

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! - Chapter 51: Lin Xuan[1,516 words]

Chapter 51: Lin Xuan

Lin Xuan was surprised to see the infamous young master of the Bai Clan—the one everyone in the sect had been talking about recently.

Although he was just a handyman, that didn't mean he was ignorant of the rumors and news that circulated in the sect, especially when most disciples were constantly discussing it.

(Is the young master coming toward me?)

He grew nervous as he noticed Bai Zihan heading in his direction. After all, there were plenty of rumors about how Bai Zihan mistreated servants.

The closer Bai Zihan came, the more certain Lin Xuan became that the young master was indeed coming for him.

(Did I offend him somehow?)

Lin Xuan thought nervously.

But he quickly dismissed the idea—he had been doing nothing but the most menial tasks for the Heaven Sword Sect's disciples.

If he had offended someone like Bai Zihan, he would definitely remember.

So his next conclusion was simple: Bai Zihan was coming to bully him. Just like some other disciples did.

What he didn't expect was that the infamous young master would begin targeting him the moment he arrived at the sect.

Lin Xuan braced himself for the worst.

However, despite waiting for quite some time, Bai Zihan didn't do anything. He just stood there, staring at him.

(Is there something wrong with him?)

It was the first thought that popped into Lin Xuan's mind as Bai Zihan silently stood before him, saying nothing.

Bai Zihan was sizing up Lin Xuan—someone who could potentially be an enemy... or perhaps an ally.

There was no sign of animosity from Lin Xuan, and there shouldn't have been any grudge between them.

However, Bai Zihan wondered—since he was a villain, perhaps by Heaven's will—whether Lin Xuan might harbor some natural resentment or hidden grudge against him.

But there was nothing like that, at least for now.

What he did notice, though, was that Lin Xuan seemed somewhat afraid of him—not to the point of cowering, but there was definitely caution and a certain... persistence in his gaze.

A quiet refusal to bend completely.

That alone made Lin Xuan different from most handymen. Normally, they would either run away or bow immediately upon seeing him.

(Indeed, a protagonist!)

Just their presence was quite different from others.

Of course, Bai Zihan wasn't going to do anything that would make Lin Xuan resent him.

If he had concluded that Lin Xuan was a threat, perhaps he would've—but for now, there was no need.

(Now, how shall I win over Lin Xuan?)

As that thought occupied him, he remained standing still, which only made it look like he was silently staring at Lin Xuan for no reason.

After thinking about it, Bai Zihan decided that for now, he would like to bring Lin Xuan by his side.

This was the first protagonist he had encountered, and he neither knew what to expect nor had a clear plan.

If it turned out to be pointless trying to bring a protagonist to his side, then he'd know not to bother with the others in the future.

Besides, Lin Xuan was weak right now—but that might not be the case for other protagonists he would meet later.

It was better to use this opportunity to understand what it meant to be Heaven's Chosen and figure out how to deal with them—starting with Lin Xuan.

"Are you Lin Xuan?"

Bai Zihan finally asked after a long silence.

Lin Xuan nodded stiffly.

"I heard from Chu Ziyang that you're the most hardworking handyman of the Heaven Sword Sect," Bai Zihan continued—with a lie, of course.

"I'm missing someone to look after my courtyard. So, I want to give you the opportunity to serve me. What do you say?"

Lin Xuan was immediately shocked—he hadn't expected anything like that.

And the other disciples around were equally stunned.

"What? Bai Zihan wants Lin Xuan to serve him?"

"Damn! What arrogance. Does he think this is the Bai Clan, where he can do whatever he wants?"

"It hasn't even been one full day, and he already wants a servant?"

...

Bai Zihan, meanwhile, was thinking that by keeping Lin Xuan close, he could keep an eye on him.

And perhaps, if fate truly favored Lin Xuan, he might be able to intercept an opportunity meant for him.

Lin Xuan was stunned by the unexpected proposal—and by the unexpected reason for Bai Zihan approaching him.

He had braced himself for insults, maybe even a slap or a kick—but a job offer? From Bai Zihan?

His mouth opened slightly, but no words came out.

(What is going on? Is this some kind of trap?)

He had heard the rumors—everyone in the sect had.

Bai Zihan was arrogant, domineering, and treated others like dirt under his boots.

He wasn't the kind of person who offered opportunities—especially not to handymen like him.

(He's probably just looking for another lackey to torment.)

Lin Xuan thought.

After all, he was parentless and had no background—a perfect target. And even if someone did torment him, who would speak up for him?

Bai Zihan's expression remained calm—maybe even polite—but Lin Xuan couldn't shake the sense of danger.

He lowered his head slightly, trying to avoid direct eye contact.

(If I say no, he might get angry... but if I say yes, I might end up suffering even worse.)

A bead of sweat slid down his temple.

He didn't expect to be so unlucky that Bai Zihan would target him the moment he arrived at the sect.

"I... I appreciate Young Master Bai's offer,"

Lin Xuan said slowly, choosing his words with care.

"But I already have many tasks assigned by the inner disciples. I wouldn't be able to fulfill your expectations."

It was a polite rejection—but a rejection nonetheless.

Some nearby handymen gasped softly.

"He actually declined?"

"Is Lin Xuan tired of living?"

"No matter what, this is a good opportunity for him..."

...

Even though they were fellow handymen, they knew that if Lin Xuan didn't accept, Bai Zihan might pick someone else—maybe even them.

And although the Heaven Sword Sect didn't force handymen to serve disciples, it was a different matter when someone backed by the powerful Bai Clan gave an order.

Who knew what would happen if they refused Bai Zihan?

They didn't want to serve him either, especially after all the rumors about how he treated others.

So, they silently hoped Lin Xuan would accept and take the hit for them.

Bai Zihan smiled faintly—not in anger. He had already expected a possible rejection. After all, he was aware of his own reputation.

But he still had other ways to make Lin Xuan accept.

"Oh? So you're rejecting me?"

He turned around without waiting for a reply, his robes fluttering as he walked away like nothing had happened.

Lin Xuan's heart skipped a beat. But as he watched Bai Zihan leave, he felt a hint of relief, thinking the trouble might be over.

Just when he thought the infamous young master would let it go—

Bai Zihan stopped in his tracks.

The air around them shifted slightly, as if even the wind paused to see what would happen next.

Then, Bai Zihan turned his head halfway, his voice calm and sharp like a blade wrapped in silk.

"Are you sure you want to reject me?"

He asked again.

Lin Xuan didn't raise his head. His voice was barely above a whisper.

"...I really won't be able to do it. Please... find someone else."

(Why is Young Master Bai Zihan so insistent? There must be some kind of scheme here.)

The crowd watching held their breath. Some shook their heads.

"He's done for."

"Why would he say no again? He's practically asking to get killed."

"A handyman dared to refuse Bai Zihan? He better be prepared for what's coming."

Everyone believed Lin Xuan would suffer now.

After all, with all the rumors going around, Bai Zihan was not the type to take rejection lightly.

The fate of those who did often ended worse than stray dogs.

Bai Zihan turned fully this time, facing Lin Xuan once more.

His next words weren't loud, but they cut through the courtyard like a cold breeze.

"Then how about this—"

He stepped forward again, just enough to bridge the gap between them.

"I'll offer you something no one else in this sect will. Not even the Sect Leader."

The crowd's whispers fell silent.

Even Lin Xuan looked up, eyes narrowing slightly in suspicion.

Everyone knew Bai Zihan was arrogant—but this arrogant?

The Sect Leader of the Heaven Sword Sect was one of the strongest cultivators in the Desolate Heaven Empire, leading the most powerful sect.

How could someone like Bai Zihan—still a junior—have something the Sect Leader couldn't offer?

Even Bai Tianheng, Bai Clan Leader wouldn't be able to utter such nonsense.

Many including Lin Xuan already thought that Bai Zihan was bluffing and trying to trick Lin Xuan with words.

Bai Zihan didn't care about what they were thinking and continued as he muttered.

"An Earth Grade Cultivation Method!"

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! - Chapter 52: Bai Zihan's Bait! [1,555 words]

Chapter 52: Bai Zihan's Bait!

A stunned silence fell over the courtyard.

The words "Earth Grade Cultivation Method" struck like a bolt of lightning.

The disciples who had been whispering moments ago were frozen in disbelief.

"Earth Grade...? Did I hear that right?"

"That can't be true. Although the Bai Clan has Earth Grade Cultivation Methods, those are reserved for their elites. How can the Bai Zihan be allowed to give one to another? He would instantly be expelled even if he was an heir!"

