

**Chapter 291: Mars's Deputy Governor!**

On the vast dusty red plains stood dozens of spheres, which were connected together to form an enormous city. The city didn't sit fully on land; instead, it floated within the large spheres.

There were three dozen of those spheres, and each one of them was enormous and the size of half an Ethereal City. The entire city was the size of more than a dozen Ethereal Cities.

There was an asymmetric beauty to it. It was a startling sight, indeed. The spheres on the lowest layer that formed the foundation of the city and carried its full weight were half buried in the ground, with the other half exposed. They held the weight of the other spheres, and together, the spheres formed the Martian City!

From outside, the city seemed to be spread out in a topsy turvy manner inside the spheres. Countless buildings and endless crowds filled the spheres, be it from the top, bottom, left, or right.

It was a spectacular sight, mind blowing to someone visiting for the first time. This was the case for Wang Baole. He stood on the cruiser and watched as the Martian Colony City rapidly approached, growing larger in size as they neared it. His heart couldn't calm down.

Despite the wide coverage of the Federation media, Mars remained a mystery. Dissemination of information outside the planet wasn't permitted. As a result, there were few audiovisual recordings of the colony city. The few that had been allowed release to the non-Martian public had been edited. What had been shown in them was nothing compared to what Wang Baole was seeing with his own eyes.

As he stood reeling from shock and amazement, the cruiser slowed down. It was sucked into a sphere when it approached its left wing and neared its parameter. The cruiser landed in a port somewhere in the city.

With a low rumbling, it stilled. Wang Baole took a deep breath in, smoothened his shirt, then lifted his head and strolled out confidently.

Someone had already received news of his arrival and was waiting for him at the port. As soon as Wang Baole stepped out of the cruiser, a young man dressed in a white combat suit stood beneath the cruiser and cupped his fists towards Wang Baole in a deep salute.

He had just arrived, and already there was someone ready to receive him and treating him with the utmost respect. Wang Baole looked forward to his future life on Mars. He laughed out loud and pulled the other young man up to his feet, starting to chat happily with him.

After greeting Wang Baole, the young man verified Wang Baole's identity via his jade slip. Then, his face broke into a smile before he bowed again with a greater degree of respect and politeness.

"Pavilion Head Wang, our new Deputy Governor will personally assign you your new office. He is waiting for you. This way, please!"

*The new Deputy Governor?* Wang Baole froze. This was a pleasant surprise. He realized that the Ethereal Dao College Sect Lord must really favor him. The latter must have sent a message ahead of his arrival. Besides securing him a better posting, Wang Baole would also have someone to rely on while on Mars.

Wang Baole grew excited at the thought. He inhaled deeply and followed the young man in a white combat suit to leave the port. They boarded a personal city cruiser and sped towards the political center of the Martian Colony—Zone Eighteen!

The Martian Colony was formed from thirty-six enormous spherical city zones. They were named accordingly, with Zone Eighteen being the political center. The offices of the Governor and the Deputy Governor, as well as the headquarters of the three key administrative departments, were all in Zone Eighteen.

Wang Baole gazed out at the towering buildings and eccentric architecture as the cruiser sped past them. There were countless pedestrians on the walkways and numerous cruisers dashing past one another on what appeared to be roads. The entire Martian Colony City was bustling with life.

The Martian population was larger than the Ethereal City population. The colony city's considerably greater size resulted in multiple waves of immigration and a spike in the population. Wang Baole had read up on the Martian Colony in detail prior to his departure. He knew that this city was not merely a colony city. To a certain extent, it could be considered an autonomous city under the Federation's governing structure!

The Martian political structure was slightly different from the Federation's political structure. The officials from the lowest to the highest echelons of the administration hailed from the various political forces in the Federation. Besides the Governor, who answered to the Federation, the rest were self-governing bodies.

The military had its own base on Mars as well. They were affiliated with the Federation on Earth but functioned more like local warlords. The power the native Martians held wasn't to be underestimated either. They continued to remain a significant political force despite repeated suppressions by the Federation.

The other political forces had established their presence in the colony city as well. It was a chaotic place, a microcosm of the current political climate in the Federation on Earth, as well as a cultivation ground for the rising heirs of the various clans and sects.

Wang Baole gazed at the world outside while reorganizing what he had learned about Mars inside his head. He gained a greater understanding of the planet. Finally, the speeding cruiser reached Zone Eighteen and landed in a public square.

The public square was a vast patch of land, and around it grew red trees and other plant life. In the middle of the square sat a building in the shape of a flame, which was painted in red. It stood out in the open. Wang Baole could feel waves of heat surging from the building as soon as he stepped out from the cruiser.

"This is the Deputy Governor's personal office. Pavilion Head Wang, this way, please!" The young man in a white combat suit smiled lightly at Wang Baole and led the way. Wang Baole inhaled a deep breath.

He lifted his head and stared at the flame-shaped building for a few long moments. Then, he followed the young man into the building.

A cool breeze welcomed him the moment he stepped inside, a stark difference from the heat outside. There was also Spirit Qi permeating the air, which instantly energized Wang Baole. He followed the young man to the highest level in the building.

There was a wooden door on this level. It was painted purple and shut.

This was clearly the Deputy Governor's office chambers. The young man in a white combat suit led Wang Baole to the door before retreating. Wang Baole smoothened his shirt out again. The various etiquettes he had read from the high officials' autobiographies came to his mind. He tried to look professional and competent. With a serious look on his face, he stepped forward and knocked firmly—not too loudly, but loud enough that the Deputy Governor would hear him—and slowly on the door.

He knocked exactly three times.

Three neat knocks resounded in the air. Wang Baole was secretly impressed. As a Dharmic Armament master, he could tell with a single knock that this was a century old wood. It had been soaked in Spirit Fluid for many years and was one of the better grade materials for refining artifacts.

*The Martian Colony sure is rich...* Wang Baole sighed. The doors swung inward slowly, revealing before Wang Baole a simple yet elegant office interior.

Spirit Qi emanated from the aged couches and the desk. The Spirit Qi within was so thick that the room seemed to be enveloped in fog.

Through the thick Spirit Qi, Wang Baole saw a landscape painting hanging on the wall before him. In the painting was a snowy mountain with a river flowing down it. On the river was a single boat, and on the boat, an old man. He was kneeling, facing the mountain, and seemed to be praying earnestly.

The other details were indiscernible. That was because a towering figure was obscuring part of the painting. The figure stood with his back towards Wang Baole. When Wang Baole's eyes fell on the man, he could feel a sudden oppressive force exuding from the latter. His heartbeat quickened. He could sense how powerful the man was.

*A perfected Core Formation realm cultivator!* Wang Baole had honed his skills at assessing the cultivation levels of Core Formation realm cultivators after his experience in the Mystic Luna Realm. He immediately sensed that the Deputy Governor was a perfected Core Formation realm cultivator. He hastily stepped forward and cupped his fists, extending a deep bow towards the man, who still had his back towards him.

"Greetings Deputy Governor, I'm Wang Baole!"

Wang Baole's voice bounced off the walls in the chambers as the doors behind him slid shut silently. The Spirit Qi mist in the room seemed to shift with an invisible wind, dispersing. All of a sudden, the towering figure before Wang Baole looked clearer.

Wang Baole observed the distinct silhouette, thinking it seemed familiar. Before he had time to recall where he might have seen it before, an even more familiar voice rang out from the man before him.

“Wang Baole...”

Wang Baole’s eyes nearly popped out of his head when he heard that voice. He stopped breathing for a moment. He was about to say something when the person before him turned around and revealed the face of a middle-aged man. Wang Baole couldn’t tell if he was smiling.

“We meet again!”

*Giant... giant tree!* There was an explosion inside Wang Baole’s head as his soul almost fled his body.

## **Chapter 292: One Step Away!**

The man who had just turned around and revealed his face to Wang Baole was... the giant tree mutation that he had crossed paths with multiple times, and whose road to the Nascent Soul realm had been wrecked by him!

Roaring waves of emotions stirred within Wang Baole, and his breath quickened. He retreated hurriedly, but the doors behind him had been shut. Some sort of array formation had obviously been set up in the room. Wang Baole retreated right up to the doors as beads of sweat dripped profusely from his forehead. He realized he had nowhere to run. His heartbeat started beating rapidly. His face tried to contort into a smile, though it would have been better if he had wept on the spot.

He was going crazy inside his head. Even in his wildest dreams, he wouldn’t have expected to see the giant tree again when he arrived at Mars... the giant tree’s presence meant one thing. It was clear that he... was the Martian Deputy Governor!

He was scared out of his wits. Wang Baole was prepared to whip out his Dharmic Armament. The gears in his head spun madly. He shouted immediately, in a strangled voice.

“Deputy Governor, I’m of the four Dao Colleges. I’ve received orders from the Federation President to be deployed here. Don’t... don’t you do anything rash.”

The giant tree stared frostily at Wang Baole. He observed Wang Baole’s actions and could tell the latter was extremely shocked and was prepared to fight for his life. He narrowed his eyes.

“It never occurred to you that the Federation President would grant me a legitimate identity, am I right? I’m now officially a member of the Federation, and the Deputy Governor of the Martian Colony.”

“Do you know why?” the giant tree asked casually. Wang Baole saw that the giant tree had no intentions of fighting him and released a sigh of relief, though he didn’t lower his guard.

He recovered from his shock quickly. Since the giant tree had been appointed Deputy Governor, he wouldn’t easily harm him so openly. Wang Baole began to sense something amiss about his Martian deployment.

*The giant tree must have something against me. He must have done something!* Wang Baole moped. He sighed inwardly. He couldn’t ignore the giant tree’s question, though. He decided to bite the bullet and play along.

“Why...”

“Why? You’re asking me why?” A fire was suddenly lit in the giant tree’s eyes. He glared at Wang Baole and forced the words out as he clenched his teeth.

“It’s because I was only one step away from the Nascent Soul realm. One step away. One step away! With my cultivation and fighting abilities, I’m not only capable of taking on the post of the Deputy Governor, but the post of Governor is also within my reach!” The giant tree glared at Wang Baole. His words reverberated in the chambers, sending shivers down Wang Baole’s spine.

His scalp went numb. He had grown nervous when he had heard the giant tree mention “one step away” the first time. The second time he had said it, Wang Baole had been twitching in his skin. The third time, Wang Baole had hovered on the verge of tears. He no longer wanted to remain on Mars. He wanted to return home to Earth...

The giant tree glared frostily at Wang Baole. He appeared to be cold and filled with rage, but, in reality, his inner emotional state had been calm like an undisturbed lake since Wang Baole entered the room. Everything he was showing Wang Baole was a deliberate act. He noticed the look on Wang Baole’s face and heard his thumping heartbeat. An imperceptible frown appeared on his brow, and something flickered in his eyes. Conclusions formed swiftly in his mind. He snorted.

“Your mission has been decided. I don’t want to see your face again!” the giant tree said. He lifted his right hand, and a jade slip flew towards Wang Baole.

