

Unfathomable 531

Chapter 531

'That about covers the outside, now should I call it a day or try to get in...'

Zhang Dong looked was sticking to a large tower that was situated on the outskirts of this Demon City. There were six others just like it and together they created a hexagram formation. These towers looked more like occult monoliths and in each one, a nascent soul demonic creature resided. For him that could mask his presence, it didn't pose a problem as the guardians were still unaware of his presence.

Even though these monsters were quite strong they were not actually meant for battle. This was quite the occult protective measure that would use their life force to protect the outer city. If a problem arose then the hexagram would activate to defend the city with evil soul-draining energies. However, now that Zhang Dong was here it would not pose a problem. Thanks to his knowledge he had rigged this protective measure that would surprise his enemies.

It took a few days of sneaking around but he managed to go unnoticed while jerry-rigging the six spires. None of the nascent soul masters were aware of his presence as they had other things to worry about. While he was being secretive more people continued to arrive. They were all around the level of the Immolation Demon that he had met before. The assembly was soon going to take place which made things more complicated yet also gave him a better chance to infiltrate.

With so many nascent soul masters arriving it was impossible to check for everything. There was just not enough manpower to go around. This Chaos Sect was still new and these masters that arrived would probably be given a choice soon. Either they joined the sect or they would be eradicated.

'I wonder if they know what is going to happen there or if they don't think that Wang Long is capable of dominating everyone?'

There were some old monsters that didn't enter the city and remained at the outskirts and outside the formation range. Some of them were weary of going inside the city as they were suspecting some foul play. Even though the war for supremacy was supposedly over some were not convinced.

'It wouldn't be strange if he created some kind of occult ritual to suppress everyone, it wouldn't be hard to get with the system...'

The people that lived in this world still tended to underestimate system holders. Zhang Dong knew that immortal grade techniques were almost nonexistent. To everyone's knowledge, there wouldn't be anything that would be able to dominate multiple nascent soul masters at once. This would require a huge amount of spiritual energy and preparation. The city was a mish-mash of renegade cultivators that didn't like each other. It would probably not be possible to hide such a formation without everyone knowing.

'No one would suspect an ancient technique to pop up that didn't require preparation but if it's the system we are talking about, then it's possible. If Wang Long had gathered enough points then it's a possibility...'

From his investigation, he knew that Wang Long went on a large killing spree. Many masters of demonic arts had fallen to him and also huge sects both here and back in the empire. Even though he was getting

fewer and fewer points from weaker enemies, he was killing people in the millions which could make up for it.

Yet this was just a theory, for all he knew Wang Long could have nothing planned out at all. It was possible that they were just throwing a giant party to announce the rise of the new demon king. Perhaps they would just give them an ultimatum which could potentially make things easier for his forces. If during the announcement the nascent soul masters began causing trouble, then it would be the right time to attack.

'I won't really know unless I sneak into the city and listen to the rumors or go further in...'

It seemed that Wang Long was taking the whole Demon King persona quite literally. The whole city was built around an active volcano that was being held back from exploding by several contraptions. Yet even then the owner of this city decided to place a huge castle inside of the huge basin of molten lava that was inside. Even from outside, he could see the tip of the castle which had a large number of black towers. It looked like it was created from an assortment of swords that were somehow glued together.

This reminded him of the past when he went through some of the system store options. There he remembered finding large structures that could be purchased with points. This thing was probably one of them, perhaps it was similar to the golden bastion that also generated some passive resources. It wouldn't be strange if he decided to get it due to his new faction and was using it as the main headquarters. Perhaps it also had a teleportation feature as the golden fortress that he had.

'Shit, if that thing can help him escape then it complicates things... Bob, can you block that thing from teleporting?'

'Not enough information to make a statement, the user will need to examine the object to make a proper estimation.'

'I thought as much...'

During his last battle with Wang Long, his system Ai had enough time to examine him. Through that, he was able to counter the teleportation feature. Yet the castle was a separate object, it could perhaps be able to escape if he had enough points.

'Bob, how long would you need to examine that thing? Would it be possible to do it during the battle?'

'Can't make an assumption without examining the target, inadequate data.'

'Yeah, I thought so...'

Zhang Dong would need to get closer and at least touch the castle for Bob to predict the time needed. It would be a numbers game, the more resources he invested into the blocking system the faster and better it would work. The big question here was if he had more juice than his opponent.

'He must have spent most of his points on that castle... maybe this announcement is actually about that... but if that's the case I need to attack before it starts...'

After thinking through the options he decided to risk it. It was important to figure out what was really going on here. Was he hosting this meeting to forcefully recruit the demonic cultivators or to kill them

for points. If it was the latter then the best choice would be to announce it and quickly attack before Wang Long has enough spirit points to counter Bob.

'Before going in, I should probably call in...'

Zhang Dong brought up his system window from which he selected Zhang Kuo that had somewhat turned into a personal secretary.

"Give me a report, how are things progressing?"

"Yes Patriarch, we have started the process of bringing in the large-scale ships. The help that we asked for from the other sects is also on the way, they will arrive later but we should be able to keep everything within the time frame."

"Good, it will take a bit longer on my side and I might not be able to contact you for a day or two."

"I understand but Patriarch, shouldn't you return we could send the spy unit out and..."

"That won't be possible, they aren't trained in going against demonic formations yet, I'll have to do it myself."

"I understand Patriarch..."

After a quick exchange between the two, he had an idea where he stood. From the exit of the desert, it would take at least one day for his army to arrive at this massive city. This wasn't the same for his golden bastion that could be teleported in a lot closer. He had already created a location for it to spawn in. Regretfully he did not have enough points for it to emerge within the city, if that was possible then conquering it would be a cakewalk.

'Maybe if I played more Strategy games this wouldn't be happening...'

Zhang Dong gave out a sigh while looking out into the distance. He was still the most suited candidate for this espionage mission. Sometimes he wished that he could just relax and send out his minions to do his biddings while he enjoys the good life. Instead, he was stuck going through smelly poison-filled environments for days without end.

In some instances, he had to encase himself in dirt and mud to evade peering eyes. After going through this entire area he needed to switch his clothes three times already. This was not something a leader of the sect should be doing but he didn't trust anyone to do a good enough job with such an important mission. Perhaps when the danger passed and Wang Long was gone he could relax while his sect members carried out missions against the other empires.

'How should I do this, sneaking into the formation as I am might be possible but what if I bump into the wrong person...'

There were a few ways of going around this problem, one of them would be just keeping to the shadows and not sticking out. Then there was the second option of staying in plain sight while in a disguise. The second option gave more freedom but more eyes would be on him for the entirety of the infiltration mission. It was also less of a hassle as he would not have to constantly look over his shoulder.

'But who should I impersonate...'

This was the big question but quickly he had the answer. There were many people entering this city, many demonic cultivators were on their way to pay tribute to the new demon king. He just needed to pick up one that didn't stick out too much and take their place. With his disguising technique this would be an easy task, the only possible problem was entering Wang Long's faction territory.

'Bob, can you hide me from his system or not?'

'User Wang Long's faction is at a lesser development stage than of user Zhang Dong's, hiding presence will be possible.'

'Nice, finally some good news, I guess building all those lady cafes to keep people happy was not a mistake'

Thanks to faction systems he could analyze and identify anyone that was outside of it. As long as they were in his territory scanning was available and this was his way of finding out potential spies. With the help of his AI he would be able to pose as a regular demonic cultivator he just needed to find a good face to impersonate.

'Hm... that one looks promising... they also made a stop before entering the city...'

Not far from here he spotted a flying ship from a demonic being. For some reason, they had decided to make a stop here and the person in charge was moving away from the rest. It was the perfect chance to make his move...

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"I just can't relax, what is that maniac up to? Should I just run and leave a body double instead? No... they would figure it out instantly..."

'This guy is quite talkative...'

Zhang Dong was keeping himself hidden while looking at an old-looking cultivator. From a quick scan, he could see that the person was a middle stage nascent soul cultivator. His Dao was a mix of the people that he already faced and not something that he couldn't emulate at this point. It seemed the man had gotten nervous and decided to take a pee in the forest.

He arrived on a large ship that looked like it was filled with ghosts. It radiated faint spirit energy and was filled with multiple decrepit souls. This was actually a good fit for Zhang Dong as ghosts and spirits were aligned with his Dao of the Souls. The man also had some treasures that utilized phantom energies which were right up his alley.

'Doesn't feel right to attack a man that is taking a piss... but oh well, the guy has probably murdered countless people, the stench of evil is quite noticeable.'

Within a flash, he found himself behind the unsuspecting man. Right when the demonic cultivator noticed his head was already flying. Zhang Dong surrounded the area with a bubble that wouldn't allow any screams to escape. The man's corrupted nascent divinity that looked more like an evil spirit couldn't even react as it was quickly taken into his seed along with the techniques he studied.

Dao:

Percentage gained

Phantoms

0 %

Demon Summoning

2 %

Curse

1 %

'Dao of the phantoms was it? Not really that useful at this point...'

The Dao of Phantoms was lower on the totem pole than his Dao of Souls. Due to this, he was unable to gain anything on that particular path. The Demon Summoning one was a first and as the name stated he would be able to summon evil creatures to do his bidding. This was more of a ritualistic summoning and not the kind seen in RPG games that were instantaneous.

'Good, no one noticed... Let's check the loot...'

He looked at the dead body that was being dissolved before him. The robe that the man was wearing was quickly put through a cleaning spell that he learned from the other world. Without using it he would need to contend with a smell akin to mothballs. The man had a lot of rings and talismans which didn't really do much for his safety. Some of them had even cracked as they were unable to defend against the powerful killing slice.

