

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan!

Chapter 401 One Man Against Three![1,231 words]

Chapter 401 One Man Against Three!

Bai Zihan's aura continued to surge-until it came to a halt.

Peak Void Refinement Realm!

He exhaled slowly, feeling the terrifying power coursing through his meridians.

His bones hummed, blood roaring like thunder, Qi flowing endlessly through an expanded dantian.

He could go higher, and his body should be able to handle it without much problem.

But he stopped.

This was his first time using the Heaven's Mandate Reversal Technique.

He didn't yet fully understand its long-term strain, nor how stable the state would be if he pushed it further.

For now, Peak Void Refinement was more than enough.

More than sufficient to test three Great Ascension Realm Demonic Elders.

The three Demonic Elders stared at him as if they were looking at a monster. "How?"

The tall Demonic Elder's pupils shrank.

A cultivation jump of more than one major realm.

They had lived for hundreds of years.

They had seen forbidden techniques and life-burning arts.

But this?

This defied all common sense.

Even techniques that forcefully pushed a Spirit Severing cultivator into Void Refinement were already considered taboo-arts that crippled the user for life or killed them outright.

Yet Bai Zihan had not only crossed into Void Refinement-

He stood it further to the Top-level.

"And his breathing is stable..."

The wounded elder muttered, his voice hoarse.

Although shocked to see such a technique, they weren't afraid.

The skeletal Demonic Elder let out a low, grating laugh.

"Kekeke... So what?"

Green flames flared violently in his hollow eyes.

"Void Refinement is still Void Refinement."

He stepped forward, Demonic Qi surging like a black tide.

"You're not a Great Ascension cultivator."

The others moved as well, forming a loose encirclement.

"And there are three of us."

Their killing intent locked onto Bai Zihan once more-heavy, oppressive, merciless.

They had already recovered from the initial shock.

After all, they were veterans of countless life-and-death battles.

They understood one thing clearly:

A technique this monstrous could not come without a price.

"No technique lasts forever," the tall elder said coldly.

He sneered.

"The stronger it is, the shorter it lasts."

The wounded elder nodded, eyes flashing with malice.

"You can't maintain this state for long, not to mention the Void Refinement

Realm is still not enough to handle the three of us."

Bai Zihan listened quietly.

Then he smiled.

"You're not wrong"

Maintaining this state indefinitely was impossible-

"However," Bai Zihan continued, lifting his sword, his eyes sharp as frost, "you're mistaken about one thing."

The pressure around him suddenly condensed.

"I don't need much time to take care of you three."

His sword intent erupted, far denser and sharper than before.

Top Void Refinement Qi fused perfectly with the Eternal Spirit Sword.

The skeletal Demonic Elder's green flames flared violently.

"This arrogance will be the reason for your demise!"

He moved.

In an instant, the space beneath his feet collapsed as Demonic Qi detonated outward.

His figure vanished, reappearing before Bai Zihan like a phantom as clawed fingers reached straight for his throat.

A killing move-fast, ruthless, absolute.

Yet-Bai Zihan was already gone.

The skeletal elder's pupils shrank.

Too fast!

Before the thought could fully form, a sharp metallic hum rang out.

Clang!

The Eternal Spirit Sword swept upward, effortlessly intercepting the fatal strike.

The clash sent ripples through the air, but Bai Zihan's body did not budge in the slightest.

The skeletal elder was the one forced back.

"What?!"

He screeched.

At the same time, the tall Demonic Elder and the wounded one attacked from both flanks.

Bai Zihan didn't retreat.

Slash! Slash!

The space before him folded.

The corrosive palm strike was sliced apart mid-air, Demonic Qi dispersing like mist.

Without pause, Bai Zihan twisted his wrist, the sword's tip flicking backward-
Clang!

The blood-black spear of Tall Demonic Elder shattered, fragments dissolving before they could even reach him.

The counterattack came immediately after.

The wounded elder barely managed to raise his arms before the sword intent struck him head-on.

Boom!

His body was blasted backward, crashing through the ground as blood sprayed from his mouth.

The tall Demonic Elder's expression finally changed.

This wasn't simple survival. Rather, they were the ones being suppressed.

They attacked together again-faster, fiercer, killing intent fully unleashed.

Yet Bai Zihan moved through their assault like flowing water.

Every attack was neutralized before it could fully form.

Every counter forced them back.

The battlefield twisted under the pressure of clashing Qi, but one thing was unmistakably clear-

It wasn't three Great Ascension Realm Demonic Elders pushing Bai Zihan.

It was Bai Zihan forcing three of them to retreat.

"How is this possible?!"

The tall elder roared, blocking another sword strike that sent tremors through his arms.

The skeletal elder retreated hastily, green flames flickering erratically.

"He's only Void Refinement-how can he be this strong?!"

Bai Zihan stepped forward once more, sword humming with condensed intent.

His gaze was calm and cold.

On the sideline, Mo Tianji watched with his mouth agape.

He had already found it difficult to believe that Bai Zihan had defeated one Great Ascension Elder-and now he was fighting three of them and still winning.

He thought Bai Zihan would be killed, and no matter how talented he was, it wouldn't matter since he would be dead.

But now?

Three Great Ascension Demonic Elders were being pushed back and struggling while Bai Zihan confidently advanced.

Seeing such a scene, no matter how arrogant one was, was enough to crush one's confidence.

Mo Tianji clenched his teeth in anger.

"Just kill him!"

He couldn't help but voice his frustration-and perhaps his fury-at the three elders. They were supposed to be among the strongest, yet they were pathetically struggling against a teenager.

Most of those watching among the Demonic Cultivators felt the same.

Those three should have killed Bai Zihan long ago and gone to help elsewhere, yet they were the ones on the verge of being killed?

That didn't make any sense.

Slash! Slash!

The three Demonic Elders gradually slowed their pace.

Their movements became more measured. More cautious.

They stopped pressing recklessly.

"He's burning Qi," the tall Demonic Elder said coldly, his eyes narrowing.

"A boost like this can't be sustained."

The wounded elder steadied his breathing, wiping blood from his lips. "Let him exhaust himself. Once the backlash hits, he'll be helpless."

The skeletal elder's green flames flickered as he laughed softly. "Kekeke... run out of breath, little brat. Heaven never gives without taking"

They began to circle instead of clash-defending more than attacking, forcing

Bai Zihan to swing again and again.

They were certain of one thing:

No Void Refinement cultivator-no matter how monstrous-could maintain such output for long.

But they were wrong.

Bai Zihan's breathing never quickened.

His Qi didn't run out.

His Qi was like an ocean with no visible bottom.

The Heaven's Mandate Reversal Technique continued to roar within his body, but his dantian showed no signs of depletion.

It has been many minutes since they fought and Bai Zihan still showed no sign of weakening.

The skeletal elder frowned.

"Why isn't his aura weakening?"

Before the doubt could fully form-

Bai Zihan stopped moving.

He lowered his sword.

The battlefield went still.

"Hm?" the tall elder sneered. "Finally reaching your limit?"

Bai Zihan lifted his gaze.

The Eternal Spirit Sword trembled.

Then-

"Nine Shadows Flowing Light Sword!"

The world split.

Bai Zihan vanished.

Not fast-

Gone!

Nine afterimages bloomed simultaneously across the battlefield, each radiating identical sword intent, identical killing pressure.

Three of them prepared for Bai Zihan's attack.

They thought that Bai Zihan might do what he had done previously against the wounded Elder and prepared to defend against Bai Zihan's powerful technique. However, Bai Zihan wasn't planning on using Fate Severing Slash and focused on a single target, the Skeletal Elder. Nine swords descended at once.

Each strike flowed like light through water-silent, seamless, unavoidable.

"NO-!"

Slash!

A clean arc of silver light flashed past.

The skeletal elder froze.

The green flames in his eyes flickered once... then went out.

His skull separated from his body, spinning through the air before crashing to the ground.

The headless body stood for a heartbeat-

Then collapsed.

Silence fell!

The remaining two Great Ascension Realm Demonic Elders stared in horror.

One of them-Killed.

Bai Zihan reappeared, standing calmly as the sword's edge dripped with faint demonic residue.

His aura remained steady.

He looked at the two remaining elders, he wasn't going to spare them either.

Chapter 402 Three Great Ascension Demonic Elder Killed!

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Bai Chu's heart sank as he sensed multiple Great Ascension Realm Demonic auras converging in Bai Zihan's direction.

His sword intent surged violently, turning erratic as worry clawed at his heart.

CLANG! CLANG!

He tried his best but Mó Zun wasn't an opponent that could be pushed aside just because Bai Chu wished for it.

He immediately sent messages to every Great Ascension cultivator and above within the Bai Clan through telepathy.

"Bai Zihan is in danger! Go help him!"

However, almost all of them were also unable to go and help Bai Zihan.

Bai Tianheng's voice carried heavy battle pressure.

"I'm held down... two Demonic Elders..."

Another message followed, unstable and hoarse.

"Surrounded... These Demonic Beasts aren't giving me any opening."

Then another.

And another.

Everyone was occupied. Even those who were in alliance with the Bai Clan were also bogged down by the enemies.

Even worse upon realizing Bai Zihan's predicament, the Li Clan, Zhao Clan, and Azure Holy Sun Sect's experts began to deliberately stall their own battles, feigning injuries and allowing their opponents to keep the Bai Clan tied down.

So not only were they being pressured by the Demonic Cultivators-even their supposed allies were blatantly working against them.

Bai Chu's expression darkened.

(It was planned!)

This wasn't a coincidence.

This was a trap-one designed specifically to isolate Bai Zihan.

And in that fleeting moment of distraction-

Mó Zūn moved.

His saber screamed as Demonic Qi erupted, striking from an angle Bai Chu would never normally allow.

The blade tore through Bai Chu's defenses, carving a bloody line across his shoulder.

Blood sprayed.

Bai Chu staggered back half a step, forcibly stabilizing his aura, fury blazing in his eyes.

Mó Zūn grinned coldly.

"Battles between experts," he said calmly, "are decided by moments like this. Bai Chu, how dare you get distracted before me!"

It was clear that Bai Chu was worried-distracted-despite his opponent being Mó Zūn.

The same could be said for the other Bai Clan experts.

Thinking that they needed to rush to Bai Zihan's aid as quickly as possible, they became impatient-

And their opponents took advantage of it, striking the moment their openings were shown.

After all, at the level of Great Ascension and above, even the slightest distraction was enough to be exploited.

Even knowing that worrying wouldn't help, Bai Chu couldn't stop himself.

After all, Bai Zihan was their Heir, not to mention the most talented one in their thousand years of history-someone they believed would rise higher than anyone else.

Even if it meant sacrificing Great Ascension Realm experts-or perhaps even Immortal Realm ones-it would be worth it if it was for Bai Zihan.

His value was much more than anyone else.

(Did we make a mistake bringing him here?)

The thought surfaced unbidden.

They and the other Clan-had brought their geniuses to gain experience, experience crucial for future growth.

Not to mention, they had believed this battle would be manageable with the combined forces present.

But who would have thought that Bai Zihan-a junior-would be targeted so heavily?

Three Great Ascension Demonic Cultivators were sent after him.

And that their supposed allies would deliberately aid the enemy in doing so?

It was like everything in this Battlefield wished for Bai Zihan's demise. The Bai Clan, who had been dominating the battlefield until now, suddenly found themselves in a predicament and was being pushed back.

The longer the battle dragged on, the greater their worries grew.

Despite Bai Zihan's sudden surge in power and fierce resistance, they didn't believe it would be enough to contend against the Three Great Ascension

Realm opponents.

Then it happened-

Three vast demonic auras vanished one after another.

The pressure rolled across the battlefield in a delayed wave, heavy and unmistakable.

Mó Zun's expression froze.

Bai Chu's breath caught.

Both of them instinctively turned their gaze toward the distant battlefield.

Three severed heads rested before Bai Zihan, the last traces of demonic aura fading from them.

Great Ascension Realm!

Dead!

Even on a battlefield filled with Immortals, the death of a Great Ascension

Realm cultivator was rare.

And this time-

It was three at the same time.

Not to mention the one who had killed them.

"Bai Zihan!"

Bai Chu shouted, his voice filled with disbelief, relief, and fierce pride.

Bai Zihan lifted his head, meeting Bai Chu's gaze across the vast distance. He gave a small nod-calm, almost casual.

Bai Zihan had been aware of Bai Chu and Mó Zūn watching him, just as he had been keeping part of his attention on them.

"After the first one," Bai Zihan said casually, "the other two weren't that hard to kill."

Bai Zihan muttered.

One was weaker than the Skeleton Elder while the other was already injured from fighting him.

It didn't take him much time to kill them with his new power-though it was largely because the two of them were shocked by what they saw, allowing him to take advantage of it.

Mó Zūn stood frozen.

His smile vanished.

His pupils shrank violently.

"What?"

Shock finally surfaced on his face.

He could have understood if it were Void Refinement Elders.

He could have understood Bai Zihan surviving against a single Great Ascension Demonic Elder.

But killing three?

At the Spirit Severing Realm?

Even if he considered that Bai Zihan had increased his cultivation using some

strange technique, it was still impossible.

"Haha... Mó Zūn, looks like you underestimated our Bai Zihan!"

Bai Chu laughed.

The loss of three Great Ascension Elders-even for Demonic Cultivators-was catastrophic.

"Underestimated, you say?"

Mó Zūn was flabbergasted.

It was already overkill to dispatch three Great Ascension Elders after someone at the Spirit Severing Realm.

If not for the potential and power Bai Zihan had shown, who else would warrant such a deployment?

And yet-

Even that had failed.

The moment Bai Chu realized that Bai Zihan was not only alive-but had slaughtered three Great Ascension Realm Demonic Elders-something loosened in his chest.

The pressure clouding his judgment vanished.

His sword intent stabilized.

Then-

It surged.

Sharpened by fury.

Tempered by pride.

Strengthened by absolute confidence.

"Mó Zun," Bai Chu said coldly, "not only has your scheme failed, you've also lost three Great Ascension Elders. How does it feel to have your plan overturned?" Slash!

Bai Chu's sword flashed.

The strike was clean, ruthless, and far faster than before-no hesitation, not restraint.

Mó Zūn's pupils were constricted.

Clang!

Their weapons collided, but this time the impact forced Mó Zūn back half a step.

His aura wavered.

His rhythm was broken.

The mental shock had finally caught up to him.

And not just here-

Across the entire battlefield, the same thing was happening.

The Bai Clan's Great Ascension experts felt it immediately. Their desperation vanished.

The urgency bleeding into their movements receded.

Instead-excitement ignited.

Their attacks grew sharper.

Their confidence surged.

"He really killed them."

"At the Spirit Severing Realm...?"

"Who else but Bai Zihan could accomplish such a thing?"

On the other hand, the Demonic Cultivators faltered.

Their movements slowed.

Their coordination fractured.

Three Great Ascension Elders had fallen.

By a single junior.

That realization crushed morale.

Not to mention the massive gap left behind by the three fallen Great Ascension Demonic Elders.

Originally, those three should have dealt with Bai Zihan and then returned to assist in suppressing the Great Ascension experts of the Desolate Heaven

Empire.

Void Refinement Realm Demonic Cultivators were currently filling in their absence, barely keeping the Bai Clan occupied-but that was never sustainable.

With the elders dead, those Void Refinement cultivators were doomed.

Bai Zihan stood tall and arrogant.

But it didn't last long.

He had burned far too much Qi using the Heaven's Mandate Reversal Technique, and his body-though resilient-was under strain.

(Damn...!)

A sharp wave of dizziness slammed into his mind.

(As expected the side effects are too great!)

The Heaven's Mandate Reversal Technique roared one final time before violently receding.

His Qi plummeted, his Cultivation falling from Void Refinement Realm to Spirit Severing Realm.

His vision blurred.

The world tilted.

Blood rushed to his head as his legs lost strength.

Bai Zihan tried to steady himself but failed.

His body pitched forward.

Just before he could hit the ground-

A pair of arms caught him.

"Bai Zihan!"

A familiar voice rang out, sharp with panic.

Chu Ziyang was already there.

She pulled him into her arms, gripping him tightly as his weight sagged against her.

Her usually calm face was pale, eyes wide with worry as she looked down at him.

"Bai Zihan! Can you hear me?!"

Bai Zihan forced his eyes open.

Her face swam into focus.

"...I'm fine," he muttered, still trying to sound arrogant.

"Doesn't look like you are fine though."

Chu Ziyang's hands trembled as she checked his pulse and Qi flow.

Soon, she realized the problem was just an exhaustion of Qi.

Without hesitation, she took out a High-Grade Rank-6 Qi Recovery Pill and brought it to his lips.

Bai Zihan frowned but swallowed it anyway.

He doesn't like eating things given by others though right now he doesn't seem to have much choice.

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Chapter 403 Carried Away by Force (Literally)

CLANG! CLANG!

Mó Zūn's gaze slowly shifted.

It locked onto Bai Zihan.

Gone was the disbelief.

Gone was the momentary shock.

What replaced it was something far sinister.

A killing intent so dense it leaked out unconsciously.

Bai Zihan wasn't just a potential genius anymore-he was already a great threat.

At the Spirit Severing Realm, he had slaughtered three Great Ascension

Demonic Elders.

(And if he's allowed to grow...)

Mó Zūn's eyes narrowed to slits.

There was a hundred percent guarantee that he would become a threat that even he and the other Demonic Immortals might not be able to handle.

In that instant, Mó Zun made his decision.

Killing Bai Zihan was no longer optional.

It was imperative.

His saber hummed softly as Demonic Qi gathered beneath his feet. The space around him twisted.

Then-

He took a step forward.

The movement was subtle.

But Bai Chu noticed immediately.

"You think I won't see that?"

Bai Chu's Sword intent exploded outward, sharp and absolute, crashing directly into Mó Zün's path.

The air screamed as Bai Chu stepped forward, placing himself squarely between Mó Zun and Bai Zihan.

His expression was icy.

His killing intent, no longer restrained.

"Where are you going?"

Bai Chu asked coldly.

Mó Zün stopped.

Slowly, he lifted his gaze to meet Bai Chu's.

(Looks like this isn't going to be easy.)

With Bai Chu keeping him in check, getting to Bai Zihan wasn't possible.

After feeding the High-Grade Rank-6 Qi Recovery Pill, Chu Ziyang didn't wait.

Even with Qi returning to Bai Zihan, it would take time for him to recover to a state where he could stand again.

And this place was not safe.

"Everyone," she said quickly, her voice steady despite the urgency, "we're leaving the battlefield. Now!"

The Chu Clan nodded without hesitation.

Bai Zihan had already done more than enough, and it would be better if he left the battlefield now.

"We will also help!"

A few Void Refinement Realm cultivators stepped forward to escort Bai Zihan out.

Chu Ziyang moved first.

She bent down and lifted him off the ground.

One arm under his knees.

The other supported his back.

A perfect princess carry.

Bai Zihan's mind went blank.

His vision spun-not from dizziness, but sheer embarrassment.

"W-What are you doing?!"

His voice cracked despite himself, embarrassment flooding his face.

No matter how injured he was...

No matter how exhausted...

This was absolutely unacceptable.

"Put me down-now!"

Bai Zihan demanded with authority.

Chu Ziyang didn't even slow down.

"You can barely stand," she said calmly. "Stop moving and making this hard for me."

"Chu Ziyang, I demand that you put me down right here."

Bai Zihan ordered with a stern voice.

Right now, he was facing the greatest embarrassment of his life.

He tried to flail and escape from Chu Ziyan's arms; however, his body refused to move no matter how much he tried.

His body betrayed him.

Chu Ziyan tightened her grip slightly, completely ignoring his protests.

"Looks like you have no choice."

Chu Ziyan said teasingly with a smile.

Bai Zihan clenched his jaw. He had forgotten who Chu Ziyan was.

As if she would listen to him.

Around them, Demonic Cultivators noticed Bai Zihan's state.

Their eyes lit up.

"He's injured!"

"We can kill him. He can't even move."

"Keke... the rewards for killing Bai Zihan shouldn'tt be low, right?"

Killing intent surged from every direction.

The Chu Clan Member stepped forward including those in the Void Refinement Realm.

"Don't think killing Bai Zihan will be easy!"

The ground cracked beneath their feet.

Void Refinement pressure slammed outward.

Chu Ziyan didn't wait.

"Move!"

The Chu Clan responded instantly.

Boom!

Several waves of pressure burst outward as they formed a tight protective formation around Chu Ziyan and Bai Zihan.

Barriers rose one after another, overlapping like layers of glass around Bai Zihan and Chu Ziyan.

They began to retreat-fast and decisive.

But the Demonic Cultivators didn't give up.

Not even for a moment.

"They are leaving!"

"Stop them!"

"Kill Bai Zihan-now!"

Madness lit their eyes.

Even Nascent Soul cultivators charged forward without hesitation, ignoring the crushing Void Refinement pressure bearing down on them.

Some spat blood as they forced themselves ahead, eyes burning with only killing intent.

It didn't matter that Bai Zihan was protected.

It didn't matter that Void Refinement Elders stood in their way.

If Bai Zihan died here, it would be worth it.

Chu Ziyan's eyes hardened. Looks like Demonic Cultivators were determined to kill her husband today.

She adjusted her grip slightly, holding Bai Zihan even tighter as she accelerated.

Whoosh!

Bai Zihan felt everything.

The rushing wind.

The violent fluctuations of Qi.

The sound of battle erupting all around them.

And worst of all-

The sensation of being carried.

His face burned.

His fists clenched helplessly against Chu Ziyang's sleeve.

(I'll remember this...!)

Anger and humiliation churned violently in his chest.

(Once I recover, I'll kill every one of you!)

Bai Zihan vowed to himself, glaring at the Demonic Cultivators.

He blamed them for the miserable state he was in.

Of course, it had been entirely his own choice to use the Heaven's Mandate

Reversal Technique and end up like this.

But he reasoned that if the Demonic Cultivators hadn't attacked him, there would have been no need to retreat-and no need to leave the battlefield at all.

Now, he was being princess-carried in front of everyone.

Even if it wasn't entirely their fault-

Bai Zihan still blamed them.

After all, that was the kind of person he was.

Boom!

A Nascent Soul Demonic Cultivator lunged out of the smoke, eyes crazed, blade slashing straight toward Bai Zihan's exposed side.

"Die!"

Before the blade could land-

Slash!

A streak of cold sword light flashed past Chu Ziyang's shoulder.

The Demonic Cultivator's head flew clean off.

Blood sprayed through the air.

"Trying to touch our Young Master?"

A Bai Clan Void Refinement Elder stepped forward, his expression frigid.

"Over our dead bodies."

More figures joined them.

Bai Clan members arrived, supporting the Chu Clan as they worked together to escort Bai Zihan out.

"Advance together!"

"Cover the rear!" "Suppress them!"

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Void Refinement pressure layered upon Void Refinement pressure, crushing the charging Demonic Cultivators back.

Soul Formation Realm cultivators and below were sent flying like leaves in a storm, bodies shattered mid-air.

Yet even then-

More came.

Relentless.

Fanatical.

Chu Ziyang grit her teeth. "They're insane!"

The retreat continued.

Step by step. Blood stained the ground behind them.

Finally after what felt like an eternity-the pressure eased.

The Demonic Cultivators were forced back, unwilling but unable to break through the combined might of the Bai and Chu Clans.

Only then did Chu Ziyan slow a bit.

Bai Zihan exhaled sharply. And immediately-

"Put me down!"

He demanded once again, but this time it was calm.

Chu Ziyan paused.

She glanced down at him.

"You can stand?"

"...Barely," he replied through clenched teeth. "But this is worse."

The corners of Chu Ziyan's lips twitched.

Then she gently lowered him, supporting his weight as his feet touched the ground.

Bai Zihan straightened with effort, forcing his spine rigid despite the tremor in his legs.

His gaze swept over the battlefield behind them.

"Did you hate being carried by me that much?"

Chu Ziyan asked.

"So much so that dying might have been better."

Bai Zihan replied without hesitation. "Hmph! Next time, I'll leave you to die then." "Thank you! That would be much better!"

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan!

Chapter 404 Third Clash Ends[1,010 words]

Chapter 404 Third Clash Ends

Bai Zihan stood there, barely steady on his feet, leaning slightly on Chu Ziyan's support-but his eyes were already sharp again.

There was no need to retreat since they were surrounded by allies and quite near the rear.

Though largely it was because he no longer wanted to be carried by Chu Ziyan. And he still couldn't walk properly to leave.

So, Bai Zihan decided to observe.

The battlefield had turned into a slaughterhouse.

Demonic Cultivators fell one after another.

Demonic Beasts roared in fury before being torn apart by sword light, saber arcs, and crushing techniques.

Blood soaked the earth.

Qi storms churned the sky.

Yet Bai Zihan felt no satisfaction.

Only regret.

"Tch!"

He clenched his fists.

His Qi was slowly recovering, but it was nowhere near enough.

Right now, even killing a Soul Formation Demonic Cultivator would be difficult.

What annoyed him the most wasn't the pain.

It was the fact that he couldn't personally kill those Grade-9 Demonic Beasts. Couldn't earn more points.

His gaze followed a Bai Clan elder as he cleaved through a pack of Demonic Beasts, their bodies exploding into mist.

Those should have been his kills.

His!

Bai Zihan exhaled slowly and forced the thought aside.

(No point dwelling on it.)

This wasn't over yet.

His eyes lifted.

Far away-Two places where the outcome of the war would truly be decided.

The first was Mó Zūn and Bai Chu.

Their clash distorted the heavens themselves.

Sword intent and Demonic Qi collided endlessly, neither side gaining ground.

Every strike carried killing power capable of annihilating countless Cultivators. Yet-they were locked in a deadlock.

With both their strengths equal, it wouldn't be easy for either to gain an advantage.

Then-

He turned to the second battlefield.

The Half-Qilin!

Despite the grievous wound carved by a Saint-Grade Sword-

Despite the blood pouring endlessly from its side-

The ancient beast was still terrifying.

Its roar shook the sky.

Each step cracked the earth.

Flames and lightning coiled around its massive body as it charged again and again.

Facing it were three figures.

Bai Ren, Zhao Wujin, and Yu Xuande.

Despite their efforts, they were being pushed back.

The Half-Qilin slammed its claws into the ground.

Boom!

A shockwave exploded outward.

Yu Xuande barely avoided it, blood spilling from his mouth as he was flung back.

Bai Zihan's expression grew solemn.

(Still this strong...?)

Even injured.

Even wounded by a Saint-Grade Sword.

The Half-Qilin was still overpowering three Great Ascension Realm experts.

And worse-

They couldn't afford a single mistake.

A single clean hit from that Half-Qilin-

Would mean death.

Just like Li Zhenhe.

No second chances.

No escape.

Bai Zihan's gaze remained fixed on the second battlefield.

Unlike the stalemate between Bai Chu and Mó Zun, this clash was changing- slowly, but unmistakably.

Bai Ren was holding his ground.

Though no single injury was fatal, small wounds were piling up, and it was certain the Half-Qilin was growing weaker.

The blood pouring from the Half-Qilin was no longer something that could be ignored.

Each movement sent fresh streams cascading down its scales. Its breathing had grown heavier.

If Bai Ren and the others played this right, they could win.

But for that, they would need to survive-and fight flawlessly.

ROOOOOAR!

A thunderous roar ripped through the sky, shaking clouds apart and rattling the battlefield below.

The Half-Qilin reared back, its eyes blazing with fury and humiliation.

"Humans!"

Its voice boomed, distorted yet filled with rage.

"You dare rely on trickery... on sophisticated weapons!"

Flames erupted from its nostrils as lightning cracked around its horns.

"I will remember this!"

The declaration echoed like a curse.

Then-

It stepped back.

Not in panic.

Not in haste.

But with terrifying calm.

The Half-Qilin turned, each movement heavy and deliberate, its massive form retreating slowly-majestically-like a sovereign leaving the battlefield at its own leisure.

The pressure it exuded did not diminish.

And no one moved to stop it.

Because no one could. Bai Ren watched silently, his sword lowered just slightly.

He would have loved nothing more than to keep the Half-Qilin there-to grind it down until its life finally bled out.

But he knew better.

He, Zhao Wujin, and Yu Xuande were already at their limits.

Their Qi reserves were dangerously low.

Their bodies strained, injuries piling up beneath forced composure.

Trying to forcibly keep the Half-Qilin here would not be heroism.

It would be suicide.

If they dared to overextend-

They would die.

Simple as that.

Mó Zun watched as the Half-Qilin retreated, followed by the remaining Demonic Beasts.

"Tch!"

The sound was sharp, filled with irritation.

Mó Zun turned his gaze back to Bai Chu, saber resting against his shoulder.

"Bai Chu," he said coldly, lips curling into a sneer, "you are lucky."

Then his voice thundered across the battlefield, infused with Demonic Qi.

"All Demonic Cultivators-retreat!"

The order was absolute. Without the Half-Qilin keeping Bai Ren, Zhao Wujin, and Yu Xuande in check,

staying behind would mean only one thing-

Death!

The demonic ranks began pulling back, formations breaking as they disengaged at full speed.

Bai Chu's eyes flashed.

"You think I'll let you leave?"

His sword intent surged violently, heaven-shaking and tyrannical.

As long as Mó Zun was kept here-

As long as he couldn't escape-

With reinforcements arriving, the Demonic Cultivators' leader could be worn down and killed.

Bai Chu stepped forward, sword blazing.

But then-

The heavens roared.

The Half-Qilin, already far away, lifted its head.

Its chest swelled.

Flames, lightning, and ancient beastly Qi converged into a single point.

Bai Chu's pupils shrank.

"Damn it-!"

He knew that Half-Qilin was aiming at him.

The Half-Qilin unleashed its attack.

A colossal beam of intertwined flame and lightning tore through the sky, spanning an impossible distance, crashing straight toward Bai Chu.

There was no time to dodge.

Bai Chu halted mid-step and raised his sword with both hands.

Sword intent erupted.

Boom-!!!

The collision shattered the air.

Space twisted violently as Bai Chu was forced fully onto the defensive, his sword carving layer after layer of intent to disperse the monstrous long-range strike.

The ground beneath him cracked and sank.

By the time the shockwaves faded-

Mó Zūn was already retreating, his figure receding alongside the fleeing

Demonic Cultivators.

He did not look back.

Bai Chu lowered his sword slowly, his expression cold and displeased. "Just how did Mó Zūn convince the Half-Qilin to work together?" It was clear that Half-Qilin was helping Mó Zūn which is quite absurd.

There was no way to tame Demonic Beasts, much less something like Half-Qilin.

Thankfully, the attack Half-Qilin unleashed this time wasn't as powerful as Li

Zhenhe, otherwise Bai Chu wouldn't have been able to defend against it.

But it did give time for Mó Zūn to escape.

The demonic forces were withdrawing.

The Half-Qilin's massive figure finally vanished beyond the battlefield, the

suffocating pressure lifting at last.

Thus, the Third Clash finally came to an end!

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! - Chapter 405 The Call to Withdraw[1,214 words]

Chapter 405 The Call to Withdraw

"We are withdrawing!"

Bai Tianheng announced.

Despite Bai Tianheng saying that he and the Bai Clan would leave the battlefield, no one argued with him instantly.

Because before he said that, Bai Tianheng had already brought up how the supposed allies weren't fulfilling their responsibilities.

Anyone with eyes could see that Li, Zhao, and even those of the Azure Holy Sun Sect were deliberately targeting Bai Zihan.

And in a crisis, they would rather increase the burden than help.

In such a situation, Bai Tianheng had no choice but to demand that they leave. Of course, that could not be allowed.

Without Bai Ren-or, for that matter, the Saint-Grade Sword-there was no way to handle the Half-Qilin if it were to return, which it surely would.

And Bai Chu might also be the only one capable of handling Mó Zun one on one.

Other Bai Clan members were also contributing the most, so losing them would be a serious blow.

But Bai Tianheng was adamant about leaving.

"We have already contributed the most."

Not a lie.

Bai Zihan himself had taken out a large number of Grade-9 Demonic Beasts, not to mention Great Ascension Realm Demonic Elders.

Even those at the Soul Formation Realm had performed admirably for their cultivation level.

Then there was Bai Ren, who killed Gou You and injured the Half-Qilin.

When it came to contribution, no one even came close to what the Bai Clan had done.

"What bullsh*t!"

Li Jianghong angrily interrupted.

"We lost our Grand Elder. How dare you complain?"

Li Jianhong added.

Others nodded. The Bai Clan contributed the most, yes, but the ones who suffered the most were clearly the Li Clan.

Not only had much of their force been killed by the Demonic Cultivators' sudden invasion during the previous clash, but today they also lost Li Zhenhe, one of their pillars.

"Hmph! That is because he lacked strength," Bai Tianheng replied.

Li Jianghong's face twisted with anger, veins standing out on his temple.

"What did you say? If not for you hiding the Saint-Grade Sword, Grand Elder Zhenhe wouldn't have died!"

He spat, voice sharp and accusing.

Bai Tianheng's expression hardened, his eyes narrowing to slits.

"Hmph! It's not like we are friends. Why would we need to disclose every trump card we have? Did you disclose yours?"

Li Jianghong froze, momentarily caught off guard by the rebuke, but his glare only intensified.

"You-! We lost so many, and your Bai Clan didn't suffer nearly as much. Yet you're complaining just because of a bit of a lapse in our performance?"

"Do not lecture me about losses! Every clan is responsible for their own survival. I've already seen enough betrayal and negligence today."

All he cared about was that, along with the Demonic Beasts and Demonic Cultivators, he also had to worry about his supposed allies potentially betraying them.

It was too much. They had endured for the previous two clashes, but today- that was it.

When his son was fighting alone against the Three Great Ascension Demonic Elders, if not for Bai Zihan's power, he would have died.

Rather than helping Bai Zihan, he saw how those bastards were acting-and even stopped those attempting to break free to assist him.

"Bai Tianheng, please-don't blame us so harshly. We've been doing our best under extreme circumstances."

Zhao Wutian said, trying to ease the situation.

Bai Tianheng's eyes narrowed, and he let out a low, humorless snort.

"Doing your best? Doing your best would have meant saving my son when he was surrounded by three Great Ascension Demonic Elders, not standing idle and pretending to be injured!"

Before Zhao Wutian could respond, Minister Xiu Yucheng interjected calmly, his voice carrying the weight of reason.

"Clan Leader Bai, please. Consider the bigger picture. The war is far from over. Pointing fingers now will only fracture alliances that-"

Bai Zihan cut him off sharply, stepping forward despite the tremor in his legs. "Even a blind man could see what happened!" he spat, his gaze piercing.

"How dare you say I am pointing fingers when these allies are doing nothing but watching!"

Bai Tianheng's face turned ashen, rage flaring. His hands clenched into fists, veins throbbing at his temples.

"How dare you!"

Bai Tianheng bellowed, his voice shaking with fury.

"You all think you can easily brush aside what happened today by simply 'seeing the bigger picture! Minister Xiu, you disappoint me!"

Minister Xiu kept his face down, unable to argue.

Indeed, anyone could see that the Li Clan, Zhao Clan, and some others were deliberately holding back when Bai Zihan's life was in crisis.

Instead of helping their allies, they were intentionally making it easier for the Demonic Cultivators to kill him.

And now, the person who should be managing everyone-who should be scolding and reprimanding them-was instead trying to calm the one who was

rightfully angry.

What should have been a meeting to discuss their next steps had devolved into Bai Tianheng scolding everyone and demanding to leave.

Minister Xiu Yucheng finally let out a slow breath.

Then-unexpectedly-he cupped his fists and bowed.

"Clan Leader Bai," he said solemnly, "this minister apologizes."

Minister Xiu straightened, and the warmth in his eyes vanished, replaced by

cold authority as he turned toward the others-his gaze lingering on Li

Jianghong and Zhao Wutian.

"I know very well that the Li Clan and Zhao Clan are not on friendly terms with the Bai Clan,"

Minister Xiu said bluntly.

"Old enmities, hatred and grudges-I am not blind to them."

He paused, then slammed his sleeve against the armrest.

"But this is not the place to bring those grudges!"

The pressure in the hall rose sharply.

"During this battle, your clans deliberately neglected the Bai Clan's side," he

said coldly. "When their forces were overwhelmed, when Bai Zihan was fighting for his life, your people conveniently became 'busy.' Injured. Delayed.

Preoccupied."

Li Jianghong's face darkened. Zhao Wutian opened his mouth-but Minister Xiu

did not let him speak.

"While the Bai Clan was cleaning up your mess," Minister Xiu continued, "they were also holding the most dangerous fronts. Handling Great Ascension Realm Demonic Elders. Restraining the Half-Qilin. Containing Mó Zun."

His gaze sharpened.

"And yet, when they needed support, you chose to watch."

Silence fell! Minister Xiu knew very well that these words would offend both clans-but he

also knew he had to say them.

Only then did Minister Xiu turn back toward Bai Tianheng.

His tone softened-but the seriousness remained.

"Clan Leader Bai, Believe us," Minister Xiu continued, "for the last time."

He took a deep breath.

"If this crisis is not handled here and now, then the Desolate Heaven Empire

will be finished as we know it."

He said slowly.

His gaze swept the hall.

"We need every bit of strength we have. Every clan. Every cultivator."

The hall remained silent.

The decision now rested with Bai Tianheng alone.

For a long moment, Bai Tianheng said nothing, his expression unreadable, muscles tensing as if weighing the enormity of the situation. Finally, he exhaled slowly, a sharp nod following.

"Very well," Bai Tianheng said, his voice steady but cold. "We won't leave."

After all, the Bai Clan was in the Desolate Heaven Empire. If the Northern Defense Line is breached, the Bai Clan would also be in danger.

A murmur ran through the hall, relief and apprehension mingling among the

clans. But Bai Tianheng's eyes did not soften. He turned sharply toward Li Jianghong and Zhao Wutian, his glare cutting like a blade.

"Make no mistake," he continued, voice low and deadly serious. "If any clan-

especially the Li or Zhao Clan-dare to pull the same stunt they did today, I will personally make them pay."

Bai Tianheng's eyes were filled with genuine killing intent. "You will know personally what happens when you cross the Bai Clan!"

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! - Chapter 406 Return to the Bai Clan?[1,486 words]

Chapter 406 Return to the Bai Clan?

Bai Zihan slowly pushed aside the curtain of his tent.

The moment he stepped out, a faint chill brushed against his skin.

The distant roars of Demonic Beasts still echoed faintly from the far frontlines, reminding everyone that the war had not ended.

His body protested the movement.

He had yet to fully recover from the backlash of using Heaven's Mandate Reversal Technique.

But well, he could at least walk properly without needing to be princess-carried.

Bai Zihan took a breath and began to walk.

He wandered through the outer sections of the encampment-where ordinary disciples, independent cultivators, and sect members gathered.

Some were resting. Others were treating wounds. Some sat in silence, staring blankly at bloodstained weapons.

Everyone was talking about today's battle.

The terrifying strength of the Half-Qilin. The appearance of the Saint-Grade Sword in Bai Ren's hand.

And the death of three Great Ascension Realm Demonic Elders by Bai Zihan. And more.

However, as they saw Bai Zihan walking, the conversations died mid-sentence. A group of disciples paused while applying bandages, eyes widening. An elder who had been instructing juniors fell silent. One by one, heads turned.

"That's him... Bai Zihan!"

"The one who killed three Great Ascension Demonic Elders..."

"Is he really at the Spirit Severing Realm like us?"

The moment they saw Bai Zihan, they began talking about his feats. When his gaze swept toward them, they subconsciously bowed in respect.

It was clear that after today's battle, no one would treat Bai Zihan as a junior despite being a teenager.

He was a youth.

Barely an adult.

His face still carried traces of immaturity, his figure lean rather than imposing. Yet no one dared treat him as a junior anymore.

Because today, Bai Zihan had done something that many here-cultivators who had lived for centuries-could not.

Three Great Ascension Demonic Cultivators!

Killed by him alone.

That feat alone was enough for anyone to respect Bai Zihan on the level of a top sect or clan leader.

Bai Zihan continued walking, his steps unhurried.

Eyes followed him wherever he went.

Some were filled with awe, some with reverence, and others with emotions far more complicated.

But one thing was clear-no one dared treat him casually anymore.

Even cultivators at the Spirit Severing Realm, who were technically his peers in cultivation, felt an instinctive urge to lower their heads when his gaze swept past them.

Strength spoke louder than age.

And Bai Zihan's strength had already crossed a threshold.

Just as he passed a cluster of tents, a familiar figure hurried toward him.

"Young Master!"

The voice was crisp, respectful, yet tinged with urgency.

Bai Zihan turned his head.

Bai Lumei was approaching at a brisk pace.

The leader of the group which Bai Zihan was supposed to be a part of.

She stopped a few paces away and bowed deeply.

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"Young Master," Bai Lumei said without hesitation, "the Grand Elders wish to speak with you."

Bai Zihan raised an eyebrow slightly.

(The Grand Elders?)

He nodded calmly.

"I heard you all called for me?"

Bai Zihan said as he entered.

Inside sat the Bai Clan's Grand Elders-figures who usually carried an air of gravity so heavy it made even elders from other clans cautious.

Yet the instant they saw Bai Zihan, their expressions changed.

"Haha! Our prodigy is here!"

"Zihan'er! How are you feeling? Are your injuries stable?"

"Come, come, sit down. Don't just stand there!"

Before he could even respond properly, he was already being ushered to a seat, several elders surrounding him like anxious family members who had not seen

their grandson in years.

"Let me see your pulse."

"No, no, you're too rough-let me do it."

"Your meridians-hmm, strained, but recovering well. Excellent constitution!"

Spiritual senses swept over him carefully and respectfully. There was no force, no probing arrogance-only concern.

Bai Zihan sat quietly, allowing them to examine him.

Their expressions gradually eased.

"The backlash is severe," Bai Yui said gravely, "but the damage is already healing.

With proper rest, it won't leave lasting scars."

Only then did they finally step back.

Bai Zihan let out a slow breath.

"I'm fine!"

After things finally settled, Bai Zihan straightened slightly and looked around.

"So," he asked calmly, "why did you call for me?"

The laughter faded.

The Grand Elders exchanged glances.

Their expressions grew more serious-not grim, but resolute.

Finally, Bai Ren stepped forward.

His smile faded, replaced by a steady, thoughtful gaze.

"Bai Zihan," Bai Ren said slowly, "you should return to the Bai Clan."

The words hung in the air.

Bai Zihan's eyes narrowed just slightly.

"Return?"

Bai Zihan repeated. That was not what he expected.

Bai Ren nodded once, his expression firm.

"We have discussed this with the elders-and with your father," he said slowly.

"After careful consideration, we believe it would be best for you to return to the Bai Clan."

Bai Zihan fell silent.

"Why?"

Bai Zihan asked calmly, though deep down, he already knew the answer.

Bai Ren looked at him steadily.

"Because your talent far surpasses what we initially believed," he said without hesitation. "And it's no longer only us who have realized this."

The elders around them nodded in agreement, their gazes heavy with concern.

"Today's battle made it clear," Bai Ren continued. "Those accursed Demonic Cultivators are already targeting you specifically."

Bai Zihan's eyes darkened slightly.

"It was three Great Ascension Realm Demonic Elders this time," Bai Ren said, his voice lowering.

"Next time... it could be an Immortal Realm Demonic Cultivator."

Bai Zihan listened, though he still wasn't going to agree. After all, where else could he farm System Points? After spending them on

Heaven's Mandate Reversal Technique, he only had 30,000 System Points left.

He would need to earn more points when he could. He absolutely couldn't

leave this battlefield where points were practically lying around.

"Do you think that's an exaggeration?"

Bai Chu added grimly.

"A teenager killing three Great Ascension Demonic Elders alone-if you were a

Demonic Cultivator, would you allow such a threat to grow?"

Bai Ren's gaze sharpened.

"And it's not just the Demonic Cultivators."

He continued.

"You know very well that those bastards from the Li Clan and Zhao Clan have

never stopped looking for an opportunity to kill you," Bai Ren said.

"Today, they already proved that they're willing to help those Demonic Cultivators if it meant killing you. Protecting you is harder when enemies and allies alike are holding us back."

The Grand Elders' expressions hardened.

"If something were to happen to you here-whether by Demonic Cultivators or

any other reason-the Bai Clan would lose far more than a single genius."

Bai Ren took a step forward.

"So we decided," he said firmly, "that it is best for you to return." "You've already gained battlefield experience," Bai Ren continued. "More than

most cultivators your age could ever dream of."

He was already capable of killing enemies at the same realm as if it were nothing. Even those in the Void Refinement Realm were nothing more than opponents who could breathe a few seconds longer.

He was even able to kill those two major realms higher than himself. Everyone could agree that Bai Zihan didn't need any more experience than this. "And your talent..." Bai Ren paused, eyes filled with conviction, "is far too valuable to be wasted dying on this battlefield."

Moreover, they all agreed that Bai Zihan's life was worth more than the outcome of this battle.

As long as Bai Zihan survived, it was guaranteed that the Bai Clan would rise higher than anyone.

Bai Zihan lowered his gaze.

He knew they were right.

But knowing did not make him change his mind.

It didn't matter whether the danger was high or low-so long as he could earn points, survival would be easier in the future.

If the Grand Elders knew that, they wouldn't suggest this. But they didn't.

Then Bai Zihan finally spoke, his voice calm but edged with steel.

"You're afraid I'll die."

No one denied it.

Bai Ren met his eyes squarely.

"Yes," he said. "Because if you die here, the Bai Clan will lose its future."

Bai Zihan exhaled slowly.

"I understand your concerns," Bai Zihan said calmly. "And I know you're all saying this for my sake." The Grand Elders exchanged glances, thinking Bai Zihan was going to agree.

"But," Bai Zihan continued, lifting his gaze, "I won't die."

The words were spoken plainly.

Not arrogantly.

Not recklessly.

But with absolute confidence.

Several elders frowned immediately. "Zihan'er-"

Bai Chu began.

"I know what you want to say," Bai Zihan said, raising a hand.

The gesture was gentle, yet it stopped them cold.

For a moment, no one spoke.

Bai Zihan looked around the tent, meeting each elder's gaze in turn. "You're worried about the Demonic Cultivators. About the Li Clan. About the

Zhao Clan," he said evenly. "You're afraid that next time, you won't be able to protect me like today.""

"That fear isn't wrong"

"But your conclusion is." The elders stiffened.

Before anyone could argue, Bai Zihan spoke again.

"Before we continue," he said, "you all saw the sword technique I used, didn't you?"

The Grand Elders paused.

Then, one by one, they nodded.

There was no way anyone could forget it.

The sword light that tore through the battlefield.

The oppressive aura that seemed to suppress heaven and earth alike.

Bai Ren's eyes flickered.

If he were honest, that technique had shaken him deeply.

He thought that if he had known the same technique Bai Zihan used, he would have been able to slay that Half-Qilin.

Bai Zihan looked at him.

"What do you think of that technique?" He asked.

The Grand Elders exchanged glances again.

"Very powerful!"

"The strongest sword technique I've seen in my life."

Bai Zihan's lips curved faintly.

"Of course it is," he said.

"It is a Saint-Grade Technique!"

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! - Chapter 407 The Saint-Grade Technique Revelation[1,007 words]

Chapter 407 The Saint-Grade Technique Revelation

The moment the words "Saint-Grade Technique" left Bai Zihan's mouth, the place fell deathly silent.

The Grand Elders froze as if struck by lightning.

"...Saint-Grade?"

"Did he just say Saint-Grade?"

In the entire history of the Desolate Heaven Empire, Saint-Grade techniques were nothing more than legends.

There had never been one.

"That explains it..."

Bai Yui murmured softly, her eyes unfocused.

"No wonder... no wonder that sword technique felt like heaven itself descending."

Awe and reverence filled their eyes.

One would have thought such words to be nonsense if they were spoken by anyone else but this was the same Bai Zihan who had donated a Saint-Grade Artifact to the Clan.

So there wasn't much reason to doubt him, not to mention that they had personally witnessed the technique.

"So," Bai Zihan said, "now that you know what kind of technique it is-what do you think? Do you still think I would be unsafe if you learned it?"

The Grand Elders exchanged glances.

What could they think?

"If we possessed such a technique..." Bai Chu said slowly, his eyes burning, "then enemies like the Half-Qilin or Mo Zun would not be impossible to deal with."

"Indeed," Bai Ren said firmly. "If we knew such a technique... then there should be no opponent we cannot face."

His gaze sharpened as he looked at Bai Zihan.

"And you're saying..."

Bai Zihan smiled faintly.

"How about this," he said evenly. "I will stay."

The Grand Elders stiffened.

"And in return," Bai Zihan continued, "I teach the Saint-Grade Sword Technique to the Grand Elders."

For several heartbeats-

Silence!

A Saint-Grade Technique!

Bai Ren stared at Bai Zihan for a long moment before letting out a slow breath.

"That is..." he said carefully, "...not a bad trade."

Several Grand Elders nodded instinctively.

With such a technique, their combat power would skyrocket.

Protecting Bai Zihan.

Crushing Demonic Cultivators.

Even suppressing scheming clans-

All of it would become realistic.

Finally, Bai Yui spoke again.

"Zihan'er," she said, "understand this-we wanted you to return to the Clan because we were afraid too many enemies were targeting you."

"Yes," Bai Chu added, his voice heavy with sincerity. "We only wanted you to leave because we were afraid we couldn't protect you."

"You should still consider what we asked," Bai Ren said seriously. "Even if you choose to stay."

Bai Zihan nodded once.

"I will!"

His expression was respectful and sincere.

At least, to them.

But Bai Zihan had no intention of leaving this battlefield at all.

But he also knew the Grand Elders were sincerely looking out for him.

