

Rebirth Of The Urban Immortal Cultivator

Chapter 41: The Third Lord's Invitation

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The girl who called Chen Fan out was the star of the bar: Sister Ding-Ding

Chen Yin stood right beside Ding-Ding. Her face was overwrought when she saw the trouble Chen Fan was in.

Having watched the development from the beginning to the end, Xiao Qian exclaimed incredulously: "Xiao Qiu, your friend is so... boorish. I have never seen an employee beat up a manager before."

Jiang Tanqiu smiled smugly and said: "You bet. This friend of mine was good at nothing but fighting. He had defeated a Taekwondo black belt at school."

When Senior Qi saw the man on the second floor, he pulled a taut face and shook his head. "Things are about to get more complicated. Did you see that man on the second floor?"

"Yeah?" Jiang Tanqiu paused for a second and then replied.

The man was behind the two girls. However, he stood right in the middle of the two. It was evident that the man was the one calling the shots. He wrapped one arm around Ding-Ding's waist and looked down at the commotion with an angered face.

"That is Brother Dong." Senior Qi said under his breath.

Jiang Tanqiu and Xiao Qian were taken aback by the revelation. They had just spoken of the devil, now there he was.

"Good, that rude brute will finally learn a lesson." Xiao Qian gave Jiang Tanqiu a look as she gloated at Chen Fan's impending doom. Jiang Tanqiu's face paled as hesitation gleamed in his eyes.

Boss Yang struggled to his feet and hurried to clamber up to the second floor as if those three people on the landing was his saviors.

"Brother Dong, help me!

"This asshole had slapped me a dozen times. Look at my face!" Boss Yang sobbed.

Displeasure etched onto Brother Dong's hard face as he saw how much Bosses Yang's face had swelled up.

The crowd on the first floor filled with surprise when they heard Boss Yang call the man "Brother Dong."

"Is he Brother Dong?"

"Brother Dong of the University District? He is the real boss of all business around this area."

"Shit, shit! What is going to happen to Xiao Fan?"

Some waitresses who were friends with Chen Fan shuffled their feet nervously.

"Sister Yin, It is all my fault, please leave Xiao Fan out of this," Ziqi spoke out bravely after taking a deep breath.

All of her friend's faces darkened. One of them tugged her sleeve and said, "What are you doing? You are going to get yourself killed!"

"Xiao Fan hit Boss Yang because of me. I can't let him be responsible for everything. He is just a student." Resolution flickered in Ziqi's eyes, despite her shaky voice.

Before Chen Yin could utter a word, Brother Dong spoke up.

"Are you Chen Fan? I have heard of you from Sister Yin.

"You see, If you had hit anyone else, I wouldn't get involved since you have saved Sister Yin's life. However, Xiao Yang is my inlaw, and also my man in the Coco Bar. He is your manager for god's sake, how could you beat him up like this? Tell me, what do you think I should do with you?"

Blood drained out of Sister Yin's face after she heard Brother Dong's words, she managed a smile and then said:

"Brother Dong, Xiao Fan is still a kid; please give him one more chance."

"One more chance?" Sister Ding Ding said in a sharp voice. "Everyone knew that Boss Yang is Brother Dong's man. Therefore, Chen Fan didn't just beat up Boss Yang, but he also slapped Brother Dong in the face.

"Am I right, Brother Dong?"

After she was done, her body seemed to have melted into Brother Dong's arms. An approving smile broke over Brother Dong's face.

Brother Dong's name is Liu Zhengdong. He was well known for his revengefulness and inflated ego.

Chen Yin's heart sank once she saw the sadistic smile on Brother Dong's face. She kept her silence and regarded Chen Fan helplessly.

Although she owned the bar, without the "protection" of Brother Dong, she would not be able to run a business in this district.

"Xiao Fan, just lower your head and apologize. That way, at least I can save your life!" Sister Yin screamed in her mind.

However, the situation took a bad turn very quickly.

Chen Fan linked his hands behind his back and looked at Liu Zhengdong with a cold smile.

"What should you do?"

"It's very easy, just apologize to me, Ziqi as well as all the other workers in the bar, and then get the fuck out of Coco. "

"What did you say?"

Brother Dong thought his ear had played a trick on him. He smirked at Chen Fan incredulously.

The girls around Chen Fan were terrified by what they heard. Ziqi threw herself at Chen Fan and shouted.

"Are you crazy? That is Brother Dong!"

"Xiao Fan, Apologize, NOW!"

Chen Yin chastised Chen Fan immediately, and then she gave Brother Dong an imploring look.

"No, go on. I want to hear what he has to say." Brother Dong waved dismissively at Chen Yin as he smiled at Chen Yin sarcastically. "What else? Do tell. I am a reasonable man, you know."

Everyone squeezed their eyes at Chen Fan, warning him not to fall for the trap.

Chen Fan ignored the warning and played along.

“Other request?”

“Why-of course! You can give up your shares in all the bars right now and sell it to me.”

Chen Fan said lightly

“You want to kick me out of the business?”

Brother Dong pointed a finger at himself as he stared at Chen Fan as if he was looking at a deranged madman.

“That’s right. You better do it before I change my mind. If I were you, I would get the hell out of the University District while you still can.”

Chen Fan was already planning to quit his job, so he decided to give Sister Yin and all of his friends at the bar one last gift that will keep on giving.

By then, not only Brother Dong but nearly everyone in the bar was convinced that Chen Fan had gone mad.

Liu Zhengdong could no longer hold back the anger inside of him, so he slammed the railing of the landing with a giant palm and grinned.

“Kid, I wanted to spare your life for the sake of Sister Yin. However, it appears that I will have to teach you a hard lesson after all.

“I, Liu Zhengdong had never met anyone who dared to talk to me like this after I pledged my liegance to Zhou Tianhao.”

“Yes, yes! Brother Dong, this kid is getting out of control, kick him out of here!”

Boss Yang said vehemently.

Seeing all hopes were lost, Sister Yin closed her eyes and didn’t want to witness what was going to happen next.

That’s it, Chen Fan had asked for it himself. Brother Dong was never going to let it slide because it was going to make him look weak. He needed to make an example of the Chen Fan and let others know what would happen to his challenger.

“Why are you so full of yourself?”

Sister Yin lamented in her mind.

Suddenly, Jiang Tanqiu stood up and said: "I can't let Chen Fan do it alone!"

Xiao Qian hurried to stop him from walking over to the commotion.

"Sister Qian-Qian, he is my friend!" Jiang Tanqiu said with a pained face.

Xiao Qian didn't reply; she turned her head to look at Senior Qi.

Senior Qi thought for a while and then shook his head. "I might be able to rescue your friend if he didn't challenge Brother Dong openly. It's too late now; no one can help him."

"Did you hear that, Xiao Qi? Sit down and shut up!"

Xiao Qian put in. She didn't like Chen Fan, and therefore she was relieved that Senior Qi was not going to get involved.

Jiang Tanqiu stood still and was not sure what to do.

Suddenly people heard loud din came from the entrance of the bar. A man pushed his way through the crowd and walked over to Chen Fan.

He was an ordinary looking man with a buzzcut.

Brother Dong hurried to the first floor and welcomed him.

"Oh my, brother Xi, what has brought you here?"

Seeing Brother Dong's unctuous smile, everyone wondered who was this mysterious guest.

Even as everyone wondered about the identity of the man, he pushed Brother Dong to the side, walked over to Chen Fan and then bowed deeply.

"Mr. Chen, The Third Lord invites you to a banquet."

Brother Dong could only stare as his mind reeled.

"What the heck is happening?"

Chapter 42: Over Sea Hong Sect

"Brother Xi, why are you..." Brother Dong's face turned black. Brother Xi was an influential assistant serving under The Third Lord of Wei.

“Mr. Chen is The Third Lord’s guest. Why? Have you offended Mr. Chen?” Brother Xi asked with a big frown.

Brother Dong lowered his head and murmured, “Er...”

Compared to The Third Lord of Wei; Brother Dong was so low on the totem pole that The Third Lord of Wei wouldn’t even grace him with an audience. If Chen Fan really was The Third Lord’s guest, Brother Dong was in big trouble.

“I am sorry Mr. Chen. I am so ignorant that I didn’t even recognize Mountain Tai.”

“Remember, if I hear anything unpleasant happening in the Coco bar, I will come to find you.” Chen Fan said thinly.

“Yes, yes. I got it!” Brother Dong felt icy sweat slid down on his back as he cursed his luck in his mind.

However, at this point in time, he scarcely dared to breathe much less protest against Chen Fan.

Seeing Brother Dong had shriveled like a worm, Sister Ding-Ding and Boss Yang were so scared that their legs started to tremble. They didn’t speak a word, fearing to catch Chen Fan’s attention.

Little did they know that Chen Fan didn’t want to waste any more time on these petty grievances. He nodded to Sister Yin and then was through the exist under many incredulous stares.

As soon As Chen Fan left the bar, the crowd boiled over.

“OMG! What did I see? Brother Dong apologized to a high school student?”

“That guy is so bad-ass! I saw him many times working here as a waiter; I never thought that he would have such powerful connections here in the city.”

“No kidding! I had been his coworker for nearly a month now; never did I see that in him.”

Customers and the employees of the bar exchanged their opinion excitedly. They had just witnessed a rare and exhilarating sight of the weak overcoming the strong. A moment ago, Brother Dong was swollen with pride, and a moment later, he was on his knees and pleading for his life.

Brother Dong’s face flushed red as embarrassment and anger roiled inside of him. He gave both Boss Yang and Sister Ding-Ding an accusatory look before he was through the door.

Chen Yin was going to call out to Brother Dong and offer some solace, but she thought better of it. She realized that the power dynamic between the two of them had changed. If Chen Fan really was The Third Lord of Wei's friend, then she doubted that Brother Dong would ever come to her bar again.

"Xiao Qian, are you sure that is your friend?" Xiao Qian glanced at Jiang Tanqiu suspiciously.

Jiang Tanqiu was taken aback by the development as well.

Sitting beside the two, Senior Qi pulled a taut face as his mind raced.

Being an honored guest of the Third Lord Wei was not a small feat for someone seemingly so ordinary.

So thinking, he glanced at Xiao Qian and Jiang Tanqiu with knotted brows. Senior Qi knew Jiang Tanqiu was also interested in Xiao Qian. However, he had never taken the fledgling seriously.