"He's definitely bluffing. It has to be a trick."

...

But even if they thought it was a trick... no one dared to say it out loud.

After all, even the biggest of scammers wouldn't casually throw around the term Earth Grade to entice people.

Profound-Grade might be somewhat believable, especially if it came from the mouth of a Bai Clan member who could afford that—but Earth Grade? That also a Cultivation method and not just a fighting technique? And for a handyman?

Even someone with the slightest intelligence would know that had to be a lie.

Lin Xuan's eyes widened ever so slightly. His heart, which had been full of suspicion and caution, now trembled for a different reason.

Earth Grade Cultivation Methods weren't just rare—they were mythical.

In the entire Heaven Sword Sect, even inner disciples only had access to Profound Grade.

Core disciples might have access to peak Profound Grade, but Earth Grade Cultivation Method?

Only disciples with powerful backgrounds—or the Sect Leader and the next Sect Leader—would ever see such things.

As for Heaven Grade Cultivation Method, no one in the Desolate Heaven Empire possesses.

Which meant Earth-Grade is the highest grade for cultivation method.

But Bai Zihan... he was claiming he had one in his possession and was willing to offer it to a handyman?

What... kind of game is he playing?

Lin Xuan didn't speak. He couldn't. He was still trying to process whether Bai Zihan was insane, lying, or actually... serious.

Bai Zihan stepped closer, his tone calm but carrying the weight of utter confidence.

"Not only that, I promise that you will get every resource you need for cultivation."

He then proceeded to take something out of his storage ring.

"Here! I'll give you this as a present for our first meeting."

Bai Zihan tossed a jade bottle containing Core Formation Pills, all of high quality.

Considering he had already broken through to the Core Condensation Stage, those pills weren't as useful to him as Core Condensation Pills.

His father had given him thousands of high-quality Core Formation Pills, unaware that Bai Zihan had already broken through.

So, Bai Zihan didn't care about giving them away.

He also had a good number of Core Condensation Pills, also gifted in preparation for his breakthrough.

Moreover, even if he ran out, he could simply inform his clan and receive a new batch.

Lin Xuan caught the jade bottle and immediately recognized what pills they were. There were at least twenty of them—each of unusually high quality.

Though Bai Zihan didn't think much of them, it was different for others—especially Lin Xuan, who had no background.

If he saved up for a year working as a handyman—and that was assuming he didn't spend it on anything else—he might be able to afford one such pill.

But Bai Zihan had casually tossed twenty at him without a moment's hesitation.

The other disciples and handymen saw this and were stunned.

Even disciples with decent backgrounds couldn't afford to give away such pills—let alone of that quality, which even money couldn't easily buy.

The handymen couldn't help but feel jealous when they realized what Bai Zihan had just given away.

They had initially thought Lin Xuan was in serious trouble, but now, looking at the casual gift he'd received, they couldn't help but envy him.

Their perspective shifted—from Lin Xuan being unfortunate, to being extremely lucky.

Lin Xuan felt the same.

With those pills, his cultivation would leap beyond what he had anticipated. In the next sect assessment, he might even have a chance to become the outer disciple of Heaven Sword Sect.

However, he also knew that nothing came free in this world. There had to be appropriate compensation.

"Young Master, this is too much. I can't accept it!"

Suppressing his desire, Lin Xuan declined the offer.

Anyone could see that Bai Zihan was going far and beyond for just a handyman—which confused everyone.

Was Lin Xuan really that valuable?

Forget the Earth Grade Cultivation Method—even the high-quality Core Formation Pills were already too generous.

"Lin Xuan, think carefully," Bai Zihan said. "Serving me will bring you benefits far beyond what you can imagine. As for those pills—you can keep them, whether or not you agree to serve me."

Bai Zihan didn't want to push too hard. That would make things too suspicious—though he figured his offer was already suspicious enough.

Still, if not today... Perhaps Lin Xuan might change his mind in the future.

Even if that weren't the case, those pills would still be valuable to Lin Xuan—and enough to place him in his debt.

Lin Xuan was still deep in thought.

Those pills alone would be a tremendous help.

And if Bai Zihan was telling the truth, and Lin Xuan could cultivate with an Earth Grade Cultivation Method, then becoming an outer disciple of the Heaven Sword Sect would be a simple matter.

After all, he and the other handymen only had access to Common Yellow Grade Cultivation Methods—the slowest of the slow.

If they wanted something better, they had to either pay a hefty price or somehow qualify as outer disciples.

And even then, all they'd get was a Profound Grade method at best.

But Bai Zihan was offering an Earth Grade Cultivation Method—something impossible for someone like Lin Xuan to obtain unless he was nominated to become the next Sect Leader... which was beyond unlikely.

While he was lost in thought, the other handymen who had been watching enviously could no longer hold themselves back.

"Y-Young Master Bai! I—I'm also willing to serve you!"

"Please, give me a chance! I'm hardworking, loyal, and will do anything you ask!"

"Lin Xuan's already hesitating! Why not give someone else the opportunity?"

...

Their sudden eagerness shattered the silence, and a dozen or so handymen rushed forward, bowing and shouting over each other like a pack of starving dogs fighting over a single bone.

The scent of opportunity had drawn them in like moths to a flame.

After all, who wouldn't want to trade a life of sweeping courtyards and scrubbing floors for Earth Grade Cultivation Methods and high-quality pills?

Those pills alone were enough reason to risk it—even knowing the rumors surrounding Bai Zihan.

After all, greater the risk, greater the reward.

Bai Zihan glanced at them without much interest.

"You?"

His voice was calm, but his words were cold.

"I offered it to Lin Xuan. Not you."

The moment those words fell, the handymen who had stepped forward froze.

"Damn it..." one of them muttered under his breath. "Why him? Why Lin Xuan?"

But none dared to say it aloud.

They could only glare at Lin Xuan, their eyes filled with envy and resentment.

Bai Zihan turned back to Lin Xuan, his expression now more relaxed—almost casual.

"You see, Lin Xuan," he said, gesturing lazily to the crowd behind him, "even they understand what I'm offering."

His tone wasn't mocking, but there was a subtle pressure in it—a reminder of just how rare this opportunity was.

"Think about it," he added. "Do you really want to spend the rest of your life scrubbing stone paths for scraps while others cultivate their way to immortality?"

Lin Xuan's fingers tightened around the jade bottle.

He wanted to say no—he should say no.

Nothing came free. This was too generous... too strange.

An Earth Grade Cultivation Method? Dozens of high-quality pills?

This was beyond anything he had ever dared to hope for—it was better than becoming an outer disciple of the Heaven Sword Sect.

There had to be a catch.

But even with all the doubt gnawing at his heart... part of him wanted to believe.

He had dreamed of becoming a powerful cultivator since the day he first stepped into the Heaven Sword Sect as a handyman.

He'd worked tirelessly, hoping for just one opportunity to change his fate.

And now... it was here.

Was it worth rejecting just because it seemed too good to be true?

"...If I agree," Lin Xuan said finally, his voice cautious, "what exactly would I be expected to do?"

Bai Zihan smiled faintly. Not a smirk, not an arrogant sneer—just a calm, almost genuine smile.

"For now? Just watch over my courtyard. Serve me tea, maybe clean up a bit. Nothing more."

He stepped a little closer.

"But in return, you'll cultivate faster than any other disciple. And when the time comes... I'll expect loyalty."

The last word lingered in the air like a hidden blade wrapped in silk.

Lin Xuan's gaze sharpened. Loyalty, huh?

He wasn't stupid. Bai Zihan wasn't doing this out of kindness—he wanted something in return.

But if that something didn't involve his life... and if it could change his destiny...

"Alright," Lin Xuan said after a long pause.

"I'll serve you, Young Master Bai."

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! - Chapter 53: Star Breathing Technique! [1,195 words]

Chapter 53: Star Breathing Technique!

(Nice! Got him!)

Bai Zihan happily thought as Lin Xuan agreed.

He thought that perhaps he might need to wait for a few more days before he could succeed, but Lin Xuan decisively agreed.

As expected, as long as one was willing to spend enough, there wasn't anything that one couldn't buy.

"Come," he said over his shoulder to Lin Xuan.

"We will talk about other things at my courtyard."

Lin Xuan followed, still holding the jade bottle of pills, his mind racing with questions.

However, no matter what, he had already made up his decision. He could only pray that Bai Zihan didn't deceive him.

