

Chapter 401: The Little Donkey's Persistence

Within the past two weeks, besides the three autonomous zones, the construction of the remaining city had gone on as per usual. However, everyone had their eyes on the battle between the autonomous zones and Wang Baole. As a result, no one noticed the strange new face in the new city.

Of course, even if there had been no such fight, this additional presence wouldn't have been discovered. After all, while there hadn't been a mass influx of new residents to the city, the current city population had already exceeded two hundred million people.

One person to such a vast city was akin to a grain of sand to a vast desert.

That was especially so when this person was adept at disguising his looks and concealing his presence. Perhaps... his cultivation was of such a high and unfathomable level, resulting in his presence not being easily detected.

At present, in the new city zone under Jin Duoming's charge, within one of its alleys, there was a young cultivator dressed in blue robes conversing happily with someone he had just gotten to know but had nevertheless become good friends with.

"Brother Jiang, the person you're talking about, is it our City Lord Wang? He's an important figure. He's really amazing!" The cultivator beside the blue-robed young man seemed to have drank quite a bit of wine. The man next to him said something. He laughed and replied.

"City Lord Wang graduated from the Ethereal Dao College, one of the four Dao Colleges. He progressed up the ranks swiftly. He is the true nobody who ascended up the ranks, step by step, to reach where he is today!"

The blue-robed young man smiled and nodded as he listened to the other speak. He didn't say much himself. They walked further and further away into the distance. His partner didn't realize that there was a fire burning deep inside the blue-robed man's eyes. It was like the Dark Fire, burning strong without signs of extinguishing.

His partner also didn't know that this young man in blue robes whom he had just befriended wasn't someone from the new city. What he was seeing wasn't the latter's true form.

Perhaps, what he should really look like, was a figure covered in black robes, from head to toe...

They walked further into the distance. An hour passed. Suddenly... a black figure dashed from afar into this quiet alley. It revealed itself as it neared. It was the donkey!

Nobody in the city had noticed the strangeness of this blue-robed young man, but the faint scent that it exuded didn't escape the donkey, whose obsession with food had reached perverse extremes.

From the initial construction of the new city zone to its current transformation into a new city, the donkey had been seemingly wandering around, leaving behind random and indiscernible tracks. In fact, it had been searching for the food that it had eaten previously and couldn't get out of its mind.

But the food was cunning. The donkey had been searching for it for a very long time but hadn't been able to find it. It didn't give up though. It continued to persevere. Finally, today, it caught a scent similar to that of the food. It was slightly different, but seemed to originate from the same source!

It had raced over excitedly. It sniffed around in the alley, seemingly surprised and confused as to why the scents were similar and yet different. It didn't think too much about it though. It swallowed visibly and, with eyes shining, it continued searching...

The donkey wanted the food all to itself. It wasn't going to let Wang Baole know about its discovery, not that Wang Baole had time to waste on the donkey anyways.

From the way Wang Baole saw it, it was good that the donkey was out and about. At least it was taking care of its own meals. Else, if it had stuck religiously to his side, the thought of its bottomless pit of a stomach and how it never seemed satisfied after a meal might drive Wang Baole into slaughtering it once and for all.

As a result, he only checked up on the donkey's condition daily to ensure that its life signs remained stable. Besides that, Wang Baole didn't pay it much attention. He would then leave his office and return to his residence.

Wang Baole seldom visited his new residence in the new city since he had an entire office building to himself. Be it seclusion or refining Dharmic Artifacts—he had a designated space for it. There were also numerous cultivators and employees from various departments in the building, as well as more female cultivators than male cultivators, which made it very pleasing to the eye.

However, Wang Baole finally felt slightly inappropriate for staying such a length of time in the office. Especially when it came to studying Dharmic Armaments and their refinement—if something were to happen and resulted in a building collapse, it would adversely affect others.

After some consideration, Wang Baole decided to continue his study of Dharmic Armaments at his own residence. His residence had been constructed and allocated alongside the other buildings in the new city, and it wasn't far from his office building. It was located in an isolated area that was heavily guarded to ensure the safety of the residents.

He wasn't the only resident in the area. It had been divided up into lots for ten separate residences.

Besides him, those who were eligible to stay there were the other mayors as well as Deputy City Lord Li Wan'er. However, like him, the rest seldom stayed here.

At present, Wang Baole returned to his residence. He activated the array formation to isolate the area from external disturbances and interruptions and began his daily training. Through his daily training and the augmentation from the Dark Qi, his cultivation had advanced rapidly. Within a brief span of time, he had reached the peak of the late-stage Foundation Establishment realm and wasn't far from the perfected stage.

His rate of progress made Wang Baole immensely happy. He felt that reaching the Core Formation realm within three years wasn't an impossible goal. Once he reached the Core Formation realm, even should there be something wrong with his Military Warrant, he would have a sufficiently strong cultivation to protect himself while he advanced further in his career!

Core Formation realm cultivator and Dharmic Armament master—if I possess both criteria... I can even try to fight for a Primary Rank Two Noble! Wang Baole raised his head proudly. He could sense that he was inching closer to his goal of becoming the Federation President. If he could just work slightly harder, it would be within reach.

Federation President! The thought of that title excited Wang Baole. He took some time to calm himself down and continue his training. It went on for a few days before he finally ended his meditation and began his study on Dharmic Armaments.

With regard to the Spirit Integration and Heavenly Evocation required for a Dharmic Armament, Wang Baole thought the former an easier step to address. The important step was the latter. However, he still had no idea how to go about doing it after studying it for so long. He didn't lose patience though. He knew that many challenges existed in the refinement of Dharmic Armaments. He just had to go through them one at a time.

Wang Baole continued his seclusion. Besides the donkey, the rest of the new city carried on with life as usual. The construction of the autonomous zones picked up pace. The new city's look changed from day to day. It began to resemble a great capital city as construction continued and improvements were made to perfect the design.

During this period, the donkey was busy searching through the entire new city. Its obsession with food made it forget exhaustion. It even resorted to staking out certain areas a couple of times. There were even a few times it narrowly missed its target, but that didn't lessen its enthusiasm.

There was another person in the new city who had first been relieved, then had slowly grown mad, and finally ended up gnashing his teeth.

This person was Wen Huai... the cause of his gnashing of teeth was Liu Daobin. He could do nothing to Liu Daobin, as he had been sent by Wang Baole to keep an eye on him. Liu Daobin was good at his job. He immediately took over the disciplinary aspects of the zone, and he was experienced and familiar with his work.

Wen Huai was beginning to suspect that Liu Daobin had been in this line of work since he was a young boy. He wasn't wrong. Since Liu Daobin had entered college, he had been in this business, working for Wang Baole. He had been doing this while Wang Baole had been around. After Wang Baole left, he had continued with his work. He was the master of this trade.

Under the masterful supervisor Liu Daobin's watchful eyes, everyone in Wen Huai's new zone was in danger. There were even signs of Wen Huai being overthrown and replaced. There had been times when Wen Huai had been simmering with frustration, with no outlet for his venting. He had almost imploded then.

He wasn't the only one in this state. Similar troubles faced Fang Jing and Chen Mu in their respective autonomous zones. They didn't have it as bad as Wen Huai, though, as not everyone had the same kind of expertise as Liu Daobin.

Wen Huai and Fang Jing were reminded of how difficult Wang Baole could be and chose to swallow their frustrations. Chen Mu, on the other hand, couldn't take it lying down. He felt resentful towards Wang Baole. At the same time, he was also deeply displeased with his fiancée, Li Wan'er.

He couldn't help but think about the legendary dubious recording of the two. If it had been in the past, he might have been able to set the matter aside and not think too much about it. However, at present, simmering with resentment and aggrievement, his thoughts began to linger on the matter. He grew increasingly uncomfortable with the thing and decided to contact Zhuo Yixian again and ask for the video.