'I hope this guy didn't have any intimate relationship with his people... let's see, his name was, Fang Jingguo?'

Luckily Zhang Dong was able to read the man's limited status screen before he kicked the bucket. He belonged to the Phantom Devil Cult and was its leader. There were a few secret techniques in the man's spatial ring along with some personal letters that let him figure out a few things. It didn't seem that he had any relatives in the sect and mostly spent his time cultivating but there was only so much he could learn after absorbing the knowledge from the notes here.

'I guess I should head out... how did the guy walk?'

After turning into the old pale man he assumed a slouched position. In his right hand, he had what looked to be an old walking cane. While holding it the attention was drawn to the colorful golden and platinum rings on his fingers. Thus for the time being he tried mimicking the old man's walking style that he examined before the beheading.

'Zhi, I'll be infiltrating the enemy city and won't be able to contact you for a while.'

'Be careful, Sir.'

'I always am.'

Zhang Dong was sure to send a message to his people, even if he didn't come back he was sure that they would continue with the mission. He wasn't quite sure what he would do inside, if luck was on his side then he would take the chance to take out his nemesis. It was always easier to defeat an enemy that wasn't expecting a confrontation.

'This would be a lot easier if that chucklehead of an older brother helped me, but he might be part of this system like that other demon king...'

Long Qing the Azure Emperor wasn't willing to help and at this point, Zhang Dong had become weary of his existence. The man was the first on the list of being part of the administrative gang that could destroy the world on a whim. Yet without him reaching a power level above the limits of the setting, he didn't think that the hidden overlords would act.

"Cult leader!"

"Mmm..."

When he arrived back he was greeted by hooded cult members. No one dared to look him in the eye and just waited for him to slowly board the ship. Thanks to the rules in this world Zhang Dong was somewhat confident in his disguise. Even if he acted a bit differently than the old cult leader no one would be able to call him out on it. Demonic cultivators were prone to violent outbursts so no one in their right mind would pester them without having a good reason for it.

"Why is the cult reader so silent? Is he mad?"

"Stop spouting nonsense, if he hears you then you're a goner, just shut up and let's go."

It wasn't that difficult to find the man's personal cabin that was radiating quite the strange energy. While walking he spread out his senses in all directions and overheated people whispering between each other. It was not something he would pick up without the system's help which probably gave them the guts to gossip about their boss.

"I see, so he is a cranky old man that is easily irritated?"

After sitting down in this gloomy cabin he looked out through the window. There he could see the ship gaining altitude and heading towards one of the main gates. There they would probably be inspected and then let into the city.

'Did this guy bring slaves as gifts to the new sect? I can also sense some demonic beasts...'

This ship was quite large and in some rooms there were ravenous beasts chained up. Even now he could feel their animosity not dying down. Besides them he could feel a group of young women, they weren't strong in any way, probably just offerings to the perverted Demon King.

Normally he would be glad to rescue these people and even let the creatures out. Yet this was a mission that he couldn't fail. His resolve needed to be steeled as on the inside he expected to see far worse things than slaves. The city was huge and a place where one's life was worth less than a grain of rice. With millions of citizens everywhere it was hard to remember that life was actually precious.

"Halt!"

'So it has begun...'

While remaining in place he watched the outside. There his new cult members were handing out some identification papers along with a few barrels of blood crystals. It was clear that the new sect was on the rise and all the other ones in high positions were trying to weasel into their good graces. To many, this was a chance to make some good connections that might allow them to prosper in the future.

"Phantom Devil Cult? Where is your leader?"

"H-he is in his private quarters, the cult leader is very old and frail so we..."

"Silence, bring him out."

"A-as you wish..."

'What is this about? Did they realize that I replaced the guy? Was someone watching when I killed him?'

The person that gave the command was only at the core formation level. There were a few nascent soul elders nearby but they were keeping their presence hidden. Normally if there was a problem they would call for more help so it didn't look that he was in trouble just yet. If something went wrong he could still just escape as long as he wasn't in Wang Long's main faction zone he would be able to teleport out normally.

'No, perhaps they just want to flex a bit...'

He had been paying attention to other ships that were at other entrance points. There he could see the gatekeepers going overboard as well. Some of them were even making the demons bow. In front of the massive sect there was nothing but death if they didn't bow their heads.

This was similar to the old days where his Zhang Clan had to do the biddings of the Dark Palm Sect. The ones with backing could bully even the strong. If he went out of line he could expect those hidden masters to appear. It was better to just step out and be nice, this new persona that he was using didn't mean anything to him. If he could avoid conflict by bowing his head, then it would be fine.

"What is this commotion about? You wanted to see this Phantom Demon?"

"Master, we were about to..."

"Be quiet, I heard it all."

He at least needed to seem like a nascent soul master. It wouldn't be hard for any of them to overhear the conversation. The core formation guard flinched a bit the moment he saw the master appearing out of the blue. Even though he was trying to keep it together it was clear that this man wasn't used to this position of power.

"You are, Fang Jingguo?"

"Yes, that's what seems to be the problem, we have come just as the Demon King ordered."

"You dare?"

"Ah my apologies."

During the conversation, he made a blunder, for this reason, he decided to perform a little bow towards where the Demon Castle was.

“I should have not mentioned the great Demon King’s name without an honorific. Was that all, can we proceed into the city? I’m sure the Great and wise Demon King doesn’t like to wait.”

While bowing he made sure to use some of his spiritual energy to envelop the guard. The difference in spiritual energies was just too vast and the man would quickly start to feel uneasy. It wasn’t truly an attack, it was only meant to instill fear into this core formation guard. Luckily it worked and they were quickly accepted into the city after getting some disgraceful looks.

“Ah yes... let them through, everything checks out.”

The man quickly accepted all bribes while also quickly letting the cult into the city. After the old man with the cane appeared he started feeling anxious. It was this fear that forced him to hasten the process from which he was hoping to get some more bribes.

‘So this is the City of Demons... looks like a great place to spend your retirement in...’

Zhang Dong wanted to give out a sigh while going through the gate. What he saw behind it was more than he had expected.

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“He’s a dead man...”

“Stop, he might notice, you want him to kill both of us?”

Zhang Dong was looking at the hidden messages between two cult members that were a bit higher on the totem pole. They were now looking at a trembling cultist that was begging for his life. It was the same person that had interacted with the gate patrol and apparently the man he was impersonating would normally be mad. It was due to this person not being able to take care of the situation without the cult leader being involved.

This conversation spying feature was quite handy, he didn’t know people liked to gossip so much when around others that could wipe them out with a fart. He was of course unwilling to just kill a person for trying to do their work. Not like this person was without sin but he still didn’t want to turn into a person that would murder people for no reason.

“Get up you fool, make sure that this doesn’t happen again.”

Thus he just pretended that he was preoccupied with other issues. His gaze was focused on the giant city and the various dark buildings that were mostly made of stone and bricks. The bowing cultist in question was not let off without getting tossed against the ship’s wall by his aura though. He at least needed to do the absolute minimum to not give himself away. A few broken bones and collapsed organs would quickly heal for someone as strong as this man.

‘Hm, I think I’ll need to stay with this bunch of murderers for a bit longer. If I split up during the night they will know that I’m some kind of spy quickly...’

The large ship was beginning to dock at a large shipyard with multiple other flying vessels. All of them were hovering in the air and were just connected to the ground by massive chains that were thicker than a grown man's thigh. Other unsavory demonic cultivators were slowly coming out and heading to various inns.

"This way cult leader."

Zhang Dong nodded as another cult member appeared to guide him down. It was up to these people to get all the information and take care of all the busy work. It was already paying off that he chose this way of infiltration as he could take a good look at the inside of this grand formation.

'It's a layered one, there are multiple barriers with the strongest one being right around that volcano.'

Yet there wasn't that much that he could do from this vantage point. When the time was right he would need to sneak up to every barrier. Then after interacting with it he would find out the way to disable them. There were several ways of disabling such barriers and it depended on the type it was.

From what he could tell the outer barrier was being supplied with energy by the hexagram of towers. On these, he worked from the outside but he would need to find the corresponding control nodes to truly disable them. When everything was prepared the forcefield would vanish when his troops attacked.

'That's the easy part, the harder ones are at the center of the city and that castle, but we can also use brute force.'

There was only so much that he could do in the few days that he had. It was the middle of the day and before it became nighttime he probably couldn't even head into the city. Yet it didn't seem that anyone was concerned about safety all that much. There weren't that many guards and the Chaos Sect was showing off their power. Even now he could see them parading on the streets to forcefully make stronger cultivators appease their hubris.

'You give them some power and they lose their mind, I wonder if any of them realize that their sect might not exist after a week...'

It was strange to see the people exert their proxy power. Even the nascent soul masters had to keep to themselves, if they killed an important family member of an elder from the strongest sect, they would have a lot of explaining to do. Some of them were also here to join up with the new giant but while they couldn't attack any sect members from the Chaos Sect, there were other targets.

"What are you looking at?"

"You dare speak to me in that tone? Who are you to block the path of this demon!?"

He could see the guests squaring up against each other. Two groups were looking at each other with animosity in their eyes. Both sides were on edge and probably all that bottled-up rage from bowing to the upstarts was fueling their actions.

'Are they succumbing to their demonic nature? Some demonic cultivators are said to have things like demonic hearts or physiques that with time drive them insane. It doesn't look like the guards will lift a finger, they will probably take the loser away later... if there is anything left that is...'

Everyone looked at the group, one side was composed of very muscular-looking individuals that had all sorts of tattoos covering their bodies. The other side on the other hand looked like some gathering of old wizards. Yet even though they were talking smack at each other nothing seemed to come of it.