Disciples and handymen alike turned to watch as Bai Zihan and Lin Xuan walked away.

The handymen were filled with envy and regret, jealous that Lin Xuan had received precious pills as a gift so easily.

On the other hand, the disciples could only shake their heads, convinced that Lin Xuan had been fooled by Bai Zihan.

In their eyes, there was no way Bai Zihan would actually keep his promise—after all, Earth-Grade cultivation techniques were considered clan secrets.

No matter what, they believed Bai Zihan would never teach the Bai Clan's techniques to an outsider.

"You said yes... but I know you're still uncertain," Bai Zihan said as they walked.

Lin Xuan remained silent.

"That's fine. I don't expect blind loyalty overnight. However, soon you will realize that this decision is the best decision that you made in your life."

Lin Xuan didn't say anything for a long time, and there was a long silence as the two of them entered the Mystic Moon Peak.

"Why me?"

Lin Xuan asked, after a long silence.

This was what bothered him for a long time.

He didn't think that there was anything remarkable about him for Bai Zihan to personally seek him out.

Bai Zihan tilted his head slightly.

"Because I see potential," he said simply.

(Stupid! You are the Heaven Chosen! Of course, I would want you.)

Bai Zihan thought.

"Because I believe in investing early... and reaping the rewards later."

"Are you telling me that I am talented?"

Lin Xuan asked uncertainly. He didn't think that he was bad, but didn't think he was talented either.

He was feeling unsure because he had tried to become an Outer Disciple for the past 5 years and had failed time and again.

After experiencing so much failure, anyone would lose confidence in themselves.

However, that was only because Lin Xuan was comparing himself with others who had support of their families and comparing with the best of the best.

Of course, compared to disciples of Heaven Sword Sect, he might not be anything special and even the weakest disciple there was much better than him.

However, those disciples were already the cream of the crop within the entire Desolate Heaven Empire and shouldn't be used as the baseline for comparison.

But without any support from others, to be able to reach Core Formation Stage at just 17 years old, that too with just a Common Yellow Grade Cultivation Method, Lin Xuan was very talented.

"You can take it in any way you want."

Bai Zihan didn't say much either.

There was another silence after that as Lin Xuan was thinking about what Bai Zihan said.

On the other hand, Bai Zihan was looking at his System Store.

He was going to buy an Earth-Grade Cultivation Technique from the System Store and give it to Lin Xuan.

Bai Zihan knew the Myriad Breathing Technique, but it was Heaven Grade and he wasn't going to risk it and teach it to Lin Xuan, who might become his enemy.

Moreover, if others knew that he had such Cultivation Technique, they would surely come to hunt him down.

He also wasn't going to teach him the Azure Dragon Breathing Method of the Bai Clan, which is only reserved for the Clan Leader and those with great talent.

Otherwise, when the Bai Clan found out, he would surely be punished and even expelled from the Clan, which he didn't want.

Leaving the Clan wasn't exactly bad, but he was sure to be crippled before being exiled.

Anyways, he felt that if just buying an Earth-Grade Cultivation Technique could make a protagonist on his side, it was totally worth it.

Moreover, in the future he could use the same Cultivation Technique to entice others to join him.

He looked at the System interface.

Currently, he had about 10,000 points.

And most Earth-Grade Cultivation Techniques cost around 5,000 points.

Bai Zihan scanned through the glowing panel only he could see, eyes moving quickly over the rows of cultivation techniques available in the System Store.

He wasn't going to waste time.

He didn't need perfection—he needed something powerful, presentable, and good enough to leave Lin Xuan in awe.

After a few seconds, he found one.

Without hesitation, he spent the 5,000 points.

A golden ripple flashed across his vision as the purchase completed.

[Star Breathing Technique: Earth-Grade]

Description:

A potent Earth-Grade cultivation technique that refines Qi using celestial resonance. It allows the cultivator to harmonize with the rhythm of stars, drastically improving Qi circulation and combat adaptability.

Absorption Efficiency: 100% increased Qi absorption. During nighttime, cultivation speed increases by an additional 50%.

Bai Zihan nodded with satisfaction.

"Star Breathing Technique, huh? Sounds fancy enough," he muttered to himself.

By the time he finished, they had reached his courtyard.

The doors opened with a wave of Bai Zihan's hand, after which he sat down on the table and took out his jade brush.

He sat down calmly and gestured for Lin Xuan to wait.

Then, with practiced ease, he began to write the technique from memory—line by line, stroke by stroke, each character glowing faintly with Qi.

Lin Xuan stood silently, not daring to interrupt, eyes filled with restrained anticipation.

It wasn't long before Bai Zihan placed the finished scroll on the table and looked up.

"This," Bai Zihan said, "is the Star Breathing Technique. An Earth-Grade cultivation technique."

Lin Xuan's breath caught in his throat.

Even though Bai Zihan had said he'd provide one, he didn't believe it until he was given the scroll.

Still, he was skeptical.

Unless he tried it, he wouldn't know whether Bai Zihan was lying or really giving him an Earth-Grade Cultivation Technique.

Bai Zihan tapped the scroll lightly.

"You are not to teach this to anyone. Not even your friends, should you have any. If I find out you've copied or passed it on without permission..."

He let the sentence hang, unfinished.

But Lin Xuan understood.

"I understand, Young Master Bai!"

He said seriously, taking the scroll with both hands and bowing deeply.

"I will never show it to anyone."

Bai Zihan leaned back in his chair and smiled slightly.

"Good! You can cultivate in my courtyard and check its efficiency."

Lin Xuan's hands trembled slightly as he clutched the scroll.

He had walked into this courtyard as a mere handyman, a nobody.

But now... now he held in his hands something that countless people could only dream of.

This was his chance.

A new beginning!

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! - Chapter 54: The Night of Cultivation[1,093 words]

Chapter 54: The Night of Cultivation

The first rays of sunlight spilled gently across Mystic Moon Peak, warming the rooftops and setting the courtyard dew aglow like tiny gems.

Inside his residence, Bai Zihan slowly opened his eyes.

"Mmm... What a great night!"

Bai Zihan muttered, stretching lazily as he sat up on the edge of his bed. A soft yawn escaped his lips as he rubbed the sleep from his eyes.

Yesterday had gone far better than he expected.

"Hah... I really did it. Lin Xuan is in."

He couldn't stop the smile from tugging at the corners of his lips.

Snagging a protagonist this early—without even needing to fight him—was an absolute win in Bai Zihan's book.

Normally, these Heaven's Chosen were arrogant and prideful to a fault, but Lin Xuan?

He was cautious, sure. But he also had no backing, no powerful sect elders watching over him.

That made him vulnerable and easy to win over.

"Now all that's left... is to cultivate his loyalty."

Bai Zihan chuckled to himself as he stepped into his robes and fastened his belt.

He pushed open the doors to his residence, stepping out into the crisp, fresh morning air.

His long robes fluttered softly, and his expression was calm and composed, as if everything in the world was proceeding exactly as he intended.

The moment he stepped out, his eyes fell on the figure seated cross-legged under the old plum tree not far from his courtyard gate.

It was Lin Xuan!

The youth was sitting in a meditative pose, his back straight, breathing calm and even.

Thin wisps of Qi spiraled around him like invisible threads drawn from the world itself, converging toward his dantian.

A subtle fluctuation in the air told Bai Zihan all he needed to know—Lin Xuan had already begun cultivating the Star Breathing Technique.

It seemed Lin Xuan had spent the entire night cultivating beneath the plum tree—something Bai Zihan hadn't expected.

He had assumed that once Lin Xuan confirmed the technique was genuine, he would return to his own quarters to rest.

"Huh. That fast?"

Bai Zihan raised a brow.

Learning a Cultivation Technique was never an easy task, even with the right method.

And yet, Bai Zihan hadn't personally taught Lin Xuan—he had simply handed him the technique.

(As expected, the protagonist with a cheat-like ability to learn!)

Bai Zihan recognized that only someone like Lin Xuan, with an innate gift for rapid learning, could absorb a new technique so swiftly.

If Lin Xuan had access to enough resources and a variety of techniques, Bai Zihan reckoned he could very well rise to become one of the strongest in the future.

"Lin—"

Just as he was about to call out, Lin Xuan opened his eyes.

A flash of brilliance flickered within them.

As soon as he saw Bai Zihan standing there, Lin Xuan stood up and bowed deeply, both hands cupped respectfully.