"Zhuo Yixian, I know you have a younger brother called Zhuo Yifan. He's a War Soldier your family has been grooming for you. You need to subdue him. I heard he's recently gone slightly out of control..."

"I can help you with your problem. What you need to do is to hand over that video in its entirety to me!"

Chapter 402: Counter!

Zhuo Yixian, who had lost the fight on Mars and returned to his family clan, considered Chen Mu's proposal seriously. His eyes flashed. He hadn't released the video earlier and had said what he had said. On the surface, it seemed like good intentions on his part, but his true intentions had been to instigate a fierce battle between Chen Mu and Wang Baole.

He would be happy regardless of who lost. While he hated Wang Baole tremendously, there were unavoidable tensions and conflict between the Zhuo family and the Chen family, despite them both belonging to the Five Generation Sky Clan, a single entity with unified interests.

Many from the Zhuo family had been harboring desires to push the Chen family off the pedestal and take over their position of authority.

That was why Zhuo Yixian had done the opposite of what he had wanted in order to lower Chen Mu's guard. He knew that Chen Mu would continue to obsess over the video as long as he couldn't view it. Many a time, a grudge wasn't formed directly but through such obsessing. It was like the devil's gradual invasion into one's mind. That was how archenemies were formed.

But Zhuo Yixian knew that Chen Mu was no fool. Even though the latter might not know what he was doing, it wouldn't take him long to realize Zhuo Yixian's tactics. When that happened, Zhuo Yixian would be placed in a more passive position.

The conditions of exchange that Chen Mu was offering now were in Zhuo Yixian's favor. The only thing he was worried about was what Wang Baole would think. In the past, he wouldn't have cared about Wang Baole's views or opinions, but Wang Baole was now the lord of a city. He was a Primary Rank Three Noble. His status was vastly different from that in the past.

Even with his current status, he is still at the Foundation Establishment realm. He can't fight his way into the Zhuo family. Even if he is unhappy, he will only vent his anger on Chen Mu. This has nothing to do with me! The gears in Zhuo Yixian's head spun furiously. He soon reached his decision.

"Deal!"

In the new Martian city, within the autonomous zone, Chen Mu narrowed his eyes slightly and sneered after he had reached an accord with Zhuo Yixian.

Zhuo Yixian is a man with great ambitions but insufficient talent. Does he think he can really fool me with such petty tricks? An icy glint flashed in Chen Mu's eyes. He had seen through Zhuo Yixian's attempt to bait him, and to add fuel to the fire, but he didn't care. He would find some way to get back at Zhuo Yixian in the future. What mattered most at present was to take a look at the video. That would determine his attitude towards Li Wan'er.

Part of it had to do with a man's pride. Another part was because he was worried about the negative impact that would arise if Li Wan'er switched sides at the most critical moment.

Filled with various concerns and thoughts, Chen Mu deliberated for a moment. Then, he immediately contacted his people inside the family clan and began a hunt for Zhuo Yifan!

Chen Mu's reach and power might have been controlled and restrained on Mars. He hadn't had the chance to display it before Wang Baole. But on Earth, as the eldest son of the Chen family, even if he wasn't guaranteed to be the heir, the connections and power he possessed weren't to be underestimated.

Through his utilizing of his connections, he was able to locate where Zhuo Yifan was very quickly...

A week passed. Wang Baole, who had been meditating in his residence and studying the Dharmic Armament's Heavenly Evocation technique, suddenly received a voice transmission from the Sect Lord of the Ethereal Dao College.

As the sound of the voice transmission rang next to his ear, Wang Baole split his concentration between answering it while trying his best to control and manipulate the glowing sphere of spirit energy he had conjured. This was the result of his studying the Dharmic Armament—an attempt to direct the energies of heaven and earth by using his own Spirit Qi as a medium.

"Sect Lord, what's the matter? I'm refining Dharmic Armaments at the moment." Wang Baole manipulated the glowing Spirit Qi sphere while bragging. He could imagine the Sect Lord's surprise and what he was going to say after hearing Wang Baole's words.

Wang Baole didn't receive what he had expected. The Sect Lord seemed not to have heard what Wang Baole said regarding his refining Dharmic Armaments. His voice was deep and serious. It was like thunder booming in Wang Baole's ears.

"Baole, there's something I have to tell you... Yesterday evening, Zhuo Yifan should have returned to the college after completing his mission, but he was ambushed and injured heavily. Coincidentally, there was a party of merchants from the Five Generation Sky Clan's Zhuo family nearby. Because of Zhuo Yifan's status, he was saved by the merchant party..."

When the Sect Lord said that, emotions rippled in Wang Baole. The glowing Spirit Qi sphere before him grew unstable and, with a loud bang, exploded instantly. It formed a sudden energy wave that surged outward, hitting the walls. His hair was swept by the force, and a cold light shone in his eyes.

"And?" Wang Baole's voice had gone deeper. He sat, unmoving.

"He was sent directly to the Zhuo family residence by the party... we have not heard from him since. We immediately contacted the Zhuo family when we heard about this, but Zhuo Yifan is from the Zhuo family, after all, the college isn't in the position to make any comments. The Grand Supreme Elder has

gone out traveling and isn't in the college. I know your relationship with Zhuo Yifan is close, that's why I've called to inform you."

"But don't worry too much about this. Zhuo Yifan is a disciple of our Ethereal Dao College. I will think of something to get the Zhuo family to release him as soon as possible... if you have anyone who can help out, you might want to ask around for favors as well. This might speed things up." The Sect Lord ended the voice transmission after finishing. He knew that Wang Baole wouldn't simply sit around and wait after finding out about this.

If Wang Baole weren't a Primary Rank Three Noble and the lord of a city, if he didn't enjoy his current reputation and fame, the Ethereal Dao College's Sect Lord wouldn't have told him what he just did. But now, in the Sect Lord's eyes, Wang Baole's status and position meant he was akin to the highest-ranking official of an independent region. Should he step in, he would be able to exert considerable influence on this matter.

He shared the same conclusions with the Sect Lord. In fact, his own conclusions might be more extreme. After the Sect Lord ended the voice transmission, Wang Baole's breathing quickened slightly. The icy glint in his eyes transformed into murder. He stood up suddenly. The cultivation inside his body started churning, and the walls around him turned to ice.

Zhuo Yixian! The expression on Wang Baole's face was dark and stormy. He was like a volcano on the verge of eruption. Zhuo Yifan was his good friend. He was a member of the Adonis Association. He was his brother, whom he had survived death with. In any case, anyone could tell that something wrong and suspicious was going on.

Wang Baole knew what Zhuo Yifan meant to Zhuo Yixian. He was the War Soldier that the Zhuo family had groomed for him. However, after entering the Ethereal Dao College and befriending Wang Baole, the wheels of Zhuo Yifan's fate had been influenced and had shifted. This had led to everything exceeding Zhuo Yixian's control.

At present, Zhuo Yifan, who had been sent back to the Zhuo family, must be in grave danger. Wang Baole knew that even though he was a Primary Rank Three Noble, and the City Lord of the new Martian city, his cultivation wasn't at the Core Formation realm. It would be hard for him to make the Zhuo family budge...

Even though the four Dao Colleges were strong, the Ethereal Dao College wasn't the leader of the group. This meant the Ethereal Dao College was in an awkward position. In addition, while the Sect Lord of the Ethereal Dao College was a good person and Wang Baole respected him tremendously, he increasingly sensed how true Lin You's earlier assessment of the Sect Lord was. He began to agree that the Sect Lord's character was slightly too mild... He lacked decisiveness and forcefulness!

Wang Baole continued thinking about this. He took a deep breath. He thought of someone who could perfectly counter and subvert the power of the Zhuo family. He pulled out his voice transmission ring, and he immediately contacted Kong Dao and summoned the latter to see him!

Kong Dao soon appeared inside Wang Baole's residence. When he arrived, he noted the icy glint in Wang Baole's eyes. He looked at the walls. He had a considering look on his face, but he didn't speak. He stood and stared at Wang Baole, waiting for the latter to speak.

