able to trust him at a level of sixty percent. Even if he had fully trusted him, he would never fully expose himself in front of the Old Marshal.

An Emperor who could not keep a secret would lose his empire, an official who could not keep a secret would lose his life! As for Yun Yang, he felt that if he could not keep his secret, he would lose all hope!

The Old Marshal was already lost in his own thoughts as he held onto the package.

When Yun Yang bid his leave, the Old Marshal only waved his hands; his thoughts had entirely gone elsewhere. His concern was in the small package in his hands and were no longer on Yun Yang.

By the time Yun Yang stepped out of the marshal's residence, stars had decorated the night sky. He took in a deep breath and stumbled back after waving his hands about. Behind him, in the shadows by the door, Sir Wang watched Yun Yang's retreating silhouette like a hawk. With a wave of his hand, four shadows floated off like spirits and began to silently follow him.

Yun Yang had only taken a few steps when he felt the presence of trailing spirits behind his back. He did nothing to acknowledge them, and instead went to vomit on the ground, holding onto a tree by the roadside before stumbling back his own residence groggily.

To everyone who could be watching, he was nothing but a drunken popinjay. The four spirit-like shadows had dissipated after exchanging looks of fruitlessness when they saw Yun Yang stumble into the Residence of Yun.

Behind the tree by the roadside, a tiny head popped out.

Ji Ling's eyes darted around as she mumbled, "This lout is putting on a show again... why is this he always cheating people?"

In the Residence of Marshal, the Old Marshal looked at the contents of the package. His expression was dark and unchanging. There was only a single tiny box inside. He was

familiar with the secret method of opening it. It was obviously placed to prevent Young Master Yun, who had brought this package over, from sneaking a peek.

Opening the box, a sheet of paper laid inside.

“Incidents at the Residence of Marshal : Three Days Ago.”

“Three days ago, the Residence of Marshal had been attacked. On duty to investigate as ordered, our findings are as follows.”

Just these few words had the Old Marshal bitterly crying.

Investigate as ordered!

As ordered by whom?

Who else could give an order to the Nine Heavens Dictum?

The old marshal took a few deep breaths to calm his emotions down before he continued reading.

“Since the sword’s disappearance in the northeast direction of Tiantang, the inquiry has verified the entry of a total of one hundred and thirty-seven thousand martial artists who are mystical level and above from Tiantang City’s east, north, and south, all within three days. Among them were three thousand and four hundred people who were not in place; seven of them with a cultivation base of fifth heaven and above. Perhaps some might be missed, however...”

“... Among the seven people, three of the accused were related to us; the other four are to be suspected as well. The duty has personally analyzed, XX, XX, and found them to be the most likely suspects, with our justifications as below... Between the two of them, one of them has publicly revealed his identity while the other hides his name behind a blacksmith’s trade... The inquiry believes that this blacksmith could be the culprit.”

“... End. Should there be incompetence found in this inquiry, any punishment rendered will be dutifully accepted.”

“Should these findings be true, the inquiry sincerely requests on behalf of all the Dictum’s brothers that the culprit’s life be left in the Dictum’s hands.”

At the end of the missive was the familiar nine stars symbol but now a drop of crimson blood decorated the center.

The letter was about fifteen to sixteen pages long, explaining the important points of each step and linked the receiving of orders to their execution in exquisite detail.

Anyone reading the letter would immediately understand what these people had worked on, if they were effective, and if the final result was credible.

Old Marshal Qiu Jianhan heaved a deep sigh; he was both satisfied and comforted but he was also disappointed and saddened.

He had seen the reports of the Nine Heavens Dictum and now understood that each mission by the Nine Heavens Dictum would clearly list the person in charge for each link.

However, the document in his hands now did not contain such a section. It was obviously for fear that he would hunt them down upon knowing their names. This meant that they were still unwilling to confront him face to face.

“Pass the order!” The old marshal sucked in a deep breath. “Dispatch the undercover guards!”

Slap!

The old marshal slapped the table.

The table, which had been constructed of solid jade, turned into powder at the touch of his hand, with a loud crack.

The Old Marshal jumped up in shock, his eyes bulging out as he looked at the pile of powder on the floor and the broken dishes; he was too aghast to speak.

What... what is going on?

Translator Note:

1big pot dish (大锅菜 dà guō cài): famous traditional dish that is common in the north of China; it is a pot of simple daily ingredients like vegetables, noodles, meat, tofu and various ingredients braised together.

Chapter 38: As Busy as a Marketplace!

The Old Marshal looked down at his own hand, unable to fathom what had just happened.

His table, which had been made of solid jade, was a gift from His Majesty the Emperor and was considered a treasured gem. How could it have shattered with just a slap? Even if he had slapped it using his entire cultivation base, it still should not have shattered into such fine particles! At most, it would have just developed cracks.

Yet how could he explain the sight in front of him?