"Young Master Bai!"

Lin Xuan said earnestly, voice filled with gratitude. Unlike yesterday, his voice was filled with only genuine gratitude and nothing else.

"Thank you. I... I never imagined such a technique even existed."

Bai Zihan gave a small smile.

"You've tried it?"

Lin Xuan nodded vigorously.

"Yes. I couldn't sleep last night after you gave me the scroll. I began cultivating as soon as I could."

As he spoke, his voice trembled slightly, still overwhelmed by what had happened.

Last night...

The courtyard was quiet, illuminated only by the soft silver light of the moon.

Lin Xuan sat alone on his simple mat, the scroll unfurled before him.

Every character inscribed by Bai Zihan carried traces of Qi, making the entire scroll glow faintly under moonlight.

As he began reading, he felt as though he had stepped into a completely different world.

He wasn't sure if the Star Breathing Technique was truly Earth-Grade, but it felt incredibly profound, far more powerful than the technique he was currently using.

It spoke of harmonizing one's breathing with the pulse of the stars, sensing the rhythm of the cosmos, drawing celestial Qi directly into the meridians and refining it with eerie efficiency.

As he followed the first breathing cycle described in the scroll, Lin Xuan immediately felt a difference.

His body responded almost instinctively.

The Qi around him stirred, faster and more willingly than it ever had before. His pores opened, and spiritual energy surged into his body like a tide.

"This... this is at least ten times faster than before!"

He had gasped inwardly.

Compared to his old cultivation technique, the Star Breathing Technique allowed him to absorb Qi at a rate ten times faster.

In just a few minutes, his Early Core Formation cultivation realm seemed to be on the verge of breaking through.

Even more incredible, the longer he cultivated, the more stable his foundation became.

The heavenly energy drawn from the stars was purer, calmer, and more harmonious.

Seeing such improvement, he couldn't possibly stop and continued cultivating.

As the night grew later and more stars filled the sky, his cultivation speed increased even further. At times, it was up to 15 times faster than his previous rate.

As he sat in the silence of the night, with the starlight gently falling on his shoulders and the scroll glowing before him, Lin Xuan felt something he hadn't felt in years.

Hope!

Before he realized it, morning had already arrived.

He only stopped cultivating when he sensed someone nearby, and it was none other than his benefactor.

"I couldn't stop cultivating," Lin Xuan said now, still visibly emotional.

"I've used many techniques over the years, but none of them... none of them even come close to this. It's like I've finally found a path that belongs to me."

Bai Zihan's expression didn't change, but deep in his heart, he was pleased.

That's right. The more you gain from me, the more you'll depend on me.

"You've only just started. The full potential of the Star Breathing Technique will reveal itself in time. For now, focus on mastering the breathing rhythm and stabilizing your meridians."

"Yes!"

Lin Xuan bowed again.

"I will not let you down, Young Master Bai!"

Bai Zihan nodded slightly.

"Good. When you reach the Core Condensation Stage, I'll give you another gift."

"Yes, Young Master!"

Lin Xuan responded enthusiastically. He didn't care much about what he might be given next, since he had already received something he could only dream of.

Still, he replied excitedly, eager to show Bai Zihan that he was genuinely happy to hear it.

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! - Chapter 55: Meet the Inner Disciples[1,087 words]

Chapter 55: Meet the Inner Disciples

The morning sun continued its slow rise over Mystic Moon Peak, casting long, warm rays across the quiet courtyard.

Bai Zihan had just finished speaking with Lin Xuan and was thinking about what to do today when a ripple of Qi stirred the air.

Footsteps approached!

He turned casually toward the source.

A young man in the standard azure robes of an Inner Disciple stepped through the courtyard gate, stopping a respectful distance away.

He was thin, sharp-featured, and carried himself with a slight air of superiority, as though he were used to being obeyed.

"Bai Zihan!"

The disciple said, cupping his hands—though his tone lacked sincerity.

Well, knowing who he was speaking to, it would've been surprising if the disciple showed any real respect.

"The Head Disciple of Mystic Moon Peak has called for a meeting of all Inner Disciples at the Cloud Pavilion. I am here to inform you and request that you make haste."

Bai Zihan's brows lifted slightly.

"Oh?"

Bai Zihan already knew where the Cloud Pavilion was as Chu Ziyan showed it to him yesterday.

As Chu Ziyan had explained, it was the usual place where all Inner Disciples of Mystic Moon Peak gathered—typically used once a month, or when Peak Master Qinglan summoned them.

"It's standard practice for new Inner Disciples to be properly introduced."

The disciple explained, seeing that Bai Zihan didn't know why the sudden meeting happened.

"Head Disciple Fang Jinyan values unity and respect among the disciples, so he has called for a meeting."

"I see."

Bai Zihan said, brushing a speck of dust off his sleeve.

He could smell that something was going on—and that the target was likely him. But he didn't think much of it.

He wanted to see what tricks they had up their sleeves... or was they just wanting to know him which is almost impossible.

But he believed that it must be his enemies scheming behind him and using the so-called Head Disciple.

After all, he hadn't offended anyone from Mystic Moon Peak yet.

There shouldn't be any reason for conflict—unless, of course, they simply wanted to keep the new junior in check.

Still, there was a bigger possibility that Fang Jinyan was acting on someone else's behalf.

Shen Liang, for example, had considerable influence within the sect and obviously wanted his revenge.

It could be others too, like Liu Tian, though his influence was nowhere near Shen Liang's.

In any case, Bai Zihan wasn't afraid. After all, none of them were protagonists.

"Lead the way!"

Bai Zihan commanded.

The disciple paused, a little surprised. He had thought he might need to persuade Bai Zihan more.

But with no objection from him, the disciple turned and led the way up the winding stone path toward the towering structure perched near the cliffside—the Cloud Pavilion.

By the time they arrived, many Inner Disciples had already gathered.

Their attention immediately turned to the newcomer of Mystic Moon Peak—already infamous among the disciples.

Many looked displeased. Some didn't seem to care.

At the center stood Fang Jinyan, the Head Disciple of Mystic Moon Peak.

He looked the part—handsome, confident, dressed in flowing blue robes with a jade sword at his side.

His smile as Bai Zihan approached was warm... too warm.

"Ah, Junior Brother Bai!"

He greeted, his voice smooth and enthusiastic.

"We were just talking about you."

"Is that so?"

Bai Zihan replied with a faint, knowing smile.

"You're quite famous already," Fang Jinyan continued.

"After all, it's not often someone joins the Inner Disciples without participating in the standard assessments."

His tone was polite, but the sarcasm didn't go unnoticed.

A few chuckles rippled through the crowd, but Bai Zihan didn't spare them a glance.

"I wasn't aware that assessments were required when Peak Master Qinglan herself approved me as a disciple of Mystic Moon Peak."

Bai Zihan replied.

"Do you want to question Peak Master Qinglan's decision?"

The jab was casual, but Fang Jinyan's smile flickered.

"...Of course," Fang Jinyan replied. "We would never question the Master's decision."

He clapped his hands lightly.

"Ahem! Anyway, since Junior Brother Bai has joined Mystic Moon Peak, I thought it best for everyone to get to know each other."

"Hehe... I don't think there's anyone here who doesn't know who I am."

Bai Zihan said arrogantly.

The gathered disciples stirred, some scoffing at Bai Zihan's blatant arrogance.

Others exchanged curious glances, watching Bai Zihan with intrigue.

Fang Jinyan's smile deepened, though it no longer reached his eyes.

"Indeed," he said smoothly.

"Your name echoes even beyond the Bai Clan. But hearing about someone is never quite the same as meeting them face to face. There are many disciples who are... curious about you."

He continued.

"So, how about letting them get to know you?"

Just then, another disciple—Kong Zhanhong, broad-shouldered and loud—stepped forward.

He cupped his fists and smirked.

"Junior Brother Bai, I've heard the rumors about you defeating the genius Li Feng. I'd like to see that for myself."

Kong Zhanhong said it with clear vigor and challenge.

"Are you asking for a spar?"

Kong Zhanhong grinned.

"Nothing serious. Just a friendly—"

"No!"

The refusal came before Kong Zhanhong could even finish his sentence.

Bai Zihan didn't raise his voice, but the air seemed to still.

Fang Jinyan's brows twitched faintly.

"Junior Brother, it's just a friendly exchange. Unless... you're not confident?"

He said it in a nice tone, but anyone could hear the provocation beneath the surface.

Bai Zihan met his gaze squarely.