As soon as Wang Baole caught it, the doors behind him swung open. A force erupted from the jade slip and flung him out of the room before the doors slammed shut.

The giant tree ignored Wang Baole. As the doors slammed shut, the furious expression on his face vanished instantly, and a look of consideration took its place. He had no part in deciding Wang Baole’s deployment to Mars.

In fact, if it were possible, he would like to keep the connection he had with Wang Baole a secret. Those were his exact thoughts when he had stood before Duan Muque and indirectly protected Wang Baole. Wang Baole was the equivalent of the fruit to him, his last chance at attaining the Nascent Soul realm.

If everything were to go according to his plan, he would have waited. He would wait until he gained the Federation’s trust before making a move on Wang Baole. He would swallow the young man whole and bring his own body to perfection. He would use this chance to attain a breakthrough in his cultivation and achieve the Nascent Soul realm.

He never expected the Federation to issue orders for Wang Baole to be transferred to Mars. It was as if they were presenting Wang Baole to him on a silver platter, and he couldn’t help but be suspicious.

*Duan Muque, are you trying to test me? Aren’t you afraid that I’ll just wing it and devour Wang Baole, attaining the Nascent Soul realm?* The giant tree frowned. He had developed an instinctive wariness of Duan Muque after the events in the Mystic Luna Realm. The man was unfathomable. He couldn’t discern his thoughts.

After a long while, the giant tree took a deep breath. He had decided. He decided to maintain the status quo. Regardless of what Duan Muque had planned for him, he would be safe as long as he didn't take the bait.

As for Wang Baole's assigned office, it hadn't been his decision; the Federation had appointed it. He took a look, decided that it wasn't that fantastic a posting, and hence didn't bother interfering further.

At present, a distraught Wang Baole was fleeing the flame-shaped building. Once outside, he took a few deep breaths. He could feel a chill down his spine. He alternated between moping and going mad with anxiety. He immediately turned on his voice transmission ring and contacted the Sect Lord of the Ethereal Dao College.

As soon as the call got through, Wang Baole started shouting frantically.

"I've decided, Sect Lord. I live and die as part of Ethereal Dao College. I want to spend my whole life working for the college. I want to remain with the college. I want to become the Pavilion Head of the Dharmic Armament Pavilion. I want to spend the rest of my life contributing to the college mission!"

"I see you've met our Fellow Daoist Osmanthus. I only found out today that he's been appointed the Deputy Governor of the Martian Colony." The Sect Lord of the Ethereal Dao College sighed before continuing to speak.

"Your records have been transferred to the Martian Colony. They're now under his jurisdiction. According to the regulations, you have to serve a minimum of one year on Mars before I can transfer you back. The both of us are Primary Rank Two Nobles. We're of the same rank. That makes things difficult. Not to mention that he's only one step away from the Nascent Soul realm."

Upon hearing those words, Wang Baole's heart turned to ice. He clutched the voice transmission ring in his hands. He suddenly felt that there was no meaning in living anymore. Even the skies looked dark and hopeless.

"Sect Lord, please don't mention anything about being one step away from the Nascent Soul realm again. It frightens me..."

The Sect Lord sighed. He immediately consoled Wang Baole.

"Don't worry too much. Since our Federation President has been appointed the Deputy Governor, he is now a member of the Federation. He is bound by Federation regulations and won't do anything rash. Besides... there's still the Martian Colony Governor. She's a character. Even the Federation President accords her some degree of respect when he sees her.

"I'll try to think of something as well, and fight to get you transferred back as soon as possible."

They exchanged a few more words before Wang Baole finally ended the transmission with a tragic sigh. He had no tears left to shed. There was nothing left to do but accept his fate. After a long while, he lowered his head and stared at the jade slip in his hand with a glum face. He activated it with his Spirit Qi. After reading its contents, Wang Baole's earlier sorrow and fury grew.

*What's this? Vice Dean of the Martian Dao Mountain Mist Academy? Me?*

The Martian Colony had an immense population. The presence of the various political forces created a messy political scene. Said political forces even had some of their most abled cultivators stationed in the colony. Naturally, there was a need to build schools for the heirs and descendants of the powerful figures in the various political forces.

The colony itself needed such academies as well, and a multitude of academies mushroomed in the city. They didn't fall under the governance of the four Dao Colleges but were directly controlled by the colony.

Amongst the schools, two stood out. One was the Fire Spirit Academy, and the other was the Dao Mountain Mist Academy.

The two academies were special because they had another name in the Martian Colony City. They were also known as the academies for the rich!

The dean of an academy for the rich was a Secondary Rank Four Noble. Its vice dean was a Primary Rank Five Noble!

*Damn you!*

*Asking me, an esteemed Foundation Establishment realm cultivator, one of the revered Hundred Seedlings of the Federation, a famous personality on Earth, to be the Vice Dean of a stupid school? I must be the most useless Primary Rank Five Noble there is! The one with the least power!* If it had been some other occasion, Wang Baole would have quit, but he was reminded of the Deputy Governor. Wang Baole sighed. He felt that sometimes one had to be a coward about certain things. It wasn't anything to be ashamed of.

*I've no choice. I'll just have to bear this for a while... then fight for a transfer after surviving one year, and get the hell out of here.* Wang Baole slapped his forehead. He sighed again, then hurried dispiritedly in the direction of the Dao Mountain Mist Academy as directed by the jade slip.

Since he was already here and had nowhere else to go, Wang Baole decided to head for the stupid school and settle the matter of his accommodation.

Wang Baole sighed as he went along. He wove his way through the various city zones and finally arrived at Zone Twelve... the Dao Mountain Mist Academy.

### **Chapter 293: Elites' Academy**

Wang Baole didn't waste any time in contacting the Dao Mountain Mist Academy on his way to the school, informing the school of his arrival. After that, he went on the Spirit Intranet and logged into the Martian Colony's official website. He began searching for information on the school.

As the other academy for rich kids on Mars, alongside Fire Spirit Academy, information about it was freely available and easily acquired online. Wang Baole had only needed to do a simple search and was able to amass tons of information about the school.

Dao Mountain Mist Academy had quite the reputation. As the second academy for the rich on Mars, its political background was complicated. All major political forces in the Federation had a stake in the school. The Trilunaris Corporation, especially, was the biggest stakeholder.

One wouldn't stray far from the truth if he had said that the Dao Mountain Mist Academy had been established for the heirs of Mars' powerful and influential. It was a top-class academy that taught nearly all subjects available. It wasn't in the same league as the four Dao Colleges. However, as an elementary academy that provided education for and nurtured students to the True Breath realm, it was a satisfactory alternative.

The academy's students were either born of wealth or nobility. That was how the title, elites' academy, had arisen and was used amongst the common folk.

The current dean hailed from the Trilunaris Corporation. He had stayed in his current appointment at the Dao Mountain Mist Academy for more than five years. Due to a myriad of reasons, his performance hadn't been exactly exemplary over the years. However, under his governance, the school hadn't encountered any major problems. Things ran smoothly.

*What elites' academy. It's just a playground for a bunch of kids.* Wang Baole browsed through the information on the school and snorted. He was displeased about his upcoming appointment as vice dean, which affected his perception of the school.

He soon changed his mind. That happened when he arrived at the school and got his first glance at the school gates.

The gates were... more than five hundred meters long. They were a majestic sight of carved dragons and sculpted phoenixes, and they exuded an air of elegant tradition. If one hadn't known it was a school, they would have thought they had arrived at the entrance of the Martian Colony Governor's Pavilion...

That wasn't the thing that sealed the deal. As a Dharmic Armament cultivator, Wang Baole quickly caught a refreshing scent in the air. He studied it carefully and couldn't control his subsequent shock.

*The gates are actually built out of... Spirit Clay! They're worth so much more than the giant tree's doors!* Wang Baole's eyes almost popped out of his head, and his breathing grew uneven. Spirit Clay was an ingredient used for refining artifacts. Its price was fixed and determined by weight, and it wasn't cheap. It was almost unbelievable that the school gates before him were constructed out of Spirit Clay. Even Wang Baole, who was at the Foundation Establishment realm, had to take a while to calculate the approximate cost for the building material.

His arrival coincided with the afternoon break. As he stood outside, blown away by the school gates, he caught sight of numerous luxurious cruisers dashing about inside and outside the school compound.

Wang Baole found a few of the cruisers familiar. He had seen similar ones at the Ethereal Fruit Feast, and a few were even more staggeringly luxurious. There were cruisers built out of diamonds, cruisers with jaw-dropping designs, and cruisers in the shape of monsters. Cruisers of all kinds could be found.

It would have been fine if everything had stopped there. As Wang Baole stood dazed by the sight, a teacher noticed Wang Baole at the gates. The academy had arranged for him to receive Wang Baole at the school gates after receiving the latter's message. He was a thin man in his middle age. He took great

care in making sure Wang Baole was indeed the person he was waiting for, then walked hurriedly towards Wang Baole eagerly.

“Esteemed Fellow Daoist, are you Dean Wang Baole?”

Wang Baole was still caught in an emotional rollercoaster, shocked by the sight of the school gates and the students rushing hurriedly around him. He heard the teacher’s question and looked over. After a brief exchange, the teacher verified Wang Baole’s identity and became friendlier. He led Wang Baole into the school.

“Dean Wang, we’ve been waiting for you for so long. You’re finally here.” The middle-aged teacher smiled widely. As he led Wang Baole into the school, he started introducing the campus to Wang Baole.

The academy grounds were spread across three hundred acres of land. It had all manners of facilities and strong teaching staff. As Wang Baole strolled across the campus, he was accosted by the strong feeling of being in a garden instead of an actual school...

Man-made lakes, artificial mountains, and expansive lands could be seen everywhere. Spirit Qi permeated the campus. It was comparable to the Upper Academy Island in the Ethereal Dao College.

Everything fed into and clarified Wang Baole’s understanding of what an elites’ academy truly was... he saw many more students as he strolled along. His eyes bulged again. It seemed that... the female students in the academy, with the help of a quality diet, had bodies that were significantly more developed than their peers on earth hiding under their standardized uniforms.

He saw a youth walking out from a building with his hands behind his back. Many others of the same age followed behind him. They were picking Spirit Stones out from their storage bracelets as they walked... all who cupped their fists and greeted the youth when they saw him would immediately receive Spirit Stones from the latter’s followers...

“What... what is he doing? Does his family own a Spirit Stone mine?” Wang Baole was lost.

“Don’t bother with him, Dean Wang. He’s from the Trilunaris Corporation. They call this act of giving out Spirit Stones posturing!” The teacher remained unruffled as he explained.

“Posturing...” Wang Baole muttered. He didn’t know what to say. He felt like a beggar standing outside the imperial palace. There was some strange power that prevented his imagination from running wild.

A dazed Wang Baole continued to be shocked by the sights that he came across and continued his slow acclimatization to the alien environment as he was brought to the dean’s office. As soon as he stepped inside the office, he saw an old man with a significant paunch—like his doppelganger but twice his size—lifting himself from the couch with great difficulty. He had a wide smile on his face.

The old man was the current dean of the Dao Mountain Mist Academy.