However, he felt a sense of threat after learning that Jiang Tanqiu had such a powerful friend.

Chen Fan was led into a black Benz, and a few minutes later, they arrived at the Hidden Dragon Villa.

He found a group of people were already there waiting for him at the entrance, among them were the Third Lord of Wei.

He was in a cab the last time he came to his villa, and no one was at the front gate to receive him. However, this time, not only he was in an expensive vehicle, but his host had also rolled out the red carpet for him.

"Master Chen, you are finally here!"

As soon as Chen Fan emerged from the car, he was greeted by the Third Lord of Wei's ingratiating smile. Another familiar face was behind the Third Lord of Wei: Guo Wei from the Wei Shen Martial Arts School.

Chen Fan greeted them with a warm smile.

The two were flattered by Chen Fan's friendliness, and their fake smiles softened into that of a sincere welcome.

"Master Chen, please come in."

Even as Chen Fan walked over the threshold, he asked curiously, “Why is Mr. Guo with the Third Lord?”

Guo Wei bowed slightly and then replied, “I am here to learn the update on Brother Hao’s research on Linbao’s background. Well, the Third Lord just happen to be here. We brief the Third Lord about what had happened at the Lake Heart Island. He was mad at us for not informing him about it as soon as possible, and he insisted on including you in today’s meeting. ”

The Third Lord of Wei chimed in. “No kidding, I blame Xiao Hao! If he had told me about you as soon as possible, I would have met you much earlier.”

“It’s my bad, sorry everyone. I will buy everyone a drink !” Brother Hao confessed.

Greetings over, everyone walked to the banquet table and sat down. Chen Fan looked to Guo Wei and asked.

“Mr. Guo, what’s the update on Linbao?”

Guo Wei nodded, and then said, “Ever since Brother Hao asked me to investigate Linbao, I had to pull some strings from inside of the Xin Yi Sect. In the end, I finally learned something valuable from a sect member who used to run a sect branch overseas.

“Linhao was a lay disciple of the grand master Lei Qianjue from the Oversea Hong Sect.”

“The Oversea Hong Sect, Lei Qianjue?” Chen Fan furrowed his brows.

“I thought the Hong Sect had been disbanded a long time ago?”

“They have disappeared in China, but they are still the number one underground organization overseas.” Guo Wei lamented.

“The friend I was talking to also practiced the Hong Fist. He wanted to open a Martial Arts School overseas, and he learned that he would need the permission of the Hong Sect. Not only that, he later found out that nearly all-powerful leaders in the overseas Chinese community are members of the Hong Sect.”

“Really?” Chen Fan exclaimed incredulously.

“Indeed! My overseas connection also told me that back in the early days, Chinese immigrants were discriminated against by their host country, and therefore, they needed a powerful protector. Hong Sect happened to be the most powerful organization at the time, and everyone sought protection under its wings.” The Third Lord of Wei said as he nodded.

“What is the rank of Lei Qianjue within the Hong Sect?” The Third Lord asked.

Guo Wei smiled wryly and then said, “This is where things get complicated. Lei Qianjue is well respected overseas and was considered one of the very few grandmasters outside of China. I have heard that even the Chairman of the Hong Sect would have to address him as ‘Brother Lei’ respectfully. ”

Everyone’s face darkened once they have heard Guo Wei’s words.

Chapter 43: Grand Master Lei Qianjue

“Is Lei Qianjue really such an admirable figure overseas?” Third Lord of Wei asked incredulously.

He found it inconceivable that a martial artist would achieve such a high social status.

“He is a Transcendent Master; it will make him an admirable person even in China much less in the Chinese community overseas. ” Guo Wei lamented. “I have told the martial artists at the Xin Yi sect about you, and no one would believe me that a sixteen-year-old boy has the power of a transcendent master.

“I wouldn’t have believed it either if I didn’t see it with my own eyes.”

After saying that, Guo Wei gave Chen Fan a respectful nod. Seeing Chen Fan’s aloof and casual expression, a wave of admiration and reverence swept through his body.

Lei Qianjue was not only a Transcendent Master but also had the same level of authority as the chairman of the Hong Sect. On the other hand, although Chen Fan was much younger than Lei Qianjue, he had already attained the same level of prowess as the old man. The achievements of Lei Qianjue spoke loudly of Chen Fan’s stunning feat.

When Zhou Tianhao and the Third Lord of Wei finally realized that Chen Fan and Lei Qianjue were on the same level, their admiration for Chen Fan had grown to a whole new level.

They only knew that Chen Fan was a powerful fighter, but they were oblivious as to exactly how powerful he was.

If Lei Qianjue could garner such respect and authority using his martial arts skills, so could Chen Fan.

After a while, the banquet started. They were presented with many delicacies as well as all kinds of expensive drinks. The dishes didn't stop coming until midnight, and The Third Lord suggested that they should go to the clubs next.

Chen Fan was not in the mood of clubbing with a group of middle-aged men, so he left for home once he was done eating.

When he got home, he made a phone call to Sister Yin and told her that he would not come to work due to the increasingly heavy load of assignments. Sister Yin knew it was an excuse, but she accepted his resignation without pressing for more answers. After Chen Fan hung up the phone, he heaved a sigh of relief for not needing to explain his relationship with Zhou Tianhao to Sister Yin.

The next day, Xin Zhong wired the forty-five million yuan to Chen Fan's bank account. By then, Chen Fan's bank account had swelled to sixty million, with such a strong financial backing, Chen Fan decided that it was time to take a leap forward in his cultivation.

Ever since he was reborn, he had only spent a little over a month on cultivation. He was still three months away from entering the late-stage of the Foundation Establishment Level. Although the Void Mortal Refinement Art was powerful, it required a huge amount of Spirit Qi. Furthermore, as Chen Fan progressed through his cultivation, the Qi required to run the Void Mortal Refinement Art would increase exponentially.

The Spirit Qi around the numinous abode had long since fallen short. Chen Fan was able to maintain his rate of progressing all thanks to the Spirit Gathering Array on the Jade Marrow Talisman.

Therefore, Chen Fan decided to put his money to good use and speed up his cultivation process.

"There are only two feasible methods to speed up the cultivation process; one is to find another Numinous Abode, and the other was to use Spirit Stones and Elixirs.

"I should forget about the elixirs for now, and focus on the first method. "

"Over the past month, I have traveled all over the city and its suburbs but wasn't able to locate an area where the Spirit Qi pooled together. I wager that I will have to brave deeper into the mountains in order to find the hidden veins where the Qi flowed. However, even if I can find such a place, it would be so far away from Chu Zhou City that it would be impossible for me to cultivate and go to school at the same time.

"That being said, if I can't find one in nature, I can create one for myself."

A confident smile surfaced on Chen Fan's face.

Many schools of cultivations had their own Spirit Land for the convenience of their disciples. At its core, a Spirit Land was a Spirit Gathering Array on steroids. It could be as small as a few square kilometers or as big as a small galaxy.

The sacred cultivation land of the True Martial Immortal Sect was a huge Celestial Array made up of countless stars and planets.

In order to create a Spirit Land, Chen Fan would have to find a secluded location. The noisy and densely populated area would not do.

“Lucky for me that Mr. Wei had given me a villa high up in the mountain.”

Chen Fan fished out the key to the villa and looked at it thoughtfully.

“I have visited the villa once since I got the key. It was located at the very top of the highest peak of the Yunwu Mountain, at the head of the serpentine mountain range. From there, I could have a bird’s eye view of the Yan Gui lake and the Yun Wu Mountain. I wager that this Villa would cost at least fifty million yuan.

“As such, Mr. Wei really had given me a great present. That being said, I still think my gift for him: the Secret Art of the Wei was better.”

Chen Fan didn’t waste any time as he began to plan his next step.

“If I could cast a large Dharma Array up in the mountain, I should be able to gather the Qi that spreads across the mountain and the lake to the Villa and create a small Grotto-heaven Spirit Land. By then, I should have enough Spirit Qi to last until I reach Ethereal Enlightenment.

“This Dharma Array needs not only to gather Qi but also serve as a defense. I don’t want to be sneak attacked while I am cultivating at home.”

Guo Wei’s warning about Lei Qianjue and Linbao had raised Chen Fan’s guard.

Although Lei Qianjue wouldn’t come after him personally, he could have sent his disciples. Plus, the number of resources from the Hong Sect that was under his disposal should not be taken lightly. Chen Fan was not afraid of vengeful martial artists, but he would be in trouble if those martial artists played nasty and brought modern weapons with them.

Although the Jade Marrow Talisman could provide him some measure of protection, it was no match against high caliber ballistic weapons such as the .357 magnum.

Plus, modern weapons had evolved greatly, and Chen Fan was convinced that there were weapons specially designed for killing Internal Force users.

“Finally, the last piece of the Dharma Array was the Stabilizer, also the most crucial component. I can use the Jade Marrow talisman, but that would mean that I have to walk around without any protection.”

Chen Fan furrowed his brows as he could not find a solution to the problem. However, he reckoned that it would take him a while to build the Dharma Array and therefore, he still had time to think about it.

He decided to let the matter rest for now and worry about it when he has to. Perhaps the answer would turn up by itself.

With newfound determination, Chen Fan carried on.

Chapter 44: Mountain Defensive Array

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Such a large Dharma Array required meticulous preparation; first, Chen Fan would need to create many small fragments of the array, then he would have to painstakingly piece all the fragments together. Much of the process also required a detailed survey of the topography of the mountain; it soon became clear to Chen Fan that in order to pull it off, he would need some help.

The first person Chen Fan thought of was The Third Lord of Wei.

Although the Third Lord of Wei knew nothing about cultivation, he had a wide network of contacts, which could be useful to Chen Fan.

When Chen Fan explained what he was trying to do, The Third Lord of Wei was taken aback. “Master Chen, you mean you want to create a ‘Dharma Array’ in at the top of the Yun Wu Mountain?”

He was so confused yet intrigued that he had forgotten the fact that his father had re-gifted his present to him to Chen Fan.

“What the heck is a ‘Dharma Array’?”

Third Lord of Wei was unfamiliar with the jargon of the cultivators, and the only thing he could relate to the Dharma Array was the military formation called the Eight Trigrams Array. That was described in the “Romance of the Three Kingdoms.”