Then, in a voice that carried through the entire pavilion, Bai Zihan declared—

"Let me be clear. I don't care about your little games."

He stepped forward, eyes sweeping over the gathered disciples.

"You think I came here without knowing what you all think? I don't care whether you're acting on personal agendas or someone else's orders."

A few disciples bristled. Fang Jinyan's smile faded slightly.

But Bai Zihan wasn't done.

"If you want to provoke me, think very carefully."

His voice dropped, each word ringing like steel against stone.

"Ask yourselves—do your clans want to exist tomorrow? Do your families know who you're picking a fight with?"

A beat of stunned silence followed.

Then he smirked.

"If you want to play, I'll play. But don't cry when the board flips and your pieces get swept away."

Bai Zihan's gaze turned cold, and so did his words.

"Remember—when you're picking a fight with me, you're not just provoking me. You're provoking the Bai Clan."

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! - Chapter 56: Commanding Authority[1,190 words]

Chapter 56: Commanding Authority

This declaration clearly shook Kong Zhanhong and Fang Jinyan, who had been stirring up trouble for Bai Zihan.

At the same time, the surrounding disciples felt a growing unease toward Bai Zihan after those words.

Although they hadn't directly provoked him, they weren't overly afraid either. In their eyes, Bai Zihan was just a waste who had entered the Heaven Sword Sect through the backdoor.

But none of them expected Bai Zihan to openly threaten them using his clan's name.

After all, disciples from powerful clans usually avoided relying on their background. They wanted to prove their strength independently, to stand tall without their clan's support.

Unless they could manage something without relying on their clan's support, they would avoid doing so.

But Bai Zihan, on the other hand, boldly leveraged the power of the Bai Clan's name.

It could be seen as cowardice.

But would anyone say that out loud? Obviously not—not after being threatened.

Fang Jinyan's smile froze on his face as Bai Zihan's cold declaration echoed across the Cloud Pavilion.

His hands, still clasped behind his back, tightened ever so slightly.

Kong Zhanhong, who had been smirking moments ago, now felt his throat run dry.

Compared to Bai Zihan's background, his own was practically nonexistent. Just one elder from the Bai Clan would be enough to uproot his entire family.

His gaze flicked toward Fang Jinyan, silently pleading for guidance.

(Tch! This guy really is as shameless as the rumors say.)

Fang Jinyan cursed internally, forcing his smile to return.

(He didn't even hesitate to drop the Bai Clan's name.)

It was clear now—Bai Zihan wasn't planning to play along.

He wasn't going to act humble. He was arrogant, direct, and completely unafraid to throw his weight around.

But Fang Jinyan didn't have the luxury of backing down.

(I can't retreat. Not after what Senior Brother Shen promised.)

His mind flashed back to a private conversation just the day before.

"Make him fall from his pedestal," Shen Liang had ordered, his voice heavy with resentment.

"Bai Zihan must appear weak—so weak that even with his Bai Clan background, no one in the sect would fear him."

Fang Jinyan had hesitated at the time.

"But... he's from the Bai Clan. Won't this bring trouble?"

Shen Liang had laughed.

"Trouble?"

He leaned in.

"The Bai Clan is strong, yes. But Zihan is just one child. If we disgrace him enough—make him a joke—even Elder Qinglan might feel ashamed to help him."

Shen Liang continued.

"Moreover, would the Bai Clan risk losing their face for a 'waste'? You don't need to worry about them."

He then promised Fang Jinyan valuable pills, rare resources, and most importantly, protection within the sect.

Even a personal recommendation from his uncle to become a Core Disciple.

With Elder Shen behind Shen Liang, Fang Jinyan knew it was an opportunity he couldn't afford to miss.

He'd been stuck as an Inner Disciple for years. His current position as Head Disciple of Mystic Moon Peak was likely his limit.

But with Shen Liang's help—or more precisely, Elder Shen's help—he could climb higher.

Best of all, he didn't need to act personally. He could use others to do the dirty work, minimizing risk.

"Make sure the other disciples stop fearing him. The more they see him as weak, the more they'll target him. I want him isolated and powerless. That's what I want!"

He couldn't back down. And yet...

Bai Zihan was proving to be a tougher nut to crack than he had expected.

Fang Jinyan kept his gaze on him.

Bai Zihan was casually dusting off his sleeves, as if he hadn't just threatened several disciples—many from powerful clans.

But compared to the Bai Clan, even their clans combined wouldn't amount to much.

"Junior Brother Bai, forgive us if we were too forward. We only wanted to get to know you better. Perhaps he got a little bit too excited."

Fang Jinyan said smoothly, as though none of the earlier malice existed.

"Excited?"

Bai Zihan echoed, his tone bone-dry.

"That's a nice excuse. But not quite good enough for seeking death, is it?"

Fang Jinyan's smile faltered. Despite the polite tone, Bai Zihan continued to press and threaten them.

"Still, isn't threatening your seniors a bit over the top?"

Fang Jinyan asked.

"Haha... So what?"

Bai Zihan replied coolly.

"Head Disciple, if I were you, I'd pray I don't become my target. But it seems like you are openly seeking death, aren't you?"

He stepped closer, voice dropping slightly.

Fang Jinyan frowned. Not even Shen Liang could threaten him like this, let alone Bai Zihan, who was weak and simply abusing his background.

"Junior Brother Bai, aren't your words a bit too much?"

"Hah? Weren't you the one looking for trouble with me? Don't think I'm too foolish not to see through your little act behind that creepy smile."

Bai Zihan insulted.

"How about this? Tell me who instructed you, and I might let you off."

Fang Jinyan blinked.

"What? What do you mean, Junior Brother Bai?"

His nervous expression betrayed the lie in his words.

"Looking at you, someone definitely sent you to create trouble for me. Could it be... Shen Liang?"

Bai Zihan speculated.

Fang Jinyan's eyes twitched.

(This devil! How does he know?!)

"Junior Brother Bai, please stop with these baseless accusations. I was only trying to help our fellow disciples bond."

Fang Jinyan denied.

"If that displeased you, then... forget it."

Fang Jinyan finally decided to back off. Any further escalation risked exposing his link to Shen Liang.

Forget becoming a Core Disciple—he might not even retain his position in Mystic Moon Peak.

After all, targeting fellow peak members because of someone's order was the same as betraying the peak.

"Hehe... Trying to run away now?"

Bai Zihan smirked.

Then, without sparing the others a second glance, he turned to the gathered disciples and spoke—his voice ringing loud and clear.

"Everyone else except him—leave!"

A stunned silence fell over the crowd.

The Inner Disciples looked around uncertainly.

"You may return to your cultivation," Bai Zihan said sharply.

"Unless... you'd rather be lumped together with this dog."

No one moved.

They had come here because Fang Jinyan with his authority as Head Disciple called them. But now, Bai Zihan was the one commanding them.

"You think this is a bluff?"

His gaze swept the group.

"I said it once—I don't care who your clan is. Act against me, and I will retaliate. Not as Bai Zihan, but as the heir of the Bai Clan."

Several disciples stiffened.

Fang Jinyan gritted his teeth.

"You—!"

Bai Zihan was already challenging him, making it clear that his power and influence as the heir of the Bai Clan far outweighed Fang Jinyan's position as Head Disciple.

If they listened, then his authority as Head Disciple would be seen as lesser than that of Bai Zihan.

"You don't want to be dragged into this, do you?"

Bai Zihan asked them, almost kindly.

"Then leave. I don't want anyone crying to their elders later when they get caught in something they had no business in."

Novel Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! Chapter 57: The Fall of the Head Disciple

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan!

Chapter 57: The Fall of the Head Disciple

One disciple coughed and quickly cupped his fists, backing away.

"I... have other matters to attend to. Sorry, Head Disciple!"

"Come to think of it, my friend asked me to help him with practising his technique."

Another followed. Then another.

Soon, everyone was already moving down the steps of the Cloud Pavilion, glancing back over their shoulders, both fearful and curious.

They consoled themselves with the thought that it was Fang Jinyan who had provoked this great disaster—they had no part in it.

Finally, only Bai Zihan, Fang Jinyan, and Kong Zhanhong remained.

Kong Zhanhong wanted nothing more than to run away, but doing so would mean offending Fang Jinyan.

So, despite his instincts screaming at him to flee, he forced himself to stay.

By then, Fang Jinyan was fuming with anger.

His authority as Head Disciple had been trampled by Bai Zihan, and he had lost a great deal of face.