In the end, Bai Zihan kept his promise.

But only to a certain extent.

He calmly explained the theoretical framework of the Saint-Grade Sword Technique-its intent and its guiding principles.

He even wrote down what he knew.

That was all.

As for demonstrating the technique?

Well, he wasn't in a condition to do so right now. Even writing was a great ordeal for his current self.

The Grand Elders also didn't ask him to demonstrate it, as they knew his body's condition.

Moreover, they had already witnessed the technique on the battlefield, so they had at least a rough understanding of it.

After the matter was settled, Bai Zihan excused himself.

He left the Grand Elders behind-still engrossed in discussion, still arguing heatedly over interpretations, still treating the manuscript like a sacred relic-

and walked back toward his tent.

The encampment was quieter now.

Night had begun to settle.

The smell of blood still lingered in the air.

Bai Zihan lifted a hand and pushed aside the curtain of his tent-

Then paused.

His eyes flickered.

Today...

He had slain three Great Ascension Realm Demonic Cultivators.

A slow grin crept onto his face.

"I should get some kind of reward for that, right?"

He straightened slightly and spoke inwardly, his voice casual but expectant.

"System!"

A familiar interface unfolded before his eyes.

Without hesitation, Bai Zihan swiftly went to the Reward Section.

[Unclaimed Rewards Available]

Killed Great Ascension Realm Demonic Cultivator for the first time: [100× Cultivation Speed Card (3 Days)]Killed Great Ascension Realm Demonic Cultivator: [Martial Arts Enlightenment Card (1 Day)]Killed Great Ascension Realm Demonic Cultivator: [10,000 Points]

""

For a second, he couldn't believe his eyes.

He had thought the rewards would be lackluster, similar to when he killed a Grade-10 Demonic Beast.

But it was clear that the System treated Demonic Beasts and Demonic Cultivators differently-especially those in the Great Ascension Realm. He had felt regretful about all the points he had missed earlier because he needed to deal with Great Ascension Realm Demonic Elders, but now he didn't

feel that way at all.

Instead, he felt deeply thankful.

Just the 100x Cultivation Speed Card alone would have been worth it-not to mention the Martial Arts Enlightenment Card and 10,000 points.

"Should I begin hunting Great Ascension Realm Demonic Cultivators?"

Bai Zihan muttered.

It wasn't a completely delusional thought.

It had already been proven that with Heaven's Mandate Reversal Technique, he could take on even three Great Ascension Realm opponents.

Then he remembered being princess-carried and shook his head.

While the rewards were great, the risks were even greater.

As the Grand Elders had said, enemies were targeting him from all sides.

If he fell into a powerless state again, the chances of being killed would increase drastically.

So rather than taking unnecessary risks, it was better to slowly farm points.

These rewards could be considered lucky blessings.

After weighing the risks one last time, Bai Zihan let out slow breath.

"Let's not take any unnecessary risks."

He muttered, forcefully suppressing his greedy heart.

Then he returned to his tent to Cultivate.

Bai Zihan turned toward the entrance, looking for a Bai Clan member.

"You!"

The Bai Clan member, who had been staring at Bai Zihan, startled when Bai Zihan pointed at him.

Bai Zihan signaled him to come closer.

Almost instantly, footsteps hurried forward.

The Bai Clan disciple stepped in and bowed deeply the moment he saw Bai Zihan.

"Young Master!"

His tone was respectful-bordering on reverent.

"I'm going into closed cultivation," Bai Zihan said. "Make sure no one disturbs me."

The disciple straightened immediately.

"Yes, Young Master!"

Although it was strange that anyone would want to be in close cultivation especially considering the place they were in, he didn't question.

After all, who was he to question Young Master Zihan's choice? "Relay this order clearly," Bai Zihan continued. "For the next three days-or

longer, if I don't come out-no one is to enter this tent."

He paused briefly, then added evenly,

"Even if Demonic Beasts or Demonic Cultivators invade."

The Bai Clan member nodded firmly. "Understood, Young Master!"

Novel Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! Chapter 408 Reaching Top Spirit Severing Realm!

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan!

Chapter 408 Reaching Top Spirit Severing Realm!

Chapter 408 Reaching Top Spirit Severing Realm!

Three days later!

Bai Zihan slowly opened his eyes.

The dim interior of the tent came back into focus as the last traces of circulating Qi settled within his dantian.

"Already... three days?"

He muttered softly, a hint of surprise in his voice.

Time had passed far faster than he expected.

With the 100× Cultivation Speed Card activated, his cultivation devoured Qi at a terrifying rate-like a bottomless abyss.

Bai Zihan exhaled slowly and glanced to the side.

Several empty jade bottles lay scattered near him.

"Almost all of them..."

He clicked his tongue lightly.

He had used nearly every cultivation pill he had brought with him.

After all, a hundredfold cultivation speed without sufficient Qi would be nothing more than empty talk.

Fortunately-

He wasn't worried in the slightest.

With his mother being Mu Yuelan of the Mu Clan, pills were never something he lacked.

If he needed more, he could simply ask next time.

The Mu Clan might be poor in combat strength, but when it came to pills?

They were practically inexhaustible.

"System!"

[Host Info]

Host: Bai Zihan

Age: 18

Cultivation Realm: Spirit Severing (Top)

Constitution: Supreme Dao Bone

Martial Arts:

Nine Shadows Flowing Light Sword (Greater Mastery)

Eternal Flowing Water Sword (Minor Mastery)

Fate Severing Slash (Beginner Mastery)

He managed to break through twice within three days, an unthinkable feat for those in the Spirit Severing Realm.

Well, with a 100x Card, it was like breaking through twice in 200 days, which wasn't too bad.

After all, who could claim to break through twice in a year at the Spirit Severing Realm?

If everyone had such cultivation speed, then anyone could reach the Immortal Realm within 100 years.

Bai Zihan rose to his feet, rolling his shoulders lightly.

He pushed aside the curtain and stepped outside.

Fresh air greeted him.

Bai Zihan's gaze sharpened slightly.

(Did the Demonic Beasts attack...?)

Before he could think further, he noticed a familiar figure standing just a few steps away from his tent.

Straight-backed.

Guarding the tent like a statue.

It was the same Bai Clan disciple he had given orders to three days ago.

Bai Zihan raised an eyebrow.

"You're still here?"

He asked.

The disciple stiffened instantly, then turned and bowed deeply.

"Young Master!"

Bai Zihan looked at him calmly.

"I told you to rel the order," he said, "not stand guard."

The disciple hesitated for a fraction of a second, then lowered his head even further.

"I... I volunteered myself!"

He said honestly.

Bai Zihan studied him for a moment.

Then he said nothing more.

Instead, he shifted his gaze toward the distance.

"Did the Demonic Beasts attack?"

Bai Zihan asked.

The disciple shook his head immediately.

"No, Young Master," he replied.

"There has been no major movement for the past three days. The frontlines have remained stable."

Bai Zihan nodded slowly.

"I see!"

His eyes narrowed faintly as he looked toward the horizon, where dark clouds still lingered far beyond the battlefield.

No movement...

That, in itself, was unusual.

But Bai Zihan didn't dwell on it for long.

Whatever was coming-

He would be ready.

Bai Zihan didn't linger any longer.

After confirming that the frontlines were calm, he turned and walked away from the encampment, his steps unhurried yet purposeful.

Bai Zihan went to look for the Bai Clan's Grand Elders.

After asking around, he was told where they were.

They were outside the encampment.

At least five miles away.

Bai Zihan headed in that direction without hesitation.

The farther he went, the emptier the surroundings became.

He already knew the reason.

With the Grand Elders practicing Fate Severing Slash, allowing anyone to remain nearby would be courting death.

Even a stray ripple of sword intent could end a life instantly.

That was why they chose an area where there was no one.

Soon enough, he arrived at the destination where the Grand Elders were.

They were practicing Fate Severing Slash.

Even from a distance, Bai Zihan could feel it.

The technique they used wasn't fully comprehended by him, though it was certainly still powerful.

With a light step, his figure blurred, and he descended toward them like a falling leaf.

The Grand Elders halted simultaneously.

Swords stopped mid-motion.

Heads snapped up.

"He's here."

"So fast..."

"Looks like he made another breakthrough!"

They had already sensed him coming when he was five miles away-not that Bai

Zihan was trying to hide, anyway.

He touched down lightly a short distance away.

Then-

Their eyes widened.

"...Top Spirit Severing Realm?"

"No-wait."

Bai Ruhong took a sharp breath, staring at Bai Zihan.

"This aura... it's not just one breakthrough."

He stepped closer, his spiritual sense sweeping over Bai Zihan without restraint

-yet Bai Zihan didn't resist at all.

Bai Ruhong froze.

"...Two."

His voice cracked.

"You advanced two realms in three days?!"

The other Grand Elders sucked in cold breaths.

Impossible.

Utterly impossible.

Bai Ruhong stared at Bai Zihan intensely before blurting out-

"What did you eat?"

Several elders nodded subconsciously.

What kind of heaven-defying pill could cause this?

What kind of divine treasure?

Or forbidden technique?

Bai Zihan blinked once. Then smiled faintly.

"I just worked hard," he said calmly.

The Grand Elders stared at him.

Worked hard?

That was it?

That explanation was so absurd that none of them knew how to respond.

Bai Ren let out a helpless laugh, rubbing his temples.

"Every time you open your mouth, you make us feel like our centuries of cultivation were wasted."

Bai Yui shook her head slowly, her expression a mixture of amazement and resignation.

"If anyone else said that, I would've smacked them."

"But coming from you..." she sighed. "I can't even argue."

The Grand Elders exchanged glances.

Bewildered.

Speechless.

And yet-

There was no doubt left in their hearts.

Bai Zihan truly walked a path that no ordinary cultivator could follow.

A path that defied logic itself.

Bai Ren looked at Bai Zihan deeply.

"Good," he said slowly. "Very good!" Then his expression sharpened.

"Because if this war drags on...you may soon need even more strength than this. Though it's not like I would let it!"

Bai Ren said confidently as he looked at his sword. Next time he met Half-Qilin,

he vowed that he would finish him off with Fate Severing Slash.

Bai Zihan listened quietly to Bai Ren's words.

Only after the elder finished did he speak.

"I came to check how the progress was, Bai Zihan said calmly.

The Grand Elders turned their attention back to him.

Then he added, almost casually-

"Now that I'm fully healed, I can help you personally learn the technique."

The words fell as naturally as they could.

A Spirit Severing cultivator helping Immortals.

If anyone else had said such words, they would have been laughed out of the area or worse, reprimanded on the spot.

Yet no one laughed. No one frowned. Rather, they nodded like it was natural. Without another word, Bai Zihan stepped aside and watched.

The Grand Elders showed how much had comprehended the Fate Severing Slash.

Bai Zihan observed closely. Every movement.

Every pause.

Among them all, Bai Chu was the one who had comprehended the most.

Well, it was expected, as he was the one with Sword Intent, so learning the Sword Technique was technically easier for him.

Bai Ren followed closely behind. The others were not bad.

But they lagged clearly behind these two.

After watching for a while, Bai Zihan nodded to himself.

Then he stepped forward.

"For the day," Bai Zihan said, his voice calm yet clear, "I'll practice alongside

you."

He continued.

"I'll also answer any questions related to Fate Severing Slash."

(Time to use the Martial Arts Enlightenment Card!)

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Novel Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! Chapter 409 Teaching the Grand Elders

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan!

[Martial Arts Enlightenment Card (Active) - 24 Hours Remaining!]

Bai Zihan used the Martial Arts Enlightenment Card.

His mind instantly became sharper, clearer.

Immediately, he could see the essence of techniques like never before.

Even the Fate Severing Slash, which he only had basic mastery over, now revealed all the flaws he had previously made.

"Grand Elders, I will also show you. Watch carefully!"

Bai Zihan declared.

"Fate Severing Slash!"

He performed the technique-this time with even greater precision and power than before, while consuming far less Qi.

This was obviously a better Fate Severing Slash than any he had performed previously.

The Grand Elders watched closely, and with their cultivation and experience, it wasn't difficult for them to notice the difference.

"It's even more powerful than before."

"Is it because of his increased cultivation?"

"I don't think so. It's more refined-sharper!"

Not only that, they now truly understood just how difficult the technique was.

Once again, they were deeply impressed by Bai Zihan-someone who could comprehend such a complex technique at such a young age.

Silence fell over the empty plains.

The sword light dissipated.

What remained was a faint, lingering pressure-as if the world itself had been lightly scarred.

The Grand Elders' gazes were locked onto the space where Bai Zihan had completed the Fate Severing Slash, their eyes wide with unmistakable astonishment.

"So this is how it's supposed to look..."

Bai Chu murmured under his breath.

Grand Elders' faces were full of astonishment.

No!

Calling it astonishment was not enough.

They had practiced until their meridians ached and their minds screamed in protest.

And yet-

What Bai Zihan displayed felt fundamentally different.

Not stronger.

Not faster.

But on an entirely different level.

Bai Zihan turned back to them.

His expression was calm, almost indifferent-yet his eyes were clearer than ever.

"Now," he said, "shall I begin by telling you what you're all doing wrong?"

The Grand Elders began to practise the Fater Severing Technique.

Bai Zihan moved.

His figure flickered and appeared beside Bai Chu.

"Here," Bai Zihan said, tapping the ground lightly with his sword tip.

"Your intent forms too early."

"...I see," Bai Chu replied quietly.

Bai Zihan was already gone.

He appeared behind Bai Ren next.

"You rely too much on Qi, Bai Zihan said calmly. "You're forcing the technique."

Bai Ren snorted.

"Old habits."

"Then break them," Bai Zihan replied.

He demonstrated a single motion-no flourish, no excess.

The slash looked plain.

Yet the space in front of him distorted faintly.

Bai Zihan moved again.

To Bai Ruhong.

To Bai Yui.

Each correction was brief and precise.

Every Grand Elder immediately understood what they were doing wrong after being told by Bai Zihan.

Back and forth, Bai Zihan went.

Observing.

Correcting.

Practicing alongside them.

As time passed, the sword lights across the empty plains changed.

They grew cleaner.

Sharper.

More efficient.

The Grand Elders' Fate Severing Slashes no longer felt chaotic or forced.

Still-

There was something missing.

They could feel it.

The crucial essence.

The final step where understanding turned into true Fate severance.

This part couldn't be taught.

Bai Zihan tried to explain but it was them who needed to understand the true essence.

Fortunately-They were Immortals.

And with Bai Zihan there-grasping that final essence was only a matter of time.

Bai Zihan wasn't only teaching and practicing Fate Severing Slash.

The Martial Arts Enlightenment Card would be wasted if he focused on only one technique.

He also practiced Eternal Flowing Water Sword and Nine Shadows Flowing Light Sword.

At times, the Grand Elders would pause their own training and watch in amazement as Bai Zihan executed the Nine Shadows Flowing Light Sword.

They could tell-his mastery over the Bai Clan's core technique had already surpassed theirs, rivaling even Bai Chu.

"Not only does Zihan'er have terrifying cultivation speed his comprehension is even greater."

"There truly seems to be no roadblock for Bai Zihan to reach the peak."

Three fundamental factors determined the strength of a cultivator:

Physical body. Cultivation. Comprehension.

Lack even one, and it became a weakness.

Some had strong comprehension but slow cultivation-like Lin Xuan.

Others had cultivation and comprehension, but weaker bodies-like Bai

Xueqing.

Though Bai Xueqing's physical body wasn't truly weak, her physical body just lagged slightly behind her other strengths.

But Bai Zihan? There was no need to speak of his cultivation or physical body-the same body that survived Gou You's punch.

Now, even his comprehension had proven superior to the Grand Elders themselves.

They couldn't imagine Bai Zihan ever being held back.

He would rise.

And rise above everything.

[Martial Arts Enlightenment Card (Active) - 5 Seconds Remaining!]

[Martial Arts Enlightenment Card (Active) - 4 Seconds Remaining!]

"Huuu..."

Bai Zihan took a deep breathe.

The Martial Arts Enlightenment Card ended.

A full day had passed since Bai Zihan began teaching and practicing Fate Severing Slash.

Even without the card, he was too exhausted to continue.

Fate Severing Slash burned through Qi at a terrifying rate.

Still, with his increased mastery and cultivation, he could now easily perform three slashes-perhaps even four.

After an entire day of demonstration and practice, exhaustion was inevitable.

"System!"

[Host Info]

Host: Bai Zihan

Age: 18

Cultivation Realm: Spirit Severing (Top)

Constitution: Supreme Dao Bone

Martial Arts:

Nine Shadows Flowing Light Sword (Major Mastery)

Eternal Flowing Water Sword (Greater Mastery)

Fate Severing Slash (Greater Mastery)

Heaven's Mandate Reversal (Beginner Mastery)

Nine Shadows Flowing Light Sword increased by one level, nearing Perfection.

Eternal Flowing Water Sword advanced to Greater Mastery, also increased by one level.

Fate Severing Slash increased by two levels, advancing from Beginner to Greater Mastery.

This was the result of Bai Zihan teaching the technique to the Grand Elders and dedicating most of his time to it.

Otherwise, his other techniques might have advanced even further.

But Fate Severing Slash was his strongest offensive move-there was no regret.

He had also successfully mastered Heaven's Mandate Reversal.

With the Martial Arts Enlightenment Card active, comprehending it was effortless.

Now, he fully understood its limits.

With his current cultivation, he could remain at Top Void Refinement Realm for nearly twenty minutes.

However, pushing into the Great Ascension Realm was limited to three minutes at most-even with full Qi.

The backlash afterward would severely damage his body.

Until absolutely necessary, he would not use it again.

He briefly considered teaching the technique to the Grand Elders-

But dismissed the idea.

Their bodies simply weren't strong enough to endure the backlash.

And with Fate Severing Slash alone, they could already defeat enemies above their realm.

There was no need to risk their lives on such a dangerous technique.

The Grand Elders slowly withdrew their swords.

Bai Zihan exhaled quietly.

His task here was finished.

He turned toward the Grand Elders and cupped his fist respectfully.

"That's all for today," Bai Zihan said. "You'll need time to digest everything. Forcing it further won't help."

The Grand Elders looked at him with complex expressions.

Gratitude.

Awe.

And something close to disbelief.

Bai Chu laughed softly, shaking his head.

"Teaching Immortals sword techniques at Spirit Severing Realm..." he said. "If anyone else saw this, they'd think the world had gone mad."

Bai Ren looked at Bai Zihan deeply.

"You've done more than enough," he said solemnly. "Rest well. Leave the rest to us."

Bai Yui nodded gently.

"When the next battle comes," she added, "we won't disappoint you."

Bai Zihan smiled faintly.

"I'll be counting on that."

Without lingering any longer, he turned and stepped away.

With a single light movement, his figure blurred and vanished from the empty plains, heading back toward the encampment.

The encampment remained orderly and calm.

No alarms.

No signs of demonic activity.

Just as he approached his tent, a familiar figure immediately straightened.

The Bai Clan disciple from before stepped forward and bowed deeply.

"Young Master!"

Bai Zihan paused and glanced at him.

"You again?"

He asked mildly.

"Hehe... Please allow me to guard your tent."

Bai Zihan studied him quietly.

After a brief moment, Bai Zihan nodded.

"Fine!"

He said calmly.

The disciple's eyes lit up instantly.

"Yes, Young Master!"

Bai Zihan stepped past him, then stopped.

"If there's any movement from the Demonic Beasts," he added, "inform me immediately."

"Understood!" The disciple replied firmly. "I won't let a single disturbance go unnoticed!"

Bai Zihan acknowledged him with a slight nod.

He lifted the tent curtain and stepped inside.

The outside noise faded instantly.

Once again, he was alone.

Bai Zihan sat down cross-legged, his expression settling into calm focus.

His Qi slowly began to circulate.

He also needs to digest everything he learned and cultivate.

Two days passed quietly.

Bai Zihan remained inside his tent, stabilizing his cultivation and digesting everything he had learned.

Qi circulated steadily within his body, his foundation becoming increasingly firm.

Outside, the Bai Clan disciple continued to stand guard without rest.

Then-

"Young Master!"

Bai Zihan opened his eyes.

"Yes?"

The disciple's voice was tense.

"Demonic Beasts and Demonic Cultivators have invaded again!"

Bai Zihan rose to his feet.

"I see," he said calmly.

"Then let's go and greet them!"

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! - Chapter 410 The Return of the Half-Qilin[947 words]

Chapter 410 The Return of the Half-Qilin

The alarms rang across the encampment as Demonic Qi surged once more.

This time, however, the pressure was noticeably weaker.

No Immortals descended from the skies.

No Half-Qilin's overwhelming aura crushed the battlefield.

Only Great Ascension Realm Demonic Cultivators and Grade-10 Demonic Beasts advanced from the darkness.

Even so, no one dared to relax.

After what had happened before, the Desolate Heaven Empire responded immediately-matching force with force, formations activating one after another, experts taking their positions with grim expressions.

High alert!

They had not forgotten that these Demonic Cultivators possessed methods capable of concealing their presence-even from Immortals.

If the same trick was used again, they had to be ready to react instantly.

Yet-nothing unexpected happened.

The Demonic Beasts charged.

The Demonic Cultivators followed.

They clashed head-on with the empire's forces, exchanged blows-

The battlefield turned into a slaughter.

Demonic Beasts fell in droves, their roars cut short by blades, and overwhelming force.

Demonic Cultivators were hunted down relentlessly, leaving corpses strewn across the ravaged land.

Of course, the Desolate Heaven Empire suffered losses as well.

Blood was spilled on their side.

But compared to the enemy-

The difference was obvious.

Bai Zihan moved like a reaper across the battlefield.

Grade-9 Demonic Beasts stood no chance before him.

Wherever he passed, sword light flashed, space trembled, and massive bodies collapsed one after another.

To him, they were no longer threats-only targets.

By the end of the battle, Bai Zihan stood amidst the fading Demonic Qi, quietly exhaling.

He felt satisfied.

He thought that staying behind had been the right decision.

In a single battlefield alone, he had earned more than 15,000 points-which meant he had killed more than 150 Grade-9 Demonic Beasts.

That alone spoke volumes.

And this was only the beginning.

From that day onward, attacks continued.

Demonic Beasts and Demonic Cultivators launched repeated assaults-but the Immortals never appeared again.

Neither did the Half-Qilin.

Whether they were deliberately holding back to catch the empire off guard later, or whether the Half-Qilin was still recovering from its previous injuries, no one knew.

But either way-this was perfect for Bai Zihan.

He continued to enter battle after battle, calmly harvesting points.

And soon became clear to everyone-

The number of Demonic Beasts was shrinking.

Especially Grade-9 Demonic Beasts.

Their population was declining at a terrifying speed.

Some even began to joke-half in awe, half in disbelief.

"If this continues... Bai Zihan might wipe Grade-9 Demonic Beasts into extinction."

It didn't seem like a joke, considering how Bai Zihan went after them as if they owed him something.

Bai Zihan, on the other hand, didn't think much about it.

He continued to farm points, and with his increased mastery of techniques and higher cultivation level, dealing with Grade-9 Demonic Beasts was no challenge.

He could also deal with Grade-10 Demonic Beasts without much difficulty. He had killed at least five of them when they came to deal with him.

Still, he preferred killing Grade-9 Demonic Beasts for easier and faster points.

Moreover, it seemed that Bai Tianheng's threat and Minister Xiu's words had worked, as the Li and Zhao Clans and the Azure Holy Sun Sect no longer dared to pull the same move as before.

Perhaps it might also be because they realized that Bai Zihan was too strong for their petty tricks to work and gave up.

The Demonic Cultivators were the same.

After Bai Zihan killed three Great Ascension Realm Elders, they seemed to understand that they were no match for him.

No Demonic Cultivator dared to move in his direction, allowing Bai Zihan to deal with the Demonic Beasts freely.

In any case, everything seemed to be going smoothly for Bai Zihan, and he was farming points without any problems.

It had already been two weeks since the Desolate Heaven Empire and the demonic forces began clashing, and things were proceeding very smoothly for the empire-except when the Half-Qilin had appeared.

Apart from that, the demonic forces had suffered heavier losses in every other clash.

By now, the Demonic Cultivators had lost almost 40% of their initial forces, while the Desolate Heaven Empire had lost around 25-30%.

As for the Demonic Beasts, although many had died, their total number remained unknown.

It was unclear whether their overall numbers were decreasing-though Grade-9 Demonic Beasts were visibly fewer due to one person.

Many began to feel confident, believing victory would come soon.

That was-

Until the Half-Qilin decided to show itself once again.

The injuries from before were gone-completely healed. Its eyes burned with cold fury, locked onto the battlefield below.

And it hadn't come alone.

Behind it, Immortal-realm Demonic Beasts emerged one after another.

More than before.

Their auras overlapped, shaking the heavens and earth, plunging the battlefield into deathly silence. It was clear-the demonic side had finally decided to stop holding back.

Mó Zun stepped forward, his expression as indifferent as ever, flanked by his usual group of Immortal-realm Demonic Cultivators.

Their presence alone caused countless cultivators below to stiffen, hearts sinking.

Yet-the Desolate Heaven Empire did not fall into chaos.

They were prepared.

After the previous disaster, Minister Xiu had already sent urgent requests to the capital.

Reinforcements had arrived days earlier-five Immortals in total, including one additional Earth Immortal.

That was the absolute limit of what the empire could dispatch on short notice.

Other clans and sects did not send more. They had already committed the majority of their strength-pushing further would leave their own territories exposed.

Still, despite their preparations, the Desolate Heaven Empire couldn't help but feel nervous.

They knew what the Half-Qilin was capable of.

Last time, they had won due to the Half-Qilin's overconfidence-and Bai Ren wielding a Saint-grade sword.

Now that the creature was aware of this, would they be able to injure it again?

Strangely enough, the Bai Clan's Grand Elders seemed rather excited.

"Haha! Looks like they won't give up until they're dead!"

Bai Ren spoke with amusement.

"Well then, let's fulfill their wish."

Bai Chu replied, his eyes locked onto Mó Zūn.

The Bai Clan's Grand Elders had no intention of letting their opponents walk away freely today.

Today was the day they would die~

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! - Chapter 411 The Battlefield of Relentless Fury[937 words]

Chapter 411 The Battlefield of Relentless Fury

Bai Ren stepped forward.

With a single step, he vanished and reappeared high above the battlefield, white robes snapping violently as Immortal Qi surged beneath his feet.

The pressure he released was sharp and deliberate, aimed directly at the colossal figure in the sky.

The Half-Qilin's pupils contracted.

Before it could react, Bai Ren had already crossed half the distance, stopping just outside its killing range-close enough to provoke, far enough to mock. He smiled.

"Didn't you learn your lesson from last time?"

Bai Ren said lightly, his voice carrying clearly through the heavens.

The Half-Qilin froze for a heartbeat-

Then it roared.

A furious, earth-shaking roar that sent shockwaves rippling through the clouds.

Its Qi flared violently, crimson flames licking along its scales as killing intent flooded the sky.

"Don't be arrogant, human!" the Half-Qilin thundered.

"You only managed to injure me because of your weapon. Today, I will shred you to pieces!"

The Half-Qilin's eyes burned with hatred as it locked onto Bai Ren alone. The humiliation it had suffered before had been carved deep into its pride-and today, it had come to erase it.

Bai Ren merely chuckled.

"So impatient," he muttered.

Behind him, two figures moved.

Zhao Wujin and Yu Xuande stepped forward as well. Since they already had experience fighting the Half-Qilin, they were chosen to face it this time as well.

Zhao Wujin honestly wanted to refuse-he never wanted to face the Half-Qilin again-but his pride would not allow it.

Not to mention, if not Half-Qilin then he might need to fight against Mó Zūn which is also not an easy opponent.

Bai Chu also moved, heading straight toward Mó Zūn.

The moment the Half-Qilin finished speaking, the sky exploded.

It did not wait.

It did not give Bai Ren the leisure of striking first.

With a furious roar, its massive body blurred, space cracking beneath its charge as it closed the distance in an instant.

Demonic flames surged, claws tearing through the void itself as it struck straight toward Bai Ren.

Fast.

Decisive.

Ruthless.

Bai Ren's eyes narrowed.

Last time, the Half-Qilin had endured, allowing injuries to stack until it was forced into retreat.

This time, it refused to give Bai Ren that chance.

Boom-!

Bai Ren raised his sword just in time, Immortal Qi erupting as the claw slammed down.

The impact shook the heavens, shockwaves rippling outward as both figures were forced back.

Before Bai Ren could press forward-

The Half-Qilin was already moving again.

Another charge. Another strike. Relentless.

It gave Bai Ren no rhythm, no opening, attacking like a storm that refused to let up.

Behind Bai Ren, Zhao Wujin and Yu Xuande struck.

Techniques crashed against the Half-Qilin's flank and back-

Yet the beast didn't even turn its head.

It ignored them completely, as if they were no more than insects buzzing at its side.

Its focus never left Bai Ren.

Because it knew.

Those two could never truly hurt it. He needs to only be wary of Sword in Bai Ren's hand.

Zhao Wujin clenched his teeth.

His attacks were landing-but shallow. Deflected by scales, dispersed by Demonic Qi.

Still, he didn't stop. Even if he couldn't deal decisive damage, every disruption mattered.

Yu Xuande coordinated flawlessly, timing his strikes to interfere with the Half-Qilin's movements, forcing slight adjustments-tiny deviations that Bai Ren

immediately capitalized on.

Bai Ren's expression sharpened.

Each exchange grew fiercer than before, sparks flying as sword and claw clashed again and again.

The Half-Qilin refused to tank blows, retreating and counterattacking instantly, never allowing injuries from Bai Ren.

This was experience.

Elsewhere-

Bai Chu and Mó Zun collided.

Their clash was quieter-but no less dangerous.

Qi and Demonic Qi intertwined as the two exchanged blows.

Neither pressed recklessly, neither revealed more than necessary.

A stalemate.

And Mó Zun didn't seem to mind at all.

His expression remained indifferent, movements unchanged from before-
steady, patient, methodical.

He wasn't here to gamble.

He wasn't here to rush.

As long as the Half-Qilin held Bai Ren in check, time was on his side.

But of course-neither Bai Ren nor Bai Chu had come here to be dragged into a
battle of attrition.

They were waiting.

Waiting for that one moment.

To show their opponents the technique they had been practicing for the past
week.

Of course, they couldn't use it recklessly.

It consumed an enormous amount of Qi, and once their trump card was
revealed, they would never get the same opportunity again.

So it had to count.

When they used it-

It had to be decisive.

CLANG! CLANG!

Sword and claw collided again and again, sparks tearing through the sky like
falling stars.

The battle only grew fiercer.

The Half-Qilin was overwhelming.

Its massive body moved with terrifying precision, Demonic flames spiraling around it as each strike carried crushing force.

Bai Ren was forced backward step by step, his white robes torn by shockwaves, Immortal Qi flaring constantly just to hold the line.

He couldn't advance.

Every time Bai Ren tried to counter, the Half-Qilin twisted away instantly, claws smashing down before the sword could fully extend.

Yu Xuande and Zhao Wujin supported without pause.

Yet-

Useless.

Their techniques struck but the Half-Qilin's scales barely cracked. Demonic Qi swallowed the impact, wounds sealing almost as soon as they appeared.

The beast didn't even snarl.

It didn't even acknowledge them.

It pressed Bai Ren harder.

Faster.

Heavier.

Another claw descended-

BOOM!

Bai Ren blocked, but his feet slid backward through the air, blood finally spilling from the corner of his lips. His arm trembled as Immortal Qi surged to stabilize his sword.

The Half-Qilin loomed above him, eyes blazing with cruel satisfaction.

"Looks like your time has come, human!"

It thundered.

Its killing intent exploded.

A massive demonic sigil formed beneath its claws as it poured power into a single decisive strike-one meant to end everything.

Even Bai Ren felt it.

He exhaled slowly.

Not panic. Not despair.

Just... calm.

The Half-Qilin descended like a falling star.

Claws tearing through the heavens. Death rushing closer. And at that exact moment-

Bai Ren's Immortal Qi changed.

It circulated inward in a pattern so profound that the surrounding space trembled.

Far away, Bai Chu's eyes sharpened.

(Now!)

The Half-Qilin sensed it too-and its expression twisted.

"What-?!"

But it was already too late.

Bai Ren lifted his sword. "Fate Severing Slash!"

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan!

Chapter 412 Sword Turned Against Great Ascension Realm[1,309 words]

Chapter 412 Sword Turned Against Great Ascension Realm

Bai Zihan stood amidst the chaos below, robes fluttering calmly as blood splashed across the earth around him.

If nothing unexpected happens, Bai Zihan thought calmly, today should be the last day of this war.

His gaze flicked briefly toward the sky.

Bai Ren.

Bai Chu.

The Grand Elders.

Once Fate Severing Slash was truly grasped-even imperfectly-it was still a Saint-Grade Technique.

Someone like Mó Zūn or the Half-Qilin...

They should be killed if the technique lands.

That confidence wasn't arrogance.

It was a certainty.

So Bai Zihan thought that today might be the last day of the war between Desolate Heaven Empire and the Demonic Forces.

Bai Zihan didn't wait. He stepped forward-and the slaughter began.

Since it might be the last day, he should farm as many Points as he could. But it was difficult when all his opponents knew how to run away.

Grade-9 Demonic Beasts seemed to know that fighting him was pointless and would rather avoid him, just like those Demonic Cultivators.

They could run, but it didn't matter-Bai Zihan could catch them easily, so running only delayed the inevitable.

After slaughtering another group of Demonic Beasts, he searched for more when he spotted Great Ascension Demonic Cultivators.

(Should I start killing them?)

Bai Zihan thought.

The rewards they gave were truly great, and now that he was much stronger, perhaps he should.

Those Grade-9 Demonic Beasts were avoiding him, and farming Points were being affected.

Not to mention, it wasn't like before when he had needed to fight the Three Great Ascension Demonic Elders by himself.

He could sneak-attack the Great Ascension Demonic Cultivators who were currently fighting others.

Moreover, this might be the last chance that he could do so.

"Hmm... let's do that!"

Bai Zihan decided.

Whoosh!

He had already set his sights on one of the Great Ascension Demonic Cultivators.

He was currently fighting Bai Feng in a very close battle.

They were the closest Great Ascension Realm fight, and hence the first target of Bai Zihan.

Whoosh! Whoosh-!

The Demonic Elder didn't notice Bai Zihan at first.

His entire focus was locked onto Bai Feng,

Blades clashed at close range, Qi and Demonic Qi grinding violently against each other.

Bai Feng pressed forward relentlessly, sharp and unwavering, leaving the Demonic Elder no room to breathe.

He was already at his limit.

Every exchange pushed him closer to collapse.

Then-

Something changed.

A faint chill crept up the Demonic Elder's spine.

Within thirty meters.

His pupils contracted violently.

(Intruder?!)

He turned just enough to glimpse Bai Zihan cutting through the battlefield like a silent blade.

Bai Zihan!

Instant panic erupted.

(Eh?! What is that monster doing here?!)

Facing Bai Feng alone was already a struggle. Adding Bai Zihan into the mix meant only one thing-
Death!

The Demonic Elder didn't hesitate.

He twisted his body, Demonic Qi erupting as he prepared to flee, abandoning the fight entirely.

But Bai Feng's eyes flashed cold.

"You're not going anywhere."

"Nine Shadows Flowing Light Sword!"

Nine sword phantoms bloomed around Bai Feng, each carrying real killing intent.

The sword light overlapped and locked the surrounding space, sealing the Demonic Elder's escape path for a split second-

That was all Bai Zihan needed.

His figure blurred.

"Nine Shadows Flowing Light Sword-Flickering Shadow Step!"

Space rippled.

Bai Zihan vanished from sight.

The Demonic Elder's heart lurched-

And Bai Zihan was already there.

Too close.

Too fast.

Before the Demonic Elder could even scream-

"Second Form-Phantom Light Strike!"

A streak of cold light passed through his chest.

The Demonic Elder froze mid-motion, eyes wide with disbelief as his Demonic

Qi scattered uncontrollably.

A thin line appeared across his torso-

Then body split apart.

The corpse fell lifelessly from the sky.

Just like that.

A Great Ascension Demonic Elder-slain.

Bai Feng stared for a brief moment, then exhaled slowly, his grip tightening around his sword.

"...Good timing."

Bai Feng looked at Bai Zihan, whose technique mastery was even higher than his own.

He couldn't believe that he had once tried to force Bai Zihan into stepping down from the Heir's position.

Who could even be his competition? Even Bai Feng felt weak compared to him.

But well, considering Bai Zihan's previous behavior, he didn't think his decision back then had been wrong either.

It was just that Bai Zihan had proven himself.

Otherwise, if he had stayed the same as before, Bai Feng knew his decision

would have been right.

Bai Zihan turned, his expression calm and composed, as if killing a Great Ascension Demonic Elder was nothing more than a routine task.

"Uncle," he said evenly, "go support the others here."

Bai Feng nodded, taking his command as if it were natural.

Then he looked back at Bai Zihan.

"And you?" Bai Feng asked, though he already knew the answer.

Bai Zihan's eyes lifted toward the distance, where several Great Ascension Demonic Cultivators were still locked in fierce battles, completely unaware of what had just happened.

"I'll handle the Great Ascension Realm Demonic Cultivators!"

Bai Zihan replied simply, like it was a statement of fact.

Bai Feng felt a strange tightness in his chest.

For a brief moment, he wanted to say something-warn him, remind him to be careful.

But the words never came.

Bai Feng nodded heavily.

"Alright," he said. "Don't be reckless!"

Bai Zihan gave a faint smile.

Then his figure blurred.

Whoosh-!

He vanished, heading straight toward another Great Ascension battlefield.

Bai Zihan descended like a black comet.

The second Great Ascension Demonic Cultivator never even understood what had gone wrong.

He was mid-battle, locked against a Bai Clan Elder, Demonic Qi surging as he prepared a counterattack-

When space rippled.

Cold light flashed.

And his head separated from his body before his thoughts could catch up.

Blood rained from the sky.

Another Great Ascension Demonic Cultivator-dead.

The battlefield fell into a brief, eerie silence.

Then-

Panic spread.

The Demonic Cultivators finally understood.

Bai Zihan wasn't hunting Grade-9 Demonic Beasts anymore.

He had turned his blade toward them.

"He's targeting the Great Ascension Realm!"

"That monster-he's hunting us!"

"If this continues, we'll all die one by one!"

Fear twisted their expressions.

Unlike the beasts, they could think.

And thinking made the situation even more terrifying.

If they continued fighting as before, scattered across the battlefield, Bai Zihan would simply move from one fight to another-executing them cleanly, efficiently, without giving them any chance to respond.

Running wouldn't help.

Fighting alone was suicide.

Far from the main battlefield, five Great Ascension Demonic Cultivators gathered swiftly, Demonic Qi converging as they formed a complex array midair.

Runes ignited.

Blood symbols burned.

"This formation-are you sure?" one of them growled.

"It only lasts five minutes," another replied grimly. "But once activated, no one can enter... and no one can leave."

Five minutes.

Five Great Ascension Demonic Cultivators.

Against Bai Zihan.

"That's enough," the leader said coldly. "If we don't do this, we die anyway."

They split apart, returning to the battlefield-each one deliberately revealing openings, baiting movements, drawing attention.

Whoosh-!

Bai Zihan cut down his third Great Ascension Demonic Cultivator with ruthless efficiency.

Blood scattered as the body fell, its Demonic Qi dispersing into nothingness.

Without pausing, Bai Zihan turned-already locking onto his next target. And stepped forward.

The moment his foot crossed the boundary-

HUM-!

The world lurched.

Space hardened like steel.

Scarlet runes ignited beneath his feet as demonic symbols carved themselves into the air.

A formation snapped shut.

The battlefield beyond blurred, twisted-and vanished.

Bai Zihan halted.

His eyes swept across the sealed domain, calm but sharp.

"...A formation."

He raised his sword and slashed casually.

BOOM!

Sword struck the boundary-

And rebounded violently.

The impact sent a ripple through the formation, but it did not break.

Bai Zihan's feet slid back half a step.

His eyes narrowed slightly.

"Oh? A Grade-5 Formation?"

The formation walls pulsed, absorbing the force, demonic runes stabilizing instantly.

It hadn't even cracked.

Bai Zihan exhaled softly.

He was impressed-if only a little.

Then-

Five figures emerged.

Five Great Ascension Demonic Cultivators stepped forward, their auras overlapping as killing intent flooded the sealed space.

Their expressions were no longer fearful.

They were excited.

Triumphant.

"Hahaha... we finally caught you."

"Do you know how many of us you've killed?"

The leader stepped forward, eyes blazing with confidence.

"But that ends here."

"This formation seals space itself. No one can enter. No one can leave."

"And we all know what happened last time you fought three Great Ascension Elders."

"You survived," he said mockingly, "but you were left completely drained."

No Qi.

No strength.

Couldn't even stand.

"So tell me," the leader said coldly, spreading his arms, "what do you think happens now?"

Five against one.

A sealed formation.

No escape.

No reinforcement.

Their Demonic Qi surged, filling the domain like a rising tide.

They were convinced.

Bai Zihan was finished.

Bai Zihan slowly lowered his sword.

He looked at them.

Then he smiled faintly.

"Let's find out," he said softly, "who is actually trapped."

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! - Chapter 413 Fated to Die Here[
1,400 words]

Chapter 413 Fated to Die Here

"Heaven's Mandate Reversal."

Bai Zihan didn't wait and straight away used Heaven's Mandate Reversal Technique.

Bai Zihan's aura climbed violently, tearing past the Top Void Refinement Realm then stabilized.

The leader's eyes narrowed.

"Again with that strange technique."

But he didn't retreat. Instead, he sneered.

"Surround him. Finish him off!"

The five moved at once.

Demonic Qi roared as they split into a killing formation, encircling Bai Zihan from all directions.

Chains of blood-red symbols linked their auras together, amplifying their power.

The reason the five of them were chosen to deal with Bai Zihan wasn't just because of their individual strength.

It was because they fought as one.

Working together, they had slain multiple Great Ascension Realm cultivators, no matter how powerful they were.

A glance, a fluctuation of aura, even the slightest shift in killing intent was enough for the others to respond instantly.

There were no wasted movements-no hesitation.

Each of them covered the others' blind spots.

"Nine Shadows Flowing Light Sword!"

Bai Zihan moved first.

His figure blurred as sword light split into nine overlapping afterimages.

Shadows scattered in all directions, each one carrying real sword intent, each one indistinguishable from the original.

In an instant, the sealed domain was filled with Bai Zihans.

One of the Demonic Cultivators struck-

But the moment his attack landed, the "Bai Zihan" before him shattered into mist.

"Fake-!"

Before he could finish-

BOOM!

Five attacks landed simultaneously.

The shadows were annihilated in the same breath.

Blades, claws, and demonic arts overlapped perfectly, erasing all nine shadows before they could complete a single killing strike.

Not one wasted motion.

Not one delayed response.

At the center-

CLANG!

Bai Zihan's real body was forced back half a step as a heavy demonic blade slammed into his guard.

Sparks exploded as sword and blade collided, the impact sending shockwaves rippling through the formation.

The other four saw it.

An opening.

"Now!"

They lunged forward together, killing intent erupting as their auras surged to their peak.

Demonic Qi howled, forming overlapping waves meant to crush Bai Zihan completely.

Bai Zihan's eyes sharpened.

His Qi surged again.

He twisted his wrist, power flowing through his arm like a raging tide, and forced the Demonic Cultivator striking him backward, shattering the momentum of the combined assault.

"Eternal Flowing Water Sword!"

Bai Zihan's sword traced a smooth, circular arc.

Sword light flowed like an eternal river, layers upon layers of defensive currents forming around him.

Each incoming strike was met, redirected, and dissolved, their violent force swallowed and guided away rather than resisted head-on.

Clang Clang Clang!

Attacks rained down from all sides, yet none could break through.

The sealed domain trembled as demonic Qi and sword intent collided endlessly.

Within the storm, Bai Zihan stood unmoved-calm, steady, unyielding.

Three minutes passed.

Inside the sealed formation, every breath was filled with killing intent.

The five Demonic Cultivators attacked without pause.

Their formation shifted endlessly-offense flowing into defense, feints turning into killing blows, angles changing in perfect synchronization.

When one retreated, another advanced. When one strike failed, three more followed instantly.

It was flawless teamwork.

Yet-

They could not take a single step forward.

Bai Zihan stood at the center like an immovable axis, his sword never stopping.

The Eternal Flowing Water Sword continued to circulate, sword light rising and falling like endless tides.

No matter how fierce the assault, it was absorbed, diverted, and dispersed.

Three minutes.

Not a drop of blood was spilled.

The Demonic Cultivators' expressions darkened.

Trying to overpower him was useless.

Every clash told them the same terrifying truth: Bai Zihan's physique was stronger than theirs.

Each collision sent numbing force back through their arms, rattling bones and meridians despite their Demonic Qi reinforcement.

And that wasn't even the worst part.

"He should be running out of Qi by now..."

One of them thought grimly.

They remembered it clearly.

Last time.

Bai Zihan had fought three Great Ascension Elders and survived-but only barely. He had been drained, emptied, unable to even stand.

That was why they had dared to trap him.

That was why they were confident.

But now-

Minute after minute passed.

And Bai Zihan's aura did not weaken.

Not even slightly.

His Qi circulation remained smooth, vast, and stable, as if it were being continuously replenished.

His breathing never grew heavy. His movements never slowed.

But how could they know that Bai Zihan had broken through twice since then

and that his mastery over the technique had increased considerably? With Heaven's Mandate Reversal, Bai Zihan was confident that he could continue using the technique for twenty minutes-as long as he didn't expend

too much Qi at once.

The five Demonic Cultivators exchanged brief glances, unease spreading through their perfectly synchronized rhythm for the first time.

Three minutes had passed.

Only two remained.

But Bai Zihan did not intend to wait any longer.

His eyes sharpened, calm and cold, as his sword slowly lowered-then steadied.

(Finding the perfect opening is pointless.)

He saw it clearly now.

Their teamwork was flawless.

There was no "best moment," no exposed flaw, no delayed response he could exploit-not with conventional means.

If he waited for an opening, he would wait forever.

So Bai Zihan chose the simplest path.

The most direct one.

His strongest. Sword intent surged.

The sealed domain trembled.

The five Demonic Cultivators felt it at the same instant, their expressions changing dramatically.

A pressure unlike before descended, heavy and absolute, as if the laws of the world themselves were being bent toward Bai Zihan's blade.

Bai Zihan took a single step forward.

He raised his sword.

The world seemed to pause.

All sound vanished.

"Fate Severing Slash!"

The moment the words left his mouth-

The sword fell.

In that instant, the sealed space itself screamed.

A crescent of pale-gold sword light swept forward, carrying within it terrifying finality. Wherever it passed, space fractured silently, layers peeling apart like thin paper.

Because the formation was already compressed-

Because space was sealed-

There was nowhere to run.

The five Demonic Cultivators reacted instantly.

"Defend!"

They abandoned all offense in unison.

Defensive arts and Artifacts-everything they had was unleashed at once.

They could not dodge in such a small space and can only withstand it.

BOOM-!!!

The Fate Severing Slash struck.

The sealed domain shook violently, demonic runes flickering wildly as if on the verge of collapse.

The five Demonic Cultivators screamed as the pressure slammed into them, bones creaking, organs trembling.

Bai Zihan watched calmly, eyes sharp and unwavering.

He wanted to know.

After breaking through twice.

After mastering Fate Severing Slash to a new level.

After stabilizing Heaven's Mandate Reversal-

Could they survive?

The sword light swallowed them whole.

And in that instant-

Fate itself awaited the answer.

Silence followed!

CRACK-!

The sealed domain-once dense with demonic runes and suffocating pressure- collapsed in fragments of distorted space, dissolving like shattered glass.

Cracks raced across the air itself before vanishing completely.

At the center of the devastation-

Five figures remained standing.

Barely.

Their blood-red symbols had dimmed to a dull, flickering glow, some already extinguished entirely.

Demonic Qi leaked from their bodies uncontrollably, like smoke seeping from shattered vessels.

One knelt on a single knee, coughing violently as blackened blood spilled from his mouth.

Another's arm hung at an unnatural angle, bones visibly warped beneath torn flesh.

The leader was still upright-but only because his sword was embedded in the ground, supporting his weight.

His armor was split cleanly down the center, a pale-gold scar burned across his chest, still crackling with residual sword intent.

They had survived.

At the final instant, they had layered every defensive art they possessed-using all the Artifacts they have, overlapping protections, forcefully diverting the sword's trajectory just enough to avoid total annihilation.

It was the strongest defense they could muster.

And it had left them in ruins.

Bai Zihan stood several dozen steps away, sword lowered, his robes fluttering gently in the fading turbulence.

He looked at them.

And sighed softly.

"You survived."

There was no anger in his voice.

Only faint disappointment.

But it vanished almost immediately.

After all-

Expecting five cultivators at the Great Ascension Realm, fighting with perfect coordination, to fall so easily had always been unrealistic.

Bai Zihan straightened.

His eyes turned cold.

"However," he said calmly, sword lifting once more, "no matter."

"You are fated to die here."

At that moment-

A surge of powerful auras erupted.

"Zihan!"

A familiar voice rang out, sharp with urgency.

Bai Clan Elders.

Several figures tore through the air, robes snapping violently as they arrived-

each one an existence at the Great Ascension Realm.

Their expressions were grim, eyes immediately locking onto Bai Zihan,

scanning him for injuries.

They had been watching.

Waiting.

The sealing formation had cut off everything-space, sound, even spiritual perception. No matter how anxious they were, no matter how furious, they could only endure.

But now-

The formation was gone.