Wang Baole knew that standing before him was the man who would be his superior for the entirety of the next year. Despite his dissatisfaction towards his appointment, he had indeed been bowled over by the grandeur of the school. He instinctively followed the teachings he had gleaned from the high officials’ autobiographies as well as lessons he had learned from Liu Daobin, and put on an appearance of respect.

The old dean was encouraged by Wang Baole's arrival. He welcomed Wang Baole with great enthusiasm, then pulled Wang Baole down to sit with him. After noticing that Wang Baole only took up half the seat and that his expression remained respectful towards him, displaying none of the arrogance one might have gained from a recent spike in popularity, the dean's smile grew warmer.

He chatted casually with Wang Baole and shared a bit about the school. Then, he finally said earnestly.

"Baole, I'm an old man. I no longer have the energy to manage the academy. Your responsibilities from now on will be great. But you're young and a graduate from the Ethereal Dao College, so this shouldn't be any problem for you.

"The kids in our school are either from rich families, have parents who are in the upper management of the Martian Colony administration, or have ancestors who made great contributions to the colony. In other words... they all come from impressive backgrounds. Their parents have great hopes for them. They want their kids to grow up excellent...

"Our responsibilities are great. Our school's mission is to groom them to become future talents. This will be the main focus of your work. The school also has more than eight hundred teachers who fall under your supervision."

After another round of encouragement, the old dean brought Wang Baole around and introduced him to the rest of the school management. He affirmed Wang Baole's appointment. Regardless of their true thoughts, the rest in the management team appeared to be respectful and polite towards Wang Baole. He was after all a Primary Rank Five Noble. Excluding the old dean, he was the highest ranking and the one with the most authority in the school.

Before the old dean left, he requested Wang Baole to help with something.

"Baole, something happened a while back to the teacher in charge of the Dharmic Armament class. The teacher has since left. The replacement hasn't yet arrived. Could you help to take over the teaching of the class in the meantime?"

The old dean treated Wang Baole with kindness and friendliness throughout their entire exchange. Part of it was because of Wang Baole's reputation and his background, while a great part of it was due to the dean's character and age.

Wang Baole was someone who reciprocated kindness with kindness. He agreed to the dean's request.

"It's good to be young." The old dean patted Wang Baole on the shoulder, then left smiling.

Wang Baole watched the old dean's rotund figure wobble down the corridor. He seemed like he might trip and fall at any moment. After the dean reached the end of the corridor and disappeared, Wang Baole turned around started to familiarize himself with the school. This was after all his first day at work. He had an obligation to do what was necessary, even if his heart wasn't in it.

A department head of the school soon located Wang Baole. He made arrangements for Wang Baole's accommodations and also asked if he might need an assistant.

There were also many personal records belonging to teachers and students, as well as many other administrative tasks, that required Wang Baole's attention. Wang Baole was busy for the rest of the day, and it was nightfall when he finally had a moment to catch his breath.

After a whole afternoon's work, Wang Baole got a greater understanding of the inner workings of the Dao Mountain Mist Academy.

*This is a school where the students reign supreme... they're not interested in learning at all, and the teachers have no control over them. After all, there's the troublesome political backing behind each student that the teachers have to consider. It's enough to give them a migraine...* Wang Baole could feel a headache coming as he placed the files down.

*The old dean said that our mission is to groom them into talents... that's an impossible task.* Wang Baole frowned. He felt that the Dao Mountain Mist Academy was more a childcare center than an actual school...

*The teachers here aren't teachers. They're nannies!* Wang Baole had already been dissatisfied with his appointment. At present, after learning more about the school, the displeasure in his heart grew.

#### **Chapter 294: A Terrific Start**

Wang Baole shook his head as he placed the documents down. He returned to the accommodations the school had prepared for him. It was a three-story pavilion built at the edge of a man-made lake. Thick Spirit Qi permeated the air, and the surroundings were quiet and peaceful. Wang Baole sat down at the edge of the lake and began to recall the events of the past day. He sighed.

*First, it's bumping into the giant tree, then it's an appointment in a school... I'm one of the Hundred Seedlings, the best looking guy in the Federation. I'm aiming for the stars. I shouldn't be here doing the job of a nanny!* Wang Baole sighed with frustration. He was still fretting over his meeting with the giant tree.

The school environment wasn't bad, but it was still incomparable to being a Pavilion Head in the Ethereal Dao College.

*Forget it. Since I'm already here, I might as well put in a bit of effort. Quickly finish the year and have the Sect Lord transfer me back...*

At that thought, Wang Baole sighed again. He set aside his anxieties about the giant tree and returned to his pavilion. Sighing once more at the school's extravagance, he sat down cross-legged and was silent the rest of the night.

The next morning, Wang Baole went to his office. He wasn't in the mood to handle the various administrative school matters, nor was he in the mood to read through the staff and student records. He snacked on his tidbits while contemplating giving his Numinous Treasures another round of major upgrades.

As he was deep in thought, musing about upgrading his Numinous Treasures and contemplating how to carry out the exercise as well as the cost required for it, he received a notification. The class he was supposed to take over temporarily was about to begin.

*I wonder how Zhuo Yifan and Zhao Yameng are doing now. No matter what, they must be having a better time than me.* Wang Baole had little interest in the class he was going to teach. However, since he had promised the old dean, he would do it. He grabbed the textbooks for the class and walked to the classroom.

He could hear the loud and noisy chatter in the classroom even before he stepped inside. He pushed the door open and walked in.

It was a relatively small classroom comprised of approximately thirty-odd students. The class was split equally into boys and girls. Students were sitting, standing, and even walking about. There was a slight lull in the class chattering when he came in. The students' eyes honed in on Wang Baole.

"A new Dharmic Armament teacher?"

"Hmm, he looks familiar."

"You guys haven't been keeping up with the news. He's Wang Baole, one of the Federation's Hundred Seedlings. He's the new vice dean!" The thirty-odd male and female students engaged in a hushed, heated discussion. Many seemed to perk up in attention when they found out who Wang Baole was.

Wang Baole assessed the students as they stared at him. He noticed, with some displeasure, that one of the youths was the one who had been posturing yesterday. Fortunately, the female students in the class were rather well-endowed and pleasing to the eye. This helped to improve Wang Baole's mood.

*I should persuade the school to change the uniforms. They're too big. That's not helpful to the students' physical development at all.* Wang Baole coughed. Then, he slammed his palm on the desk.

"Let's begin!"

The students made their way to their desks leisurely. When they looked at Wang Baole, it was more with interest than respect.

Wang Baole couldn't care less. Him being here as a temporary substitute teacher was simply a gesture on his part.

*Let's get the class over and done with so that I can go back and run through the upgrading and refinement of my Numinous Treasures.* Wang Baole retracted his gaze. His heart was simply not in the pseudo-nanny job. He pulled out a bag of chips and started munching in front of the class. As the students stared incredulously at him, he started teaching.

Wang Baole followed whatever was written in the textbook, occasionally throwing in his personal knowledge of Dharmic Armaments. The former was standard information, while the latter was clearly priceless knowledge that encapsulated his understanding of Dharmic Armaments. The students, though, clearly lacked focus and discipline.

Except for a few native Martians who listened attentively to his teachings, the other students from families of the various political forces had initially paid attention at the beginning of class—largely due to an interest in Wang Baole—before they soon lost their interest in the lesson.

Those from the Five Generation Sky Clan all had supercilious looks on their faces, growing increasingly scornful of Wang Baole. There were also those from the Galactic Dusk Sect. The Mystic Luna Realm fiasco had been a great blow to the Galactic Dusk Sect. However, their parents were from the Martian Colony and were barely affected by the affair. Not that it prevented them from displaying the natural coldness and dispassion bred into their bones.

There were also a few students from the Plume Manifestation Connate Sect. The heirs of the disciples from the two main sects could choose their own sect. This was, however, not strictly enforced. Many chose to send their children to a school on Mars to undergo basic cultivation and education.

The posturing youth and his posse were from the Trilunaris Corporation. They seemed to have fallen into the habit of idleness and indolence. They kept talking in hushed tones to one another, engaging in the occasional bragging.

In the span of a lesson, Wang Baole went through five bags of snacks. He wiped his mouth and was about to leave, wanting to head back and run through the upgrades for his Numinous Treasures. However, as he was about to step out of the classroom, one of the students stood up and shouted. It was the youth with the posturing antics, the one who had made such a deep impression on Wang Baole.

“Teacher, please wait!”

He hurried towards Wang Baole with his minions following closely behind. He stood in front of Wang Baole and blocked the latter’s path to the door.

Wang Baole paused in his steps and raised his eyebrow. His mood hadn’t taken a turn for the better since he had arrived on Mars. He glared at the person who dared stand in his way. He was about to speak when the youth smiled lightly and put on an appearance of maturity and experience. He cupped his fists towards Wang Baole and said casually.

“Teacher, I heard that the puppets you make are ultra-realistic. They’re famous throughout the Federation. Are they for sale?”

The other students immediately raised their heads curiously and looked at Wang Baole. A few who seemed to have heard of his puppets had a look of interest on their faces.

Wang Baole was caught by surprise. He didn’t expect the youth to ask about his puppets. Pleasure surged within him as he wondered if his puppets had indeed become so well-known. Still, he kept a poker-faced expression.

“You have a sharp eye for a kid. However, those things aren’t good for health. Don’t obsess over puppets. They’re not toys. You can get one when you become an adult!” Wang Baole glanced at the youth before dishing out a few words of reprimand and continuing on his way.

The youth panicked at Wang Baole’s indifference and shouted hurriedly.

“Teacher, I’m already an adult. My dad just bought me a hotel on Mars as a coming-of-age present. It’s located right in front of the Fire Spirit Academy. It’s a great spot. I’ll exchange that for one of your puppets!”

“What?” Wang Baole paused in his tracks. He turned back and stared at the youth with shock in his wide eyes.

“A hotel for a puppet?”

“That’s right, teacher. Are you going to do it or not?” The youth jerked his chin up proudly. He had a look that proclaimed loudly about how rich and grown-up he was.

Wang Baole sucked in a breath of air. Regardless of the other’s family background, he still found the entire thing incredulous. He couldn’t help but think that maybe the people of the Trilunaris Corporation had all become idiots from the sheer wealth they possessed. He couldn’t control his curiosity, and he asked.

“Why? There are many people who make puppets. Why are you buying them from me?”

Upon hearing the question, the youth raised his chin higher and said arrogantly.

“Jin Duoming has your puppets by his side. I saw them when I returned to Earth a while back, and he kept showing them off in front of me. I won’t take this lying down. I want one too. I want the exact same female puppet!”

Wang Baole gave the smug youth before him a deep, meaningful look. He had an odd expression on his face. If he were this kid’s father, he would smack him to hell and back. The kid was an absolute disaster.

*Seems like the people from the Trilunaris Corporation aren’t normal. They’re all prodigal sons and daughters... Jin Duoming used a Dharmic Armament to exchange for a fragment, and this kid is exchanging his hotel for a puppet...* Wang Baole sighed. He seemed to keep running into ultra-rich folks. He felt more and more resigned to his fate. His destiny seemed to be providing more ways for these rich people to spend their money.