“Brother Kong, I have a personal matter that needs to rely on your family background, as well as the military power of both Mars and Earth. Please let me know if you’re not comfortable helping me with this matter,” Wang Baole stared at Kong Dao and said seriously.

“Say it.” When Kong Dao heard those words, his pupils contracted. He didn’t dodge the issue and instead replied in all seriousness as well.

“Go to the Zhuo family residence. Get Zhuo Yifan safely out and bring him here to Mars!”

Upon hearing the words “Zhuo family”, Kong Dao pondered for a moment. He remembered how Wang Baole had saved his life and gotten him a promotion. Decisiveness flashed in his eyes, and he nodded.

“I can get this done! I’ll leave immediately. I’ll make a trip personally to Earth and to the Zhuo family residence, and bring him back!”

“You have my gratitude!” It was during moments of crisis that one could tell whether someone was a friend. Kong Dao didn’t hesitate in giving his answer. Wang Baole was moved. He cupped his fists and bowed deeply.

Kong Dao did the same. He turned and took his leave. Then, he quickly activated the control the military had over the Great Martian Array Formation and teleported straight to the main Martian city. He boarded a space cruiser and headed straight for Earth!

Kong Dao’s expression was stern prior to boarding the space cruiser. He knew the challenge he would face in getting this matter done, but he also knew that Wang Baole had never asked anything of him. That was why he had decided that he must do a good job!

As he deliberated, Kong Dao turned on his voice transmission ring and sent a voice transmission to the President’s Office, where his godfather was...

Chapter 403: By the Order of City Lord Wang!

Kong Dao respected his godfather Duan Muque from the bottom of his heart. His primal, beast-like instincts could sense that Duan Muque indeed was like a father to him, hiding his concern and care for him in his heart beneath his stern fatherly demeanor. He believed his instincts. Even so, he didn’t dare make requests of him easily.

That was why he had contacted the President’s Office instead to inform the office that he was going to make a trip out of Mars. He submitted his request to Earth’s administrative office. The person taking his voice transmission was a woman with a very melodic, soothing voice. He felt it vaguely familiar, but he couldn’t place the voice and whom it belonged to. He didn’t think much further on it. After ending the transmission, he contacted the Martian military.

After a series of preparations, when Kong Dao finally boarded the space cruiser headed for Earth, he had more than three hundred men with him. They were all cultivators from the Martian military. Their cultivations were at the Foundation Establishment realm; they were no weaklings. The Martian military also dispatched a Core Formation realm priest to escort the party and guard Kong Dao.

After all, Kong Dao was the Martian military's representative in the new city. He also came from a unique background, and his reason for visiting Earth was because of Wang Baole. All these resulted in the Martian military's enthusiastic support.

As a safeguard, Kong Dao had also contacted the military on Earth. He had everything prepared. When his cruiser landed on Earth, he saw a party of three hundred sent by Earth's military awaiting him. They were also all at the Foundation Establishment realm.

They had been instructed to support Kong Dao and complete the mission!

There were three people in the team who caught Kong Dao's attention. Amongst them was a young woman. She was dressed in a smart uniform and looked sharp. Her extraordinary beauty sent the hearts of everyone around her racing. However, the purity in her eyes and her natural aura inspired shame and sheepishness in those around her. It was as if all impure thoughts fled before her sight.

This woman was... Zhao Yameng!

She was the assistant to the President's Office. Her presence here sent a clear message about the Federation President's attitude towards this matter. Behind her were two elders whose cultivation levels were extremely high and at the Core Formation realm.

Kong Dao wasn't unfamiliar with these two elders. He knew that the Federation had a Priest Association which had recruited many Core Formation realm cultivators. These cultivators reported to the Federation President. The presence of these two elders also spoke volumes about the Federation President's stance.

Kong Dao was heartened and excited by the support that he had gotten from the military on Earth and from his godfather, but he still harbored slight uncertainty. The support that they were showing exceeded his expectations. He had thought that his godfather would simply give his approval. He himself had made separate preparations for that. It seemed that he had no use for them now.

Six hundred Foundation Establishment realm cultivators and three Core Formation realm cultivators—this was a force none of the political forces in the Federation would like to trifle with. The political forces behind this small army were also forces not to be underestimated.

The Zhuo family was indeed shocked by the sight of the army. Zhuo Yixian, especially, began to grow nervous. Kong Dao had brought his army to their home. There was a complete absence of tact in his words. They were blunt and direct to the extreme!

"I am Kong Dao, Martian military colonel, a mayor of Divine Armament New City, and a Secondary Rank Three Noble. I am here by the order of the City Lord of Divine Armament New City, Wang Baole. I have come to take Zhuo Yifan away. I seek the cooperation of the Zhuo family to release him immediately!"

The master of the Zhuo family and many others hadn't known about this fiasco involving Zhuo Yifan. They had only found out about Zhuo Yixian's deal with Chen Mu after Zhuo Yixian had imprisoned Zhuo Yifan. Regardless, what had been done was done, there was nothing more to be said about it. Despite the current complications that had arisen, the Zhuo family was still a noble family with a reputation to consider. There was no way they would simply do what others ordered them to and release someone just because someone else said so. In accordance with the rules of society, there should have been a

series of negotiation before both parties reached a satisfactory agreement. It would have taken a few days before a settlement was reached.

As a result, when faced with such a forceful Kong Dao, the elder who was in charge of handling this matter on behalf of the Zhuo family immediately refused to comply with Kong Dao's orders coldly.

As soon as he made his refusal, before Kong Dao could make things difficult for him, a quietly angry Zhao Yameng chose to strike. Her attack couldn't be considered fierce, but the Core Formation realm priests behind her had struck at the same time, their cultivation erupting and heightening the tension and chaos of the situation instantly.

The Zhuo family, who had intended to maintain a forceful attitude, immediately softened their stance. The elder from the Zhuo family was clearly wary of Zhao Yameng. Kong Dao found that curious but couldn't care to think further on it. Before he acted, he sent a voice transmission to Wang Baole asking his permission.

After all, things would change once he gave the orders to attack. He wanted to know how Wang Baole would make his choices.

Wang Baole had been following the matter closely. After receiving the voice transmission and getting a clear picture of what was going on, he didn't hesitate. His voice over the voice transmission ring was ice cold.

"Do it! If anything happens, I'll take full responsibility!"

Upon hearing the decisiveness in Wang Baole's voice, a murderous intent flashed in Kong Dao's eyes. He immediately gave the orders to strike, and a fight was about to break out at any moment now. The Zhuo family didn't fear battle, but they knew they would lose. Their enemy had Kong Dao, had Zhao Yameng, had the military; they had three Core Formation realm cultivators who had their own political backing. The Zhuo family was at a disadvantage.

The Federation President, the Federation military, the Martian Colony Governor, and Wang Baole... damn it, Zhuo Yixian, are you trying to get the entire family clan killed? At that moment of intense pressure and tension, the head of the Zhuo family took in a deep breath. He made a choice for general stability and stopped both parties from fighting. He didn't make a personal appearance, but he had someone bring Zhuo Yifan out.

However, the same moment that Zhuo Yifan appeared outside, a surge of late-stage Core Formation realm cultivation and the spirit energy of a ninth-grade Dharmic Armament erupted from the Zhuo family's backyard. The sudden eruption of the spirit energies almost transformed the heavens and earth. Thunder rumbled and formed an overpowering presence in the air. It surrounded Zhao Yameng, Kong Dao, and their people.

It appeared that it would be an easy feat for this Core Formation realm cultivator of the Zhuo family to wipe them all out. However, he had only given them a slight taste of his power before his presence disappeared. It was both an attempt to terrify and shock, and a message to everyone watching—the Zhuo family was handing Zhuo Yifan over not because they were afraid, but because they placed the greater good in higher priority!