Shattered by Fate Severing Slash.

Bai Clan Elders inhaled sharply as they took in the scene.

The destroyed domain.

The ravaged ground.

And the five Demonic Cultivators-barely standing.

Bai Zihan had already dealt with the most dangerous opponents.

What remained-

Was cleanup.

The leader of the Demonic Cultivators looked up slowly, bloodshot eyes widening as he sensed the surrounding pressure.

Great Ascension auras.

Multiple. Encircling them.

It was their end!

But well, Bai Zihan still had to earn rewards from the system, so in the end, he

delivered the final attack.

And no one could complain-after all, they were already in a weakened state

after fighting Bai Zihan.

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! - Chapter 414 No Path Left to Victory[990 words]

Chapter 414 No Path Left to Victory

The battlefield tilted decisively.

The Demonic Forces had lost too many Great Ascension Realm cultivators. Moreover, unlike before-when Heaven's Mandate Reversal had left him drained and forced out of the battle-Bai Zihan remained fully capable of fighting.

The Desolate Heaven Empire now held the overwhelming advantage. Demonic Qi thinned across the battlefield.

Yet despite this-

Everyone knew.

The true deciding factor had never been the Great Ascension Realm.

It was the Immortals.

High above the battlefield, where space warped and laws screamed under pressure, the clash between Immortal existences continued to tear at the heavens themselves.

That was where victory would truly be decided.

And just as many braced themselves for a prolonged, brutal stalemate-like the last great war-

Something changed.

"Fate Severing Slash!"

The Half-Qilin's pupils shrank to pinpoints.

The moment Bai Ren spoke those words, it felt like it-

Not power exploding outward-

But something far more terrifying.

Bai Ren swung.

The sword moved cleanly, simply-yet the moment the slash left the blade, the world split.

A pale-white arc carved through the sky, cutting through space, demonic flames, and intent alike.

At that exact moment-

Bai Chu's eyes sharpened.

Seeing Bai Ren reveal the technique, he moved without hesitation.

If Bai Ren knew it-then Mó Zun would already assume he did as well which was the correct assumption.

The element of surprise was already gone.

So Bai Chu chose decisiveness instead.

He did not wait for the perfect opening.

He accumulated Qi-

Almost simultaneously.

Mó Zun's pupils shrank.

Just as his attention was drawn by the massive surge of Qi from Bai Ren's direction, Bai Chu struck as well-leaving him no time to even register surprise.

Bai Chu raised his sword.

"Fate Severing Slash!"

The heavens trembled a second time.

A cold, merciless arc descended toward Mó Zun, severing space, intent, and causality itself.

Mó Zūn's expression finally darkened.

He abandoned offense instantly, Demonic Qi erupting as layers of defense unfolded one after another.

Two Fate Severing Slashes.

Almost simultaneous.

One against the Half-Qilin.

One against Mó Zūn.

The world screamed.

Qi erupted, vast and absolute, tearing through the heavens in pale-gold arcs that seemed to cut through it.

Space split cleanly in their wake, laws unraveling as the slashes descended with judgmental finality.

Neither of them had mastered the technique.

They were not even at beginner mastery.

Yet it was still a Saint-Grade Technique.

Even at half-mastery, it was far more powerful than any Heaven-Grade technique in existence.

Bai Zihan's mastery might have been superior-

But in terms of raw power, Bai Ren and Bai Chu stood far above him. And that clearly showed in their Fate Severing Slash.

The twin slashes descended.

Sound vanished as sword Qi cleaved downward-not exploding, but erasing, as if fate itself had been cut from the world.

The Half-Qilin was hit first.

It roared-an instinctive, furious cry-bringing both forearms up in a desperate block, demonic flames surging wildly.

The Fate Severing Slash passed through its guard without resistance.

Its arms were severed cleanly at the shoulders, demonic blood spraying into the void as space itself peeled apart behind the strike.

The slash did not stop.

It carved onward, tearing through scales, flesh, and bone, the force of it ripping a deep, horrifying gash across the Half-Qilin's body.

The slash did not cleave it in two-but it came terrifyingly close, the residual Sword Qi tearing through its torso and leaving its massive body split by a wound that refused to heal.

RRRWWRRR!

The Half-Qilin crashed downward, its roar breaking into a hoarse, agonized scream as its aura collapsed violently.

Demonic Qi leaked uncontrollably from the mutilated body, its regeneration completely suppressed.

...

It did not die-

But it was crippled.

At the same time- Mó Zun was struck.

The moment the Fate Severing Slash descended, his pupils contracted violently.

He did not hesitate.

A High-Grade Heaven Defensive Artifact erupted in front of him, layers of runes unfolding like a collapsing star as Demonic Qi poured into it without

restraint.

BOOM-!!!

The artifact shattered.

Runes disintegrated one after another, defensive layers collapsing in a cascade of violent backlash.

The artifact absorbed most of the slash-

But not all.

Mó Zun was flung backward, blood spraying from his mouth as his body slammed through distorted space.

He barely stabilized himself, breathing heavily, chest heaving violently.

His armor was torn open.

Across his chest-

A deep, scratch burned, sword intent still lingering like a curse.

Mó Zün stared at it.

Cold sweat seeped down his spine.

(If I had hesitated for even a second... If that artifact were weaker...)

He would already be dead.

He looked up.

And his gaze landed on the Half-Qilin.

The once-dominant supreme beast lay mangled, its arms gone, body nearly bisected, aura in utter disarray.

It could no longer fight as it had before.

Not even close.

Mó Zún frowned.

And then-

Following Bai Ren and Bai Chu's lead, other Bai Clan Immortals moved.

"Fate Severing Slash!"

The heavens screamed again.

One Demonic Immortal-facing Bai Yui-was struck head-on.

There was no escape.

The slash erased him completely, body and soul torn apart as space folded inward and collapsed.

The other two Demonic Immortals who faced Bai Qingshan and Bai Ruhong barely survived.

One lost half his torso.

The other was severed from shoulder to waist, barely clinging to life as his aura flickered like a dying flame.

The battlefield fell into stunned silence.

Too many Immortals had fallen or received serious injuries in a single exchange.

This was no longer a battle.

It was an execution.

The Desolate Heaven Empire's force celebrated while the Demonic Force couldn't help but be in panic.

Their strongest was losing whether it be Great Ascension Realm or Immortal Realm Elders.

They no longer see a path of victory for themselves.

Mó Zun clenched his fist slowly, breathing heavily, eyes cold and calculating.

(It's over!)

Even if they continued-

The outcome would not change.

The Demonic Forces had lost their trump cards.

Mó Zun took a heavy breathe and glared at Bai Chu.

"Keke... Bai Chu, just where did you get all these treasures? This technique wasn't Heaven-Grade, was it?"

Mó Zün muttered.

He was referring to the Saint-Grade sword in Bai Ren's hand-and the technique that had nearly ended him.

He knew.

From its power alone, the technique was undeniably Saint-Grade Technique.

"Who knows?"

Bai Chu replied calmly, offering no explanation.

"You are lucky. Very lucky," Mó Zün said, admitting defeat at last.

"This is your victory!"

Even so, Bai Chu did not let his guard down.

Until Mó Zün's head rolled- There was no such thing as safety.

"Celebrate today's victory while you can," Mó Zun said coldly.

"Next time when we meet again-your Bai Clan will face its end!"

Novel Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! Chapter 415 Beast Tide Came to an End

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan!

Chapter 415 Beast Tide Came to an End

Bai Chu's gaze remained calm as Mó Zūn finished speaking.

"There won't be a next time," Bai Chu said flatly. "Mó Zūn, you can't escape today."

For a moment, it truly seemed that way.

Mó Zūn was severely wounded.

The Half-Qilin was crippled.

Most Demonic Cultivators Immortals lay dead or dying.

The battlefield belonged entirely to the Desolate Heaven Empire.

Yet-

Mó Zun smiled.

It was slow and deeply unsettling.

Bai Chu's pupils shrank.

Too relaxed.

Too assured.

Before Bai Chu could react, a ripple of movement appeared behind Mó Zūn. Figures emerged beside Mó Zūn.

Bai Chu's eyes narrowed.

He didn't sense their presence at all.

(Since when have they been here?)

Bai Chu was surprised by their sudden appearance.

No matter how focused he was fighting Mó Zūn, his sense was always keeping eyes on interference from others.

But he totally didn't sense them until now.

And he also didn't recognize them.

Yet the aura they radiated was unmistakable: Earth Immortal.

Having lived so long, and knowing that Earth-Immortals were rare, Bai Chu was familiar with almost all of them.

415 Beast Tide Came to an End

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Yet the two who appeared didn't resemble anyone he knew.

Two of them stepped forward, shielding Mó Zūn. Bai Chu raised his sword, Immortal Qi flaring, ready to face them alone.

The three collided instantly.

CLANG! CLANG!

Bai Chu responded with precision, parrying and countering, but the two Earth Immortals pressed him relentlessly.

Each strike forced him to adjust, each feint pushed him off balance.

Exhaustion from using Fate Severing Slash weighed on him. His arms burned,

his movements slightly slower.

Step by step, he was driven backward, sliding through the air as his feet

struggled to find footing.

Against two Earth Immortals, even Bai Chu could not maintain control.

Bai Chu realized that they were stronger than almost any cultivator he had ever faced-stronger, perhaps, than Mó Zūn himself.

(Who are they?)

Mó Zūn wondered. There was no way he wouldn't recognize someone as

strong as them.

Mó Zūn's smile widened, his calm demeanor unbroken. He took a step back, letting his supporters handle Bai Chu with effortless control.

A single gesture from Mó Zūn sent tremors across the battlefield.

"Retreat!"

He commanded.

Mó Zun's eyes lingered on Bai Chu.

"See you next time!"

He said lightly, his voice carrying a threat hidden in casual words.

As he vanished into the sky, leaving Bai Chu standing alone, reeling, forced to confront the two Earth Immortals who had stayed behind to ensure he could

not pursue immediately.

Bai Chu steadied himself, sword in hand, his robes fluttering violently in the winds left behind by the departing Mó Zūn.

"Who are you? Why are you helping Mó Zūn?"

Bai Chu demanded.

".."

No answer came.

After Mó Zūn disappeared from view, the two Earth Immortals also began to retreat.

Whoosh!

Bai Chu didn't chase. He still didn't fully understand their power, and going after them alone would be dangerous.

Not to mention, while the threat of Demonic Cultivators was gone, Demonic Beasts-including Immortal Realm ones-still roamed the battlefield.

"Tsk!"

Bai Chu clicked his tongue, frustrated that an opportunity to kill Mó Zūn had been wasted.

More than anger, he was wary of the two mysterious figures who had intervened.

"Just where the hell did they come from?"

The battlefield remained chaotic.

"Retreat!" Mó Zun's command resounded through the battlefield.

Demonic Cultivators didn't need to be told twice.

Many were waiting for the command since they were getting overwhelmed by the Desolate Heaven Empire's force.

Now that Mó Zūn gave the order, they didn't wait.

Still, retreating was far from easy. Bai Zihan, along with Great Ascension Realm cultivators, carved through the fleeing Demonic Cultivators, leaving no room for easy escape.

Within minutes, the surviving Demonic Cultivators were forced to flee with their tails between their legs.

Though not many from Bai Zihan's side managed to escape.

And those that did were missing one or two limbs.

Yet the war was far from over. Demonic Cultivators were gone, but the Demonic Beasts still needed to be dealt with.

For Bai Zihan, it was also a chance to farm the last of his System Points.

After Demonic Cultivator's departure, his eyes obviously shifted to those Grade-9 Demonic Beasts.

With the Demonic Cultivators gone, the battlefield shifted even further in the Desolate Heaven Empire's favor.

Demonic Beasts now faced human reinforcements who had previously been occupied fighting the Demonic Cultivators.

The overwhelming numbers that had once belonged to the Demonic Beasts were now turned against them.

Bai Zihan led the charge, Great Ascension Realm cultivators raining down precise, devastating attacks.

Their formations carved through the lesser Demonic Beasts like a scythe through wheat.

Even without fully unleashing their power, the humans' superiority was undeniable.

At the center, the Half-Qilin-their leader-stood battered and mutilated.

Its forearms gone, torso ripped and bleeding, yet its colossal form radiated unbroken rage.

"Human! Don't think I will go down easily!"

It roared, the sound shaking the battlefield itself. Despite the state he was in, he still didn't get scared or ran away.

Even crippled, its Demonic Qi flared violently, a force of raw destruction aimed at anyone who dared approach.

Bai Ren, Zhao Wujin, and Yu Xuande still struggled to finish off the half-dead Half-Qilin.

No matter how injured, it's body was still tough and almost no attack had any effect.

But soon, Bai Chu and the other Immortals who had been fighting Demonic Cultivators joined the fray.

The Half-Qilin fought back with every ounce of strength left, slashing and tearing at the air.

But against so many Immortal Realm cultivators, even such a legendary beast could not hold.

Its Demonic Qi sputtered and died, leaving nothing but a broken, lifeless husk.

With the leader fallen, the remaining Demonic Beasts panicked. Many fled, while others fought to their last breath.

The Immortals turned to the remaining powerful Demonic Beasts, killing them efficiently.

The weaker ones were eradicated swiftly. One strike from an Immortal could fell hundreds, even Grade-10 Demonic Beasts.

With an overwhelming advantage, Desolate Heaven Empire has killed almost 80 % of Demonic Beasts in an hour while the rest have escaped.

The Beast Tide had come to an end!

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! - Chapter 416 The Letter from Home[1,371 words]

Chapter 416 The Letter from Home

The Beast Tide had come to an end.

But the war was not truly over.

Even as the battlefield fell into uneasy silence, it wasn't yet time to be returning home.

Guards stretched across the land, and patrols were dispatched without pause.

As long as Demonic Beasts still lurked in the wilds-and as long as Demonic Cultivators still drew breath-there was always the chance of another sudden strike.

Yet despite the vigilance, something undeniable spread through the Desolate Heaven Empire.

Relief.

News traveled faster than one could think.

The Demonic Cultivators had been defeated. The Half-Qilin-leader of the Beast Tide-was dead.

Cities erupted into celebration. Sect grounds echoed with laughter mixed with exhaustion.

Mortals knelt in gratitude, cultivators breathed freely as they no longer needed to worry about Beast Tide.

They had won.

Along with the relief came something else.

Names.

Stories.

Legends in the making.

Tales spread rapidly-some embellished, some understated, some deliberately exaggerated by interested forces.

Young geniuses who had distinguished themselves were spoken of in teahouses and sect halls alike.

"Have you heard? Chu Ziyan killed a Grade-8 Demonic Beast by herself."

"I did. Ever since the Dragon and Phoenix Competition, she's been rising nonstop."

"And Bai Xueqing too. I heard she immobilized a Void Refinement Realm expert mid-battle."

"That's terrifying for someone her age."

"There were others as well... young geniuses everywhere this time."

Some had slain Demonic Beasts far above their realm.

A new generation was rising.

But among all those names-

"But the rumors about Bai Zihan are absolutely ridiculous!"

"They say he fought against Great Ascension Realm Demonic Elders. Three of them!"

"No-five!"

"I heard five as well. And he won."

"Isn't that already stronger than Bai Tianheng?"

"Hah! His father might not even dare say otherwise. Looks like the Bai Clan has produced a monster."

Previously, many had thought of Bai Zihan as a fraud for not participating in the Dragon and Phoenix Competition.

While the Heaven Sword Sect learned of him through Bai Zihan defeating Lu Xiangyuan, many others still didn't know.

But now, they finally realized-Bai Zihan wasn't a coward; it was simply not his league.

If he had participated, then perhaps the competition would have turned into one-sided dominance.

His name spread once again like wildfire through the aftermath of the Beast Tide.

A day passed since the Half-Qilin was slain.

No more Demonic Beasts appeared, and it seemed like peace was finally on the horizon.

Bai Zihan lay resting after the battle ended. His breathing was steady, consciousness drifting away.

Until-

"Young Master Bai!"

The voice struck like thunder.

Bai Zihan's eyes snapped open.

A figure stood at the entrance of the tent, breathing heavily. Fear lingered in his expression, but urgency burned brighter.

"Young Master... Patriarch Bai requests your presence immediately."

Bai Zihan frowned.

"Now?"

The man nodded quickly.

"Yes!"

Bai Zihan rose, throwing on his outer robes as he stepped outside.

"What does that old man want now?"

He complained.

As he followed the messenger through the encampment, Bai Zihan's mind raced.

(Did the Demonic Beasts regroup? Or did Mó Zun return?)

He considered various scenarios, but judging by how others were behaving, he didn't think those were the issue.

When Bai Zihan stepped in, his gaze immediately caught familiar figures.

Bai Tianheng stood at the head, expression grim.

Beside him-Bai Ren.

And not far away-Bai Xueqing.

Bai Zihan's brows knit together.

(What's going on?)

"Father, what's going on?"

Bai Zihan broke the silence as soon as he entered.

Bai Tianheng looked at him for a long moment, then nodded slightly.

"Sit!"

A disciple immediately stepped forward, placing a chair beside the table.

Bai Zihan didn't argue and took his seat, his gaze briefly sweeping over Bai Ren and Bai Xueqing.

Neither of them spoke.

Bai Tianheng exhaled slowly, then took out a scaled letter.

"I received this message after the Beast Tide was fully suppressed," he said. "It came from the Bai Clan."

Bai Zihan's eyes narrowed.

"Something happened at home?"

Bai Tianheng nodded.

"The Bai Clan was attacked."

Bai Zihan's expression was still the same.

"Demonic Cultivators," Bai Tianheng continued. "They didn't even bother hiding their identity."

He tapped the letter lightly against the table.

"The situation wasn't completely out of control. The clan held them off successfully. Casualties were limited, despite the Demonic Cultivators sending Immortal Realm Elders."

To truly invade Bai Clan territory, Immortal Realm cultivators were required.

Despite five Immortal Realm experts being stationed at the Northern Defense Line, the Bai Clan still had more than enough strength to defend itself.

Bai Zihan said nothing, listening intently.

"There are three possible reasons," Bai Tianheng said.

"First-our treasury."

"After this battle, we revealed too much," Bai Tianheng said calmly. "A

Saint-Grade artifact and your techniques."

Bai Tianheng knew that Bai Zihan had taught a sword technique to the Grand

Elders, but he still didn't know much about it and thus referred to it simply as a powerful technique.

Not to mention the technique that temporarily raised his cultivation realm. "The Demonic Cultivators may have believed that such inheritances were stored within the Bai Clan's treasury."

"They failed, though." Bai Ren added.

Bai Tianheng nodded. "Which leads to the second possibility."

"A diversion," he continued. "They may have intended to draw our attention

back and weaken our presence here... but the Beast Tide ended faster than

they anticipated."

Bai Zihan frowned slightly.

"And the third?"

Bai Tianheng fell silent.

The tent grew deathly quiet.

Bai Zihan tilted his head, unease creeping in.

"We're still not entirely certain of their true objective," Bai Tianheng said slowly.

Then he looked directly at Bai Zihan.

"They failed to achieve the first two, but during the attack-your personal

maid..."

"She was kidnapped."

Bai Zihan didn't react.

For a brief moment, the tent remained utterly silent.

Then-

"What?"

His tone was flat, almost blank, as if he had misheard.

Bai Tianheng's brows furrowed slightly.

"Luo Qing," he said again. "Your personal maid. She was taken during the chaos."

Bai Zihan stared at him, eyes steady, showing neither shock nor anger.

"... You're sure?"

"To the best of our knowledge," Bai Tianheng replied. "She was kidnapped amidst the chaos."

Bai Zihan leaned back slightly.

A maid. An ordinary one.

That was precisely what made it strange.

Bai Ren glanced at Bai Tianheng the moment the words were spoken, and Bai Tianheng understood immediately.

They had already considered several possibilities-leverage against the Bai Clan, or more likely, against Bai Zihan.

Yet the question lingered.

How would they even know about her? And what made them think that it would work?

Bai Tianheng couldn't make sense of it.

If the target had been Bai Xueqing, or his wife, it would have been understandable. Such captives held real weight.

But an ordinary maid? Someone with no cultivation to speak of, no background, no value.

It was illogical.

Demonic Cultivators of all people should have known that threatening the Bai Clan with servants was meaningless.

Even if hundreds were taken, the clan would not hesitate-though, naturally, they would never allow such a thing if it could be prevented.

The only one who might be affected should be Bai Zihan.

And yet, when Bai Tianheng looked at Bai Zihan, he saw nothing.

No anger. No panic. No visible reaction at all.

If their goal had truly been to affect Bai Zihan, then it had failed completely.

(At least, there is no need to worry.)

Just when he thought that-

BOOM!

The tent shuddered.

An invisible pressure exploded outward as Bai Zihan's aura surged without restraint. Killing intent, cold and absolute, flooded the space like a collapsing sky.

The air grew heavy, suffocating-disciples outside staggered, knees buckling, faces draining of blood.

Even Bai Tianheng felt it.

His breath hitched, his sleeves fluttering violently as if caught in a storm.

For an instant, the Patriarch saw not his son-but something far more dangerous.

Bai Zihan rose slowly from his seat.

His eyes burned.

"How dare they?"

The words were low at first-then erupted.

"HOW DARE THEY?!"

The killing intent spiked again, sharper, more vicious.

Bai Zihan had always maintained his calm.

Even when schemed against by clans like Li and Zhao.

Even when plotted against in the Heaven Sword Sect by Shen Liang.

Even when he was ambushed by Gou You.

He had merely scoffed.

But this time-

For the first time, Bai Zihan was truly furious.

"They're courting death!"

The ground beneath his feet began to crack. Despite being only at the Spirit Severing Realm, his pressure was nothing to scoff at.

"Zihan'er!"

Bai Tianheng stepped forward, forcibly releasing his own aura to counterbalance the pressure.

"Calm down!" he barked. "Calm down, Zihan'er!"

Bai Xueqing had gone pale, her heart pounding violently.

Who would have thought that Bai Zihan's aura alone was enough to suppress her this much?

Only Bai Ren seemed unaffected.

Bai Zihan stood there, aura roaring like an unchained beast-

Then, slowly-

He lifted his eyes and looked toward the direction of the Great Wilderness.

Bai Tianheng already knew what Bai Zihan was thinking.

Since the culprit was the Demonic Cultivators, the answer to where Luo Qing might be was simple to know.

Just ask Mó Zún-the leader of the Demonic Cultivators.

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan!

Chapter 417 Toward the Great Wilderness[1,324 words]

Chapter 417 Toward the Great Wilderness

At first, Bai Zihan thought he had heard wrong.

Luo Qing was kidnapped.

That was what his father had said.

The words passed through his ears, yet failed to settle in his mind-like mist dispersing before it could take shape.

Luo Qing?

He sat there calmly, posture relaxed, expression unchanged. He thought that shouldn't be right.

Why would Demonic Cultivators, after invading the strongest clan, take a simple mortal?

Even if it were meant as a threat, he didn't think Demonic Cultivators would be stupid enough to do so.

"...You're sure?"

The question left his mouth without weight.

Inside, his thoughts were already moving elsewhere, dismissing it as something he had misheard.

Demonic Cultivators would never waste effort on something so meaningless. Then Bai Tianheng confirmed it.

"Luo Qing."

Something stopped.

Not violently. Not suddenly.

It simply... halted.

For the briefest instant, Bai Zihan's mind went blank.

Luo Qing!

Not just a maid.

His maid.

No-

That wasn't right.

She had been there when he was still a child with uncontrollable moods, when servants avoided him like a curse, when elders shook their heads and said nothing.

She was the one left behind with him.

Not because she was loyal.

But because no one else wanted the job.

And because he hadn't fired or killed her.

Whenever his temper flared, others would retreat. Luo Qing stayed because she was his personal maid.

Apart from Bai Zihan's parents, she was the one who had been with him the longest.

One might even call her his childhood friend-though obviously, Bai Zihan never saw anyone as his equal, so he didn't have friends before, and even now.

But perhaps she was the one who came closest to being one.

"...She was kidnapped."

The words settled at last.

And something inside him cracked.

No.

That wasn't accurate.

Something broke.

The world around him dimmed, as if color itself recoiled. The tent, the people,

the battlefield beyond-it all became distant.

A single thought rose, sharp and absolute.

(Those dirty bastards...)

His fingers curled slowly.

They dared.

They dared lay hands on her?

The pressure erupted before he even realized he was standing.

BOOM.

His aura exploded outward, no longer restrained, no longer controlled.

Killing intent-pure, murderous, ancient-flooded the tent like a collapsing sky. The ground groaned.

The air screamed. Disciples outside fell to their knees as if struck by divine punishment.

Bai Zihan didn't see them.

Didn't care about anything else.

His vision burned crimson.

"How dare they?"

The words left his throat low and hoarse.

Then louder.

"HOW DARE THEY?!"

The restraint he had cultivated for years shattered completely.

"They're courting death."

While furious, his mind never stopped thinking.

Demonic Cultivators!!

Since the culprits were Demonic Cultivators, then there was only one place that might hold the answer to what he wanted.

Where is Luo Qing?

Bai Zihan lifted his gaze toward the distant Great Wilderness.

Whoosh!

Bai Zihan vanished.

The instant his gaze locked onto the Great Wilderness, his figure tore through the tent's entrance like a blade unsheathed.

The ground cracked where he had stood, Qi exploding outward in a violent wake.

BOOM-

The encampment erupted into chaos.

"What was that?!"

"Enemy attack?!"

"Battle formation-move!"

Disciples poured out of tents, elders rose into the air, defensive arrays flared instinctively.

Many thought a hidden Demonic Expert had infiltrated the camp.

Then they saw him.

A lone figure streaking across the sky, killing intent rolling off him like an ocean tide.

"...That's Young Master Bai."

"What's going on?"

"Damn-who angered him?"

Murmurs spread rapidly as cultivators stared upward, expressions shifting from alarm to disbelief.

Behind Bai Zihan, another figure surged forward-steady, powerful, unmistakable.

Bai Tianheng!

The Patriarch of the Bai Clan followed closely, his aura released to its fullest as he chased after his son.

Seeing the two of them, some disciples exchanged strange looks.

"...Is the Young Master trying to challenge his father for the position?"

"Hah-don't joke. Who would dare provoke Bai Tianheng like that?" "Still... look at that killing intent. I've never seen Young Master Bai like this."

Some laughed nervously. Some swallowed hard.

But not a single person moved to intervene.

No one was foolish enough to place themselves between Bai Zihan and whatever had driven him into this state.

In the sky, Bai Tianheng tried to speak.

"Zihan-!"

The wind swallowed his voice.

He accelerated, appearing beside his son, reaching out-

"Zihan'er, calm yourself!"

No response.

Bai Zihan's eyes were locked forward, pupils sharp and burning, his aura roaring like an unchained beast.

He neither slowed nor acknowledged his father's presence.

Bai Tianheng knew that look.

This wasn't anger that could be reasoned with.

He had already made his decision.

If Bai Zihan continued like this-charging straight into the Great Wilderness alone-then the consequences would be catastrophic.

Demonic Cultivators were cruel by nature.

Mó Zun was no ordinary enemy.

And in this state, Bai Zihan would not retreat.

This is bad.

Bai Tianheng gritted his teeth.

"Grand Elder!"

A third figure surged forward, his presence calm yet overwhelming, cutting through the turbulent Qi with effortless authority.

Bai Tianheng had already anticipated this scenario-one where Bai Zihan might react like this and need to be stopped.

Unfortunately-or perhaps fortunately-he was self-aware enough to know that his own strength wouldn't be enough.

That was why Bai Ren had been called.

Bai Ren had been following all along, silent until now.

Bai Tianheng didn't hesitate.

"Please stop him."

No further explanation was needed.

Bai Ren nodded once.

The next instant, space seemed to compress. He vanished-

And reappeared directly in front of Bai Zihan.

Blocking his path.

Bai Zihan's killing intent crashed into him like a tidal wave.

Bai Ren did not move.

He raised one hand and placed it firmly on Bai Zihan's shoulder.

The pressure shook the heavens.

"Bai Zihan," Bai Ren said, his voice low yet carrying absolute authority.

"Enough!"

Bai Ren's hand was like a wall.

The moment it landed on Bai Zihan's shoulder, the raging Qi around him was crushed downward, forcibly compressed by overwhelming strength.

Immortal Ascension Realm pressure descended.

Bai Zihan's body shuddered mid-flight.

For the first time since his outburst, he was forcibly stopped.

His eyes snapped sideways.

"Move!"

The word was cold and absolute.

It was not a request.

It was a command.

Bai Ren didn't even blink.

Instead, a faint grin tugged at the corner of his lips.

"Heh," he chuckled softly. "Try me, you brat!"

The pressure intensified.

Bai Zihan's bones creaked. His muscles screamed under the sudden suppression.

To anyone else, this would have been the end-forced back to reason, crushed by a realm they had no right to resist.

But Bai Zihan's eyes burned brighter.

His Qi surged-not chaotically, but violently ordered, like a blade being reforged mid-strike.

His voice dropped to a whisper.

"Heaven's Mandate Reversal."

BOOM-!

The world shuddered.

Bai Zihan's aura exploded outward, no longer restrained by the Spirit Severing Realm.

His cultivation surged violently, breaking through invisible shackles in an instant.

Peak Spirit Severing-

Void Refinement-

Great Ascension Realm!

Bai Ren's eyes widened.

"What-?!"

PAH!

Bai Zihan shook off Bai Ren's hand as if it were nothing more than a nuisance.

He surged forward, putting several hundred meters between them in the blink of an eye.

Then Bai Zihan drew his sword from his storage ring.

With a single, decisive slash, he cut downward.

RIIIP-!

Space itself split apart.

A dark rift tore open before him, its edges warping violently as chaotic spatial currents spilled outward.

It was a feat reserved for Void Refinement Realm experts and above.

Bai Zihan stepped into the rift without hesitation.

He was gone.

For a single heartbeat, the heavens were silent.

Then Bai Ren burst into laughter.

"Hahaha-!"

But there was no amusement in it.

Only shock.

He vanished instantly, chasing after Bai Zihan, while simultaneously sending out a powerful transmission.

"Grand Elders, please follow me! Bai Zihan is in danger"

Behind them, Bai Tianheng finally caught up, his expression dark and furious.

"Why didn't you stop him?!"

He snapped, forgetting all decorum as he shouted at Bai Ren mid-flight.

Bai Ren didn't slow.

"Because if I used any more power," he replied grimly, "I might have seriously harmed him."

Bai Tianheng realized that Bai Ren was correct.

Bai Ren had already used Immortal Ascension Realm pressure against someone in the Spirit Severing Realm-which should normally have injured them.

Yet even so, Bai Zihan still managed to escape.

Bai Ren exhaled sharply, eyes fixed on the figure tearing space apart ahead of them.

"Who would have thought even that wouldn't be enough?"

He shook his head, unsure whether to curse... or laugh.

"What a monster!"

Bai Tianheng followed in silence.

He couldn't blame Bai Ren.

He had taken care not to harm Bai Zihan-and that restraint was precisely why

Bai Zihan had escaped.

More than that, Bai Tianheng didn't know what to feel about Bai Zihan's outburst over Luo Qing's kidnapping.

He had thought his son cared for no one.

And yet-here they were.

Ahead of them, Bai Zihan cut through space once more.

His destination was clear.

The Great Wilderness.

And whoever stood between him and Luo Qing-

Would die!

Chapter 418 Then I'll Make You Speak

Bai Zihan emerged from the torn rift of space at the edge of the Great Wilderness.

The sky here was darker, the clouds tinged with an ashen hue, as if the land itself rejected the heavens.

Below him stretched endless desolation-jagged mountains, cracked earth, and forests so ancient and twisted that even sunlight struggled to penetrate them. He stopped mid-air.

But finding the Demonic Cultivators would not be easy.

The Great Wilderness was vast-far too vast. Even if thousands of people searched for a year, they wouldn't be able to explore 10 percent of it. Worse still, there was no guarantee they were even here anymore.

They might have already retreated after the failed invasion.

Bai Zihan closed his eyes briefly, then spoke inwardly.

"Feilian," he said.

Within his sea of consciousness, a luminous figure stirred.

Her voice echoed, calm yet edged with unmistakable concern.

"Bai Zihan," Feilian said slowly, "I advise you to retreat!"

Her tone sharpened.

If Bai Zihan were to encounter Demonic Cultivators alone-especially one on the level of Mó Zūn-even she might not be able to save him.

It was not a warning born of caution. It was a statement of fact.

Charging headfirst into demonic territory alone was madness—a reckless act that would almost certainly end in death.

Immortal Emperor Feilian waited for his usual response-cold dismissal, absolute confidence, or stubborn silence.

Instead, Bai Zihan opened his eyes.

"Please!"

The word was quiet.

And utterly unlike him.

For the first time since she had known him, Feilian felt it clearly-not rage, not arrogance but Desperation.

"Help me find them," Bai Zihan requested.

Immortal Emperor Feilian fell silent.

Within the vastness of his consciousness, time seemed to stretch.

She didn't think that Bai Zihan-the arrogant young master-would plead for a mortal girl.

He never had, even when he himself was in danger.

"Very well," she said at last. "But I can't help it if they are outside my perception."

Her presence expanded outward, no longer confined to his soul.

An invisible wave of divine perception surged forth, sweeping across mountains, ravines, and buried ruins-probing, searching, listening. One breath.

Two.

Then-

Her voice snapped sharp.

"There!"

Bai Zihan's eyes flared open.

"To the northeast."

Feilian said.

That was all he needed.

BOOM!

Space thundered as Bai Zihan vanished, tearing through the air in the direction she indicated.

The ground below split under the pressure of his passing, ancient beasts cowering as a streak of death carved across the sky.

His killing intent surged once more, sharper than before.

They were here.

Deep within the Great Wilderness, a temporary encampment lay hidden within a ravine.

Torches burned with sickly green flames.

Several Demonic Cultivators sat gathered around, their expressions dark.

After all, their invasion had failed, and they had lost too many people.

"This invasion was a joke."

"We lost too much-for nothing."

"Those Demonic Beasts were useless. Even that Half-Qilin was killed easily."

They couldn't stop talking about it.

"That Bai Clan-no, that Bai Zihan."

The name alone seemed to lower the temperature.

"He's not human. I saw it myself. Spirit Severing Realm, yet he slaughtered Great Ascension Realm Elders."

"Don't exaggerate-"

"Exaggerate? He cut them down while smiling."

Silence fell!

Then another voice spoke, hoarse and shaken.

"I was there... when Elder Mo Kuang died."

The cultivators turned.

"He begged. You know that? A Great Ascension Realm expert begged for his life before someone in the Spirit Severing Realm."

The speaker swallowed.

"Bai Zihan didn't even hesitate. He is a true demon!"

"That monster-"

Bang!

"Enough!"

The word cracked through the ravine like a whip.

Mo Tianji stepped forward, anger burning in his eyes.

His face was pale, fists clenched, eyes filled with restrained fury.

"Shut up. All of you!"

The demonic cultivators fell silent instantly.

Mo Tianji's chest

and fell as emotions surged unbidden.

Three Great Ascension Realm Elders.

Dead.

Killed right in front of him.

He still remembered it-too clearly.

Mo Tianji had been there, watching in horror.

He hadn't dared to move.

Even when Bai Zihan was injured and unable to move, he didn't dare go after him.

He felt inferior.

Compared to Bai Zihan, what was he?

A weakling-not the genius everyone praised him as.

"...Damn it!"

Mo Tianji hissed under his breath.

Just remembering Bai Zihan made his heart tighten.

And then-

RIIIP-!

Space tore open above the ravine.

A violent spatial rift split the sky, raw and domineering.

Those at Void Refinement Realm and above felt it instantly-the distortion.

But something was wrong.

"This isn't Demonic Qi," someone whispered.

"It's Qi."

Pure.

Violent.

Overwhelming.

The rift widened.

A figure stepped out.

The moment he appeared, killing intent crashed down like an execution blade.

Some Demonic Cultivators dropped to their knees on the spot.

A single voice echoed across the ravine, cold and absolute.

"Mo Zun, come out!"

Bai Zihan shouted. "Who is courting death?"

"How dare he mention our leader without respect?"

"Huh? Isn't he Bai Zihan?"

At first, they thought someone had come to commit suicide.

Then they saw him clearly.

Immediately, the Demonic Cultivators recognized him.

How could they not?

Just a day earlier, Bai Zihan had been wreaking havoc, cutting them down like

grass.

Some felt old terror resurface-like Mo Tianji.

Others clenched their fists, thinking it was time for revenge.

Bai Zihan hovered in the torn sky, his killing intent locking onto the encampment like an execution seal.

Mo Zün didn't come out.

"Feilian," he asked without looking away. "Can you sense Luo Qing?"

A brief pause.

Then-

"No!"

The single word fell like a hammer.

For half a breath, Bai Zihan did not move.

Then the temperature dropped.

The sky darkened as if responding to his will. The air twisted, groaning under invisible pressure.

His eyes narrowed, crimson light blooming within them.

"So that's how it is..."

His grip tightened.

The killing intent that followed was no longer restrained.

It was absolute.

Bai Zihan raised his sword.

The blade hummed, trembling violently as laws gathered around it.

Fate itself seemed to shudder, threads snapping and tangling as an ancient, forbidden intent awakened.

"If Mo Zun doesn't want to show up, then I shall force him."

His cultivation rose to the Great Ascension Realm.

"Fate Severing Slash!"

The sword descended.

Just a single, thin line of light-descending from the sky.

Then-

BOOOOOOM-!!!

The world split.

The ravine below was cleaved open like rotten flesh.

Mountains collapsed inward, forests were erased, and the demonic encampment was swallowed by annihilation.

Thousands of Demonic Cultivators didn't even have time to scream.

Below Spirit Severing Realm-dead.

Void Refinement-erased.

Bodies disintegrated before blood could spill, souls shredded by the severing of fate itself.

Immortal Realm Demonic Cultivators appeared and protected those who they could.

But even they, at such small notice, couldn't protect everyone.

A bottomless chasm replaced what had once been an encampment.

They were flung outward like broken dolls-bleeding, bones shattered, expressions frozen in sheer terror.

Smoke and dust rose endlessly.

Silence followed.

Then-

Black mist gathered.

Demonic Qi surged.

From the heart of the shattered ravine, a figure rose.

Eyes like abyssal pits swallowing all light.

Mó Zūn

The leader of the Demonic Cultivators finally appeared.

He glanced at the ruined land below-at the corpses, or rather, the absence of corpses-and sighed softly.

"What a pity."

His gaze lifted, locking onto Bai Zihan.

"So many of my people... erased in a single strike."

The air grew heavy as his presence fully unfolded-ancient, tyrannical, overwhelming.

"You've done great damage," Mó Zūn continued, his voice low and amused, yet edged with danger.

A faint smile curved his lips.

"Tell me, Bai youngling..."

His eyes gleamed coldly.

"How do you plan to pay for it?"

Bai Zihan looked at him.

A cold, absolute stillness- as if Mó Zun's presence, his aura, his power, meant nothing at all.

"Mo Zun," Bai Zihan said slowly, each word heavy with restrained intent, "I will ask this once."

The surrounding air trembled.

"Where is Luo Qing?"

For a moment, Mó Zūn blinked.

"...Luo Qing?"

The name clearly meant nothing to him. He frowned slightly, searching his memory, then shook his head.

"I don't know what you're talking about."

The stillness around Bai Zihan shattered.

His killing intent surged, sharp enough to cut the heavens.

"The girl," Bai Zihan said, his voice dropping dangerously low, "the one your Demonic Cultivators kidnapped from the Bai Clan."

Understanding dawned.

Mó Zūn's lips curled upward.

"Oh."

A soft, amused sound escaped him.

"Her?"

He didn't deny it.

There was no need.

In the first place, there was nothing to hide.

"Keke..." Mó Zun chuckled darkly. "So that's it. The Bai Clan's peerless young monster... rushing alone into the Great Wilderness."

His eyes gleamed with cruel amusement.

"You want to sacrifice your life for a mere mortal girl?"

He shook his head slowly, laughter deepening.

"What a disappointment."

Then his smile sharpened.

"Unfortunately," Mó Zun continued, his voice dripping with malice, "you will never see her again."

The words struck.

Bai Zihan's fingers clenched so tightly that blood seeped from his palm.

Veins stood out along his forearm.

His breath grew heavy.

"Where is she?"

This time, the question was no longer calm.

It was a demand-absolute, tyrannical, laced with killing intent so dense that the surviving Great Ascension Realm cultivators instinctively retreated.

Mó Zūn met his gaze without fear.

"Do you think," he said lightly, "that I would answer you?"

The world seemed to hold its breath.

Above the shattered ravine, Bai Zihan slowly raised his sword once more.

His eyes burned, crimson light spilling out like molten blood.

"Then I'll make you speak!"

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan!

Chapter 419 Bai Zihan Vs Mó Zun! [1,362 words]

Chapter 419 Bai Zihan Vs Mó Zun!

Whoosh!

Bai Zihan moved.

There was no hesitation.

One instant, he stood above the ravine-still, cold, sword raised.

The next-

He vanished.

The space between him and Mó Zun collapsed as if it had never existed.

A single step carried him across kilometers.

His sword flashed.

This strike was faster, sharper, and far more focused than before.

Mó Zūn merely lifted a finger.

Clang!

The sound was soft.

Almost casual.

Yet Bai Zihan felt it instantly.

His sword-Eternal Spirit Sword infused with Sword Intent-was stopped.

By a single finger wrapped in Demonic Qi.

Bai Zihan's pupils shrank.

Before his mind could react-

Boom!

A wave of force erupted outward.

Bai Zihan was sent flying.

His body tore through the air like a meteor, smashing into a distant mountain. The peak exploded on impact.

Rock and debris rained for kilometers.

Bai Zihan coughed violently, blood spilling from his lips as he forced himself upright amid the rubble.

His bones screamed.

His meridians burned.

Yet his eyes remained locked forward.

Mó Zūn stood where he had always been, unmoved.

He glanced at his finger, then flicked it lightly, as if brushing away dust.

"Is that all?"

Mó Zun asked calmly.

Bai Zihan roared and surged forward again.

Qi erupted from his body, his cultivation roaring at full force.

He unleashed strike after strike-sword light tearing through the heavens, Earth shaking from the impact.

Each slash was powerful enough to kill Great Ascension Realm experts.

Each one was met the same way.

Blocked.

Mó Zūn didn't even step back.

He walked forward leisurely, passing through Bai Zihan's attacks as if strolling through mist.

Then-

He appeared in front of Bai Zihan.

Bai Zihan barely had time to raise his sword.

Mó Zūn's palm struck his chest.

No technique.

Just a palm.

Crack!

The sound echoed like thunder.

Bai Zihan felt his ribs shatter.

His organs ruptured.

His body folded inward as he was slammed into the ground.

The earth collapsed beneath him, forming a massive crater.

Bai Zihan spat out a mouthful of blood, his vision blurring.

He tried to rise.

A foot pressed down on his chest.

The pressure was overwhelming.

It felt as if an entire world had been placed upon him.

His bones creaked.

His breathing stalled.

Mó Zun looked down at him.

"Just how strong is that body of yours? That doesn't look like a Bai Clan Body Refinement Technique."

Mó Zūn was genuinely surprised.

In any normal scenario, Bai Zihan should have died by now.

Though he hadn't used his full power, it had been more than enough to kill several Great Ascension Realm experts.

Yet Bai Zihan survived.

"I can't let you live!"

Mó Zún declared.

He was reminded just how great a threat Bai Zihan posed-he couldn't even imagine what he might become if allowed to grow.

Previously, he was checking to see what kind of trap it was.

After all, a person like Bai Zihan, would never be allowed to come here alone.

The Bai Clan would never allow it.

So, Mó Zun thought that it was some kind of trap to catch him off guard.

But he saw no one and it truly seems like Bai Zihan's has lost his mind.

Mó Zun intended to end this before any help arrived.

Bai Zihan's vision darkened.

Blood seeped from the corners of his eyes.

To be honest, his body was already at its limit.

Mó Zun stepped forward.

This time, there was no laziness in his movements.

The Demonic Qi around him condensed-no longer drifting like mist, but compressing into something heavy, oppressive, real.

The ground beneath his feet cracked with every step.

His eyes locked onto Bai Zihan, cold and merciless.

Bai Zihan's chest felt as if it were being crushed inward. His bones screamed, his meridians tearing under the strain.

Within his sea of consciousness, Immortal Emperor Feilian's voice rang out-sharp and furious.

"I told you, you can't win!"

Bai Zihan didn't reply.

"Tch! Can't be helped!"

Her presence exploded outward.

A torrent of immortal qi surged into Bai Zihan's body like a raging flood.

His cultivation skyrocketed.

In a single breath, Bai Zihan stepped into the Immortal Realm.

The heavens roared.

The sky cracked with thunder.

Immortal light erupted from his body, forcing even Mó Zun to narrow his eyes.

Feilian's voice came again, strained now, urgent.

"I can't keep this up!" she snapped. "Ten seconds! Only ten seconds!"

Her tone was harsh.

"Escape-now!" Bai Zihan stood.

Slowly.

The pressure vanished.

The foot on his chest was gone.

Just as Mó Zūn came close, despite Bai Zihan's sudden surge in cultivation, he

did not stop.

If anything, his killing intent deepened.

The demonic qi around him no longer merely pressed down-it sharpened, condensing into a suffocating, murderous force that crushed the air itself. "Killing you..." Mó Zūn muttered, his voice low and indifferent, "...seems like a

waste."

Yet his steps never slowed. Each one carried absolute intent.

From the very beginning, he had been moving to kill Bai Zihan-and that intent had never wavered.

The Immortal Realm aura radiating from Bai Zihan did not make him hesitate.

It only confirmed one thing.

This threat had to be erased now.

Mó Zun's gaze remained locked on Bai Zihan, cold and merciless, as demonic laws gathered around him-silent, inevitable.

Bai Zihan also didn't flee.

Instead-

His killing intent surged.

It intensified.

More violent than before.

Feilian froze.

"What are you doing?" she demanded. "I said escape!"

Bai Zihan's eyes burned, crimson light swirling with immortal radiance.

"No!"

he replied quietly.

Mó Zun tilted his head, mildly intrigued by Bai Zihan's refusal to run.

Bai Zihan tightened his grip on his sword.

Immortal qi and Fate-Severing intent intertwined, twisting unnaturally, violently.

Mó Zūn raised his hand.

Demonic laws gathered-absolute, tyrannical.

He intended to erase Bai Zihan completely.

Mó Zūn closed the distance.

Five steps.

Four.

Three.

Bai Zihan lifted his sword.

Mó Zūn glanced at the blade and scoffed inwardly.

Fate-Severing Slash?

He had survived Bai Chu's version.

A junior's imitation-even with Immortal Realm cultivation-was nothing worth fearing.

Bai Zihan's eyes locked onto him.

The world went silent.

"Fate-Severing Slash!"

The sword descended.

Space tore apart, and everything in existence seemed to be erased.

Mó Zūn's pupils shrank violently.

(This isn't weak!)

Too late!

Bai Zihan's cultivation had not reached the Earth Immortal Realm.

But that did not mean his attack was weaker than Bai Chu's.

Yes-Bai Chu possessed higher cultivation.

However, Bai Zihan had achieved mastery, even advancing to Greater Mastery.

In addition, Bai Zihan possessed Intermediate Sword Intent, while Bai Chu only wielded basic Sword Intent.

These factors combined made Bai Zihan's Fate-Severing Slash equal to Bai Chu's or perhaps even stronger.

Mó Zun knew the instant the slash descended.

This was not something he could fully block.

Not in time.

Not without cost.

He forcefully twisted his body sideways, abandoning defense for survival.

Too late to escape completely.

SLASH-!

A line of annihilation tore past him.

The Demonic Qi around his body shattered like brittle glass.

For a heartbeat, the world froze.

Then-

Blood sprayed.

"ARGH!"

Mó Zun's left arm was severed cleanly at the shoulder, erased so completely

that not even demonic qi could regenerate it instantly.

The arm fell-disintegrating before it touched the ground.

Silence!

Mó Zūn staggered half a step back.

His pupils contracted violently.

Shock flashed across his face-raw, unmistakable.

Then came rage.

Pure, unrestrained fury.

The sky darkened as demonic qi erupted from his body like a volcanic storm, crushing the ravine even further.

"You-!!!"

Mó Zun's voice trembled-not with fear, but with murderous wrath.

He turned his remaining eye toward Bai Zihan, killing intent boiling over.

"You are dead!"

Bai Zihan swayed.

The moment the slash completed, the immortal radiance around him shattered.

Feilian's presence vanished instantly.

His cultivation plummeted.

Qi drained from his body like water from a shattered vessel.

Bai Zihan nearly collapsed mid-air, barely managing to remain upright as blood poured from his mouth.

His limbs trembled violently.

His meridians screamed in agony.

He was exhausted.

There was no strength left.

Just then-

RIIIP-!

Space tore open violently behind him.

A massive spatial rift split the sky.

"Zihan'er!"

A thunderous voice roared with barely contained panic.

Bai Ren emerged first, his aura erupting uncontrollably the instant he saw Bai

Zihan's condition.

Behind him-

Several Grand Elders stepped out in unison, their expressions grim and furious.

Then-

Bai Tianheng.

The moment he saw his son-pale, bloodied, barely conscious-his expression hardened into something terrifying.

"Zihan..."

He clenched his fists.

The Bai Clan's experts quickly formed a protective formation around Bai Zihan, supporting his body before he could fall.

For a moment, no one spoke.

Then-

Their gazes shifted forward.

Toward the enemy.

Toward Mó Zún.

And then-

They froze.

Silence fell heavier than before. Mó Zun stood amidst the shattered ravine, Demonic Qi raging uncontrollably.