'I guess they are just blowing off some steam, no one is stupid enough to start a large brawl right after coming to the city of demons.'

"Cult leader, I have our accommodations ready, please walk this way."

Finally one of the cult members returned with a piece of paper. On it, he could see an address to some kind of hotel. Probably the rooms were distributed depending on the worth of the strongest person. With him being a middle stage nascent soul cultivator, the hotel would probably not be the best or the worst, something in the middle.

'This is a peculiar looking place... I hope the rooms are better than the exterior.'

After wandering through the city for around thirty minutes they finally arrived at a large spire. The thing looked like a spiky cactus made from hardened molten lava. It was quite the building that fit the gloomy city filled with murderers and thieves. On the way here he witnessed crimes being performed in broad daylight. The city guards didn't react even when the citizens were being beaten.

They clearly had no use for the non-cultivators or people with no backing. Only when someone had some sort of token would they come to their aid. It looked like the city was also divided into smaller districts ruled by smaller clans that were similar to criminal gangs. These tokens differed between these districts which were also separated by large walls. Even the building's shape was different and the ruling gang's characters were plastered everywhere.

'I thought Wang Long was supposed to have united the city...'

While climbing the tower that looked like it was created in some fetish dungeon he took some time to look everywhere. This area was about in the middle of the outer city. The stronger the faction a person was with the closer to the inner city they were able to stay.

His entourage was forced to rest on the lower levels while he received one whole upper level to himself. Without wanting to bump into any other demonic masters he quickly entered his room and ordered not to be disturbed. This room at first glance didn't look that bad but after spending time in the Azure Palace and his own well-established sect, this place looked like a dumpster.

Outside his window, he could feel the demonic energy rising in the air. The concentration of Qi was a lot higher here but it was at the level of the lower regions on the mainland. This was probably a spirit vein existing somewhere in that volcano and being mostly contained to that area.

'This Qi is also different, it's corrupted with a strange demonic essence, if a person cultivates with this, they probably won't be able to learn the usual cultivation methods. There might be a way to alter the vein but that depends on the reason for this corruption.'

While looking out at the setting sun he contemplated the validity of this invasion. When his troops arrived a lot of people would die. Even through the short walk through the city, he could see innocent people just trying to survive. They were just forced to act in a certain way due to their surroundings.

Even this spiritual energy that was floating was one of the causes as it would reinforce the more animalistic nature of a human being.

'I need to stop thinking about this or I'll never go through with this attack...'

In his mind, it was wrong to just attack without a proper notice. People could then choose to evacuate if they were just civilians. Yet here he wasn't sure if that would even amount to anything. The lands around the city were barren and filled with many demonic beasts, poison, and soul-sucking phantoms. The people would have more luck trying to wait out the battle instead of fleeing outside of the city.

'I can only minimize the destruction and focus on that castle...'

Luckily the vast majority of the evil cultivators and their lackeys were in the inner district and the gaudy-looking castle. Even with the barriers in place, he could feel the evil energy radiating from afar. Thus the main plan would be to quickly make their way towards their actual enemies while the citizens fled into the underground.

The city seemed to have a vast expanse of underground tunnels all over the place. It was probably another zone that was even below the outer city in status. While it was populated by the poor it could probably shield everyone from a lot of explosions that would be happening on the outside.

'That is if they evacuate in time... I guess it's time to leave, the sun is down.'

While looking out through the window he identified a few points of interest. He had also spotted some of the sects and cults that had arrived wandering through the city. This was also his plan, there was no reason to abandon his disguise if it allowed him to walk through the city. Only when he arrived at the critical locations would he fade into the shadows and get to work.

'First I need to get to those six nodes that link to the obelisks outside, then I'll take a look at the inner city formation if I can get past it...'

His eyes gazed upwards towards the active volcano and the castle within. There his enemy resided and it was already hard for him not to just storm the entire place alone. If he could take care of Wang Long himself then no one would have to suffer...

Chapter 534

"You dare go against the Phantom Devil Cult!"

"I dare! Why would our Crimson Fiend Cult be afraid of your little cult?"

"Little? You really have a death wish, brothers to arms!"

'Why do these things keep happening to me...'

This was supposed to be the easy part of the job. He was already inside the outer city and ready to visit the tourist attractions. First, his attempt of heading out by himself was thwarted by his new cult members. He did not expect some of them to wait in the city even before he already arrived, it was a blunder on his side.

When he was out on the stroll through the night city he was approached by a group of six. They were quick to surround him to scare off the common people and made a large scene before he could even react. This was probably the usual procedure and he wouldn't be surprised if the real Phantom Demon that he took the body over ordered them to do this.

Of course, this behavior brought over some trouble. His brilliant plan of going into a random restaurant where he would ditch his new entourage backfired. While there they bumped into a rival organization that was supposedly in a prolonged war with their side. Even their leader was here and now both sides were insulting each other.

'This guy is also a middle stage cultivator.'

The current opponent was slightly stronger than the man that he assassinated to infiltrate the city. Perhaps he had gone through some kind of minor progress in his cultivation method and was feeling confident. From the way the old man was smirking in his direction it looked like he was itching for a fight.

"You look kind of pale, old fart. Maybe you should go back and get some sleep. You should be thoughtful of your age."

"Ho..."

"A lackey dares to talk to me?"

The person that was the leader was called the Crimson Fiend. His body was large and he didn't look that old. He was quite muscular but without any definition. Compared to Zhang Dong's more uniform physique he looked like a powerlifter. There was a lot of fat on his body which made him look out of shape.

'The crimson part probably has to do with all those red tattoos, they look like they were made from blood...'

He had to raise his walking cane to block an attack on one of his new followers. The man jumped in to protect him from being insulted but was somewhat out of line. A junior could not just raise his voice against a powerful cult Patriarch.

This was quite risky, with the newfound Dao's he was somewhat able to mask his Qi to imitate the corrupted one. However, he would not be able to do it if he attempted to use one of his granted techniques. Unless he limited his own battle prowess there was a possibility of being identified as an orthodox cultivator with pure Qi.

"What does a man that called his cult by his stupid name want with me? Go away, I'm busy, how about you save some of that energy for when you meet the Demon King."

"What's that supposed to mean, you old crow?"

"I don't know, how about you use that empty head of yours for a change?"

Zhang Dong still was not sure about the way this old demonic cultivator would talk. He could only assume that he would be irritated with the provocation and throw a few insults back. Yet while looking

around he might have made a mistake. The people that were with the Crimson Fiend were taken back while the ones from his side were in awe.

'Wait... was this old fart the type to talk shit only when weaker people are around him? Maybe he turns into the silent type when around people at the same level as him?'

This wasn't a bad assumption as the Crimson Fiend looked surprised as well. Perhaps the Phantom Cult leader would just ignore the obvious provocation as he wasn't willing to risk a battle breaking out. As an old person, he would probably be able to judge his opponent's character to an extent that Zhang Dong wasn't able to in this case. The large man looked like an irritable kind but he at least thought that the two had a history of insulting each other.

"You old fart, you think I'll just let you insult me to my face, in front of all of these people? Have you gone senile?"

The demonic cultivator was not backing down but if he lowered his head then he might not be able to come out of this unscathed. In this city showing weakness was a sin and he wasn't sure if this musclebound idiot wouldn't attack him if he indicated any type of fear. If he stood his ground and showed that he was confident in his power then the other man should just back away.

'This is hard... how do you tell someone to screw off without offending them too much?'

Zhang Dong was not the best at diplomacy, most of the time he was the person with the biggest fist. This reminded him of the earliest goof that he created with the Dark Palm Sect when he didn't bow before their envoy. While he was not in danger of losing his life here it would hamper his mission if he got in trouble.

"You insulted me, so I've insulted you back, why can't you understand a simple thing like that? Now that you do, go away. I don't have the time to argue with you."

'There I didn't even call him any bad names... he should be content at leaving it, right?'

Zhang Dong wasn't really afraid of losing to this blockhead but there were a lot of eyes on him. The priority was to get out of here without a fight breaking out. It was possible to knock out the bulky Crimson Fiend with one punch but then he would probably get some strange looks from the peanut gallery here. There were also hidden masters everywhere, their allegiance was neutral at best and if they saw an opportunity they would take it.

"Hey, where are you going, I'm not finished with you."

"As you said earlier, this old man needs his beauty sleep, so you can have this place all to yourself."

'There, I'll just make some fun of myself to make him feel better.'

He could hear some of the people from his side chuckling while the other side was getting madder. Yet he was already making his way out of this restaurant, there was no reason for that idiot to push it. There was no reason to start an unsanctioned fight in the middle of nowhere. Without the permission of the Chaos Sect that ruled it would be a slap to their face if two outside factions engaged in warfare on their territory.

"Y-you... I challenge you to true death combat!"

“W-what did he say?”

“True Death?”

“Is he out of his mind?”

Zhang Dong’s face remained behind the hood of his robe. He was not sure what this true death combat thing was but it didn’t seem that it was a good idea. From the name, he could only speculate that the things at risk were their nascent divinities. If one side lost they would die and be erased from the face of the planet. Perhaps they would even be turned into blood crystals for the other party to absorb.

“Are you drunk Crimson Fiend? What nonsense are you spouting?”

“What old crow, did you think I wouldn’t have the guts? Come, face me if you dare!”

‘This idiot is really confident for some reason, there might be more to this than meets the eye...’

Zhang Dong didn’t like how this man just pushed for a death duel. It was quite an unreasonable request, one that a demonic cultivator would normally never take. There was a possibility of some outside help or a secret that let this man be confident in victory. Could the man that he was impersonating be weakening? Maybe he had some kind of condition that this Crimson Fiend was aware of?