His Majesty the Emperor could not have done this, and as for Yun Yang... The Old Marshal was certain that his cultivation base had not yet achieved the first heaven of mystical Qi and that the fellow had not even crossed the first peak. To turn this jade dining table into fine dust while maintaining its shape without anyone noticing was just plain impossible.

"This is sheer madness..."

The corners of the old marshal's lips curled up in amazement, he sincerely believed that this could be constituted as one of the wonders of the world!

...

When Yun Yang got home, Lao Mei looked bemused and even Fang Mofei wore a strange expression on his face.

"Young master, ever since you went out today, our residence has been plagued by a constant stream of guests." Lao Mei had to tone his grin down a notch. This was the first time in his three years in the Residence of Yun that it had gotten as busy as a noisy marketplace, with an endless tide of people coming and going.

"Who were they?"

"Ling Family, Ma Family, Qin Family... all seven young masters had people sent over. Among them, the young masters from the Family of Ling, Ma, and Qin had come personally while the others had men coming over, bearing a multitude of gifts."

"Certainly. What else?"

"The young masters of East, South, West, and North all came today as well." This practically covered the eleven families who had appeared today.

"Yes, yes."

"Furthermore, there were six or seven... beautiful ladies who came bringing their guards and maids. They looked rather put out when they knew that the young master wasn't in." Lao Mei looked at his young master with a mystified air, unable to comprehend all of these.

Since when was his young master such a ladies' man for so many beautiful ladies to come to their residence just to pay him a visit?

Yun Yang pinched the bridge of his nose and slowly massaged the spot with two fingers as he asked, "Are they all gone?"

"They are all gone. Young Master Dong Tianleng came by to wait here the entire afternoon. He only just left not too long ago, heaving deep sighs to himself." Lao Mei said.

"There's no need to bother about him." Yun Yang felt it was a wise decision to hide outside for the whole day. So many people had come for him, the continuous efforts at socialization would probably have given him a splitting headache.

"How are you today, Old Fang?"

"Better than yesterday," Fang Mofei replied with a confident now.

"Rightly so." Yun Yang nodded and went to his room reeking of alcohol. However, the moment he entered his room, the smell of spirits and the bewildered look he sported vanished in an instance.

"Meow..."

Meawoo..."

Weak whimpers emanated from the corner of Yun Yang's blanket on his bed. It soon raised itself and four tiny snow-white heads popped out. They looked like a set of quadruple kittens on the outside but their individual mewlings were sufficiently different to set them apart.

All four little critters continued to hide their bodies in the blanket and only their heads showed, eight pairs of glassy eyes looking at Yun Yang.

Yun Yang was overwhelmed by their lovable mannerisms at once.

"Have I not told you little critters a few times by now?" Yun Yang frowned and pulled a long face in front of the three tiny Eclipse Panthers. "Don't go 'meawoo' next time. Say 'meow'. Is that so hard to remember?"

"Meawoo..." The three little beasts looked at Yun Yang as if he was wrong in the head as they mewled once more.

"Alright, you've got me there." Yun Yang smacked his forehead. The three tiny beasts waddled out of the blanket and happily clambered on Yun Yang.

Yun Yang felt an inordinate sense of accomplishment. Eclipse Panthers would normally make sounds that resonated 'ooawoo', rather similar to that of a tiger's, but Yun Yang had already forcefully changed them into 'meawoo'.

He was already halfway there. If he managed to change the other half... these little guys would most probably have caused a commotion in the mystical beast world. They

would become Eclipse Panthers that mewled 'meow' like a cat, an utterly groundbreaking feat. Apparently, Yun Yang was steadily making progress on this route.

...

Yun Yang sat down with folded legs and began cultivating. The Endless Divine Art gradually began to flow once more. Yun Yang was intent on breaking through the first peak today! However, even as he began, Yun Yang could already feel a difference in his surroundings..

This time, his meridians seemed to possess an additional load of spiritual Qi. Besides, his mystical Qi had gushed out violently the moment he began cultivating. It was much stronger compared to it's levels this morning! This was normally a situation that could only occur after going through the first peak.

What was going on?

Yun Yang grasped hold of his mystical Qi as he began to charge through his level but strangely, there was no difficulty whatsoever, He had practically gone through without encountering a barrier! Furthermore, the spiritual Qi in his meridians still had the excess energy to push his cultivation base forward a tiny bit beyond after stabilizing the first level.

Yun Yang's dantian's Qi had only dissipated after he managed to break through the first level. Before he could examine himself, he dived into his subconscious. The excess energy he felt had come from the inside and was definitely not an external force.

Other than Emmie, there was no other possibility. As the surroundings began to gain clarity, Emmie could be seen swaying around happily like it was dancing.

Squinting to take a closer look, he saw that Emmie's fresh green leaves had turned shades darker!

Catching sight of Yun Yang, Emmie got even more excited as it shook once before a fine vine extended towards Yun Yang.

It had even grown its vine now, and it could extend itself to such a great length! Yun Yang was suddenly frightened as he pulled himself out of his subconscious with a 'sha' sound, leaving Emmie's fine vine hanging in midair as it could not react in time.