But his left arm-

Was gone.

Cleanly severed.

Blood dripped from the wound, refusing to regenerate immediately.

Bai Ren's eyes widened.

Bai Tianheng's pupils shrank.

"...Zihan cut him?"

The words fell like thunder.

The leader of the Demonic Cultivators.

An existence that had terrorized generations.

Crippled by Bai Zihan.

The air grew suffocating. Mó Zún slowly straightened, his single remaining arm clenched tightly as he

stared at the newcomers.

His gaze burned with hatred.

"So," he said coldly, demonic qi rolling like a storm, "the Bai Clan finally arrives."

His eyes flicked briefly toward Bai Zihan-barely conscious behind them.

A slow, vicious smile curved his lips. "Good. None of you are leaving alive!"

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan!

Chapter 420 Bai Zihan's Threat[1,322 words]

Chapter 420 Bai Zihan's Threat

A few minutes ago-

Bai Ren and Bai Tianheng chased after Bai Zihan.

Space warped continuously ahead of them as they followed the fading traces left behind by Bai Zihan's spatial tears.

Bai Tianheng stayed close behind, his expression dark, robes snapping violently in the turbulent currents.

He felt a bit of guilt. He shouldn't have revealed what had happened before they returned home.

He thought his son could handle the news. Even made preparations in case of what he might do.

Yet this was the result.

Moments later-

RIIIP!

Another spatial fluctuation rippled outward.

Figures emerged one after another.

Grand Elders.

Each arrival carried immense pressure, their expressions grim the moment they sensed the chaotic spatial disturbances ahead.

"Bai Ren!"

"What happened?"

"Where's Bai Zihan?"

After receiving the message, they had left everything behind and followed immediately.

Bai Ren didn't turn his head, his gaze still fixed on the traces ahead.

"Later," he said sharply. "Follow closely!"

They did.

As they followed, Bai Tianheng spoke, explaining everything without leaving anything unclear.

They realized why they were called.

For a brief moment, silence followed.

The Grand Elders' anger burned.

If anything happened to Bai Zihan, they swore they would burn down everything the Demonic Cultivators possessed.

Bai Ruhong tried to calm the situation.

"The Great Wilderness is vast. Even if he rushed in blindly, the chances of immediately encountering Demonic Cultivators are extremely low."

Bai Qingshan nodded.

"That's right! He might even be occupied fighting a Demonic Beast."

The reasoning made sense.

Compared to Bai Zihan encountering Demonic Cultivators so quickly, it was more likely that he was lost in the Great Wilderness.

They were sure that nothing bad should happen to Bai Zihan.

Bai Ren extended his perception outward, vast and overwhelming, sweeping across mountains, ravines, forests, and buried ruins.

Bai Ren couldn't sense Bai Zihan but he followed the spatial traces left behind by Bai Zihan.

The Grand Elders followed suit.

Minutes passed.

Then-

Something shifted.

A powerful fluctuation rippled through the air.

It was the aura of two Immortal Realm fighting.

Bai Ren froze.

His eyes narrowed.

"That direction."

The Grand Elders focused instantly.

Two auras.

One violent, sharp, unmistakably familiar.

Bai Zihan!

However, his Cultivation Realm which should be Spirit Severing Realm and at most Great Ascension Realm was now in Immortal Ascension Realm.

And the other-

The moment Bai Ren sensed it, his expression changed completely.

So did Bai Tianheng's.

Bai Ren's pupils contracted.

"...That aura."

Bai Tianheng's breath caught.

There was no need to ask.

No need to confirm.

Only one being in the Great Wilderness carried such pressure.

Such tyrannical demonic presence.

Mó Zūn.

The leader of the Demonic Cultivators.

Bai Ren's expression darkened.

"So that's it..."

Bai Tianheng's face drained of color.

"...He ran straight into him."

The Grand Elders exchanged sharp looks.

The atmosphere shifted instantly.

This was no longer a matter of probability.

This was the worst possible outcome.

Bai Ren's aura surged.

"Move!"

Space shattered beneath their feet as the Bai Clan's strongest experts vanished

in unison, racing toward the epicenter of the clash.

"Zihan, are you alright?"

Bai Tianheng checked on his son.

His breathing was irregular, and his body was nearly destroyed.

Yet more than the external wounds, it was the internal injuries that were far

worse.

Still, Bai Zihan was alive.

Grand Elders breathed a sigh of relief.

Fortunately, they arrived in time-but danger still loomed.

More figures emerged.

Demonic cultivators.

One after another, silhouettes stepped out from distorted space, their auras sharp and oppressive, eyes filled with bloodlust.

Immortal Realm.

They had come to protect their leader.

Horror crept across their faces as their gazes landed on Mó Zūn.

Their invincible leader.

Their absolute pillar.

Standing there-

Missing an arm.

Blood still dripping.

For a heartbeat, no one spoke.

Their minds refused to process what they were seeing.

Previously, they didn't intervene because Mó Zun was just playing with Bai

Zihan, showing that Mó Zun could take care of Bai Zihan whenever he could.

This was supposed to be an opportunity to capture Bai Zihan. A chance to wash away yesterday's humiliation and defeat.

Who could have imagined-

What was meant to be an easy hunt...

A perfect opportunity to seize the Bai Clan's heir....

Would end like this?

Their leader crippled.

Mó Zun's expression twisted.

The shock on his subordinates' faces only fueled his rage.

Demonic Qi surged violently, crushing the ground beneath him as he clenched his remaining arm so tightly that space warped around his fist.

"Enough!" he barked.

His voice boomed like thunder, laced with absolute authority.

The Demonic cultivators straightened instantly, fear replacing bloodlust.

Mó Zūn's single eye burned as he stared at the Bai Clan.

"Kill them."

His killing intent exploded outward.

"Leave no one alive!"

The Demonic cultivators roared in unison.

But-

The Bai Clan did not panic.

Bai Ren stepped forward.

His gaze swept across the battlefield, not lingering on Mó Zūn's severed arm, not reacting to the threats.

Instead-

It fell on Bai Zihan.

Barely standing.

"Let's finish this quickly!"

The Bai Clan Grand Elders moved instantly.

Bai Ren took another step forward.

The air changed.

His presence alone pressed down like a mountain, forcing the demonic cultivators' roars to falter.

Then-

He reached out.

A low, resonant hum echoed as a sword emerged behind him.

The moment it appeared, the heavens seemed to lower their gaze.

A Saint-Grade Sword.

Its mere existence distorted space, as if the world itself feared being cut.

The Immortal Realm Demonic Cultivators' pupils shrank.

They knew this sword.

With it, Bai Ren had slain Half-Qilin, a legendary beast of terrifying power.

Bai Ren rested his hand on the hilt.

Around him, the Grand Elders released their auras-layer upon layer of overwhelming pressure.

Qi surged like a rising tide, forming an unyielding wall.

This was not a desperate stand.

It was a declaration.

Bai Ren's gaze swept over the demonic cultivators, calm to the point of indifference.

"Do you really want to do this?"

He asked.

This was not the tone of someone cornered-but of someone issuing a warning. "How about this?" Bai Ren continued. "We go our way. You go yours."

Silence fell!

Blatant disregard.

Numerical advantage meant nothing.

No one thought it was a bluff.

They all knew that Bai Clan knew a terrifying Sword Art which is even capable of killing Half-Qilin.

They had just witnessed a junior of Bai Clan sever their leader's arm with it.

They might be able to kill the Bai Clan's Grand Elders but at what price?

And the first to go would definitely die.

Who would volunteer to die?

None of them dared to lead the charge.

Mó Zun finally raised his remaining hand.

"Enough!"

His voice was hoarse-but controlled.

He inhaled slowly, suppressing the raging Demonic Qi within.

The Demonic Cultivator has suffered too much against the Bai Clan. They naturally developed a fear against them.

Even those considered violent, mad demons would think twice before lunging forward when facing the Bai Clan.

His gaze locked onto Bai Ren and other Grand Elders.

Then shifted-

To Bai Zihan.

Barely conscious.

Yet alive.

If they fought to the end, Mó Zun knew the losses would be severe.

And Bai Zihan could escape amid the chaos.

(There is no need for such losses. The Bai Clan will fall eventually.)

"Let them leave!"

There was no need to be said twice.

Both Bai Clan's Grand Elders and Demonic Cultivators were relieved to hear

that.

But Bai Ren and others weren't going to fully believe those words.

After all, this is a good opportunity to eliminate them and didn't understand why Mó Zun would let go of such an opportunity.

Of course, they believed in their strength but Bai Ren felt that there was something more to that than this.

Only when the pressure fully receded and Demonic Cultivators retreated, did Bai Ren gesture.

"Go!"

Space tore open.

Just before they vanished-

A weak, hoarse voice cut through the air.

"Mó... Zun... you will regret this."

Bai Zihan lifted his head with effort, blood trailing from his lips. His eyes were dim-but burning with hatred.

"Three years."

Each word carried unwavering resolve.

"You and all the Demonic Cultivators..."

"I will kill you all!"

Bai Zihan swayed slightly, his body barely held together, blood soaking his robes, his aura shattered and chaotic.

Any ordinary cultivator in such a state would have sounded laughable-delusional, desperate, pitiful.

But no one laughed.

Not Bai Ren.

Not the Grand Elders.

And certainly not Mó Zún.

Mó Zún turned.

"Hmph! Big Word! Survive first, youngling!"

The spatial rift closed.

Their camp appeared in a flash of distorted space.

Bai Tianheng and the Grand Elders emerged first, immediately surrounding Bai Zihan.

A figure rushed forward.

"Father!"

Bai Xueqing's voice rang out.

She stopped short.

Her gaze fell on Bai Zihan.

Bloodied. Barely standing.

His eyes filled with anger and guilt.

Her expression tightened.

She had expected him to be dragged back before he could even leave the camp.

Not returned like this.

Whatever he had faced-

It was clear he had brushed against death.

"Xueqing," Bai Tianheng said urgently. "Call the medic!"

She turned instantly.

"I'll get them!"

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! - Chapter 421 Bai Zihan Crippled???[946 words]

Chapter 421 Bai Zihan Crippled???

"Clear the area!"

"Seal the surroundings. No one approaches without permission!"

Bai Clan disciples scattered at once, fear and urgency warring across their faces.

The medics arrived in a rush-three senior healers accompanied by several assistants. Their expressions turned pale the instant they laid eyes on him. "Put him down-slowly!"

Bai Tianheng carefully lowered his son onto the jade platform, his movements uncharacteristically gentle, as though even the slightest mistake might kill him. The lead medic extended his spiritual sense, sweeping carefully through Bai Zihan's body.

Seconds passed.

Then his expression changed completely.

"This... is bad," the medic said.

"How bad?"

Bai Chu demanded sharply.

The medic swallowed.

"His meridians are torn in over a dozen places. Several have already collapsed. His internal organs have suffered severe damage, and his dantian has endured extreme backlash from Qi overload."

He paused, choosing his words with care.

Bai Ren's eyes narrowed.

"He'll live," he said. "Won't he?"

The medic hesitated-just for half a breath-before nodding slowly.

"Yes. His life is not in immediate danger."

Relief barely had time to surface before the medic continued.

"But..."

Everyone's hearts sank.

His gaze fell to Bai Zihan's pale, motionless face.

"The damage to his meridians is catastrophic."

Silence swallowed the tent.

"Then what do we do now?"

Bai Tianheng's voice was low and hoarse, stripped of the authority he usually commanded on the battlefield.

"Tell me what must be done."

The lead medic exhaled slowly, steadying himself.

"I will stabilize his meridians."

He immediately went to work, acting with extreme caution and full concentration, guiding the raging Qi within Bai Zihan's body into stillness.

As he worked, the lead medic couldn't help but glance at Bai Zihan in astonishment.

Such pain-pain far worse than shattered bones-would have caused even Century Old cultivators to scream in agony.

Yet Bai Zihan did not react at all.

His expression did not change.

It made the process casier-but also far more unsettling.

After more than an hour, the medic finally withdrew his hands.

"Phew..."

Sweat streamed down his face as he straightened.

"For now, his condition has been stabilized," he said. "The backlash in his dantian has been suppressed, and the internal damage will no longer worsen."

"But from this point onward," the medic continued gravely, "everything depends on Young Master Bai himself."

"He must not circulate Qi-at all. If even a trace of Qi is forced through his damaged meridians, the remaining pathways could collapse entirely."

The Bai Clan members felt a brief sense of relief-but it was quickly overshadowed by dread.

"With proper medicine and rest, his body can recover," the medic said. "The internal injuries will heal with time. But the meridians..."

He shook his head slowly.

"They may never fully recover."

The implication struck like a hammer.

"What do you mean, doctor?"

Bai Tianheng asked solemnly.

"Even if he survives," the medic said softly, "there is a strong possibility that Young Master Bai will no longer be able to cultivate."

Crippled.

The word went unspoken-but everyone heard it.

Bai Tianheng stood frozen, staring at his son.

The blow was heavier than any battlefield loss.

Bai Zihan-someone who could have led the Bai Clan to the very top-had been

declared crippled.

"T-This is all my fault..."

Bai Tianheng's fists clenched.

"If I had stopped him..."

The Grand Elders said nothing.

Silence was all that remained.

"T-Then... we will take our leave," the lead medic said quietly.

The medics withdrew.

After a long while, Bai Tianheng stepped forward again, his gaze never leaving

his son.

"Guard this place," he said hoarsely. "No one enters without my permission."

"Yes!"

The surrounding disciples responded immediately.

Outside the medical tent, however, the camp was anything but calm.

Whispers spread like wildfire.

Despite the Bai Clan's efforts to suppress the news, too many had seen Bai Zihan carried back-blood-soaked, barely conscious.

Speculation ran rampant.

Some claimed that Bai Zihan had clashed with Bai Tianheng himself, pointing to

how the Clan Head had chased after him earlier.

Others whispered that Bai Zihan had suffered Qi deviation-punishment for forcefully raising his cultivation realm through a forbidden technique.

No one knew the truth.

That did not stop the rumors.

After all, this concerned Bai Zihan.

And inevitably, those rumors reached the ears of his fiancée-Chu Ziyan.

She rushed to the Bai Clan's camp at once, only to be stopped by the guards

despite her status.

Fortunately, Bai Xueqing came out when she heard Chu Ziyan's voice.

"What happened?"

Chu Ziyan asked urgently.

"Is it true that Bai Zihan is heavily injured?"

"Let's talk somewhere else."

Bai Xueqing did not answer directly.

She glanced around, her gaze sweeping over the guarded camp-and the many

unseen ears listening from the shadows.

Chu Ziyan immediately understood and nodded.

Bai Xueqing led her to her tent, far from the medical area. With a flick of her wrist, she activated several formation flags.

A sound-isolation barrier enveloped the tent.

Only then did Bai Xueqing talk.

"What I'm about to tell you," she said calmly, "must not leave this tent."

"I understand!"

Chu Ziyan replied firmly.

Bai Xueqing explained nearly everything-the cause, the pursuit, and why it had happened.

Though she did not know exactly who Bai Zihan had fought, she was certain it was a powerful Demonic Cultivator.

And Chu Ziyan learned the story.

That it all began because Luo Qing had been kidnapped.

For a fleeting moment, a trace of jealousy surfaced in her heart.

To be driven to such fury... to risk everything like that... If only he felt the same for her.

But the thought vanished almost instantly.

Her worry was far greater.

"What about his injuries?"

Chu Ziyan asked quietly.

Bai Xueqing lowered her gaze.

"Severe. The medics managed to stabilize him, but..."

She paused.

"His meridians are heavily damaged."

Chu Ziyan stiffened.

"...How badly?"

"There's a chance," Bai Xueqing said carefully, "that he may never cultivate again."

The words lingered in the air.

Chu Ziyan did not cry.

She did not shout.

She simply stood there, fear tightening her chest.

Not fear of losing a powerful fiancé.

But fear for Bai Zihan's life.

He had too many enemies.

If word spread that Bai Zihan was crippled, countless people would come for his life.

Even the Bai Clan itself might turn cold once his value disappeared.

Chu Ziyan clenched her fists.

(I will protect you!)

Her resolve hardened-not spoken aloud, but burned into her heart.

Novel Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! Chapter 422 I'm Crippled!

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan!

Chapter 422 I'm Crippled!

Chapter 422 I'm Crippled!

Three days passed!

Inside the heavily guarded medical tent, time seemed to slow to a crawl.

Bai Zihan lay motionless upon the jade platform, his breathing faint but steady, surrounded by layers of protective formations and faint medicinal fragrances. His fingers twitched.

Barely perceptible.

Then-

"Argh!"

A hoarse, pained groan escaped his lips.

Pain crashed into him like a tidal wave.

It was everywhere.

In his limbs.

In his chest.

In his bones.

Even drawing a single breath felt like dragging shattered glass through his lungs.

Bai Zihan's eyelids fluttered open.

Blurry light flooded his vision.

His head throbbed violently, memories slow and fragmented, refusing to align. "Where... am I...?"

His voice was weak, dry, almost unrecognizable.

He tried to move.

Instant regret.

A sharp surge of agony ripped through his body, forcing a strained gasp from his lips as he collapsed back onto the platform.

His mind reeled.

Images surfaced one after another.

His pupils shrank.

"...Right."

He remembered now.

The clash with Mó Zūn.

Grand Elders timely arrival and his warning to Mó Zūn.

And then-

Darkness.

His breathing quickened slightly as another memory surfaced.

"Feilian..."

He tried to call out instinctively.

Nothing happened.

No response.

His heart sank.

Once more, he tried.

Silence!

Bai Zihan clenched his jaw.

"...Feilian?"

Still nothing.

Guilt crept into his chest, heavier than the pain.

He remembered it clearly now.

She had poured her Soul Power into him without hesitation-All to give him a chance to escape.

A chance that nearly cost her everything.

But he refused and still insisted on fighting.

And what did he gain from it?

Nothing.

He still didn't know where Luo Qing was-or whether she was even alive.

All he got in return was nearly being killed, and Feilian exhausting her Soul

Power.

It was stupid move.

He could still feel Feilian's presence within the Soul-Confining Artifact, but seemed to be resting.

That realization brought a sliver of relief-but it did nothing to ease the weight in his heart.

Bai Zihan closed his eyes, breathing unevenly.

(Luo Qing... why was she taken?)

If it was to threaten him-or the Bai Clan-then Mó Zun would have done so already.

She wasn't even in that encampment.

Then what?

A coincidence?

The thought surfaced-but he rejected it immediately.

Perhaps... but he did not believe the Demonic Cultivators would kidnap a mortal over a Bai Clan member.

His eyes opened slowly.

Cold resolve burned beneath the pain.

"Just you wait..."

His voice was weak, but the intent behind it was sharp.

"Whatever the reason, I'll pluck the answer from your mouth myself."

No matter what it took.

Just then-

"You're awake?!"

A familiar voice rang out.

Bai Zihan turned his head slightly.

Bai Xueqing stood at the edge of the tent, eyes widened in clear shock.

A faint smile tugged at Bai Zihan's lips despite the pain.

"What?" he asked hoarsely. "Did you think I would die?"

"You-!"

Bai Xueqing opened her mouth to retort, but the words never came.

She stopped.

And simply stared at him.

Seconds passed.

The silence stretched-heavy and awkward.

Bai Zihan shifted slightly, then winced.

"Ahem!"

He coughed, breaking the tension.

Bai Xueqing blinked-as if waking from a trance.

"I-I'll get Father!"

She turned abruptly and rushed out of the tent.

Moments later, hurried footsteps echoed outside.

The tent flap was pulled aside.

Bai Tianheng entered first.

Behind him followed several Grand Elders.

Chu Ziyang came as well, her eyes filled with worry-and relief.

And the medics.

"Zihan'er... you are awake."

Bai Tianheng's voice was low, but the relief in it was unmistakable.

He stepped forward at once, stopping beside him.

For a brief moment, the imposing Clan Head looked nothing like the man who commanded armies-only a father who had feared he was about to lose his son.

The medics did not waste time.

The lead physician stepped forward, his expression solemn, and extended his spiritual sense once more.

Gentle waves of Qi swept through Bai Zihan's body as the others watched in silence.

Time passed.

Then the medic withdrew his hand and exhaled.

"His condition has stabilized," he announced. "His life is no longer in danger."

A subtle wave of relief rippled through the tent.

Bai Tianheng closed his eyes briefly.

"Thank heavens..."

But the medic did not relax.

He hesitated, then continued. "However-"

The air instantly grew heavy again.

"Young Master Bai must remember this clearly," the medic said, his tone grave.

"Your injuries were... unprecedented. You survived something that should have killed you outright."

He looked directly at Bai Zihan.

"Most of your meridians have been destroyed beyond repair."

Silence fell!

"You may live a normal life," the medic continued slowly. "But from this point on, you must not cultivate."

"If you attempt to circulate Qi again," he warned, "the remaining meridians will shatter completely. Your dantian could collapse, and your life would end."

The tent was deathly still.

This was not merely an injury.

It was a verdict.

A crippled cultivator which is equivalent to being a mere mortal.

Chu Ziyang's expression stiffened, her fingers tightening at her side.

Bai Tianheng turned back to his son, his gaze heavy.

They waited.

They expected anger.

Despair.

Denial.

At the very least-a strong reaction.

But Bai Zihan's expression did not change.

His face remained calm.

Almost indifferent.

It was the same expression he wore on the battlefield.

Bai Tianheng's heart sank.

"Zihan'er," he asked carefully, his voice gentler than anyone in the tent had ever heard it,

"did you understand what the doctor said?"

For a moment, they thought he hadn't.

Perhaps the shock had numbed him.

Perhaps the words hadn't sunk in yet. Then Bai Zihan spoke.

"Yeah, isn't it that my meridian is almost completely destroyed?"

That was all.

No bitterness.

No protest. No grief. Nothing.

The tent remained silent.

An unsettling silence.

As if the verdict meant nothing to him at all.

"Do you truly understand what that means?"

Bai Tianheng asked.

Bai Zihan knew why his father was asking.

He wanted to reassure him-to show that this was nothing and could be easily healed.

But then his eyes met Chu Ziyan's.

(Perhaps... this is an opportunity.)

"Isn't it simple?" Bai Zihan said calmly.

"I'm crippled!"

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Novel Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! Chapter 423 Engagement Broken??

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan!

Chapter 423 Engagement Broken??

Chapter 423 Engagement Broken??

What was worse than trash in this world?

A genius who had fallen... and become trash.

With the doctor's words, everyone present was already convinced-

He was crippled.

(Good!)

Bai Zihan thought calmly.

This is perfect.

Previously, no matter how much of a "trash" he had been, he could still cultivate.

And he still had his status as the heir of the strongest clan of the Desolate Heaven Empire.

Because of that, even with his poor reputation and lowly talent in the past, the Chu Clan had never shown open dissatisfaction.

Chu Ziyang herself had also agreed to the engagement-out of convenience.

But now?

Now he was different.

A cripple.

Someone no different from a mortal.

Even Chu Ziyang-who had once insisted on the engagement for practical reasons-would surely hesitate.

The Chu Clan would definitely push to dissolve it once they heard the news. And the Bai Clan?

They would have little reason to object.

After all, Bai Xueqing had once broken an engagement herself.

If the Bai Clan protested too much, it would only make them look unreasonable.

Not to mention, Bai Zihan had already planned to persuade his father.

Bai Zihan's lips curved faintly.

(A perfect excuse.)

A clean dissolution of the engagement.

No loss of face.

No grudges.

No one would feel guilty.

But that wasn't the main reason.

It wasn't as if the engagement to Chu Ziyan truly affected his life. Whether it existed or not changed nothing for him.

He had no interest in other women, and his status as being engaged didn't bother him.

And he had to admit that because he was engaged, his parents didn't bother him about marriage-which they surely would have if he wasn't.

What mattered more... was what came after.

Being seen as crippled had its advantages.

Many of his enemies would finally breathe easy. Once they believed he posed no threat, they would stop watching him so closely.

Of course, some might see this as an opportunity to exact revenge-but those people were insignificant.

If Bai Zihan were still viewed as a threat, the ones sent after him wouldn't be petty weaklings.

They would be Immortal Realm experts.

After all, during the war against the Demonic Forces, everyone had seen it clearly-

He was capable of handling Great Ascension Realm cultivators.

To eliminate someone like that, Immortal Elders would have to move.

And they would surely plan extensively to assassinate him.

But if they found out that he had become crippled?

Many of them wouldn't even bother sending assassins, as they would still need to deal with the Bai Clan.

And those who sent assassins out of grudge or other reasons would surely let their guard down.

"I'm crippled!"

Bai Zihan said.

With that Bai Tianheng and others atleast confirmed that Bai Zihan knew what had happened to him.

Yet he was so calm to an almost impossible degree.

Bai Zihan turned his head slightly, his gaze settling on Chu Ziyan.

(Come on...)

Bai Zihan thought silently.

(Break it off like a heroine. Don't worry-I won't hold any grudges like some petty protagonist.)

He waited for Chu Ziyan to denounce the engagement.

Surely, she wouldn't feel good having a cripple as her husband.

But what came next... was none of that.

"Bai Zihan..."

Chu Ziyan stepped forward, her brows tightly furrowed.

Her eyes weren't cold.

They weren't calculating.

They were full of worry.

"Is your body alright?"

She asked softly.

Bai Zihan froze.

"...Huh?"

Chu Ziyan came closer and checked for any injuries that had yet to heal.

"Arg-I'm fine!"

Bai Zihan answered.

Seeing Chu Ziyan genuinely worry about him, Bai Zihan felt a twinge of guilt inside.

She was worried, and here he was trying to trick her.

He frowned inwardly.

(This isn't how it's supposed to go!)

She should be looking at him with pity.

Or distance.

Not concerned after hearing the news about him being a cripple.

Bai Zihan waited.

Perhaps she was just being mindful of the Bai Clan's status.

Perhaps it was because Bai Xueqing-her best friend-was his sister.

Yes.

That had to be it.

There was no way she would actually want to stay engaged to a cripple.

So he waited.

But nothing changed.

Along with Chu Ziyan, others also made small talk, trying to ease his worries and telling him not to worry about what the doctor had said.

Bai Ren even boasted that he knew an Alchemist who could create a pill that could completely heal his body.

Others said that there was no need to worry and that he was still the heir of the

Bai Clan.

Only Bai Xueqing remained silent, her eyes and expression wasn't like that of

others.

Whether it was because she didn't care about him, or because she didn't

believe he had truly become crippled, Bai Zihan couldn't tell.

He thought it was most likely the former.

Eventually, it was time to leave.

"Zihan'er needs rest," Bai Tianheng said quietly. "Everyone, give him some time."

Bai Tianheng thought that with so many people present, Bai Zihan wasn't able

to show his true emotions.

So they should let him be for the time being and give him space to process what had happened to his body.

The Grand Elders nodded. One by one, they turned to leave.

Chu Ziyang hesitated... then slowly followed.

That was when Bai Zihan spoke.

"Wait!"

Everyone stopped.

Bai Tianheng turned back, surprised.

"Zihan, do you need something?"

Bai Tianheng asked.

Bai Zihan took a slow breath.

"Father... about my engagement with Chu Ziyang." The tent went quiet again.

Bai Tianheng's expression stiffened.

Bai Zihan continued, as if speaking for Chu Ziyang's sake.

"With my condition," he said slowly, "the Chu Clan shouldn't have to accept a cripple as their future son-in-law."

He glanced at Chu Ziyang.

"Chu Ziyang deserves better."

Bai Tianheng said nothing.

He simply looked at his son.

In his eyes, he saw not calculation-but resignation.

The once arrogant, confident Bai Zihan...

Seemed to have lost faith in himself.

And that realization hurt far more than any battlefield wound. Normally, he would have said that Bai Zihan needn't worry about such things.

He was still his son and the heir of the Bai Clan. There was no way he would let a once-decided engagement be broken.

But he didn't dare argue against Bai Zihan, who seemed to have given up.

He didn't want to force things and decided to let Bai Zihan make his own choice.

Bai Tianheng let out a quiet breath and slowly nodded.

He wanted to say that if this was his wish, then he wouldn't object-but before he could speak, Chu Ziyang's voice cut him off.

"There is no need."

Chu Ziyang declared.

Bai Zihan stiffened.

Chu Ziyang stepped forward.

Her back was straight and her gaze unwavering.

"Whether crippled or not," she said clearly, each word firm and steady, "the engagement still stands."

The air went completely still.

Bai Zihan's mind blanked.

"...What?"

Chu Ziyang turned to look at him directly.

"There seems to be a misunderstanding," she continued calmly.

"In the first place, I did not agree to this engagement because of your cultivation talent."

True-before the engagement, Bai Zihan had been hailed as someone with trash-tier talent and no hope.

Though she didn't agree to the engagement because of love either, it was definitely not because of his cultivation.

Murmurs rippled through the tent.

The Bai Clan's Grand Elders exchanged glances.

Bai Yuie nodded approvingly.

"Well said," she said with a faint smile.

"To remain steadfast in times of prosperity is common. But to remain loyal in adversity..."

Her gaze shifted to Chu Ziyang.

"That is the bearing of a true Lady of the Bai Clan!"

Bai Ruhong laughed softly.

"Haha! Indeed. Such resolve is rare among the younger generation."

"Unshaken by gain or loss-this loyalty will surely not go unrewarded"

Even Bai Ren nodded in agreement.

Bai Tianheng stared at Chu Ziyang for a long moment.

Then... a complicated smile surfaced on his face.

This daughter-in-law...

She really is the best.

Only one person felt none of that.

Bai Zihan.

(...This isn't how things were supposed to go.)

His world felt like it had tilted.

No-

It felt like it had collapsed outright.

Chu Ziyang's ears reddened faintly under the gazes of the Immortal Grand Elders.

Even she was not immune to such praise.

"I... I will do my best," she said softly, lowering her head for a brief moment.

Her voice was steady, but the blush betrayed her.

The Grand Elders smiled, clearly satisfied.

Only Bai Zihan felt a sharp twitch at the corner of his mouth.

(...Do her best?)

Best at what, exactly?

Best at becoming his wife?

Best at ruining his carefully laid plans?

Then-perhaps sensing his gaze-Chu Ziyang looked up.

Their eyes met.

Her expression softened, the worry from earlier still there, but now mixed with something firm.

Resolute.

Almost... reassuring.

"So," Chu Ziyang said, looking straight at him, "there is no need for you to worry!"

Bai Zihan's heart skipped-not in anticipation, but in alarm.

"You will definitely get married to me."

Silence!

The words hung in the air like a sacred vow.

To everyone else, it sounded romantic.

To the Grand Elders, it was loyalty.

To Bai Tianheng, it was relief-no, more than that. Gratitude.

But to Bai Zihan-

Those words rang like a death sentence.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Novel Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! Chapter 424 I'll Not Give him!

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan!

Chapter 424 I'll Not Give him!

Chapter 424 I'll Not Give him!

Everyone left Bai Zihan's tent.

Grand Elders were happy about Chu Ziyan, but they were still worried about Bai Zihan.

However, there was nothing they could do at the moment.

All they could do was hope to find some miracle elixir or a Miracle Doctor who might be able to help Bai Zihan.

They had yet to give up on Bai Zihan, despite what the doctor had said.

Bai Tianheng was the same. He was already planning to inform his wife, Mu Yuelan.

He thought that since the Mu Clan was a prestigious Alchemist Clan, they might have a solution.

And if it was for Bai Zihan, then they would surely spend everything they had to find a cure-even if it meant using some secret of the Mu Clan.

They all left with their own thoughts and plans, and only Bai Xueqing and Chu Ziyan were left behind.

"Xueqing, I'll be leaving too," Chu Ziyan said.

"Wait!"

Bai Xueqing stopped her.

"Chu Ziyan!"

Bai Xueqing called out her name seriously, as if something was wrong.

"Yes?"

Chu Ziyan turned to face Bai Xueqing, whose expression looked solemn, making her wonder what was going on.

"Are you really sure about your engagement with Bai Zihan?"

Bai Xueqing asked.

"Oh, that? Yes, I'm pretty sure!"

Chu Ziyan replied without any hesitation.

"Ziyan, if you're doing this because of me, then there's no need. Bai Zihan is crippled, and no one would blame you even if you broke off the engagement," Bai Xueqing said.

There was a few seconds of silence as Chu Ziyan stared at Bai Xueqing.

Then Chu Ziyan smiled.

"Xueqing, there's no need to say more about this. I've already made my decision."

Chu Ziyan still refused.

"And Xueqing, you should know that Bai Zihan isn't crippled."

Chu Ziyan added, looking straight into Bai Xueqing's eyes.

Bai Xueqing's expression didn't change much from Chu Ziyan's words.

It wasn't that she hadn't thought about it.

From the very beginning-even when the doctors emphasized that Bai Zihan was crippled-Bai Xueqing had never truly believed it.

And that suspicion only grew stronger when Bai Zihan began acting.

Just the way he behaved, the way he calmly admitted to being crippled-she knew it was all an act.

If he were truly crippled, his reaction wouldn't be like that.

There was no way he would behave so calmly, or even suggest breaking off the engagement.

Bai Xueqing didn't know what Bai Zihan's plan was or what he wanted to achieve, but she was certain of one thing-

He wasn't crippled.

Even if he was, she didn't believe that Bai Zihan didn't have a solution.

Someone who could give out a Saint-Grade Technique and a Heaven-Grade cultivation technique would surely have a way to rebuild his body-even if he truly became crippled.

Though Bai Xueqing mostly still believed he wasn't.

Maybe if Bai Zihan kept up the act for a year, then perhaps she would believe it.

"What do you mean?"

Still, Bai Xueqing feigned ignorance.

She didn't know what made Chu Ziyan say that. Even their father had been fooled-so how could Chu Ziyan know?

"Hehe, Xueqing, I didn't know you'd still continue acting in front of your best friend."

Chu Ziyan said.

"So be it. Anyway, you also know Bai Zihan isn't crippled. So I don't understand why you're suggesting that I break off the engagement."

Bai Xueqing didn't answer.

"What? Scared that I'll take your brother?"

Chu Ziyan teased.

Bai Xueqing's brows twitched.

"Hmph!"

She turned her head away sharply, her chin lifting arrogantly.

"I don't know what you're talking about," she said coldly. "I was merely looking out for you."

She glanced back briefly, her eyes sharp.

"But if you don't want to break off the engagement, then that's none of my business."

With that, she spun on her heel.

Chu Ziyan watched her back disappear beyond the tent's entrance.

For a moment, the teasing smile on her lips lingered.

"Sorry, but I'm not going to give Bai Zihan to anyone even if that is you."

Bai Zihan's plan had failed miserably when it came to breaking off the engagement-but his other plan was working flawlessly.

Just as Bai Zihan had predicted, no matter how much Bai Tianheng wanted to control the news of him becoming crippled, it was impossible.

One of the medics-or perhaps all of them-must have leaked the information.

Even if they were ordered to keep it secret, other clans-most likely rival clans -would definitely pay a huge price just to obtain such news.

Since everyone already knew something had happened to Bai Zihan, there was no way they wouldn't keep tabs on the medics who had entered the Bai Clan's

medical tent.

Under such temptation, very few people could keep their mouths shut.

In any case, it was great for Bai Zihan-because this was exactly what he wanted.

"Hey, have you heard the rumors?"

"Yeah. I heard Young Master Bai has become crippled."

"What?! Bai Zihan?"

"Who else? They say his meridians were completely destroyed."

"So he's basically a mortal?"

"More or less!"

"Hah... looks like Heaven couldn't tolerate a genius like Bai Zihan. A genius who could have rewritten the history of the Desolate Heaven Empire has become crippled. Such a pity!"

With Bai Zihan at the center of the news, the rumors quickly spread throughout the Desolate Heaven Empire.

While many shook their heads in regret over the fall of a rising star, others felt relieved and even believed it was retribution for all the evil Bai Zihan had committed.

The Li Clan and the Zhao Clan, in particular, were the happiest.

At first, they suspected it might be a trap meant to lower their guard-perhaps even false information.

However, they sent their own people to verify the news, and it turned out to be

true.

Upon hearing that Bai Zihan had become crippled, they even forgot about the heavy losses they had suffered in the war against the Demonic Forces.

But one person was very unhappy.

And that person was currently scolding Bai Tianheng. "Tianheng, how could you let something like this happen?"

Bai Zihan's mother, Mu Yuelan, had arrived.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Novel Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! Chapter 425 Mu Yuelan Hears The News

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan!

Chapter 425 Mu Yuelan Hears The News

The Mu Clan didn't participate in Beast Tide.

Unlike martial clans that thrived on bloodshed and battlefield glory, the Mu Clan's value lay in pill refinement.

Because of that, the Mu Clan had never been required to participate directly in the war against the Demonic Beasts.

As long as they contributed a fixed quota of pills-healing pills, recovery pills, detoxification pills, and emergency life-saving elixirs-the Empire was more than satisfied.

After all, sending alchemists onto the battlefield was foolish.

An alchemist's life was worth far more than a single cultivator's.

With one high-grade alchemist working safely behind the lines, thousands of cultivators could be kept alive.

Lose that alchemist, and even an army would crumble sooner or later.

Thus, while countless clans were dragged into brutal Beast Tides and bloody fronts, the Mu Clan continued their regular routine:

Pill refinement.

Herb cultivation.

Formula research.

Life within the Mu Clan proceeded with calm precision, almost detached from the chaos consuming the rest of the Empire.

Until a letter arrived.

It was delivered personally, bypassing the usual channels.

Sealed with the Bai Clan's insignia.

It was for Mu Yuelan.

But before that, it landed in Mu Clan Leader Mu Yuelan's brother, Mu Qingyuan's, hands.

Mu Yuelan was in seclusion and couldn't read it herself.

But seeing that it was from the Bai Clan and marked urgent, Mu Qingyuan read it to determine whether he should disturb his sister.

As he read, his eyes widened in shock and worry.

He moved swiftly through the quiet halls of the Mu Clan, his footsteps filled with urgency.

He barely paused before reaching the heavy doors of his sister's seclusion chamber.

He knocked once, sharply.

"What is it?" Mu Yuelan's voice called out, tinged with annoyance.

Normally, interruptions irritated her, but she knew one thing: Mu Qingyuan would never disturb her without a very good reason.

"I... I apologize, sister," Mu Qingyuan said, his tone unusually tense. "But an emergency situation has arisen. You should read this letter-it was sent personally by your brother-in-law."

Mu Qingyuan carefully handed over the letter, bowing slightly in respect.

The seal of the Bai Clan gleamed faintly under the soft light, the urgency in its design unmistakable.

Mu Yuelan took the jade slip into her hands, her gaze sharpening.

She could feel the subtle weight of the message-its power, its importance. She opened it slowly, scanning the contents.

Her expression darkened in an instant.

"The Bai Clan... Zihan?" she muttered under her breath, her calm composure cracking just slightly. "Impossible... how could this happen?"

Mu Qingyuan swallowed nervously. "Sister... I thought you should know immediately. It seems... it's about Zihan'er's condition."

She read it again. Then again. And then, without a word, she crushed the jade slip in her hand.

"Prepare my ship."

Her voice was calm-but anyone who knew Mu Yuelan understood how terrifying that calm was.

"I'm leaving immediately."

Within hours, Mu Yuelan was already on her way.

And now-

She stood before Bai Tianheng, her eyes sharp, cold, and blazing with suppressed fury.

"Tianheng," she said again, her voice low and dangerous, "how could you let something like this happen to my son?"

Bai Tianheng, who had come to receive his wife, was stunned by her the moment she descended.

"Yuelan, calm down, I can explain!"

Bai Tianheng stepped forward hastily, holding his hands up in a placating gesture.

"Calm down, my foot!"

Mu Yuelan's voice cut through his words like a blade.

"Tianheng, you let Zihan'er become crippled? How can you explain this to me?"

Bai Tianheng swallowed hard, opening his mouth to speak.

"Yuelan, it's not-"

"Explain clearly! How did this even happen?" Mu Yuelan said angrily.

"I-he... Bai Zihan went off to face the Demonic Cultivator Leader," Bai Tianheng finally blurted, trying to explain, his voice strained.

Mu Yuelan's eyes snapped to him, fiery and sharp.

"And? You didn't stop him?"

"It isn't that I didn't, but I couldn't!" he said, his voice rising slightly under her

gaze. "What do you mean? You? A Peak Great Ascension Realm couldn't stop a Spirit Severing Realm child? Tianheng, I've heard better excuses than that!"

Her voice cracked like thunder, every word laced with disbelief and fury.

Bai Tianheng's throat went dry. He wanted to explain, wanted her to

understand, but the truth was difficult to admit.

Indeed, he should have been able to stop him... but Bai Zihan... he was stronger than a typical Spirit Severing Realm.

He couldn't bring himself to say it outright-not to his wife.

His pride, his dignity as a Peak Great Ascension Realm, weighed on him. How

could he admit that his son was stronger than him in certain ways and that he couldn't stop him?

If it were anyone else who had witnessed Bai Zihan's feats during the Beast

Tide, they would have understood.

And yet, Mu Yuelan didn't know.

She hadn't heard the rumors, hadn't followed the news of Bai Zihan killing Great Ascension Realm Demonic Elders.

Before receiving the letter, she had been in seclusion, and the Mu Clan in general didn't keep up with such rumors.

Only after being informed by her brother did she understand the situation.

Bai Tianheng opened his mouth again, trying to explain more, but every word seemed like an excuse in her eyes.

He knew Mu Yuelan wasn't in the mood to listen, so before he could continue, he tried to calm her down.

"Yuelan, please cal-"

But Mu Yuelan's patience had run out at what she deemed only excuses from Bai Tianheng.

Her Qi surged outward as her aura rose.

Bai Tianheng's eyes widened. "Yuelan... you... you broke through?!" he muttered excitedly, almost forgetting the crisis at hand.

The reason Mu Yuelan had been in seclusion was because she had broken through to the Great Ascension Realm and was stabilizing her cultivation.

Her sharp glare snapped him back to reality. She wasn't in the mood for congratulations.

"Don't change the topic, Tianheng!" she snapped silently in her mind, her focus entirely on her son. After a few tense moments, her breathing steadied.

Slowly, she reined in her Great Ascension Realm aura, letting it settle back around her like a controlled storm.

"Enough," she said finally, her tone firm but calmer.

"Let's go! I want to see my son."

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! - Chapter 426 Leaving The Northern Defense Line[1,302 words]

Chapter 426 Leaving The Northern Defense Line

After everyone left the tent, Bai Zihan remained lying on the bed, his eyes half-lidded as his consciousness turned inward.

Silence enveloped him.

Slowly, carefully, he examined his own body.

What he sensed made even him feel a trace of solemnity.

His meridians were in chaos-fractured, scorched, and forcibly widened beyond their natural limits.

His dantian was exhausted to the brink of collapse, its Qi circulation sluggish and unstable.

Even his flesh bore the scars of overexertion, every muscle fiber strained far past what it was ever meant to endure.

During the battle with Mó Zun, he had pushed far beyond reason.

He had used Heaven's Mandate Reversal to forcefully raise his cultivation to the Great Ascension Realm.

Then, with Feilian's help, he had further raised it to the Immortal Realm.

Even that wouldn't have caused such severe damage to his body if, as Feilian suggested, he had escaped.

But no-he had chosen to use Fate Severing Slash instead.

That single strike had almost consumed every last bit of Qi in his body.

For any ordinary cultivator, after such recklessness, they would have died on the spot.

Yet Bai Zihan was still alive.

Not because of chance.

But because his body was anything but ordinary.

The Primordial Body Refinement Technique had forged his flesh beyond common limits, tempering it again and again until it had become nearly indestructible.

And then there was his Supreme Dao Bone.

With all this, Bai Zihan understood clearly.

His condition was severe. But it was not irreversible.

He was not truly crippled.

And even if those advantages did not exist and he had truly become crippled, there were still many solutions in the System Store.

There are pills beyond Grade-8-which were almost legends in the Desolate Heaven Empire-and with the System Points he had earned, he should be able to easily afford them.

"Oh yes, I still haven't checked the System Rewards for killing Great Ascension Realm Demonic Elders."

He had rested after the war ended, and right after that came the announcement of Luo Qing being kidnapped, so he had yet to claim all the rewards.

"System!"

[Unclaimed Rewards Available]

Killed Great Ascension Realm Cultivator: [100x Cultivation Speed Card (1 Day) Killed Great Ascension Realm Cultivator: [10,000 System Points]

The rewards were as expected, with nothing particularly special, but there were still important items-such as the 100x Cultivation Speed Cards and several 10x cards with longer durations, all of which were extremely valuable. Then there were the System Points.

All in all, the harvest from this Beast Tide had become far greater than he had anticipated.

"Three years..."

With all these resources, he felt that he should be able to break through to at least the Great Ascension Realm within three years.

By then, he reckoned that a fight with Mó Zun would be very different from before.

If he pushed himself hard enough, perhaps even the Immortal Realm was possible-though it obviously wouldn't be easy.

But Bai Zihan was determined.

He was going to make Mó Zūn pay for kidnapping Luo Qing-and force answers from his mouth about why she was taken, and where she was.

"Just you wait!"

Bai Zihan could have easily healed his condition by using a Grade-8 or higher healing pill, but he refrained.

He needed to keep up the act for quite some time so that everyone would believe it-especially their enemies.

He planned to let his body heal naturally from the injuries, and during that period, he might not be able to cultivate properly.

But that was fine.

During this time, his focus wouldn't be on cultivation alone, but on something far bigger.

"It's time to take care of all the enemies."

He already knew who posed the greatest threats to him-and who had already tried to kill him.

Just as he was deep in thought-

"Zihan'er!"

Mu Yuelan entered.

What followed was a hectic period for Bai Zihan.

The moment Mu Yuelan entered Bai Zihan's room and personally examined his condition, the restraint she had forced upon herself shattered once again.

Upon discovering that Bai Zihan appeared to be truly crippled, Mu Yuelan's emotions erupted all at once.

Anger.

Fear.

And an overwhelming surge of guilt.

In her fury, she blamed Bai Tianheng, the Grand Elders, and everyone involved for allowing Bai Zihan to reach such a state.

Bai Tianheng said nothing.

He bore it all in silence, allowing his wife to vent every ounce of her anger upon him.

He knew very well that saying anything would only make her angrier.

If not for Bai Zihan calming her down, she would have remained like that for the entire day.

Even so, Bai Zihan now had to deal with his doting mother, who seemed ready to burst into tear at any moment.

He felt guilty and also a little afraid.

If she ever found out the truth, she definitely wouldn't let this matter rest easily.

With Bai Zihan's condition, the Bai Clan could no longer remain at the Northern Defense lines.

The Beast Tide had already been quelled.

The Demonic Beasts had retreated, their leader already killed, and there were no further signs of large-scale movement.

As for the Demonic Cultivators, they too had suffered heavy losses, and with the demonic beasts dealt with, they vanished without a trace.

In the eyes of the Desolate Heaven Empire, this crisis was effectively over.

Of course, precautionary forces still remained stationed across the region, but the era of nonstop bloodshed had come to an end.

Under normal circumstances, the Bai Clan would have continued to station elite forces at the border for a while longer, just in case.

But now, with Bai Zihan heavily injured-crippled, at least on the surface-the priorities shifted.

The Bai Clan moved decisively.

Most of the Bai Clan's core members began preparations to return to the clan grounds, escorting Bai Zihan personally.

Even the Grand Elders chose to return alongside them.

With Bai Zihan in such a state, enemies might take the opportunity to strike.

They intended to protect him throughout the entire journey back to the Bai Clan's territory.

Naturally, they had to inform the person in charge.

Bai Tianheng went to inform Minister Xiu Yucheng about their departure.

Minister Xiu Yucheng raised no objections.

After all, he could guess the reason without needing to be told.

He had already heard the rumors circulating-rumors of Bai Zihan's crippling injuries.

So he knew this was a serious matter for the Bai Clan, and that they wouldn't stay even if he asked.

Moreover, it wasn't as if the Bai Clan was withdrawing all of their forces.

They still left some behind, though most of their strongest members-including the Grand Elders-were leaving.

The Bai Clan had already done more than enough.

No one could deny their contributions.

They had borne the brunt of the Beast Tide's fiercest waves.

They had slain the majority of the Demonic Elders. They had stabilized collapsing battle lines when others faltered.

And they had dealt with the half-Qilin-the greatest threat to the Desolate Heaven Empire.

If not for the Bai Clan, the losses would have been immeasurably worse.

Minister Xiu personally expressed his gratitude.

He assured them that once the aftermath of the war was fully sorted out, the Empire would grant the Bai Clan generous rewards.

Especially regarding the half-Qilin.

A high-grade Demonic Beast of such caliber was itself a walking treasure vault.

Its demonic core alone could serve as a supreme forging material or cultivation catalyst.

Its hide could be refined into near-indestructible armor. Its bones and horns were perfect for high-tier weapons and artifacts.

And its blood-

That was priceless.

Qilin blood possessed immense vitality and purification properties, coveted by both alchemists and body refiners alike.

Since Bai Ren had been the primary force responsible for slaying it, Minister

Xiu made it clear that the majority of the half-Qilin's remains would rightfully belong to him-and by extension, the Bai Clan.

With formalities concluded, the Bai Clan's fleets finally departed. Flying ships cut through the skies, formations tight and disciplined, carrying Bai

Zihan back toward the heart of Bai Clan territory.

Inside one of the ships, Bai Zihan lay quietly, eyes closed, his aura weak and unstable-at least to anyone observing from the outside.

To the world, he was a crippled genius.

To his enemies, a fallen threat.

To the Bai Clan, someone worth protecting at all costs.

And to Bai Zihan himself-

This was merely the calm before something far greater. A Storm was brewing for Desolate Heaven Empire!