As they handed Zhuo Yifan over, the elder who had been charged with handling this matter also tactfully explained that they weren't the ones responsible for the current situation. Someone else had brought Zhuo Yifan to them.

The matter could be said to have reached an end. It had been a storm that had rumbled loudly but had yielded petty raindrops. Those who had been observing the affair weren't surprised, as anyone would submit when faced with the combined force of these political forces.

Zhuo Yifan looked pale, but Wang Baole's rescue had been in time. He was slightly injured but generally unharmed. He was clearly in low spirits, however. The last shred of familial feelings he had for the Zhuo family seemed to have vanished.

No one knew what he had gone through during his brief imprisonment. He didn't say a single word. Even Zhao Yameng couldn't get anything out of him. It was clear though, that Zhuo Yifan had gone through something tremendous during these few days, and that it had been a huge blow to him.

During the silent trip back, Kong Dao suggested that Zhuo Yifan make a trip to Mars, but Zhuo Yifan shook his head.

"Help me tell Baole that I'm not going to Mars. I'm going to the Moon. I'll be training there, and I won't return until I reach the Core Formation realm!" Zhuo Yifan said that with stubbornness and determination in his eyes.

Kong Dao sighed when he heard Zhuo Yifan's decision. Before he left, he said suddenly, "You can consider making a trip to the Sea of Beasts. If you really wish to seek a breakthrough in your cultivation by putting yourself in extreme danger, the Sea of Beasts would be a more suitable training ground compared to the Moon!" Then, Kong Dao cupped his fists and saluted Zhao Yameng, turned, and led his men away.

He had once admired and felt something for Zhao Yameng. However, at present, he had a clearer understanding of his heart. What he desired was to embark on a journey to become a powerful cultivator. It was a harsh and challenging path, and he couldn't afford too many distractions and commitments. That was why he had chosen to keep these feelings deep in his heart and turn away from Zhao Yameng.

He didn't immediately leave Earth for Mars. After splitting up with Zhuo Yifan, he began an investigation on the Zhuo Yifan incident. He used his connections and even contacted Jin Duoming. Finally, he traced whatever slight clues he had and found evidence that the cause of everything was Chen Mu!

He boarded the cruiser headed for Mars and sent the outcome of his findings to Wang Baole. The cruiser lifted off into the skies, marking the end of his mission!

Even though the entire mission happened over a brief period of time, it still caused quite an uproar in the Federation. Everyone—the four Dao Colleges, the Senate, and the other political forces—who had witnessed the outcome of the fiasco turned their eyes towards Mars at the same time.

The political forces had only had eyes on the Martian Colony Governor when they considered Mars. Now, someone else had entered the picture. He was only at the Foundation Establishment realm, but he was able to get someone to head to Earth to carry out a mission with a single order while he was still on

Mars. He had the support of the military and the Martian administration as well as the implicit approval of the Federation President. Everything... pointed to the fact that this new rising star on Mars had risen to a level where his importance could no longer be disregarded!

To Wang Baole, this mission showed his displeasure towards the Zhuo family and his desire to save his friend. To the other political forces... this was Wang Baole's attempt at displaying his power. To them, he was using his own way to tell everyone that regardless of which political force it was, he, Wang Baole, and his family and friends, weren't to be easily messed with!

If you dared touch them, he would show you he was equally unafraid to show you what he was made of!

Chapter 404: A Video Showing Only Darkness...

Wang Baole was still frantically monitoring the Zhuo family incident in Divine Armament New City. He received Kong Dao's voice transmission and realized how the entire incident had happened. He realized that Chen Mu was the real mastermind!

Chen Mu, you've got some guts! An icy glint flashed in Wang Baole's eyes. He had only harbored a dislike towards Chen Mu in the past. He had instinctively found the other man repelling. However, he hadn't really hated the man. That was why he had only pressured him until the other had yielded and hadn't continued to pursue the matter after.

Now though, his feelings towards Chen Mu were completely different. Chen Mu had dared to hurt his friend. It was as if he had left a thorn in his heart. Now, whenever Wang Baole saw Chen Mu, he would remember this incident. The best way to solve this problem was to kick Chen Mu off of Mars!

Wang Baole also heard Zhuo Yifan's message from Kong Dao, that he was going to go to the Moon and train. After hearing that, he fell silent for a moment, then sighed. He didn't know what had happened to Zhuo Yifan in the Zhuo family, but he could guess that the impact on Zhuo Yifan must have been great. He respected Zhuo Yifan's decision. After all, in this Spirit Inception Era... while there was still law and order on Earth, Wang Baole, who had climbed his way up to a Primary Rank Three Noble, was beginning to understand the one true law that the Federation inclined towards—the law of the strongest.

The strongest referred to both one's status as well as one's cultivation. Both aided and supported the other; neither could be done without. Those who had the former would naturally get the latter, usually.

After all, under the law of the strongest, the strong would devour the weak. This was the unchanging law of the Dao Universe!

It all boils down to cultivation! Wang Baole took a deep breath. He lifted his head and stared in the direction of the Moon. A moment later, he retracted his gaze. He turned his eyes toward the direction of Chen Mu's autonomous zone. His eyes slowly narrowed, and a faint Dark Qi that was indiscernible to others glowed in Wang Baole's eyes.

It might be pure coincidence, but when Wang Baole turned and gazed at the autonomous zone, Chen Mu instantly raised his head. He clenched his teeth and glared in the direction of Wang Baole's office, the veins in his eyes filling with blood instantly. He had an appearance of extreme viciousness and madness about him.

“Wang Baole!” Chen Mu roared. He almost shattered the jade slip in his hand!

This jade slip was the result of his deal with Zhuo Yixian. After he had arranged for someone to have Zhuo Yifan brought back to the Zhuo family, Zhuo Yixian had sent it over. As if to prove that he didn’t make a copy, Zhuo Yixian had someone bring the original jade slip to Chen Mu.

This jade slip was the one that contained the video recorded by the Colony Disciplinary Order of the heretic cultivator’s cave abode. Zhuo Yixian had taken it and sent it back to his family clan for restoration. The restoration hadn’t been complete despite the expertise and resources of the Zhuo family, but most of it had been restored.

Chen Mu immediately viewed it after receiving the jade slip. Upon viewing it, he almost exploded. The video was extremely clear at first. He held his breath as he saw Wang Baole’s big face and Li Wan’er’s expressionless one. He noticed that the two of them were inside a secret chamber.

He already couldn’t take that. Then, the screen turned dark. He couldn’t see anything, but he could hear Wang Baole’s and Li Wan’er’s voices!

“Wang Baole, take off your clothes.” When Chen Mu heard this, the green veins on his forehead started pulsating. He was on the verge of madness. He could tell that it was Li Wan’er’s voice.

That slut, she was the one who made the first move! Chen Mu stopped himself from shattering the jade slip. He gritted his teeth and continued listening. Soon, he heard the next part of their conversation.

“Don’t think about silly things. We haven’t reached the moment for one last hurrah before our deaths.”

“What’s next? Do you come, or do I go? My cultivation isn’t as high as yours, so I can’t see anything clearly. I cannot find your location. Where are you?” These two lines seemed harmless, but barely. Still, Chen Mu’s eyes were filled with blood. The words that followed made him roar out in rage.

They were...

“Now, you can cover our bodies with the clothes.”

One shouldn’t think too deeply into that statement. Once one did that, he would realize that the two were naked. The words “our bodies” meant that they were holding each other in their arms... Chen Mu’s howl was filled with madness. The final and fatal blow was the words that followed after.

“If you don’t wish to see a part of yourself missing after we are rescued, then you can continue!” Chen Mu heard Li Wan’er’s words and shuddered violently. An image instantly appeared in his mind. Wang Baole and Li Wan’er were both naked and entwined in each others’ arms. Wang Baole was doing something utterly despicable, and Li Wan’er, seemingly unaffected, only uttered a single statement of refusal.