*If that’s the case, I shouldn’t go against what fate has presented before me.* At that thought, Wang Baole took in a deep breath. A bright smile appeared on his face, and he patted the youth on the shoulder.

“Kid, you have a bright future!” Wang Baole pulled out the puppet he was asking for immediately, and they completed the transaction. Wang Baole walked out of the classroom happily with the transfer deed in his hands. Inside the classroom, the youth also stared happily at his puppet, his eyes glowing with excitement and pleasure.

When Wang Baole reached his office, he stopped, suddenly, a few steps before the door. He smacked his forehead.

*That’s not right. My intentions are to be transferred out. Why did I start a business on Mars...* He had mixed feelings at that juncture. He wouldn’t be able to move the hotel when he left, and it would be a waste to sell it off as well. He had done some research on Mars before he had arrived. Property on Mars was precious and worth a great deal of money.

*Forget it, let's not think too much about it now. This is still considered a terrific start on Mars.* Wang Baole's mood improved visibly. He hummed as he pushed open the door to his office. The Dao Mountain Mist Academy didn't seem as bad as he had initially thought it to be.

*Should I make a few more puppets to stand around in class and help with future lessons?* Wang Baole was tempted to do that. It seemed like a good path to riches and wealth.

## **Chapter 295: A Familiar Face**

As vice dean of the Dao Mountain Mist Academy, he had plenty of things to busy himself with if he wanted to. However, he could carve out chunks of free time for himself if he wanted to as well.

The latter was what Wang Baole was doing. He returned early to his pavilion and continued running through the upgrades of his Numinous Treasures in his head. He finally completed the organization of all his Numinous Treasures late in the night. That was when he commenced the actual crafting and refinement.

After he reached the Foundation Establishment realm, Wang Baole realized that the bottleneck he had encountered in the past during his attempts at crafting fourth-grade Numinous Treasures had disappeared with the advance in his cultivation. That was why he had begun to upgrade and enhance his Numinous Treasures.

This grand project required a substantial expenditure. Fortunately, Wang Baole had adequate savings. He disregarded the cost of the materials and started refining his Numinous Treasures.

He didn't stop his cultivation either. He continued practicing the Lightning Dao: First Volume and could feel the lightning tattoo within his right leg growing stronger. It was ready to release a bolt of lightning with the kick of his leg.

This seemed to have something to do with the lightning mystic techniques he had acquired in the Lightning Domain. He had made some progress with the Lightning Dao: First Volume, but his progress with the Dark Art was slow, which made him anxious. Every time he forced himself to go through practicing the latter, he would feel an agonizing pain in his entire body. It felt as if his blood and flesh were being torn apart. Wang Baole had no choice but to stop.

*Why is this Dark Art so difficult to master?* Wang Baole could feel a headache coming. He could only set the Dark Art aside and concentrate on the Lightning Dao: First Volume. That was how he spent the next three days.

Wang Baole completed his cultivation three days later. He had perfected the first level of the Lightning Dao: First Volume. He had also exhausted the materials he had on refining his Numinous Treasures and needed to buy more.

Wang Baole went on the Spirit Intranet and did a detailed search on the Martian City. He wanted to locate a store that had a more comprehensive range of materials for sale, then purchase them in one go. The focus of his purchase was to obtain materials for refining his scabbard.

*I need a lot more Spirit Stones to refine Armament Sand.* Wang Baole's head started pulsing with pain when he thought about how much Armament Sand was required to upgrade his scabbard. It was something he had to do, however. His encounters in the Mystic Luna Realm had taught him how extraordinary his scabbard truly was. He wasn't just referring to the gray mosquito inside the scabbard; he was also thinking about the black and purple mosquitoes. He could almost imagine the extent of power he would have once he could control them.

*I have to speed up the refinement process of the scabbard!* Wang Baole took a deep breath. He continued his search on the Spirit Intranet, and, after locating a store that fulfilled his requirements, he immediately took out his cruiser and left the academy. He headed for the store.

There were no restrictions on flying in the Martian Colony, meaning many cruisers were dashing about in the city. Wang Baole's cruiser was actually of quite a good make. However, it appeared common in the crowd of cruisers. He lamented at how rich the Martian Colony was again before he caught sight of the store he was heading towards. Suddenly, in the skies ahead, a wave of inscriptions expanded in the air.

Everyone watched as the wave rippled outward. All cruisers caught within the wave malfunctioned instantly. Control of the cruisers seemed to be wrested from the drivers, and they paused and hovered in mid-air.

Wang Baole's cruiser did the same. He froze in surprise and stared ahead cautiously. The people in the cruisers around him seemed unfazed as if this was a normal occurrence. A few did step out of their cruisers, but most simply waited patiently inside.

Sounds of hushed discussions rose in the air.

"What's going on these few days? The Colony Disciplinary Order seems to be conducting more random searches."

"Guess something must have happened again. I heard a heretic cultivator appeared a while back..."

Wang Baole heard the discussions when he stepped outside. The mention of the Colony Disciplinary Order drew his attention. He soon saw seven to eight pitch-black cruisers dashing past. They exuded a foreboding air, and the pitch-black color had a somber, murderous feel to it. They seemed to be searching for something as they approached. They left after some time.

The wave of inscriptions vanished with the departure of the pitch-black cruisers, and all cruisers regained function. As Wang Baole continued his journey, his eyes fell on the distant pitch-black cruisers; they were glowing with envy.

*The Colony Disciplinary Order? That's one of the three key departments on Mars.* Wang Baole sighed. It was the department he had looked forward to joining the most. He had done thorough research on the Martian government structure before his trip and knew that Mars had three key departments—the Military Council, the City Administrative Department, and the Colony Disciplinary Order.

The Military Council was the Martian military, the City Administrative Department served a similar function as the Federation government and was responsible for the running of the Martian Colony City, and the Colony Disciplinary Order was responsible for policing and upholding the city laws.

The three key departments branched out further into many smaller departments and teams. Above the key departments sat the Deputy Governor and the Governor.

It seemed like a straightforward and simple structure, but there were many complicated political structures and networks nested within. They came together and formed an intricate interweb that supervised the entire Martian Colony.

The Martian Colony's Governor wasn't well known by the Federation public, but Wang Baole was able to dig up some information in the Ethereal Dao College database. He had been blown away then. The Governor of the Martian Colony was a legendary figure.

The Governor wasn't a man but a female cultivator. She had a natural spirit body and had attained a perfected Core Formation realm cultivation. She stood at the top of the power structure in the entire Federation and held a Secondary Rank One Noble. There was quite an extensive profile on the Martian Colony Governor in the Ethereal Dao College database.

One particular section caught Wang Baole's eye. Besides her position as the Martian Colony Governor... she was also one of the potential candidates in the running for the next Federation President!

The Holy River Dao College graduate had a high chance of becoming the next Federation President. She not only came from an impressive background, but she was also the Governor presiding over the Martian Colony. She had the right qualifications, the right level of cultivation, as well as the right network.

Her partner was also a prominent figure. He headed the Spirit Science Section in a few key departments in the Federation. He wasn't only a Primary Rank Three Noble, he was also the person in charge of the grand initiative to merge Spirit Qi and science.

With such an impressive background and power, Wang Baole couldn't help but feel stressed after absorbing all the information. He viewed her as his future competitor. After some deliberation, he decided that he would fight for his chances after her presidential term ended.

He felt a weight off his shoulders at that thought. His thoughts had strayed down that particular path at the sight of the Colony Disciplinary Order cruisers, and he remained lost in thought as he arrived at the store. He purchased all the materials he needed and was about to return to the academy when he realized the hotel he had gotten in exchange for a puppet was in the vicinity.

*Let's go take a look at my hotel.* Wang Baole was tempted by the sudden thought and steered his cruiser away. He pulled out the deed and confirmed the hotel's location to be opposite the other elites' academy, the Fire Spirit Academy.

*Battle-axe Hotel?* Wang Baole glanced at the name of the hotel and found it a cool name. He thought about how this was the first property under his name. Spirits high, he quickened his pace towards the hotel.

He soon saw a towering pavilion over forty stories tall ahead of him in the distance. It took up quite a bit of land and had an air of majesty to it. An enormous battle-axe stood before the grand pavilion—it looked very impressive.

There were numerous cruisers parked beneath. Crowds of people, both male and female, entered and left the hotel. It was bustling with business.

Wang Baole was stunned by the sight. The scale of the hotel and the impressive display of the battle-axe blew him away. He could hardly believe his eyes. This was what he had gotten in exchange for his puppet.

*This is why I like being friends with prodigals.* Wang Baole's mood improved immensely. He quickly parked his cruiser and got out. He was about to step into his hotel and take a look at how the business was coming along when he felt someone staring at him in the distance. He turned around and saw an expressionless bald person looking back at him...

*I was wondering where the reflective light was coming from. It's that baldy...* Wang Baole was surprised when he saw the baldy. It was a familiar face.

The baldy was the disciple of the Ethereal Dao College's Grand Supreme Elder, Li Wuchen!

Li Wuchen had fought against Wang Baole in the Combat Pavilion tournament and lost a few years ago. He didn't expect to see Wang Baole here. He wasn't pleased at all. The sight of Wang Baole reminded him of how he had lost his precious Spirit Blood... he glanced away and pretended he didn't see Wang Baole.

"Baldy Chen, this is like meeting a familiar face in a foreign land. Why have you come to Mars?" Wang Baole didn't expect to meet Li Wuchen here. He laughed and waved in greeting.

"Why, is the entire planet your home? Why should I have to let you know if I'm visiting?" Li Wuchen said coolly. It had been a while since he had left the college, and while he didn't know why Wang Baole was on Mars, he had heard about what had happened in the Mystic Luna Realm. He remembered his current status then, and a flash of arrogance flickered in his eyes. He ignored Wang Baole and strolled into the Battle-axe Hotel.

*Is he looking down on me?* Wang Baole glared. He watched the young man step into his hotel and raised an eyebrow.

## **Chapter 296: The Story of the Battle-axe Hotel**

*You look down on me and still dare to step into my hotel! You're going too far!* Wang Baole hmped and walked towards the lobby of the Battle-axe Hotel.

The lobby was extremely spacious. Although it couldn't be considered the best hotel in the Mars Colony, it could be seen as a reputable time-honored brand. Its interior design was extremely lavish, and it felt like a themed arena. Every attendant, regardless of gender, was in a jumpsuit. With one look, you could tell that they weren't ordinary people. In fact, all of them were at the Ancient Martial Arts realm.

Straight through the lobby was a check-in counter. There were sofas in front of the counter and at the four corners of the lobby for customers to rest on.

Other than that, the hotel also had statues and specimens of beasts within it. This made the Battle-axe Hotel seem slightly ominous.

Despite this, there were still many customers in the hotel. They came and went, making the whole hotel very lively.