Novel Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! Chapter 427 Emergency State of the Bai Clan

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan!

Chapter 427 Emergency State of the Bai Clan

The Bai Clan's flying fleet descended steadily toward the main aerial dock of the Bai Clan.

As soon as Bai Tianheng stepped off the flying ship, he did not pause to rest, nor did he accompany Bai Zihan directly back to the inner residences.

Instead, he issued a single, decisive order.

The Bai Clan would enter an Emergency State.

Clan bells rang across the mountain ranges, echoing through valleys and cultivation peaks.

Formation flared as dormant defensive arrays awakened one after another. Patrol routes doubled.

Restrictions tightened.

Communication talismans activated in bulk, sending instructions to every hall, every elder and every disciple.

No one questioned the decision.

Those who had remained behind in the Bai Clan—elders overseeing logistics, disciples recovering from injuries, formation masters maintaining the clan's defenses—had already heard the rumors from the frontlines.

Bai Zihan was crippled.

Even without official confirmation, most had already guessed that the emergency declaration was because of him.

And because of that, the response was immediate.

If Bai Zihan had truly fallen, then the balance surrounding the Bai Clan would shift overnight.

Within hours, the Bai Clan entered a state of absolute readiness.

Even birds that passed through Bai Clan territory were examined thoroughly, as if they might be spies sent by enemies.

As for Bai Zihan, he was carried directly to his residence, bypassing every unnecessary stop along the way.

The courtyard that had once been quiet and familiar now felt cold and incomplete.

Luo Qing was not there.

The absence was subtle, yet impossible for Bai Zihan to ignore.

The plants she used to tend were still neatly arranged, but no one had pruned them recently.

Bai Zihan was gently placed onto his bed and instructed to rest.

Then the security measures escalated.

Dozens of elite guards took up positions inside and outside the courtyard.

Even an ant attempting to cross the threshold would be detected, restrained, and erased before taking a second step.

Shadows moved silently along the rooftops-hidden experts assigned to overwatch duty.

No servants were allowed inside.

No disciples were permitted to approach.

Only Bai Tianheng, Mu Yuelan, Bai Xueqing, Chu Ziyan, and a select few Grand Elders held the authority to enter.

During this turbulent period of the Bai Clan, however, one person definitely gained the most.

Chu Ziyan!

She had remained by Bai Zihan's side and taken care of him from the beginning, acting like a devoted wife.

Her actions did not go unnoticed.

Not by Bai Tianheng.

Not by the Grand Elders.

And certainly not by Mu Yuelan.

She gained a great deal of favor from them, and they treated her as if she were already Bai Zihan's wife.

Outside the Bai Clan's territory, the Desolate Heaven Empire did not remain quiet either.

Like wildfire fed by dry winds, rumors spread through sects, clans, markets, cities, and imperial halls at a terrifying speed.

The first rumor was already shocking enough.

Bai Zihan was crippled.

The second rumor or rather news was much more shocking.

The Bai Clan possessed a Saint-grade Artifact.

And it was not merely hearsay-many had already seen it or firmly believed it

to be true.

It had been used.

Used by Bai Ren.

Used to slay Gou You, an Earth Immortal Realm Demonic Elder.

And used to cut down the half-Qilin, a Demonic Beast whose very existence had threatened the foundations of the Desolate Heaven Empire.

There was no suppressing such news.

Too many eyes had witnessed it.

Too many cultivators had felt the terrifying sword intent that split the heavens.

Too many forces had survived only because that blade had fallen.

Within days, the entire empire was buzzing about it.

"How is this possible?"

"A Saint-grade Artifact... in the hands of the Bai Clan?"

"That kind of thing shouldn't even exist in the Desolate Heaven Empire. Even the imperial treasury doesn't have one."

"If that's true, then the Bai Clan is no longer on the same level as the Li Clan or Zhao Clan. They stand one level above them."

"Unless the Li Clan or Zhao Clan obtain a Saint-grade Artifact themselves, the Bai Clan is untouchable within the Desolate Heaven Empire."

After all, a Saint-grade Artifact was far too great a game-changer in the Desolate Heaven Empire.

Even Heaven-grade artifacts were treated as rare and precious-but Saint-grade?

Most people had never even seen one in their entire lives.

Only the Empire in the Western Region of the continent was rumored to possess a few.

Thus, the reaction of the Desolate Heaven Empire's cultivators was entirely understandable.

It was only natural for them to believe that the Bai Clan had now risen to an entirely different level compared to the Li or Zhao Clans.

"An era is ending."

"And another is beginning"

That sentiment quietly took root across the empire.

For generations, the Desolate Heaven Empire had maintained a fragile balance -imperial authority, great clans, and major sects restraining one another.

But now-

The Bai Clan stood apart.

Above.

With the Bai Clan wielding a Saint-grade sword, who could possibly challenge them?

Many of the most powerful figures had already witnessed just how terrifying that blade was when Bai Ren used it to slay the half-Qilin.

Some even claimed that without the Saint-grade Artifact, the Desolate Heaven Empire's forces might have lost to the Demonic forces entirely.

Thus, it became undisputed-

The Bai Clan was now the strongest.

Naturally, minds began to move.

Those who had allied with the Bai Clan despite knowing that the Li-Zhao alliance might target them couldn't help but celebrate.

After all, with the Bai Clan rising, their own influence would rise alongside it.

Those who had hesitated before now cursed themselves.

"Late is better than never!"

Those who had remained neutral hurriedly sent envoys, gifts, and letters of goodwill toward Bai Clan territory.

Forming ties with the Bai Clan-whether friendship, cooperation, or alliance-
was now considered the wisest possible move.

After all, compared to the alternatives, the choice was obvious.

The Li Clan and Zhao Clan inspired fear.

But fear alone was no longer enough. They had suffered massive losses during the war.

Their foundations were shaken.

And neither possessed anything remotely comparable to a Saint-grade Artifact.

Against the Bai Clan as they were now?

It wasn't a competition.

It was a gamble with death.

Those who had openly aligned themselves with the Li-Zhao alliance couldn't
help but feel cold dread creeping into their hearts.

Regret gnawed at them.

Some even cursed their own shortsightedness.

"If we had known... if only we had chosen to ally with the Bai Clan."

"I thought two top clans together would be stronger. I was wrong"

But regret was useless.

Because if the rumors were true-

If the Bai Clan truly possessed a Saint-grade sword-

Then the Bai Clan was no longer merely powerful. They were almost invincible.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! - Chapter 428 Paths to Downfall[1,227 words]

Chapter 428 Paths to Downfall

The chamber was silent.

A place where even breathing felt like an intrusion.

The Li Clan and the Zhao Clan sat gathered within a sealed hall, layers of formations isolating the room from the outside world.

Flickering lamps cast long shadows across stone walls carved with clan insignias-symbols that once represented unquestioned authority.

Now, they felt... dim.

The war with the Demonic Forces was, for all intents and purposes, over.

The Beast Tide had been crushed.

The Demonic Cultivators had withdrawn.

The Desolate Heaven Empire was already preparing proclamations of victory.

Yet inside this room, there was not a trace of celebration.

No relief.

No pride.

No sense of victory.

Only gloom and unease.

For the Li and Zhao Clans, this war had taken far more than it had given.

Their losses were staggering.

The Li Clan had even lost one of their Grand Elders in the Earth Immortal Realm-a true loss for them.

Their foundations had been shaken to the core.

And the losses on their side were staggering when compared to the Bai Clan, who had suffered the least among all the clans while having contributed the most.

"The Bai Clan..."

The name alone carried weight now.

Once, it had been spoken as an equal.

A rival.

Now, it was spoken with restraint.

And caution.

Before the war, Bai Zihan alone had already been an anomaly-an existence that defied logic and crushed expectations.

Every attempt to suppress him had only made him stronger and more dangerous.

But that had been manageable.

Or so they thought.

Now?

It wasn't just Bai Zihan.

Bai Ren.

Bai Xueqing.

The Bai Clan's Grand Elders.

And other Bai Clan Members had clearly undergone some kind of transformation.

The Bai Clan's strength was far greater than they had known and anticipated.

Their growth was also on an entirely different level from what they had calculated.

And then-

The Saint-grade sword.

The room grew even heavier as that thought surfaced.

While it was fortunate that the Bai Clan had been forced to reveal their trump card during this Beast Tide, it also showed just how much stronger they were than everyone else.

In the few days after the Beast Tide had ended, the influence of the two clans had already decreased, while the Bai Clan's influence had increased severalfold. All the clans-even those who had allied with them-now wanted to ally with the Bai Clan.

BANG!

Li Jianhong's hand slammed down onto the stone table.

The sound echoed sharply through the sealed chamber.

His expression was dark, veins faintly bulging at his temples.

The humiliation, the pressure, the helplessness-it all boiled over in that single strike.

"The Bai Clan is too powerful! Zhao Wutian," Li Jianhong said, his voice low and strained, carrying barely restrained anger, "what should we do?"

His gaze locked onto the Zhao Clan Patriarch.

"If this continues," he continued grimly, "the Bai Clan will swallow our two clans whole."

The words tasted bitter on his tongue.

Li Jianhong had always been proud.

As the head of the Li Clan, he had stood above countless others, commanding respect with strength and authority.

He had believed that as long as the Li and Zhao Clans stood together, no single clan could threaten them.

But now-

Reality pressed down on him with merciless clarity.

Despite his pride, Li Jianhong knew the truth.

The Bai Clan was no longer something he could handle.

Not even with the Zhao Clan standing beside him.

Their Saint-grade sword alone was enough to overturn every calculation they had relied on for generations.

Add to that the Bai Clan's terrifying technique that had been used to slay the Half-Qilin.

Almost no one-perhaps not even their strongest ancestor-could survive such an attack from that.

"If the Bai Clan decides to act," Li Jianhong said slowly, his voice heavy, "we won't even have a fighting chance"

Silence followed his words.

Several elders lowered their heads.

Others clenched their fists beneath their robes.

No one refuted him, because they all knew that Li Jianhong was speaking the truth.

Even Li Jianhong who never showed weakness was admitting that.

The balance had broken.

What they were facing now was not rivalry-it was survival.

"Calm down, Li Jianhong!"

Zhao Wutian said calmly.

Contrary to Li Jianhong's fury and despair, Zhao Wutian remained seated, composed.

In fact, the corners of his lips slowly curved upward into a faint smile.

That smile immediately drew everyone's attention.

Li Jianhong's eyes narrowed.

"Calm down?" he snapped. "Zhao Wutian, look around you. Our influence is collapsing, and you're telling me to calm down?"

Zhao Wutian raised a hand slightly, signaling him to pause.

"I said calm down, Li Jianhong" Zhao Wutian said again, his tone unhurried, almost relaxed.

That only made Li Jianhong angrier.

"How can I calm down?" Li Jianhong demanded.

"Our enemy is holding a Saint-grade sword! They slew the Half-Qilin, crushed the Demonic Elders, and now the entire empire is flocking to them like dogs smelling meat!"

He stared at Zhao Wutian intently.

"Don't tell me you've already accepted your fate."

For a brief moment, the room went still.

Then-

Zhao Wutian laughed.

A low, amused chuckle echoed through the sealed hall, completely out of place in such a grim atmosphere.

"Hah... hahahaha..."

Li Jianhong froze.

The elders exchanged uneasy glances.

Zhao Wutian shook his head, eyes gleaming with a strange light.

"Accepted my fate? No!"

He leaned forward slightly, resting his elbows on the armrests.

"On the contrary," he said softly, "I believe the Bai Clan has already stepped onto the path of their own downfall."

The words hit like a thunderclap.

"What?" Li Jianhong blurted out, disbelief written all over his face.

Zhao Wutian's smile widened.

"Their Saint-grade Artifact," he said clearly, "will be their downfall."

The room erupted into confusion.

Li Jianhong stared at him as if he were hearing nonsense.

"Are you out of your mind? That sword is precisely why they're untouchable right now!"

"Is it?" Zhao Wutian asked calmly. "Or is it why they've become the most obvious target in the entire Desolate Heaven Empire?"

Li Jianhong hesitated.

Zhao Wutian continued before anyone else could interrupt.

"Tell me," he said, his voice steady and confident, "what kind of people populate this empire?"

Li Jianhong frowned.

"What kind of question is that?"

"Greedy people," Zhao Wutian answered himself. "Ambitious people. People who fear power-and people who desire it."

He straightened his posture slightly.

"For countless generations, Saint-grade Artifacts have been nothing more than legends in this land. Even the Imperial Family possesses none."

His eyes swept across the room.

"And now, suddenly, a single clan reveals that it possesses a Saint-grade sword."

Li Jianhong's expression slowly changed.

Zhao Wutian tapped the table lightly with his finger.

"Who do you think the greedy will look at first?"

"Who do you think the Imperial Family will be wary of?" Silence!

The answer was clear.

Zhao Wutian's smile faded, replaced by cold calculation.

"The Bai Clan has painted a giant target on their backs," he said. "Not just for us

-but for everyone."

Li Jianhong's brows furrowed deeply. "You're saying... the Imperial Family?"

"Of course," Zhao Wutian replied without hesitation.

"Do you truly believe the Imperial Family will sit idly by while a clan under their rule wields a Saint-grade Artifact that threatens their authority?"

He shook his head slowly.

"That sword disrupts the balance far more than our two clans ever did."

"Moreover, do you think that only those in the Desolate Heaven Empire are after them?"

"You mean..."

Li Jianhong's voice trailed off as realization struck him.

The implication was terrifying-and intoxicating.

Not just the Desolate Heaven Empire.

Even other empires would covet the Bai Clan's Saint-grade Artifact.

Zhao Wutian waved his sleeve.

A stack of jade slips slid silently across the stone table, stopping before Li Jianhong.

"Here," Zhao Wutian said. "The list of clans who want to work with us to deal with the Bai Clan."

Li Jianhong reached out and picked up a jade slip.

His pupils shrank as he read its contents.

Li Jianhong's hand trembled slightly.

His earlier gloom, despair, and fury slowly melted away, replaced by unmistakable excitement.

Zhao Wutian watched him quietly, eyes cold and steady. "The greatest treasure of the Bai Clan," Zhao Wutian said calmly, "will also be their downfall!"

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! - Chapter 429 An Invitation to the Capital[1,391 words]

Chapter 429 An Invitation to the Capital

The Bai Clan was in an Emergency State!

No threats came.

No probing attacks.

No assassins.

On the contrary, the pressure surrounding the Bai Clan eased rather than intensified.

Those sides who had once hesitated now hurried to show goodwill.

Those who had once watched from the sidelines now scrambled to declare their stance.

Envoys arrived daily.

Gifts piled up at the outer halls-spiritual treasures, rare ores, and pills. Alliance proposals flooded in without restraint.

Minor clans!

Mid-tier clans!

Great Clans!

Even those that had once aligned themselves-quietly or openly-with the Li and Zhao Clans now sought to mend relations.

There were also those who came under the pretense of thanking the Bai Clan for their sacrifice during the Beast Tide.

But it was clear that they wanted to curry favor with the Bai Clan.

The Bai Clan rejected none outright.

Nor did they accept hastily.

Every request was recorded.

Every envoy was received with courtesy-and held at arm's length.

Calm and measured, as always.

The Bai Clan had no need to rush.

They were now the axis around which others moved.

However-

Among all the proposals arriving at Bai Clan territory, there was one category that surged at a rate no one had anticipated.

Marriage!

Marriage proposals-specifically involving Bai Zihan-arrived in staggering numbers.

Daughters of Great Clans.

Granddaughters of Sect Masters.

Talented young women rumored to possess special constitutions, rare

bloodlines, or extraordinary beauty.

Some proposals were subtle.

Others were shockingly direct.

The reason was obvious.

After news spread that Bai Zihan had been crippled, countless forces immediately assumed that the Chu Clan would sever their engagement.

In their eyes, it was only logical.

A crippled genius was no longer a genius.

Even if Bai Zihan had once stood peerless, cultivation was everything in this world.

It was nothing after he had become crippled.

Like many say, there are countless talents and geniuses in the world-but how many actually survive long enough to become powerhouses?

Anyways, a Top Clan that stood just below the Top Three Clans like the Chu Clan-would they really sacrifice their beloved princess?

So everyone believed that sooner or later, the engagement would inevitably be broken.

But Bai Zihan was still Bai Zihan.

He was still the most beloved son of Bai Tianheng.

The Bai Clan's Grand Elders openly protected and adored.

Even crippled, his status within the Bai Clan had not fallen in the slightest.

If anything-

For reasons they could not understand, Bai Zihan was still held in extremely high regard.

So instead of forming an alliance by marrying into one of the other Bai Clan members, they thought of marrying their daughter to someone they believed was unwanted by anyone else.

In their minds, this would be doing the Bai Clan a great favor.

They believed that despite the Bai Clan's status, it would be difficult to find a wife for Bai Zihan-especially someone talented, beautiful, and with a strong background like theirs.

What they did not realize was that they were not the only ones thinking this way.

In truth, several clan leaders had arrived at the same conclusion and put forward marriage proposals to Bai Zihan as well.

But they did not know that someone had already taken the position of Bai

Zihan's wife long before their schemes even began.

Many also ignored the fact that Chu Ziyan was still Bai Zihan's fiancée, they offered their daughters or granddaughters as concubines.

After all, anyone could see that the Bai Clan was rising and would soon become untouchable.

Even if they had to sacrifice their beloved daughters to become concubines,

they were willing.

Since Bai Tianheng could clearly see their ulterior motives-and had already accepted Chu Ziyan as his daughter-in-law-he outright rejected all marriage

offers.

As for the proposals involving concubines, he neither accepted nor rejected them outright.

After all, while he himself did not have any, he did not reject the idea in principle.

With Bai Zihan, if he were to have other women, it would mean the possibility of several grandchildren.

And with Bai Zihan's talent-even though he was crippled-Bai Tianheng believed that the blood within him was still extraordinary, capable of producing

offspring of similar potential.

Moreover, more descendants meant a more secure future for the Bai Clan.

Thus, he did not think that Bai Zihan taking concubines would be a bad idea.

Then there was also Bai Xueqing.

She, too, received nonstop.

After all, she was the perfect candidate-flawless in every sense.

But winning her heart was another matter entirely.

Apart from all this, there wasn't much happening.

The Bai Clan was generally peaceful-far more peaceful than anyone had expected.

But Bai Tianheng did not relax in the slightest.

If anything, the apparent calm only made him more cautious.

The Emergency State remained in effect.

Formations continued to hum day and night. Patrol rotations were not reduced.

Every envoy was monitored from the moment they crossed Bai Clan borders

until the moment they left.

And no one was allowed to visit Bai Zihan unless they had Bai Tianheng's explicit permission.

Two weeks passed in the blink of an eye.

By then, the aftermath of the Beast Tide had largely been dealt with.

Demonic corpses were cleared, and damaged formations along the Northern Defense Line were repaired.

And finally-

The Imperial Family made their move.

An official proclamation spread throughout the empire, carried by imperial messengers and broadcast widely.

The Beast Tide had been repelled.

The Demonic Forces had been driven back.

Victory belonged to the Desolate Heaven Empire.

With that proclamation came the next announcement.

A grand imperial convocation!

All major contributors to the war were to be summoned to the capital, where rewards would be bestowed, merits recorded, and the future balance of power formally acknowledged.

Among the names listed-

The Bai Clan stood at the very top.

And explicitly included was one name that immediately drew attention.

Bai Zihan!

After all, aside from the Bai Clan's Grand Elders who had dealt with the most dangerous Immortal-level enemies, Bai Zihan had personally slain the greatest number of enemies below the Immortal Realm-including Great Ascension Realm Demonic Elders.

Seeing his name listed alongside Immortal Realm figures was not strange at all.

Bai Tianheng frowned deeply.

Mu Yuelan's expression turned cold with worry.

They shared the same thought.

Bai Zihan should stay behind.

Although it was an imperial order and obedience was expected, Bai Zihan was now crippled-and his life was clearly in danger from enemies who might target him.

The clan was the safest place for him.

If anyone wished to kill Bai Zihan, they would first need to destroy the Bai Clan itself.

The imperial capital, however, was different.

Too many uncontrollable variables.

Too many dangers.

Especially for Bai Zihan, who currently possessed no cultivation.

"It's better if you don't go," Mu Yuelan said firmly, "Your injuries haven't healed.

The capital is not safe."

Bai Tianheng nodded.

"No one will dare say anything. We'll explain it to the Emperor ourselves."

But Bai Zihan shook his head.

"I have to go."

His voice was calm, almost indifferent, yet carried undeniable resolve.

"If I don't," he continued, "it will look like the Bai Clan is already placing itself above the Imperial Family"

Refusing an imperial summons at a time like this would only give others an excuse to speculate.

After all, people were already whispering that with the Bai Clan's current strength, they deserved to stand above the Imperial Family. Even with valid reasons, the timing was terrible.

If the Bai Clan refused, someone would surely make a big issue out of it.

Bai Tianheng fell silent.

Mu Yuelan hesitated.

They both knew Bai Zihan was right.

But of course-

Bai Zihan's true intention was something else entirely.

He didn't care about the Imperial Family.

If they felt threatened and wanted to fight, then so be it.

If not, they could maintain the same relationship as before.

He wanted to leave because this was the perfect opportunity.

Things had been too quiet.

No assassins.

No probing attacks.

No desperate moves.

For days, he had waited-patiently and deliberately-for something to happen.

Nothing had.

(Did I really make fewer enemies than I thought?)

The thought almost made him laugh.

Someone like him-who offended people left and right just by opening his mouth-having no enemies?

Ridiculous.

Even he knew that in his current state, if he were seen alone on a road, multiple people would be eager to kill him.

Whether those enemies came from before he regained his memories from Earth, or after awakening his memories from his previous life.

If anything, this only proved that the Bai Clan's defenses were impeccable.

Even those who hated him to the core would not act impulsively. They were waiting for the right moment. After all, being crippled was not a temporary condition. A smart person would wait for the target to leave their territory.

So Bai Zihan intended to give them exactly the opportunity they were waiting for.

And what better stage than the imperial capital?

(Good!)

Bai Zihan thought coldly.

Moreover, this would allow him to meet the Emperor and the Imperial Family personally.

What did they truly think of the Bai Clan now?

Would the Imperial Family stand alongside them?

Or had they already joined hands with his enemies?

He would find out soon enough!

Chapter 430: The Cripple Walks into the Imperial Capital

Chapter 430: The Cripple Walks into the Imperial Capital

Bai Zihan managed to convince his father and mother after quite an ordeal.

With him being crippled and enemies watching closely, it wasn't easy for them to allow him to enter what could very well be a wolf's den.

However, after his persistent persuasion—and knowing that the Imperial Family was already wary of the Bai Clan—the two of them finally gave in.

Even so, they placed many restrictions on him, ensuring that he was never left alone.

The only exception would be when he went personally to receive his reward from the Emperor.

The day of the ceremony arrived!

At dawn, Bai Clan territory stirred with quiet order.

Flying ships rose one after another from the clan's inner docks, their hulls engraved with Bai insignias that shimmered faintly as formations activated.

Bai Tianheng personally led the convoy.

The Five Grand Elders were also coming, as they were one of the main reasons the Demonic Forces had been dealt with in the first place.

Bai Zihan stood at the front deck of the central flying ship, dressed in plain white robes, his expression composed and indifferent.

No Qi leaked from his body.

To any outsider, he looked exactly like what the rumors claimed.

A cripple.

Yet none of the Bai Clan members aboard dared to look at him with pity or disdain.

Beside him stood Bai Xueqing, who had also been summoned due to her contribution.

To be honest, the contributions made by the younger generation—aside from Bai Zihan—had a minimal impact on the overall battlefield.

However, the awards still existed for those among the younger generation who had made the greatest contributions.

It was a form of recognition—perhaps a consolation—acknowledging their efforts at such a young age.

Bai Jian was also included in that.

He had fought relentlessly during the Beast Tide, cutting down Demonic Cultivators without hesitation.

His contribution had earned him a place in this convoy—and recognition from the Imperial Family itself.

Of course, being at the Nascent Soul Realm, his contribution was nothing noteworthy compared to Bai Zihan or even Bai Xueqing.

Still, for his age, it could be considered impressive.

Normally, for someone in their twenties, reaching the Nascent Soul Realm was considered standard.

It was Bai Xueqing—and Bai Zihan, who had reached even higher realms—who were abnormal.

The two of them were not competing within their own generation at all.

They were competing with cultivators one—perhaps even two—generations older.

Bai Zihan noticed Bai Jian immediately.

In fact, he had been expecting something.

This was the perfect opportunity for Bai Jian.

He was weak.

Crippled.

If Bai Jian wanted revenge...

If he wanted to reclaim the Heir position...

This was the moment.

Yet—

Nothing happened.

Bai Jian stood several steps away, his gaze occasionally drifting toward Bai Zihan.

Their eyes met once.

Bai Jian stiffened almost imperceptibly—then looked away, turning his head as if nothing had happened.

No mockery.

No cold remarks.

No veiled provocation.

Bai Zihan frowned slightly.

(...Strange.)

He observed Bai Jian a few more times throughout the journey.

Sometimes, Bai Jian would glance over.

But each time their eyes met, Bai Jian would turn away again.

Still no words.

No action.

No hostility made explicit.

If this had been the past, it would have been the perfect opportunity for Bai Jian to mock him—or even provoke him openly.

(Did I give him too much trauma?)

Bai Zihan thought.

(Well, I don't care.)

He dismissed the matter quickly.

If Bai Jian wanted to act, he would eventually.

If not, it changed nothing.

Still, his thoughts drifted.

Perhaps Bai Jian—and Uncle Bai Feng—were simply waiting.

Waiting to confirm whether he was truly crippled beyond recovery.

It was possible they feared that this crippled state was only temporary.

If Bai Jian truly intended to seize the Heir position, this should have been the perfect opportunity.

Yet Bai Zihan had not heard a single rumor of Bai Feng—or anyone else—making a move.

In the past, right after he was declared crippled, his status as heir would have been revoked immediately.

Yet so much time had passed, and he still held the position.

The flying ships cut through the clouds, heading straight toward the heart of the Desolate Heaven Empire.

Soon, the Imperial Capital came into view.

Unlike the tense and oppressive atmosphere that had shrouded the Empire during the Beast Tide, the capital was now vibrant and alive.

Banners fluttered from towering walls and palace spires, embroidered with imperial insignias and symbols of victory.

The streets below were packed shoulder to shoulder with people—cultivators and mortals alike—their faces lit with excitement and relief.

Laughter echoed.

Music rang out.

Wine flowed freely.

For the common people, the Demonic Forces had been an existential threat.

The Beast Tide had nearly swallowed entire regions, and countless families had waited in fear, uncertain whether they would survive.

Now, that fear is gone.

Victory had come.

And it was worth celebrating.

When the Bai Clan's flying ships appeared above the capital, cutting through the clouds in neat formation, the reaction was immediate.

Gasps rippled through the streets.

Then cheers erupted.

"It's the Bai Clan!"

"The Bai Clan is here!"

Hands waved enthusiastically from below. Some people even bowed instinctively, clasping their fists toward the sky.

Others shouted their thanks, uncaring whether they would be heard.

After all, everyone knew the truth.

Among all the forces that had fought during the Beast Tide, the Bai Clan had contributed the most.

Without them, the Northern Defense Line would have collapsed.

Without them, the Demonic Forces would not have been driven back.

To the people of the empire, the Bai Clan were not merely a powerful clan.

They were saviors.

The convoy continued forward, passing above the inner districts before descending toward the imperial palace complex.

The Imperial Family's territory was vast, its scale dwarfing even the largest clan compounds.

Formations shimmered in layered curtains of light above the vast landing platforms, complex runes rotating slowly as they monitored every fluctuation of qi.

Rows of imperial guards stood in perfect formation, halberds grounded, their armor gleaming beneath the morning light.

As the Bai Clan's flying ships approached, the formations did not immediately part.

Instead, several beams of light descended from the arrays, sweeping across the hulls of the ships, the engraved Bai insignias, and the cultivators aboard.

An imperial officer stepped forward, his gaze sharp and professional.

After a brief moment, the formations stilled.

The officer's expression shifted.

He immediately clasped his fists and bowed deeply.

"Bai Clan convoy confirmed," he announced loudly. "Please forgive the formality!"

At his gesture, the guards straightened and saluted in unison.

The layered formations above the platform rippled, then slowly parted like a curtain being drawn aside, opening a clear path into the inner palace grounds.

The Bai Clan's flying ships began their descent.

Engines hummed softly as the vessels lowered themselves onto the vast landing platforms, one after another, movements precise and disciplined.

The moment the hulls made contact, defensive formations flared briefly beneath them—then stabilized, locking the ships firmly in place.

The ramps did not lower immediately.

Instead, the Bai Clan moved first.

Several Bai Clan Members stepped out onto the decks, their expressions cold and alert.

Some leapt down onto the platforms, boots striking stone in dull thuds. Others remained aboard, their senses spreading outward in overlapping waves.

Spiritual perception swept across the landing grounds, the surrounding palace walls, the nearby corridors, and even the imperial formations themselves.

Nothing was trusted.

Not even the Imperial Family.

Only after several breaths passed—and no abnormalities were detected—did a subtle signal pass through the Bai Clan members.

The ramps lowered.

Bai Tianheng stepped out first.

His presence was steady and imposing, his gaze calm but sharp as it swept across the surroundings.

Bai Zihan followed closely behind.

Close enough that Bai Tianheng could reach him in a single step.

To outsiders, it might have looked excessive.

To Bai Tianheng, it was not nearly enough.

Bai Zihan walked calmly, his posture relaxed, his expression unchanged. He looked no different from before—plain robes, no visible cultivation, no qi.

A complete cripple!

Yet the way the Bai Clan unconsciously positioned themselves told a different story.

Two Elders flanked him slightly behind. Several guards adjusted their positions to ensure overlapping coverage.

Any possible line of attack toward Bai Zihan was sealed off before it could even be imagined.

Behind them came the Five Grand Elders.

Their steps were slow and measured, but the pressure they exuded was impossible to ignore.

They were not alone.

Several other flying ships had already arrived.

Bai Zihan's gaze swept across the platforms.

Li Clan.

Zhao Clan.

Their insignias were unmistakable.

Their ships were already anchored—far enough to be clearly separated from the Bai Clan.

It looks like almost all the important players have already arrived.

Bai Zihan smiled as he walked ahead.

A cripple walking into the heart of the empire.

The celebration outside was loud and radiant.

But within the imperial grounds—It was going to be anything but peaceful.

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! - Chapter 431 Desolate Heaven's Emperor! [1,020 words]

Chapter 431 Desolate Heaven's Emperor!

An imperial escort immediately stepped forward to receive the Bai Clan, greeting them respectfully before leading the way toward the ceremonial hall.

Under the watchful eyes of the palace guards, the Bai Clan advanced deeper into the Imperial Palace.

The Bai Clan was already familiar with the route and didn't truly need an escort.

They had walked these halls more than once before.

Even so, protocol could not be neglected.

At a time like this, even the smallest lapse in courtesy could be interpreted as disrespect and the Imperial Family could not afford to make such a mistake. Golden tiles stretched beneath their feet, polished to a mirror sheen. Massive pillars rose on both sides, carved with dragons entwined with runes.

At last, they arrived.

The Grand Ceremonial Hall!

The doors were already open.

As the Bai Clan stepped inside, the atmosphere within shifted instantly.

The hall was vast, crowded with figures both familiar and formidable.

Clan Patriarchs.

Sect Leaders.

Ministers.

And even envoys from foreign Empires.

Even Commander Wei was present, standing near the front with his hands clasped behind his back, his posture straight and dignified.

Almost everyone who had played a meaningful role in the war against the Demonic Forces was here.

And the moment the Bai Clan entered-

Attention converged.

Conversations faltered.

Eyes turned.

Then-

Movement.

"Patriarch Bai!"

A middle-aged clan leader was the first to approach, his face lit with enthusiasm. He clasped his fists deeply.

"Thanks to the Bai Clan's decisive actions, the northern front was saved. Truly admirable!"

Before Bai Tianheng could respond, another voice chimed in.

"Well said! Without Patriarch Bai and the Bai Clan, we might still be fighting a losing battle."

Several figures followed suit, surrounding the Bai Clan almost instantly.

"Grand Elder Bai, your clan's sacrifice will not be forgotten."

"The Empire owes you a great debt."

Praise flowed freely.

Compliments piled one atop another.

The Bai Clan responded with calm courtesy-neither aloof nor overly receptive.

Bai Tianheng exchanged polite words, his demeanor steady and composed, clearly accustomed to such scenes.

Meanwhile, the Li and Zhao Clans watched from a distance, anger simmering beneath their restrained expressions.

In terms of sacrifice, it was they who had suffered the greatest losses-yet listening to the praise, one would think only the Bai Clan had fought against the Beast Tide and Demonic Beasts.

Li Jianhong drained his cup of wine in a single gulp.

"Tsk! Rejoice while you can, Bai Tianheng. Soon, you'll be groveling at my feet."

Bai Tianheng didn't even have time to check where the Li and Zhao Clans were, as he was completely surrounded.

He couldn't even tell them to step back-some of those crowding him were influential figures the Bai Clan might wish to cooperate with in the future.

Yet soon-

The focus subtly shifted.

Eyes drifted toward Bai Zihan.

"Young Master Bai, your name has already become legend among our generation. To stand against demonic forces far above one's realm... truly a hero among men."

One of the younger generations spoke with admiration.

Another followed quickly.

"Indeed! If not for Young Master Bai holding the line, countless cultivators

would have perished."

"A genius worthy of the Bai Clan's legacy."

"A peerless talent!"

The words were lavish.

Sincere or at least convincingly so.

Bai Zihan merely smiled faintly, offering small nods in response.

Not a single person mentioned his crippled state.

No one was foolish enough to touch the Bai Clan's reverse scale.

Their words were carefully chosen.

To openly refer to Bai Zihan as crippled-here of all places-would be tantamount to slapping the Bai Clan in the face.

And no one present was willing to bear that consequence.

Commander Wei's gaze lingered on Bai Zihan longer than most.

Then he nodded once, solemnly.

He, too, felt gratitude toward the Bai Clan and wished to personally thank them -but seeing how thoroughly they were surrounded, he chose not to add to the commotion.

There was also regret in his eyes.

A genius with limitless potential, cut down before his future could truly unfold.

It was a loss for the Desolate Heaven Empire.

But that was simply how fate worked.

Soon enough, as the last arrivals settled into place, a subtle change swept through the hall.

The murmurs gradually died down.

Conversations faded into silence.

At the front of the Grand Ceremonial Hall, the imperial attendants straightened as the great doors behind the throne platform slowly swung open.

"The Great Emperor of the Desolate Heaven Empire arrives!"

The announcement rang clear and loud.

Everyone in the hall-clan patriarchs, sect masters, ministers, and envoys-straightened instinctively.

One by one, they turned toward the entrance.

Bai Zihan did the same.

He was curious.

In his childhood, he had technically met the Emperor-but at the time, his vision had been obstructed by the System Interface.

Moreover, since then, rumors have spread endlessly.

The Emperor's health was declining.

It was only a matter of time before he passed.

Given those rumors, Bai Zihan had unconsciously formed an image in his mind-an old man clinging to life, supported by pills, his authority maintained only by legacy.

So when the Emperor finally appeared-

Bai Zihan was caught off guard.

The man who stepped into the hall was indeed old, his hair streaked with silver and his face marked by the passage of years.

But fragile?

Not in the slightest.

His back was straight.

His steps were firm and unhurried.

Beneath the loose imperial robes, the outline of solid muscle was clearly visible

-lean, disciplined, and far from decayed.

Each step he took carried weight-not from cultivation pressure alone, but from sheer authority.

Confidence radiated from him.

Not the forced confidence of someone pretending to be strong.

But the calm certainty of a ruler who knew his position and held it firmly.

His eyes were sharp, clear, and steady as they swept across the hall-missing nothing.

Bai Zihan's brows rose almost imperceptibly.

(So the rumors were a lie?)

He didn't think so though. It was not even a rumor as spy of different faction has seen the Emperor's state and reported it as being almost dead.

Bai Zihan also received one from Kong Zhanhong. He didn't think Kong Zhanhong would make a mistake in his report.

He wasn't the only one surprised.

Around the hall, subtle reactions rippled outward.

Some widened their eyes. Others stiffened unconsciously. A few exchanged brief, startled glances.

Everyone here seemed to be aware of the state that the Emperor was in yet when they finally saw him in person, he was nothing like what was reported.

The Emperor ascended the steps to the throne platform without assistance, turned, and sat down smoothly.

As the Emperor settled into his seat, a faint smile tugged at the corner of his lips-

and an unspoken warning spread through the hall!

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan!

Chapter 432 Rewards Bestowed By Then Emperor! [1,131 words]

Chapter 432 Rewards Bestowed By Then Emperor!

The moment the Emperor sat down, the atmosphere in the Grand Ceremonial Hall changed completely.

Even the Great Ascension Realm felt an instinctive pressure settle upon their shoulders-not the oppressive force of cultivation, but something far more unsettling.

Authority!

The kind that had been honed over centuries of rule.

The Emperor's gaze swept across the hall once more, slow and deliberate. He did not rush. He did not speak immediately.

Only after the hall had fully stilled did he finally open his mouth.

"Today," the Emperor said calmly, his voice neither loud nor soft, yet echoing clearly through every corner of the vast hall, "we celebrate victory!"

His words were simple.

"The Demonic Forces have been repelled. The Beast Tide has been crushed. The borders of the Desolate Heaven Empire remain intact."

He paused briefly.

"This outcome was not achieved by anyone alone."

His gaze passed over every faction present.

"The clans."

"The sects."

"The commanders and cultivators who stood on the front lines."

"And the Cultivators who paid with blood."

The Emperor inclined his head slightly-an almost imperceptible gesture.

"For that, this Emperor acknowledges you."

The words carried weight.

Almost as if he stood above everyone present.

In an empire like the Starfall Empire, such a declaration might have been normal.

But in the Desolate Heaven Empire, it was different.

Clans like the Bai, Li, and Zhao were considered nearly equal to the Imperial Family.

Statements like this were rarely-if ever-made in their presence.

Yet today, the Emperor said it without hesitation.

He was displaying his authority.

Interestingly, the Bai, Li, and Zhao Clans themselves did not seem to care.

Because they knew that Words were meaningless.

Only true strength mattered.

Then, the Emperor's gaze shifted.

It settled more clearly in one direction.

The Bai Clan!

And at its center-

Bai Zihan!

The Emperor's eyes lingered there for a fraction of a second longer than necessary.

Not obviously.

Yet Bai Zihan felt it clearly.

(Hostility?)

No!

It wasn't that crude.

It was closer to... observation.

Bai Zihan kept his posture relaxed, his expression neutral, his breathing steady.

Outwardly, he looked exactly like what the rumors claimed-a crippled young man with no qi fluctuations.

(This Emperor...)

He could not reconcile what he was seeing with the intelligence he had received.

If Kong Zhanhong's report was accurate-and Bai Zihan trusted it-then this Emperor should not have been capable of sitting here.

Unless-

(A temporary recovery? Or a substitute?)

The second option seemed impossible with so many experts present.

If it was anyone other than the Emperor that many are familiar with, then he/ she would have been caught immediately.

Then the first?

That was plausible.

There were pills capable of temporarily restoring vitality-though the backlash afterward would be severe.

But that was rare and precious, and in Desolate Heaven Empire, it is almost

unheard of.

Which was the truth?

Who knew!

It was also possible the Emperor had deliberately feigned illness for years to deceive his enemies just as Bai Zihan was trying.

But if that were the case, Bai Zihan couldn't understand why he would reveal it

now.

Either way-

This was something Bai Zihan would have to investigate.

Meanwhile, the Emperor continued.

"Merits must be rewarded. This ceremony exists for that very reason."

Only then did he raise his hand slightly.

At the gesture, imperial attendants stepped forward, each carrying treasures sealed within shimmering formations.

Even without being revealed, the aura alone made breaths turn shallow.

The Emperor's voice rang out once more.

"The first merit," he said calmly, "belongs to Grand Elder Bai Ren."

If Kong Zhanhong's report was accurate-and Bai Zihan trusted it-then this Emperor should not have been capable of sitting here.

Unless-

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Even without being revealed, the aura alone made breaths turn shallow.

The Emperor's voice rang out once more.

"The first merit," he said calmly, "belongs to Grand Elder Bai Ren."

The moment the name echoed through the hall, countless gazes snapped toward the elderly figure standing among the Bai Clan's ranks.

Bai Ren stepped forward slowly.

This was the man who had personally slain Gou You, one of the Demonic Sect's core experts.

The man who had hunted down and killed a Half-Qilin—an existence regarded as a calamity.

His merit was unquestionable.

"The slaying of Gou You."

"The extermination of the Half-Qilin."

"For this," the Emperor continued, "your merit ranks the highest."

At his signal, an attendant stepped forward and unveiled the rewards. Gasps rippled through the hall.

Ten crystal bottles floated into the air, each sealed with blood-red runes.

Inside, thick crimson liquid churned slowly, radiating terrifying vitality.

"Ten bottles of Half-Qilin Refined Blood."

Even Li Jianhong and Zhao Wutian couldn't hide the change in their expressions.

The refined blood of a Half-Qilin could alter the destiny of an ordinary cultivator.

Ten bottles-

In the hands of an alchemist, it could produce high-grade pills.

Such treasures were nearly impossible to obtain, even with immense wealth.

Then-

Another attendant stepped forward.

A suit of armor unfolded mid-air.

Scales shimmered like molten metal, layered seamlessly, each engraved with dense defensive runes.

A faint beastly pressure pulsed outward-ancient and domineering.

"A Mid Heaven-Grade Armor, refined from the hide of the Half-Qilin itself."

The hall fell into silence.

Mid Heaven-Grade!

Even for top clans, such a treasure was exceedingly rare.

With such armor-and a Saint-Grade sword-who could truly threaten Bai Ren?

Bai Ren accepted the rewards calmly, clasping his fists slightly.

"This old man thanks the Emperor.""

The Emperor nodded once.

Then his gaze shifted.

"The second merit," he said, "belongs to the commander who held the Northern Defense Line."

All eyes turned. "Commander Wei Zongyuan."

Commander Wei stepped forward.

His armor was plain, his expression steady-but the respect in the hall was unmistakable.

Unlike Bai Ren's overwhelming individual strength, his contribution was different.

"Before reinforcements arrived," the Emperor said, "you held the Northern Defense Line against relentless demonic assaults."

"Afterward, you stabilized the battlefield, coordinated the counteroffensive, and ensured that chaos did not claim more lives"

"If not for your command," he said evenly, "the Northern Defense Line would have fallen."

No one doubted it.

If the line had collapsed, entire regions would have been swallowed.

Millions of lives lost.

"For this," the Emperor said, "your merit ranks second."

Rewards continued to be bestowed-starting with Immortal Realm experts, followed by Commander Wei of the Great Ascension Realm.

Then came clan leaders and sect masters, rewarded not only for personal merit, but for the contributions of their factions.

The Bai Clan received additional territories and a significant share of demonic beast cores and resources.

The Li and Zhao Clans followed.

And then-

The Emperor spoke again. "Next," he said slowly,

"Bai Zihan of the Bai Clan!"

Chapter 433 A Crippled Dragon Stands Before the Throne

Chapter 433 A Crippled Dragon Stands Before the Throne

The moment the name was spoken, the Grand Ceremonial Hall fell into a strange, heavy silence.

Countless gazes converged at once on Bai Zihan.

Some eyes burned with admiration. Others carried unconcealed pity.

A few were filled with thinly veiled disgust. Yet beneath it-lurking at the deepest layer-was fear.

Even if everyone knew that Bai Zihan was crippled now, that fact alone could not erase the images burned into their memories.

The battlefield.

The rain of blood.

The calm, almost indifferent expression as enemies were cut down one after another.

Many present had witnessed it personally.

Others had only heard the reports.

But whether seen or heard, the effect was similar.

A scar had been carved into their hearts.

Those who once believed they could compete with Bai Zihan-those who had secretly measured themselves against him-had long since abandoned such thoughts.

The memory of Bai Zihan slaughtering enemies they themselves could not even face still lingered vividly.

Crippled or not-

That fear wouldn't vanish overnight.

Anyway, after the Immortal Realm experts and the leaders of every

organization, it was Bai Zihan who was rewarded before many of the Great Ascension Realm elders.

By merit alone, those who stood at the top should have been Immortal Realm experts, followed by Great Ascension Realm powerhouses.

And yet-

Bai Zihan was called right after them.

Highest among them.

Some instinctively recalled the battles.

The desperate moments when even Great Ascension Realm cultivators had been forced back.

The turning points-again and again-where the situation had shifted because of one person.

Bai Zihan!

He had single-handedly killed hundreds of Grade-9 Demonic Beasts-more than anyone else and even slain several Great Ascension Realm Demonic Cultivators.

When they thought of it that way...

No one could deny it.

Regardless of cultivation.

Bai Zihan had contributed more than anyone else below the Immortal Realm.

He deserved this place.

Bai Zihan stood calmly as the attention settled upon him.

Then, without hesitation, he stepped forward.

His pace was calm and steady.

Each step echoed clearly in the vast hall, as if striking against the hearts of those watching.

He neither lowered his head nor deliberately raised it-his posture was natural and composed, carrying neither humility nor arrogance.

It was this very calmness that unsettled people the most.

When Bai Zihan stopped before the imperial dais, the Emperor looked at him directly.

For a brief moment, silence reigned.

Bai Zihan was probing the Emperor without concern for whether it might be seen as disrespectful.

The Emperor was the same.

He looked at Bai Zihan as if observing-perhaps even assessing-him.

Then-

A rare smile appeared on the Emperor's face.

"Bai Zihan," the Emperor said slowly, his tone carrying clear approval, "you killed several Demonic Beasts ranging from Grade-10 to Grade-8, and slew several Great Ascension Realm and Void Refinement Demonic Cultivators. Truly, a dragon among men!"

"To achieve such contributions at your age," the Emperor continued, "is something unheard of in the history of the Desolate Heaven Empire."

His gaze sharpened slightly.

"Even among past generations, none could compare."

Praise.

Open and undisguised.

Coming from the Emperor himself.

Then, without warning, the Emperor shifted the topic.

"However," he said calmly, "I have heard some rumors. I do not know whether they are true or not."

The hall stiffened.

Many people instinctively held their breath.

"The rumors," the Emperor continued, his eyes fixed on Bai Zihan, "say that you are crippled?"

Shock flashed across countless faces.

Not because of the topic itself-

But because only the Emperor could dare to ask such a sensitive question so

openly.

Even if it was the Emperor, Bai Zihan was from the Bai Clan, and offending the

Bai Clan was not good for the Imperial Family.

If it were anyone else, they would have been torn apart by Bai Tianheng before the words even left their mouths.

But that did not mean Bai Tianheng and the others were not furious.

They were simply waiting patiently to see why the Emperor would ask something like this.

All eyes turned to Bai Zihan.

Bai Zihan did not react immediately.

Then, he answered calmly.

"That is what the doctors said," he replied. "That I can no longer cultivate"

No embellishment.

No denial.

A straightforward admission.

The hall stirred.

The Emperor stared at him for a moment longer, then slowly shook his head.

"What a pity," the Emperor said, his tone carrying genuine regret. "If not for this... you might have stood at the very peak of this world!"

Before anyone else could react-

Bai Zihan spoke again.

"That's for sure!"

The words were shameless. Confident-perhaps arrogant.

Yet-

No one could refute them.

Not a single person in the hall. Because it was the truth.

All they could do was feel a strange sense of relief.

Relief that such a monster had been crippled.

The Emperor paused-then laughed softly.

"Haha, good!" he said. "At least you have not lost your heart!"

The Emperor's laughter faded, and the hall gradually quieted once more.

Then, his expression turned serious.

"If you do not mind," the Emperor said slowly, his gaze steady, "can you tell this Emperor how it happened?"

The question was calm.

Yet the weight behind it was immense.

All eyes turned toward Bai Zihan again.

Bai Zihan did not hesitate this time either.

He briefly explained the attack on the Bai Clan's estate and how his maid had been taken.

He explained that he was only informed after the war with the Demonic Forces had ended.

The hall stirred.

He then stated that he had gone after the Demonic Cultivators and fought Mo

Zun.

"That is how it happened!"

Finally, everyone understood how Bai Zihan had become crippled.

It was not an internal problem.

Nor was it a disease, as many had assumed.

It was because he tried to save his personal maid.

Many people felt their hearts tighten.

Some shook their heads inwardly.

Too reckless and impulsive.

To seek out Mo Zun directly-even if Bai Zihan had once been a monster among monsters-such a decision bordered on madness.

A few could not help but think that he deserved it.

Yet-

Others felt something different.

Admiration and Respect.

Because Bai Zihan had not done it for glory.

He had done it for someone under his protection.

To face the leader of the Demonic Cultivators without hesitation, knowing the risks-

That kind of resolve was rare.

And many silently realized something else.

Given who Mo Zun was-

Given his cultivation and methods-

For Bai Zihan to have survived at all...

Becoming crippled might have been the best possible outcome.

If it were anyone else-

They would not even have left a corpse behind.

The Emperor remained silent for a long moment.

Then his expression grew solemn.

"Your Bai Clan," he said slowly, "has made sacrifices."

His voice carried a weight that pressed down on the hall.

"Our Empire is safe because of heroes like you."

A faint killing intent seeped into his words.

"Rest assured," the Emperor said firmly, "this matter will not end here."

"The Demonic Cultivators will pay for what they have done!"

The hall was silent.

"Anyway, it is time to reward you for your hard work!"