That wasn’t all. It would have been fine if that was the end of it. But... the contents of the jade slip ended abruptly then. A complete restoration was, after all, extremely challenging. They could only restore the video to this extent. As for what had happened after that, besides Wang Baole and Li Wan’er, no one else would know.

To have the video end here abruptly was akin to leaving Chen Mu with an unimaginable itch. He was going to go mad. A long while later, he was finally able to calm himself down. Resentment and vengeful hate shone in his eyes.

He knew that at the time of the video recording, he and Li Wan'er hadn't yet been engaged, but he still couldn't tolerate this. He understood that their goal had been to huddle together for warmth. If they hadn't done that, they might have died. But from the way he saw things, he wondered why Li Wan'er hadn't simply died. There would have been no trouble for him if she had died.

He didn't care whether Li Wan'er lived or died. What he cared about was the humiliation and shame this incident caused him!

Li Wan'er, this slut. I'll find ways to make you suffer. You're not afraid to die, right? I'll make you wish for death! As for Wang Baole... this adulterous pair, you just watch out. I may not be able to touch you now, but I can hurt your loved ones. Zhuo Yifan is the first. Anyone related to you, I'll do something about!

Chen Mu had almost ground his teeth down completely. He lifted his head and stared unblinkingly in the direction of Wang Baole's office. His eyes and Wang Baole's seemed to meet across the vast distance and countless buildings in between.

Another person weighed down by troubles was Li Wan'er. While she was annoyed and frustrated with Chen Mu, their engagement had been decided. She had no choice in the matter. She was also troubled by Wang Baole. The earlier incident concerning the lockdown of the autonomous zones had caused their relationship to reach an icy stage. After all, she had threatened Wang Baole.

As the complicated web of relationships cast an invisible blanket over the new city, Wang Baole retracted his gaze. He pondered for a moment, then immediately sent a voice transmission to the Sect Lord of the Ethereal Dao College. He had to make plans for the worst. He needed the power of the four Dao Colleges to ensure his family's protection and safety.

Wang Baole's status and importance to the four Dao Colleges meant that the latter promised they would ensure his family's safety. Wang Baole had intended to send for his parents and bring them over to Mars, but it wasn't completely safe here either. The environment was also foreign to them. After thinking about it for a while, he decided to abandon that idea.

At the same time, the Sect Lord of the Ethereal Dao College was also silently mulling over the Zhuo Yifan incident. He had witnessed Wang Baole's forcefulness and seen the weakness in his own character. As the head of a Sect, the Sect Lord still had some passion and hotbloodedness in him. He told himself that he would never allow something like that to happen again. It was about time that the Ethereal Dao College found an appropriate time and place to emphasize its presence.

As the Zhuo Yifan incident came to an end, and as preventive measures were carried out, Wang Baole set his thoughts and feelings about Chen Mu aside in his heart. He knew that he had to follow the rules of the Federation when handling this matter. He couldn't afford to be impatient.

He also knew that everything had happened because his cultivation was still not of a high enough level. If he were at the Core Formation realm presently, everything would have been different.

Cultivation! Wang Baole sucked in a deep breath. He left his office and returned to his residence, where he began his cultivation. He could sense clearly that he was very close to a breakthrough from the late-stage Foundation Establishment realm to the perfected Foundation Establishment realm.

At the same time, beyond Mars, beyond the Solar System, in the distant, infinite space, a coffin was speeding along. It seemed to be racing through the cosmos, and when it did, time and space distorted around it. It seemed to be wandering in space-time. Perhaps it would reach Earth hundreds of thousands of years later; perhaps it would reach Earth... hundreds of thousands of years in the past!

On the other end of space, in a part of the universe not particularly far away from the Solar System, within the same space and time, there was a black jellyfish that appeared to be drifting aimlessly. If nothing unexpected happened, it appeared that it would drift past the edge of the Solar System...

Chapter 405: The Family Name of the Governor's Partner is Zhao?

The matter involving Zhuo Yifan ended. Suddenly, every political force in the Federation began to view Wang Baole, this rising star from Mars, with greater importance. Finally, they had all decided not to offend him without good reason.

Chen Mu had his own plans, but he too had received a stern warning from his family clan. He was to keep a low profile in the new city and stop doing things that might result in conflict or tension.

Chen Mu was resistant towards the instructions. However, his connections and power all stemmed from his family clan. He could only swallow his pride. But he couldn't help but think about the segments of the video that hadn't been restored. The more he thought about it, the more resentful he felt. He was powerless to do anything, though.

Time passed slowly. Everything seemed peaceful. Be it the construction of the new city or the autonomous zones, it was all moving along well as improvements were made and the city was steadily perfected. The Federation and the Martian administration scheduled a mass migration of new residents to the new city.

Wang Baole had intended to go into seclusion and train until his cultivation broke through from its current late-stage Foundation Establishment realm to the perfected Foundation Establishment realm. However, there were many administrative matters he had to deal with. Even though he could delegate the majority of those tasks to his mayors, he still had to be the one making decisions for the mass migration.

After two weeks of seclusion, Wang Baole finally had to leave his residence one fine morning and head for his office. He had to go through the proposals for the mass migration with his mayors. In addition, Jin Duoming had sent him a voice transmission yesterday. He had wanted to speak to Wang Baole about something after the meeting.

The sky was bright and clear when he walked out of his residence. It looked like a sunny day, but there was a chilly breeze with a cold that pierced straight into one's bones. Winter was approaching on Mars.

Wang Baole felt the cold winds. He watched the cultivators who were stationed in the area to guard his residence and patrol the area approach from afar. He watched as they noticed his presence and immediately stopped in their tracks, saluting him respectfully. He was overcome with emotion.

Without knowing it, he had spent more than a year on Mars. Too many things had happened during this period. He sighed as he thought back on what had happened.

I've turned old. Wang Baole patted his tummy. He thought about how he had already reached his twenties. He couldn't help but lament at how swiftly time was passing. Life was like a dream...

Immersed in his thoughts, Wang Baole, who had just stepped out of his residence and was about to retrieve his cruiser, felt someone's eyes on him. He turned his head. An odd expression settled on his face.

Behind him, or more specifically, the residence next door to his, the doors to the pavilion had just swung open. Li Wan'er, dressed in uniform, stepped out. Her eyes fell on Wang Baole as well. She frowned. Then, expressionless, she walked over.

The area Wang Baole was residing in was a special residential area in the new city set aside for those with the rank of a mayor or higher. However, Kong Dao and the rest typically resided in their own city zones, leaving this area unoccupied most of the time. Only Li Wan'er continued to reside here after she arrived in the new city.

Wang Baole only returned occasionally when he needed to go into seclusion and refine Dharmic Artifacts, and this was the first time the two of them had seen each other here. Wang Baole had been stunned at first as well, before he realized that Li Wan'er was his neighbor.

Wang Baole didn't speak as he watched Li Wan'er walk over. Li Wan'er was silent as well. She seemed to be ignoring Wang Baole's presence as she brushed past him, retrieved her cruiser, and prepared to leave.

Wang Baole was unconcerned with Li Wan'er's attitude. Because of Chen Mu, she had threatened him twice. Their relationship might not be considered hostile, but it was definitely distant and cold.

Their tense relationship hadn't stopped Wang Baole from watching Li Wan'er with regret in his eyes. His eyes had followed her as she walked past him and landed on the cruiser she retrieved.

Regret filled Wang Baole's heart as he stared at the familiar cruiser. He had taken a ride in the cruiser before. He remembered the elegantly decorated interior and comfortable chairs—they had been extremely soft and cushy.

What a pity. Don't think I'll get a chance to do it again. Wang Baole shook his head and was about to withdraw his gaze. He didn't know why, but he instinctively stared at Li Wan'er's back.

It might have been because of the uniform, but it made Li Wan'er's already alluring figure seem even more attractive. The uniform seemed to hold within it everything that was beautiful and perfect. Anyone of the opposite sex, upon the sight of her, wouldn't be able to control the fire burning in their hearts.