Before Chen Fan could explain what a Dharma Array was, Master Qi stormed into the room. He received a notice from Chen Fan, asking him to attend the meeting.

“Master Chen, you are planning to cast an array?”

“Indeed. I wanted to use the Yun Wu Mountain as the base and cast a large Dharma Array around it.” Chen Fan said.

Master Qi gaped at Chen Fan, his eyes wide open with disbelief. He had never heard of anyone casting a Dharma Array the size of a mountain.

Such a large scale array was only described in ancient legends, and it was given a name, “Mountain Defensive Array.”

This was said to be the magnum opus of the most powerful cultivation families. It took hundreds if not thousands of years to complete, and the last time it happened was a few dozen thousand years ago, as stated by books that were half as old. In the present day, even a micro-sized array was rare, much less the large scale ones. Nonetheless, some people believed that there were still a couple of Mountain Defensive Array’s that had survived the test of time and were kept as top secrets by the most ancient Dao sects.

However, without seeing it with his own eyes, Master Qi was convinced that those were just high tales.

After listening to Master Qi’s explanation, the Third Lord of Wei was stunned by the magnitude of the work. A Dharma Array the size of a mountain. Was that even possible?

Chen Fan knotted his brows and said, “It’s not as big as you think.”

A Mountain Defensive Array was used to protect an entire mountain, but his spell would focus on just the house at the mountain peak. As for the rest of the area, he designed to patch it up with less demanding arrays such as the Spirit Gathering array, the Spirit Channeling Array and the Mist Array.

The real Mountain Defensive Array not only called for a tremendous amount of numinous treasures but also required the cultivator to reach the level of Divine Sea.

Since Chen Fan only need to focus on one area, the difficulty in creating the array decreased drastically.

Even though the array was only a fraction of the original version, Chen Fan still needed to take baby steps.

“Even if it’s just a watered down version, it will still be an impressive feat!”

“Channeling the Spirit Qi around the Yan Gui Lake and the Yun Wu Mountain and then to reroute them into one reservoir. The scope and vision were unprecedented.” Master Qi exclaimed.

He suddenly thought of something and then asked curiously. "Master Chen, there are not many people left in the world who are versed in the art of casting arrays. I wonder who you would ask to join you for the project?"

"Oh? no one else in the field of cultivation knew how to cast an array?" Chen Fan was staggered by the question.

Dharma Array, Talisman Inscription, Elixir Brewing and Artifact Crafting were all the basic training of a cultivator. Any Foundation Establishment Level fledgling would recite at least one hundred different kinds of methods of the art.

"We don't even have many cultivators, much less, ones that could cast arrays." Maser Qi gave Chen Fan a wry smile.

"Master Wu who you had defeated, was already considered one of the most powerful experts."

"Even that snake oil salesman?" Chen Fan couldn't believe his ears.

"It seems like cultivation had fallen out of fashion in this world." Chen Fan frowned slightly and then said, "Doesn't matter, I will do it myself."

"You will do it all by yourself?" Master Qi was stunned.

The sheer scale of the project made Master Qi believe that it was Chen Fan's teacher who had envisioned the array. However, when Chen Fan announced that he was going to build the array by himself, Master Qi realized that it was Chen Fan's idea all along.

"Yes. The reason I decided to meet up with you two was that I need you to buy something for me." Chen Fan produced a list from his pocket.

The list included most of the material needed to cast the array.

The Qi on the earth is near depletion, and therefore, Chen Fan would have to be creative and use alternative materials.

"This array will need thirty-six small Dharma Artifacts, and five of them will be used by the Spirit Gathering Array at the center. You can help me find the jade I need to create these five Dharma Artifacts.

"If you could bring me those jade stones, I will create a Dharma Artifact similar to the Eight Trigrams Plate for each of you."

The Third Lord of Wei and Master Qi's faces lit up with glee after hearing the reward.

They don't care what kind of Dharma Artifact it was, as long as they could have one.

After the meeting, the three of them started to work towards their goals.

Chen Fan used the free time during the national holiday to work on the first Dharma Artifact.

Since the array would be cast over the misty mountain, Chen Fan decided to name it the “Misty Mountain Array.”

The Misty Mountain Array consisted of four main components, at the center of the array, inside the Villa, was a Spirit Channeling Array; around the villa was a Guardian Array which connected to the Spirit Channeling Array; Lastly, high above the mountain peak was the Misty Mountain Array.

By combining the mountain mist with the Mist Array, not only was the effect of the array amplified, but the constant thick mist also concealed the villa from the view of the public.

The Yan Gui Lake had a large amount of Water Spirit Qi, and they would be channeled towards the villa. This Qi could not only be used for cultivation; it could also be used to fuel the Dharma Array.

At the center of the large yet complicated system of arrays was the Spirit Gathering Array. It was the pulsing heart that drove all of the other components. Without it, all the other components would stop working and fall apart.

The most crucial material for creating this Spirit Gathering Array was supreme-grade jade stones.

Only the flawless jade could hold a massive amount of Spirit Qi. In order to purchase these Jade Stones, Chen Fan had spent a third of his money in just a couple of days.

He sat in a quiet room of the villa while a piece of emerald-colored jade floated in the air in front of him. The jade was suffused with a green glow and with every pulse, energy erupted from inside.

Chen Fan closed his eyes and let out an ancient sound. The sound formed a shape in the air and turned into a golden symbol.

Chen Fan made a few more sounds, and with it, a few different golden symbols appeared out of thin air. These symbols drifted toward the jade and left a slight but precise impression of its surface.

“Hur!”

Chen Fan suddenly opened his eyes and puffed out a white gas from his mouth. This was Raw True Essence in its purest form. The gas merged into a writhing white light as it shot at the jade.

The white light agitated the Jade plate and made it hum. Inside the jade, in between the pulses of the green glow, Chen Fan can see energy roil and tumble like the powerful undercurrent of the ocean. All the while, the jade started to glow brighter and brighter.

Suddenly, the golden symbols surfaced on the Jade Plate. The strokes of the symbols formed a golden chain that confined the pulsing energy that threatened to break free. The struggle between the confining power of the symbols and the tumultuous green undercurrent made the Jade plate shake violently. After a while, the struggle finally subsided.

Chen Fan heaved a sigh and reached for the jade plate.

By then, the jade plate was no longer glowing. However, its surface was covered with countless small symbols made out of hair-thin strokes.

“Finally, the first Spirit Gathering Plate was completed! Four more to go! With these five plates, I should be able to construct the large Spirit Gathering Array in no time!” Chen Fan cheered in his mind.

He wished he could have more than just one piece of Jade Marrow since it was much more convenient to work with, and it was much more powerful. He wagered that he could have completed the entire project with just five Jade Marrows.

Without the Jade Marrows, Chen Fan had to separate the array into small segments and use inferior Dharma Artifacts to support each one of them.

“The jade stone for the Spirit Gathering Array was the easiest to find. I can gather enough of them as long as I have abundant funding. However, the materials required for other arrays are going to be difficult to find. I shouldn’t just sit and wait for Third Lord of the Wei to find them for me; I need to work on it as well.”

Chen Fan rubbed his chin and said thoughtfully.

Since the purpose of the Spirit Gathering Array was to gather and hold Spirit Qi, it called for the highest grade of jade. Jade was the most compatible with Spirit Qi since there were already small amounts of Spirit Qi inside of a high-grade jade.

However, the other three arrays were a whole new ball game.

In order to channel the Water Spirit Qi, Chen Fan will have to find material with a natural affinity with water. He didn’t expect to find high-grade water class numinous treasures on earth, so he had asked Third Lord of Wei to purchase rocks from the deep sea.

Being buried a few thousand kilometers under the sea, a rock would attain some degree of affinity with water even if it was just an ordinary rock. That should be enough to keep the Spirit Channeling Array going.

The Mist Array called for the thousand-year-old Pine Driftwood. The pine wood was of yin attribute by itself, and the thousand-year-old Pine Driftwood would be as effective as the “Yin Crystals.” However, Chen Fan was not hopeful that the Third Lord of Wei would be able to acquire such rare material.

The Guardian Array required even more special material, and Chen Fan decided to worry about it later.

By the last day of the National Holiday Season, Chen Fan had finished all five Spirit Gathering Plates. He had also used the leftover materials to create two more jade talismans which contained a lesser version of the Spirit Gathering Array. Although the effect of the lesser version was inferior to that of Chen Fan’s Jade Marrow Talisman, it was much more powerful than the Eight-Trigrams-Plate.

Chapter 45: Enemy At the Gate

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Once Chen Fan had finished creating the Dharma Artifact required for the Spirit Gathering Array. He moved into the Villa on the mountain.

Although Chen Fan had already visited here once, he only walked around the perimeter of the building. Once he got inside, he was stunned by the lavish decorations. Many pieces of furniture inside the building were imported from overseas. The refrigerator alone would cost well over tens of thousands of yuan. Chen Fan cleaned the place up a bit and started to focus on his task at hand.

He set the five Spirit Gathering Plates in the five chosen corners of the house.

And then, he walked to the center of the hall and initiated the Dharma Art to link his energy with the five plates.

Suddenly, he stomped the floor and shouted, “Start!”

Five rays of emerald light lanced up from five corners, each measuring half dozen meters long. Once the five rays converge above the roof, they started to spread out until they formed a green umbrella covering the entire building.

Chen Fan closed his eyes as he felt the power of the Spirit Gathering Array.

Although Chen Fan didn’t turn on the air conditioner, the temperature inside the villa dropped drastically. As the Spirit Qi was attracted to the house by the Spirit Gathering Array, it formed white mist around and inside the house. Chen Fan could feel the Spirit Qi gather around him and was contained safely inside the green umbrella.

“That’s what I am talking about. It’s at least three times more efficient than the Spirit Gathering Array in my Jade Marrow talisman due to its scale.”

Chen Fan opened his eyes and was very pleased with the results.

The outcome had exceeded his expectations as it couldn’t have been better. It occurred to him that the cause of the success was not only the size of the Dharma Array but also the fact that the density of the Spirit Qi this far in the mountain was much greater than that at the foothill.

“Once I finish the Misty Mountain Array and connect the Spirit Qi of the mountain with that of the lake, this place is really going to turn in to a Spirit Land!”

The thought filled Chen Fan’s heart with anticipation.