In the future, it would be difficult for him to command the same respect he once held.

"Bai Zihan!"

Fang Jinyan roared, dropping all pretense.

"How dare you overstep your bounds as an Inner Disciple?!"

His expression twisted as the last of the disciples fled the Cloud Pavilion. Their retreat echoed like a chorus of slaps across his face.

He had been thoroughly humiliated.

His reputation and status as Head Disciple were stomped underfoot by Bai Zihan—and the man wasn't even pretending to be modest.

He stood tall, looking at Fang Jinyan as if he were already beneath him.

That was the final straw.

Fang Jinyan's hand dropped to his waist as a surge of Qi flared around him.

"You've crossed the line, Bai Zihan."

He said, fuming with anger.

"I won't allow you to continue disrespecting the peak—or me!"

With a hiss of steel, Whispering Frost left its sheath, the refined spirit weapon gleaming with icy-blue light.

The wind howled through the pavilion as his aura exploded outward.

It was a Profound-Grade weapon gifted to him by Shen Liang—originally meant to be unveiled during the upcoming Core Disciple assessment.

But now, blinded by rage, all he could think about was using it to crush Bai Zihan and reassert his dominance.

Kong Zhanhong flinched from the release of pressure and quickly backed away.

He'd considered running, but seeing Fang Jinyan take the lead brought relief.

(Great! He's handling it himself. That means I don't have to do anything.)

He silently moved to the side, far from the center of the coming storm, hands raised as if to show he had no part in this anymore.

Bai Zihan remained still, the wind tugging at his robes, gaze calm as he looked at Fang Jinyan.

Then, with a smooth motion, he reached into his spatial ring and drew his own weapon.

The moment the blade appeared, the atmosphere shifted.

A heavy, suffocating pressure slammed into the pavilion like a tidal wave.

The sword's design was simple—no ornate embellishments, no garish colors—yet it radiated an oppressive sense of dominance.

Its edge shimmered faintly, as if hungering for battle.

An Earth-Grade Sword!

Kong Zhanhong's knees nearly buckled.

After all, weapons of that grade were usually only wielded by high-ranking elders within the Heaven Sword Sect.

If Bai Zihan knew this, he would've mocked the so-called "poor" elders—after all, not only did he possess an Earth-Grade sword, but he was also fully equipped with Earth-Grade artifacts from head to toe.

It was one of the reasons he had no fear facing Fang Jinyan, even if the latter was a Golden Core cultivator.

Fang Jinyan's eyes widened.

"You—where did you get that?!"

Bai Zihan didn't respond. He simply raised the blade, resting it casually on his shoulder.

"Since you're so eager for a fight," he said, "let's not waste time!"

Fang Jinyan gritted his teeth, fury bubbling.

"So, you're relying on a weapon to make up for your weakness?" he spat.

"Hmph! No matter how strong a weapon is, it's only as powerful as the one who wields it!"

But even as he said that, he felt unease rise in his chest.

This was his first time facing an Earth-Grade weapon. No matter how he tried to brush it off, the pressure it exuded was real.

He tried to convince himself—and Bai Zihan—that someone at the Core Formation Stage couldn't possibly handle such a weapon properly.

With a roar, Fang Jinyan moved first, dashing forward, Whispering Frost flashing like a beam of cold light.

A full-force strike from a Golden Core cultivator.

Any ordinary opponent would've been crushed in an instant.

But Bai Zihan was no ordinary opponent.

He raised his sword.

Clang!

A single swing.

The impact cracked the tiles of the Cloud Pavilion.

Fang Jinyan was blasted backward mid-strike, skidding across the floor as he struggled to stay upright.

"That sword..."

Fang Jinyan's arms trembled. His hands had gone numb.

He thought it was just the sword's power. After all, a Core Formation stage cultivator could never—

But it wasn't just the sword.

Bai Zihan himself possessed overwhelming strength that defied his cultivation realm.

His body had been refined through the Primordial Chaos Body Refinement Technique—his physique possibly surpassing that of Golden Core cultivators.

Combined with the Myriad Breathing Technique, his Qi was impossibly pure, allowing him to execute techniques with terrifying efficiency.

While Fang Jinyan staggered, Bai Zihan wasn't going to give him a chance to recover.

He wasn't some third-rate villain who'd taunt his opponent and let them strike back.

He would end the battle when he had the advantage.

"Nine Shadows Flowing Light Sword!"

"First Form: Flickering Shadow Step!"

He vanished.

Fang Jinyan's pupils contracted as Bai Zihan reappeared directly in front of him, sword already descending.

BOOM—!

Fang barely raised Whispering Frost in time to block—but the raw power behind Bai Zihan's strike was too overwhelming for him to block.

Fang Jinyan staggered backward, blood rushing up his throat.

He couldn't believe what was happening. A Core Formation Stage cultivator was casually overpowering him.

"This can't be... I refuse to believe he can beat me!"

Desperation overtook Fang Jinyan.

He unleashed a barrage of techniques, his aura blazing with violent intensity—but Bai Zihan met every strike with calm precision.

His swordplay was fluid, elegant, and devastating, parrying each attack like it was child's play.

"Oh? So this is the strength of the mighty Head Disciple?"

Bai Zihan's voice dripped with mockery.

"At this rate, I might as well take your place. You're clearly unworthy of the title."

Fang Jinyan's fury spiked.

The taunt stung not because it was cruel—but because it felt true.

If he couldn't even defeat a Core Formation cultivator, then what was left of his pride?

"Don't get ahead of yourself, Bai Zihan! You haven't won yet!"

He roared, forcing strength into his voice—but the desperation behind it was obvious.

No matter how he tried to spin it, Bai Zihan had already outclassed him in every way.

(It's time!)

Bai Zihan twisted his blade, disrupting Fang Jinyan's stance with sudden, precise footwork.

Then—bam!—a brutal kick to the gut.

Fang flew backward, coughing blood as he slammed into a pillar.

"Second Form: Phantom Light Strike!"

This was the end!

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Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! - Chapter 58: The Hand Behind the Sword[1,029 words]

Chapter 58: The Hand Behind the Sword

A streak of brilliant silver light tore across the pavilion.

Bai Zihan shot forward, his figure blurring like a phantom.

His sword howled through the air, shimmering with a sharp, lethal glow as it closed in on Fang Jinyan—who was still dazed, blood staining his lips.

"Stop—!"

He tried to yell, but his voice caught in his throat.

Too late!

CLANG!

A thunderous crash rang out as Whispering Frost barely intercepted the blow—but Fang Jinyan was flung through the air like a broken kite, his body spinning before crashing into the steps of the Cloud Pavilion with a sickening thud.

Cracks spiderwebbed beneath him, and dust clouded the air.

His robes were torn, his Qi wildly unstable.

He tried to rise, groaning in pain, but collapsed again.

Eyes wide with disbelief, he gasped, "How... how is this possible...?"

Kong Zhanhong stood frozen in place, jaw slack, pupils trembling. He couldn't believe what he was seeing.

Fang Jinyan—the one who stood untouchable atop the Inner Disciples—was being crushed.

And not by a fellow Golden Core cultivator...

But by a so-called Core Formation junior.

"...This is a nightmare," Kong Zhanhong muttered. "There's no way this is real."

He now wanted to curse his earlier decision to stay. He could've clearly run away—but no, he had to stay.

After Fang Jinyan, he feared that Bai Zihan's next target would be him.

"I have to do something," he muttered resolutely.

Bai Zihan's sword dragged lightly across the pavilion floor with a low, metallic hum—one that sounded far more menacing than a war cry.

Fang Jinyan's lips quivered.

"Y-You... You won't get away with this... I'm the Head Disciple!"

Bai Zihan stopped a few paces away.

He looked down at Fang Jinyan like one would at a bug that dared bare its fangs.

"Oh? I would like to verify that then."

He raised his sword again, voice calm—too calm.

A wave of Qi pressure surged outward as he stepped into his final stance. The air grew dense, heavy with killing intent.

Fang Jinyan's eyes filled with terror before he lost consciousness.

"Tch! Only this much?"

Bai Zihan said, unsatisfied with the fight.

Well, it was boring, considering that his opponent was a Golden Core cultivator.

But it had also made something clear—with all his artifacts equipped and his tempered body, he could take on even Golden Core-level enemies.

Although he wasn't arrogant enough to think he could take on every Golden Core cultivator, Fang Jinyan was just a mediocre one without many trump cards.