*This is my hotel.* Wang Baole stood in the lobby and looked at his surroundings, feeling very motivated. In front of him, Li Wuchen noticed Wang Baole following him and how he was looking at his surroundings. Li Wuchen laughed at Wang Baole for being a country bumpkin in his heart and didn't bother with him.

At the same time, a middle-aged man wearing a white jumpsuit quickly walked out from behind the counter after he noticed Li Wuchen. He seemed to have been waiting for a long while, and he welcomed Li Wuchen with a smile on his face.

"Sir, are you Dean Li Wuchen?" His voice and smile spread towards Li Wuchen before he got to him. He had a courteous expression as he greeted Li Wuchen with cupped fists.

The middle-aged man was dressed differently from the other waiters, and he seemed to be at the True Breath realm. As he walked out, the surrounding waiters all bowed their heads towards him. He was obviously part of the management staff at the hotel and held a high-ranking position.

"Ah, you must be Daoist Xu, I'm Li Wuchen." After seeing the middle-aged man, a smile appeared on Li Wuchen's face as he nodded at him.

"I rushed over to wait for you the moment I received your notice. Please, Dean Li, let's talk over here." The middle-aged man was all smiles and felt smug deep down. He knew that Li Wuchen was at the Foundation Establishment realm and had a strong background. However, this was his turf. Li Wuchen still had to be courteous to him when he was there.

Li Wuchen nodded while smiling in response to the middle-aged man's invitation and followed him to a rest area nearby. As for Wang Baole, he took no notice, and the middle-aged man high-ranking manager obviously didn't know who Wang Baole was. If it was any other time, he might have attended to Wang Baole personally because of Wang Baole's cultivation level, but his main focus was Li Wuchen now.

Besides, the hotel had many cultivators come and go at all times. It was obvious that the middle-aged man had seen too many of them to take much notice. Thus, he started talking to Li Wuchen softly in the rest area.

Seeing this scene, Wang Baole raised his eyebrows and walked into the rest area as well. He sat down comfortably near Li Wuchen and the middle-aged man and ordered a drink. As he drank and observed his hotel, he was also listening to their conversation.

Noticing that Wang Baole was near them, Li Wuchen felt a little annoyed deep down. However, he had more pressing matters at hand, so he ignored Wang Baole once more and turned his head to engage the middle-aged man in discussion once more. A moment later, Li Wuchen looked unhappy and said in a low voice, "Daoist Xu, you must settle this matter for me today. I come here today representing not only myself but also Fire Spirit Academy!"

"Dean Li, the matter is too huge. I will try my best to coordinate matters, but I can't guarantee that I can get it done on time." The middle-aged man forced a smile while shaking his head.

Hearing their conversation, Wang Baole was a little confused. Actually, Wang Baole had observed that Li Wuchen needed to ask for a favor from his attitude towards the middle-aged man. He went closer to listen because he was curious.

Now, he still didn't understand the whole issue, but he did learn the identity of Li Wuchen.

*Vice dean of Fire Spirit Academy? That's the same job as mine!* Wang Baole was a little annoyed. He thought about how he had attained so many achievements to get to the position of Level Five Official, but Li Wuchen got to the same position seemingly without any achievements.

Even though Wang Baole was the vice dean of Dao Mountain Mist Academy, he was unhappy that Li Wuchen was at the same rank as him, so he hmphe.

During his previous research, he had also taken notice of the Fire Spirit Academy. After all, the Fire Spirit Academy was a college for the wealthy just like Dao Mountain Mist Academy. To a certain degree, one could even call the two colleges rivals.

As Wang Baole was thinking, Li Wuchen and the middle-aged man's voices were a little louder than before. Li Wuchen furrowed his brows, and a glimmer appeared in his eyes.

"Daoist Xu, this is only a problem of where a battle-axe is facing. It shouldn't be too much trouble, besides it's not like the battle-axe hasn't changed before!"

"Dean Li, you may say that, but I'm not the one making the decisions on this matter. Could you please wait for a few more days? I've reported this already. Although the owner changed, I believe this matter will be approved in a couple of days."

Listening to their conversation, Wang Baole's curiosity was piqued even more. He couldn't understand why the vice dean of Fire Spirit Academy would come here to talk to a True Breath realm cultivator about the problem of a battle-axe's direction.

It would have been fine if this wasn't his hotel, but it was. Hence, Wang Baole was even more curious. He opened up the Spirit Intranet and typed in keywords like battle-axe and Fire Spirit Academy to do a search. This search made Wang Baole open his eyes wide, and he was very surprised.

*This Battle-axe Hotel has a backstory!*

The Battle-axe Hotel was built directly in front of the Fire Spirit Academy. Looking at its geographical location, it was in a very good area. It was close to a school and not too far away from the downtown district; its business was also pretty good. However, this hotel was pretty odd...

Its oddness came from how it seemed to counter the Fire Spirit Academy... Accurately speaking, the Battle-axe Hotel did counter the Fire Spirit Academy. The main point of this seemed to be related to the huge battle-axe in front of the entrance of the hotel.

When the Fire Spirit Academy was just built, everything was normal. This was until the Battle-axe Hotel opposite opened for business. That huge malicious battle-axe faced the Fire Spirit Academy directly. Hence, not even a year had passed before the vice dean of Fire Spirit Academy at that time died unnaturally...

Following that came the Fire Spirit Academy's second vice dean. Not only was he at an extraordinary cultivation level, but he was also good at divination, and he divined that the malicious aura coming from the battle-axe was too heavy. However, the hotel was the property of the higher-ups of the Trilunaris Corporation so he couldn't use force. So he negotiated with the Battle-axe Hotel and compromised a little to make the blade of the battle-axe change its direction to not face the Fire Spirit Academy directly.

It might have actually worked. In less than a year, that second vice dean got promoted and recalled back to Earth. Now, he was the Vice Minister in a huge ministry.

As he got promoted, the third vice dean came in. This third vice dean didn't believe in superstition and took no notice of the hotel. Hence, the hotel turned the blade of the battle-axe back to face the Fire Spirit Academy directly.

As a result, the corruption scandals of this third vice dean were found out by the Colony Disciplinary Order, and he was immediately detained. He was still locked up in the Mars Prison today...

The occurrence of these three events made the Battle-axe Hotel popular. From then on, the first thing new vice deans of Fire Spirit Academy did when they reported for work was to communicate with the hotel and get them to change the direction of the battle-axe blade.

This was way too weird, and people would rather believe it. There were those who didn't, but not one escaped unscathed. Most of them were caught like the previous vice dean... This was why Li Wuchen, the new vice dean of Fire Spirit Academy, came here to negotiate with the hotel.

*So I can do that...* Wang Baole was very happy after reading the information. His eyes lit up, and a smile appeared on the corner of his lips when he looked at the gloomy Li Wuchen.

At that moment, Li Wuchen also seemed to run out of patience. He stood up and shot the middle-aged man a cold look. He spoke in a low voice.

"Daoist Xu, I don't care about the change in owners. I want an answer by today!"

"Dean Li, I'll be honest with you, there was originally no problem with this, but I received a message a few days ago telling me that the hotel had changed hands. That's why I couldn't settle this matter on time." The middle-aged man also quickly stood up and replied with a forced smile.

"Please don't make things hard on me, Dean Li. How about this... I'll ask about it now. Although I've never seen the new owner, the old owner gave me his contact details, I'll ask now. Don't worry Dean Li, this isn't a huge issue, there shouldn't be any problems."

Hearing his reply, Li Wuchen finally relaxed a little and nodded. To him, nothing would go wrong with this issue. After all, he had the Ethereal Dao College backing him. The Grand Supreme Elder and others wouldn't make things hard for him over this small matter.

So he didn't take notice of the middle-aged man who took out his voice transmission ring to contact the new hotel owner. Li Wuchen slanted his eyes to look at Wang Baole, who was fiddling with his voice transmission ring. As he noticed Wang Baole's slightly smug expression, he harrumphed in disdain.

*Country bumpkin! One day I will make you cough up the Spirit Blood you swallowed with interest!*

As he thought that deep within his heart... the voice transmission ring of Wang Baole... rang...

## Chapter 297: Evil Rises in the Air

A voice transmission ring typically didn't have any sound notifications enabled as it was activated by the Spirit Qi in one's body. Though, if the need arose, it was equipped with vibration as well as sound notification capabilities.

Wang Baole had been playing around with those functionalities earlier, to allow the voice transmission ring to give sound notifications. The notification from the voice transmission ring resounded in the air now. Wang Baole coughed, and he waited for a few moments before connecting to the transmission. His eyes didn't leave Li Wuchen all the while.

As soon as the transmission connected, a voice that sounded similar to that of the man with the Xu family name rang out from the voice transmission ring...

"Is this Mister Wang? A good day to you! I'm the person in charge of running the Battle-axe Hotel under your name. My name is Xu Zhenjing, but you can simply call me Little Xu..."

As the voice from the voice transmission ring traveled, Xu Zhenjing, who had been sitting at one side of the room speaking into his voice transmission ring, heard his own voice from Wang Baole's voice transmission ring and froze. He lifted his head and stared confusedly at Wang Baole, who was sitting a short distance away from them on the couch.

He wasn't the only one who was stunned. Li Wuchen's eyes almost popped out of his head. He looked as if he was in a daze.

Wang Baole was quietly pleased with the pair's expressions. He coughed then lowered his head, speaking into the voice transmission ring.

"Yes, it's me, Little Xu. I'm quite busy here. What do you want?"

Xu Zhenjing sucked in a breath of cold air. He looked at the voice transmission ring and then at Wang Baole. He finally came to his senses after a long while and hurried over with the intention of extending a greeting, but the other party seemed to be fixated on his voice transmission ring...

He tried to recall if he had offended the other earlier, then realized he had focused on attending to Li Wuchen and given his new boss the cold shoulder. He shuddered inwardly. He could cry.

*Why didn't the boss give a heads up before he came...*

Fraught with uncertainty, he hesitated before continuing to speak politely into the voice transmission ring. He communicated Li Wuchen's request hastily, then raised his head and stared nervously at Wang Baole.

Li Wuchen remained lost. He seemed to be caught in disbelief at the scene unfolding before him. It was beyond his wildest imagination, and he found it difficult to accept the reality so readily. He could only stare, dazedly, as Wang Baole and the person with the last name Xu carried out their conversation over their voice transmission rings despite sitting only a few yards away from one another.

Wang Baole was feeling extremely pleased with himself. He stared at the confused Li Wuchen then replied into his voice transmission ring coolly.

"Of course not. The battle-axe represents the hotel's image. How can we just change it?"

"I want you to quickly build another three identical battle-axe sculptures. I want them all lined in front of the hotel entrance, and the axes have to face the Fire Spirit Academy!"

As soon as Wang Baole said that, Xu Zhenjing sucked in a breath of cold air. He dared not say a single word and hurriedly and very loudly agreed to do as Wang Baole ordered. Li Wuchen, who was sitting beside Xu Zhenjing, exploded. The veins on his forehead pulsed furiously, and he could hear a loud roar in his head. There was red in his eyes as he yelled furiously.