However, not just any place with abundant Spirit Qi could be called a Spirit Land. What made a Spirit Land was the so-called “Spirit Qi Mist.”

Such a mist would only form when the air was saturated with Spirit Qi. No longer able to dissolve into the air, these Spirit Qi would seep out from the air and form mist. On occasions where the concentration of mist was high enough, it would come even from Spirit Dew. Once collected and used by the cultivator, these Spirit Dew could help prolong the user’s life. Its effect was even better than that of using Spirit Stones since it practically had no side effects.

The highest form of the Spirit Qi was called the “Crystallized Spirit Qi” or “Spirit Stones.” Nearly all natural Spirit Lands that were capable of producing the Spirit Stones were occupied by one of the major Cultivation Sects.

And that was only the case for normal grade Spirit Lands. In the sacred ground such as the Spirit Land of the True Martial Immortal Sect, the cultivator could directly absorb Spirit Qi from the realm of the immortals. Therefore, the effect and level of the Spirit Qi in those areas was much more powerful than that of a normal Spirit Land.

Chen Fan was quite content with Spirit Qi Mist considering the lack of Spirit Qi on Earth. He didn’t expect to ever see liquified or crystallized Spirit Qi.

He sat down cross-legged inside the villa and tested the Dharma Array; satisfied, he stood up and stopped the Dharma Array.

Since the Spirit Gathering Plate was not made out of Jade Marrow, it would eventually break after a period of use just like that Eight-Trigrams-Plate did.

Chen Fan walked out of the villa and started down the path that led to the foothills.

It was early in the evening, and many wealthy families were having their after-supper-walk on the mountain path. Seeing a young boy descending from the mountain top, confusion was written all over their faces. They knew there was only one villa at the mountain top, could that be this kid's home?

When Chen Fan was halfway to the end of the path, he heard someone calling his name. "Chen Fan?"

Chen Fan turned to the side and saw Jiang Churan and her family of three were staring at him with astonishment.

"Why are you here?"

Jiang Churan asked as he looked over Chen Fan's shoulder to where the boy was coming from.

She knew that the path led only to the mountaintop where the mysterious villa was located. She was halfway to the mountain top, and right at the threshold of that Villa owner's private property. This was where most people's daily evening walk ended as well, since from here forward would be the private property of the villa's owner.

"Auntie Tang, Uncle Jiang, and Ra-Ran, nice to see you all." Chen Fan greeted them with a warm smile.

Auntie Tang must have sensed something between him and Jiang Churan, and therefore she had stopped inviting him over for supper. Nonetheless, she had never stopped talking to him over the phone, asking how he was doing nearly every other day. Chen Fan was very appreciative of her care and attention.

After a while, Chen Fan answered, "I live up there."

"You live in Villa Number One?" Jiang Churan was taken aback, and she asked incredulously.

"Yes." Chen Fan nodded.

Jiang Haishan burst out laughing.

"The villa number one was the first villa built in this development, and it was a gift from the richest man in Chu Zhou City: Sheng Ronghua, to the founder of the Fang Sheng International Group: Mr. Wei."

He gave Chen Fan a look of disdain as he spoke.

"So are you telling me that you are Mr. Wei's family?"

"He gave this villa to me." Chen Fan said lightly. Without wasting any more time on Jiang Haishan, he looked toward Auntie Tang and said.

"Auntie Tang, thank you for looking after me ever since I arrived here. Can I invite you to visit my new home?"

Auntie Tang hesitated as her eyes met Chen Fan's candid gaze.

Reason told her that Chen Fan had to be lying. Why would The Third Lord of Wei give a high school kid a mansion that was worth over tens of millions?

However, the sincere look on Chen Fan's face tugged at her heart. She didn't want to hurt the boy's self-esteem, especially when her daughter was present.

So thinking, she forced a smile and then said, "I am still very full from my supper, maybe next time?"

"Why don't you have an evening stroll with Ran-Ran. You two youngsters must have a lot of talk about. Your Uncle Jiang and I will excuse ourselves."

After she said that, she started down the path, dragging Jiang Haishan behind.

Jiang Haishan managed to blurt out a few more words before he was dragged away, "The kids nowadays are all pretty little liars!"

"Don't you think that you can have my daughter using just lies!"

"Shut your trap; let's go!" Auntie Tang flung back at her husband.

It wasn't until her parents had disappeared, Jiang Churan turned toward Chen Fan and asked.

"Why are you here?"

"Did you come here for me?"

Chen Fan paused a second and then said with a smile, "I really do live in Villa Number One.

"I can prove it to you; just come with me."

Jiang Churan's pulled a taut face as soon as she heard Chen Fan's words.

"Chen Fan, we are alone now, why are you still lying to me?"

"I know you are a friend of Wei Ziqin, but so what?"

"I hope you realize that a real princess like Wei Ziqin would never have a true friendship with ordinary people like you and me. Your friendship with her was built on her pity for you."

Even as she spoke, her eyes seemed to have lost focus.

She was stunned by the turn of events at the Hidden Dragon Villa. However, when she got home and gave the incident more thought, she realized that she had overestimated Chen Fan. However, powerful Wei Ziqin was, Chen Fan was just her friend, a poor friend while at it.

Most rich people would have one or two poor friends at some point in their lives.

However, those friendships were often short-lived. Sooner or later, the rich and powerful would get tired of helping the poor.

After the auction, Jiang Churan had gone to the Coco bar again to see if anything had changed with Chen Fan. She was disappointed. Chen Fan was still doing the hard work a labor would.

Impatience flash across Chen Fan's face, and then he said, "I have told you the truth. I own this mansion now. It has nothing to do with Wei Ziqin."

Slightly frustrated, Chen Fan turned around and started down the path, leaving the girl all by herself.

She could not believe that Chen Fan had left her hanging for the second time. Anger rose inside of her, and she shouted at the arrogant boy:

"Chen Fan, you can't rely on Wei Ziqin forever!"

Although Jiang Churan looked disappointed, many other feelings clashed together in her heart.

She didn't believe Chen Fan's claim, but deep down, she wished that he had told her the truth.

And then, she was mad at herself for being riled up by Chen Fan, and she asked herself why did she care about him so much?

Meanwhile, unknown to Chen Fan, there was a ship cruising toward Tian He City a few thousand miles away from China.

"Lord Hu, we are only ten miles away from the coast; we need to anchor down right now before we hit the rocks."

“I will lower a boat and ferry you across to the coast.”

The captain spoke to a middle-aged man fearfully.

The middle-aged man stood upright with his hands linked behind him. Despite the swelling waves that rocked the ship, he stood still steadily without a word.

Everyone in the captain was staring at him like he was a freak.

He had been standing like this for 24 hours and didn't move a muscle.

“No need for the boat.”

The middle-aged man finally broke the silence.

His eyes seemed to be able to pierce through the gloomy sea and see the coastline ten miles away.

“Lower the anchor; I will go there myself.”

Everyone was shocked by what they heard.

They were still a dozen miles away from the coastline; how could he reach the shore by himself? Without the knowledge of the sea, hidden rocks would surely destroy his boat.

Even as the captain was going to speak up, he watched as the middle-aged man hopped over the rail and jumped into the rolling sea.

“Lord Hu!”

Everyone's hearts were caught in their throats. They leaned over the rail and looked down, and what they saw would stay with them for the rest of their lives.

They saw the middle-aged man run on the broken surface of the sea as if it was solid ground. He darted toward the coast with incredible speed, trailing behind a line of gleaming back-waves.

The captain collapsed to the deck; trembling uncontrollably, but he still managed to say a few words: “Is he... the Dragon Lord of the sea?”

Chapter 46: Walking On the Sea

Chapter 46: Walking On the Sea

Around ten o'clock, the coast of the Tian He City was lit up by the headlights of many jeeps.

Xin Zhong linked his hands behind his back and looked out into the gloomy darkness of the sea far away with knotted brows.

He was surrounded by his most trusted bodyguards as well as Master Wu.

Master Wu glanced at his watch from time to time as an impatient look crawled onto his face.

"When the heck is Lin Hu going to be here? We have been waiting for over four hours."

"Even the Hong Sect cannot be trusted nowadays. That Linbao they sent here a few weeks ago outright disappeared, and then this Lin Hu, he can't even be punctual! No wonder the Hong Sect had been kicked out of China."

Xin Zhong forced a smile and didn't refute the white-haired one.

Although Master Wu was defeated by Chen Fan, he was still a force to be reckoned with.

After a while, even Xin Zhong's patience was wearing thin, he looked to one of his bodyguards and ordered him to radio the ship. The bodyguard glanced at his cell phone and shouted out:

"He is here; he is here!"

"The message said that the ship was only ten miles away from the coast."

"And Lin Hu is coming by himself."

"What do you mean he is coming by himself? Is he going to ride a speedboat to here?" Xin Zhong asked with knotted brows.

Xin Zhong and his men lived off the sea, and therefore they were all experienced sailors. He knew that without a thorough knowledge of the sea, it was suicide to sail alone in the dark.

This was particularly true for this area. Many hidden rocks lurked under the water, waiting for ships to stumble upon them.

"This is suicide to sail alone in this weather!" Master Wu shook his head.

By then, the wind had come up, and the waves were as high as a meter. Only a large ship guided by an experienced captain could survive this angry sea.

Realizing the danger, Xin Zhong's face looked troubled.

They had been expecting this martial artist for a long time, and he didn't want him to die before they even met.

Spurred by his concern, Xin Zhong was going to call the ship and ask again. Suddenly, one of his men shouted:

"Boss, look! What is that?"

Everyone looked toward the direction the man was pointing. They saw a line of churning water coming toward the coast.

"Is that a speedboat? It's too fast to be a speedboat."

As Xin Zhong wondered what he was watching, he was quickly shocked by what he saw.

As the white line drew close, they could vaguely trace the outline of a human running on the water.

"Impossible!

"How could anyone run on the water?

"Did our eyes play tricks on us?"

Everyone was shocked by what they saw. They watched as the white line got closer and closer until it was only a few hundred meters away from the shore. By then, they could not only see the person running on the sea but also hear the din of splashing and churning water. Suddenly, the man kicked the water under his feet, causing a huge splash. Meanwhile, the force lifted his body up, and like an eagle, the man glided in the air for a few seconds before he gracefully landed on the sand.