This was a beauty that belonged entirely to Li Wan'er. There were similarities with the beauty Li Yi possessed, but Li Wan'er surpassed her vastly in this aspect. The coldness exuding from Li Wan'er's person made her appear like an icy rose with thorns. It was both a danger and a fatal temptation.

She was that to Wang Baole as well. He had only glanced over instinctively, but his eyes instinctively looked at Li Wan'er's bottom first.

He couldn't help but sigh then. He remembered... he had touched it, and patted it. It had been soft and bouncy. Everything had been so great. Something so wonderful was going to be possessed by the hateful Chen Mu. Wang Baole was annoyed and depressed. It was likely he would never get a chance to smack it again.

Whatever, whatever. There are plenty more fish in the sea. I, Wang Baole, am an upstanding and honorable man, the most good looking man in the entire Federation. It's her loss. I can see it now, how she's going to regret this for the rest of her life, Wang Baole thought. He could instantly feel how right he was as he withdrew his gaze. It was then that Li Wan'er seemed to sense something. She turned and glared at Wang Baole, then stepped into her cruiser and flew off.

Wang Baole raised his eyebrow. He retrieved his cruiser as well and left his residence, heading for the office. There, he saw Li Wan'er once again, as well as Kong Dao and the others. Wen Huai and Fang Jing had arrived as well. Only Chen Mu was absent. He had sent one of his men to participate in the discussion and examination.

Wang Baole could hardly care to dig further into such petty matters. He was a man who didn't act recklessly. However, when he did act, he would make sure his enemy suffered or got out of his sight.

No problems surfaced during the examination of the proposal for the mass migration. Everyone soon reached a consensus, and Wang Baole submitted the finalized proposal to the Governor.

After the meeting adjourned, Li Wan'er left immediately without an expression on her face. Wen Huai extended a nod towards Wang Baole as a friendly gesture before leaving the office with Fang Jing, who had done the same, albeit reluctantly.

Finally, with the departure of Kong Dao and Lin Tianhao, only Wang Baole and Jin Duoming remained in the office. Jin Duoming loosened his collar and sat in front of Wang Baole. There was a deep, unfathomable light in his eyes. He gave Wang Baole a considering look, then laughed suddenly.

"Baole, I heard you and Li Wan'er had something going on in the past..."

"Why? You're interested in Li Wan'er?" Wang Baole threw Jin Duoming a look. He pulled out a bag of snacks, then started eating while speaking in a rather unfriendly tone.

"How's that possible!" Jin Duoming shivered inwardly and shook his head hastily.

"Even you know that's impossible. Let's get back to business. When are you going to bring over a ninth-grade Dharmic Armament in exchange for my amazing donkey?" Wang Baole said, rather impatiently. Jin Duoming had to bring the topic up. Besides, the both of them had gone through so much together. Their relationship had since grown more casual, and it felt normal to switch topic randomly.

Jin Duoming felt slightly frustrated when Wang Baole brought up his donkey again. He had been conducting businesses his entire life, but this was the worst deal he had tried to make. He stopped talking about Li Wan'er and instead, whispered.

"Baole, have you heard of... the Anti-Spirit Bomb?"

As soon as Jin Duoming said that, Wang Baole's eyes flashed. He nodded.

"I knew it. I knew you must have heard about the Anti-Spirit Bomb. Baole, do you know, this Anti-Spirit Bomb was jointly developed by the Trilunaris Corporation and the Federation. We have many research facilities studying and testing it...

"I want to invite the Spirit Research Department of the Federation to set up an Anti-Spirit Bomb research facility in my city zone in our new Martian city!"

"With this facility in place, it'd be a great boost to the reputation of our new city and to my status in the Trilunaris Corporation!" Jin Duoming's eyes were bright as he whispered. It was clear that he had been preparing for this for a long time. He only lacked Wang Baole's permission now.

"An Anti-Spirit Bomb research facility?" Wang Baole's expression was serious. He placed his snacks down, pondered for a moment, then asked.

"Is it safe?"

"There's no issue with safety. I can promise you that. In fact, there's an Anti-Spirit Bomb facility in the main Martian city. If it's unsafe, could they even have built it there in the first place?"

"Besides, I've dug up some information. The top expert on the Federation's Anti-Spirit Bomb, Zhao Pinfang, Master Zhao... he'll be visiting Mars in a few days to inspect the Anti-Spirit Bomb project at the Martian facility and resolve any issues. This is an important figure we're talking about. He's the Martian Colony Governor's partner... I've already submitted a request to tour the facility and personally meet Master Zhao. If he gives us his support for this proposal of ours, we'll be guaranteed a research facility in our new city!"

"Zhao Pinfang? The Governor's partner, his family name is Zhao?" Wang Baole asked curiously.

"Yup. This Master Zhao resides on Earth most of the time. Now that you've mentioned it, even the Federation President has to treat the couple with some degree of respect. After all, one of them is in charge of Mars, and the other is the top expert on the Anti-Spirit Bomb!" Jin Duoming sighed. He glanced at Wang Baole, then said suddenly.

"They have a daughter..."

Chapter 406: The Art of Longevity

What does that mean? Wang Baole was a little suspicious, sensing that something wasn't right from Jin Duoming's gaze. He was initially speaking normally but suddenly mentioned that they had a daughter. It wouldn't have been much if it was just a recount, but when he mentioned it, the way he looked at Wang Baole implied that there was a more profound meaning behind it.

“Do you mean Little Sister Zhao? I am close to her, but this matter is a secret. You know, she has a peculiar family background, so it’s enough that you know that.” After thinking about it, Wang Baole suddenly cleared his throat and spoke.

When he spoke, Jin Duoming was shocked, looking somewhat incredulous. He hesitated for a while but decided to speak despite that.

“That... Baole, I’ve only met the daughter of the Governor once when I was young. I heard that since she was seven, she has been sent for training on the ancient greenish-bronze sword, and hasn’t returned until now... How did you know her?”

Wang Baole was shocked. What Jin Duoming said allowed him to heave a sigh of relief, realizing that he had been too sensitive just now. At the same time, he felt regrettable, for he thought previously that the Governor’s daughter was Zhao Yameng.

After all, they had the same last name, Zhao. Furthermore, Zhao Yameng had a similarly mysterious background. Even though he was now Primary Rank Three, he was still unable to find out about it. Right now, with regret, Wang Baole hurriedly avoided the question and began asking about the research facility for the Anti-Spirit Bomb.

An incredulous look remained on Jin Duoming’s face as he took another glance at Wang Baole. He appeared to have understood the situation and didn’t continue harping on it. However, deep inside his heart, not only was he gloating about his acting skills, but he also felt extremely delighted. He felt that he finally had the chance to take revenge for all the times Wang Baole had deployed the donkey to create trouble for him without reason. He had made up the story of the Governor’s daughter being sent to the ancient greenish-bronze sword.

Jin Duoming knew very well that the more he said, the more loopholes he would expose. Therefore, he stopped elaborating once he put his point across and began talking about his plans, as well as the details of the Anti-Spirit Bomb research facility. Wang Baole’s eyes lit up when he heard his description, and he realized the importance of the research facility to the new city.

It could be said that once the research facility had been built in the new city, the Federation would have to send more personnel to protect the area, as well as more research staff. This would significantly increase the value to the new city, and the protective covering would also be strengthened. In addition, the importance of the new city, and to a certain extent, the scope and development of Wang Baole’s authority, allowed Wang Baole to know why Jin Duoming was so passionate about it, even if it wasn’t laid out in an obvious manner by him.

After all, the internal affairs of the Trilunaris Corporation were complex, with many factions that each with their own leaders. Even though Jin Duoming had the rights to inheritance, he wasn’t the sole heir. It wasn’t known how the Trilunaris Corporation would eventually assess and choose a successor, but it was clearly related to one’s accomplishments and the power that one holds. Therefore, once Jin Duoming managed to build the all-important Anti-Spirit Bomb research facility in his region, it would be immensely advantageous to him.