Why did he leave so fast when he had just gone in?

Yun Yang briskly examined his body to see what he had lost once he came out of his subconscious. Had something by his side been devoured? Shockingly, he did not notice anything missing after checking high and low. Looking at Emmie, it was definite that it had absorbed something of great nourishment. Otherwise, it was impossible to have such a distinct change.

But what had it consumed?

Yun Yang went into his subconscious again. After much threatening, Emmie leaves finally drooped helplessly and projected an image of a table, indicating the item it had devoured earlier.

Yun Yang was dumbfounded upon seeing it.

Was this not the table in Old Marshal Qiu's house that had been made with Cooling Heart Nephrite? He had just dined on that table just now!

It was said that His Majesty the Emperor had taken pity on the Old Marshal who had devoted his entire life to serving the military and had specifically gifted a set of gems to him. The set that included a bed, table, chairs, and cutlery that were all made from Cooling Heart Nephrite. It was the only set of its kind in the entire Empire of Yutang!

Who would have known that the table with magical properties would be consumed in this manner once the Old Marshal had invited him over? Yun Yang was at a loss for words. Looking at the dejected Emmie with its drooping leaves, he did not have the heart to chide it. He could only sigh and try to think of a way to make it up to the Old Marshal in future.

Sigh, it was fortunate that the Old Marshal had not asked him to stay the night, otherwise the bed would have met the same fate!

As Yun Yang's train of thoughts carried him to a logical conclusion, a hint of regret arose, "Why didn't I behave better? If the Old Marshal had asked me to stay the night, then his bed would have been eaten as well!"

...

Throughout the night, Yun Yang cultivated endlessly, turning the excess energy that came from within him into his own. The Endless Divine Art flowed through him in endless loops.

Whatever gem it was, it was still only a gem. There was no external force that could compare to having that force himself! It was only when his meridians felt like exploding that Yun Yang had stopped.

Amidst this process, a tiny shadow came in from outside the window. Yun Yang did not have to open his eyes to know that it was the Eclipse Panther he had sent away for a mission. Seeing that Yun Yang was cultivating when it came back, the panther hopped right into his embrace and stayed there quietly, not returning for the entire night.

The three Eclipse Panthers and the Lightning Cat that had been with Yun Yang all this while stayed obediently by his side, not fighting for a spot in his embrace.

All of them knew that the eldest among them was carrying out its mission outside and was rarely back, thus the best spot had to be reserved for it. After all, they had plenty of chances as they were staying by their master's side the entire time.

It was dawn when the tiny white silhouette made a slow walk around Yun Yang longingly before leaping out of the window again.

...

Yun Yang opened his eyes slowly as a flash of light gleamed through them. One would only see the first heaven after conquering the first peak. One peak would be more difficult than the other. Before breaking the first level, Yun Yang was but a tiny shrimp in a vast ocean. Although he had mastered countless techniques and experience within himself, he could not utilize any of them. However, upon breaking through the first level, he had finally obtained the ability to protect himself, even if it was a weak one.

Moreover, the resilient mystical Qi in his body made him feel utterly rejuvenated!

Yun Yang picked himself up. He was still in high spirits even though he had not slept for the whole night.

A peculiar jade glimmered in his hand. Yun Yang cultivated to activate it and letters began to materialize on the jade's surface;

"Fierce battle broke out in the north of the city during midnight. Four undercover guards dead, thirteen injured; culprit fled bearing heavy injuries. Tracking is in progress."

"No results regarding the assassination of Young Master Yun."

"No results regarding the assassination of Young Master Yun."

"No results. Suspect that the assassin has left Tiantang after missing the target."

...

No results.

Yun Yang's eye gleamed wickedly.

Could the assassin really have left?

Yun Yang sincerely doubted it but he quickly put the thought away. Since the assassin had accepted the mission, he would not give up that easily and would wait for the opportunity to arise again. That was certainly not a matter of terrible concern.

However, as for the killer who had escaped, that was another matter altogether. He had actually slipped through the exceptional hands of the Residence of Marshal and Yun Yang could only wait for news to arrive before he would find out more.

The more urgent matter that awaited him right now was none other than Dong Tianleng – Young Master Dong, who had been waiting by the door since early morning!

When Yun Yang caught sight of Dong Tianleng, he was astounded. They had only been apart for one day but Dong Tianleng looked completely different now.

“You’re...” Yun Yang looked at the wreck in front of him. His eyes were blacker than that of a panda’s, his nose crooked and his lips had a two-inch swell; his ears were torn and his face sported various degrees of colors...

In short, he looked nothing like how did yesterday!

“I’m Dong Tianleng...” Dong Tianleng opened his mouth to speak in a agonized tone; he was trying hard to open his swollen eyes that were only slits now. Yun Yang could see that his gums were still bleeding.

“...” Yun Yang was at a loss for words.

He had just left him for a single night. How did he end up looking like he had been walloped by one hundred burly men?