‘This guy was awfully easy to kill for a middle stage cultivator... perhaps his age was really getting to him?’

That was the simplest explanation and probably also true. This Phantom Demon was really old, perhaps even over a thousand years old. People that were adept at soul-related techniques were always good at prolonging their life. This might have been the case, Crimson Fiend was slightly stronger and had a powerful body. On the other hand, Phantom Demon only could utilize his phantom arts while his body was in a bad state of slow decay.

‘He could also have some kind of treasure to counter his nemesis, perhaps this had been already planned beforehand and he was just looking for an excuse...’

“Why should I listen to the prattling of a madman? Go fight a cow if you want.”

There was no reason to save his nonexistent face. The man he was impersonating would quickly disappear after he removed his disguise. Even if they laughed at him he didn’t care, what he was here for was the mission. Also if he used the right words he could simply weasel out of it. The other old monster would probably see through the strange act of the Crimson Fiend and applaud him for seeing through it.

“Are you afraid?”

“No, I’m just not a buffoon like you!”

“Hah, this was getting interesting old man, why did you have to spoil the fun? This won’t do, I even prepared an arena already...”

Suddenly one of the hidden masters made himself known. It was a man at the late stage of the nascent soul level. His face looked serpentlike and his eyes were quite narrow to the point of seemingly being

closed. Just as he had expected there was some kind of ruse here and this person was responsible. Normally that would be it but there was a problem, the robe that he was wearing belonged to the Chaos Sect.

“How are you going to make it up to me, you two? I have invested good crystals into all of this.”

The man appeared next to the Crimson Fiend that moved his head to the side. It was strange to see this meat monster acting like a little mouse when approached by a predator. Yet even Zhang Dong needed to be careful as he could not just ignore someone from the Chaos Sect. If he conducted himself in an improper fashion then they would have an excuse to restrain him, or even attack.

‘It’s fine... this is going to be the last infiltration mission that I take part in...’

While giving out a sigh he prepared himself for the worst. If he played his cards right then there might be a way to smooth things with this snake bastard. Bribing was always an option and he didn’t care much about the belongings that he lifted from the cult leader. The big question is, if this man was willing to listen or if he already decided their fate...

Chapter 535

‘Why does it always have to be some kind of arena?’

Zhang Dong found himself walking into an underground crime den that was in possession of a huge battle arena. The city that was already huge and housed multiple off millions of people also had a vast array of underground tunnels and structures.

It hadn’t been long since they left the restaurant in which he got into a verbal argument with Crimson Fiend. It was clear that this rather musclebound idiot was planning to kill the Phantom Demon that he was impersonating. It seemed that he even had some kind of agreement with the Chaos Sect member that pulled him towards this deathmatch.

He wasn’t left with much of a choice as the man wouldn’t take a no for an answer. There was a point at which Zhang Dong could not refuse. The other party could call in more support from their sect and even attack him if they wanted. At that point, his cover would be blown as he could not risk going to their version of prison. Crimson Fiend that was part of this charade was grinning through the entire thing and now both of them were slowly floating to the center of the ring.

“Ladies and Gentlemen, my name is Li Zhong and today we will see a very special bout between two masters. They have been at each other’s throats for hundreds of years and today one of them will finally fall!”

The man from the Chaos Sect revealed his name while announcing the sides. His face was truly something that should belong to a snake. It wasn’t just a mirage; there was probably some kind of beast bloodline running in his veins. Zhang Dong could tell that it was due to a body refining technique that made him somewhat similar to some of the demi-humans he faced not so long ago.

“Are you mad old Phantom? Did you really think I wouldn’t get to you eventually?”

The man that looked like a strongman was standing before him with a large oversized hammer over his shoulder. The face of the hammer was wider than his entire head and would probably decimate a

regular person from the weight only. It was clearly a heavenly treasure that was radiating some kind of bloody aura.

‘The weapon absorbs blood to get stronger? I guess it’s a fitting weapon for a meathead like that.’

Zhang Dong didn’t reply as he just scanned the surroundings for potential trouble. The snake-like man was a nascent soul master at around the level of the Crimson Fiend. It wouldn’t be surprising if he decided to jump in to help his ally if something went wrong. There were also two early stage nascent soul masters that barely made the cut, probably some people that the Li Zhong trained as they had similar features.

‘His disciples? Would they jump in if the Phantom Demon started winning? How much of my power should I use...’

The silence that Zhang Dong gave Crimson Fiend only made the cultivator fume with rage. From his perspective, it looked like the old man was not taking him seriously. This wasn’t that far off as Zhang Dong didn’t think any of these people were his opponents. The only problem was that he couldn’t just attack people from the Chaos Sect. If they jumped in to save their friend and he killed all of them, then his infiltration mission would end.

‘I guess I’ll need to make this fast and not give them a chance to interfere...’

His original plan was to prolong the fight to not raise brows. Yet if he took too long in defeating Crimson Fiend then there was no telling of what the other party would do. There were some attacking formations on this ring that could be activated or they could be in possession of hidden treasures with curses. It wouldn’t be hard for masters to perform hidden attacks without giving themselves away.

‘I bet they will try to attack me if this idiot starts to lose...’

“You won’t be able to keep that smile on for long!”

The angered Crimson Fiend looked towards the announcer that was taking his sweet time. These two weren’t even trying to hide the fact that they were working together. Soon the snake nodded and made the announcement.

“I see that the Crimson Fiend is getting impatient, the bets will be closed. Let us start with the match!”

‘They won’t even ask me if I’m ready huh? I guess I’ll need to make a spectacle of this so that they won’t seek me out for more trouble... Not like it’s impossible for old farts to progress further... luckily I came prepared.’

Zhang Dong expected things to go wrong and for this occasion, he had made a few treasures. The demi-humans were quite the source of weaponry as their bodies were in a sense high quality treasures. With the help of some of the commanding officer’s bones, he had created a fitting weapon for someone like the Phantom Demon to use. It wasn’t the only one that he created but this fit his current persona the most.

The match started with a smack to a loud gong. The moment the battle was on he pulled out something that looked like a staff made from human bones. Its top part had a skull with a large protruding horn. It belonged to one of the tribe leaders that his sect had slain and it could produce several effects.

“That’s not going to help you! Now die old fart!”

“Idiots that charge in never live long lives...”

Demonic cultivators normally weren’t fools but the more they progressed through the ranks the more they were consumed by hubris. Even though they should be aware of their own deficiencies they tended to overestimate themselves if they were convinced of their superiority. This was the case during this clash, the man charging at him was assured of his victory.

From the sides, he could feel the gazes of many people but the ones that he was paying attention to were the two nascent soul masters. With his current level, he could tell that they were waiting for something. Their auras were already quickly rising as they were up to no good.

The man that was charging at him expanded in size. His entire body which was a mix of fat and muscle became a lot more muscular than before. With the increase in size came a side effect of his skin turning crimson. In a matter of moments, the man didn’t look like a human anymore and was more similar to a devil with a complete set of black horns.

‘So that’s why they call him the Crimson Fiend?’

The demonic energy around the man became really thick and quickly filled the entire area. Black smoke that looked like volcanic ash started blocking out the view. This was certainly all a ploy to allow his allies to act as it didn’t take long for them to launch their hidden techniques toward Zhang Dong’s location.

‘Transparent needles coated in paralyzing venom?’

To block this attack he just raised the occult-looking staff that was in his right hand. A shroud of green flames surrounded his entire body that halted the needles from connecting with his neck. They were quite small and made from expensive materials but his enemy seems to be waiting for this opportunity.

Perhaps this hidden attack was not meant to work but just took the focus of the Crimson Fiend that was already swinging the giant hammer down on his body. If the weapon connected there would be nothing left of the man once known as the Phantom Demon. Yet no one could have known that the old man was already dead and they were fighting someone that was far more deadly.

From within the gray shroud, the man that looked like a red demon emerged. His body looked like it was burning up as a small number of fire elements gathered. His target was the decrepit old man with the staff that looked like he would collapse at the smallest tap.

Yet suddenly a ferocious mass of green flames erupted. These flames did not burn the flesh, no instead they aimed at the core of what this Crimson Fiend was made of, his eternal soul. The man was in shock, it was as if he was separated into two existences the moment the burst of green energy collided with his body.

The Crimson Fiend could see his body moving forward while his spirit remained behind. He knew that the Phantom Demon was versed in wielding wraiths and creatures like phantoms but he did not expect him to be able to directly affect his nascent divinity. This one attack of his was capable of separating it from his main body that without it around was just a mindless husk.

It continued to perform the last action that his brain sent but instead of colliding with the old demon it just clobbered the rocky ground. The entire place shook along with the audience which was mostly unaware of what was happening.

A loud shrieking sound escaped from the blast of green flames that turned into ferocious demonic skulls. This sound was coming from above and the audience finally noticed what had transpired. When they looked they could see the Crimson Fiend's nascent divinity being ravaged by these green phantoms that were clearly produced by the decrepit old man.

Zhang Dong was floating to the side as he left an afterimage behind in the spot the hammer hit. To others, it looked like it was some kind of phantom but he only utilized his astonishing speed that even a late stage nascent soul master would not be able to fathom.

His Dao of the Soul was a higher form than the one that Phantom Demon was using. While he could not truly summon demonic phantoms that would eat up his opponent's nascent divinity he could produce a similar effect. Only a person that was efficient in the Dao of the Souls would be able to see through this ruse. Yet there was no one like that here, to them it looked like the demonic green ghosts were just eating up a defenseless Crimson Fiend.