He also let his anger cloud his judgment, which made the fight much easier.

If it had been a protagonist Golden Core cultivator, they would've shown trump card after trump card.

Let alone Bai Zihan, who was just at the Core Condensation Stage—even a Nascent Soul cultivator might suffer.

That was the terrifying thing about protagonists.

Their trump cards were endless, and even if you managed to defeat them, killing them was another story entirely—with some senior, master, or love interest always swooping in to save them.

Fang Jinyan clearly didn't have a single protagonist perk.

"Wasn't there another one?"

Bai Zihan muttered as he looked around, searching for the other Inner Disciple who had stayed behind—the one who had challenged him earlier.

It was clear he had been in cahoots with Fang Jinyan.

"Young Master Bai!"

Kong Zhanhong suddenly appeared out of nowhere.

"That was excellent. As expected from Young Master Bai Zihan, who is rumored to have defeated Li Feng. I underestimated you. Even the Head Disciple was no match! You must be the number one genius in the Desolate Heaven Empire—no, in the whole world!"

Kong Zhanhong immediately began kissing up to Bai Zihan.

"No wonder Master Qinglan directly accepted you as an Inner Disciple. Even taking you in as a Core Disciple wouldn't be wrong!"

Bai Zihan's brow arched ever so slightly as he looked at Kong Zhanhong's groveling display.

The flattery was thick enough to suffocate a man.

"Oh?" he said lazily, wiping his blade clean before returning it to his spatial ring.

"You weren't saying that earlier when you wanted to challenge me. Something about sparring to 'know each other,' wasn't it?"

Kong Zhanhong's face twitched, but he recovered quickly, slapping on a bright, obsequious smile.

"That was before I had the honor of witnessing your divine prowess, Young Master Bai!" he said, voice full of reverence.

"A mere ant like me—how could I have dared to presume?"

He bowed so low his forehead nearly touched the cracked floor of the pavilion.

Bai Zihan didn't respond immediately.

He stepped past Fang Jinyan's unconscious form and slowly descended the pavilion steps, hands clasped behind his back like he was taking a leisurely stroll rather than walking away from a duel.

Kong Zhanhong scrambled to follow.

"I-I never had any ill intentions," he said hurriedly.

"It was all Fang Jinyan's idea. I didn't want to, but he threatened to revoke my cultivation resources. Young Master, please believe me!"

Bai Zihan paused, his back still turned. His voice was soft, almost casual.

"Is that so?"

Kong Zhanhong nodded like a chicken pecking rice.

"Yes! Yes, that's exactly how it happened! I was forced!"

There was a brief silence.

"Well, no matter. Do you know why Fang Jinyan targeted me?"

Bai Zihan asked.

Since Kong Zhanhong was being so submissive, he decided not to take action—for now.

Besides, it would be useful to have someone like Kong Zhanhong around. After all, he was still new to the Heaven Sword Sect.

"I'm not sure, Young Master!"

Kong Zhanhong answered.

That caused Bai Zihan to frown.

Thinking Bai Zihan was angry, Kong Zhanhong quickly added.

"But I think—just as Young Master Bai suspects—it must have something to do with Shen Liang! I saw Fang Jinyan going to Shen Liang's courtyard yesterday before he gave us the order."

Kong Zhanhong added.

"Also, the sword Fang Jinyan used against you—it belonged to Shen Liang. He must've given it to him specifically to cause you trouble, Young Master."

"Hmm... Shen Liang, Shen Liang," Bai Zihan mused darkly.

"It looks like suffering once wasn't enough for him."

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! - Chapter 59: The Pain That Commands [1,251 words]

Chapter 59: The Pain That Commands

A low groan escaped Fang Jinyan's lips as he stirred, blood crusted on the corner of his mouth.

His vision blurred, but the sharp ache that pulsed through every bone in his body told him he was still alive.

(Was it... a dream?)

That thought flickered through his foggy mind.

But then—he turned his head slightly and saw the chaos around him.

Cracks ran across the once-pristine jade tiles of the Cloud Pavilion, broken fragments littering the steps like shattered glass. Dust still floated in the air.

His robes were torn, his Qi in disarray, and pain radiated from his chest with every breath.

(No... not a dream!)

The cold fear of reality began to sink in—and then he saw him.

Bai Zihan!

Descending the pavilion steps like a stroll through a garden, his hands clasped behind his back, his robes fluttering ever so slightly in the breeze.

"Finally woke up!"

Fang Jinyan's eyes widened in panic.

"No... no, no!"

He gasped, trying to crawl backward.

Every movement sent pain shooting through his limbs, but he didn't care.

He had to get away.

Bai Zihan's presence now felt suffocating, like a mountain pressing down on his soul.

"Y-You... stay back!"

Fang Jinyan croaked hoarsely.

Then—he spotted Kong Zhanhong not far off.

A flicker of hope ignited in his heart.

He reached out a trembling hand.

"Zhanhong... Help me! We can take him down together!"

Kong Zhanhong stared at Fang Jinyan as if looking at a clown.

(Idiot! Did he already forget how he got beaten up?)

Fang Jinyan's voice rose, fueled by desperation.

"He's just one man! He can't take both of us! I will even give you 5 Golden Essence Pills."

Kong Zhanhong shook his head in dismay.

"Ahaha... Head Disciple Fang, I think you might've hit your head a bit too hard."

Fang Jinyan's pupils contracted.

"W-What?"

Kong Zhanhong took a careful step back, sweat beading on his brow.

"You see," he said cautiously, "Young Master Bai and I were just discussing that... well, your sword—Whispering Frost, right? That's from Shen Liang's collection, isn't it?"

Fang Jinyan's heart dropped.

"You..."

"You sold me out?!"

He hissed, disbelief and fury contorting his battered face.

"Tch! Who told you to go against Young Master Bai? You are lucky that the young master decided to show mercy on you."

Kong Zhanhong said with a grin, quickly backing away to stand behind Bai Zihan.

Fang Jinyan realized with a sinking heart that Kong Zhanhong had already switched sides—and was now shamelessly currying favor with Bai Zihan.

Bai Zihan stopped and turned, finally giving Fang Jinyan his full attention again.

He raised an eyebrow.

"Oh? You want to fight me again?"

Fang Jinyan's face turned deathly pale.

His lips moved, but no words came out.

He had seen death before—but never had it felt this close.

Bai Zihan walked slowly toward him, each step echoing across the shattered pavilion like a death knell.

Fang Jinyan's breath quickened.

He needed to find a way out—fast.

But in his current state, escape on foot was impossible.

And with Kong Zhanhong having already betrayed him, he was on his own.

Call for help? The pavilion was already deserted—no one would hear him. And even if someone did... would he still be alive by the time they arrived?

A cruel gleam flickered in Bai Zihan's eyes as he approached the fallen Fang Jinyan.

He stopped just a few paces away, looking at Fang Jinyan.

Bai Zihan then reached into his sleeve and retrieved a small, jet-black pill.

Its surface shimmered faintly with a pungent gleam, and even from a distance, it exuded a sinister, almost corrosive Qi.

Fang Jinyan's instincts screamed at him to back away—but before he could move, Bai Zihan stepped forward, knelt slightly, and forced the pill into his mouth with practiced ease.

"Wai—mmph!"

Fang Jinyan gagged, trying to spit it out, but Bai Zihan flicked a finger and sealed his Qi.

The pill melted down his throat in an instant.

Then came the pain.

An earth-shattering, marrow-deep, soul-wrenching pain.

"AAAAHHHH!"

Fang Jinyan screamed.

His body arched off the ground as if struck by lightning. Veins bulged across his skin.

His Qi flared wildly before turning inward, thrashing and convulsing like a beast in a cage.

"AAAAAARGH—!!"

He clawed at his chest, his throat, the ground—anything to anchor himself as he writhed in agony.

Kong Zhanhong flinched and backed even further away.

Even he hadn't expected this.

It was like watching someone be slowly torn apart from the inside out.

Looking at Bai Zihan, he once again realized just how wise his earlier decision to submit had been.

Otherwise, it might very well be him screaming in agony alongside Fang Jinyan.

Just watching a single pill bring a Golden Core cultivator to his knees in seconds, Kong Zhanhong knew—it had to be at least a Grade-3 poison pill.

Bai Zihan stood there, utterly unfazed by Fang Jinyan's screams.

There was no need to show mercy to someone who dared to harm him.

"P-Please..."

Fang Jinyan stammered.