“What is the meaning of this?” Yun Yang looked over at the two guards beside Dong Tianleng. They looked peacefully calm, with not a single sign of injury on them. They did not even seem bothered to see their own young master beaten up to a pulp.

This was remarkably bizarre!

Besides, the Double-Headed Elysian Lion was also missing patches of fur and was bleeding all over its entire body. Judging by its sorry state, it was obvious that it had also been beaten up as well.

Yun Yang did not know what to make of this entire state of affairs.

If they had been in battle, Dong Tianleng’s guards would have died before allowing the young master to arrive at such a state but these two men looked perfectly fine and dandy!

Chapter 39: I’m Really F*cking Cheap...

"It's quite a long story," Dong Tianleng sighed dramatically. "I have the worst possible luck ever."

"Bad luck?" Yun Yang's eyes goggled in incredulity.

It must have been terribly bad luck indeed for him to have ended up in this state!

"Well, last night, I waited for you for quite a while before I left. You didn't come back..." Dong Tianleng glared at Yun Yang irritably and spat, his saliva flecked with blood. "Since I had nothing much to do, I went out to seek for a wager..."

A wager?

Yun Yang was terribly confused. What kind of wager could he have gotten himself into?

"Clearly, I lost." Dong Tianleng said regretfully. "It was a simple wager; everyone was in for the fun of it. Each person placed a bet of a hundred mystical stones and a medicinal pill. We agreed that there would be roughhousing, but no deaths. The bet was that whoever lost has to be beaten up by his enemy, bad enough that even his own mother would not recognize him."

Yun Yang's eyes twitched at the thought of such ridiculous conditions.

"Which son of a b*tch set this idiotic rule?" Yun Yang was in disbelief. "You actually agreed to it?"

Both guards coughed simultaneously and seemed to be looking everywhere else at once.

Dong Tianleng blinked rapidly and looked at Yun Yang with a certain measure of guilt in his eyes. "Well, ahem, that son of a b*tch just happens to be... me."

Yun Yang experienced a paroxysm of coughing upon hearing that.

Dong Tianleng quickly defended himself and said, "The younger generation of the great families are all very competitive and refused to acknowledge the possibility that others could be better. This sort of arrogance had caused several unnecessary deaths... until all the families unanimously agreed to this rule. It was a way for us younger ones to compete against each other without any fatal mishaps occurring. It was a peaceful way to solve our grudges."

Yun Yang couldn't help grinning at the irony of the statement.

"Gradually, everyone began quarreling, but it wasn't enough to fully vent the pent-up anger. It was about then that I suggested this wager. In future, whoever loses can be walloped by his opponent as a way to vent their anger but the opponent cannot beat

him to death. He has to, however, beat him up until his own mother wouldn't be able to recognize him... and the loser is not allowed to apply any medication or attempt to heal his injuries; he has to wait for it to heal naturally."

Yun Yang sighed despondently.

"Who would have known that ever since the wager was formed, I would usually end up being the one who got a trashing." Dong Tianleng said with a sniff, "There have been only eight wagers, but I've lost five times already."

Yun Yang was at a loss as to how to respond to this level of idiocy...

With your IQ, you were allowed to set the rules of this game?

"Then why are you here this early in the morning instead of resting in the tavern?"

What Yun Yang had truly wanted to say was "I'm very busy" but he was too nice a person to do so without feeling a twinge of guilt.

"I believe that you are the only one who can help me," Dong Tianleng said looking at Yun Yang with undisguised admiration.

"Me?" Yun Yang's said in strangled voice. You bunch of second generation children with all your crazy games; what could I possibly help you with?

"Yes, you're the forefather of popinjays!" Dong Tianleng said in adoration, "Among the people whom I have met, no one can challenge you in these games; no one can be a better popinjay than you. If you help me, it's an absolute certainty that we will be able to beat these people."

Dong Tianleng said hopefully and adoringly, "Big brother, my lord, I ask that you use your enriched experience of being a popinjay to give these opponents of mine the trashing of their lives!"

Enriched experience of being a popinjay...

Yun Yang felt like crying woefully.

I really don't have it!

Looking at Dong Tianleng's hopeful gaze, Yun Yang said helplessly, "Look, I really can't help you with this."

"No..." Dong Tianleng begged, "Big brother, my lord, blood brother! As long as you help me, to beat those three bastards up just this once, I'll do anything you want me to! I will give you anything you want!"

"I don't want anything from you and I don't want you to do anything as well. I can't help you." Yun Yang remained adamant.

"You're really not helping me?"

"No!"

"You're really willing to just stand there and watch me die?" Dong Tianleng's expression was incredulous.

"No means no!"

Yun Yang was unaffected by Dong Tianleng's play at sympathy.

Plop!

Dong Tianleng dropped to his knees in front of Yun Yang.

"What on earth are you doing?" Yun Yang tried to drag the hapless fellow up.

"I won't get up if you won't help me!" Dong Tianleng spoke with stubborn determination.