"Was this what you wanted to show me, Crimson Fiend? I am not impressed..."

Zhang Dong watched as the simulated phantoms devoured the soul while he used other ways to apprehend that nascent divinity along with the increase in his understanding of the demonic Dao.

"Hm, shouldn't you announce the winner, young man?"

He called out to the Chaos Sect member that could not understand the situation that unfolded before him.

"..."

After his victory, he returned down to the ground where the intact body of the Crimson Fiend resided. It looked like the large man was just sleeping as there were no visible injuries. Without a nascent divinity or his soul, it was just an empty shell of his former existence. The only use for him now was turning it into blood crystals...

Chapter 536

"The winner is... Phantom Demon..."

"If this is all then I will excuse myself. I will also offer the remains of the Crimson Fiend to the wonderful host."

Zhang Dong in his disguise performed a little two-handed clasp while slowly removing himself from the arena. His winning came as a shock to almost everyone here and mostly to the man that looked like a snake. There was nothing he could say though as the win was achieved fair and square. Also by giving up on the blood crystals that could be harvested from Crimson Fiend's corpse he was showing his allegiance to the Chaos Sect.

"Brother Phantom, you have truly shown me something interesting today, I will gladly accept this offering..."

The man just nodded while the two nascent soul masters that threw poison needles toward him moved closer. Both of them were wearing black hoods over their faces but he could clearly tell that they were weary of him. All three knew that this old man before them wasn't that simple and they had attacked him already.

'It wouldn't be strange if they attacked me now... but I bet they still believe that I won't cause them any harm while in this city...'

Normally a fight would ensue as they had tried to kill him and he was aware of it. They also saw him repel the poison needles but for the time being, he needed to show proper decorum. This was the fate of people with less backing, even if another party was weaker they could not fully act against them. At most he could give them a slap or two to assert his dominance but leaving it like this allowed the other party to save face.

"My old bones are tired, I will have to rest."

Zhang Dong was left alone for now but in the future, it wouldn't be strange if the person called Phantom Demon got assassinated. The other party created a grudge that demonic cultivators liked to hold on to. All of them knew that if the power dynamic shifted then the people from the Chaos Sect would find themselves being chased down by the green phantoms.

'They are letting me go for now at least... it wouldn't be strange if in a few days they try organizing something though...'

There was no one stopping him as people moved their heads down as he floated towards his current cult members. The people from his own cult were quite surprised at the increase of people of their own master. Perhaps some of them were slowly realizing that there was something fishy. Then there was the danger of him being assassinated by the snake cultivator. The longer he remained in the city the harder it would be for him to act.

"All of you return to the hotel, I need to take care of a few things."

"Cult Leader?"

The main servant looked toward him as if he wanted to say something but after one glare he slumped his head down. He would not allow this chance to get away from him. This was the time to sink away into the darkness of the night and sabotage the protective formation from within.

Thus the moment he found himself in a more secluded location he sank into the shadows. His face was already known but not like he needed to worry about being stopped by anyone. Word of his overbearing victory would probably reach the ears of other similar sects. They would probably keep their distance due to the spike in the power of the person called Phantom Demon. Everyone would have to re-evaluate his potential before approaching him again.

"..."

'That's about it and not too soon...'

Zhang Dong stepped out of an empty alley that was occupied by a rotting corpse. This was not of his doing as he had just used this passage to get back into the city. Only now when he was alone and going through these streets did he realize how bad of a state this place truly was in.

Only the main streets through which large clans or powerful cults went through were in a presentable state. Everything else looked worse than the slums that he remembered from all the cities he visited in the Empire. He was someone that liked to wander through his own city to see how his citizens were living so this was quite shocking.

‘Does that bastard’s faction system not show him the state that this place is in?’

This was the big question, his points would plummet if he started treating his people like garbage. Only if the approval rating and happiness of his people were above a certain threshold would he be able to gain anything out of it. It didn’t look like Wang Long had the same problem which could originate from their personalities.

‘This system tends to change itself depending on the user...’

There was one explanation for the difference. While he wanted to play the good guy and help the people, Wang Long was the opposite. His system gave him a faction that he could nurture by good deeds. Wang Long on the other hand probably received the reverse of it, the more miserable his people were then the more power he acquired.

‘Maybe he gains points if people worship him instead of liking him?’

While Zhang Dong was receiving his own kind of worship it was more of the positive kind. It wouldn’t be that strange if Wang Long was supposed to be his opposite, an evil god that his people feared. It was a different kind of fanaticism that could be troublesome to deal with

The people that his side would be going up against were backed up against a wall filled with spikes. They probably didn’t really want to fight but the fear of death by the new Demon King was too strong. In their eyes, it was more likely to come out alive if they followed orders instead of trying to flee.

‘Yet if I manage to break their belief in their leader then they should quickly flee...’

While there were positives in using fear like desperation to survive there was a big drawback. If the faction led like this saw their leaders failing they would quickly abandon them. If they saw a way out of their predicament they would certainly take a chance to flee or even join the battle against their oppressor. It wasn’t strange when despots got stabbed in the back in their time of need.

‘I guess that just means that I need to quickly win that one-on-one to end this war quickly but will that guy be as stupid like last time?’

Zhang Dong looked back towards the remains and with a swipe of his hand set them ablaze. While watching the flames fill the dark alley he began to worry more. It would be fine if he could just end it all with just one fight but he had to consider other possibilities. Wang Long could tackle everything in many ways and there was also a chance that his enemy had become a lot stronger than before. He had rushed here but this didn’t mean that Wang Long couldn’t have gotten enough spirit points to reach new never before seen heights.

‘That takes care of the outer city, should I stay for that assembly or just cut my losses now...’

He was slowly returning to the hotel that he should be occupying without revealing his face. It wouldn't be hard to escape from this place as the outer barrier had been altered from both sides by him and he could move out without a problem. The days in these demonic lands were mostly cloudy and shrouded in shade which made concealing techniques easy to use.

‘I should first confirm what I already know before making a decision...’

Within a few moments, he traversed the city's shadowy alleys without anyone being the wiser. Even slipping back into the hotel he was occupying went unnoticed. Ever since his battle with the Crimson Fiend, he noticed an increase in guards and Chaos Sect presence. The snake bastard that started this farce was clearly watching his moves. Luckily the sentries he had sent weren't all that great and he would be able to evade their gazes with a few easy tricks.

“Cult Leader, you called for me?”

“Yes, explain to me again, when will the assembly take place and when will we be allowed to enter the inner city.”

“Yes, Cult Leader! We will be able to enter the inner city in three days, the Chaos Sect will...”

While listening he confirmed the information that he already knew. The gathering of demonic cultivators would take place in the inner city in one of the old main sect buildings. This one had been taken over by the Chaos Sect that was now in power but used to belong to one of the other demons that was now dead.

The old buildings were trashed during the takeover but were quickly rebuilt within a few weeks following it. Everyone seemed to work quite fast when they were fearing for their life. Apparently, some of the builders had been killed to motivate the others that didn't sleep all that well through the entire procedure.

This meant that he would not be entering the Demon King castle. Instead it would be hosted in the new inner sect courtyard where the announcement took place. Even these cultists had no idea what would happen. The man that he was talking to had given him some concerning information.

“That is all, you can leave, call me when the time to enter the inner city comes.”

“I obey, Cult Leader!”

The man left quickly which caused Zhang Dong to ponder his next move. Infiltrating further into the fortified sect was quite risky. For the time being, he was safe but the closer he got to Wang Long the more probable his discovery became. There was a possibility of him not being able to teleport out to safety even with a large number of points. If he was forced to engage his opponent on his home turf then he would probably be as good as dead.

‘The whole plan could go down the drain if I'm too cocky... it would be better to not push my luck anymore...’

It was the smart and more logical thing to do. He already was able to examine the inner city's barrier which would also help during the attack. Yet it still wouldn't be easy and a lot of his own people might

have to give their life for the cause. His somewhat inflated sense of justice and drive to save lives was somewhat pushing him to risk his own life instead of the sect members that he built up.

'If I survive this then my wife will probably kill me herself...'

Chapter 537

"Is everything ready?"

"Yes, Matriarch... but are you sure that you should be here? The Patriarch gave orders that you should remain in the main sect..."

Zhang Liena looked at a somewhat nervous-looking Zhang Kuo who wasn't sure what to say. The lady he was talking to was not someone he could control, only her husband had the leisure to give her orders. Even the second most powerful person Huo Qiang was just shrugging while Kuo tried to seek some aid.

"I will do no such thing!"

"Ah, yes Matriarch..."

"Haha, you're scaring him, Liena."

"Grandfather?"

Zhang Jin was also here and so were many other nascent soul cultivators and members of the United Element Sect. All of them were gathered here for the coming war but they were a bit ahead of the schedule their leader had prepared for them.

"Elders, the Patriarch has given us specific orders. Are you willing to break them?"

"Zhi, stop pretending you're probably itching to aid our glorious leader the most, if it weren't for that silly sense of duty of yours you'd have stormed that city already."

Huo Qiang laughed while smacking Zhang Zhi on the back.

"Just give it up, we are going to go ahead with the plan if you want it or not..."

Zhi looked towards all the other nascent soul masters that were in this meeting room. Even if it went against his beliefs he couldn't deny the fact. What these people were doing was something that he had to agree with. Their judgment was correct and this was probably the best way to serve the Patriarch, even if they all got punished in the end.

"Well then, if we all agree, let's continue with the meeting."

Zhang Kuo nodded while pointing to the holographic map. There all of them could see the barriers and monoliths with the beasts inside. It was something produced by their leader that had decided to scout out the area like a footsoldier.