Everyone gaped at him without speaking a word; only the howling of the wind filled the silent voice.

The headlights outlined an image of a middle age man. Although he was drenched by splashing water, he stood proudly with his back straight.

"Lin Hu?"

Xin Zhong asked with a shaky voice.

"I'm here." Lin Hu shot Xin Zhong a piercing glance. Although Xin Zhong thrived in his rough and tumble life, the ability of the man in front of him scared him nonetheless.

"I guess you are Xin Zhong? Good!"

Lin Hu scanned around, and none of Xin Zhong's elite bodyguard had caught his attention. Instead, his eyes locked onto Master Wu.

"I never expect to see another Transcended Cultivator here," Lin Hu said with a calm voice.

"Me either. I bet you have almost reached Immortal Enlightenment level, haven't you?" Master Wu smiled wryly.

Master Wu had been a well-respected master at the Dong Du area. However, the recent setback at Jiang Bei region had taken the wind out of his sails.

His skills paled under comparison with Chen Fan's Thunder Art and Lin Hu's ability to walk on water.

"What happened to my brother Linbao? Have you guys figured it out?" Lin Hu asked abruptly.

Xin Zhong gathered himself and replied, "Linhao was wounded by Zhou Tianhao from the Chu Zhou City."

"Impossible!" Lin Hu refuted.

"Linhao had already achieved phenomenal success, and therefore he wouldn't be injured even by regular weapons, much less a mortal!"

"Well, there is another possibility." Xin Zhong gave Master Wu a knowing glance and then said hesitantly, "We have met someone, a boy at Chu Zhou City who could use the Thunder Art. If Linbao was defeated at Chu Zhou, it has to be because of him."

"Thunder Art?" Lin Hu's interest was piqued as his eyes lit up. He asked doubtfully, "There is still someone in China who know how to use the Thunder Art? I thought it was long gone!"

Master Wu announced with a deep voice, "I suspected him of being a disciple of the Heavenly Master Sect. Everyone around him calls him Master Chen."

The thought of the thunder boring down on him made Master Wu tremble slightly. Ever since his defeat, the mentioning of Chen Fan's name would send a chill down his spine.

"The Heavenly Master Sect, Master Chen? Humph!" Lin Hu snorted, eyes glinting. "However powerful he was, as long as he hasn't perfected the Dao, my fellow martial artists and I can kill him as easily as squashing a worm."

Every one of his words carried a chilling intent to kill, which made the listener's hair stand on its end.

Master Wu had a gut feeling that Lin Hu could strike his opponent down before the opponent could materialize their plan of attack.

"No wonder the spellcasters had gone nearly extinct while the martial artists were still thriving. Without perfecting the Dao, no caster would stand a chance against a martial artist who was only one step away from the Transcendent State."

Master Wu lamented.

"Lin Hu, are you going to Chu Zhou City to avenge your brother right now?" Xin Zhong asked cautiously.

To everyone's surprise, Lin Hu shook his head and said, "There is no hurry. In addition to avenging my brother, I am here to consolidate the powers at the Jiang Bei region."

Xin Zhong's face lit up with glee; he exclaimed, "Are you going to stay in China?"

"Indeed." Lin Hu nodded. Then he said wistfully, "My master wanted to come as well, but his defeat at the hands of Ye Nantian had stopped his plans cold in their tracks."

"After decades of preparation, my teacher is ready to fight Ye Nantian once again. As his disciple, I need to come here to make the process of his return smoother."

Hearing that, Xin Zhong beamed from side to side.

Due to the nature of his overseas trading business, he had to deal with Lin Hu very frequently. He learned from the earliest stage of his business to lean toward Lin Hu for support. With a strong protector, he was able to establish himself at the coastal city of Tian He and grow his business steadily.

However, the fact that Lin Hu lived overseas had somewhat limited his influence. Xin Zhong was convinced that if Lin Hu lived in China, he would have already become the most powerful man in the Jiang Bei Region.

Years of waiting had finally bore fruit. Lin Hu's decision to stay in China left Xin Zhong feeling ecstatic.

"If that is the case, I would recommend you to wait half a month for the annual Martial Arts Tournament. This was an annual event for all the magnates of Jiang Bei to settle scores and redistribute the pie based on the new balance of power. Zhou Tianhao will be there as well."

“If we can make Zhou Tianhao believe that the competition this year was going to be fierce, he would very likely bring Master Chen with him.

“Then, the stage will be all set! Once Lin Hu defeated Master Chen, you would be able to claim dominance over the entire Jiang Bei region.”

Xin Zhong went onto explain the details of his plan. Words formed from his mouth quicker than his mind could forget. Meanwhile, Lin Hu nodded approvingly from time to time as he listened.

“Very well. We will let Zhou Tianhao and his boy-champion live for another half month.”

Lin Hu said; his eyes were brimming with hatred.

Chapter 47: Xu Rongfei's Birthday Party

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When the national holiday was over, and Chen Fan was back to school, he found that other than Jiang Tanqiu's insistent questions about what had happened at the bar on that night, nothing else had changed at school. His classmates no longer looked down on him and neither did they admire him.

Si Yinxia was still studying like there was no tomorrow. Teachers were very impressed by his newfound enthusiasm, and they were convinced that if Si Yinxia kept at it, he could potentially be admitted into the best university in China.

One day, Xu Rongfei came over to look for Chen Fan. Chen Fan went out of the classroom to meet her as a swell of murmurs rose around him.

“It's my birthday next week. Can you make it?” Xu Rongfei asked as she batted her lashes at Chen Fan.

“Of course!” Chen Fan cracked a smile. “You are my sister, remember?”

He said, indulging the girl with his attention.

Although he would not date her, she could be his sister he always wanted.

Chen Fan had cultivated among the stars for over five hundred years. Other than his teacher Cangqin, he had no one to talk to and confide in. It wasn't because he didn't have anyone around him, but it was because of his unwavering dedication to his cultivation that had forbidden him to waste his time on sentiments.

“Am I just a sister?” The light went out from Xu Rongfei’s eyes for a split second before the smile returned to her face.

She turned around and sauntered off. After a few steps, she turned back and shouted, “Seven o’clock next Saturday. Don’t forget about it!”

Chen Fan cracked a smile. After he made a mental note of the time, he put the matter to the side to focus on his real business.

Of late, he had spent all of his time on creating the Dharma Array. Third Lord Wei had brought him a piece of stone that was found at a few thousand miles down in the ocean, but its effect was mediocre. After all, it was just a rock, regardless of how many centuries it stayed underwater, it contained little to no water element in it.

“If this is the only material we get, the Spirit Channeling Array could only release less than ten percent of its intended effect.”

Chen Fan lamented.

However, even at ten percent, the huge amount of Spirit Qi meant that there would be more than enough Qi for him to use until he reached the Ethereal Enlightenment Level.

When Chen Fan walked back to the classroom, he found himself the target of many jealous glares. From time to time, he even caught a glimpse of Si Yinxia’s chilling gaze.

Time flew by, and soon it was Saturday.

When it was nightfall, Chen Fan found Xu Rongfei’s home based on the address she had given him. It was called the “Golden Kang Community Villa.”

The Golden Kang Community Villa was a mid-range residential development and a two-story house that would cost only two or three million yuan. It was more affordable and modest than the Yun Wu Mountain Villa. This was where most of Chu Zhou City’s middle-class family lived.

“Welcome, welcome!”

The birthday girl stood at the entrance and welcomed him with a charming smile.

She was dressed up from head to toe tonight. She was in a white slim fit maxi dress that accentuated her tiny waist and elegant legs. She wore makeup but not too heavily, and her delicate earrings complemented her egg-shaped face. She wore her hair down with wavy curls. She looked nothing like a student, but an elegant and gorgeous white-collar city girl.

“Brother Chen, you are finally here!”

“I was worried that you were going to bail on me.”

Xu Rongfei said as she gave Chen Fan a warm smile.

“I told you that you are my sister; what kind of brother would miss his sister’s birthday?”

Chen Fan cracked a smile and then handed a small gift box to Xu Rongfei.

“Happy birthday, this is your gift.”

Inside the box was an earring made out of jade. Chen Fan had cast a Dharma Array on it that was no less powerful than what he offered Third Lord Wei. Once the earring was close to its wearer, it would protect the wearer from all kinds of ailments.

“A gift? Thank you, Brother Chen Fan!” Xu Rongfei was elated. She accepted the gift box and started to unpack it. However, she was stopped by Jiang Churan with a cold face.

She reminded Jiang Churan that it was uncouth to unpack a gift in front of the guests.

“Get in here; don’t block the way.”

Jiang Churan’s face was hard as stone. She glared at Chen Fan with a great measure of rancor.

Chen Fan cracked a smile and let Jiang Churan’s insult slide off of his mind. He walked into the house and started to greet other school mates.

The house was already packed with guests, some of them were Xu Rongfei’s childhood friends, and some were friends she met at high school. Chen Fan saw many familiar faces: Li Yichen, Zhang Yumeng, Yang Chao, and even Han Yun.

“Master... Mr. Chen?” Han Yun’s eyes lit up as soon as she saw Chen Fan. She walked to Chen Fan with a glass of red wine.

She was the oldest member of the group and was already working for her grandfather. She was wearing a custom fit dress and heavy makeup. She looked like a rich princess straight out of one of those Korean Soap Operas.

“Miss Han.” Chen Fan nodded.

Han Yun’s lips curled into a smile. “Why so formal! Just call me Xiao Yun. I have heard the Old Man Zhen calling you brother, so technically, I am one generation younger than you.”

"I will call you Han Yun, and you can call me whatever you want." Chen Fan shook his head and said.

Chen Fan had lived over five hundred years; even the Old Man Zhen was a child in his eyes.

However, since he was reborn as a teenager, he needed to act like one. Plus, he would choose to be a happy go lucky high school kid over a lonely and gloomy old cultivator at any time of the day.

"Fine, no fun. I will call you Chen Fan then. I was hoping to make Fei-Fei jealous of me. Oh well." Han Yun battered her lashes and gazed at Chen Fan with a pair of mesmerizing eyes.

Of all the people attending the party, only she knew who Chen Fan really was. She alone knew that even the most powerful tycoons in Chu Zhou City had to call him Master Chen respectfully. He was not simply "a friend of Wei Ziqin."