"Get up and we'll talk about it!"

"I won't get up even if I die if you don't help me! It's meaningless for me to live if you don't help me to win. I'll just kneel here until death comes to claim me! I'll take my own life first before I let anyone move me from this spot!"

Dong Tianleng spotted his two guards who were moving over to pull him up and hollered, "I'll break my meridians! I'll starve to death! I'll kneel to death! I'll...I'll behead myself with my sword!"

"I don't want to live anymore, and there's nothing that you all can do about it!"

Yun Yang was out of his wits. He had gone along with the flow when facing Ji Ling's threat previously but he always had a way out. Now though, he faced a knave who would not budge with force nor with persuasion, with oil nor salt, who simply refused to be swayed.

Yun Yang felt a terrible headache start to bloom between his eyes. He pleaded to the guards "Are you fellows not bothered by your young master's behavior?"

Both guards wore twin bitter smiles. "Young Master Yun, it's not that we're not bothered but we really can't do anything about it."

"It's no use going after them!" Dong Tianleng knelt on the ground as he roared with newfound strength, "It's useless going after anyone! Even if you ask my father to come over, it would be useless as well! I am my own man and I'm not getting up until I decide to do so!"

Yun Yang was rendered utterly helpless by this young master's hysterical behavior.

"Look even if I could, I don't even know how to help. I don't even know what you fellows are betting on." Yun Yang massaged his temples, feeling terribly exhausted by this brief encounter.

"So you've agreed to help me?" Dong Tianleng raised his head in delighted surprise.

"Why don't you tell me about it and I'll see if I can help," Yun Yang replied non-committedly.

"We bet on mystical beasts!" Dong Tianleng sighed, "We placed wagers on eighth level mystical beasts this time but we have no control over grown eighth level beasts so we placed bets using young ones. Two beasts would fight and the one that wins will move on to fight with another one that's won. The final round would be on the wagers mentioned earlier."

"My Double-headed Elysian Lion..." Dong Tianleng looked like he had f*cked a dog. "I thought it was already the cream of the crop. Who knew those bastards managed to get their hands on a Silvertail Howler¹, the young of an eighth level pinnacle mystical beast. It's one level higher than mine, an eighth level intermediate."

"That's two levels higher." Yun Yang snorted before saying, "Eighth level intermediate, eighth level ace, eighth level pinnacle. That's two levels higher and still, you went ahead with the fight... how could you possibly win?"

"That's how I lost." Dong Tianleng said pitifully, "My lord, just look at how badly I've been beaten!"

"I really can't help you with this." Yun Yang shook his head. "Two levels higher, just the restrictions stemming from the level difference could kill you. If they keep using this Silvertail Howler to fight you, you would lose even if you tried to fight a hundred times."

"But that Silvertail Howler is younger than mine." Dong Tianleng said hurriedly, "That one is only three years and five months old, mine is already six years old. Six years old! It's still possible to win!"

Yun Yang sighed. Theoretically, it was possible.

Realistically however, he would undoubtedly lose.

Unless... I take a personal hand in training this dog of a Double-headed Elysian Lion.

Perhaps he could help after all.

“Dong Tianleng...” Yun Yang murmured to himself and finally said frowning, “Let’s put it this way. If you can give me a single piece of information, I’ll help you with this.”

“Big brother, just ask and you shall have it!” Dong Tianleng jumped to his feet in high spirits, his movements spry and agile. “I will give you whatever information you wish! Even if you want my father’s information, I will also...”

“Hold it!” Yun Yang said exasperatedly. “Follow me.”

“You fellows wait right here!” Dong Tianleng ordered his guards and turned to follow Yun Yang.

The guards looked at each other wordlessly, certain that their young master had been bewitched.

They had humbled themselves to ask their young master this question two nights earlier, “Why do you treat Yun Yang so differently?” Thinking back on their young master’s answer had them both feeling absolutely... f*cked.

There are a lot of reasons. First, Boss Yun is not an eyesore to me; second, if I were placed in his shoes to do what he did, I wouldn’t dare to; third, he’s not an eyesore to me; fourth, he’s not an eyesore to me.”

Both the guards had no reasonable response to this madness.

Not an eyesore!

Beautiful women are not an eyesore to your father either! What kind of a reason is this?

...

In the room, the two men stopped to converse.

“Dong Tianleng.” Yun Yang said, “I’ve always been curious about the most mysterious clan in the martial arts world.”

“The most mysterious clan?” Dong Tianleng asked in curiosity, “The Concourse of the Underworld?”

“No.” Yun Yang said, “A clan even more mysterious than the Concourse of the Underworld.”

“Such a clan does not exist.” Dong Tianleng said with unshakeable certainty.

“Doesn’t exist?” Yun Yang frowned. “Are you sure?”

“I am absolutely certain of it.” Dong Tianleng nodded seriously.

Yun Yang kept quiet for a heartbeat before asking, “What about the Four Seasons Tower?”