With a wave of his hand, imperial attendants stepped forward.

Treasures appeared one after another, each emitting a faint but profound aura.

Weapons.

Protective artifacts.

Rare spiritual materials.

Yet among them, one item drew everyone's attention.

A jade box floated forward.

The moment it opened, a pure, life-giving fragrance spread through the hall.

"A Top Grade-7 Healing Pill," the Emperor said.

Gasps echoed.

Top Grade-7!

It was extremely rare and precious in the Desolate Heaven Empire. Only the Pill King-the greatest alchemist of the Desolate Heaven Empire-could refine such

a pill.

The Emperor's expression softened slightly.

"Something like meridian being destroyed cannot be cured by a Grade-7 pill," he said honestly.

"But this pill can save your life at a critical moment."

Bai Zihan accepted the jade box, his expression unchanged.

"This junior thanks the Emperor," he said calmly.

Bai Zihan had just turned slightly, preparing to withdraw-

"Wait!"

The Emperor spoke.

The Emperor raised his hand, his gaze fixed on Bai Zihan once more.

Unlike before, there was now a hint of something deeper in his eyes-
calculation mixed with intent.

"This Emperor has something more," he said slowly, "that I wish to bestow upon
you."

The hall stirred again.

More?

After a Top Grade-7 Healing Pill?

Even the Bai Clan elders frowned slightly, uncertain of where this was going.

Then the Emperor spoke a name.

"Yu Feiyan!"

The moment the name was uttered, the atmosphere subtly shifted.

From the side of the hall, footsteps approached-light, graceful, almost
soundless.

A young woman stepped forward.

She wore simple palace robes, elegant but not extravagant. Her figure was slender, her movements
fluid, each step perfectly measured.

Her face was beautiful-undeniably so-but not the aggressive, dazzling beauty
that overwhelmed at first glance.

Instead, it was the kind that grew more captivating the longer one looked.

Eyes like autumn water.

Lips curved gently, neither smiling nor cold.

Yet the moment she appeared, many cultivators felt an inexplicable discomfort.

As if something about her did not quite align.

At that instant-

A translucent screen abruptly appeared before Bai Zihan's eyes.

His pupils shrank.

[Heaven Chosen Detected!]

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! - Chapter 434 A Marriage Bestowed, a Line Crossed[1,324 words]

Chapter 434 A Marriage Bestowed, a Line Crossed

!!!

Bai Zihan's heart skipped a beat.

He had not seen this notification in a long time.

[Scanning...]

The world around him seemed to slow for a brief moment.

Then-

[Heaven Chosen Profile Unlocked]

Name: Qin Lingxiao

Age: 200+

Fate Grade: ★★★ (Three Stars)

Cultivation Base: Golden Immortal (Early Stage)

Destiny:

Qin Lingxiao is a natural-born manipulator of fate and perception. She possesses an unparalleled talent in seduction, deception, and identity

manipulation, capable of instinctively discerning the deepest desires, fears, and weaknesses of her targets.

Her physique allows her to alter her appearance, aura, voice, and even soul fluctuations, perfectly matching whatever form best suits her objective-be it innocence, allure, authority, or fragility.

Once she chooses a target, Qin Lingxiao can subtly weave herself into their perception of reality, blurring the line between truth and illusion until even the target themselves cannot tell whether their emotions are genuine or

manufactured.

She excels at espionage, infiltration, political manipulation, and psychological warfare.

Those who fall for her rarely realize they have already lost.

Bai Zihan's eyes widened-just for a fraction of a second.

(Heaven Chosen... at this cultivation level?)

More importantly-

(Who is she?)

The Emperor had clearly called for the Ninth Princess, Yu Feiyan, yet the profile showed that she wasn't Yu Feiyan at all.

Reading the description, Bai Zihan understood.

This woman-Qin Lingxiao-had replaced the original Yu Feiyan and was now standing in her place.

No wonder her presence and aura felt completely different from when he had met Yu Feiyan in the Ancient Ruin.

Back then, she had been timid and unremarkable.

Now, she naturally exuded a feeling of attraction.

It was because they were two completely different people.

(She's dangerous!)

Very dangerous.

Not only did she possess terrifying deceptive abilities, but her cultivation was far beyond the Earth Immortal Realm.

Golden Immortal Realm!

She must be the strongest individual present in this hall.

Bai Zihan wasn't even sure whether all the Grand Elders working together could defeat a Golden Immortal.

Not to mention the other hidden enemies present-some of them might even aid this woman if she chose to move against the Bai Clan.

Bai Zihan fell into deep thought.

Another dangerous opponent had appeared-one with a cultivation realm that shouldn't exist in the Desolate Heaven Empire.

He was almost certain that Qin Lingxiao wasn't even from this empire.

He had never heard such a name-though it might simply be due to his lack of knowledge.

He lifted his gaze from the system panel and looked at Qin Lingxiao again.

Around the hall, low murmurs began to spread-subtle at first, then gradually growing as cultivators leaned closer to one another.

"Ninth Princess looks so beautiful. She has changed, hasn't she?"

"Before, Princess Yu Feiyan barely drew attention. She had no backing, no ambition, and no presence. Now? I heard she has recently recruited several mid-sized clans to her side."

"That's right! Many clans that once supported other princes and princesses have already switched sides."

"In the past, she wasn't even considered a candidate. But now? She's one of the strongest contenders."

"Hidden talent, perhaps. They say her charm bloomed overnight. Even elders who pride themselves on their Dao Hearts were moved by her words."

"A late bloomer? Or someone who had been hiding her talent all along?"

Bai Zihan listened quietly, his expression unchanged.

(They're all wrong.)

What they called a change was not growth.

It was a replacement.

Standing there was Qin Lingxiao.

More voices whispered.

"But what I don't understand is why His Majesty summoned her now."

The Emperor waited for a few seconds before speaking.

"Yu Feiyan is this Emperor's Ninth Princess."

His gaze returned to Bai Zihan.

"This Emperor believes that someone of your merit... deserves a companion worthy of standing beside him."

The words landed heavily.

Some gasped.

Some stiffened.

The Bai Clan elders' expressions darkened slightly.

Was this-

A reward?

Perhaps.

After all, if this were the past, Bai Zihan could have chosen any woman he wanted.

But now?

A cripple being granted a marriage to a princess by the Emperor-

That was undeniably a reward.

The Emperor's words echoed through the Grand Ceremonial Hall.

For a brief heartbeat-

Silence!

Then the hall erupted into restrained chaos.

Whispers burst forth like ripples across still water.

"A companion... worthy of standing beside him?"

"Is His Majesty implying... a marriage?"

"So this is an imperial bestowal?"

Many faces stiffened.

Others widened in disbelief.

Some elders exchanged sharp looks, instantly understanding the weight behind those words.

An imperial marriage.

And it was being offered to Bai Zihan.

A cripple.

The whispers grew sharper.

"Hah... even crippled, Bai Zihan is still Bai Zihan."

"Lucky bastard!"

"Marrying a princess... and such a beauty at that."

"I heard the Ninth Princess is not only beautiful, but terrifyingly capable now."

"Even if he can't cultivate anymore, with the Bai Clan and imperial backing, his status won't fall."

Jealousy seeped through the murmurs like poison.

Some cultivators clenched their fists.

Others forced smiles.

Many young men felt bitterness rise in their throats.

They had struggled their entire lives for recognition-yet Bai Zihan, even after losing everything, was still being handed treasures they could never reach.

But amidst the whispers-

"Then... What about Chu Ziyan?"

"That's right! The engagement still exists!"

"Chu Ziyan of the Chu Clan-wasn't she Bai Zihan's fiancée?"

"Well, she should consider herself lucky. She won't need to stay engaged to a cripple anymore-and might even earn favor from the Imperial Family if she breaks off the engagement for the Ninth Princess."

Many had once tried to offer their daughters to Bai Zihan in hopes of forming an alliance, but they all knew one thing-

The engagement between Bai Zihan and Chu Ziyan still stood.

So what would happen now?

Another rejection, as before?

Or would the Emperor's bestowal be acknowledged?

Several gazes instinctively turned toward the Chu Clan's seating area.

There-

The atmosphere was noticeably colder.

Chu Clan elders sat stiffly, their expressions tightly controlled.

Some were clearly displeased.

Others were deep in thought, weighing implications rather than emotions.

And at the center of it all-

Chu Ziyan!

She sat straight-backed, her posture elegant and dignified.

But beneath her sleeves, her hands had curled tightly into fists.

She was clearly angry-

And this time, she didn't even bother to hide it.

The murmurs had yet to fully die down when the Emperor spoke again.

"This Emperor will make it clear."

The Emperor said calmly, his gaze sweeping across the hall,

The hall quieted instantly.

"I intend to bestow a marriage," he continued, his eyes settling on Bai Zihan once more, "between Bai Zihan of the Bai Clan and this Emperor's Ninth Princess."

Boom!

It was as if a thunderclap had exploded within the Grand Ceremonial Hall.

Even those who had already guessed at the implication felt their hearts lurch.

An imperial marriage.

Before anyone could fully process the weight of those words-

A clear, steady voice rang out. "Your Majesty!"

Everyone froze.

Countless heads turned toward the source.

From the Chu Clan's seating area, Chu Ziyan stood up.

The hall plunged into dead silence.

To interrupt the Emperor at such a moment-

It was bordering on sacrilege.

Many inhaled sharply. Some frowned.

Others widened their eyes in disbelief.

Chu Ziyan stepped forward, her posture straight, her expression composed- though the tension beneath the surface was unmistakable.

She clasped her fists and bowed deeply.

"This junior greets Your Majesty," she said respectfully. "Please forgive my abruptness!"

Her tone was calm and measured with politeness.

Yet the fact remained-

She had objected.

And everyone understood something else just as clearly.

If the situation were reversed-if it had been anyone else-

They would already be kneeling, bloodied, or worse.

But this was different. Because this time-

It was the Emperor who had crossed the line first.

The engagement between Bai Zihan and Chu Ziyang was no secret.

It had been acknowledged by both clans.

They were allies.

And the Bai Clan was not a faction the Imperial Family could casually offend.

Not now.

Not after the war.

Even if Chu Ziyang's actions were technically disrespectful-

Could the Emperor truly punish her?

The Emperor's gaze fell upon her.

The hall felt suffocating.

Chu Ziyang took a slow breath, then spoke again.

"This marriage... cannot be," she said firmly.

Gasps rippled through the hall. She bowed once more, deeper than before.

"Your Majesty, Bai Zihan is already an engaged man," Chu Ziyang continued. "This junior is his fiancée."

Her words were neither sharp nor emotional.

They were factual.

"To bestow another marriage upon him," she said calmly, "would be

inappropriate and unfair."

Silence followed!

A heavy, oppressive silence.

Many people exchanged glances.

Some were shocked by her courage.

Others admired her resolve.

A few sneered inwardly, wondering whether she was acting out of pride, jealousy, or something deeper.

Chu Clan elders remained seated, their expressions unreadable.

They did not interrupt.

They did not support her openly.

But neither did they stop her.

Their stance alone spoke volumes.

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! - Chapter 435 Declaration Of Love![1,438 words]

Chapter 435 Declaration Of Love!

The Emperor did not get angry.

Instead, he smiled.

It was a calm, measured smile-one that carried neither warmth nor hostility, only authority tempered by calculation.

"This Emperor is well aware," he said slowly, his voice echoing through the silent hall, "that the engagement between Bai Zihan and you exists."

A faint pause.

"As far as this Emperor knows," he continued, "that engagement was formed for the sake of an alliance between the Bai Clan and the Chu Clan."

The Emperor stated this plainly. It was clear that he was trying to undermine the engagement.

No matter the reason, an engagement was still an engagement.

The Emperor's gaze shifted-briefly, subtly-toward Chu Ziyan.

"However," he said, his tone softening just a fraction, "this Emperor's Ninth Daughter has already fallen in love with Bai Zihan."

The hall stirred.

Love?

The Emperor continued calmly, as if speaking of something entirely reasonable. "She admires his merit and his resolve even in adversity," he said. "Such feelings are not something this Emperor can simply ignore."

His gaze returned to Chu Ziyan.

"Therefore, this Emperor hopes that you can understand," he said evenly, "and voluntarily dissolve this engagement."

A breath passed.

Then-

"This Emperor will not allow the Chu Clan to suffer losses," he added. "Generous compensation will be provided."

Resources.

Territory.

Imperial favor.

Even future protection.

The meaning behind those words was obvious.

The Emperor was not requesting.

He was negotiating from a position of overwhelming authority.

The hall was in chaos though outwardly they also maintained their decorum.

Many thought it was a good proposal from the Emperor. Chu Ziyan no longer need to marry a cripple.

If this had been before, many would not have thought the same-but now that Bai Zihan had become crippled, marrying him was akin to being shackled.

So to be given an opportunity-not only to break off cleanly, but to receive rewards from the Emperor as well-was an added bonus.

Everyone was having similar thoughts and calculations.

However, Bai Zihan's thoughts were completely different.

(What is this Emperor playing at?)

His expression remained calm, but his mind was racing.

Bai Zihan tried to understand why the Emperor would want to marry the Ninth Princess-specifically Qin Lingxiao-to him.

(Is he truly the Emperor?)

The thought surfaced.

Before today, Bai Zihan would never have doubted it. There were many experts capable of discerning deception easily.

But having already learned about Qin Lingxiao and her abilities, it was not far-fetched to think that the Emperor himself might also have been replaced.

If so, he might be working together with the impostor Ninth Princess to do something to him-or to the Bai Clan.

However, he could not determine that easily yet. If even Immortal Realm experts could not detect anything wrong, then he obviously could not.

There were still two possibilities.

One-the Emperor was real, but had been influenced or persuaded by Qin Lingxiao.

Two-the Emperor himself had been replaced, just like Yu Feiyan.

Either way, whether it was the Emperor's intention or Qin Lingxiao's, it was clear that they wanted to infiltrate the Bai Clan.

And neither was something Bai Zihan could afford to test.

He shifted his gaze-just slightly-toward Qin Lingxiao.

She stood calmly, her expression gentle, dignified, flawless.

As if the entire situation were unfolding exactly as she expected.

(What do you gain from this?)

Bai Zihan asked silently.

Infiltrating the Bai Clan?

Using marriage to bind herself to him?

Getting closer to him?

Or-

(Taking my place?)

The thought sent a chill down his spine.

She had every ability to do so, and by already taking Yu Feiyan's place, she had proven just how easily she could accomplish it.

He was not arrogant enough to believe he could deal with a Golden Immortal Realm cultivator whose intentions he could not discern.

Marriage was out of the question.

Binding himself to someone whose intentions he could not see-someone powerful enough to erase him without effort-

That was suicide.

Yet outright rejection?

It was not a good option either-but it was still better than being tied to someone as dangerous as her.

Then-

Chu Ziyang stood up and protested the marriage.

!!!

(Chance!)

He thought. "To bestow another marriage upon him," she said calmly, "would be inappropriate-and unfair."

Chu Ziyang spoke firmly.

The Emperor did not immediately respond.

He studied Chu Ziyang for a long moment, his gaze deep and inscrutable, as though weighing far more than just her words.

Then-he sighed.

A soft sigh.

"One could say," the Emperor said slowly, "that what this Emperor proposes is indeed... somewhat inappropriate."

A ripple of surprise passed through the hall.

To hear the Emperor acknowledge impropriety so openly was rare.

"But," he continued, his tone shifting, carrying the weight of a father rather than a ruler, "this matter was not initiated by this Emperor alone."

His gaze shifted-gently-toward Qin Lingxiao.

"My daughter," he said, "insisted."

The words landed quietly, yet they struck harder than any thunderclap.

"She has never asked anything of this Emperor," he continued.

"This is her first love."

The hall fell into an even deeper silence.

Some expressions softened.

A few scoffed inwardly, yet none dared voice it.

"As her father," the Emperor said calmly, "how could this Emperor refuse her?"

His gaze returned to Chu Ziyang.

"For the alliance between the Chu Clan and the Bai Clan," he said, "there are countless other ways."

Marriage between other members.

Political agreements.

Resource exchanges.

"But my daughter cannot simply replace her feelings."

Chu Ziyang's fingers trembled slightly beneath her sleeves.

Her composure cracked-just a little. It was clear that the Emperor wasn't going back off easily.

Well, in the eyes of others it was she who was not easily backing off when offered such a generous condition for breaking off an engagement that she didn't want.

Chu Ziyang took a step forward.

"Your Majesty," she said, her voice tightening despite her effort to remain calm,

"I also-"

But before she could finish-

A figure moved.

Bai Zihan stepped forward.

He moved closer to Chu Ziyang's side, close enough that the space between them vanished.

His hand lifted calmly and wrapped around her arm, fingers firm yet gentle, drawing her toward him.

Chu Ziyang stiffened. A faint blush appeared on her cheeks.

Her breath hitched as she was pulled half a step closer, her shoulder brushing against his chest.

To anyone watching-

It was an unmistakably intimate gesture.

Bai Zihan placed himself slightly in front of her, shielding her presence as he raised his gaze toward the throne.

Only then did he speak.

"Your Majesty," Bai Zihan said clearly, his voice steady and resolute, "this junior must reject the imperial bestowal."

The hall exploded inwardly.

"The truth is," he said calmly, "Ziyan and I are already in love."

Chu Ziyan's pupils shrank violently.

It was as if the words themselves had struck the hall.

Just as everyone believed the engagement was merely one of convenience-as many already knew-Bai Zihan made a bold declaration.

Chu Ziyan's heart pounded wildly.

Her face flushed-with embarrassment and shock.

She turned sharply to look at Bai Zihan.

"You-!"

But Bai Zihan's grip tightened slightly around her sleeve.

A silent signal.

(Trust me!)

His eyes seemed to say that or at least he thought.

Anyways, the only flaw in this plan is if Chu Ziyan didn't cooperate with him.

Though judging by her earlier attitude, he didn't think that he needed to worry much about that.

The Emperor's

expression finally changed.

Just a little-tinged with surprise.

"Do you really like each other?"

The Emperor asked.

"Yes!"

Bai Zihan replied without hesitation.

His voice did not waver.

Chu Ziyang couldn't help but blush at the shameless words coming from Bai

Zihan. She was certain that everything Bai Zihan was saying right now was complete nonsense. As if he could really change just like that.

She assumed that Bai Zihan was simply trying to avoid being betrothed to the

Ninth Princess-using her as a shield, just as she herself had once intended to use the engagement to ward off others.

But still...

She couldn't help but blush.

Bai Zihan's bold declaration of love-spoken before so many people, spoken

before the emperor himself-while holding her arm so firmly protectively... After all, no matter how tough or strong a girl was, deep inside, they all

harbored a similar fantasy.

A prince.

A public declaration of love.

Standing against the world.

And Bai Zihan was acting exactly like that-right in front of the Emperor.

So, one could say that this scene was every girl's dream.

Gasps rippled through the Grand Ceremonial Hall-

Like countless hearts being struck at once.

Among the younger cultivators-especially the women-there was a visible stir.

Some covered their mouths.

Some stared wide-eyed at the scene before them. Some felt their hearts pound uncontrollably.

A bold declaration of love-before the Emperor himself.

If not for Bai Zihan's ruined cultivation....

This would have been a perfect legend.

"A sworn life bond..."

"To declare that so openly..."

"He even shielded her..."

One young woman clenched her sleeves unconsciously, her eyes shining.

"If only Bai Zihan wasn't crippled..."

"Then this would truly be a dream pairing"

Many shared the same thought.

A pity.

A tragic romance. Strong love shackled by fate.

Yet-

Not everyone was moved. The elders.

The schemers.

The Emperor.

They saw through the surface.

The Emperor's gaze remained fixed on Bai Zihan-deep, calm, and assessing.

He did not look angry.

Nor pleased.

Only thoughtful.

He could clearly see what Bai Zihan was doing.

Avoiding the imperial marriage.

Using Chu Ziyang as both shield and anchor.

And

yet-

Chu Ziyang had already spoken.

Bai Zihan had already spoken.

For the Emperor to now forcefully separate them would be-

Too

ugly.

Too blatant.

Especially in front of so many people. The Emperor understood this clearly.

Novel Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! Chapter 436 Threads of Desire, Unmoving Heart

Chapter 436 Threads of Desire, Unmoving Heart

Silence stretched.

A silence thick with calculation.

Then-

A soft voice broke it.

"Father Emperor!"

All murmurs died instantly.

Everyone turned.

Yu Feiyang-no, Qin Lingxiao-took a step forward. Her movements were graceful.

Her expression carried neither anger nor hurt.

Only gentleness and understanding.

She bowed lightly.

"Please let this daughter speak with Young Master Bai," she said softly.

Her voice was pleasant-warm enough to disarm, calm enough to soothe.

Then she lifted her gaze.

And looked directly at Bai Zihan.

"Young Master Bai," she said, her tone sincere, almost tender, "this one never intended to cause trouble."

Her words drew attention like gravity.

"If your heart already belongs elsewhere," she continued, "then how could I force myself into your life?"

A few people nodded unconsciously.

What a reasonable princess.

What grace.

What dignity.

Qin Lingxiao smiled faintly.

"But-" she said softly.

That single word caused Bai Zihan's instincts to flare.

"But feelings are not crimes," Qin Lingxiao continued. "Nor is admiration."

She turned her gaze toward Chu Ziyang.

"There is no intent to disrespect Miss Chu Ziyang," she said gently. "Nor the Chu Clan."

Her words were flawless.

Impeccable.

Yet Bai Zihan felt a chill crawl up his spine.

(This woman... She doesn't want to give up!)

"I merely wished to follow my heart once."

She lowered her head.

"If Young Master Bai truly cannot accept it," she said quietly, "then I will not insist."

A pause.

Then-

"But I hope," she added softly, "that this matter will not end with misunderstandings... or hostility."

Her gaze lifted once more.

"I never intended to hurt anyone," she said quietly. "Nor did I wish to come between the feelings of Young Master Bai and Miss Chu."

Her gaze lowered slightly, lashes trembling.

"But... feelings are not something one can control."

The words were simple.

Sincere!

A faint ripple passed through the hall.

Some sighed inwardly.

Some nodded subconsciously.

After all, many cultivators have fallen for the same thing as what Yu Feiyan described.

Yu Feiyan lifted her gaze again, this time looking directly at Bai Zihan.

"There is no need for conflict," she continued softly. "If my presence has caused discomfort, then I am willing to step back."

A pause.

"However..." she hesitated, as if struggling with herself, "...could I speak with Young Master Bai for just a moment?"

Her tone was almost pleading.

"Only a few words. If, after that, I still cannot let go of these feelings... then I will give them up."

The hall fell silent.

A private conversation.

A chance to resolve things peacefully.

In the eyes of the onlookers, it was reasonable.

Even considerate.

Chu Ziyang frowned slightly.

Instinctively, she felt something was wrong-but she could not put her finger on it.

Bai Zihan lifted his gaze.

His eyes met Yu Feiyang's.

For an instant-

His world tilted.

It was subtle. So subtle that no one else noticed.

The moment their gazes locked, Bai Zihan felt as if something invisible had wrapped around his perception.

Not pressure.

Not killing intent.

Just-

A sense of being attracted.

His pupils shrank imperceptibly.

Then-

His expression went flat.

Emotion drained from his eyes, leaving behind a calm so cold it was unsettling.

The hand that had been holding Chu Ziyang's arm... loosened.

And fell.

Chu Ziyang felt it immediately.

The warmth vanished.

She turned, startled-but Bai Zihan was already taking a step forward.

No one found it strange.

After all, he was only agreeing to speak.

Only a few words.

Yet-

Bai Zihan's mind was screaming.

(Danger!)

Every instinct he had was blaring warnings.

But his body moved anyway.

Meanwhile-

Yu Feiyan's lips curved almost imperceptibly.

Inside her mind-

(Easy!)

From Qin Lingxiao's perspective, everything unfolded exactly as expected.

Although there were some unexpected variables-like Chu Ziyang, and Bai Zihan, who should have happily accepted the decision.

In the end, with her seduction technique, she was able to capture Bai Zihan's heart instantly.

It was no big deal, considering the opponent was just a cripple.

She didn't even need to use one percent of her full ability to manipulate someone like him.

The moment their eyes met, she had already slipped into the cracks of his perception.

No resistance.

Effortless.

(So this is Bai Zihan?)

She mused calmly.

(Nothing special.)

She stepped forward to meet him, her expression still gentle, still harmless.

Yu Feiyan stepped closer.

One step.

Then another.

The distance between her and Bai Zihan closed smoothly, naturally-so

naturally that no one thought to question it.

She stopped just an arm's length away.

Then-

Her hand reached out.

Slender fingers brushed against Bai Zihan's sleeve, then slid down to his hand,

lightly enclosing it.

Warm, Soft and Intimate.

A perfectly timed gesture.

Gasps rippled faintly through the hall.

Yu Feiyan looked up at him, her eyes clear and gentle, her expression carrying a

quiet vulnerability.

"Brother Bai," she said softly, her voice lowered just enough to feel private,

"shall we speak alone?"

"Only for a moment?"

Her thumb pressed lightly against the back of his hand-an unconscious,

affectionate motion.

"I truly wish to resolve this without causing pain to anyone."

She waited.

This was the moment.

The moment when men always nodded and gave in to her.

From Qin Lingxiao's perspective, the outcome was already decided.

Bai Zihan stood still.

For a breath-

Two.

His eyes were unfocused, his expression distant, as though his thoughts were submerged beneath still water.

Chu Ziyang's heart clenched.

Seeing how Bai Zihan did not react to Yu Feiyang's gesture, she began to feel a bit of panic.

What if Bai Zihan fell in love?

After all, Yu Feiyang was a princess who could bring higher status to Bai Zihan than her.

Not to mention, she was sweet and innocent-a type that many powerful men were attracted to.

Could Bai Zihan be the same?

She took a half-step forward, lips parting-

Then-

Bai Zihan inhaled deeply.

The daze shattered.

His fingers twitched.

Slowly-deliberately-he withdrew his hand from Yu Feiyan's grasp.

!!!

Yu Feiyan-no, Qin Lingxiao-was immediately surprised.

This shouldn't be possible.

Once someone was enchanted by her, they would never want to pull away.

They would go mad if separated for more than an hour.

Yu Feiyan's pupils flickered.

Bai Zihan lifted his gaze.

This time, his eyes were clear. Sharp and Cold.

"Princess," he said calmly.

The single word carried distance.

"It would be inappropriate."

Yu Feiyan froze.

"And rude."

His hand moved-not toward her-but back to Chu Ziyang's side.

He did not touch her yet, but his position alone spoke volumes.

"If you have anything to say," Bai Zihan said plainly, "you may say it here."

Yu Feiyan's gentle smile stiffened for the briefest instant.

The shock she felt was immense.

Inside her mind, a sharp crack appeared in her calm. (Refused? Impossible!)

She had already slipped into his perception.

A cripple should never be able to resist someone like her.

He should have folded effortlessly.

Yet-

He hadn't.

She looked at him again-truly looked.

Behind her gentle expression, her thoughts shifted.

(Did I hold back too much?)

So that Bai Zihan wouldn't turn into a mindless idiot-and because he was just a cripple-she hadn't even tried.

But now she wondered if that was the reason Bai Zihan had managed to break free from her seduction.

Her smile returned-soft, understanding, flawless.

"As you wish, Brother Bai," she said gently.

Yu Feiyan's smile did not falter.

Outwardly, she remained gentle and dignified-every inch the understanding princess who had been politely refused.

Inwardly-

A faint irritation bloomed.

(Not enough?)

Her gaze lingered on Bai Zihan for a fraction of a second longer.

This time, she did not touch him.

She didn't need to.

Qin Lingxiao exhaled softly.

It was imperceptible.

But in that breath- Something changed.

An invisible wave spread outward from her body, subtle yet overwhelming-like a fragrance that seeped directly into the soul rather than the nose.

Her aura shifted.

Not violent or aggressive.

Simply... alluring.

A charm that resonated with desire, longing, admiration-twisted just enough to blur reason.

Several cultivators blinked.

Some swallowed unconsciously.

A young noble from a mid-tier clan suddenly clenched his chest, eyes widening.

"Princess Yu Feiyan..." he murmured without realizing it. "She's... she's too kind..."

"I know, right?" another voice whispered fervently. "How could anyone reject someone like her?"

"She's perfect..."

"She's understanding, beautiful, noble-what more could anyone want?"

The murmurs grew. Not scheming whispers.

Not political ones.

These were emotional.

Two young cultivators-both men who had been glaring at each other moments ago over factional rivalry-suddenly turned at the same time.

"I think I've fallen in love," one blurted out.

The other snapped back instinctively, eyes reddening.

"You?! Don't joke-she's mine!" "What did you say?!" Their auras flared.

Qi rippled.

A chair scraped harshly against the floor.

"What are you doing?"

An elder barked sharply, only to falter mid-sentence as his gaze drifted back to

Yu

Feiyan.

His voice softened despite himself.

"... Such grace," he muttered, frowning as if confused by his own words.

Many men with low mental strength had already been seduced by Qin Lingxiao despite being so far away.

Qin Lingxiao's eyes flicked back to Bai Zihan.

She let her aura surge just a little more.

(Now. Become mine!)

Her power wrapped around him like countless invisible threads, slipping toward his senses, his emotions, his Heart.

She waited.

She expected-

Desire.

Submission.

But-

Nothing happened.

Bai Zihan stood there.

His expression did not change.

His eyes remained cold and lucid!

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan!

Chapter 437 Bewitched!!![1,301 words]

Chapter 437 Bewitched!!!

(Danger!)

The warning exploded in Bai Zihan's mind like a thunderclap.

Something was wrong.

The moment their gazes met, Bai Zihan had felt it-that faint tug at the edge of his thoughts.

The unnatural warmth spreading where reason should have been. It wasn't forceful. It wasn't invasive.

It was natural, like it was inevitable.

(I'm losing clarity.)

It was exactly like losing his mind, yet he could feel the subtle change taking place within it.

It was as if-even though he knew Qin Lingxiao was a dangerous Heaven Chosen who could take his life-he didn't mind.

Even though he knew it was a seduction technique directed at him, he didn't feel anger or fear.

That was what made it dangerous.

He felt like he was falling into a swarm he didn't mind sinking into.

His steps carried him closer without conscious intent.

(Stop!)

He commanded himself.

His heart beat steadily-calm where there should have been tension, interest where there should have been wariness.

(If I let this continue...)

He didn't finish the thought.

His vision dimmed for a split second.

He was about to stop having those thoughts altogether.

(Useless?)

The word surfaced naturally.

Caution. Suspicion. Vigilance.

All of it suddenly felt... unnecessary.

They weren't useless-but Bai Zihan was already beginning to believe they were.

Meanwhile, the feelings stirring toward Qin Lingxiao felt important. Meaningful. Worth protecting.

Perhaps he had already fallen into her technique.

And then-

[WARNING!!!]

The word detonated inside his consciousness.

A voice-cold, mechanical, utterly alien-resounded directly within his soul.

[SYSTEM ALERT]

The host's mental state is being compromised.

Bewitchment level: CRITICAL.

Estimated time to complete enslavement: 7 seconds.

Bai Zihan's pupils shrank violently.

System?

The interface-which had never appeared without his command-had manifested on its own.

It had never done this since it first appeared to him at birth.

But that wasn't important right now.

He was on the verge of losing himself completely.

[Immediate Danger Detected]

Source: Saint-Level Mind Seduction Technique

Host resistance: FAILING

Suggested Countermeasure:

Purchase Saint-Grade Mind-Protecting Artifact

Cost: 60,000 Points

Confirm purchase?

YES/NO!

Bai Zihan's thoughts slowed even further.

The warmth deepened.

(No need... She wouldn't harm me...)

The thought nearly solidified.

His gaze drifted toward Qin Lingxiao.

Her figure blurred-then sharpened-then softened again.

He was about to reject the prompt.

The system. The warning. The danger.

All of it felt exaggerated.

Unnecessary.

Then-

A fragment of instinct screamed.

Not logic.

Not reason.

Pure survival.

Images flashed through his mind.

Him kneeling.

Smiling.

Offering everything he owned-his techniques, his future, his life-without hesitation.

Not because he was forced.

But because he wanted to.

Because serving her would feel right.

Horror surged-thin, weak, but real.

With the last scrap of willpower he possessed-

(YES!)

The thought slammed down.

[RECEIVED CONFIRMATION!]

Saint-Grade Artifact Activated.

Crack!

The warmth shattered.

The invisible pull snapped violently, like silk threads cut by a blade.

Cold clarity crashed back into Bai Zihan's mind.

He gasped.

Air rushed into his lungs as if he had been suffocating.

His eyes widened in raw horror.

He staggered internally-not physically, but mentally-realizing just how close he had been to complete annihilation.

Not death.

Something far worse.

He looked at Qin Lingxiao again.

This time, truly looked.

Her smile.

Her eyes.

Her calm.

(She didn't even try.)

That realization sent a chill through his bones.

She wasn't even using her Qi. That meant the technique was something she naturally exuded after countless years of refinement.

And yet-

Without lifting a finger, she had nearly turned him into a willing slave.

He had almost been reduced to a tool.

No.

A toy.

Worst of all-

If the system hadn't intervened, he knew the truth with terrifying certainty.

He would have done anything for her.

Given everything.

And he wouldn't have minded in the slightest.

Bai Zihan's heart pounded violently.

She wasn't just dangerous. If she truly tried, she might be able to charm everyone or so he believed.

He didn't know what requirements, if any, were needed for her to cast her techniques. But seeing how effective it had been on him-someone with high mental strength-he knew she was capable of far worse.

His gaze hardened.

Though he was angry at himself and at the woman before him, he knew that trying anything against her now would be suicide.

He wanted to kill her-perhaps even if she weren't a Heaven Chosen.

Not merely because of the danger she posed-

But because she had dared to toy with his heart.

(Not yet!)

But he couldn't.

He pulled his hand away from Qin Lingxiao in near disgust.

"Princess, that would be inappropriate and rude."

He knew this would make Qin Lingxiao wary-he had shown that her technique didn't work-but he had no choice.

As long as she continued wearing Yu Feiyan's skin, she shouldn't reveal her true identity yet.

But of course-

Qin Lingxiao didn't give up.

She increased the power of her technique.

Bai Zihan felt it.

But it still didn't work.

His mind remained clear, and he viewed Qin Lingxiao as an enemy he must one day kill.

The artifact was still effective.

Even so, he could see just how terrifying her seduction techniques were.

Even some cultivators in the Immortal Realm seemed affected-though they managed to maintain their rationality.

But Bai Zihan remained cold and distant.

"Since Princess has nothing else to say, we will take our leave."

He quickly grabbed Chu Ziyang's hand and tried to leave.

This place was dangerous.

And now, he wasn't just thinking of returning to his position-

But retreating to the Bai Clan entirely.

Bai Zihan had taken no more than two steps when-

"Wait!"

The voice was soft.

Yu Feiyan stepped forward, her sleeves fluttering gently as if moved by a

harmless breeze.

To anyone else, it looked like concern.

Like reluctance.

Like a woman unwilling to let go of a meaningful encounter.

But inside her mind-

(Impossible!)

Qin Lingxiao's thoughts were in chaos.

(How did he resist?)

She had increased her power-yet Bai Zihan remained unaffected.

Even Immortal Realm experts would feel it.

He had nearly fallen-

And then escaped.

That shouldn't have been possible.

Her smile never wavered, but beneath it, something sharp twisted violently.

She took another step forward.

"Young Master Bai," she said gently, "surely there is no need to reject me. I merely wished to speak with you privately."

Before Bai Zihan could answer-

A cold laugh cut through the air.

"How shameless!"

Chu Ziyan stepped forward, deliberately placing herself half a step in front of Bai Zihan.

Her grip on his hand tightened-clearly displaying who he belonged to.

She looked directly at Yu Feiyan, eyes clear, unclouded, and utterly unaffected.

"A woman who doesn't know how to accept rejection," Chu Ziyan said flatly, "is ugly."

The surrounding cultivators stiffened.

Yu Feiyan's pupils contracted-just slightly.

Ugly?

No one had ever dared-

"What did you say?" Yu Feiyan asked, her tone still gentle... but colder now.

Chu Ziyan didn't hesitate.

"I said you're dislikable," she continued calmly. "At least have the dignity to accept it when a man has already refused you."

Inside Qin Lingxiao's mind, rage surged like a rising tide.

A fledgling.

A nobody.

She dares speak to me like this?

For a split second-

Killing intent nearly leaked.

Then Qin Lingxiao forcibly suppressed it.

(Not now!)

She inhaled slowly, reassembling her composure with terrifying precision.

"I merely wished to speak privately with Young Master Bai," she said coolly.

"Why is that such a problem?"

Chu Ziyan scoffed.

"Trying to approach a man who is already engaged," she replied sharply, "and refusing to take no for an answer-Princess, you should learn when to give up."

Chu Ziyan said it directly.

If Bai Zihan had accepted, it would have been a different matter.

But since he hadn't-

She saw no reason to hold back.

Perhaps some of the resentment she carried in her heart had leaked out.

Yu Feiyan's smile finally thinned.

"Young Master Bai is the hero of this empire," she said. "A man like him deserves someone who loves him for who he is not merely his background, his clan, or political convenience."

That was when Chu Ziyan laughed.

"No matter who he is," Chu Ziyan said without hesitation, "he is engaged to me."

She turned her head slightly-just enough to show Yu Feiyan her profile.

"So an outsider should butt out."

The temperature dropped.

Yu Feiyan's gaze sharpened fully.

(Little girl, I will teach you a lesson!)

Her lips curved upward again-but this time, the smile was no longer warm.

"Very well," Yu Feiyan said calmly.

"If words are insufficient..."

Her eyes locked onto Chu Ziyang.

"Then let us settle this with a battle. Miss Chu, do you dare accept my challenge for Young Master Bai?"

After all, she was just a person who is known to be in the Nascent Soul Realm and weaker than Chu Ziyang.

Qin Lingxiao expected Chu Ziyang to accept immediately, especially since it was an easy win for her.

Well, Chu Ziyang did take the bait.

"Very well! If that will make you give up on Zihan!"

Novel Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! Chapter 438: The Ninth Princess's Mask

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan!

Chapter 438: The Ninth Princess's Mask

"Very well! If that will make you give up on Zihan!"

Chu Ziyang said without hesitation.

Her voice rang clear and firm.

She stepped forward, her posture straight, her expression calm.

It wasn't arrogance.

Nor was it the desire to bully someone weaker.

In her eyes, Yu Feiyan was nothing more than a spoiled princess who had never been told no—someone who needed a firm answer she couldn't twist with words or charm.

And if a battle was what it took to make her retreat?

Then so be it.

Not to mention, it was Yu Feiyan herself who dared to challenge her—and that too with Bai Zihan on the line.

For Yu Feiyan to take things this far, Chu Ziyang understood that Yu Feiyan was not going to give up easily.

The hall erupted instantly.

"What?! Princess Yu is challenging Chu Ziyang?"

"This is absurd! Princess Yu is only in the Nascent Soul Realm!"

"Why would the Princess even suggest such a battle?"

"She's bound to lose—what kind of decision is this?"

...

Controlled laughter rippled through the crowd.

To everyone present, the outcome was obvious.

Chu Ziyang was stronger in almost everything.

Be it cultivation realm, techniques, or experience, Chu Ziyang was far superior to Princess Yu Feiyan, who had been sheltered and protected since youth.

This fight would end in moments.

Some even shook their heads in pity at Yu Feiyan.

But Bai Zihan felt none of that ease.

Not even for a second.

His heart sank.

They didn't understand.

They couldn't.

To them, Yu Feiyan was a Nascent Soul cultivator.

To him—

She was a monster wearing innocent smiles.

She had the highest cultivation among anyone here.

She was also more than two hundred years old, so there was no need to even discuss experience—and not to mention, she had already used a Saint-Grade technique on him.

So it was certain that she knew higher-grade techniques than almost everyone present.

It was definitely a battle that would end in a moment—but the victor would definitely not be Chu Ziyang.

Qin Lingxiao's lips curved ever so slightly.

(As expected!)

With her taking the identity of the fragile Ninth Princess, there was no one who thought she would win.

So naturally, she had already expected Chu Ziyang to accept—especially since she was going after her fiancée.

She knew Chu Ziyang would want to prove that she was more worthy than herself.

The Ninth Princess had challenged, and Chu Ziyang had accepted. Everyone knew what was coming next.

It was time for their agreement—and the duel—to happen.

Before anyone could move—

"Enough!"

Bai Zihan stepped forward.

The hall fell silent.

He stood between Chu Ziyang and Yu Feiyang, his expression resolute, his aura steady but unyielding.

"This is unnecessary," he said flatly.

All eyes turned to him.

He turned slightly, looking at Chu Ziyang.

His gaze softened.

"My heart is already set on Chu Ziyang," Bai Zihan declared calmly.

"So no matter the outcome of any battle—my decision will not change."

A wave of murmurs swept through the hall.

To outsiders—

It sounded like devotion.

Like a man publicly declaring his love, refusing to be swayed by anything.

Some even felt moved.

But inside—

Bai Zihan's thoughts were ice-cold.

This isn't a duel.

It's a trap.

No matter who stood here—

Chu Ziyang.

A Grand Elder.

Anyone in this room—

None of them could win against Qin Lingxiao.

She had deliberately provoked Chu Ziyang.

Offered a challenge that looked like certainty—

Only to lead her straight toward inevitability.

And Bai Zihan would not allow it.

His gaze snapped to Yu Feiyang.

"So, Princess—let's end here!"

Qin Lingxiao's smile didn't reach her eyes.

Just as she thought things would return to their track, Bai Zihan disrupted her again.

For a brief moment, silence reigned.

Then Yu Feiyang smiled again.

As if Bai Zihan's interruption had merely amused her.

"Why must Young Master Bai interfere?" she asked softly.

She turned her gaze to Chu Ziyang.

"This is between two women," Yu Feiyan continued, her voice gentle yet resolute, "who wish to prove who truly deserves Young Master Bai's heart."

A ripple ran through the hall.

Some nodded unconsciously.

Some leaned forward.

Romantic rivalry.

A duel of affection.

It sounded... reasonable.

Bai Zihan felt a surge of revulsion.

He stepped forward again.

"No!"

The single word was sharp.

His gaze locked onto Yu Feiyan, cold and unwavering.

"You misunderstand something, Princess."

He did not raise his voice.

Yet every word cut cleanly through the murmurs.

"I did not fall in love with Chu Ziyan because of her cultivation, her talent, or her background."

Chu Ziyan's eyes widened slightly.

Bai Zihan continued, his tone calm but absolute.

"And I will not choose a woman based on power, status, or who can defeat whom."

He turned fully toward Yu Feiyan.

"I am grateful for the favorable feelings the Ninth Princess holds toward me," he said formally.

"But I cannot—will not—reciprocate them."

The hall grew deathly still.

"Feelings are not trophies to be claimed," Bai Zihan said coldly. "Nor are they prizes to be fought over."

His words landed heavily.

Yu Feiyan's smile stiffened.

Bai Zihan exhaled slowly.

"And most importantly," he said, sweeping his gaze across the hall, "this is a day of honor."

"A celebration for the heroes of the Northern Battlefield."

His voice hardened.

"To turn it into a farce over personal obsession is disrespectful—to the fallen, to the living, and to everyone who sacrificed themselves."

Most nodded. Indeed, what Bai Zihan said was reasonable.

Bai Zihan's eyes returned to Yu Feiyan one last time.

"So, Princess," he said plainly, "this matter ends here."

Bai Zihan did not wait for a response from Yu Feiyan.

He turned and faced the imperial throne directly.

He cupped his fist, his posture straight despite the faint stiffness in his movements.

"Your Majesty!"

The Emperor's gaze sharpened.

Bai Zihan spoke calmly, without resentment or grievance.

"This junior has already received the rewards bestowed for the Northern Battlefield," he said evenly.

"The merit, the treasures, the recognition—I accept them with gratitude."

The hall listened, breath held.

"But as for matters beyond that," Bai Zihan continued, his voice steady, "this junior will have to decline!"

He lifted his head slightly.

A wave of shock swept through the hall.

Silence followed.

All eyes turned to the Emperor.

The Emperor studied Bai Zihan for a long moment.

Then—

He sighed.

A quiet, weary sound.

"Very well," the Emperor said at last, nodding slowly.

There was no anger in his voice.

Only acceptance.

"This matter... is not something I can force. Since you have already set your heart on someone then what can I do?"

A ripple ran through the ministers.

Bai Zihan had refused—

And the Emperor had allowed it.

Not because he wished to.

But because he could not do otherwise.

Even crippled.

Even withdrawn.

Even standing there with damaged meridians and a future clouded by uncertainty—

Bai Zihan was still Bai Zihan.

Things always went the way he wanted and today was no different.

Bai Zihan cupped his fists once more.

"This junior thanks Your Majesty for your understanding."

His voice was calm, steady—neither triumphant nor resentful.

The Emperor waved a hand lightly, as if dismissing not Bai Zihan, but the matter itself.

"Go," he said. "Take care of your health."

Bai Zihan bowed deeply.

Then he turned.

He did not look at Yu Feiyan again.

He reached out, his hand closing around Chu Ziyang's wrist as naturally as if it had always belonged there.

"Let's leave," he said quietly.

There was no room for refusal in his tone.

And Chu Ziyang... didn't refuse.

Chu Ziyang stiffened for half a breath—

Then relaxed.

She nodded faintly and followed without resistance, the faintest trace of warmth blooming on her cheeks despite her composed expression.

The two walked side by side through the hall.

The crowd parted instinctively.

Some gazes were filled with awe.

Some with disbelief.

Some with complicated envy.

A crippled hero.

A rejected imperial marriage.

A woman willingly followed him without hesitation.

No one could decide which part was more shocking.

Behind them—

Yu Feiyan remained where she stood.

Her posture unchanged.

Her expression serene.

Still smiling.

But deep within her eyes, something cold shifted.

Not anger.

Not humiliation.

Interest!

As Bai Zihan walked, his senses remained stretched to their limit.

He did not look back openly.

From the corner of his vision, from the faint shifts in Qi and intent, he quietly observed Qin Lingxiao.

Yu Feiyan stood where she was.

Not even the faintest ripple of killing intent appeared.

There was none.

Bai Zihan's grip on Chu Ziyan tightened imperceptibly.

(If she wanted to act...)

He knew the truth.

Qin Lingxiao did not need a sneak attack.

She did not need schemes.

She did not need excuses.

If she wished to kill him—

He would already be dead.

Right here.

In this hall.

Surrounded by emperors, elders, and heroes alike.

And none of them would be able to stop it.

At least, Bai Zihan realized that Qin Lingxiao has no intention of throwing away her mask, not yet.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan!

Chapter 439 Twice Refused Beneath the Dragon Throne[1,354 words]

Chapter 439 Twice Refused Beneath the Dragon Throne

The ceremony continued in an orderly fashion.

Treasures were presented.

Titles were announced.

Imperial records were read aloud with solemn clarity.

After Bai Zihan, it was mostly Great Ascension Realm cultivators who stepped forward-veteran powerhouses whose names carried weight across the empire.

Each received their due recognition before retreating calmly to their places.

Then came the Void Refinement Realm cultivators.

Their contributions were substantial, their rewards correspondingly rich. And then-

"Bai Xueqing of the Bai Clan," the official announced.

A faint ripple stirred through the hall.

Many were surprised.

Not because Bai Xueqing was undeserving-

But because she was announced before several Spirit Severing Realm cultivators who were, on paper, stronger than her.

Yet no one truly objected.

Because everyone here knew why.

Bai Xueqing walked forward, her steps light, her expression cool and composed.

Frost-like Qi lingered faintly around her, restrained but unmistakable.

The official continued reading her merits.

During the Northern Battlefield campaign, Bai Xueqing had not simply fought.

She had controlled the battlefield wherever she went.

Her ice techniques had immobilized entire clusters of demonic beasts.

Frozen terrain had cut off enemy advances.

Several Void Refinement Realm cultivators had been able to finish their battles only because their opponents had first been locked in her frost.

Despite being in Soul Formation Realm, she has also killed several Grade-7 and even Grade-8 Demonic Beasts.

Her contribution was not measured by not only raw kills, but by how many lives had been saved- and how many battles had been decisively tilted.

In terms of battlefield value-

Her contribution was already comparable to Void Refinement Realm cultivators.

Bai Xueqing accepted the rewards with grace.

Then-

The Emperor paused.

A pause just long enough for those perceptive to feel it coming.

"Bai Xueqing," the Emperor said, his voice calm yet deliberate, "you are currently unengaged, are you not?"

A subtle stir passed through the hall.

Déjà vu!

Bai Xueqing's eyes narrowed-just slightly.

"Yes, Your Majesty," she replied calmly.

"The previous engagement," the Emperor continued, as if discussing the weather, "has already been annulled."

Several ministers exchanged knowing looks.

The Emperor's gaze softened.

"You are young, talented, and possess exceptional merit," he said.

Then came the words everyone expected.

"If you are willing," the Emperor said slowly, "you may choose any prince you find suitable and marry into the imperial family."

The hall fell silent.

Again!

Eyes shifted-this time not toward Bai Zihan, but toward Bai Xueqing.

However, this time it wasn't unexpected. Anyone would want Bai Xueqing as their daughter-in-law.

She was talented and beautiful, and she was also the precious daughter of Bai Tianheng.

More importantly, she wasn't a cripple like Bai Zihan.

So, marrying her would mean gaining the support of the Bai Clan.

And with the Bai Clan's recent surge in strength, even the Imperial Family desired that connection.

Others watching couldn't help but whisper that the Emperor looked desperate to secure a marriage tie with the Bai Clan.