"Humph! Look at her; she is going to melt before Chen Fan. Can she be any more desperate?" Zhang Yumeng grunted.

At first, Zhang Yumeng was shocked by the development at the auction like everyone else. However, after she had talked to some friends, she learned that Wei Ziqin had a habit of making friends who were not in her league. That being said, none of her friends had any notable achievements either, so she wagered that Chen Fan was one of those lucky few who happened to be Wei Ziqin's friend by chance.

In other words, being Wei Ziqin's friend didn't change the fact that Chen Fan was a useless no-account.

Zhang Yumeng wagered that if Wei Ziqin weren't put on the spot as she happened to be there when Chen Fan was on his last leg, she would not offer her help so readily.

Convinced that there was nothing extraordinary about Chen Fan, Han Yun's unctuous and submissive attitude toward the boy made Zhang Yumeng feel sick.

"Don't stress out about it. Han Yun is the oldest, and she knows what she is doing. "One of Zhang Yumeng's friends put in.

Li Yichen stood beside the girl and was also observing Chen Fan attentively.

Ever since his plan failed to bring down Chen Fan, he decided to take this opponent seriously. After much research, he found out that Chen Fan's mother was a successful businesswoman in the Zhong Hai City.

It was highly unusual that the son of a real estate magnate would labor inside of a bar.

He registered that Chen Fan was hiding something.

“OK, I think everyone is here; let’s start the party!”

A beautiful woman in her forties came down the stairs. She and Xu Rongfei looked very similar, and although being old, she was not any less attractive than the girl.

Everyone greeted her in unison, “Hi Auntie!”

Auntie Xu nodded with a smile. Behind her was a buff young man. It was Chu Minhui. It appeared that Chu Minhui and Auntie Xu were very close as they talked and laughed with each other.

“Minghui, would you please tell Fei-Fie to come here?”

Auntie Xu spoke to Chu Minhui with a warm smile.

“Yes, Auntie Xu.”

Chu Minhui strode out, and when he passed by Chen Fan, he paused a fraction of a second as the hook of his cold glance caught Chen Fan. He let out a snort full of disdain before he carried on.

All the while, Chen Fan held a clam and indifferent face.

He had given him warning before. If Chu Minhui dared to offend him again, he would make him pay dearly.

A Celestial Lord always kept his word. Even if the most powerful man on earth protected Chu Minhui, Chen Fan would not hesitate a second before he rained down punishment on him.

After a while, Xu Rongfei was brought into the room, and the birthday party finally started.

Chu Minhui pushed out a cart, and on it was a seven-layer-cake. It was decorated with seventeen candles for Xu Rongfei’s seventeenth birthday.

Everyone sang the birthday song and then they waited for the birthday girl to blow out the candles and make a wish.

Xu Rongfei folded her hands and half-closed her eyes. She gave Chen Fan a surreptitious glance.

“This is my wish...

“I wish I could live with Chen Fan happily forever after.”

Although she had made the wish in her mind, Chen Fan had heard every word of it loud and clear. Seeing the infatuated expression on the girl's face, Chen Fan smiled wryly.

He had thrived in his rough and tumble life for five hundred years, and never once was he defeated. Countless goddesses fell for him because of his invincibility, and therefore, he was no stranger to a girl's loving gaze.

“I am sorry; I think you will be disappointed.”

Chen Fan lamented in his mind.

“I have waited for five hundred years for this new life. But I didn't come back for you...”

After Xu Rongfei had made the wish, everyone jumped at the cake at once.

Suddenly, the door was pushed open, and a handsome, refined middle age man crashed the party with a group of brawny bodyguards.

“What are you doing here?”

As soon as Auntie Xu saw the man, she pulled a taut face.

On the other hand, Xu Rongfei's face was lit up with surprise, she shouted gleefully, “Dad!”

Chapter 48: Xu Ao Of Hai Dong

“Fei-Fei, I have heard that it's your seventeenth birthday. I had come all the way from Hai Zhou to celebrate with you.” The middle age man spoke scholarly like a university professor.

He smiled to his daughter apologetically and then gave his wife a warm smile. “I am the father, of course, I need to be here for her birthday.”

Auntie Xu's face softened a little and then said wistfully: “Do you still remember us?”

The middle-aged man rushed to her and embraced her firmly as he whispered some placatory words into her ear. Auntie Xu struggled to break free, but she didn't try very hard. She then rested her head on the man's shoulder and started sobbing quietly.

Tears gleamed in Xu Rongfei's eyes, and she threw herself into the arms of the man and started crying as well.

“He is Fei-Fei’s father? I thought she only lived with her mom.”

“I have heard that her father had abandoned both her and her mother and married another rich woman in another city. Who would have thought that he is back now.”

“Judging by his entourage, he is doing pretty well for himself. I wonder if he is going to help out his ex-wife and daughter.”

A swell of murmurs rose among the guests after seeing this development.

Chen Fan had kept his silence; he looked over the shoulder of Fei Fei’s dad and saw a grizzled old man.

This old man had two muscular arms. His blue veins ran across his forearms, looking like withering dragons in the clouds. His eyes were half closed and glinted from time to time. All the brawny bodyguards looked at the old man with a great measure of fear and respect.

“Another Internal Force user who had reached Phenomenal Success. He is at least as powerful as Linbao and Elderly Man Wei.”Chen Fan exclaimed in his mind. Who was Xu Rongfei’s father? Why would he need the protection of a powerful Internal Force user?

Suddenly, Chen Fan heard someone exclaim incredulously: “Is it just me or Fei Fie’s father looks like Lord Ao.”

“Lord Ao? Who the hell is Lord Ao?” Everyone gaped at the speaker, and none of them had heard of such name in Chu Zhou City.

Having followed Old Man Zhen around for many years, Han Yun knew a lot more than her younger friends. She suddenly exclaimed with a quiet but excited voice:

“Xu Ao of Hai Dong”

Han Yun’s words shocked everyone.

Although no one had heard of Lord Ao, Xu Ao of Hai Dong was a household name in Jiang Bei region.

Hai Dong was a city under the jurisdiction of Hai Zhou City. Hai Zhou was close to other cities such as Zhong Hai and Jin and was one of the most developed and largest cities in the Jiang Bei region. Xu Ao was the richest man in Hai Zhou City if not the entire Jiang Bei Region.

Just like Xin Zhong of Tian He City and Third Lord of the Chu Zhou City, he was one of the most powerful tycoons in the region. Compared to him; Zhou Tianhao was nothing but a pawn.

"I have heard that Xu Ao's protector was a powerful family from Southern China who had deep roots in the Chinese industry. Because of the powerful backing, No one dared to ruffle Xu Ao's feathers. I had never thought that Xu Ao was Xu Rongfei's father!" Li Yichen's face hardened as he started to see Xu Rongfei as a very different person.

He always considered Xu Rongfei a beautiful doll—beautiful but powerless. She was popular solely because of her looks.

However, if her father was indeed Xu Ao, she had more influence than most of her classmates. No one in Chu Zhou City would even dare lay a finger on her.

"But I know that Xu Ao had his own wife and kids. Is Fei-Fei his... bastard daughter?" Zhang Yumeng spoke quietly under her breath.

"Not likely. I have heard that Xu Ao's son is only ten years old. He must have had Fei-Fie first, got divorced and remarried again." Han Yun said as she shook her head.

Bastard or not, it didn't change the fact that she was Xu Ao's daughter and it must have been a well-kept secret. Should Zhou Tianhao know that he would never dream of making such a racket in the bar and demanded Xu Rongfie to drink with him.

After a while, the tears on the mother-daughter pair's faces were replaced with joy. The family of three finally walked to the guests together.

"Welcome to my daughter's party. I think some of you might have already known who I am. I am Xu Ao of Hai Zhou. Thank you all for looking after Fei-Fei over the past few years."

Everyone stood up from their seats after they have heard Xu Ao's name.

Xu Ao looked to Chu Minhui and asked, "Minhui, how is your father?"

"Thank you for asking, Uncle Xu. He is doing well." Chu Minhui stood up and spoke in a respectful voice.

It was evident that Chu Minhui had known who Xu Rongfei's father was all the while.

Xu Ao nodded approvingly.

He looked around and asked. , "Who is Chen Fan?"

Everyone was taken aback by the question. They searched for Chen Fan and found him in a corner.

Everyone was convinced that Chen Fan was in knee-deep trouble today.

Chen Fan stood up readily and nodded at Xu Ao, "Nice to see you, Uncle Xu. I am Chen Fan."

Xu Rongfei pulled an unnerved face and then jerked at her father's arm "Daddy! Don't be mean. He is a nice person."

"I haven't spoken yet. Haha. I wanted to see him in person because I have heard so much about him that my ears are about to bleed." Xu Ao jested. He turned to the other guests momentarily and then said:

"I didn't mean to crash the party; please continue!"

Xu Ao walked to the dining table and sat down at the center seat.

After Xu Rongfei sat to his left, Xu Ao called Chu Minhui to sit next to his daughter. Although he didn't speak a word to Chen Fan, everyone knew that he was sending a clear message to the boy.

No one spoke a word, and many people hoped for more drama to surface.

Xu Ao was a scholarly man, and he spoke with an even and refined voice. Soon, everyone relaxed and forgot that he was the most powerful man in the entire Jiang Bei region.

"Auntie Xu, I have heard a mysterious Master Chen had shown up in the Chu Zhou City. Is that true?"

As the discussion at the table touched upon recent news, Zhang Yumeng raised a question curiously.

Auntie Xu worked at the TV station, and therefore she would be the first person to know the ins and outs of recent developments in the city.

She nodded and said, "Indeed, I have heard of him."

"I have heard that Old Man Zhen and The Third Lord of Wei respected him immeasurably. Even the experienced Master Qi vouched for his ability. He is said to be even more powerful than the grand masters from Hong Kong."

"Is there really such a thing as Dharma Spells?" Some teenagers asked curiously.

"I am not too sure either." Auntie Xu answered with knotted brows. "However, those who had met Master Chen all claimed that he could cast spells and is very good at it."

Suddenly, Xu Ao spoke up, "As for this Master Chen, I think I can shed some light on the topic."

Silence fell to the dining table as everyone looked to Xu Ao. He was the most resourceful person at the table, and therefore, it was not surprising that he knew much more than Auntie Xu.