Dong Tianleng’s expression took on a sickly look.

“Shush!” Dong Tianleng looked like he was about to throw himself over to cover Yun Yang’s mouth. “Big brother, my lord, your words are going to get one, if not both of us killed. How did you find out about the Four Seasons Tower?”

Yun Yang’s eyes shone in triumph. “You know about it?”

“I don’t know anything about it.” Dong Tianleng replied through gritted teeth. “My advice is that you remain ignorant about it as well. That sort of knowledge is not conducive to a long and healthy life.”

Yun Yang spread his arms wide. “Then I have no choice in the matter. You can go get yourself beaten to death. I can’t help you anymore.”

“Dong Tianleng looked utterly miserable as Yun Yang walked over to the door, with no intention to linger.

“Big brother, don’t...” Dong Tianleng pulled at his sleeve.

Yun Yang already had a foot out the door. “Please leave, I still have lots to do today.”

“I really don’t know much...” Dong Tianleng was terribly distraught over the matter.

“I don’t want to hear about it anyway.” Yun Yang looked at him weirdly. “I really have something urgent to do.”

Dong Tianleng finally said helplessly, “Alright, I’ll tell you everything I know. But you’ll have to tell me why you want to know about Four Seasons Tower?”

“I have things to do. I don’t want to know about it anymore.” Yun Yang flung Dong Tianleng’s hand away.

“Don’t, don’t, don’t...” Dong Tianleng was in utter panic. Looking at Yun Yang’s cold demeanor, he let loose a string of expletives, “Big brother, I won’t ask anymore. I’ll just tell you everything, alright?”

"I'm not asking and I don't want to hear it." Yun Yang rolled his eyes and turned about to leave.

"Don't... Big brother..."

Seeing that he could not stop him, Dong Tianleng dropped to his knees again, and wailed in desperation, "Big brother, I beg of you to ask me and hear me out!"

With a loud smack, Dong Tianleng slapped himself as he said tearfully, "I'm really f*cking cheap..."

...

—

Translator Note:

1Silvertail Howler (银尾吼yín wěi hǒu): mystical beast with its concept derived from Chinese legendary creature that has ten characteristics that resembles animals: horns like a deer, head like a camel, ears like a cat, eyes like a shrimp, mouth like a donkey, hair like a lion, neck like a snake, belly like a giant shellfish, scales like a koi, front paws like an eagle, and rear paws like a tiger; legends says it if one of the Dragon King's son that has the habit of guarding.

Chapter 40: Information, Training a Lion and Prepping for a Fight

"The Four Seasons Tower is one of the most mysterious clans in the martial arts world. However, it doesn't exactly belong entirely to martial arts." Dong Tianleng began. "No one knows the origins of the Four Seasons Tower. Nonetheless, we know that they secretly exist within the martial arts world, the imperial courts of the various empires, in the powerful clans and family sects, in the backbones of the eight great families and even among the experts from the hidden families."

Even the mere mention of this immutable force in Dong Tianleng's opening words gave Yun Yang chills.

"But the Four Seasons Tower has never made its name known in the martial arts world. It has completely and utterly incognito in all of its operations. There are only a handful of people in this world who has even heard of their existence."

"This organization is closer to being a religion than a clan.." Dong Tianleng lowered his voice. "I believe that there is the presence of the Four Seasons Tower in our Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter families, solely because the names make up the four seasons of a year," Dong Tianleng said.

Yun Yang maintained an air of casual indifference, "Are they so very mysterious? I have heard people mentioning it a few days ago and thought that everyone knew about it."

"Everyone knows about it?" Dong Tianleng snorted, "This is the Four Seasons Tower we're talking about! The most mysterious clan of all time in the Tianxuan Continent. Legend has it that Ling Xiaozui and the Four Seasons Tower were at war for an entire century yet Ling Xiaozui never managed to locate the Four Seasons Tower's base and eventually had to give up his search."

"As for the Four Seasons Tower, they were intelligent enough to avoid provoking such a peerless expert as Ling Xiaozui. Since Ling Xiaozui decided to let it go, the Four Seasons Tower wisely refrained from attempting to put an end to him. Ling Xiaozui's skills were unparalleled after all.

Dong Tianleng then sighed, "All said and done, the Four Seasons Tower is a titan of colossal proportions."

Yun Yang frowned. "Do you then know who heads the Four Seasons Tower?"

"Why, that would be Mr. Nian, of course." The words slipped out of Dong Tianleng's mouth, "Everyone who knows about the Four Seasons Tower knows this as well."

"Who is Mr. Nian?" Yun Yang asked, intrigued by this little tidbit.

"Other than Mr. Nian himself, nobody else in the entire Tianxuan Continent can answer your question." Dong Tianleng smiled bitterly.

"Right. What else do you know?"

"Nothing else."

"You know only this tiny bit of information?" Yun Yang stared wide-eyed. "You act as if it is some earth-shattering secret! Even a child on the street could have told me the same!"