"Wang Baole, how dare you!"

What Wang Baole was doing was simply too much. A single battle-axe was enough to axe the vice dean, much less four axes. Li Wuchen was furious. He could sense the gathering of dark storm clouds above his head, and a strong impending sense of danger loomed, making his whole body shudder.

Wang Baole remained unfazed as Li Wuchen yelled at him, continuing to speak casually into his voice transmission ring.

"Did I hear someone at your end yelling my name? Let's not stop at three axes then, make it ten instead! Every time someone over at your end yells my name, add another ten axes!"

"Oh, if the vice dean of the Fire Spirit Academy isn't happy with my decision, ask him to come look for me. I'm sure we can work things out as long as the price is right. Alright, I still have other matters to attend to, so that's all for now." Wang Baole ended the transmission. He stood up from the couch and stretched his limbs before looking around with a pleased look on his face.

*This hotel's not bad at all.* He sighed, pleased. Then, with great satisfaction, and under the scorching glare of Li Wuchen, he turned and headed towards the hotel entrance.

A thought suddenly hit Xu Zhenjing. He ignored Li Wuchen and rushed over to Wang Baole. As if trying to salvage the situation, he nodded and bowed furiously as he saw Wang Baole off.

Li Wuchen clenched his fists. The veins in his eyes were blood red. He swallowed his fury after a long, difficult moment. Then, clenching his teeth, he charged out of the hotel. He glared at the enormous battle-axe, his breathing rapid.

*Wang Baole, you want me to lower my head and negotiate with you? In your dreams!* Li Wuchen snorted and left.

At present, Wang Baole was in his cruiser speeding towards the Dao Mountain Mist Academy, extremely pleased with himself. The Battle-axe Hotel was a great asset. The murderous air exuding from the battle-axe was something that surprised and delighted Wang Baole. He thought of how Li Wuchen had viewed him with disdain initially and how his look of condescension had morphed into one of rage. It cheered him up immensely.

*Baldy Chen, you dare to fight with me? If you had lowered your head and submitted yourself before me, seeing how we come from the same college, I wouldn't have made trouble for you. But you choose to be*

*stubborn. You can't blame me for what happens next!* Wang Baole snorted. He returned to the academy in a good mood and began his enhancements of his Numinous Treasures.

Three days passed in a blur. In an attempt to prove himself, Xu Zhenjing personally supervised the production of the new axes. Ten spanking new battle-axes soon arrived, and all eleven enormous battle-axes were lined outside the hotel, radiating violence and ill intent. Their blades were brandished at the Fire Spirit Academy, and everyone in the academy was taken aback.

"My god, the Battle-axe Hotel owner has gone mad..."

"One battle-axe would have ended the vice dean's career. With eleven axes now, I think the vice dean's going to be slaughtered..."

"Does the owner of the hotel have some grudge against Dean Li?"

The commotion wasn't only stirred in Fire Spirit Academy. The few neighboring zones heard of what happened as well and were stunned. Many came to take a look, the crowd endless, and the Battle-axe Hotel saw a spike in business.

Many students from the Dao Mountain Mist Academy, the Fire Spirit Academy's competitor, also heard about this. They started discussing the matter furiously. All of them were excited about what was going on and couldn't stop talking about it.

The youth from the Trilunaris Corporation who had sold the hotel to Wang Baole was shocked. The hotel had been a recent gift from his father, so the administrative matters hadn't been managed by him. He had heard of the urban legend, but as a student, he hadn't paid it much attention. This was until he transferred ownership of the hotel and heard that Wang Baole had gotten someone to build ten more battle-axes. He suddenly realized how brave and extraordinary Wang Baole was.

"I heard it's because he holds a grudge against Dean Li of the Fire Spirit Academy..."

"He's trying to push him over the edge."

Wang Baole's Dharmic Armament classes continued as excited discussions carried on amongst the student body. He was due to have the second lesson with his first class. When he arrived at the classroom, the students clearly looked more attentive.

Their attention wasn't on the knowledge Wang Baole was imparting though; they were simply drawn towards Wang Baole as a person of extreme interest.

There was another reason for their interest... the puppet that the youth from the Trilunaris Corporation had gotten had gained extreme fame throughout the campus during the past few days. It was largely due to the youth's love for bragging. No matter where he went, he would bring along the beautiful and well-endowed female puppet. The puppet was also extremely useful. It not only helped him with note taking, but it could also help him do his homework.

It was like a real person. It massaged his shoulders and back, and it followed him around and protected him; it took care of his every need.

The other students were green with envy. They longed to have one of their own. The starting price for the puppet was too high, however. They couldn't afford it despite how much they wanted one...

The youth from the Trilunaris Corporation who had gotten the puppet for the price of a hotel was extremely pleased. He felt that he had handled the matter extremely well and had been very clever.

*Humph, everyone says I'm a prodigal son. They don't know I intentionally exchanged the puppet with a hotel and jacked up the price of the puppet. This means other people won't be able to afford it as easily. It'll make my puppet a limited edition, one that I can get it off my hands anytime because there'll be plenty of buyers. I believe Wang Baole would keep the price high as well and won't sell his puppets for cheap.*

And that was indeed the case. After having gained a hotel for a puppet, Wang Baole naturally wouldn't sell his puppets at a lower price, nor did he have the chance to do so. A few other prodigal sons of the Trilunaris Corporation and the Five Generation Sky Clan approached him. Fiercely competitive and not lacking in money, they offered similar terms of exchange. Wang Baole managed to sell a few more puppets and soon had two hotels and three stores under his name on Mars...

He was completely blown away by the extent of their wealth.

*The minds of rich people are beyond my comprehension. To think of the puppets I had wasted in the past. They're all money! But I'm here to govern, not to accumulate wealth... if I continue doing this, will the Colony Disciplinary Order come knocking on my door...*

## **Chapter 298: The New Dharmic Armament Teacher**

As Wang Baole was still twitching in fear from his various puppet sales and worried about whether he'd be called up by the Colony Disciplinary Order for a cup of tea, his substitute teaching career came to an end. The new Dharmic Armament teacher had arrived.

Wang Baole was surprised and pleased when he picked up the file and read about the new Dharmic Armament teacher.

*A familiar face in a foreign land indeed.* Wang Baole sighed. He deliberated for a while before arranging for someone to receive the new teacher at the school gates. He instructed the person to bring the new teacher to him when he arrived.

The new Dharmic Armament teacher arrived in the span of time Wang Baole took to finish a few bags of chips... When he heard the knocks on his office door, Wang Baole stood up and walked towards the map hanging in his room. His back faced the door, and he spoke coolly.

"Enter."

The new Dharmic Armament teacher had an unpleasant look on his face as he knocked on the door. He heard a voice in the room, hesitated, then pushed the door open. When he saw Wang Baole's back, his face darkened. He was feeling all sorts of uncomfortable. Discomfort surged and rose like waves in his stomach. He had no choice, though. He bit the bullet and cupped his fists, saluting Wang Baole.

"Dean Wang... please accept the greetings of Lin Tianhao!"

The new Dharmic Armament teacher was Lin Tianhao!

The frustrations Lin Tianhao held inside him had reached a tipping point. If he had known that Wang Baole was here, he wouldn't have chosen to come to this place. But it had been too late when he had finally found out. The orders had been issued, and his appointment had been something his father had paid dearly for. Resigned to his fate, Lin Tianhao had no choice but to turn up.

As frustrations boiled inside Lin Tianhao, Wang Baole remained with his back towards the former and spoke.

"Tianhao, come over."

Lin Tianhao felt uncomfortable hearing how Wang Baole was addressing him, but there was nothing he could do about it. He sighed inwardly and, with a frown on his face, walked towards Wang Baole. He stood beside the latter.

Wang Baole glanced at him and said nothing. He continued staring at the map.

Silence descended, and half an hour passed. Regardless of how unhappy Lin Tianhao was feeling, he still sensed something was amiss. He saw where he was standing in relation to Wang Baole and remembered his father's teachings. He realized he was standing in the wrong spot.

If it had been someone else who was the vice dean, Lin Tianhao wouldn't have made the same mistake. His feelings towards Wang Baole were simply too complex. There were exasperation and a sense of powerlessness as well as an unwillingness to admit defeat. He was torn, but, after a long moment, he sighed inwardly and took one step back.

As soon as he did that, Wang Baole's face widened into a bright smile. He turned and laughed, then spoke with great enthusiasm.

"Tianhao, welcome to the Dao Mountain Mist Academy!"

Wang Baole led Lin Tianhao to sit down with him on the couch. His smile stayed on his face, and his eyes were bright with encouragement. He watched as Lin Tianhao took his seat, then smiled and spoke.

"Our Dao Mountain Mist Academy carries a heavy responsibility. Our mission is to groom the next generation for Mars and for the Federation. Dharmic Armament education is especially important, but I can put my worries to bed now that you are here. Your responsibilities are great, I'll need you to work very hard."

"... Dean Wang, I'll do my best." Lin Tianhao was still unaccustomed to the superior-subordinate relationship he now had with Wang Baole, as well as the way they were speaking to one another. He couldn't bring himself to cheer up, and his inner frustrations grew.

"Do your best? Tianhao, you're no longer a student of the Ethereal Dao College. You're a teacher now. You are the candle whose light will illuminate the world of your students. It's not enough for you to try your best. You must give your all. You must pass on all that you know and understand about Dharmic Armaments to these children!" At the end of his speech, Wang Baole had a serious and fierce expression on his face. He threw a glance towards Lin Tianhao, whose bum remained firmly seated on the couch.

Lin Tianhao took a deep breath. He straightened his back, nodded, and was about to speak when Wang Baole suddenly patted him on the shoulder and said casually.

“Tianhao, we’ve known each other for years. We might have had some tensions in the past, but you know me, I’ve always been a jolly, even-tempered person. I never hold grudges. So don’t worry, I really don’t hold grudges, I don’t hold grudges at all.” Every time Wang Baole mentioned the word “grudges”, he patted Lin Tianhao on the shoulder once. He mentioned it three times, and patted Lin Tianhao three times.

This was something he had learned from the giant tree. He used it on Lin Tianhao because he wanted Lin Tianhao to yield to him. He wanted to make Lin Tianhao his loyal subordinate and follower. This way, he would no longer be alone in the Martian Colony.

This technique that he had learned from the giant tree really worked. Lin Tianhao’s frustrations morphed into anxiety and uncertainty as he remembered Wang Baole’s ruthless antics and heaved a giant sigh in his heart.

If it had been anyone else, he might have been able to make use of his family connections, but Wang Baole, despite his commoner’s family origins, was backed by people as impressive as his own family. Having been in the same college as Wang Baole, he was deeply aware of the fact. He even still firmly believed that Wang Baole had a mysterious godfather supporting him, as nothing else could explain how he had managed to escape unscathed so many times.

He thought about how he was going to be his subordinate for the next few years. Powerless to change his fate, Lin Tianhao shifted forward and inched half his bum off the couch. He gritted his teeth and bit the bullet. For the first time in his life, he took out a storage bracelet and placed it carefully to one side.