“Have you guys heard of Xin Zhong of Tian He City?” Xu Ao spoke slowly.

“Yes, he is the boss of the Yuan Hai Group. He runs a shipping fleet and owns some assets overseas as well. Quite a resourceful man at least in Tian He City.” Chu Minhui chimed in to show off his knowledge.

“That’s him.” Xu Ao nodded approvingly.

Chu Minhui shot Chen Fan a smug glance.

Chen Fan lowered his head and pretended that he didn’t even see Chu Minhui.

Xu Ao continued: “Xin Zhong had brought with him some hot shot master and set up a con for Third Lord of Wei. However, one of the Third Lord’s men, Master Chen, had seen through the fraud and defeated Xin Zhong’s grandmaster in a battle. ”

“Xin Zhong ran back to Tian He City and lost forty-five million yuan to Master Chen.”

“Forty-five million!” Everyone gasped.

At their age, the most amount of money they had used was in the tens of thousands. They found it hard to comprehend what it was like to suddenly gain so much money. It was nearly half of Zhang Yumeng family’s entire assets.

“So the master Chen really is the real deal. Otherwise, he wouldn’t be able to kick Xin Zhong out of Chu Zhou and extort forty-five million from him.”

“Touche!”

Everyone nodded as their eyes were filled with respect for Master Chen.

On his debut appearance, he had driven the powerful Xin Zhong back to his city and earned a tremendous amount of money. It was as legendary as a legend could get. Even these teenagers powerful fathers and grandfathers paled in comparison with what Master Chen had achieved.

“I wonder what Master Chen is like. Oh, it would be so nice to marry him?” Zhang Yumeng said with an infatuated face.

“What if he is an old man? Plus, what are you going to do with Yang Chao?” Jiang Churan joked.

“Humph, if Yang Chao can be less of a loser, I might stay with him.” Zhang Yumeng said as she gave Yang Chao a hot glance.

Yang Chao let out a stupid smile and scarcely dared protest for himself.

Even as everyone was marveling at the mysterious Master Chen, Han Yun looked surreptitiously to Chen Fan, who was sitting in the corner and lamented.

“How would you react if you knew that Master Chen is among us right now.

“However, I will keep this a secret from everyone. This is the opportunity of a lifetime; I cannot let it slide away.”

The thought had lit up the eagerness and desire in Han Yun’s eyes.

Chapter 49: Xu Ao At The Door

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The remainder of the party was uneventful, and then it eventually ended on a pleasant note. Chu Minhui didn’t provoke Chen Fan even once, as he designed to keep up appearances before Xu Rongfei’s parents.

Han Yun offered a ride to Chen Fan, which the latter politely refused.

The next day morning, Chen Fan was walking along the lakeside path to school when a few black jeeps pulled over next to him. A brawny man with a pudgy face wearing a black suit walked over to Chen Fan and said, “Mr. Chen, our boss wants to have a word with you.”

“Your boss?”

Chen Fan looked to the direction where the pudgy face was pointed at. He saw a familiar figure standing next to the lake.

“OK.”

When Chen Fan closed in, He realized that it was Xu Rongfei’s father who he met last night.

Xu Ao!

He stood by the lake, hands linked behind his back, and he was looking into the distance where the lake became the sky. Around him were a few bodyguards, including the old man Chen Fan saw last night.

“You want to see me, Uncle Xu?”

Chen Fan paused a few paces away from the man and asked calmly.

Xu Ao face was indifferent and severe. Unlike the scholarly and tender father that he had been last night, he looked more like a powerful boss that ruled the city of Hai Dong.

“What do you see from here?”

Xu Ao asked faintly.

Chen Fan looked into the distance and saw only the vast expanse of the lake. He thought about the answer for a moment and then replied, “I saw the Yan Gui Lake.”

“Indeed. Misty, vast and makes one feel so small, doesn’t it?” Xu Ao lamented. Suddenly, his voice grew cold and sharp.

“It might look big, but did you know that it is only the tenth largest lake in Hu Dong Province and was considered a small pond among all the lakes in China.”

After he said that, he looked to Chen Fan and said: “Just like you. Although you can stand out in Chu Zhou City, you are insignificant on the stage of the Hu Dong Province. Just a tiny drop of water in the vast lake in front of us.”

Chen Fan remained calm and asked. “Can you be more specific please, Uncle Xu?”

“You know what I mean.” Xu Ao linked his hands behind his back and said contemptuously, “I need you to leave Fei-Fei alone.”

“I agree you are an outstanding young lad in the Chu Zhou City, but you couldn’t compare with the brightest minds of the Hu Dong Province. ”

Chu Minhui said faintly, “Do you think Chu Minhui is up to snuff?”

“Humph! Even Chu Minhui has to prove that he is worthy of my daughter.” Xu Ao’s lips curved into a smile. “I would consider him only if he could rise to power in five years all by himself. Otherwise, I will not allow him to see my daughter.”

Xu Ao turned to look at Chen Fan and said, “I know that you despise Chu Minhui and rightfully so.

“Your father is from the Chen Family of the Jin City, while your mother ran a company at Zhong Hai city that’s worth a few hundred million. Plus, you were able to save Fei-Fei from the clutches of Zhou Tianhao.

“Therefore, I agree that you are a better choice than Chu Minhui.

“You have investigated me?” Chen Fan asked.

Xu Ao laughed out loud and then said, “Why shouldn’t I. Fei-Fei is my only daughter, and I can’t just let her date anyone!

“I know that you not only have a knack for martial arts but also are a friend of the Princess from Wei Family of the North Bank. In theory, you should have been a rightful candidate to date Fei-Fei.

“However, things have changed since last night.” Xu Ao said firmly. “Now everyone knows she is MY daughter.

“That makes you unworthy of her.”

Xu Ao said the words slowly and firmly. He was convinced that he was right.

“Oh? So how could I prove myself to you?” Chen Fan looked down and asked.

“Your family needs to have at least a few billion yuan.” Xu Ao said calmly “As for ability, you can set a small goal first, for example, earn 100 million to start with!

“But I don’t see that in you.” Xu Ao shook his head.

“Although you appear to be very modest, deep down, you are arrogant to the extreme. Stubborn, inflexible, and unaccommodating. Your personality means that you are destined to fail when you enter the real world.

“Now, you tell me, why would I be comfortable letting someone like you have my daughter’s hand?”

After Xu Ao had finished what he had to say, he gazed at Chen Fan as if he had already seen through the boy.

Chen Fan burst out laughing and then said, “Mr. Xu, that is all just your wishful thinking.

“I have always treated Fei-Fei like my own sister, but no more.

“You are right about one thing. I am a very proud, if not arrogant person. I not only look down on worldly power but also money.”

Chen Fan's face was calm; nothing could have disturbed his inner peace.

"Really? What made you think so? Your family or your martial arts skill?" Xu Ao asked with a sarcastic smile.

The real reason that he wanted to meet this young man was to pin him under his thumb so that he could recruit his talent. When the time was right, he would not only give him great responsibilities but also his daughter if he performed well enough.

However, after talking to Chen Fan, he realized that the boy was even more arrogant than he had expected.

"My power is beyond your imagination. My father-in-law was the former boss of Chu Minghui's father.

"Everyone in Hai Zhou is at my command. When I say jump, everyone shouts how high!

"Master Gu, for example. He is the old gentleman right next to me. He is a descendant of one of the oldest martial arts family. He could easily defeat ten of you at one time."

Xu Ao said slowly.

"I know you wouldn't be able to imagine what it is like; after all, you are just a sixteen-year-old boy. What could you have achieved?"

Xu Ao ended his rant with a cold grunt.

He was angry at Chen Fan for being unwilling to admit his limitations. Although The boy insisted that he had more tricks up his sleeve, Xu Ao quickly dismissed him with hard facts.

If he were really more powerful and resourceful than he seemed, he wouldn't need Wei Ziqin to rescue him when he was embattled at the auction.

Chen Fan replied calmly, "Mr. Xu, all those things you have mentioned were troubles that I could solve with one single sweep of a blade. "

"A sweep of a blade?" A broad smile broke over Xu Ao's face.

He shook his head as he gathered himself "Chen Fan, you are not the first teenage boy to dream that you could solve everything using violence. I did too. However, let me tell you something. The world follows the rules and if you don't follow them, you will very quickly be abandoned and forgotten.

"Anyways, you still have a long way to go. If you manage to think it through, come talk to me. "

Xu Ao waved a dismiss at Chen Fan before he started off.

None of his bodyguards had moved while they were talking, much less interrupted their conversation. It was evident that Xu Ao's men were better trained than that of Zhou Tianhao. After all, Xu Ao was the top boss in the entire Jiang Bei region.

When the old man named Gu walked passed Chen Fan, he shot Chen Fan a glance and then shook his head.

"What happened to the kids nowadays? Lord Xu was going to offer you an opportunity of a lifetime, but he had ruined it all.

"If you came under Lord Xu's protection, it would further your status by at least twenty years.

"If I had the same opportunity as you did, I would not just be a bodyguard now."

Chen Fan replied with an even voice:

"We are different. His offer might seem like a life-changing opportunity, but to me, it's worthless."

"Humph! How arrogant!"

The old man's face hardened and walked away after he let out a snort.

After everyone was gone, Chen Fan shook his head and looked to the Yan Gui Lake.

"Your limited vision only makes you see China, and therefore you knew that the Yan Gui Lake was a small pond when compared to all lakes in China.

"However, I can see far further than you. I can see China, the earth, and the entire universe. Your puny power was less than a grain of sand in my eyes..."

"You might be rich and talented, but you are a mortal, and in my eyes, a mortal does only one thing: die. But I am different; I will live until the end of time."

The old man pulled open the car door and hopped in.

"Hasn't he change his mind?" Xu Ao asked calmly.

"This kid is as stubborn as a mule!" The old man heaved a sigh and shook his head.

"Never mind then. I have already extended an olive branch, but he had refused it, Fei-Fei should not blame me in the future for objecting to her relationship with him " Xu Ao

pulled a taut face, and then said, “I have heard that Xin Zhong was going to bring a tough fighter to this year’s Martial Arts Tournament, is that true? ”

“Yes, Lord Xu.” One of the men sitting in the passenger seat replied. “We have confirmed it with our source at Tian He City.”

“Xin Zhong had invited a champion from overseas. He is fawning over this martial artist as if he was the high lord of the la la land. This fighter has sworn to win all fights during the tournament.”