It could be said that it was a win-win situation, and that alone made Wang Baole's mind active with thoughts. Jin Duoming extended the invitation to Wang Baole to accompany him on a trip to the Martian City again, to view the research facility in the main city, as well as to pay a visit Zhao Pinfang.

However, there is still something strange about this. Theoretically, it would be enough for Jin Duoming to view the research facility and make the visit himself. Why is he repeatedly inviting me along? With that, Wang Baole grew suspicious, but when he noticed Jin Duoming's appearance, he quickly found the reason.

It must be because I am the most handsome person in the entire Federation, and I have such a high status, which makes me an elite despite my young age. I am well known in the entire Federation and am so shockingly handsome that Jin Duoming felt that if he went with me, it would greatly increase his chances of succeeding. He is making me his wingman! Wang Baole touched his chin, full of himself as he patted Jin Duoming's shoulder. His eyes conveyed a message of praise, as well as one that hinted that it was an exception, not the rule.

That gaze made Jin Duoming a little guilty, as thoughts darted about his head. After confirming that he hadn't exposed a loophole, he smiled, but he was still nervous as a result of how Wang Baole was looking at him.

*D*rn it. After this Wang Baole became the city lord, he seems to have become smarter than before and learned how to manipulate his authority. He couldn't have realized the reason why I'm trying to ride on his fame and power, could he? He must not have realized that. The most he must have sensed is that I'm taking advantage of his power, but not which aspect of it. Otherwise, he wouldn't be carrying that expression.*

With that thought, Jin Duoming relaxed slightly, smiling modestly at Wang Baole. As they looked at each other, the duo decided to head to the main Martian City together.

As this matter had to be kept a secret, the two of them only notified Kong Dao and Lin Tianhao so that they would be mentally prepared. They didn't inform Li Wan'er and departed immediately that afternoon.

Li Wan'er didn't seem to notice Wang Baole's departure. In the entire new city, other than Lin Tianhao and a portion of the cultivators from the four Dao Colleges, no one knew about it.

However, the donkey knew. The instant Wang Baole left, the donkey, which was hiding in the corner of a street, its body like a chameleon that blended completely with the surroundings, suddenly raised its head to look at the skies. It sneezed loudly and shook its tail vigorously, apparently very happy as it continued staring at a house not far ahead.

The donkey had arrived where it was after tracking the smell of food for the past few days. However, it felt a sense of danger here and didn't take further action. Instead, it planned to wait for the right opportunity so that it could swiftly take a huge bite out of it before fleeing.

Right now, the donkey was staring at a blue-robed youth sitting with his legs crossed in the shed. Before him were three middle-aged cultivators kneeling expressionlessly and motionlessly.

Without looking at the three cultivators before him, the blue-robed youth narrowed his eyes slightly, his right index finger tapping on his knee, as if he were in deep thought. After a brief moment, he smiled.

That old Boat Spirit suffered serious injuries back then such that his main consciousness couldn't be awakened, with only a portion of his consciousness capable of being revealed... It is said that it detected the scent of a Dark Child. Right now, in the new city, the one that fits best into its description is Wang Baole, the City Lord.

This is utterly absurd. The Dark Sect has long fallen. The battle back then was so destructive, and it's impossible for a Dark Child to appear now! Only that old Boat Spirit would be so adamant that the Dark Sect has been released into the cosmos to control the reincarnation process and lure the spirits to rebuild its former glory!

However, speaking of it, the array formation of this city is interesting in that it can gather Dark Qi. This way, it's still necessary to pay notice to Wang Baole's status. However, testing that hypothesis would exhaust a lot of my energy. Furthermore, it is highly likely that Wang Baole isn't the Dark Child, which would make direct testing too wasteful. As he sighed, the blue-robed youth thought about it. Suddenly, he revealed a smile, a cold one that carried a sinister meaning.

Regardless of whether he is the Dark Child, I want to carry out my plan. It won't be too late to test it out even after he realizes it! From the bottom of his heart, the blue-robed youth didn't believe that the Dark Child still existed in the universe. Therefore, he planned to carry out the first plan that he made after emerging from the catacombs, one that he made after studying the new city in detail.

That was... polluting the Great Baole Array Formation in Divine Armament New City, the one that could gather Dark Qi!

If it succeeded, he could make use of the Great Baole Array Formation and indirectly gain control over the Great Martian Array Formation. After all, those two were linked together, which allowed him to wield the greatest control over the Great Martian Array Formation in the boundaries of the new city. Furthermore, as others wouldn't be able to detect it, it would have a miraculous effect when a crucial juncture was reached.

The first step to polluting the Great Baole Array Formation required tainting the cultivators in the new city. Once they were tainted, he could make use of the unique characteristic of the Great Martian Array Formation, which continuously absorbed the aura of the people in the new city to absorb the tainted aura off them. The more of it absorbed, the more successful it would be.

That was the only loophole he had found after observing the Great Baole Array Formation!

The fastest and best way to do it is to create a cultivation technique, and garner believers and followers from there. The blue-robed youth smiled slightly, looking at the three expressionless middle-aged cultivators before him.

The three cultivators were the source of pollution that he had carefully chosen over this period of time. They were also the first batch of people he was directly in control of. They had all come from different regions and had different backgrounds.

As he looked at them, the trio seemed to have realized it as they raised their heads. Their originally stiff facial muscles began to relax, and a look of passion burned in their eyes.

“Go, disseminate the cultivation technique that I have taught all of you using your status!”

“This cultivation technique is known as the Art of Longevity!” The blue-robed youth spoke calmly. The three passionate cultivators before him stood up, greeting him with cupped fists.

“Yes, State Preceptor!”

Chapter 407: Research Facility!

Even though there was no lack of cultivation techniques in the Federation during the Spirit Inception Era, they weren't plentiful either. Furthermore, the different factions kept their own techniques a top secret from each other, preventing the cultivation techniques that they had developed from being leaked to others. Therefore, it resulted in difficulty for other small factions and vagrant cultivators to gain access to even a single cultivation technique if they weren't cultivators from the four Dao Colleges or the various major factions.

In the new city, despite there being numerous cultivators from the different factions, most of them were from the group of trillion people that had been scattered after being relocated previously. At the same time, even though the cultivators from the various factions had no shortage of cultivation techniques, if there were one technique that was different from the rest, no one would reject it. Of course, it was a given that there must be no issues with the cultivation technique.

That was the basis for how the Art of Longevity was disseminated. Not many people knew how this cultivation technique spread, but somehow, unknowingly, everyone started to talk about it, and some even began to practice it.

Needless to say, the Art of Longevity encompassed every quality that made it suitable to be passed on. Firstly, it was simple to cultivate it, and secondly, there were no prerequisites needed to cultivate it. Regardless of whether it was a cultivator or a commoner, it could be cultivated. Lastly, it wasn't a technique that was used to activate spirit energy. Instead, it was a technique that trained one's physique!

This broadly reduced many people's concerns. After all, physical training was only used to strengthen one's physique, and even if there were other disadvantages that weren't apparent, it was far less damaging compared to cultivating other cultivation techniques that involved Spirit Qi.

Furthermore, most importantly, it didn't take long to see the effects of this cultivation technique. Once it had been mastered, one could immediately feel that their bodies had been significantly strengthened. At the same time, they would look radiant and injected with youth, and that in itself was miraculous. Many cultivators in Divine Armament New City had also researched on it previously and found that there were no major issues with it. The only aspect highlighted was that after mastering this cultivation technique, one's appetite for food would increase.

However, to the masses, this wasn't a big problem, as not only did it not make one obese, it also matched up to people's judgments. After all, there must be a source of fuel in order to make one

energetic, and this so-called disadvantage made sense to the law of energy intake and expenditure. Therefore, the Art of Longevity was immediately popularized, making it a favorite of females.