“Dean Wang... this is just a small token. Please accept it.”

The smile on Wang Baole’s face grew wider as he witnessed the change in Lin Tianhao’s attitude. He reminisced about their college lives for a while before ending the conversation. Before he picked the teacup up and sent him away, Wang Baole got Lin Tianhao to take his storage bracelet with him. His eyes were earnest as he spoke seriously to Lin Tianhao.

“Tianhao, you and I are both college mates, there’s no need for this. What happened between us happened when we were still young and hotheaded. Every thing has been resolved during City Lord Li’s fruit feast. Don’t be burdened by this. I hope that you and I can bring Dao Mountain Mist Academy to the next level and that both of us won’t fail in the duties that have been placed on us!”

Wang Baole’s words sounded sincere, and they moved Lin Tianhao. He looked at Wang Baole for a long time before he kept the storage bracelet. Then, he cupped his fists and bowed deeply.

“I’ll do my very best!” Lin Tianhao left after he spoke to Wang Baole. This was his first day at school, and he still had many things to attend to. Wang Baole watched Lin Tianhao’s back retreat from the room and disappear behind the door. That was when he placed his teacup down, pulled out a bottle of Ice Spirit Water, and took a big gulp. He was very pleased.

*There’s no need to rush to secure Lin Tianhao’s loyalty. I’ll take things one step at a time...* At that thought, Wang Baole concluded that, despite the giant tree’s presence, life on Mars wasn’t without its pleasures and excitement. He had increased his net worth and become Lin Tianhao’s superior. Both made him incredibly happy.

He hummed a small tune and was about to open a bag of chips when his voice transmission ring suddenly vibrated. He lowered his head and took a look. What he saw surprised him.

*Li Yi?* Wang Baole had a disbelieving look on his face. He activated his voice transmission ring, and Li Yi's voice immediately rang in his ear. She sounded calm and slightly tired.

"Wang Baole, I know you're on Mars. I've also been deployed to Mars..."

"I hadn't thought much of it before I graduated, but after I graduated and joined the Federation, I became so tired... I thought back to our past and all the unhappiness I felt towards you. They're all just fleeting emotions. Why should we be fixated on these things?"

"We still have a long road ahead of us. I want to resolve the conflicts between us. Do you have time? I'd like to treat you to a meal."

Wang Baole was slightly confused. This voice transmission from Li Yi was too sudden and unexpected. He not only found it incredulous, but he also began to find it suspicious too. He was of the firm belief that Li Yi was a petty, vengeful person who loved her grudges. Why would she suddenly say something like that?

"Have you been kidnapped? Did my enemies do that? That's not right. My enemies wouldn't kidnap you. You're not Li Yi. Tell me, who the hell are you!"

At that exact moment, inside Zone Eighteen of the Martian Colony City, within the office building of the Martian City's Deputy Governor, Li Yi sat inside an office. She gnashed her teeth as she listened to Wang Baole's voice in the voice transmission ring. After inhaling a few deep breaths, she spoke softly again, trying to make herself sound tired and spent.

"Wang Baole, you've misunderstood my intentions. I..."

Wang Baole ended the transmission abruptly even before she could finish speaking. She stared at the voice transmission ring in her hand before smacking her desk violently.

*That jerk! How dare he hang up on me!* Li Yi was furious. Her chest heaved with anger, and she gnashed her teeth, determination flashing in her eyes.

*I was hesitating a while ago. Now I've made up my mind. It's going to be him! I'm going to use him as the target for mastering my mystic art!* Li Yi inhaled deeply. The reason she had sought Wang Baole out for reconciliation was that she had obtained a mysterious mystic art. The prerequisite for mastering it was extremely strange. It required her to fall in love with the person she hated the most and then break off their romantic relationship. That was the only way to master it.

It was called the Heartless Willow Art!

The mystic art wasn't something found in the White Deer Dao College's records but something the Deputy Governor had given her after she had arrived on Mars and had been appointed his secretary.

She even secretly contacted the college and informed them about the mystic art. The upper echelons of the White Deer Dao College were taken aback and told her to go ahead and master it!

That was why she could set aside her worries and concentrate on practicing the mystic art. She thought long and hard. There were few people she couldn't stand, but amongst them was one man she despised the most—Wang Baole.

### **Chapter 299: Trying to Seduce Me?**

*She's crazy!* Inside the Dao Mountain Mist Academy, Wang Baole ended the transmission abruptly. Li Yi's sudden request for reconciliation smelled fishy. Even an idiot could tell something was wrong.

*They all say that those with big breasts have no brains. Li Yi's breasts aren't big at all, so why is it that she also lacks a brain?* Wang Baole snorted. He thought himself smarter than her. There was no way her sudden kindness was for nothing. Those who were friendly without reason all turned out to be robbers and rapists!

*That can't be right. Is this Li Yi trying to...* Wang Baole's mind was fixated on the image of robbers and rapists. Alarm bells immediately sounded in his head. He took a look at himself in the mirror, and his alarm grew. Li Yi must be lusting after him because of his good looks!

*Where is her sense of shame!* Wang Baole had a serious look on his face. He was both pleased and exasperated and concluded that good looks were as much a blessing as they were a curse. To be so good looking that people longed and lusted after him every moment of his life would be an exasperating and frustrating struggle.

Wang Baole sighed in exasperation as he pulled out a bag of chips. He started munching on his snacks as he reclined in his chair. From time to time, teachers would knock on his door, enter, then present their reports to him. In that manner, half a day passed.

The teachers in the Dao Mountain Mist Academy were divided into male and female teachers. A majority were cultivators, with the lowest cultivation at the peak of the Ancient Martial realm. They had pleasing physiques, and, as teachers of the school, their attire, like the students, was also standardized. It made the view extremely pleasing to the eye.

*Even though there's not much authority in overseeing a school, I still have a few hundred people reporting to me. It's not much different from being a Pavilion Head in a college's Dharmic Armament Pavilion.*

Wang Baole snacked and got his eyeful throughout the rest of the day. The head of the academy's Administrative Office, especially, was a young married woman who wasn't yet thirty years old. Her appearance was passable. Her eyes though were especially beautiful. There seemed to be hooks hidden in them, and every time she looked at Wang Baole, he could feel himself being hooked and slowly reeled in.

He was very pleased with the current state of affairs. He increasingly felt that if the giant tree weren't on Mars, his current situation would have been perfect.

Time passed swiftly, and before long, the sun was setting. As the school day came to an end, the students of the Dao Mountain Mist Academy began to leave for home. They continued their daily

posturing and boarded their extravagant cruisers, and the sounds of cruisers dashing out of the school rose in the air.

The youth from the Trilunaris Corporation, alongside a dozen of his classmates, was one of the first few to leave school. He headed straight for the Battle-axe Hotel. They'd agreed to visit the hotel today and admire the spectacle that was the eleven grand battle-axes.

When nearly half of the student population had gone, Wang Baole left the building and prepared to head back to his residence for cultivation. It was then that an unexpected guest who had been simmering in rage the entire day arrived.

It was Li Yi!

Li Yi was actually quite beautiful. Despite her vanity and her need to carry a mirror wherever she went, she fulfilled the criteria for being a beautiful woman. Her delicate, fair skin and voluptuous figure made her an incredibly charming and attractive woman.

The view of her back was especially striking, with her perky buttocks and her ultra-slim waist. As she stood at the gates of the Dao Mountain Mist Academy, her figure drew the attention of the students who were on their way home. Most of them were young men in their teens and in the prime of their youth. They were at the age of innocence, and their eyes popped out of their heads when they saw Li Yi.

Li Yi witnessed the effects of her charm and was immensely pleased. She pulled out a mirror and gazed into it, and even she was captivated by her own beauty.

She sighed inwardly in wonder at her own beauty...

The female students around her glared and shot daggers from their eyes. They felt like cheap knockouts next to Li Yi. They stared at Li Yi with hostility in their eyes, and a few who were brasher and less shy even started muttering.

"Who is this fox?"

"She's so old. Isn't she embarrassed to step out of her house?"

"What a fat ugly ass!"

Under the unblinking stares of the male students, and amidst the hostile looks from the female students, Li Yi stuck her chin up high and raised her voice, shouting towards the Dao Mountain Mist Academy.

"Wang Baole, come out here!" Her Foundation Establishment realm cultivation boosted the volume of her voice and made it sound like thunder. It rumbled and spread outwards. The surrounding students froze in surprise, a look of curiosity and interest immediately appeared on their faces.

Wang Baole had just walked out of the office building when he heard her voice. He looked over and, past the crowds of departing students, saw Li Yi standing outside the school gates.

*She resorted to wearing such skimpy clothes just so she can win me over and have my beautiful body to herself? She actually came looking for me?* Wang Baole instantly went on high alert. He touched his

round face and smacked his forehead. He was troubled and realized he needed to end this farce, once and for all. He headed for the school gates.

Wang Baole arrived at the gates. He ignored the students who had turned curious onlookers and didn't give Li Yi a chance to speak. He spoke in a serious voice.

"Li Yi, I know I have a great physique and a handsome face. I'm not only one of the Federation's hundred seedlings, but I'm also unrivaled amongst cultivators at the same cultivation realm. My potential and genius surpass everyone in the entire Federation. Even the Federation President said that I'm a prodigy, but I'm not an unprincipled, wanton person with no standards!"

The students around him widened their eyes when they heard what Wang Baole had just said. They stared at Wang Baole with incredulity, then turned and looked at Li Yi. They couldn't believe what they were seeing and hearing.

"Is Dean Wang praising himself? Is he turning her down?"

"That's just too shameless..."

"The missy called Li Yi didn't even say she likes Dean Wang!"

Li Yi was equally taken aback. She almost couldn't control her temper and was on the verge of blowing up. Wang Baole's words, when taken the other way, seemed to imply that she was the one who was unprincipled, wanton, and had no standards!

She soon fell into uncertainty and doubt, though. While what Wang Baole had said was indeed infuriating, it did reflect her true intentions to a certain extent. After all, she had come here so that she could use Wang Baole to practice her mystic art. She took a deep breath.

"Wang Baole, I..."

"You don't have to speak another word!" He waved his hand. His eyes were filled with exasperation and frustration. They swept down Li Yi's face and her well-endowed figure before he coughed and continued.

"I know what you want. Alright, I hope this will kill whatever ideas you have in your head." Wang Baole sighed and took a big step forward. The students around them watched, flabbergasted, as Wang Baole came right up to a lost and confused Li Yi, opened his arms wide and pulled her into a tight embrace.

Li Yi's eyes widened immediately. She was about to struggle her way out of the embrace and give Wang Baole an instinctive smack when she remembered her plan and her objective. She sucked in a breath of air. Her body trembled, but she reined in her feelings of intense dislike and disgust and tried to control herself.

The scene roused a commotion amongst the students who hadn't yet left school. They found the sight of Li Yi and Wang Baole together unbelievable. This was beyond their wildest imagination...

"My god, are my eyes seeing this? Our dean is just too amazing!"