"As you might know the last time the Patriarch contacted us was a few days ago, if we go by the schedule the grand assembly that will include all of the Chaos Sect elders and the Demon King will take place in just a day..."

...

'So far so good...'

"Next!"

The guard to the inner city looked at his credentials and after some eyeballing allowed him and his group of cult members to go through. This time around though he was only allowed to bring five people in at most. The rest would have to wait in the outer city for his return. This was quite a dangerous feat as the minor cult members would have a hard time defending themselves from any Chaos Sect outer disciples.

'Are they really going to try something drastic? This doesn't look that well for me or all the others...'

Some of the nascent soul masters complained as they were not allowed to bring in certain weapons or people. Zhang Dong had to use a special technique to hide the contents of his spatial ring as well as have Bob shield him from any outside system scanning.

The inner city was surrounded by a huge gate and four even larger gates. A person could only enter through them and only if a person from the inside opened the way for them. Even a nascent soul master would not be able to break through from the sky as an invisible force field surrounded everything.

Yet now he was on the inside and his brain was already working on a way of getting through these defenses. This one wasn't as easy as the other one but as always there were ways to get around everything. In each gate resided a nascent soul presence and with their authority, the guards were able to open and close the gates.

Thus the first way of getting around this defensive barrier would be to rob these four masters of their gate-opening privilege or somehow copy it. Yet this was probably not something that would work in the long run. It wouldn't be strange if this privilege could be stripped by the sect leader within a moment of a fight breaking out.

He could also try going to the source of the formation that was directly inside of the sect they were going to be attending. In there he would probably find the main control unit of the formation. These huge barriers always needed some kind of power source so if he wasn't able to overwrite the array he could always try destroying its source.

'I will only know when I get there...'

Time was slowly running out for him as the closer to the day of the assembly the more in danger he was. Even if he wasn't discovered he didn't think that this gathering of masters was anything favorable. There was a possibility that nothing would happen to him and he would just have to swear allegiance to the new master.

'A soul curse is more likely though... it might be possible to resist it though.'

The most likely scenario that would play out was some kind of slave contract between the current sect. They were the only superpower with no enemies around them. To solidify their rule the next move would be to get all the nascent soul masters on their side. The Demons would not join them for no reason though as all these evil cultivators were quite prideful. Only if their lives were threatened would they change their allegiance.

“Cult leader, our accommodations are this way.”

“Mhm.”

He just nodded as his attendant guided him in the direction of the main sect. The state of this city was a lot better than the slums on the outside. There was actual order here and people seemed to be conducting themselves in a proper manner. The demonic energy was still strong here, even though they were trying to hide it there were certain spots filled with murderous Qi.

‘I guess the biggest difference is that they clean up after committing a murder...’

For someone of his caliber, he could tell. There were areas that had been patched up but marks of conflict were visible. Even if all signs of blood and gore could be wiped clean the lingering souls of the deceased weren’t that easy to get rid of. Some of their spiteful energies continued to fester in a few spots.

Luckily he could not see the snake-like person that he had a run in a few days ago. Even without him, Zhang Dong noticed that some eyes were on him. His quick victory over someone that was ranked at a similar rank probably raised some eyebrows.

A lot of people were probably wondering how such an old fart like him could have increased his power without giving it away. The demonic masters prided themselves in having an extensive spy network. The person with information and backing was always the one that was victorious. In all likelihood, if he didn’t replace the old man the Crimson Demon would have attained victory.

‘The way they are looking at me... this isn’t necessarily a bad thing...’

To test out his claim his head quickly turned to the left where one of his supposed new fans was trying to measure his power. The person looked like a young woman but the aura she was giving off seemed to put her somewhere over half a millennium in age.

“What do you want?”

“No... I.... excuse me.”

The granny that was somehow able to keep her youthful appearance panicked, bowed, and quickly escaped his gaze. The other masters that were in the area followed suit out of fright. It was clear that Zhang Dong, who was impersonating the old man, was dangerous. Thanks to this he would probably be able to evade a lot of potential drama and discourse.

‘At least they won’t seek trouble with me, they are unsure of the Phantom Demon’s true power now, they won’t risk it.’

This would give him some freedom against the other strong demons but would probably not work against the Chaos Sect masters. Those would probably be less scared of any backlash of prodding the old fart. Yet even they wouldn’t go overboard as angering a demonic master of this caliber was never a good thing.

“I’ll call for you if there is a need.”

“Yes, Cult Leader.”

This time around they were organized in larger more pristine buildings and not a huge hotel. There weren't really that many powerful demonic masters here. Together with him, there were only twenty, not really such a large force. However considering that they were all demonic cultivators and in one specific location, this was already a huge force.

'Well then, I should think about my next move. Bob, are you sure that Wang Long won't be able to see me?'

'Discovery is possible, the user must stay out of the range of the other system user by approximately twenty-five meters.'

'I'm not sure if that's close or far...'

If Wang Long kept to himself and didn't interact with the demonic cultivators then he would be safe. Yet if he decided to shake everyone's hand or even come closer to where he was at then his cover would be blown.

'Perhaps it would be better to not go to that meeting... but would sending one of the cult members in my place work?'

He didn't have any techniques that could produce clones of himself but he could change the aura and appearance of other people. There were five cult members with him and they were at least loyal to him. One of them could take his place in the assembly while he used this time to go through the encampment. This would be a one-way mission as he would be abandoning this place after he got to the barrier.

'It's risky but going somewhere where all the old demonic monsters gather is even riskier...'

Thus he hatched the plan for the next day. After calling over one of the core formation cult members that was closest to his height he began with an explanation.

"You wish for me to take your place, cult leader?"

"That's right, you don't really think we can trust these Chaos Sect members, do you?"

"But what if they discover it..."

"Don't worry they won't, your disguise will be perfect, not even the Demon King himself will be able to see through it."

The cult member nodded but he wasn't quite convinced. Luckily the fear he felt towards this old man Zhang Dong was impersonating was greater. There were of course soul binding spells keeping him in check as well. At least that is what this person thought as this curse would have vanished after the Phantom Demon had died.

"Good, now stay still, this might feel strange but bare with it."

Finally, the time to act was almost there. The last mission to take down the barrier and then perform the surprise attack was upon him.

Chapter 538

'I don't think they are expecting any trouble, the security here is worse than in some mid-sized sects.'

After spending some time in the inner city the time for the assembly of demons was upon him. While the others that came here were forced to attend it he decided to do something else. Instead of going himself, he had transformed one of the cultists into the older man he was impersonating.

The disguise was intricate and probably no one would be able to discover the foul play that was taking place. No one actually was that close to the Phantom Demon, the cultist that was acting as him already knew all of the mannerisms his Patriarch had. This person could probably do a better job impersonating the cult leader than Zhang Dong could.

To augment the core formation cultist's power he lent him a few treasures that would allow him to exude a nascent soul-like aura. Not many people would be able to tell that it was coming from the treasures instead of his own nascent soul. Before anyone would, he was planning to already be done with his mission.

"Into the closet, you go..."

After shoving one of the guards into a cramped space and taking his clothes, he changed into a new disguise. This already felt better as he didn't need to walk awkwardly as a decrepit old man with a bad back. It was one of the guards patrolling this large sect compound and someone that was allowed to get close to his next destination, the treasure powering the grand array.

From the outside, this looked like the usual sect palace filled with various golden patterns. He wasn't sure why all of these people liked to flaunt their wealth and decorate everything like this. Even the cultivators of the demonic variety liked to put dragons and flying fish on the walls just with more black here and there.

The layout was very similar to all the other fortresses to the point of making them look like they were being copy pasted. Perhaps there were just a few working variants that were considered the best and everyone just made a slight variation to it. Thanks to this he knew that what he was looking for was in the lower areas of this compound.

With the help of his system map, he could tell that this place had a spacious underground. He could feel a faint tint of corrupted Qi coming from below that was being hidden from people with a lesser spiritual sense. But he could tell that if he manages to go through one of those closed gates that he would arrive closer to his destination.

"Greetings, Senior."

"Open up the gate."

Before him, there were two guards but luckily for him, he had turned into someone that was in a higher position. Thanks to this they could only bow with their heads while opening. Even if they found something odd with this situation they couldn't really call him out on it. The demonic cultivators were really overbearing to the point of killing people below them for the faintest transgression. They were gambling with their lives if they asked him about his reason for being here which they were unwilling to do.

This large gate was already in a more secluded location that was kept hidden away from the nascent soul demons. It had a strange demonic dragon that looked like some kind of phantom than the usual serpent type he was used to seeing. There were signs of rebuilding so perhaps this was something that was decided on by their new leader.

The doors slammed open without creaking too much as everything looked to be brand new. On the inside, he was greeted by more people that were wearing similar robes. This was in reality one of the entrances to the core sect region. There were various disciples wandering around with their chests puffed out as if they owned the place.

Yet it wasn't all pleasant, after a few steps he heard some shouting. The disciples weren't the only ones here, there were also various servants that were tending to their needs. Just as he was passing by one of them was getting kicked around by an angry young master. There didn't seem to be a good reason for this and a group of two other young lordlings was grinning not far from there while their servants remained quiet.

'Is this some kind of way they go about their stress levels?'

At first, he thought the young man delivering the beating was angry but soon his furrowed brows shot up and were accompanied by a grin. He was clearly enjoying himself and the person that he was hitting was even of a higher cultivation level than he was. Most of the time the servant was also a bodyguard.

"Learn your place! How dare you embarrass me and lose! What good of a dog are you if you can't even perform?"

"Please y-young master, show mercy."