Dong Tianleng began to bemoan his beleaguered fate, "My lord! The information I have just shared is of the highest sensitivity! Four Seasons Tower has a rule that says only death awaits whoever exposes their identity. Even if your enemy doesn't kill you, the Four Seasons Tower itself will come after you!"

"There weren't many individuals who had attempted to expose the Four Seasons Tower in the martial arts world. They were only minor characters, as significant as a normal day in a month, but with no exception, they are all dead! Even their corpses had been turned and a dagger stuck into them, to ensure the thoroughness of the job. Every monarch of the empires dreams of uprooting the Four Seasons Tower." Dong Tianleng said humorlessly, "But who could find them?"

“Anything else?” Yun Yang asked disinterestedly.

“Nothing else... Oh yes, there’s just one more thing. It is said that one could find the Four Seasons Tower by word of mouth.” Dong Tianleng continued, “Rumour has it that people have gone to Heaven’s Inquisition to buy information on the Four Seasons Tower’s.

“Heaven’s Inquisition?”

“Yes, Heaven’s Inquisition.”

“What price is exacted for this information?”

“Heaven’s Inquisition demanded a hundred thousand mystical crystals, seven flowers of wonder, three herbs of poison, and spiritual liquid of the Five Elements.” Dong Tianleng said, “This is the cost for information on the Four Seasons Tower.”

The corners of Yun Yang’s lips curled up in amusement.

That was an astronomical price, no two ways about it.

Just the hundred thousand mystical crystals was a number that could cause a pinnacle martial artist to breakdown, what more seven flowers of wonder, three herbs of poison, and spiritual liquid of the Five Elements! Each of them was a legendary item; each of them was priceless!

“Though the price is steep, all high-level martial artists in the world know that once Heaven’s Inquisition offers a price, the information is as good as truth.” Dong Tianleng said. “The only problem is that no one can afford the price.”

Yun Yang exhaled heavily.

“But in recent days, for the past fifty years or so, Heaven’s Inquisition has also mysteriously become increasingly obscure, and in danger of vanishing altogether. Heaven’s Inquisition goes by another moniker; The Know-It-All. Even if there are things heaven itself is not aware of, one would only need to go to Heaven’s Inquisition to obtain the answer!” Yun Yang mumbled, “Heaven’s Inquisition should carry the honor of being the most mysterious organization in this world.”

“All true. However, Heaven’s Inquisition isn’t an organization. It is a person.” Dong Tianleng repeated himself, “The fancy title is held by a single individual!”

An individual!

Yun Yang was curiously outraged and amazed all at once.

“With that, I’ve exhausted all the information I have on the Four Season’s Tower..”

“Alright then, one last question. Since the Four Seasons Tower has always kept a low profile and taken such great pains to remain nondescript, what then is the point of their existence?” Yun Yang asked, “In other words, what do they actually hope to achieve?”

“I really have no clue about that. However, I do believe that there is no one in this that can provide you the answer besides this mysterious Mr. Nian. Nonetheless, everyone knows that the Four Seasons Tower has its nefarious purposes, and these purposes are extremely horrifying. While the exact details of these facts are rather sketchy, we can only wait for the day when it will all be revealed..”

“Wait...” Yun Yang snorted in derision; he was clearly displeased by this.

Dong Tianleng’s ingratiating expression returned as he pleaded, “My lord, my lord... help me win...”

“Seeing as how you’ve told me all these...” Yun Yang huffed, “Although it’s all useless information, I won’t take it for granted. Consider yourself fortunate.”

“Yes, yes, my lord is benevolent and generous, with a heart bigger than the ocean and intelligence higher than the heavens...” Dong Tianleng chuckled. “So, how do we go about plotting their deaths?”

“Plot their deaths? Simple!” Yun Yang said, “Let your Double-headed Elysian Lion fight again and you’ll win.” He pointed at the beast with a confident smile on his face.

Dong Tianleng’s expression crumbled in dismay.

Had the beast not already fought? Wouldn’t fighting again be a total waste of time?

“Bring your Double-headed Elysian Lion over, I’ll help you train it.” Yun Yang smiled, “Although mystical beasts possess innate killing instincts, they actually need to learn as well.”

Dong Tianleng looked at Yun Yang, dumbfounded.

Does he want to take the Double-headed Elysian Lion as a disciple?

I- I- I-... Why am I a little confused?

To prove his point, Yun Yang immediately began the beast’s training right in front of Dong Tianleng.

Beckoning the lion over, he flowed into a set of martial forms, demonstrating the techniques in order for the Double-headed Elysian Lion to follow suit.

Dong Tianleng's face was ominously expressionless; both the guards beside him were trying their level best not to guffaw out loud.

This is what this great sir meant by helping?

The Double-headed Elysian Lion was obviously startled as well. If it could speak, it would definitely be stuttering, "Prac- practice martial art forms? You want me, a lion, to practice martial form like a human?"

"I may be an eighth level mystical beast, intelligent beyond the norm, but there are limits of course."