"Spare me. Please, I will do everything you say!"

But Bai Zihan wasn't interested and just kept staring at Fang Jinyan who was pleading for help.

After a few moments, he retrieved a second pill—this one shimmering with a faint golden hue—and tossed it toward Fang Jinyan.

"Swallow it!"

Fang Jinyan obviously hesitated.

After all, the last pill had brought him unimaginable pain.

This one might very well send him straight to the afterlife.

"Unless you don't want the pain to stop?"

Bai Zihan added.

Fang Jinyan didn't hesitate any longer.

The agony clawing through his body was too much that a sliver of hope is all he needed to obey.

He shoved the pill into his mouth with trembling hands, coughing and choking, eyes bloodshot and overflowing with tears.

The pain dulled—slowly.

His breathing steadied, but the agony lingered like a burning coal buried in his gut.

"W-What did you do to me?"

He croaked, barely able to speak.

Bai Zihan crouched beside him, voice low and menacing.

"It's called the Thousand Vein Parasite Pill," he said softly.

"An exquisite little poison that binds to your meridians, your bones and your muscles."

Fang Jinyan trembled.

"What I gave you was a remedy which can help suppress the poison for three days after which it will resurface."

"What?"

Fang Jinyan realized he hadn't been given the antidote yet—and the pain still lingered, coiled deep within his body like a sleeping beast.

If he were to suffer that agony again, he might very well lose his mind.

"What do you want from me?"

Fang Jinyan asked with fear in his voice.

Bai Zihan stood up, casually brushing dust from his robes.

"I want you to become my eyes and ears," he said simply.

"A loyal little spy, sitting beside Shen Liang. You'll smile, flatter, obey—and report everything back to me. Won't you?"

Bai Zihan's gaze was calm, yet cold.

Fang Jinyan hesitated.

After all, going against Shen Liang was no easy task. If he was ever found out, it could mean death.

But then he remembered the pain—mind-shattering, soul-wrenching pain.

Compared to that, betraying Shen Liang didn't seem nearly as terrifying.

"Yes! I'll do as you say!"

Fang Jinyan agreed, his voice trembling.

"Oh, and Fang Jinyan..."

Bai Zihan said, turning back with a faint smile.

Fang looked up weakly.

"Why don't you give me a brief summary of your deal with Shen Liang?"

Novel Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan! Chapter 60: Rumors, Lies, and Lace

Turns Out, I'm In A Villain Clan!

Chapter 60: Rumors, Lies, and Lace

Well, to be honest, I didn't get anything useful out of Fang Jinyan.

Just some lame deal about stirring up trouble for him in exchange for resources.

No clever schemes, no secret plans—just a typical suck-up mission gone wrong.

Now that Shen Liang's plan had gone up in flames, Bai Zihan figured the guy might try something else soon.

Well that was if he knew that Fang Jinyan failed which he wouldn't know as he got Fang Jinyan in his hand.

Moreover, although the guy was a total weakling, he was the Head Disciple of Mystic Moon Peak.

That title had some weight to it—might as well use it like it's his own in future.

Getting Mystic Moon Peak to do his bidding now and then? Yeah, that might come in handy.

"So, you're going to report to Shen Liang after this, yeah?"

Bai Zihan asked lazily.

Fang Jinyan looked hesitant for a second, but since Bai Zihan already knew, there was no point in lying.

"Yes... Shen Liang asked to meet me once I was done here," he admitted.

"Hmm... Then you know what to say, and more importantly, what not to say," Bai Zihan said.

"Just tell him I suffered a bit and escaped with some fancy artifact."

"Understood!"

"And when we're in public, act arrogant around me," Bai Zihan added casually.

After all, if he suddenly started acting all submissive, Shen Liang would sniff something out immediately.

But if he played the tough guy, it would throw them off the scent.

"Go on then—go report."

Fang Jinyan didn't need to be told twice.

He bolted out of there, practically tripping over himself in relief.

He wasn't dead... yet. But with the poison still in his body, if he ever tried anything funny, he'd be coughing blood before he could even regret it.

Now only Kong Zhanhong was left, standing obediently like a little dog.

"You..."

Bai Zihan called.

"Yes, young master! Whatever you need, just say the word."

Kong Zhanhong said, bowing with a big-ass grin. The guy was practically born to kiss ass.

Bai Zihan didn't mind. Honestly, he preferred guys like that over clueless idiots who didn't know their place.

"Go gather all the info you can about the Heaven Sword Sect and its factions," Bai Zihan ordered.

(I was planning to ask someone from the Bai Clan, but haven't seen a single one yet.)

"Oh, and another thing—find out where the other Bai Clan disciples are hiding."

(Hmph. Trying to avoid me?)

"Yes, young master!"

With everything taken care of, Bai Zihan headed back to his courtyard.

As he stepped onto the familiar stone path, the wooden door slid open and a figure came rushing out.

"Young Master, you're back!"

Lin Xuan said, voice full of respectful enthusiasm.

It was a big change from yesterday. Gone was the cautious tone, the wary glances.

Lin Xuan now stood straight, eyes slightly lowered, voice steady but reverent.

The shift was clear as day—he wasn't just pretending. He'd already accepted Bai Zihan as his master.

A sharp contrast from yesterday's edge-of-suspicion attitude.

Bai Zihan gave him a sideways glance.

"Mmm!"

Lin Xuan quickly stepped aside, holding the door open and offering a fresh cup of tea like a proper servant.

"I've cleaned the courtyard, lit some calming incense. Would you like to rest?"

All this without even being asked. Bai Zihan raised an eyebrow slightly but said nothing.

(Not bad!)

At least, better than Luo Qing who needs to be given orders for everything.

He walked inside, took the tea, and made himself comfortable.

Meanwhile, the Heaven Sword Sect was buzzing with gossip.

In the inner disciple dorms, down by the riverside training grounds, even in the pill refinement hall—everyone had something to say.

"Yo, you heard? That new Bai Clan guy took in a handyman as his personal servant."

"You mean Lin Xuan? That quiet dude from the outer quarters?"

"Yeah. Word is Bai Zihan offered him Earth-Grade cultivation techniques and high-level pills."

"No way. That's insane!"

"Man, Lin Xuan's either crazy or just desperate. I bet he's suffering right now, poor guy."

But that wasn't the hottest rumor.

"Oh, oh—and get this: Bai Zihan fought the Head Disciple, Fang Jinyan!"

"No shit? What happened?"

"Apparently, Fang Jinyan kicked his ass. Send him running like a scared little rabbit."

"Seriously?"

"That's what people are saying. Some even claim they saw him limping off with his robes torn up."

"Tsk! Useless guy. Why the hell is he an Inner Disciple while I'm stuck here busting my ass as an Outer?"

This rumor was blowing up fast.

And surprise, surprise—it all traced back to Shen Liang.

He was the one feeding the gossip through his little minions, spicing it up with fake details.

Like Bai Zihan begging for mercy or being dragged away in disgrace. He even had a few lackeys pretending to be "eyewitnesses."

Shen Liang wanted to chip away at Bai Zihan's growing mystique—make him look weak, laughable.

He didn't just want to isolate Bai Zihan. He wanted to make him a joke.

Naturally, it was to make Bai Zihan lose whatever reputation and influence he might have as Bai Clan's heir.

He also rewarded Fang Jinyan as promised and gave additional tasks with even greater reward.

"So that's what he's planning, huh?"

Bai Zihan let out a dry mutter as Fang Jinyan finally stopped talking and bowed, dutifully delivering Shen Liang's so-called genius plan like it wasn't complete trash.

Apparently, just having to get Fang Jinyan to beat him up and spreading rumors wasn't enough for that bastard.

No, Shen Liang wanted the full package—his reputation wrecked, his engagement blown up, and if possible, his entire future in the Heaven Sword Sect torched.

And this latest scheme?

He ordered Fang Jinyan to sneak some female undergarments into Bai Zihan's room. Make sure they're placed somewhere obvious.

Then tip off a few girls—ones who'd be willing to play along. And make sure Chu Ziyang's with them too.

Accuse him of something nasty. Say he's been peeping, stealing, or maybe even plotting something worse.

The girls would act shocked, kick up a fuss, and start pointing fingers in front of a crowd.

If it all went according to plan, the engagement with Chu Ziyang would be over, and Bai Zihan might even get expelled.

At the very least, his name would be dragged through the mud until he didn't even have the face to show up in public.

Too bad for Shen Liang—Bai Zihan already knew everything.

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