One rejection-then shifting to another person who was equally important and precious to the Bai Clan.

Bai Xueqing did not hesitate.

She did not look flattered.

She cupped her fists calmly.

"This one thanks Your Majesty for the honor," Bai Xueqing said evenly.

Then-

"However, I must also decline."

Compared to when Bai Zihan rejected the offer, the astonishment wasn't there.

With Bai Xueqing's status and talent, there was no one she couldn't get. Perhaps there wasn't a single man at the moment who was truly worthy of her.

So even if it were princes, when compared to her, falls below.

The Emperor raised an eyebrow.

"Oh?" he asked. "And why is that?"

Bai Xueqing's voice remained cool, almost indifferent.

"I have no time for such matters," she said plainly.

The words were simple and blunt.

Bai Xueqing had good manners, but she realized that the Emperor wouldn't understand unless she was direct.

Not to mention, being told she could marry any prince-what kind of suggestion was that, anyway?

At least in Bai Zihan's case, they had disguised it as Princess Yu Feiyan being in love with him.

She didn't think that was true though.

Bai Xueqing didn't think there should be any girl who would truly love Bai Zihan.

Well-except for one.

Bai Zihan was cruel and didn't know how to sugarcoat his words.

He didn't care about others' feelings.

He looked down on everything and was arrogant beyond words.

Bai Xueqing didn't believe a princess would fall for such a person-especially now that he was crippled, his greatest virtue, his talent, seemingly gone.

More importantly, how can she fall in love with Bai Zihan when in Ancient Ruins, Bai Zihan mercilessly and cruelly beat Mo Tianji.

And later he killed one of the geniuses and threatened almost everyone present there for Bai Xinyue?

There wasn't a girl that could fall for such behaviour. At least, Princess Yu Feiyan who was timid didn't seem like someone who would fall for such a thing.

So she saw it as a farce-an excuse to get their hands on Bai Zihan, and ultimately, the Bai Clan.

And now, the same thing was happening to her.

Except the Emperor didn't even bother crafting a story this time.

Well, she didn't care.

But she also didn't think she needed to give too much face.

"My cultivation is low. I realized this after fighting demonic beasts," she continued.

"Marriage is a distraction I cannot afford."

She lifted her gaze slightly-not challenging, but unwavering.

"Therefore, I will not be marrying anyone yet."

The hall was utterly silent.

Bai Xueqing wasn't just rejecting the Emperor.

She was rejecting all the clans that had been continuously sending marriage proposals.

The Emperor sighed, then laughed.

A short, helpless laugh.

"It seems," he said slowly, shaking his head, "the Bai Clan truly does not raise ordinary people."

Another refusal.

Another opportunity slipping through imperial fingers.

Moreover, this also determined what kind of relationship the Imperial Family and the Bai Clan would have moving forward.

Since both Bai Xueqing and Bai Zihan rejected the Emperor's proposal then everyone knew that there can be no alliance between the two.

The Imperial Family obviously would be wary of the Bai Clan considering their strength.

Without the alliance, no matter what the Bai Clan did, the Imperial Family would always be afraid of them.

"Very well," the Emperor said at last. "I will not force what you do not desire."

Bai Xueqing bowed once.

"Thank you, Your Majesty!"

She turned and returned to her place without another word.

As she passed Bai Zihan, their gazes met briefly.

Bai Xueqing's eyes fell on his hand, which was still holding Chu Ziyan's.

Bai Zihan thought that letting go would look fake, so he continued displaying his affection for Chu Ziyan.

Bai Xueqing narrowed her eyes.

Beside Bai Zihan, Chu Ziyan was smiling like an idiot and didn't even seem to notice her.

Bai Xueqing returned to her place with annoyance.

She didn't know why it annoyed her.

She didn't want to think about it.

A soft snort escaped her nose before she could stop herself.

"Hmph!"

Bai Zihan noticed it as well.

He glanced sideways, just in time to catch the tail end of Bai Xueqing's retreating figure-and that unmistakable look of displeasure.

He frowned slightly. (What made her angry now?)

After a moment, Bai Zihan arrived at a conclusion that felt... reasonable.

She must truly hate engagements and marriage.

Perhaps the Emperor's words had reminded her of her previous engagement

with Nie Fengzhuo.

"Tsk, tsk. Looks like she's going to be single for the rest of her life," Bai Zihan thought.

The ceremony continued.

One by one, names were called.

Then-

"Chu Ziyan of the Chu Clan," the official announced.

She calmly stepped forward.

Her merits were read clearly-her leadership, her decisive strikes, her role in holding the line during multiple critical engagements.

The Emperor listened quietly.

He did not bring up previous disagreements or the topic of marriage, focusing solely on bestowing her deserved reward.

Chu Ziyan accepted it with composure, bowing deeply.

"This one thanks Your Majesty!" She returned to Bai Zihan's side without incident.

The rest of the awards passed without disturbance.

At last, when the final name had been read and the final treasure bestowed, the Emperor rose from his throne.

The hall stilled instantly.

"Heroes of the Northern Battlefield," the Emperor said, his voice resonant, carrying effortlessly through the grand hall.

"Today, you have been rewarded not merely for strength-but for courage, sacrifice, and resolve."

His gaze swept across the gathered cultivators.

"Because of you, the borders stand firm. Because of you, countless citizens sleep in safety."

He inclined his head slightly.

"For that, this Emperor offers his sincere thanks."

A wave of respectful silence followed.

Then the Emperor continued, his tone easing.

"The award ceremony ends here." Subtle relief spread through the hall.

"However," he added, a faint smile appearing, "a celebration has been prepared."

Soft murmurs rose.

"There will be food, wine, and music," the Emperor said. "I hope all heroes present will participate freely."

"Tonight, set aside cultivation and conflict. Enjoy what you have protected."

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan!

Chapter 440 Beauty Beneath a Mask[1,417 words]

Chapter 440 Beauty Beneath a Mask

The Emperor did not remain long.

Shortly after the first cups of wine were poured and the musicians began tuning their instruments, a senior eunuch stepped forward and announced, with practiced solemnity, that His Majesty's old injuries had acted up and that he would be retiring to rest.

No one doubted the reason.

Rather, it was more unbelievable that the Emperor had been able to stay here without any problems until now.

Once the dragon throne was empty, the atmosphere subtly-but decisively- changed.

The tension loosened.

And the celebration truly began.

Wine flowed freely.

Spirit fruits were served on jade plates.

Music rose in gentle waves, flutes and zithers weaving together-soft enough not to disturb cultivators, yet lively enough to stir the mood.

Laughter appeared.

Voices grew bolder.

Once again, Bai Zihan became the center of attention.

It was almost absurd.

He sat calmly at a low table near the center of the hall, posture relaxed, expression indifferent-still with Chu Ziyan beside him.

Yet around him-

Girls gathered.

Now they approached one after another, wine cups in hand, smiles carefully practiced.

Some were bold.

Some were shy.

Some pretended coincidence.

"Senior Brother Bai, may I offer a toast?"

"I heard you once crossed half a battlefield alone-this junior truly admires you."

"Even injured, your aura is still... extraordinary."

Bai Zihan responded with polite nods and minimal words-never rude, but never encouraging.

Even after the public rejection of the Ninth Princess.

Even after his blatant display of affection for Chu Ziyan.

Even after the entire empire knew he was "crippled."

Many girls were still after Bai Zihan.

The truth was obvious to anyone.

This wasn't about affection.

It wasn't even about Bai Zihan himself.

It was about the Bai Clan.

The clan that had surged in strength.

Even with all the negativity about Bai Zihan, it was good as long as they could form a strong relationship with the Bai Clan.

And so they came.

Again and again.

Much to Chu Ziyang's growing displeasure.

However, there was one thing that managed to lift her mood-and that was Bai Zihan being unusually affectionate right now.

"Ziyang, have these grapes!"

Saying that, he fed her personally.

Chu Ziyang didn't really understand why Bai Zihan was acting this way.

There was no Emperor anymore, and he didn't need to keep up the act.

Bai Zihan would never normally behave like this, but whatever the reason, she decided to enjoy it.

Bai Zihan continued his act of affection toward Chu Ziyang.

Because across the hall-

Yu Feiyang was watching.

No.

Qin Lingxiao.

She too was surrounded by quite a lot of people-her supporters and those who wished to join her faction.

There were also people offering marriage to her, especially since she had managed to attract quite a few young men with her earlier attempt to seduce

Bai Zihan.

She failed in seducing Bai Zihan, but succeeded with many other young men.

Bai Zihan still didn't understand who Qin Lingxiao truly was, nor what she

wanted.

But whatever Qin Lingxiao wanted-

It definitely wasn't good.

The music swelled.

A troupe of dancers stepped into the open space at the center of the hall, sleeves fluttering like drifting clouds, skirts tracing elegant arcs across the jade

floor.

They were young and beautiful.

Soft murmurs immediately rose among the gathered cultivators.

"Not bad!"

"They may not be on the level of Bai Xueqing or the Ninth Princess, but they're definitely top-tier beauties."

"Mmm... at the very least, they're enough to make this celebration feel worthwhile."

The dancers moved in perfect coordination, their steps light, expressions gentle, eyes shimmering beneath long lashes.

Their beauty was not overwhelming-but it was inviting. The kind that made people lower their guard without realizing it.

As the music reached a lively rhythm, the dancers began to separate.

One by one, they approached the guests.

Laughing softly and extending their hands.

"Young Master, would you honor this humble one with a dance?"

"Haha, how could I refuse?"

Several young masters stood immediately, more than willing to join.

The atmosphere relaxed further.

And then-

One of the dancers turned.

Her gaze swept across the hall.

And stopped at Bai Zihan.

She was the prettiest among them.

Not just in face, but in presence.

Her eyes were bright, lips curved in a gentle smile, her figure graceful without being overly provocative.

She walked toward him.

Chu Ziyang noticed instantly.

Her fingers tightened around her cup.

The dancer stopped before Bai Zihan and bowed lightly, her voice clear and melodious.

"Young Master Bai," she said softly, drawing countless looks, "hero of the Desolate Heaven Empire."

Her smile deepened.

"This humble one wonders... would you be interested in sharing a dance?"

Chu Ziyang's expression darkened.

Bai Zihan looked at the dancer.

For a brief moment, his expression remained unchanged-calm, indifferent, almost lazy.

But inside, his intuition warned him that something was about to happen.

He glanced sideways.

Chu Ziyan was staring at the dancer with poorly concealed hostility, her grip on the cup tight enough that the jade creaked faintly.

Bai Zihan weighed the situation quickly.

If someone was planning something, declining now would only delay it.

Besides, he had come here precisely because he wanted to find out what the Imperial Family was thinking.

Qin Lingxiao was a variable he hadn't expected to encounter.

Either way, Bai Zihan still needed to figure out the Imperial Family's decision.

For now, judging from the Emperor's actions, they wanted to form an alliance with the Bai Clan.

But who knew?

Could the Imperial Family truly tolerate a clan more powerful and influential than themselves?

He gave a small, almost imperceptible sigh.

Then he smiled faintly.

"Very well," Bai Zihan said calmly, placing his cup down. "Today is a day of celebration. Declining such a beauty as yourself wouldn't be right."

Chu Ziyan's eyes widened.

"You-"

Before she could stop him, Bai Zihan was already standing.

Her displeasure was immediate and intense.

Bai Zihan didn't look at her. Instead, he gently placed a sweet into her palm.

"Eat," he said softly. "I'll be right back."

Her lips parted, anger and worry colliding-

But Bai Zihan had already turned away. Across the hall, Qin Lingxiao's gaze sharpened slightly.

She watched the scene with curiosity and interest.

The dancer's smile brightened as Bai Zihan accepted her hand.

They stepped into the open space as the music shifted, becoming lighter and more playful.

The surrounding crowd watched with interest. Whispers spread.

"Young Master Bai is participating?"

"Looks like even Bai Zihan couldn't resist beauty."

"After all that talk about loving Miss Chu!"

Bai Zihan moved with ease, his steps precise but unhurried. He neither tried to dominate nor blindly follow.

At first glance, everything seemed... normal.

The dancer's movements were smooth, her breathing steady, her hand light in his.

Her Qi-if it could even be called that-was almost nonexistent. Weak. Scattered. The kind only mortals possessed.

From the outside, she was nothing more than a talented mortal girl brought in to liven the celebration.

And that-

That was precisely what made Bai Zihan more alert.

They turned in a gentle circle, sleeves brushing, the music carrying them along.

The dancer glanced up at him, curiosity flickering across her delicate features.

"Young Master Bai," she asked softly, as if genuinely puzzled, "is it true what they say?"

"Oh?" Bai Zihan replied lightly. "Which part?"

"That you were willing to sacrifice your life," she said, voice lowering just a little, "for a mere servant girl?"

Around them, several ears subtly perked up.

Bai Zihan didn't hesitate.

"She was worth it," he said casually.

The words came easily.

The dancer froze for a fraction of a heartbeat.

Then her smile softened, something warm appearing in her eyes.

"Young Master truly has kind eyes," she said. "To someone like you... even we mortals must look precious."

Bai Zihan only smiled.

He didn't answer.

If he were being honest, the answer would have been no.

And even if she changed the question-asking whether cultivators' lives were precious-the answer would still be the same.

They spun again, slower this time.

Bai Zihan adjusted his grip, guiding the dance as if he were enjoying himself.

Then he spoke.

"You dance well," he said. "Where did you learn?"

The dancer brightened, clearly pleased by the attention.

"In the southern provinces," she replied smoothly. "I was born in a small town near the Green River. My parents were entertainers, so I learned early."

Her answer flowed naturally. Bai Zihan nodded, as if impressed.

"Southern provinces?" he asked lightly. "That's quite far. You must have traveled a lot."

"Yes," she said. "After my parents passed, I joined a troupe and wandered from place to place until I arrived at the Capital and settled down."

She lowered her gaze at just the right moment.

Bai Zihan smiled wider.

From the outside, it looked like interest.

Like curiosity.

Like a young master taken in by beauty and tragedy.

Inside, however-

(Lie.)

Not in the story itself.

But in the details.

The Southern Provinces were very far from the Capital, and even riding a horse, it wouldn't be easy to reach it within ten years.

Yes, there were flying ships-but a girl like her couldn't afford them.

There was still a chance she traveled slowly over many years.

If so, then her flawless skin was a problem. Someone who traveled constantly wouldn't possibly have such smooth skin.

Not to mention, her skin tone was quite different from that of people from the Southern Provinces.

He didn't expose her. Instead, he chuckled softly. "Looks like Miss is quite fortunate."

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Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan!

Chapter 441 Assassin at Imperial Banquet!

Chapter 441 Assassin at Imperial Banquet!

The girl smiled back, relief flickering briefly in her eyes.

They continued dancing while conversing with each other.

"What should I call you?" he asked.

The dancer hesitated for just a fraction of a breath.

"Xi," she replied, smiling softly. "Xi Yu!"

Bai Zihan nodded, committing the name to memory.

Whether it was real or fake, he didn't know.

Bai Zihan asked a few more questions-small ones, harmless ones.

About food.

About seasons.

About customs.

And slowly, carefully-He pieced it together.

She knew how to act like a mortal.

But she didn't think like one.

Her habits were trained.

Either she was like Luo Qing-someone who was a mortal yet served a powerful clan-

Or she was a cultivator pretending to be mortal.

Either way, she wasn't just a dancer from a troupe.

Around them, laughter rose.

More young masters joined the dancers.

The music did not stop.

It grew livelier-drums joining the flutes, laughter rising as more cups were refilled.

And that was when it happened.

Another dancer, who had been dancing with one of the young cultivators, moved closer to Bai Zihan and Xi Yu.

Everything seemed ordinary at first glance.

After all, dancing around, you are bound to change places tho
seemed to have deliberately chosed this.

that dancer

With Bai Zihan's reputation, who dares to get near him and disturb his dance?

However, then everything changed.

That dancer aura exploded outward.

The young master she had been dancing with was thrown backward, sent skidding several meters away by the sudden outburst of her aura.

Great Ascension Realm!

The dancers-including the young masters dancing among them-instantly felt the pressure, many of them kneeling while others collapsed outright.

They were far weaker, not to mention completely unprepared for the sudden surge of pressure.

Most of the dancers-well, almost everyone except Xi Yu-lost consciousness. Wine cups shattered.

Music faltered mid-note.

Faces drained of color.

She was already in motion.

Her body blurred, closing the distance in a heartbeat, her hand snapping forward like a viper's strike.

No blade.

No visible weapon.

Just fingers coated in something dark and shimmering. It definitely posion.

And her target was easy to guess.

Bai Zihan was in the open.

Surrounded by ordinary people.

No elders within immediate reach.

At this distance-

Even those Immortal Realm experts wouldn't arrive in time.

Chu Ziyan's face went white.

"Zihan-!"

Others reacted as well, instinctively moving toward Bai Zihan in an attempt to protect him.

However, the distance between Bai Zihan and the assassin was only a few meters while they were far away.

Even Bai Chu with all his full speed would take more time than for the assassin to strike Bai Zihan.

The assassin's eyes were cold, focused, merciless.

She was clearly ready to throw her life away to kill Bai Zihan. After all, there was no escaping from the experts present.

So, this was definitely a suicide mission, to kill Bai Zihan before the Grand Elders of the Bai Clan.

All she intended to do was kill Bai Zihan-and she spared no effort, holding nothing back.

Bai Zihan pretended to collapse to the ground, continuing the act of being a mortal.

It was extremely dangerous-unable to respond against a Great Ascension Realm assassin.

But by pretending to be defenseless, he was taking a calculated risk.

He could be killed.

However, with his physique and the Heavenly-Grade defensive artifact he wore beneath his robes, Bai Zihan believed he could survive.

After all, assassins primarily relied on poison.

And judging by her methods, she was no exception.

He could dodge easily.

He could twist aside, let the strike miss, even counter if he wished.

But the moment he did-

The lie he had maintained-the lie of being crippled-would shatter in front of

the entire Imperial Court.

So, he decided to just take the attack without defending himself.

It would be painful.

But not fatal.

Especially not for him.

So Bai Zihan made his decision.

He subtly shifted his weight, preparing to receive the blow in a way that minimized exposure-

And then-

Someone stepped in front of him.

It happened so suddenly that even Bai Zihan's eyes widened.

Xi Yu!

She appeared completely unaffected by the assassin's aura.

(So she truly is a powerful cultivator.)

After all, even Spirit Severing Realm cultivators were struggling to stand.

Xi Yu was clearly not a mortal.

But the assassin had already revealed herself.

Bai Zihan couldn't understand what Xi Yu's intention was.

Was she an accomplice?

Or something else entirely?

Xi Yu moved.

There was no warning.

No surge of aura.

No dramatic release of power.

She simply stepped forward.

To everyone else, it looked like she was throwing her life away to protect Bai Zihan.

To the assassin-

Xi Yu was nothing more than a momentary obstruction.

Her poison-coated fingers were less than a breath away from Bai Zihan's chest when Xi Yu's sleeve brushed past them.

A soft sound rang out.

Pa!

It wasn't loud.

It wasn't flashy.

But the moment Xi Yu's palm connected with the assassin's face-

The world seemed to lurch.

The Great Ascension Realm assassin was sent flying.

Her body twisted violently through the air like a broken doll, smashing into one of the distant stone pillars lining the hall.

BOOM-!

The impact shook the entire banquet hall.

Cracks spiderwebbed across the stone as the assassin slid down the wall, blood spraying from her mouth, bones audibly shattering.

She hit the ground and didn't move.

It was unclear whether she was dead-or barely alive.

Silence fell!

Not the tense silence from before-

But a stunned, absolute stillness.

Cultivators froze in place.

A Great Ascension Realm assassin had been dealt with so effortlessly.

Bai Zihan looked up at Xi Yu, genuine surprise flickering in his eyes.

She stood calmly in front of him, posture relaxed, breathing steady-as if she had merely brushed away an insect.

Not a single strand of hair was out of place.

Behind them, the oppressive pressure vanished as abruptly as it had appeared.

Those who had collapsed began gasping for breath, confusion and terror etched across their faces.

Chu Ziyang was the first to reach Bai Zihan.

"Bai Zihan!"

She grabbed his arm, hands trembling as she checked him over, eyes frantic.

Although she knew Bai Zihan was only pretending to be crippled, that

knowledge did nothing to erase her fear when a Great Ascension Realm assassin had nearly killed him.

Bai Clan elders arrived almost instantly.

Bai Tianheng appeared beside his son in a blur, expression dark and cold as his

gaze swept over Bai Zihan before snapping to the assassin embedded in the wall.

Fortunately, she seemed to still be alive.

That meant answers could be extracted.

Relief flickered briefly across his eyes.

Then vigilance replaced it. His gaze shifted-

And locked onto Xi Yu.

A supposed dancer.

Unaffected by Great Ascension Realm pressure. Capable of neutralizing such an assassin with a single casual strike.

He couldn't see through her cultivation at all-but he knew it surpassed his own.

Bai Tianheng clasped his hands together, voice polite but guarded.

He did not lower his guard.

Not after an assassination attempt in the middle of the Imperial banquet.

Not when such a dangerous unknown stood beside his son.

Who knew what her true intentions were?

"Thank you for saving my son," he said.

The words were sincere. But his eyes never relaxed. "May I ask who you are?"

Xi Yu turned to face him. Up close, the illusion fell apart completely.

There was no trace of mortal meekness left in her eyes.

"May I answer that after we move elsewhere?"

She asked.

Her gaze flicked briefly toward the many eyes fixed on them.

She clearly had no intention of revealing anything in front of so many people.

Bai Tianheng understood and nodded.

Since she was willing to speak at all, he allowed himself to lower his guard-just

slightly. Across the hall, elders from other factions finally moved, Immortal Realm pressure descending as they secured the area.

Imperial guards rushed in, faces pale as they stared at the assassin.

Whispers erupted.

"A Great Ascension Realm assassin...?"

"That dancer-who is she?"

"Tsk, tsk. Bai Zihan, who once easily killed Great Ascension Realm cultivators,

now can't even withstand their presence."

With how Bai Zihan kept his act, most believed that Bai Zihan was truly crippled now.

After all, he didn't reveal himself when his life was in danger and no one thought that anyone would do that.

The Elders and Grand Elders all apologized for the negligence and that they would definitely find out who is behind this.

Bai Zihan reassured them that he was alright and that there is no reason to worry.

Then he slowly stood, brushing imaginary dust from his robes.

His gaze on Xi Yu.

"Looks like you lied to me," Bai Zihan said calmly.

Xi Yu didn't answer immediately.

"I apologize," she said at last. "I had my circumstances for deception."

"Well, no matter, you saved my life. Thank you!"

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

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Chapter 442 An Assassin Beneath the Dragon Throne

Bai Tianheng had already moved.

He strode toward the assassin embedded in the shattered stone pillar, his expression dark.

A few Bai Clan elders followed closely, sealing the surrounding space to prevent any unexpected movement.

The assassin lay slumped against the cracked stone, blood pooling beneath her.

Her chest still rose-barely.

Bai Tianheng reached out, fingers moving to restrain her meridians.

His expression changed.

Too late!

The assassin's lips twitched.

A faint, almost mocking smile appeared at the corner of her mouth.

Then-

Crack!

A subtle sound, like something shattering within her teeth.

Her eyes lost focus instantly.

Her breathing almost instantly stopped.

Dead!

Bai Tianheng's face darkened completely.

"Damn it!"

The curse rang loudly through the hall.

As expected of a professional.

Poison concealed within her teeth-she never intended to escape from here.

Several elders clenched their fists in frustration.

Still, Bai Tianheng did not stop there.

Although dead, they could still investigate the identity of the assassin, which might help determine who was behind the assassination.

Anyway, with the cultivation she had shown, it was certain she wasn't as young as her face appeared.

Even though cultivators aged very slowly, with her realm she should have

looked to be in her thirties or forties-

Not someone who appeared barely in her twenties.

Bai Tianheng reached up and tore away the assassin's face veil, which was there as expected.

Gasps erupted around the hall.

Then-

"It's her..."

"That face-!"

"Abyssal Sparrow."

Whispers exploded.

One of the elders sucked in a sharp breath.

"She's one of the most wanted assassins in the Desolate Heaven Empire. She

killed the head of the Fan Clan ten years ago."

"And escaped an Immortal Realm pursuit."

That alone was enough to prove her strength.

She wasn't some no-name but extremely infamous criminal in the Empire.

She has been active for more than 30 years with many feats including killing the head of Fan Clan who was in Great Ascension Realm at his own home.

For such a figure to be sent to kill Bai Zihan meant the one who commissioned her had to be powerful.

After all, she had come here expecting to die.

Whoever employed her could not be an ordinary person.

Bai Tianheng's eyes narrowed.

There were only a few forces capable of employing someone like this on a suicide mission-the Imperial Family, the Heaven Sword Sect-

Though his greatest suspicions lay with the Li and Zhao Clans.

Among everyone present, they had the strongest motive.

Li Jianhong and Zhao Wutian didn't show much change in their expression.

They pretended as if they had no idea who sent the assassin. But they also didn't pretend to care for Bai Zihan.

Bai Tianheng wanted to question them the most about this assassination.

Of course, without proof, he could do nothing.

He straightened, his gaze sweeping across the hall, heavy with pressure.

Far away, Bai Zihan watched quietly.

From the moment the assassin revealed-

He already knew the answer.

The Imperial Family!

Or at the very least-

They were also accomplices.

It was reasonable to suspect the Li or Zhao Clans.

And that could very well be true.

However, one also had to consider the location of the assassination.

This was the Imperial Palace.

An event attended by the Emperor.

Every servant.

Every dancer.

Every musician-

Had been screened layer by layer.

For a Great Ascension Realm assassin-one of the most infamous criminals alive

-to infiltrate this deeply?

Impossible!

Unless someone at the very top had opened the door.

After all, if it were truly that easy to infiltrate the Imperial Palace, such

incidents would have happened countless times before.

Yet until now-

Not a single assassin had ever succeeded in infiltrating the Imperial Palace.

So why now?

Well, obviously it should be because they allowed it.

Bai Zihan's gaze drifted toward the now-empty dragon throne.

His expression remained calm.

But his eyes were cold.

(So that's how it is...)

From this alone, it was enough to guess the Imperial Family's intention.

Across the hall, imperial ministers were pale, loudly swearing loyalty and condemning the act, promising a full investigation.

Bai Zihan listened.

And believed none of it.

They were likely accomplices of the Emperor-though perhaps not all of them.

Anyways, they would rather erase any evidence that points towards themselves than catching the one behind this assassination.

The atmosphere in the hall had yet to recover when hurried footsteps echoed from the side entrance.

A young man in imperial robes strode forward, his expression solemn.

The First Prince, Yu Zidi.

He stopped a few steps away from Bai Zihan and clasped his hands deeply, bowing with genuine gravity.

"Young Master Bai," he said, his voice steady but heavy, "this matter occurred within the Imperial Palace. Regardless of the cause, the Imperial Family bears responsibility. I offer my sincere apologies on behalf of my father and the

court."

His posture was respectful.

His words were flawless.

But Bai Zihan felt nothing.

This was all for show-an assertion of authority for himself.

A reminder that in the Emperor's absence, the one representing him was the First Prince.

He should also want to portray himself as a responsible person before so many powerhouses.

Bai Zihan looked at him calmly.

"I understand," Bai Zihan said.

The First Prince visibly relaxed- Only for Bai Zihan to continue. "Please relay a message to His Majesty." The prince straightened slightly, listening intently.

"This is what you decided. Thank you for the gift!"

Previously, Bai Zihan had known the Emperor was weighing whether to ally with the Bai Clan-

Or to join others in containing the Bai Clan.

In the end, it seemed the latter had been chosen.

The First Prince's pupils shrank almost imperceptibly.

Before the First Prince could gather his thoughts or offer another word, Bai Zihan had already turned away.

The matter was settled-in his eyes, at least.

Xi Yu stood a short distance away, calm and composed amid the lingering chaos, hands folded loosely before her.

Unlike everyone else in the hall, she showed no trace of tension-no unease, no urgency to explain herself.

Bai Zihan looked at her for a moment.

Then he spoke.

"You wanted to talk with me, didn't you?"

His voice was calm, almost casual-but there was no mistaking the certainty behind it. Although she didn't seem to be after his life, there should be a reason as to why such a powerful person approached him.

Xi Yu met his gaze.

She nodded once.

"Yes!"

Bai Zihan gave a small, knowing smile.

"Then you can come along with me. We will talk at the Bai Clan Estate!"

He turned slightly, gesturing ahead of him.

He swept his gaze across the hall-over the ministers, the elders, the sect representatives, and the countless eyes filled with unease.

"I enjoyed the banquet," Bai Zihan said evenly. "But it seems the time has come."

He smiled faintly.

"I'll take my leave."

No one spoke.

No one objected.

Who would?

An assassination attempt had just occurred in the middle of the Imperial banquet.

A Great Ascension Realm assassin had nearly succeeded.

If Bai Zihan chose to remain-

That would be reckless.

After all, it had already been proven that the Imperial defenses were not trustworthy.

After saying those words, Bai Zihan didn't wait and directly left under the gaze of everyone.

Before leaving, he glanced at Li and Zhao Clan who seemed to have separated from all the chaos.

They didn't seem to care much about the assassination or at least pretending not to.

(Well, I will know soon!)

The Bai Clan elders and grand elders followed suit, their auras restrained but sharp, forming a subtle protective formation around Bai Zihan.

Chu Ziyang stayed close at his side, eyes vigilant as she scanned their surroundings.

Following the Bai Clan's departure, the banquet hall fell into an uneasy silence.

For a brief moment, no one moved.

Then-

"Ahem! Ah... now that I think about it, there is an urgent matter within my sect that requires my immediate attention. This one will have to take his leave as well."

"Indeed! My disciple is currently undergoing a breakthrough. If something goes wrong, it would be disastrous. I must return immediately."

One excuse after another surfaced.

The hall, once filled with polite laughter and thinly veiled rivalry, now echoed with hurried farewells and insincere bows.

None of them were fools.

An assassination attempt inside the Imperial Palace-successful or not-meant one thing:

The waters of the Desolate Heaven Empire had become violently turbulent.

Moreover, who knows whether there are more assassins hiding and targeting them.

They don't have to risk their lives.

And with the Bai Clan gone, most had no reason to stay. Most of the clan only wanted to form a relationship with the Bai Clan.

And with all the Bai Clan's allies leaving with the Bai Clan, they don't want to be seen as being one the other side.

After all, with the Bai Clan gone, only Li-Zhao and the Imperial Family and their ally was left behind.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan!

Chapter 443 Alliance in the Dark[1,362 words]

Chapter 443 Alliance in the Dark

Deep beneath layers of stone and formation arrays, a dark seclusion chamber lay sealed off from the world.

A gathering had formed.

At the head of the stone table sat Li Jianhong and Zhao Wutian, their expressions composed, eyes sharp and calculating.

Several other figures occupied the remaining seats-clan heads, sect elders, and shadowed representatives who rarely showed their faces in daylight.

Then-

Bang!

The stone table cracked.

A terrifying pressure surged outward as the Shen Clan Leader slammed his palm down, his face contorted with rage.

"Failed?!"

He roared.

"You're telling me the assassination failed?!" Several figures frowned but remained silent.

His gaze swept across the table like a blade.

"I warned you, Zhao Wutian!" he growled. "For me to join your alliance, you needed to kill Bai Zihan."

The atmosphere turned suffocating.

"Brother Shen," Zhao Wutian said calmly, raising one hand slightly. "There's no need to lose composure."

Shen Hao's glare snapped toward him.

"Composure?" he sneered. "My son-"

"-will have his revenge, Zhao Wutian interrupted smoothly.

His voice wasn't loud.

But it carried authority.

Realizing that he had overstepped, Shen Hao forced himself to calm down.

After all, the person before him was the Zhao Clan Leader, whose power far exceeded that of the Shen Clan.

Though he didn't need to beg for their help, in the current situation it was the Zhao Clan that needed as many allies as possible to move against the Bai Clan.

"What do you mean by that?"

Shen Hao asked, his tone controlled.

"We have all confirmed it," Zhao Wutian continued, eyes narrowing slightly.

"Bai Zihan's meridians are shattered. His cultivation-gone."

Li Jianhong nodded slowly beside him.

"He is crippled," Li Jianhong said. "That much is no longer in doubt."

Zhao Wutian leaned back, fingers tapping the stone table rhythmically.

"Tell me, Brother Shen," he said, a faint smile forming, "wouldn't it be more... satisfying for Shen Liang to deal with him personally?"

Shen Tianhao paused.

Zhao Wutian continued.

"Not a swift death in the dark," he said. "But despair and humiliation. The slow realization that everything he once stood for is gone."

He paused.

"To torture the genius who once took your son's arm," Zhao Wutian added softly, "with his own hands."

Shen Tianhao's breathing slowed.

The rage in his eyes didn't vanish-but it shifted.

He closed his eyes.

One breath.

Then another.

"... You're right," he said at last.

His lips curled into a cold smile.

"A crippled Bai Zihan," he muttered. "What threat is that? I will let my son slowly humiliate and torture that bastard!"

After all, once the Bai Clan fell-

Bai Zihan would be nothing more than a helpless mortal. Even without his arm, Shen Liang was hundred, not thousands times stronger than Bai Zihan.

Shen Tianhao straightened.

"Fine," he said. "I'll wait!"

But then-

His expression hardened again.

"There is still a problem," he said, eyes sharp as knives.

"The Bai Clan!"

Li Jianhong and Zhao Wutian both looked toward him.

He clenched his fist.

"Even with Li, Zhao-and all of us gathered today," he said slowly, "I don't believe we have a hundred percent chance of crushing them."

The room grew quiet.

It was true. Even before their recent rise in strength, the combined Li and Zhao

Clans couldn't fully suppress the Bai Clan.

One might say that now, with their alliance, they could.

But one also had to consider that while their alliance was growing, the Bai Clan was doing the same-perhaps even faster.

Zhao Wutian didn't answer immediately.

Instead-

He smiled with the calm confidence of someone who already knew the ending of the game.

Li Jianhong, too, allowed a faint smile to curve his lips.

"We don't need to worry about that,"

Zhao Wutian declared.

The words sounded arrogant-especially considering their opponent was the Bai Clan.

Shen Tianhao frowned.

"What is it?"

He demanded.

"Are you saying you still have a way?"

Zhao Wutian slowly rose from his seat.

"You're right, Brother Shen," he said mildly. "If it were only us, the result might be ambiguous."

His eyes swept across the chamber.

Several figures nodded grimly.

Then Zhao Wutian turned toward the far end of the chamber-toward a section of the stone wall that appeared no different from the rest.

"But fortunately," he continued, voice steady, "this alliance isn't just us."

A low hum echoed through the chamber.

Then-

The stone wall split apart.

It opened.

A narrow passage revealed itself, deep and dark.

Slow, deliberate footsteps echoed from within.

Step! Step! Step!

The moment the figure emerged, several clan leaders instinctively rose to their feet.

Their pupils shrank.

Their breathing stalled.

The man wore imperial black-gold robes, embroidered with ancient draconic patterns.

No clan insignia.

No sect emblem.

Only a single token at his waist-

The Imperial Crest!

His face was calm, expressionless, eyes deep and unfathomable.

Yet the aura he released-

Was terrifying.

Earth Immortal Realm!

Shen Hao's heart slammed violently.

"...You-!"

His voice caught in his throat.

Others reacted no better.

Some staggered back.

"Th-The Emperor's... right hand..."

"Ji Zhenhuang!"

Whispers and disbelief filled the room.

Everyone knew him-one of the most loyal and powerful figures of the Desolate Heaven Empire, whose sole duty was to protect the Emperor.

No one had ever imagined he would appear anywhere without the Emperor's direct will.

His presence here could only mean one thing.

The Imperial Family-

Was standing on their side.

Of course, nothing was officially declared yet.

But this alone was enough to shake the balance of power.

The man stopped beside Zhao Wutian and Li Jianhong.

Given his status, he stood on equal footing with them.

Zhao Wutian clasped his hands slightly, his smile deepening.

"Allow me to introduce our final pillar," he said calmly.

"The Emperor's personal guardian-Royal Commander, Ji Zhenhuang!"

A heavy silence followed.

It pressed down on the chamber harder than any aura.

Several clan leaders exchanged looks, shock written plainly on their faces. Ji Zhenhuang's name alone was enough to crush hesitation.

Finally, someone couldn't hold it in.

"Royal Commander Ji..." an elder said cautiously, rising halfway from his seat. "Why is the Emperor's personal guardian here?"

"Does this mean... the Imperial Family has chosen a side?"

"If the Emperor stands with us-then the Bai Clan-"

Before the speculation could spiral further-

"Enough!"

Zhao Wutian's voice cut through the chamber like a blade.

It silenced everyone instantly.

He turned slowly, gaze sharp and composed, sweeping across the gathered figures.

"This is not a marketplace," he said coolly. "You will hear what you need to hear -when it is time."

Several people stiffened, expressions darkening, but none dared to speak again. None-

Except Shen Tianhao.

He rose to his feet, eyes fixed on Zhao Wutian, fists clenched.

"Brother Zhao," he said, forcing restraint into his tone, "don't keep us waiting."

His gaze flicked briefly toward Ji Zhenhuang, then back.

"Why is the Royal Commander here?"

The question echoed.

Zhao Wutian studied him for a moment.

Then-

He smiled.

"Let me ask you something first, Brother Shen," Zhao Wutian said lightly.

"How do you think a Great Ascension Realm assassin-one of the most infamous in the Empire-managed to infiltrate the Imperial Palace?" The room froze.

Shen Tianhao's pupils shrank.

Several others sucked in sharp breaths.

Zhao Wutian continued calmly.

"That banquet was attended by the Emperor's court. Grand elders. Sect masters. Every servant, every dancer, every musician was screened layer by layer."

His fingers tapped the table once.

"Yet Abyssal Sparrow walked in."

The implication settled like a suffocating fog.

Shen Tianhao's throat went dry.

"You're saying..." he began slowly.

Zhao Wutian nodded.

"Yes!"

Li Jianhong spoke up at last, his tone even but heavy.

"The Imperial Family opened the door."

Shock rippled through the chamber.

Some faces turned pale.

Others lit up with restrained excitement.

Zhao Wutian straightened, his voice carrying absolute certainty.

"The Emperor has already made his choice," he said. "He will not openly declare it-not yet."

His eyes flicked briefly to Ji Zhenhuang, who stood motionless, expression unreadable.

"But his will is clear. If the Imperial Palace had truly intended to protect Bai Zihan," Zhao Wutian continued, "that assassin would never have made it past the outer gates."

The room erupted into low, stunned murmurs.

Shen Tianhao slowly exhaled.

"So the Emperor..." he said hoarsely, "has chosen to stand against the Bai Clan."

"Not openly," Zhao Wutian corrected. "Not yet."

"But when the time comes-"

Li Jianhong's eyes gleamed.

"-the Bai Clan will stand alone."

All eyes turned to Ji Zhenhuang.

Ji Zhenhuang's gaze swept over the gathered figures, cold and indifferent.

"His Majesty," he said flatly, "has no objections to the fall of the Bai Clan. They have been labeled a threat to the Desolate Heaven Empire."

Those words made everyone's assumptions certain.

The Emperor had chosen their side.

Even though everyone here knew the truth was that the Bai Clan's strength challenged the Imperial Family's authority, they didn't expose him.

After all, the Imperial Family would coat every word like they are doing this for

the good of the Empire while it was for their own.

Li Jianhong smiled faintly.

"With the Imperial Family standing behind us," he said, "Brother Shen-do you

still doubt our chances?"

Shen Hao swallowed hard.

Slowly-

A grim smile spread across his face.

"No!"

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan!

Chapter 444 Grade-8 Pill?![1,359 words]

Chapter 444 Grade-8 Pill?!

The Bai Clan Estate was silent.

Elders dispersed efficiently, some moving to reinforce defensive arrays, others sending silent messages through jade slips.

After the assassination attempt on Bai Zihan, it was natural for them to be more vigilant.

Bai Zihan lead Xi Yu to somewhere they could talk privately.

Xi Yu followed without hesitation.

She didn't seem surprised by the grand appearance of the Bai Clan's estate; rather, it almost looked like she was looking down on it.

Bai Zihan led her into a secluded courtyard deep within the estate.

A small pavilion stood at the center, understated yet elegant.

Moments later, servants arrived silently, setting down spirit tea that released a soft, calming fragrance.

The two of them sat across from each other.

For a time-

Neither spoke.

Steam curled lazily from the porcelain cups.

Night insects chirred faintly in the distance.

Xi Yu lifted her cup, took a small sip, then set it down with precise movements.

Only then did Bai Zihan speak.

"Now," he said calmly, eyes steady on her, "who are you?"

Xi Yu met his gaze without flinching.

She stared at him with judgmental eyes, as if evaluating him.

"You can call me Xi Yu," she said at last. "That name is real."

Bai Zihan tried to recall anyone famous with that name but couldn't. Perhaps he needed to refresh his knowledge of powerful figures.

"And your purpose?"

Bai Zihan asked calmly.

Xi Yu didn't answer.

Instead, her gaze sharpened.

It was no longer casual, nor merely observant-it became piercing, as though she were trying to see through his skin, his bones, his very soul.

"Before that," she said coolly, "answer me something first."

Bai Zihan raised an eyebrow slightly.

"Are you really crippled?"

Xi Yu asked as if that question were truly important.

Bai Zihan chuckled.

He lifted his teacup, took an unhurried sip, then set it down.

"You can judge that yourself," he replied.

Xi Yu's eyes narrowed.

Bai Zihan continued.

"Besides," he added, "even if I told you yes-or no-would you truly believe me?" Xi Yu didn't deny it.

She wouldn't.

Words meant nothing when spoken by someone like him-at least according to what she knew.

She leaned back slightly, fingers resting lightly against the table.

"From what I can tell," Xi Yu said slowly, "your meridians are indeed shattered. There's no mistaking that."

Her gaze flicked briefly to his dantian.

Bai Zihan remained silent.

"But," she continued, eyes locking onto his, "your demeanor contradicts it."

She studied him openly now.

His calm composure.

The faint arrogance that didn't bother hiding itself.

The complete absence of despair.

"I've seen many geniuses fall, Xi Yu said flatly. "Some lose everything-their

pride, their confidence. They become empty shells."

"Some drown in self-loathing and resentment, wallowing in self-pity."

"Others refuse to accept reality. They cling to delusion, insisting they are still who they once were."

She lowered her hand.

"You are none of them!"

Bai Zihan was exactly as she had heard-arrogant, as if everything were unfolding just as he expected.

There was no panic, even when he had nearly been assassinated.

Yet despite all that, it didn't seem like he was deluding himself into believing he was still the same Bai Zihan as before.

He accepted at least outwardly-that he was crippled. There was no denial, unlike most who couldn't accept such a cruel reality.

But no crippled genius acted this arrogantly-not after being struck down at the peak.

Bai Zihan smiled faintly.

"And?"

Xi Yu sighed.

She didn't know what kind of person he was-someone even she couldn't fully see through.

Like someone who had already given up, she too seemed to give up on understanding Bai Zihan's true self.

"Anyway, it looks like you really are crippled."

Bai Zihan listened, still not understanding why his condition was connected to her purpose.

"I am on a mission given by our Saintess."

(Saintess?)

Bai Zihan pondered that word deeply. Not because such a title didn't exist in the Desolate Heaven Empire.

Most holy sects named their successors Saint or Saintess.

Even Demonic Cultivators had their own Saints and Saintesses, who would later become sect masters-or even leaders of the entire demonic path.

But for a Saintess-a junior-to command someone as powerful as Xi Yu...

That meant the organization behind her possessed an unfathomable background.

Xi Yu's sleeve shifted.

A small jade bottle appeared in her palm and was placed gently onto the stone table between them.

Bai Zihan's eyes flickered.

Xi Yu pushed the bottle forward.

"A gift," she said flatly.

Bai Zihan didn't reach for it immediately.

Instead, he studied the jade bottle.

Translucent. Warm to the eye. Faint golden runes flowed beneath its surface like slow-moving veins.

Even without opening it-

He already knew.

"This is..." Bai Zihan murmured.

"A Grade-8 pill," Xi Yu said, as if stating something mundane.

"Its name is the Heavenly Renewal Heart Pill."

Bai Zihan's pupils contracted-just slightly.

Grade-8.

Not Grade-6.

Not even the near-mythical Grade-7.

Grade-8 pills were legends.

In the Desolate Heaven Empire, even Grade-7 pills were treasures capable of shaking sects and top clans.

As for Grade-8-

There was no alchemist capable of refining them.

Even their ingredients were so rare and precious that one might never obtain them.

They should not exist in the Desolate Heaven Empire.

It was certain that Xi Yu belonged to a force outside the Empire.

Even Bai Zihan-who had seen far more than anyone here should-felt genuine surprise.

(To give something like this away so casually...)

His gaze lifted to Xi Yu.

(It seems I underestimated the force behind you.) "That pill," she continued, "possesses powerful restorative properties. Although

not one hundred percent guaranteed, there is a chance that it will be able to heal your meridians."

Bai Zihan finally reached out.

Although he could use his System to obtain any pill he wanted, this one could save him Points.

"I understand your intention," Bai Zihan said. "But that only makes me more

curious."

He looked at her directly.

"Who is this Saintess?"

Xi Yu shook her head.

"You don't have the authority to know."

The answer was immediate.

Bai Zihan wasn't offended.

He had expected as much.

"Do I know her?"

He asked.

Xi Yu hesitated-just for a fraction of a second.

Then she answered honestly.

"I don't know either."

Whether it was the truth or a lie, Bai Zihan couldn't tell.

He studied her for a moment longer, then leaned back slightly.

"I see!"

It didn't seem like he would get any more information from Xi Yu.

She likely wouldn't reveal the sect or clan behind her either, since she had already refused to identify the Saintess.

Xi Yu rose to her feet.

Her movements were smooth and decisive-like someone who had already concluded everything that needed to be concluded.

"My mission is complete," she said calmly. "There's no reason for me to stay."

Bai Zihan didn't try to stop her.

At the very least, after saving him from an assassination attempt and handing him a Grade-8 pill without hesitation, it was clear she wasn't an enemy.

Not yet.

And if her Saintess truly favored him...

That, in itself, wasn't entirely bad.

She turned to leave the pavilion, her steps light against the stone floor.

Just as she was about to step out-

She stopped.

Xi Yu turned her head slightly, her gaze falling on Bai Zihan once more.

This time, there was no scrutiny.

No curiosity.

Only warning.

"Bai Zihan," she said coldly, "don't get close to our Saintess."

The words struck like a sudden chill.

Bai Zihan's brows furrowed.

...What?

Genuine confusion surfaced on his face.

(Get close? I don't even know who she is.)

Though he had an idea, he wasn't sure to which it was the same as not knowing.

He let out a short breath and looked at her steadily.

"I don't even know who your Saintess is," Bai Zihan said. "How exactly am I supposed to avoid someone I've never met?"

Xi Yu didn't fully turn back.

"You'll know," she replied simply. "When the time comes."

Her eyes hardened slightly.

"And when that happens," she added, "I expect you to maintain your distance."

Bai Zihan stared at her back.

The warning made no sense.

Yet... it didn't sound empty.

Before he could say anything else- Crack!

Space itself fractured.

Right in front of Xi Yu, the air split open like shattered glass, revealing a dark, twisting rift beyond.

A spatial rift!

Bai Estate was protected by layered formations-defensive arrays capable of suppressing teleportation and spatial tearing even from Immortal Ascension Realm.

To forcibly open a rift here...

(Earth Immortal? Or perhaps above...)

Xi Yu stepped forward without hesitation.

Her figure vanished into the rift.

Crack!

The rift sealed instantly, space returning to normal as if nothing had ever happened.

Silence returned to the courtyard.

Only the faint scent of spirit tea lingered.

Bai Zihan remained seated, eyes fixed on the spot where she had disappeared.

"...Interesting," he muttered.

A Saintess of powerful backing.

An unexpected Heaven-Chosen in the Golden Immortal Realm.

Assassination attempt on him.

It seemed Heaven had no intention of letting him rest.

Bai Zihan picked up the jade bottle, his fingers brushing against its warm surface.

"It seems," he said softly, a faint smile forming, "that things are about to get interesting."

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! - Chapter 445 Blueprint of Control[1,336 words]

"So even the Imperial Family has joined them."

Bai Zihan muttered softly, more amused than surprised.

He had expected it, though it hadn't been confirmed.

He was currently reading the information gathered by Kong Zhanghong, and it contained everything they thought they were secretly discussing.

In truth, uncovering it had been far easier than most would imagine.

Kong Zhanghong had made use of the Black Lantern Society to join the alliance of the Li-Zhao Clan, who were desperate to gather allies.

The Li-Zhao Clan seemed to be familiar with the Black Lantern Society, and more than the group's strength, they coveted their network.

Since they already knew that the assassination attempt on Bai Zihan a year ago had been Black Lantern Society's work, they trusted that they were against the Bai Clan.

Moreover, the Black Lantern Society also provided information about the Bai Clan to earn that trust.

Of course, all the information was what Bai Zihan deliberately wanted them to know-such as how many people from the Bai Clan would attend the Imperial Celebration.

The number of flying ships used, and other details, all of which turned out to be accurate.

Because of this, they found that the Black Lantern Society was far more helpful than expected, and they openly trusted them.

Thus, there was not much that Bai Zihan didn't know about the plans his enemies were making behind their backs.

"Emperor..."

Bai Zihan muttered as he thought about the man he had met recently.

After seeing Qin Lingxiao, it was difficult to discern whether the Emperor had been replaced or not.