"Such a pretty missy is actually actively pursuing..."

“There’s no justice in this world!”

As commotion stirred amongst the student body, Wang Baole copped a feel as he hugged Li Yi. It felt kind of nice. He wanted to continue but realized he didn’t want Li Yi to take advantage of him, so he released her hastily and said coolly.

“You’ve already hugged me. You can go now.”

Li Yi was cursing in her heart. She almost started to regret her decision, but she thought of the mystic art and gritted her teeth. She was going to wing it. She lifted her head and tried to soften her gaze. She parted her lips and was about to speak.

It was then that Wang Baole’s voice transmission ring suddenly vibrated. He lowered his head and checked the transmission. Anger instantly flashed across his face, his eyes burning with fury.

*Tearing down my battle-axes?*

The sender of the transmission was Xu Zhenjing of the Battle-axe Hotel. His voice sounded anxious in the transmission as he informed Wang Baole that Li Wuchen of the Fire Spirit Academy had led quite a big group of his students to the hotel. They intended to tear down the battle-axes. He couldn’t hold them back for long and hence had sent out this call for help.

*Li Wuchen, what a foolhardy idiot you’ve become!* Wang Baole was furious. He was about to charge off when his eyes glanced over at Li Yi, landing on Li Yi’s voluptuous body. He threw a casual remark over his shoulder.

“Li Yi, I know you’re lusting after my great looks. I can give you an opportunity to share a bath with me. I’ll acknowledge your sincerity if you buy me one of every snack available on Mars!”

Wang Baole ignored the subsequent, louder commotion that stirred in the student body as well as Li Yi’s widened eyes and her shuddering body. She appeared to be extremely agitated by what he had said. He turned, retrieved and boarded his cruiser, then sped off towards the Battle-axe Hotel.

### **Chapter 300: A Disagreement**

As Wang Baole sped off, an uproar exploded outside the Dao Mountain Mist Academy’s school gates. Not only were the students engaging in a heated debate, but the teachers also started discussing amongst themselves as well. The dean stood at his office’s window and observed the commotion with interest for a long while.

Li Yi was growing mad with rage. She sorely regretted her actions, but her mind was determined. Once she had made up her mind, she wouldn’t change it easily. The challenge inherent in her mission seemed to have exceeded her expectations, but Wang Baole’s stare at her didn’t escape her notice. She was confident she would succeed.

*That disgusting fatty. I, Li Yi, am going to use you to cultivate my mystic art!*

At present, Wang Baole was standing in his cruiser and heading towards the Battle-axe Hotel at full speed. He was equally furious and marveling at his own charms.

*Hah, she got so excited just with a hug from me, and became so agitated when I said I was going to give her a chance to prove herself...* Wang Baole sniggered as a cold glint flashed across his eyes.

*There's something wrong with this Li Yi. She used to dislike me intensely, but just a moment ago, she was actually willing to tolerate my embrace and taunting words... she must be plotting something nefarious.* Wang Baole narrowed his eyes. What he had done earlier might have seemed like harassment on his part, but, in reality, he had been testing her.

He had found Li Yi's request for reconciliation and her sudden appearance at the school suspicious. After his little test earlier, he had confirmed his suspicions, though he had kept them to himself.

Wang Baole set the matter aside and steeled himself. The cruiser dashed at top speed towards the Battle-axe Hotel, drawing nearer and nearer the hotel.

At the same time, outside the Battle-axe Hotel, many students from both the Fire Spirit Academy and the Dao Mountain Mist Academy stood in confrontation against each other. There was tension in the air. It felt as if a fight could break out anytime.

"Jin Duozhi <sup>1</sup>, your name doesn't fit you at all. You should be called Piglet <sup>2</sup> Jin!"

"Sun Chao, you dare fight me for a cruiser I had my eyes on. I'll kill you today!"

"Li He, you're all words and no action. My brother kicked your brother's ass a few days ago. Today, I'm gonna kick your ass!"

There were more than a hundred students gathered outside the hotel. Most of them were from the Fire Spirit Academy, and there were about two dozen students from the Dao Mountain Mist Academy. The latter group was all bruised and beaten up.

Despite being cornered and trapped, they remained brave. Curses and insults continued flying. The competitive nature of the two academies had influenced the attitudes of their students as well, and both groups developed an intense dislike towards the other.

Many students amongst both groups might come from the same political force. However, even within a single political force, there existed multiple factions. The conflicts within the groups were endless.

Jin Duozhi and his group of friends hadn't come to the hotel with the intention of stirring up trouble. They had originally wanted to take a look at the battle-axes. Their bumping into the students from the Fire Spirit Academy was pure coincidence and highly unfortunate. What had started as an exchange of insults spiraled into a fight.

With the Fire Spirit Academy located just across the road, more than a hundred students from said academy had soon rushed over. The hotel staff had observed the escalating tensions and were about to step in and appease both parties, but that was when Li Wuchen had seen his opportunity and exploited the chaotic situation between the two groups of students. He had stepped in and immediately destroyed three battle-axes!

This had resulted in a further escalation of the conflict. There was no end in sight.

Before Li Wuchen had realized the hotel had changed hands, he might have been concerned about the backlash from the Trilunaris Corporation when he destroyed the battle-axes. However, since he had

found out that the hotel was no longer under the name of the Trilunaris Corporation, he no longer feared the consequences of his actions. He decimated the battle-axes fearlessly.

He continued his attacks during the entire confrontation, and deafening explosions thundered in the air as all ten newly minted battle-axes were destroyed.

He continued striking the last standing battle-axe—the original battle-axe that the Battle-axe Hotel had erected. It seemed to be made from a different material, as it withstood his attacks without immediately being blown apart. However, the cracks on its surface grew with each new blow.

The hotel's security guards were mostly True Breath realm cultivators. They were no match for Li Wuchen at all. They could not stop him and could only watch and fret at the sidelines.

"All hail the mighty Dean Li. Let's tear down this Battle-axe Hotel!"

"All hail the powerful Dean Li. Haha!"

Shattered stone bits exploded in the air as Li Wuchen continued his onslaught. More cracks appeared on the battle-axe. Jin Duozhi and his friends started panicking.

"You guys are too much. Our dean is Wang Baole. He'll be here anytime soon!"

"Haven't you heard of Wang Baole!?"

The students from the Fire Spirit Academy burst out laughing. They stared at Jin Duozhi and his friends with scorn, and a few even taunted them.

"Of course we have. Do you mean that fatty? Our Dean Li will kick his ass if he dares turn up today. He'll swell to twice his size!"

"That's right. I heard that this Dean Wang of yours might look powerful, but he's actually a coward! You too, Jin Duozhi. You're another pig head. Who exchanges a hotel for a puppet? Are you stupid?"

"I heard the Deputy Governor doesn't like him very much. My father works for the Deputy Governor. If he dares to show up today, I'll report him to my father!"

The quarreling persisted. The taunting of the Fire Spirit Academy students, the raging retorts from the Dao Mountain Mist Academy students, and the sounds of Li Wuchen blasting at the battle-axe continued. Then, suddenly, the piercing shrill of a speeding cruiser approached from the distance.

A furious roar exploded from the cruiser even before the cruiser drew near.

"Li Wuchen, you have a death wish!"

Wang Baole dashed out from the cruiser as his voice rang in the air. He was so fast that he shot past his cruiser. He crossed a hundred yards with a single bound, shocking those who saw him approaching. He took another two steps and appeared right before Li Wuchen. His fist flew forward.

Li Wuchen's pupils contracted. He retreated immediately, and his fingers formed rapid hand seals. Instantly, a drop of water appeared before him. It was clear and pristine, and it formed a defensive barrier that met Wang Baole's angry fist head on.

An explosion thundered, sending tremors through the earth and a shudder through the heavens. Li Wuchen was alarmed. The curtain of water before him couldn't withstand the power of Wang Baole's blow. It shattered instantly. Li Wuchen watched as Wang Baole charged at him with murder in his eyes. At that precise moment, a snort rang out from the Fire Spirit Academy. Seven to eight figures dashed out towards them.

Amongst them was a man in his middle age. His cultivation was at the late-stage Foundation Establishment realm, clearly considerably higher than the rest. He exuded an aura superior to the rest, one that was fearsome and carried a hint of arrogance.

This man... was the dean of the Fire Spirit Academy. The rest were teachers from the same academy. They were all support Li Wuchen had gathered since Li Wuchen had an idea of how powerful Wang Baole was. Much of what he knew was from hearsay, but while he had never witnessed Wang Baole in actual battle, he knew that Wang Baole was a powerful opponent.

They had agreed to lend a hand because Li Wuchen had requested their help. Another reason was that they found the idea of eleven battle-axes horrifying as well. The most important reason was the conflict and competition that existed between the two schools. They wanted to use this opportunity to establish their superiority.

So what if you were newly appointed? With the Dao Mountain Mist Academy dean advancing in age, the Dao Mountain Mist Academy was no longer performing as well as it had before. The Fire Spirit Academy should not be one of two elites' academies on Mars, but it should be seen as the only elites' academy on Mars; It should be recognized as the best academy on the planet!

Their objective was to establish and prove their superiority. They wanted Wang Baole to lower his head in submission whenever he saw anyone from the Fire Spirit Academy in the future. The Fire Spirit Academy dean had asked around for information on Wang Baole's fighting capabilities. He knew that Wang Baole had avoided late-stage Foundation Establishment realm cultivators in the Mystic Luna Realm and had chosen to teleport them away instead. This boosted his confidence.

As he drew near, the dean of the Fire Spirit Academy thundered.

"Scram!"

The loud roar traveled swiftly through the air and surged towards Wang Baole, who had intended to go after Li Wuchen, in the form of an aural attack.

Li Wuchen burst out in laughter. He stopped retreating and instead, started to charge at Wang Baole instead. They rushed at Wang Baole from two flanks!

"You really think I can't hold my own against a late-stage Foundation Establishment realm opponent?" Wang Baole thundered as a murderous rage burned in his eyes. He raised his right hand and summoned his seventh-grade Dharmic Armament saber, then, he slashed towards the approaching Fire Spirit Academy dean!

As the blade swept through the air, a black tornado rose around him. It transformed into a black crocodile. As the crocodile howled, the green lotus inside Wang Baole swayed violently. Waves of

intense spirit energy erupted inside his body. They augmented Wang Baole's cultivation and strengthened his physical body to the very limits of its capacity.

Everything culminated in that very moment. Wang Baole's roar drowned out the Fire Spirit Academy dean's. His overwhelming presence rose to the sky as his blade descended from the heavens. The heavens changed. Everything came to a standstill!

Li Wuchen reeled back in shock and terror. The other teachers from the Fire Spirit Academy were equally dumbstruck. The Fire Spirit Academy dean's eyes widened as an overpowering sense of danger exploded in his head. It was like a sudden tsunami that threatened to drag him under!

"That's impossible!" Amidst the shocked gasps, before everyone's eyes, Wang Baole descended from the sky in a tornado, the sharp light glimmering off his blade hundreds of feet long. It sliced through the heavens!