"Stupid!" Yun Yang scolded without mercy, "You have to hold your fist like this." Then he demonstrated as he spoke.

How could a lion's paw be like a human's fist? How could it even form a fist?

"Like this!" Yun Yang walked over and grabbed the lion's front left paw, prying it open and closing it again. "You understand?"

Dong Tianleng and the guards broke down in irrepressible mirth.

The Double-headed Elysian Lion's four eyes brightened as it howled excitedly, "Sss-awoo..."

At that moment, an unimaginable amount of refined air of vitality flowed into its body. The effect was so apparent that the Double-headed Elysian Lion immediately felt that its front paw had become stronger at once and was filled with endless energy and potential!

If the energy flow did not cease, it could even level up!

"What are you howling at?" Yun Yang slapped the lion's head, delivering another refreshing flow of energy into the beast. The Double-headed Elysian Lion wagged its tail like an excited puppy, unable to stop howling. "Sss-awoo... sss-awoo..."

"Be still and keep silent!"

Yun Yang landed slap after slap on the beast's body.

The more he struck the lion, the more excited and delighted it got.

"Now right punch! Like this!"

"No! Idiot, like this!"

Streams of the vibrant energy seeped into the exhilarated beast.

“Now we train the legs. Front kick, front stomp, turning kick, side kick, back kick... Goodness, they’re all wrong!”

“How slow can you be?”

“Let me correct this...”

“Sss-awoo... Sss-awoo sss-awoo...”

Dong Tianleng and his guards’ jaws were in danger of dropping straight to the floor.

This is the first f*cking time I’ve seen this in my entire life!

A Double-headed Elysian Lion standing upright on its hind legs, looking for all the world like a human as it delivered a powerful punch with its left paw. It then jumped up, spinning around as it delivered... a roundhouse kick?

“Oh, I must be losing my mind...” Dong Tianleng covered his face with one hand as he lowered his head speechlessly.

Had this fellow actually succeeded? Why was the Double-headed Elysian Lion behaving this way? How could it be so obedient? It was being pummelled mercilessly and it was reeling from side to side, yet it kept going back to him.

“Was it because of its cheap master that my lion has also followed suit?” Dong Tianleng was convinced that there was no other possible explanation.

You’re a f*cking lion, a Double-headed Elysian Lion. You’re innately blessed with the ability to manipulate Yin and yang as well as fire and water; where’s your innate ability now?

If those can’t be used, you can still f*cking bite, right? What’s the use of having two mouths?

Now, this madman is getting you to execute martial art forms!

Fang Mofei and Lao Mei were watching from the side as well, their stomachs cramped from attempting to rein in gales of laughter.

Fang Mofei appeared gentle and refined; a middle-aged scholar who was weak and powerless. It wasn’t far from the truth; his cultivation base had not fully recovered.

Dong Tianleng and his guards only awarded him a single glance before turning away.

The two guards from the Dong Family, however, eyed Lao Mei suspiciously as they could faintly feel the strong sense of threat arising from him. "This Young Master Yun actually keeps such a butler by his side." Both guards were guardedly assessing the seemingly harmless man, "Looks like he isn't just an ordinary person as well..."

Under everyone's scrutinizing gaze, Yun Yang completed his efforts on the Double-headed Elysian Lion. Then the showcase began.

"Jump up and spin!"

"Walk with two hind legs!"

"Hug the ball with your front legs and walk with your hind legs straightened!"

"Go, pick the ball I've thrown back."

"Come, see my hand? Jump over it."

"Run to the gate and run back here within a single breath!"

...

Dong Tianleng was flabbergasted.

F*ck, are you training a lion or a dog?

Young Master Dong Tianleng could take it no longer and came to his feet. "My lord, you..."

"Done!"

Yun Yang clapped his hands, stopping the exhausted Double-headed Elysian Lion. "Go request for a battle. Have the Double-headed Elysian Lion fight the Silvertail Howler tonight, you have my word that you will definitely win!"

"I beg your pardon?"

Dong Tianleng's eyes came close to popping out from their sockets.

You just taught my lion a martial form and made it run here and there like a dog. Now, you expect it to be able to fight?

"I'm sure that it isn't ready just yet?" Dong Tianleng placed a hesitant hand on his head and felt the residual pain from being beaten up and said with a long face, "If it fights tonight, I'm afraid that I won't be able to recover in half a year..."

“Go, go fight again tonight. Are you confident?” Yun Yang asked the lion.

“Sss-awoo!” the Double-headed Elysian Lion was in high spirits as it roared its approval.

“Go on, tell your young master that you’ll definitely win!” Yun Yang pointed at the dejected young master.

The Double-headed Elysian Lion walked in front of Dong Tianleng and held both of its heads high with pride, its tail wagging violently.

“Woof!”

As much as Dong Tianleng felt like breaking down in tears, he couldn’t find the energy to cry.

You- you... you’ve turned my Double-headed Elysian Lion into a dog!