While he didn't like what was happening here this was not his fight. The commotion was actually a blessing in disguise as it brought everyone's attention to the beaten servant. With the help of this young master he went unnoticed and was able to delve deeper into this underground inner sect.

There was a whole new biome down here. The space was vast and out in the distance, there was something like a miniature sun. This place wasn't as extravagant as the dimensional regalia but it could still house tens of thousands of people without there being worry of running out of space.

'So they are living lavishly here while the rest of the people on the island struggle?'

This place was comparable to larger sects. There were lush forests and even herb gardens along with small lakes with high-quality water. Everything that a disciple could need to advance was here. The only difference was the type of Qi that filled out this area. It was somewhat affecting the plants giving some of them monstrous traits.

'The Evil Qi is stronger here but the source should be there...'

Just like the palace above, there was another castle right here. This one was occupied by some rather unsavory individuals that were radiating massive amounts of demonic Qi. It was actually surprising, he did not expect that many experts to be still here after they were supposedly cleansed by Wang Long and his forces.

'Perhaps they aren't here by their own volition? There is something peculiar about their souls but I won't know for sure until I get closer...'

While still using his hiding technique he tried to identify the robes of the people here. The one he grabbed from the guard would probably do him no good here. He needed to get his hands on one that would allow him to get into the innermost secret chambers of this Chaos Sect.

This wouldn't be such an easy endeavor as realistically speaking only a nascent soul master would be able to get in. While Zhang Dong was strong it would still be risky to take a person like them out. He was lucky enough when the Phantom Demon decided to separate from his ship but here there were more eyes everywhere. A spike in spiritual energy or him putting up a shield to hide it could be noticed.

'There isn't much time left, I only have half a day until Wang Long comes here, it would be better to get out before that happens...'

There was of course another way that didn't require killing anyone. Either he could just sneak in while wearing his current attire and hope for the best or take the form of someone that was busy. There were probably many senior disciples and elders that were in secluded cultivation that could be used for this tactic. The problem was figuring out which one of them would be able to get the closest to his destination without causing the ire of others.

While this area was the inner sect the ones he needed to go to was for the core members. For that, he would either need to take on the form of one of the masters or disciples. Yet there was also a third option. He remembered the scene that occurred when he first appeared here, a lot of servants were living together with their masters, and it would be possible to sneak in if he took on the form of one of them.

'That's probably the safest option considering their power...'

It would be much easier to knock out a servant than a core disciple or an elder. They would probably be situated in areas that weren't monitored by anyone as their worth wasn't all that great. This took him to a large structure that looked like an inn.

'A lot of these people are under the effect of curses that aren't active, they must be the servants.'

Of course, demonic cultivators wouldn't trust anyone. Thus their servants would be forced to agree to a slave contract on their souls or die. From what he heard this could even happen without them agreeing when they were weak and young. Such a servant would slowly be groomed into bodyguards that would have to forfeit their life for their owners if they ordered them to.

'Let's see, is there anyone or should I just try something else.'

Zhang Dong listened in on the various conversations that the people here were having. With his enhanced hearing and cultivation he could somewhat separate his attention between the various groups. What he was looking for is someone that was on some kind of errand and after a moment he found him.

"Here, don't forget to be quick, you know that the young master doesn't like to be kept waiting!"

"I know..."

There was a servant doing delivery of some sorts. He was handed a spatial ring along with some kind of talisman. This he had seen being carried by other people around this sect. It was probably an identification table that would allow him to pass through some of the checkpoints.

'I guess this guy is as good as any...'

The plan was simple. First, he waited for the man that looked to be in his mid-thirties to leave the servant quarters. When he was walking through one of the more secluded locations he made his move. Within a second his target was knocked out and stripped of his clothes. To keep his body hidden his dimensional regalia replica was used. If no one was able to find the original servant then his disguise would be almost perfect.

'Hm... demonic qi reinforcement pills and some shitty techniques, this young master can't be much higher than a foundation establishment junior...'

With everything in place he left the hidden alley and headed for the large core sect building in the distance. With some luck, he would be able to just get in and quickly take care of his task. In reality, he wasn't even planning to interact with the servant. Even if the young master came searching for him Zhang Dong would be long gone, the time to end this infiltration had begun.

Chapter 539

'I should have practiced this mimic skill a bit more...'

Zhang Dong was making his way through the inner Chaos Sect while in his new disguise. This time around he was a man that looked to be around forty. In reality, this person was closer to a hundred and only a foundation establishment late stage practitioner. With his advanced age it would be quite hard to reach the core formation stage as the older a person got, the harder this became.

'Perhaps that's why he is only a servant? He would have a better life in some of the lower regions where core formation is rare...'

His new disguise was a bit problematic as he couldn't even fly on a sword to his destination. Yet before he exchanged himself for this person the servant was keeping up a fast pace. Probably if he delivered these pills and scrips slowly he would receive punishment.

'I just need to get in and find a core disciple to impersonate.'

Zhang Dong's main concern was reaching the thing that powered the formation. His current disguise along with the identification plaque that he got from the unfortunate servant would allow him to progress further inside. From his experience, the hard part was getting through a checkpoint but once in it wouldn't be that hard to move around.

Core sect elders were mostly trying to prolong their life and get to the next level so they didn't pay that much attention to what was happening outside. Their disciples were even more focused on progressing their techniques as their growth was more palpable. They would certainly not be that quick to investigate servants running around as there were other things to be done.

"Did he send you out for another errand, Liu Chen?"

"Ah, yes..."

Zhang Dong approached the gate and was surprised that one of the guards knew who he was. There was a certain look of pity in the man's eyes when he looked his way. This probably meant that Liu Chen, who he was impersonating, didn't have an easy life.

When he knocked out the servant there were certain injuries that didn't fully heal yet. He even had to mimic some of the wounds on his face that indicated that he had been recently punched. Probably if he actually ran into this young master it wouldn't be strange if he had to get smacked a few times for his mission to succeed.

"Go in then, young master Yichen should be out at the training ground."

After bowing his head Zhang Dong was able to get into the core sect compound. This one was also behind a grand wall that stretched almost all the way up to the ceiling of this underground. Above on the wall, he could see core formation sentries with ranged weapons patrolling even as he went in.

'I expected their defenses to be lax, they should have transferred more guards towards the assembly.'

He had hoped that everyone, even the disciples would have been forced to pay their respects to their new leader. Perhaps Wang Long didn't like sect gatherings and forbade everyone from participating?

This might have been the reason behind this place being filled with demonic disciples and their masters. It just seemed to be an average day for them if some weren't commenting about the demon king's arrival then he could assume that he wasn't even coming here.

'The training area should be that way...'

Normally the plan was to avoid the young master to whom this servant belonged. Yet as always his luck when it came to infiltration wasn't all that great. Where the training ground was so was his next destination. Only after passing through it would he arrive at the main sect building where his mission would end.

'Bob, are you sure that this is the best route?'

'Affirmative.'

'Great...'

He had found a map of the entire sect compound on the servant. There were some markings done by Liu Chen that probably indicated where the young master of his liked to hang out. The servant probably got the map to help him find this Yichen before he got another beating. Thanks to this he could order Bob to simulate the safest route of getting there and all of the paths went through the spot this young master was at.

'Is there someone else I can change to... this might become troublesome if I start getting beat and this brat breaks his arm on my face...'

Zhang Dong's body refining skill was at the peak of this world. It would be somewhat hard for him to get injured by anyone below the nascent soul level. To anyone below it would feel like they were hitting a slab of metal instead of flesh. He would really need to go with the punches to make it seem believable if the confrontation occurred.

Regretfully this place wasn't really suited for taking out people. There were a lot of open spaces and a large number of people were going back and forth. The fake sun that was illuminating the place would also make most of his shadowy techniques lose most of their impact.

Luckily for him, the robe he was wearing was identical to every other servant. It wouldn't be that hard to cover his face and blend in with the crowd. Thus after silencing his own steps and breathing he decided to blend in with everyone else. It seemed that looking at attendants in the face was not something the young masters would do. This gave him the opportunity to move toward his target with more ease than he expected.

'I'm practically invisible to these people...'

It was as if he was water and they were oil. No one was interested in him after they realized his robes belonged to a servant. There were even special walkways for servants like him through which he could avoid contact with most of the disciples and elders.

When passing through he could see the usual facilities everywhere. Cultivation caves, herb gardens, and pill pavilions. It didn't really look any different from any other sect even though the buildings were a bit less kept from what a person would expect to see.

'Well... that went better than I expected...'

To his surprise, after arriving at the training grounds there was no trouble. The disciples were just training and battling each other to gain more experience. For a moment he expected one of these young masters to run up to him with their palm outstretched. Yet even after going through the whole way, there was no one that stopped him.

It seemed that taking on the role of a servant was a lot better than impersonating an elder or a disciple. No one that mattered probably even knew who he was. They weren't expecting any infiltration attempts either and perhaps they thought that no idiot would even try impersonating one of their personal delivery boys.

'Well then, now comes the interesting part.'

When he arrived at the main compound he quickly evaded the praying gaze of the other guards. Instead, he hugged the wall like a frog and started climbing up. This place was another checkpoint yet this time around it was too dangerous to try and get in through the main gate. Instead, he would use all of the skills that he gained to not get detected.

He wasn't sure what it was but for some reason, the path before him had opened itself up. When he went through the guards were not paying attention, all of his moves were silent, and progressing through this checkpoint proved to be an easy endeavor.

His good luck continued as he pushed further into the core sect. There he found an underground labyrinth. Yet to someone of his knowledge it was obvious that if he went with the traditional way then he would be stuck in there for days. It was a clear trap for the non-initiated and a secret path was there for him to be discovered.