“Humph! What an arrogant fool!” Xu Ao sneered in his mind. He looked to the old man and said. Master Gu, I will have to count on you during the tournament. ”

“Rest assured, Lord Xu. Although I am old, I will teach these youngsters a lesson before I finally kick the bucket.”

“Thank you, Master Gu.” Xu Ao nodded approvingly.

Chapter 50: Jade Bone Complete!

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Chen Fan called Zhou Tianhao to ask about Xu Rongfei’s father.

“Xu Ao? Why did he come to Chu Zhou City?” Zhou Tianhao was shocked by the revelation.

“Is he one of the top most powerful people?” Chen Fan asked curiously.

“Master Chen, he was at the very top of the food chain in the Jiang Bei region.” Zhou Tianhao answered.

“How does he compare with the Third Lord of Wei?” Chen Fan asked.

“Third Lord is way less powerful.” Zhou Tianhao shook his head. “Xu Ao runs a very successful outfit in Hai Zhou City. Third Lord’s business was less than half the size as his.”

“Master Chen, what is going on? Did he mess with you?” Zhou Tianhao asked nervously.

“Nah. I just found out that he is the father of one of my friends.” Chen Fan said lightly.

“That’s good; you don’t want to be in his way. Even Third Lord dares not to cross Xu Ao.”

“Really? I thought the Wei Family was the most influential family in the Jiang Bei region. Why is the Third Lord afraid of Xu Ao?”

“Well, Xu Ao is, of course, no match against the collective might of the Wei Family. However, The Third Lord and his family are not... very close if you know what I mean. If the Third Lord has a feud with Xu Ao, his old man might not even stand up for him.” Zhou Tianhao smiled wryly.

“And Xu Ao’s father in law is also a force to be reckoned with.” Zhou Tianhao paused a second and said, “Anyways, all you need to know is that no one in Jiang Bei dares cross Xu Ao.”

“That makes much more sense now.” Chen Fan nodded as he realized that Xu Ao had risen to power thanks to his father in law’s protection.

Judging by his interaction with Xu Rongfei and Auntie Xu last night, he didn’t seem to want to cut ties with his first family. However, he also needed to tread carefully since it was impossible for him to divorce his second wife either.

“Master Chen, I want to ask a favor of you.” Zhou Tianhao said consciously.

“What is it?” Chen Fan asked.

“There will be a martial arts tournament in half a month. This tournament is crucial to our business, and the outcome is tied directly to our next year’s profit. Thanks to A’Biao, I was able to get by last year’s event. However, I have heard that this year’s competition is extremely fierce, and there is going to be Internal Force users too.” Zhou Tianhao heaved a sigh.

“A tournament?” Chen Fan’s interest was piqued.

“Indeed.” Zhou Tianhao nodded.

“You are not talking about underground cage fighting, are you?”

Zhou Tianhao grinned and said, “Dear Master Chen, look at me. Do I look like a criminal scumbag to you? It’s a normal tournament; everyone plays by the rules. No one has been seriously injured ever since its conception.”

“These martial artists had trained many years just for this opportunity to put their training to work. We have strict rules, and no funny business was allowed. Each businessman will pick his champion, and the outcome of the fight would determine the share of influence one would get in the coming year.

“You know better than me how powerful those Internal Force users are. Just Linbao alone had nearly killed me. How am I supposed to maintain my businesses for the next year if more Linbaos show up?”

Zhou Tianhao said with bitterness in his voice.

Every year around this time, he had to stomach the humiliation from business rivals who happened to be more resourceful than him. Many of his rivals invited world renowned Muay Thai kickboxers, Taekwondo masters or Baji Fist masters, but he had only one champion: A'Biao.

If the Internal Force users were going to enter the race this year, A'Biao would definitely not be enough to ensure the smooth operation of business next year.

“You want me to help you fighting at the tournament?” Chen Fan furrowed his brows.

“Of course I want to, but I wouldn't dare ask you.” Zhou Tianhao hurried an explanation.

“I have already invited Master Guo as my champion. Master Guo was also an Internal Force user. However, he hasn't partaken in the tournament for many years, so I want to invite you to come with me just in case.

“If you are with me, at least people from outside of the city wouldn't look down on us.”

“Fine, I can see sense in that. ” Chen Fan nodded.”Might as well. I want to meet more Internal Force users anyways.

“I will go with you; just let me know when to leave.”

“Yes, yes,” Zhou Tianhao answered excitedly.

After he had learned more about Xu Ao, Chen Fan started to focus on building the Dharma Array.

By then, one of the four components of the Misty Mountain Array: the Spirit Channeling Array, was completed. The Spirit Channeling Array had been underway ever since Third Lord of Wei had delivered the last shipment of deep-sea rocks. As for the Mist Array and the Guardian Array, Chen Fan was still waiting for the material to be collected.

“While I wait, I should hurry up and finish the Spirit Channeling Array. The other two are not that important anyway.”

Chen Fan finally made up his mind to finish the second array.

In the next two weeks that followed, he rushed home as soon as he was done school and started to work on those rocks from the deep sea.

These rocks were huge; each was the size of an elephant and weighted a few tones. They were just ordinary rocks and could only absorb a small amount of Water Qi per unit volume. In order to meet the requirement of the array, Chen Fan had to rely on size.

The method of refining a deep-sea rock was also different than that of refining the Jade Marrow.

Chen Fan held a dagger in one hand as he awakened the arcane energy inside of him. He channeled the energy into the sharp blade and then started to carve countless cryptic symbols onto the surface of the rock. There was a primitive and raw nature in those scraggly strokes that made up the symbols. A faint golden light glinted in the deep grooves of each stroke.

It would take Chen Fan at least a few hours to cover one of those rocks with symbols and to complete the array, Chen Fan needed sixteen rocks. There was no time to waste; Chen Fan worked day and night industriously and eventually finished the work.

“Finally!”

Chen Fan heaved a sigh. He stood at the mountain peak and looked down. He saw dark rocks stood in the path that connected the lake to where he was standing every few hundred meters or so. Symbols and inscriptions covered all of those rocks. Upon closer look, one could even see the flowing golden light hidden in the tiny grooves on the surface of the rocks.

“The next step is to turn the Spirit Channeling Array on.”

Chen Fan sat down with his legs crossed. He faced the vast expanse of the lake and close his eyes, extending his soul energy to the void dimension.

Inside the void, Chen Fan was surrounded by impenetrable darkness. However, he could vaguely trace out sixteen flickering dots in the distance: those were the sixteen deep-sea rocks.

“Arise!”

Chen Fan shouted and connected his soul energy with the first dot.

The dot flickered for a second before it cranked up its brightness. A barely visible thin ray of light shot out from the first rock and when it landed on the second rock, the second rock also lite up just like the first one.

Two, three, four... At last, all sixteen rocks were lit up.

These sixteen rocks shined brightly inside the dark void like sixteen torches. Inside the Void Dimension, their energy could be felt even from far away.

In the real world, the sixteen rocks only gave a faint golden glow that was easily overpowered by the sunshine.

“Almost there!”

The moment that all sixteen torches were lit up, Chen Fan became alert and was ready to finally kick start the array.

The first few seconds was the most critical moment of the entire process. As soon as the array was started, the flood gate would be open, and all the Spirit Qi inside of the Yan Gui Lake would be dumped upon the Array in a matter of seconds. If the array was not strong enough to hold the Spirit Qi, Chen Fan would not only have to start all over again but also risk jeopardizing his own life.

Lo and behold, a powerful wave of Water Spirit Qi gushed into the array through the channel created by the sixteen sea rocks. The immense power agitated the five Spirit Gathering Plates as they quickly reached their holding limit.

Chen Fan was at the forefront of the array and had taken the brunt of the force from the powerful pulse of energy. Luckily, the Void Mortal Refinement Art had significantly strengthened his bones and sinews, and therefore, he was able to hold his ground. That being said, Chen Fan could feel the pressure in his body increasing as his system accommodated more and more energy.

“Excellent!”

The steadily increasing pressure inside of Chen Fan didn’t unnerve him. Instead, he was excited by the deluge of surging energy inside of him.

He allowed an immeasurable amount of energy to rush into his body, colliding against every single piece of muscle and bone. Chen Fan doubled down on the Void Mortal Refinement Art and dug in to absorb as much Spirit Qi as possible.

After a while, his bones started to glow with the color of jade.

Soon, the glow started to spread until all 206 bones in Chen Fan’s body were suffused with the creamy glow. A mysterious and profound change was happening inside of Chen Fan’s body.

Before he knew it, he had reached the second level of the Void Mortal Refinement Art: Jade Bone.

After a while, Chen Fan slowly opened his eyes, and then heaved a sigh of relief.

By then the flood of the Spirit Qi from the lake had also subsided. The deluge had reduced to a trickle, and all the energy was safely contained within the Spirit Gathering

Array. As Chen Fan had expected, the high concentration of the Spirit Qi had caused the mist to form inside and around the house, making it all that more fitting for a home of a cultivator.

“The sea rocks are not nearly as effective as I expected. I should find a better replacement soon.” Chen Fan lamented.

Despite the slight hiccup, the array was a success.

Unlike many other Foundation Establishment Arts, The Void Mortal Refinement Art was divided into five levels.

Ice Skin, Jade Bone, Silver Blood, Golden Eyes and Dao Body

Once he reached the fifth level, he would be able to reach the physical requirement for completing the Connate Spirit Level. He should be able to connect his soul energy with all types of Qi on the earth without any difficulties.

However, even among the members of The Sect of the Grand Dao, only a handful of cultivators had reached level five.

“I had already reached the Ice Skin level when I breached the mid-stage of the Foundation Establishment. However, If not for the help of the Spirit Channeling Array, I would still be stuck with level one. It’s going to be an uphill battle for the rest of my cultivation on Earth. ” Chen Fan lamented.

He slowly stood up and felt like his body was charged with energy. He could feel that his bones were fortified and were nearly unbreakable.

“I have gained more power; all I need is to test it.” Chen Fan said as he shook his head.

He wished that Lei Qianjue would come knocking on his door to seek revenge right now.

Suddenly, his phone rang, and it was Zhou Tianhao on the other side of the line.

He called to inform Chen Fan that the Martial Arts tournament was about to start.