But one thing was definitely certain-a foreign force was intervening in the Desolate Heaven Empire.

Either way, the Imperial Family was his enemy now.

The Shen Clan was also one to be wary of, though they weren't as powerful as the Imperial Family.

Bai Zihan fell silent.

Against the combined forces of the Li Clan, Zhao Clan, and the Imperial Family, the Bai Clan could still stand.

It would be difficult.

But not impossible.

If it were only those forces, Bai Zihan was confident the Bai Clan could grind them down-even if the price would be steep.

However-

The real variable was not them.

It was the foreign force lurking behind the curtain.

Qin Lingxiao!

There was also Xi Yu's force. Though her stated objective was to give him a Grade-8 pill, there might be ulterior motives.

If those forces chose to intervene directly, the situation would change entirely.

Even if the Bai Clan survived the first wave, the next would be fatal.

Bai Zihan did not know which empire Qin Lingxiao or Xi Yu originated from.

One thing, however, was certain.

Foreign intervention was no longer a possibility.

It was already happening.

And Bai Zihan had no intention of letting the Bai Clan bleed itself dry before that storm even arrived.

Reducing casualties mattered.

He didn't want to be exhausted before facing a much more powerful opponent.

He leaned back slightly, fingers tapping against the armrest.

Then-

A plan formed in his mind.

Simple.

Blunt.

Effective.

If the Li-Zhao Alliance could expand, then so could the Bai Clan's.

They were already doing so, though the process was slow, as Bai Tianheng didn't believe that forming too many alliances with numerous clans would be beneficial.

The number of forces trying to join the Bai Clan's alliance was greater than that of the Li-Zhao Alliance.

However, with the Imperial Family taking their side, the balance tipped in favor of the Li-Zhao Alliance.

It wasn't just the Imperial Family they would need to fight.

Those allied with the Imperial Family also had to be accounted for-and their combined strength was almost equal to the Li or Zhao Clan alone.

One might say the Bai Clan was already receiving as many alliance requests as possible.

But Bai Zihan had a simple way to increase that number further.

Offer an Earth-Grade cultivation technique to anyone who joins them.

Earth-Grade cultivation techniques were treasures capable of altering the fate of entire clans and sects.

By offering one, many more would be willing to join the Bai Clan's alliance.

Even those already aligned with the Li-Zhao Alliance would be tempted. After all, cultivating an Earth-Grade technique was far more valuable than receiving resources or protection from the Li-Zhao Clan.

This could change an entire clan's fate.

However-

Every plan had its flaws.

And this one had a major flaw the enemy could easily exploit.

If he handed out the technique freely to every clan that joined the Bai Clan's alliance, leakage would be inevitable.

Once such a technique spread beyond control, there would be no need to join the Bai Clan to obtain it.

The Li-Zhao Alliance could deliberately send infiltrators.

Join in name.

Learn the technique.

Then take it back.

If that happened, the entire advantage of the plan would collapse.

After all, this was precisely why cultivation techniques were never shared lightly.

It was the reason clans would rather fall than reveal their core manuals.

Bai Zihan exhaled softly.

Yet his expression did not darken.

Instead, his eyes gleamed faintly-as if he had already expected this outcome.

Because that flaw-

Was not a flaw at all.

It was an opportunity.

Bai Zihan recalled something he had seen or read in many novels on Earth.

In many assassin organizations and shadow sects, cultivation techniques were divided into ranks.

Outer disciples cultivated incomplete manuals.

Inner members cultivated partial versions.

Only core members were granted the complete technique.

And the hierarchy was absolute.

Those who cultivated incomplete versions could never surpass certain limits.

Some techniques even embedded fatal restrictions-mechanics that allowed the higher rank to cripple, suppress, or outright kill those who cultivated the lower versions.

If such techniques existed-

Wouldn't it be better for them to spread, as long as he controlled everyone who practiced them?

Bai Zihan's fingers tapped once against the armrest.

If the Li-Zhao Alliance truly sent infiltrators, then all the better.

They would willingly step into his net.

A publicly shared outer method-powerful, yet incomplete.

Anyone who cultivated only the outer layers would unknowingly place their life in his hands.

At best, he could suppress their cultivation.

At worst-

He could kill them.

Control, if possible.

Elimination, if necessary.

Either outcome was acceptable.

In that sense, even if the Li-Zhao Alliance obtained the technique, it would not weaken him.

It would strengthen his leverage.

Still, he would need to find such a technique first.

Bai Zihan leaned back against the seat, eyes half-lidded.

The plan was almost flawless.

But execution-

That was the true problem.

If such cultivation techniques already existed in this world, he only needed to obtain one.

His first thought went to the deepest authority bound to him.

"Feilian..."

There was no response.

Bai Zihan frowned.

Ever since she had shared her power with him, Emperor Feilian had remained at rest.

He tried again.

Still nothing. "Not recovered yet."

Bai Zihan exhaled softly.

He had hoped that someone like Emperor Feilian-an existence that had stood at the peak of countless eras-would possess one or two techniques fitting his

needs.

But clearly, that path was blocked for now.

Which left him with only one other option.

The System Shop. His gaze sharpened.

With a thought, the familiar translucent interface unfolded before his eyes.

He navigated directly to the Cultivation Technique Store.

Earth-Grade!

One technique after another appeared, each radiating profound aura and terrifying potential.

Ninefold Mountain Tempering Art.

Heaven-Splitting Meridian

Powerful. But not what he needed.

Codex.

Bai Zihan's brows knitted slightly.

None of them were what he was looking for. Since such techniques were often used by assassination organizations, Bai Zihan had thought it would be easy to obtain one.

It seemed he was mistaken.

At least, there were none in the Earth-Grade section, which he finished examining after many hours.

Then, it was time to move on to the Heaven-Grade techniques.

Bai Zihan's gaze slowed as he sifted through hundreds more cultivation techniques.

Then-

He found it.

A technique whose description made his heartbeat quicken.

His eyes narrowed as he read further.

And then-

His expression darkened.

"There's limitation."

Even if he possessed the complete version...

Even if others cultivated incomplete forms...

The technique could only exert control over those whose cultivation was below his own.

Those of equal strength-resistance was possible.

Those stronger-completely immune.

Bai Zihan fell silent.

The room seemed unnaturally quiet.

Finally, he let out a low chuckle.

"So in the end, it's just a tool for suppressing the weak."

Against cannon fodder.

Against those who were never a real threat to begin with.

That wasn't what he wanted.

He could already slaughter weak enemies without such a technique.

There was no need to pay an astronomical price to accomplish what brute force already could.

His real goal was different.

He wanted a net.

Something vast enough to entangle entire clans.

Something subtle enough that even experts would step into it without

realizing.

Something that could restrain enemies before blades ever crossed.

This-

This Heaven-Grade technique fell short.

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! - Chapter 446 Heavenly Mandate Assimilation Art! [1,429 words]

Chapter 446 Heavenly Mandate Assimilation Art!

Bai Zihan continued searching.

One Heaven-Grade technique after another passed before his eyes.

There were others with effects similar to what he wanted, but all of them had limitations he disliked.

Some required direct contact.

Some demanded long preparation.

Others were limited in the number of people that could be controlled.

In the end, none of them were truly feasible for the plan he had in mind. Bai Zihan's expression grew increasingly calm as the list dwindled.

If Heaven-Grade was insufficient, then the next option was simple. "There's only one place left..."

His gaze lifted.

Saint-Grade!

The techniques listed there were few.

This was his last resort. If there wasn't one suitable here, then he could only give up on the plan and think of something else.

Bai Zihan scanned them one by one.

Soul-Descent Scripture.

Heavenly Oath of Ten Thousand Spirits.

Minutes passed.

Then-

His eyes stopped.

Saint-Grade Cultivation Technique:

Heavenly Mandate Assimilation Art!

Bai Zihan's pupils contracted.

He read the description slowly.

The technique allowed cultivation through layered assimilation.

Three layers were divided into three different cultivation techniques.

The lowest layer was comparable to an Earth-Grade cultivation technique, the second was Heaven-Grade, and the complete technique reached Mid Saint-Grade.

The lowest layer formed a Mandate Seed, which the cultivator believed to be their own foundation.

Inner practitioners refined it further.

Only the true master cultivated the Origin Mandate.

And the terrifying part-

The Mandate Seeds were not independent.

They were branches.

Branches that unconsciously resonated with the Origin.

As long as the Origin Mandate existed, all derived Mandates remained connected-regardless of cultivation level.

No realm restriction.

No upper limit.

No requirement for consent once cultivation began.

The higher one cultivated using the derived technique, the deeper the connection grew.

The master of the Origin Mandate could-

Suppress.

Disrupt.

Collapse cultivation.

Death was not guaranteed.

But the destruction of the foundation was.

At the very least, they would become crippled.

Bai Zihan did not move.

Then-

He smiled.

Satisfied.

"So it does exist..."

Now, he could move forward with the plan.

Though the price was a bit high.

75,000 Points!

That was almost half of what he had saved from the Beast Tide.

But considering the effect-and the fact that it was essentially a Saint-Grade, Heaven-Grade, and Earth-Grade cultivation technique combined-it was understandable.

In any case, Bai Zihan didn't hesitate.

He purchased the technique.

"Now, it's time for the plan to begin!"

Convincing his father wasn't very difficult.

Of course, Bai Tianheng had his doubts, but Bai Zihan expertly answered every concern.

He didn't explicitly mention that it was a Saint-Grade cultivation technique, instead presenting it as a Heaven-Grade technique and explaining only some of

its properties.

Realizing that those who cultivated it would be unable to betray the Bai Clan, Bai Tianheng had no objections-though he still didn't understand why Bai Zihan was so eager to expand the Bai Clan's influence when it was already

growing at a rapid pace.

Once Bai Tianheng agreed, the plan was executed swiftly.

The news that the Bai Clan was offering an Earth-Grade cultivation technique

to those who joined them spread faster than anyone expected.

At first, it was only whispers and rumors.

But within a single day-

It became impossible to ignore.

"Have you heard?"

"Heard what?"

"The Bai Clan is recruiting allies... and they're offering a High Earth-Grade cultivation technique."

The moment those words were spoken, disbelief followed.

"A High Earth-Grade technique? That's impossible!"

"That's what I thought too. But the rumor isn't coming from just one place.

Many people have already confirmed it."

In a teahouse near the imperial roads, several cultivators sat in tense

discussion, voices deliberately kept low.

"High Earth-Grade isn't the same as ordinary Earth-Grade. That's the level just below Heaven-Grade."

"A single technique like that could raise an entire clan by several tiers. I didn't

think such a thing existed in the Desolate Heaven Empire."

"Why would the Bai Clan give something like that away?"

"Why not? With their influence and such benefits, they can rope in countless clans and even surpass the Imperial Family. The Bai Clan is clearly going all in!"
Indeed, if they seized this momentum and completely outclassed their rivals, the Bai Clan could become absolute.

Then this would no longer be the Desolate Heaven Empire ruled by the Yu Clan -but by the Bai Clan.

Then someone spoke again, voice hesitant.

"Did you hear about the Yun River Lu Clan?"

The table stirred.

"You mean the one that's been loyal to the Zhao Clan for generations?"

"That one. They switched sides."

The words landed heavily.

"No hesitation," the speaker continued. "They publicly withdrew from the Li-Zhao Alliance this morning and declared allegiance to the Bai Clan."

"That fast?!"

"Understandable," another muttered. "If the offer is real, not switching would be foolish."

"A High Earth-Grade cultivation technique..."

Someone clenched their fist unconsciously.

"If it's true, the benefits are unimaginable."

A clan stuck for centuries could finally break through. Talents previously limited by mediocre cultivation manuals would bloom.

Even elders nearing the end of their lifespan might glimpse a higher realm.

And all of that-

For choosing a side.

"I'm going. I'll join the Bai Clan!"

"But what if it's false?" someone asked cautiously. "What if it's just a rumor?"

"Then so what?" came the immediate reply. "We lose nothing."

The speaker leaned back, eyes sharp.

"At worst, we make contact and test the waters."

"If it's false, we withdraw."

"If it's true..."

He didn't finish.

He didn't need to.

The others already understood. Even sending a delegation earned goodwill.

Hesitation cost nothing.

Compared to the possible reward, the risk was laughably small.

Hence, with the same line of reasoning spreading like wildfire, many more clans, sects, and lone cultivators made their way toward the Bai Clan.

Some came cautiously, sending only scouts or juniors.

Everyone shared the same thought.

See it with our own eyes. After all, rumors were cheap.

But Heaven-altering opportunities were not.

What none of them expected was that the truth would exceed even the most exaggerated whispers.

The Bai Clan was truly offering a High Earth-Grade cultivation technique simply for joining their alliance-a benefit most could only dream of.

Shock and disbelief were quickly replaced by uncontrollable excitement.

Those who obtained the technique wasted no time. Sound transmission talismans flared to life.

Clan leaders personally contacted trusted allies, sworn brothers, and blood relatives.

"Come immediately and join the Bai Clan's alliance. Do not ask questions!"

Within days, the flow toward the Bai Clan transformed from a trickle into a flood.

And what astonished everyone even more-

The Bai Clan did not discriminate.

They accepted powerful clans and minor families alike.

They accepted declining sects on the brink of collapse.

They even accepted independent cultivators with no backing, no lineage, and no territory.

As long as one swore loyalty, the doors were open.

There were no additional tributes.

No demands for land.

No demand for resources.

Only two conditions existed.

First-absolute secrecy regarding the cultivation technique.

Second-when the Bai Clan called, they would answer.

That was all.

Such generosity should have raised suspicion.

Yet it didn't deter those who wished to join the alliance. After all, for a High Earth-Grade cultivation technique, even surrendering all their resources would have been worth it-yet the Bai Clan demanded none of

that.

So while the Bai Clan appeared almost saintly, it was better to seize the opportunity than hesitate like a fool and lose it forever.

And as time passed, as they cultivated using the Heavenly Mandate Assimilation

Art, their conviction only deepened.

The effects were immediate.

Almost frighteningly so.

Clans once listed as declining-spoken of with pity or disdain-began to stir like

dormant beasts awakening from a long slumber.

In one such clan, a young genius who had been hailed as a prodigy a century

ago finally broke through.

For decades, he had been trapped in the same realm, his talent wasted by an incomplete foundation and inferior techniques.

Yet after only days of cultivating the High Earth-Grade technique-

His bottleneck shattered.

Qi surged like a roaring tide.

His aura climbed relentlessly, breaking through two minor realms in a single

closed-door session.

When he emerged, the elders stared as though witnessing a miracle. Elsewhere, an elder who had already resigned himself to old age felt the

invisible wall before him tremble.

Tears streamed down his weathered face as he stepped into a realm he had

once believed forever beyond reach.

Stories like these spread faster than rumors ever could.

Not exaggerations. Not hearsay.

But undeniable results.

One clan reported three core disciples advancing simultaneously.

Another spoke of their declining bloodline showing signs of revival.

A sect on the brink of dissolution stabilized overnight, morale restored as hope

returned to its disciples' eyes.

Everywhere, the same conclusion was reached.

The Bai Clan had not exaggerated.

If anything-they had understated the value of what they gave.

Gratitude turned into reverence.

Reverence into loyalty.

When representatives returned to the Bai Clan, they bowed deeply-some even

kneeling without hesitation.

"This opportunity... we will never forget."

"Our lives belong to the Bai Clan." "Should the Bai Clan command it, we would walk through fire without

complaint."

And when neighboring clans witnessed these transformations-

They could no longer remain calm. Caution crumbled before temptation. After all, when one's neighbor was obtaining gold without loss, who could

remain unmoved?

Suspicion mattered little in the face of visible prosperity.

One by one, clans that had hesitated sent envoys.

Then sects.

Then entire families uprooted themselves, rushing toward Bai Clan territory.

The alliance expanded like a living organism-growing, adapting, strengthening with every passing day.

And from within the Bai Clan-

Bai Zihan watched everything unfold.

The plan was proceeding exactly as he had expected.

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! - Chapter 447 False Betrayal, True Scheme[1,494 words]

Chapter 447 False Betrayal, True Scheme

The atmosphere within the Li-Zhao Alliance was gloomy.

Gone was the confidence that had once filled the room.

Gone were the loud discussions, the laughter, and the certainty of victory. What remained was silence.

Just when they had gained the upper hand with the Imperial Family joining them, the Bai Clan pulled a move that left them no chance to respond.

Their alliance wasn't being destroyed by outsiders; rather, many had left in search of greener pastures-which, at the moment, was the Bai Clan.

"Three more clans left today," one of them finally said, his voice hoarse. "All of them declared allegiance to the Bai Clan."

No one was surprised.

But that didn't make it easier to accept.

"They didn't even try to negotiate," another added bitterly. "They left immediately after confirming the cultivation technique."

While they seemed to be complaining, deep down, many of them wanted to leave as well.

After all, High Earth-Grade cultivation techniques were something only top clans and the Imperial Family possessed.

And no matter how strong an alliance was, such techniques would never be taught to outsiders.

However, many of them had sacrificed too much to reach their current status within the alliance.

Unlike the lower-ranked members who left-knowing the benefits of joining the Bai Clan far outweighed what they get from staying-they were unwilling to gamble everything they had built.

A murmur spread through the hall.

Discontent.

Frustration.

And unease.

"The Bai Clan..." Shen Hao said slowly, his voice low and cold. "They've gone too far!"

"High Earth-Grade cultivation techniques?" another scoffed. "Do they think such things grow on trees? They must be deceiving everyone!"

Yet even as he spoke, doubt crept into his eyes.

Because the reports were undeniable.

This wasn't bait.

This wasn't deception.

This was real.

Another clan leader clenched his fists.

"If this continues, we won't just lose minor clans," he said grimly. "We'll lose everything except ourselves!"

"Even some of our affiliated families are wavering."

The hall fell silent once more.

Everyone understood the implication.

Even if they want to stay, with the pressure from the Clan wanting to join the Bai Clan, they would eventually need to or there would be too much dissatisfaction among their clan members.

They might be the Clan Leader but they can't make decisions by themselves. Seeing those they had once looked down upon rapidly rise in cultivation, many clan members realized that if they did not join the Bai Clan and obtain the High-Grade cultivation technique, they would soon be left far behind.

Unlike Li and Zhao Clan, not many have grudges against the Bai Clan, at least not something that can't be erased if given a High Earth-Grade Cultivation Technique.

So, they were indirectly saying that if this continued, they might even need to leave this alliance.

If this happened...

Then this war would be decided before the first decisive battle was ever fought.

Even with the Li Clan.

Even with the Zhao Clan.

Even with the Imperial Family backing them-

They would still lose if they had no other allies.

That was the unspoken fear gnawing at everyone present.

Fortunately... not all hope was lost.

The clans that had left or betrayed the alliance were all low-ranked and

unaware that the Imperial Family had joined them.

caught off guard when it was finally revealed.

Thus, their secret supporter remained hidden-and the Bai Clan would be

Those with access to the inner circles-those who knew the Imperial Family stood behind the Li-Zhao Alliance-had stayed.

Perhaps they stayed because they knew this.

With the Imperial Family's backing, victory should have been inevitable.

And yet-

That confidence was beginning to crack as time passed and the clans under the

Bai Clan's banner grew astronomical.

Because the Bai Clan kept gaining allies.

Left and right.

Without slowing.

Without hesitation.

But still, it wasn't as if all these clans would give their lives for Bai Zihan. In

essence, it wasn't an alliance built on bonds-only on greed.

... And yet, despite all of that, even if such an alliance lacked unity-

Even if many of those clans had no true loyalty to the Bai Clan-

Even if they might scatter the moment things turned unfavorable-

The fact remained.

Their numbers were horrifying to behold.

Even a fragile coalition, when swollen to such a scale, could crush mountains through sheer weight alone.

The hall remained heavy with that thought.

Until-

A soft sound of amusement broke the silence.

"Heh!"

All eyes turned.

Zhao Wutian.

Throughout the entire ordeal, he had remained seated, expression composed, fingers idly tapping against the armrest of his chair.

Now, he looked up, a faint smile curving his lips.

"I know what you're all worried about," he said calmly. "But there's no need for that."

The words sent ripples through the room.

Was this confidence real?

Or merely a mask to steady a collapsing alliance?

"Clan Head Zhao," one of the elders said cautiously, "on what basis do you say that?"

Zhao Wutian's smile deepened.

"Because," he replied unhurriedly, "not all the clans that 'betrayed' us... truly betrayed us."

The hall froze.

"What do you mean?" someone blurted out.

Zhao Wutian slowly stood.

"We sent one of them," he said plainly. "Under the name of betrayal. To join the Bai Clan."

A sharp intake of breath echoed through the hall.

"We gave them a task," Zhao Wutian continued. "Join the Bai Clan. Gain their trust. Obtain the cultivation technique they are distributing"

A pause.

"And they succeeded."

Excitement exploded instantly.

Chairs scraped.

Eyes lit up.

Even Shen Hao's gloomy expression shifted, shock and anticipation warring in his gaze. Zhao Wutian raised his hand, and the noise gradually died down.

Then, with deliberate slowness, he took out a jade slip.

It shimmered faintly, spiritual light flowing across its surface. "This," Zhao Wutian said, his voice carrying unmistakable satisfaction, "is a copied manual of the High Earth-Grade cultivation technique the Bai Clan is distributing-obtained under the banner of alliance."

Murmurs erupted again, louder this time.

Some stood outright.

Others leaned forward, eyes burning. "Impossible..."

"They really gave it away?"

"Without verification?"

Zhao Wutian chuckled softly.

"It seems the Bai Clan is more desperate for allies than we thought," he said.

"They didn't check backgrounds. Didn't verify loyalty. Anyone who joined...

received it. It was honestly very easy."

Too easy.

Zhao Wutian thought.

His gaze swept across the room, sharp and calculating.

"Now that this is in our hands," he said slowly, "tell me-do we really need to fear the Bai Clan?"

Many exchanged glances.

After a moment of thought, most of them didn't think so.

Because if the Bai Clan's greatest weapon had already been copied-

If their leverage was gone-

Then there was no need to worry.

Moreover-

The moment that thought settled, someone finally voiced what many had been thinking.

"Clan Head Zhao," an elder asked carefully, eyes fixed on the jade slip, "can we... cultivate it?"

The question cut straight to the heart.

The hall went quiet again-but this time, it was tense with anticipation.

Zhao Wutian's fingers tightened around the jade slip.

For a brief moment, something flickered in his eyes.

Suspicion.

Because he felt it too.

It was too smooth.

Too easy.

A High Earth-Grade cultivation technique-handed out without scrutiny,

safeguards, or delay?

That alone rang alarm bells.

Yet-

If he refused now...

If he hesitated-

It would look like he was keeping things from others and acting selfishly.

Too many people were already wavering.

Too many were standing on the edge, eyes fixed on the Bai Clan's banner.

If he denied them this-

Dissatisfaction would turn into defection.

Zhao Wutian exhaled slowly.

Then nodded.

"You may cultivate it," he said evenly. "Not only that-use it to calm your clan members."

A ripple of excitement swept through the hall.

"We'll also use this technique to attract more allies," Zhao Wutian continued.

"With the Bai Clan's advantage gone, fewer clans will feel compelled to go to them." Heads nodded rapidly. Expressions brightened.

Many didn't even wait-jade slips were immediately pressed to foreheads as spiritual senses plunged inward. Pages of profound insight unfolded.

Qi circulation patterns.

Meridian refinement.

Foundational reinforcement.

Gasps of awe echoed quietly.

"It's real..."

"So powerful. I can feel my Qi increasing just by reading"

"No wonder they flocked to the Bai Clan..."

Even Li Jianhong's eyes shone.

A High Earth-Grade cultivation technique was no small matter.

Such things could redefine a clan's future.

But before he could say anything-

A hand caught his sleeve.

"Li Jianhong"

Zhao Wutian's voice was low.

He pulled him aside, away from prying ears.

Li Jianhong frowned. "What is it?" Zhao Wutian's expression hardened.

"I don't trust it," he said bluntly. "Not yet."

Li Jianhong stiffened. "...You're saying we shouldn't cultivate it?"

"For now," Zhao Wutian replied. "Yes"

Li Jianhong's brows knitted together.

A rare opportunity lay before them-one that even top clans would fight over.

To delay was to lose advantage.

"I trust your judgment," Li Jianhong said slowly, dissatisfaction leaking into his

tone despite himself, "but this is a High Earth-Grade technique. Rare. Precious.

Are you saying we should just ignore it?"

He almost added-

I can make my own decisions.

But Zhao Wutian spoke before the words could leave his mouth.

"Li Jianhong," he said quietly, "don't you find it strange?"

Li Jianhong paused.

"Strange... how?"

"If the Bai Clan can casually distribute something like this," Zhao Wutian continued, eyes sharp, "then what do you think they themselves are cultivating?"

Li Jianhong froze.

Zhao Wutian pressed on.

"Do you really believe their core members are using the same technique they hand out to outsiders?"

Silence! Realization struck like lightning.

Li Jianhong's eyes widened. "...They must have something better." "Much better," Zhao Wutian said. "And if this technique is part of a larger

scheme-if it carries something hidden-we'd be walking straight into it."

Li Jianhong clenched his fists. Slowly, he nodded.

"So we wait."

Zhao Wutian met his gaze.

"We let others cultivate this High Earth-Grade technique," he said calmly. "After we destroy the Bai Clan, we'll take whatever they truly cultivate for ourselves."

Novel Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! Chapter 448 An Alliance Forged in Resentment

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan!

Chapter 448 An Alliance Forged in Resentment

The Desolate Heaven Empire stirred.

No-

It boiled.

Just when they thought that the Bai Clan would be unstoppable and nobody could replicate what they did, the Li-Zhao Alliance also made an

announcement.

A High Earth-Grade cultivation technique-

Taught to those who joined their ranks, just like the Bai Clan.

The moment the Li-Zhao Alliance made their announcement, the already cracked ice shattered and nobody could maintain their calm.

"What did you say? The Li-Zhao Alliance too?"

"They're offering High Earth-Grade Cultivation Technique?" "So it's not just the Bai Clan anymore..."

"I heard the Li and Zhao Clans actually stole it from the Bai Clan."

"Who cares, as long as we can get access to it!"

For the first time in decades, something unthinkable was happening.

Two great powers-

Throwing out their greatest treasures to recruit allies.

It was madness.

It was desperation.

And it was war-

Just not one fought with blades yet.

Excitement swept through the Desolate Heaven Empire like a rising tide. For once-

Amid clashes of ambition, grudges, and rivalries between Great Power-

The ones who benefited the most were not the great clans.

It was them.

The countless minor clans.

The wandering cultivators.

The families that had always lingered at the edge of relevance.

To obtain a High Earth-Grade cultivation technique simply by joining an alliance-

It was something that would have been unthinkable just days ago.

"In the past, we would've had to bow for generations just to glimpse such a technique."

"And now they're handing it out?"

Laughter echoed through taverns.

Eyes gleamed with undisguised greed.

For many, it felt as though the heavens themselves were finally tilting in their favor.

Some chose patience.

They observed quietly, waiting to see whether the Bai Clan or the Li-Zhao Alliance would raise the stakes even further.

After all-

If both sides were already willing to throw out High Earth-Grade techniques, who was to say they wouldn't offer more?

Wouldn't they be willing to add more benefits such as perhaps handing out Grade-6 pills?

Others, however, couldn't wait.

Opportunities like this did not come twice.

If they hesitated and missed their chance, they might never recover.

So for a High Earth-Grade cultivation technique, they were willing to pledge

their entire clan to another.

With the Li-Zhao Alliance also offering the same cultivation technique, many expected the situation to tilt in their favor-

Or at least stabilize.

To balance out.

But reality proved otherwise.

Yes, the Li-Zhao Alliance did attract new clans.

Several, in fact.

Enough to make noise.

Enough to give the appearance of resurgence of their alliance.

Yet it was nothing compared to what the Bai Clan had gained.

Because a vast number of clans had already joined the Bai Clan.

And now that they possessed the High Earth-Grade cultivation technique-

What reason did they have to betray?

Some felt gratitude.

Some felt loyalty.

Others simply saw no benefit in switching sides when they already held what others were still chasing.

Moreover, the Bai Clan demanded only one thing.

Loyalty.

No excessive tributes.

No forced mobilization.

No binding clauses that drained a clan dry.

In stark contrast, the Li-Zhao Alliance's terms quickly became known.

To join-

A clan had to contribute twenty percent of its total resources.

Gold.

Spiritual herbs.

Artifacts.

And worse-

In the event of war, they were required to commit half of their fighting force to the alliance's command.

Not negotiable.

No exceptions. "Fifty percent... What if they drag us into a war we can't afford?"

"Damn it! I only want the cultivation technique-better join the Bai Clan!"

Even though both alliances offered the same cultivation technique, their requirements were vastly different.

Of course, a wise man could say that loyalty is much worse than 50%. The Bai Clan demanded loyalty-but what that loyalty meant was ambiguous.

It could mean one hundred percent commitment.

Or far less.

A deeply loyal clan might give everything.

A lukewarm one might give only the bare minimum.

There were no specified numbers.

So even if Bai Clan loyalty might one day require more than fifty percent of their forces, no one knew until it actually happened.

Compared to that-

The Li-Zhao Alliance's explicit demand of fifty percent already felt oppressive whether they would need to or not.

Clans would be forced to comply even if their own circumstances were disastrous.

So while it was impossible to say with certainty which deal was better-

The Bai Clan's conditions seemed far more generous to most, at least to their ear.

And so, while the Li-Zhao Alliance grew-

The Bai Clan continued to swell.

Still, many believed the situation spelled loss for the Bai Clan.

After all, the cultivation technique being spread by the Li-Zhao Alliance was-

by every account-the same one the Bai Clan had unveiled first.

Their greatest weapon.

Now in enemy hands.

"Didn't the Bai Clan shoot itself in the foot?"

"They revealed too much!"

"Li-Zhao neutralized their advantage."

Such voices were common in the empire's streets.

To outsiders, it looked obvious.

The Bai Clan had lost exclusivity-

And with it, leverage.

Many waited for the Bai Clan to erupt in fury.

To denounce Li and Zhao.

To retaliate openly.

But strangely-

The Bai Clan remained silent.

And it was precisely that silence that made something else stand out.

Because the ones who were truly furious-

Were not the Bai Clan.

They were the clans that had already joined it.

The moment news spread that the Li-Zhao Alliance was distributing the same cultivation technique, outrage exploded within the Bai Clan's expanding

coalition.

"What?!" "They stole it?!"

"Which bastard leaked it?!"

Clan after clan erupted in curses.

Those who had joined the Bai Clan were furious-and convinced that the traitor must be one of them.

"That technique was given to us in trust!"

"To think someone would betray us like this-steal it and hand it to Li and Zhao?!"

"I swear, if I find out which clan leaked it, I'll wipe them out to the last dog!"

Anger burned hot and wild.

Some were furious at the Li and Zhao Clans, accusing them of shameless theft.

Others were furious at the unknown traitor-

The clan that had "betrayed" the Bai Clan.

And still others were angry for a simpler, far more selfish reason.

Just days ago, they had believed they stood above everyone else.

They had joined first.

They had obtained a High Earth-Grade cultivation technique few others possessed.

They had imagined a future where their disciples surged ahead-

Where rivals were left choking in the dust.

Now?

That advantage was slipping away.

"Damn it!"

"Just when our juniors started breaking through!"

"Just when we thought we could suppress everyone!"

To them, the Li-Zhao Alliance hadn't merely copied a technique-

They had stolen their future.

"This isn't just against the Bai Clan anymore."

"This is against all of us!"

Resentment sharpened.

Because whether they admitted it or not, one thing was clear-

They had tied their fate to the Bai Clan.

And Li-Zhao's actions felt like a direct slap to their faces.

Ironically, that fury did something unexpected.

Instead of weakening the Bai Clan's coalition-

It made them have the same goal with the same hatred against the Li-Zhao

Alliance.

The earliest clans grew more tightly bound, united by shared outrage.

If there truly was a traitor among them-

Then that traitor was no longer merely an enemy of the Bai Clan.

They were an enemy of everyone.

Within the Bai Clan's hall, the atmosphere was nothing like the chaos sweeping

the empire.

Bai Zihan stood by the window, hands clasped behind his back, gazing at drifting clouds beyond the mountain peaks. Reports lay scattered across the table behind him-

Each detailing outrage, curses, and escalating hostility toward the Li-Zhao Alliance.

He read them.

And then-

He smiled.

A faint curve of the lips.

"So this is how it turns out..." he murmured. Truthfully, even Bai Zihan hadn't fully anticipated this outcome.

He had expected Regret. Even wavering loyalty after finding out that Li-Zhao Clan was giving out the same Cultivation technique.

But the hatred now being directed at the Li-Zhao Alliance- It exceeded his expectations.

He had never expected much from the alliance he created.

They were instruments, Puppets used to spread the cultivation technique and increase his leverage.

Whether it was the Bai Clan or the Li-Zhao Alliance distributing it had never truly mattered. If anything-

It was better that Li and Zhao helped spread it for him.

By now, he reckoned most of the Li-Zhao Alliance members had already begun cultivating it.

Those clans' fate were already in his hands.

If they dared bare their fangs at him, he could threaten-or kill-them without hesitation.

As for those who join the Bai Clan's Alliance, it was similar. They were no longer a threat though he also has no use for them.

But now...

Perhaps they could be used better.

If he could reshape this resentment-

Convert it into a shared purpose- Then he wouldn't even need to reveal his trick.

He could have those clans rally willingly against the Li-Zhao Alliance.

Bai Zihan's smile widened, cold and satisfied.

"That," he said quietly,

"Would be the ideal situation for us!"

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Novel Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! Chapter 449 Dispute Flaring

Chapter 449 Dispute Flaring

The Desolate Heaven Empire had rapidly split into two.

One side stood with the Bai Clan, while the other supported the Li-Zhao Alliance.

Even those who had not formally joined either faction held strong opinions about who was better suited to reign over the Desolate Heaven Empire.

Many who once shared close relationships but now stood on opposite sides gradually turned from friends into enemies.

It no longer mattered what history they had shared-only what future awaited them based on the side they chose.

After all, the Bai Clan's side accused the Li-Zhao Alliance of thievery and lacking morals, while the Li-Zhao Alliance denied all accusations.

Some even falsely claimed that it was their alliance's cultivation technique that had later been stolen by the Bai Clan and distributed as if it were their own.

This only fueled the anger of the Bai Clan's alliance toward the Li-Zhao Alliance.

As the divide deepened, words were no longer enough.

Incidents began to surface across the Desolate Heaven Empire involving the two factions.

At first, they were small.

Arguments. Broken tables. Shattered tempers.

Then it escalated-clans barred those from the Li-Zhao Alliance from entering their territories.

Some sects that had formally joined the Bai Clan's alliance even expelled disciples who came from clans aligned with the Li-Zhao Alliance.

The situation only worsened.

What was expected to follow the end of the war against the Demonic Forces was peace, yet instead they found themselves trapped in civil chaos.

The imperial guards were dispatched again and again, yet even they found themselves stretched thin.

Every time one conflict was suppressed, two more erupted elsewhere. It was as if such fights were slowly becoming a daily occurrence.

Such scenes repeated themselves.

In different cities.

In different sects.

With different faces.

Violence became frequent enough that it could no longer be dismissed as coincidence.

And through it all-

The Imperial Family remained largely silent.

They issued calls for restraint.

Spoke of harmony.

Dispatched mediators who urged both sides to calm themselves.

Yet they never addressed the root of the division.

Never condemned either the Li-Zhao Alliance or the Bai Clan.

Thus, they maintained the image of neutrality-the single power standing between the two sides.

But they couldn't completely hide it.

In disputes where the lines were blurred-

Their judgment leaned, ever so slightly, in one direction.

Never blatant enough to accuse.

Never obvious enough to prove with certainty.

But consistent.

When matters involved Bai-aligned clans and Li-Zhao supporters-

The scales tipped.

Just a little.

When guards and judges ruled in favor of those from the Li-Zhao Alliance, speculation naturally arose.

However, there were also times when they sided with the Bai Alliance, making it difficult to determine whether the Imperial Family truly supported the Li-Zhao Alliance.

In any case, it was mostly the small clans and insignificant figures who sparked these conflicts and fought openly.

Those at the very top-the Li, Zhao, and Bai Clans-had yet to make any moves.

They didn't even show open hostility toward one another, which was strange for enemies who had opposed each other for decades.

But most people knew-

It wasn't because relations had improved.

It was simply the calm before the storm.

In a bustling city not far from the capital, two young men stood facing each other in the middle of a crowded street.

Both were cultivators.

Both in their early twenties.

Both brimming with the restless arrogance of youth.

One wore a robe bearing a faint Bai Clan token at his waist.

The other carried the insignia of a Li-Zhao-affiliated sect stitched proudly onto his sleeve.

Their argument began with words.

It always did.

A scoff.

A pointed remark.

"A thief who's proud. As expected from someone from the Li-Zhao Alliance!"

The other replied coldly.

"Hmph! You all have no evidence-only baseless accusations."

Voices rose.

Qi stirred.

Pedestrians gathered to watch the show. No matter how many times they had seen such scenes, they never seemed bored.

Rather, they were slowly growing accustomed to it, treating it as entertainment.

After all, most mortals couldn't be bothered to understand the difference between the two alliances. To them, both were merely super-powerful organizations.

It didn't matter who stood at the top-nothing in their lives would change.

In any case, they didn't miss the opportunity to watch a fight that was bound to ensue.

The Bai-aligned youth took a step forward, eyes burning with contempt.

The Li-Zhao supporter answered in kind.

"Look! It's Pei Chiyan and Zhuan Kaiyu!"

"Are they going to fight?"

The excitement of the crowd was not without reason.

Those two were not nameless cultivators.

The Bai-aligned youth, Pei Chiyan, was well known in this city-a rising genius who reached the Golden Core Realm before twenty.

And his cultivation had only soared repeatedly after joining the Bai Clan's alliance, said to have reached its peak.

It is said that in the coming Dragon and Phoenix Competition he might be able to enter the Top-20.

The Li-Zhao supporter was no lesser.

He, Zhuan Kaiyu, was a famous disciple of his sect, his reputation forged through repeated victories and public duels.

Since joining the Li-Zhao Alliance, his cultivation had surged as well, nourished by rare pills and the High Earth-Grade Cultivation Technique.

So, with such figures openly arguing and about to fight, it was no wonder that people gathered, including the mortals.

"It's them..."

"I heard Pei Chiyan broke through twice in three years."

"They say he was once evenly matched with an inner disciple, despite being an outer one."

"No wonder they're so arrogant."

To the onlookers, this was not a street brawl.

It was a spectacle.

A clash between two geniuses.

Pei Chiyan took another step forward, spiritual Qi rolling outward like a wave.

Zhuan Kaiyu answered in kind, his Qi surging as well, the air between them trembling faintly.

BOOM!

The first blow shattered the tension.

Their fists collided, Spiritual Qi erupting violently.

Stone cracked beneath their feet.

Shockwaves rippled through the street, forcing weaker mortals to stagger back.

"Heh? Is this all you've got?"

Pei Chiyan scoffed, retreating half a step before stabilizing himself effortlessly.

"That was only ten percent of my strength! You're lucky I didn't go all out and kill you in one move!"

Zhuan Kaiyu shot back, his eyes blazing with pride.

They clashed again.

And again.

They weren't holding back in the least and very much intended to kill the other.

Cracks spread along the street like spiderwebs.

Stalls overturned.

Walls crumbled. The crowd roared with excitement.

This was what they had come to see.

Soon, familiar figures began pushing through the gathering crowd.

Their fellow disciples are led by a senior brother.

"Stop, Zhuan Kaiyu!"

"What are you doing, Pei Chiyan?"

Their Senior brother stopped the two hot-blooded youths from fighting.

At first, many believed they had come to stop the fight.

But then the two started to whisper something in their senior brother's ears,

and those who initially stopped them frowned and glared at the other party.

"You dare strike our people?!"

"You think we are some losers?! Apologize!"

"You apologize!"

Anger flared instantly, neither wanted to back down.

Instead of calming the situation, the newcomers formed ranks behind their

leaders, spiritual Qi stacking layer upon layer.

One of the Bai-aligned disciples stepped forward, voice cold.

"Apologize!"

His gaze locked onto the Li-Zhao supporter.

"Apologize for insulting our alliance and injuring our senior brother."

The Li-Zhao disciples bristled.

Another stepped out in response, eyes sharp.

"Apologize?" he sneered. "For defending ourselves? You should be the ones kneeling!"

How could either side accept such humiliation?

Especially now.

Not with so many eyes watching.

Not when they carried the name of their alliance on their backs.

The brief restraint shattered completely.

What had been a duel exploded into chaos.

Qi techniques flared. Blades flashed.

Spells detonated midair.

Shouts echoed through the street as both sides surged forward.

Onlookers who had once watched from a safe distance were forced to retreat as the clash spiraled out of control.

What should have ended with two injured geniuses instead became a full-fledged confrontation.

What should have been a minor dispute turned into a full-fledged clash, drawing in friends and even onlookers who had aligned themselves with one of the two alliances.

"Stop!"

By the time the imperial guards arrived, several people lay injured.

The guards separated the combatants with practiced efficiency.

But what followed was... telling.

The Bai-aligned youths were reprimanded. Warned. Forced to compensate for damages.

The Li-Zhao supporters were escorted away first.

Their injuries were treated.

Their explanations were listened to with greater patience.

No laws were openly broken.

No verdict was unjust enough to provoke immediate outrage.

Yet those who watched closely noticed the pattern. The Imperial Guard was yet again favoring the Li-Zhao Alliance.

Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! - Chapter 450 The Quiet Sharpening of Blades[1,353 words]

Chapter 450 The Quiet Sharpening of Blades

Within a courtyard deep inside the Bai Clan's territory, Bai Zihan sat behind a long jade desk.

Scrolls lay neatly stacked before him.

Reports.

Some significant, others not so much.

His fingers moved slowly, unrolling one document after another, his expression calm-almost detached.

If one didn't know better, they might think he was merely reviewing routine clan affairs rather than reading about violence erupting across the empire.

"Imperial Guards intervened... the ruling leaned toward the Li-Zhao side again." Bai Zihan murmured softly.

There was no anger in his voice.

Only confirmation.

Seeing how they were still pretending to be impartial, it seemed they did not yet wish to be openly associated with the Li-Zhao Alliance.

Perhaps the Imperial Family was still assessing which path would benefit them more.

Well, Bai Zihan didn't care about their thoughts.

The moment they participated in assassinating him, they had already become his enemies.

Bai Zihan exhaled slowly and rolled the scroll shut.

At the side of the room stood Kong Zhanghong, hands clasped behind his back, posture straight but relaxed.

While the rest of the world thought of Bai Zihan as crippled and looked down on him, Kong Zhanghong knew better.

Whether it was true or false didn't really matter-because the person before him was still Bai Zihan.

Even without cultivation, would he dare to oppose him or look down on him? The answer was a hard no.

Even now, he could see that Bai Zihan was in complete control of the situation, and Kong Zhanghong felt that it was only a matter of time before Bai Zihan ruled over the Desolate Heaven Empire.

Perhaps even beyond...

In any case, his focus was only to carry out Bai Zihan's commands-not to question or speculate about the reasons behind them.

"Kong Zhanghong" Bai Zihan said calmly, not looking up.

"I want your attention on Princess Yu Feiyan."

Kong Zhanghong's eyes flickered briefly.

"As you command!"

No questions asked.

"Keep watching her movements-especially if she meets people who don't seem to belong to the Desolate Heaven Empire," Bai Zihan continued. "Also, continue

investigating the Emperor."

"Certainly. I will do my best!"

Although obtaining information about the Emperor was difficult, he could only increase his efforts.

As for Princess Yu Feiyan, he did not think it would be too difficult.

Bai Zihan glanced at Kong Zhanghong with satisfaction.

Among everyone Bai Zihan knew, Kong Zhanghong was the only one capable of probing matters tied to the Imperial Family.

It might be dangerous to gather information related to Qin Lingxiao given her strength; however, she would never suspect that it was him behind it.

Once the instructions were given, Bai Zihan rose from his seat.

He did not linger.

There was nothing more to say.

The empire was restless.

The factions were watching one another, and everyone was simply waiting for something to happen.

That, however, would be advantageous to him. The longer the wait, the more Heavenly Mandate Assimilation Art would be cultivated.

He made his way toward his cultivation room.

The moment the door closed behind him, the outside world faded away.

Silence descended.

Bai Zihan stood still for a moment, then slowly clenched his fist.

After meeting Qin Lingxiao-after witnessing her strength-he understood something clearly.

The strength that others feared was still not enough.

Even Mó Zun, whom he had promised to kill in a few years, was nothing compared to her.

She was the biggest variable in his plans.

Someone of her strength-no matter what strategies he employed-was beyond his current ability to handle.

He also did not have the luxury of time. Clearly, Qin Lingxiao's target was the Bai Clan, for reasons still unknown.

In any case, he needed to prepare himself for when the inevitable arrived.

He sat down at the center of the formation, spiritual Qi already beginning to circulate around him.

Spiritual Qi surged inward like a tidal wave.

"Time to cultivate!"

Bai Zihan lowered himself fully into a seated position at the center.

He raised his hand.

Resting on his palm was a jade bottle.

Grade-8 Healing Pills.

Given to him by Xi Yu.

Bai Zihan's gaze lingered on it for a brief moment.

If he consumed these pills, his injuries-both hidden and apparent-would be completely healed.

His meridians would be restored to perfection, his body returned to an optimal state without the slightest aftereffect.

To outsiders, this would have been the obvious choice.

But Bai Zihan merely closed his fingers and returned the bottle to his spatial ring.

"There's no need."

His injuries were not as severe as the world believed. Troublesome, yes-but manageable, and more importantly, recoverable.

These pills were far more valuable when used at the right moment.

Perhaps to save his life one day.

With that thought settled, Bai Zihan's expression remained calm as he shifted his focus inward.

Next came another decision.

Which cultivation technique to use.

The Myriad Breathing Technique-or the Heavenly Mandate Assimilation Art.

By rank alone, the latter stood far above.

The Heavenly Mandate Assimilation Art was a terrifying existence-an art capable of exerting absolute control over those who practiced its incomplete versions.

That was the reason was classified as a higher-grade technique.

But Bai Zihan understood it better than anyone.

In terms of pure cultivation speed, it was not significantly superior to the Myriad Breathing Technique.

Its true value lay elsewhere.

Control.

Domination.

And Bai Zihan had already learned it.

Practiced it.

But only for one purpose-to control and make use of others.

Not for cultivation.

"Myriad Breathing Technique."

It was better to continue cultivating with what he had already mastered, especially when there was no immediate benefit to switching.

He took a deep breath. Each breath drew in spiritual Qi from the surroundings, circulating it through

his meridians in a pattern he had practiced countless times before.

The Qi flowed smoothly, without resistance, responding as if it had always belonged there.

(Looks like there is no problem with cultivating.)

Only then did Bai Zihan take out several jade bottles, all containing cultivation pills.

Pills refined by his mother.

Pills taken from the Bai Clan treasury, each one worth a fortune outside.

He did not hesitate.

One bottle after another was opened.

Medicinal Qi flooded into his body, colliding with circulating spiritual energy and dissolving seamlessly into his meridians.

Warmth spread through him-repairing, nourishing, reinforcing. With his damaged meridians, many believed his body would collapse the

moment he circulated Qi.

But aside from some initial discomfort, nothing serious happened.

Outside, the storm had not yet broken.

Yet the wind was everywhere. Across the Desolate Heaven Empire, conflict simmered without pause.

Arguments still erupted in marketplaces, sect gates were still shut to those bearing the wrong insignia, and blood was still spilled in alleys where words had failed.

And yet-

Something strange was happening beneath the surface.

Amid the rising hostility between the two alliances, an unprecedented wave of cultivation swept through the empire.

They were cultivating harder than ever before.

With High Earth-Grade cultivation techniques no longer the exclusive privilege of a single power, they had quietly become the new standard of the Desolate Heaven Empire.

What was once a treasure worth waging wars over-

Was now something that could be obtained-if one chose a side.

Or even simply prepared for what was to come.

Loose cultivators shut themselves inside caves and rented formations for months at a time.

Small clans poured every last resource they had into pills, spirit stones, and cultivation rooms.

Sect disciples who once wasted time on rivalry now competed in silence, measuring progress not with words, but with breakthroughs. One could even say-

The overall strength of the Desolate Heaven Empire was rising.

Rapidly. And that fact alone made the situation all the more dangerous. Within the Bai Clan, this shift was even more pronounced. While the outside world focused on recruitment numbers and political

maneuvering, the Bai Clan itself had entered a period of intense consolidation.

Allies were important-but raw strength was paramount. Elders who had not shown their faces for decades emerged briefly, only to

vanish once more into deep seclusion.

Grand Elders refined their Dao.

Even those who had long accepted that their peak had passed now struggled

desperately to take one more step forward.

The Bai Clan was not merely expanding-

It was sharpening itself.

As for the Li-Zhao Alliance...

No one truly knew what they were doing.

Some whispered that they were cultivating with the stolen technique,

attempting to fully digest and refine it before its flaws surfaced. Others believed they were stockpiling strength, waiting for the moment when

cultivation alone would no longer decide the outcome.

And then there were darker rumors.

Schemes.

Preparations that had nothing to do with cultivation at all.

No one could confirm any of it. Which only made the silence more unsettling.

Thus, the Desolate Heaven Empire entered a strange equilibrium.

Fights erupted daily.

Yet so did breakthroughs.

Hatred deepened.

Yet so did foundations.

It was chaos-

And calm.

It looks like everyone was quietly sharpening their blades!