With the help of his senses and also his system he was quickly able to discover an out-of-place entrance. It was hidden behind several illusory arrays that after being cracked opened up to a flight of stairs. From

that point onwards it was smooth sailing and within an hour of him passing through the checkpoint, he finally arrived at his destination.

'It doesn't seem that there is anyone here, could it be that they haven't really had time to prepare this place for spies?'

Even though he was a one-in-a-billion master it was still strange that it was this easy to get here. The only explanation that was plausible was his timing. This sect had been taken by Wang Long not so long ago.

It wouldn't be strange if the people that knew this place in and out were all dead. Wang Long might have not thought ahead with his plans and had everyone that was competent replaced. This would leave the new people to pick up the slack, without proper plans of the area it would take years for even a master to figure out this whole place.

Only with the help of his cheat system was he able to condense all the knowledge from old books and texts to come this far. Others would need expectantly more time to get a grasp of everything around them.

'There really doesn't seem to be anyone here...'

Even though he had a hunch it was still best to wait and see. Only after spending some time scanning the whole area with the help of his system and his sense did he decide to reveal himself. The area he was in now looked like a giant chasm with lava coming out of it, yet the lava wasn't quite red but instead looked like corrupt dark blood.

'This must be a corrupt spirit vein, the demonic radiation is truly powerful but...'

He trailed his eyes forward and could feel that this was not the spot with the most energy. That went further in the direction of Wang Long's new castle. Luckily spirit veins of this caliber couldn't just be absorbed by the system. They would need to go through some kind of process of purification before this could be attempted.

All over the walls, he could see strange occult symbols that the energy-gathering formation was composed. It was responsible for the grand formation working and if he disabled it then the inner city shield and even the one around this core sect area would be easily breached.

"I guess I should put a timer on this and get out of here..."

The last phase of the plan was upon him. After hacking the formation he would be able to leave. Finally, the time for the last battle was within hand's reach.

Chapter 540

'That should do it...'

It wasn't easy and he wasn't sure if his cover wasn't already blown but the formation was prepared. He had placed a backdoor into the whole system that would allow him to destroy the formation even from outside. This should be enough to catch the Chaos Sect members off guard and shift the tide of battle if the need arises.

'It is still too dangerous to contact the others at this stage.'

His system was still being blocked by Wang Long's own faction zone. Unless he got out of it it wouldn't be possible to inform everyone of his feat. If he spent enough points it would be possible but it would also alert his enemy to his presence. After that happened all hell would break loose and he put himself at a disadvantage when being inside their main camp.

'I need to save all the spirit points for the battle, I don't know what might happen'

Zhang Dong had managed to remain unseen by his enemies that were probably too busy with the new sect management. It was still possible to make his way out of here through the same way that he came in. Even if the fake Phantom Demon was discovered it might not be traced back to him. It was smooth sailing if he made it out into the outer city, from there were many escape routes that he had saved within his mapping system.

This whole thing reminded him of the time he was building up the new sect city. At that time he had chosen to remain there to monitor the situation. With the help of his system, he was able to easily discover spies before they could even make it in. His counterpart Wang Long didn't seem to have the same worth ethic.

It seemed that he liked to rest on his laurels and indulge in the carnal pleasures of the flesh. Probably if his enemy took it seriously then it would have been impossible for this infiltration mission to go this smooth. Yet there still existed a small possibility that when he went outside troops of nascent soul masters could be waiting for him.

'It still could be a trap so I should keep vigilant...'

With that in mind, he raised his awareness to its maximum while escaping from the underground spirit vein. Yet just like before not much had changed, the path was already open and with some knowledge, he was able to close everything behind him to make it look like he was never there, to begin with. Soon he found himself back outside with no one being the wiser.

His expectations of finding an elaborate trap with twenty or so nascent soul masters trying to lead him into a trapping formation didn't come through. It really seemed that Wang Long was not expecting anything to happen. Perhaps he overestimated who he was going up against or the person grew complacent with the amount of power and prestige he received. Perhaps he was so convinced of his own superiority that he didn't even see Zhang Dong as a proper opponent.

'He might also have convinced himself that even if he loses he could just start over somewhere else.'

With the help of the system, it was possible to teleport out to another part of the empire. Wang Long probably still had a save point to the old sect he destroyed. No one could really follow him there if he decided to escape. With the new demonic cultivation and the system, Wang Long could continuously level up at a rapid pace. Zhang Dong, on the other hand, could only turn to resources like spirit stone and his faction and even then he would fall behind, thus his best bet was to end it here before everything got out of hand.

'It was good that I kept this robe and token, I just need to sneak out.'

The appearance of the servant Liu Chen was kept. He had not delivered the pills that he was supposed to but this wasn't important now. It was unlikely that the sect would be looking for a runaway servant. The young master that Liu Chen was serving was probably too busy to even care.

That is what he was hoping though but finally, his luck was about to run out. When he was making his way from the core sect area and through the training ground he noticed a commotion. A circle around two shouting people was forming and he was going straight through it. Even though he was hiding his face behind his robe someone called out to him.

"Hey isn't that Liu Chen?"

"I think it is him!"

For some reason, the disciples turned in his direction. The place was filled with what looked to be teenagers that were mostly at the higher points of Qi condensation. In the middle of this circle were two snotty-looking brats. With one glance he could tell that they were prestigious young masters.

One of the young masters wasn't alone. A brutish-looking man that looked like some kind of battle-hardened warrior was standing behind him. From what Zhang Dong could tell the man was hiding his power level. On the outside, he seemed to be a foundation establishment late stage practitioner but in reality, he was a half-step core formation expert.

"Liu Chen, where were you?"

"I..."

"Never mind you idiot, get over here!"

"Hah, so your dog actually showed up? At least he got a spine, not like you Yichen!"

"Shut your mouth Haoyu, I know you did something to keep him away but your rouse didn't bear fruit, don't think you can weasel out of the bet now!"

"Hah, you always had a vivid imagination Yichen, do you think my battle slave would ever lose to that servant of yours? "

"We will see!"

'What the hell is going on here...'

Zhang Dong had seen the commotion from a mile away but he expected it to work in his favor. While the kids were cursing up a storm he would just slip past them and be out of this sect in no time. Only now was he able to hear the names of the young master in question being mentioned. It was of course the one that he was supposed to deliver the pills to. Perhaps the delivery was just a pretext to get him over to fight this mountain of muscles.

"Liu Chen what are you doing, get over here!"

"Ah yes young master..."

He had to quickly get into character as he bowed before the sixteen-year-old. The youths here were probably related to the nascent soul masters to be able to be in the inner sect area at this age. It was

clear that Liu Chen's young master had a feud with the other guy. Yet Haoyu was pulling a fast one on him. The servant he was using was far above the level of Liu Chen who was a late stage foundation establishment warrior.

'This Haoyu is grinning too much, I bet he planned this thing out and got a fighter to win the bet.'

It was probable that the servants were limited to a certain level. Liu Chen was a true late stage foundation establishment practitioner and the man behind Haoyu was faking it. He was wearing some kind of treasure that was masking his true level. Not many people would be able to detect the ruse.

After going through the audience he could see that more people were on the side of this Haoyu fellow. When comparing the two young master's cultivation they were around the same. They were probably unwilling to go against each other directly. One of them would probably not get out of it unharmed, either dead or crippled.

Perhaps this wasn't the first time the servants were forced to fight for their young masters. The bet probably involves the transferring of cultivation resources and would leave the loser with a hit to their pride. To many this was still the harshest punishment they could receive, being mocked and disrespected.

"I..."

The group turned to the open field where the usual training ground was. There were teachers here but they didn't seem to care. He could even see some of them placing their own bets. This was probably not the first time the disciples cleared out disputes between each other like this.

'This Liu Chen must have had a hard life...'

The unhealed wounds on the man he replaced now started to make more sense. It was not that he was getting beat by the young master but instead he was forced to battle other servants. Perhaps he had been on a winning streak that convinced Yichen of his own superiority.

'Should I win or lose?'

There was nothing that he could really do. If he started running now the whole sect would be on to him. It wouldn't be hard for him to win in this situation but it was also risky. The other side might have been cheating but if he showed more power than he was supposed to then he could also get into trouble.

'I think I'll have to sweat for this one...'

There was no escaping his fate, the disciples were already gathering around them. Luckily no nascent soul masters were paying attention. Going back to foundation establishment level martial arts wouldn't be so easy. However, constricting his power levels would just be proof of his control.

"Don't you dare lose, Liu Chen!"

"Master Yichen's servant looks so weak compared to master Haoyu's."

"I'll bet my bloodstones on young master Haoyu's servant!"

"Me too, that Liu Chen is barely standing up!"

The other disciples clearly knew of Liu Chen's recent bouts. It could have been the case that other people from Haoyu's faction had tried to weaken Liu Chen with other fights. Even when they lost if they managed to injure the only battle slave Yichen had, it would be enough. This Haoyu had clearly prepared the stage for a decisive win.

"You have my apologies but I must follow the young master's orders."

The large man spoke up to him as if he was assured of his victory. He was probably ordered to either kill or cripple Liu Chen in this fight. It was supposed to be a show of might for the other side. There was no animosity in the tone of his voice and Zhang Dong couldn't fault the reasoning. The man was only doing things to survive and if he failed his life would probably be in danger.

'I guess if this sect falls it won't be such a bad thing...'

When looking at the young children here he could see that they were already too far gone. Their morals were skewed by the years of infighting and a massive superiority complex. It would be hard to straighten them out at this point but if he could then he would like to give them a chance.

'Okay, let's get this over with...'