The rate at which it was being passed between people increased significantly. Initially, it was only within Jin Duoming's region, but gradually it spread to Lin Tianhao's region and then Kong Dao's region, where many military cultivators were practicing it with obvious effects.

It even spread to the autonomous zone. The Art of Longevity completely garnered the attention of Li Wan'er, as well as Kong Dao and company.

With Wang Baole and Jin Duoming having left, Li Wan'er, who learned about their departure later, immediately assumed the responsibility as the Deputy City Lord and began a research meeting focused on the Art of Longevity.

During the meeting, they thoroughly researched the details of the Art of Longevity. They even sent it to be interpreted by the various factions. However, in the entire Federation, with the exception of Wang Baole, no one had cultivated the Dark Art. In addition, even Wang Baole couldn't see through this cultivation technique, as only someone who had seen the art being practiced would know the ins-and-outs. Therefore, even though many disadvantages were discovered, on the whole, the Art of Longevity seemed like a legitimate technique to strengthen one's physique.

However, on Earth, the various factions found that there was no significant effect after testing the technique out. It was only on Mars that an extraordinary effect was produced. At the same time, through the investigation carried out by Li Wan'er and company, they found out that there was only one person who was disseminating the Art, and that person had a clean background, only experiencing one miraculous encounter on Mars.

At the same time, he merely taught the cultivation technique to two of his best friends. Therefore, the spread of the cultivation technique at such a large scale was likely due to the two friends instead. Everything seemed to be developing normally, the only issue being that... the speed at which it spread was just too fast.

Even though there were no issues with this cultivation technique, Li Wan'er eventually still decided to temporarily prevent it and control the speed at which it was spreading. However, she didn't forcefully ban it, as she planned to make a firmer decision after a period of observation.

However, the suppression of the speed of dissemination still dampened the spirits of people who were cultivating this cultivation technique. Despite that, the leader of this whole incident, the blue-robed youth, wasn't anxious at all and didn't even step out of his residence. This kept the donkey waiting outside the residence. However, the donkey wasn't anxious either, as it felt that it was worth the wait as long as it could get a taste of the delicacy!

On the other hand, right now, Wang Baole had heard news about the Art of Longevity. Through Lin Tianhao, he obtained the cultivation mnemonic, and after taking a look, he didn't discover anything amiss. In addition, after arriving at the main city with Jin Duoming, they had submitted the application to view the research facility as well as to visit Zhao Pinfang, both of which had been approved. Therefore, with Jin Duoming's urging, Wang Baole put aside the matters related to the Art of Longevity and arrived at the heavily guarded research facility with Jin Duoming.

Even though it was rumored that the research facility was located in the main Martian City, it was built below ground. In addition, it was so heavily guarded that even though Wang Baole and Jin Duoming had applied, they only managed to pass through the teleportation array formation and enter the facility after going through rounds of checks.

Wang Baole only knew that the facility was underground, but wasn't sure if it was directly beneath the Martian City. In addition, the area covered by the facility was extremely large. What was presented before Wang Baole and Jin Duoming the moment they stepped out of the teleportation array formation was something that looked like a mini-city covered with metallic planks that formed numerous passageways, which each led to a vast space at their ends.

There, innumerable research staff dressed in their white uniforms were walking about. Occasionally, screams that seemed like those of ferocious beasts could be heard from an unknown location. The instant the duo stepped out of the teleportation array formation, Wang Baole immediately felt the suppressive force from tens of Core Formation realm cultivators focused on him and Jin Duoming, dissipating only after they had inspected them both.

In addition, Wang Baole had only taken a breath of the Spirit Qi and immediately felt that his body was floating, and his cultivation was swiftly being activated. Even without him trying, the Spirit Qi entered his body directly.

That made Wang Baole extremely surprised.

The Spirit Qi was so concentrated that it was unimaginable. If it were somewhere outside, it could probably already form the Spirit Fog. However, right here, there seemed to be a unique Dharmic Artifact that could somehow filter this concentrated Spirit Qi such that it didn't become a fog.

It went without saying that, within this research facility, there must be an astonishing number of fragments from the large sword. If not, such a concentrated cloud of Spirit Qi wouldn't exist.

That wasn't what made Wang Baole most shocked. The thing that completely overwhelmed his mind and threw him into utter disbelief was that, right here, he sensed the aura from Dharmic Armaments, one that wasn't of seventh- or eighth-grade, but of a ninth-grade Dharmic Armament. In addition, it appeared that there was more than one.

This is the research facility? How extravagant! Between breaths, Wang Baole looked at Jin Duoming and realized that even a tycoon like Jin Duoming was dumbfounded. Apparently, this was also his first time in the Anti-Spirit Bomb research facility.

"Welcome to the Anti-Spirit Bomb research facility." As the duo stood in shock, a brilliant glow appeared before them. The glow swiftly concentrated itself, forming an illusory figure of a woman who looked extremely beautiful—her beauty on the level that was probably unattainable by humans. Right now, she was wearing the same uniform as the other research facility staff, smiling at Wang Baole and Jin Duoming.

Wang Baole's eyes widened, and his mind buzzed with activity as he looked at the illusory glow that had appeared before him.

Little Missy? Wang Baole gasped, preventing himself from shouting that thought out loud.

However, his facial expressions still caught the attention of the illusory figure. The figure slanted her head and looked at Wang Baole, and Jin Duoming, who was beside him, had also grown suspicious. After looking at Wang Baole, he couldn't help but wave his hand across the illusory figure. Unable to grasp anything, he cleared his throat.

"Baole, this is fake. It's smart technology... You can't be so desperate that you're interested in playing the fool with smart technology, can you?"

Wang Baole didn't bother about Jin Duoming. Right now, a torrent of thoughts and emotions were crashing in his mind. The illusory female figure that had appeared before him looked completely identical to Little Missy in the mask!

However, Wang Baole was sufficiently thick-skinned that even though he was shocked, he quickly adjusted his emotions and tried to mend the situation after realizing that he hadn't made a good impression. He blushed, trying to appear as if he had fallen in love at first sight with the illusory female figure.

"I have already received the application sent by the both of you. Master Zhao is now in research room number three. Please follow me." The illusory female figure didn't care about Wang Baole and instead spoke calmly. As she spoke, she stepped forward, and Wang Baole and Jin Duoming followed closely behind. Under the lead of the illusory figure, they traveled through the golden passageway and entered the Anti-Spirit Bomb research facility.

Along the way, the curiosity and shock in Wang Baole's heart was indescribable. Had this location not been so inconvenient, he would have long entered the mask and inquired about the matter with Little Missy.

He took a moment to suppress his shock. However, as he entered the metal passageway, Wang Baole suddenly stopped in his tracks, as if sensing something. He suddenly looked at the metallic wall on the right, realizing that this metallic wall was an illusion. In reality, inside that wall, many specimen-like objects were sealed within.

Most of them were corpses of ferocious beasts, but Wang Baole wasn't familiar with any of them. One of them even appeared to be a dragon!

"These..." Wang Baole took a deep breath, his heart trembling with shock.

"These are the corpses of the more valuable ancient beasts that have been discovered throughout Earth's history. There are also some of them that have originated from space. On the other hand, some were from the ancient greenish-bronze sword." The illusory female figure before them explained while smiling. It was then that Wang Baole saw that, in a metallic wall not far away, a black jellyfish was sealed inside. The jellyfish wasn't large, only palm-sized, and looked like any ordinary jellyfish—except for its color.

"That is also an ancient beast?" Wang Baole pointed at it in bewilderment.

"This creature originated from outer space. We have named it 'Sea Glutton', and as you can see, it is still juvenile. Its mature form is as large as a cruiser, possibly bigger, and its use is also similar to that of a cruiser. According to our analysis, its speed is unimaginable, and according to investigations by the

Federation, there is a seventy percent likelihood that an undiscovered civilization from outer space arrived using this creature!”

The illusory female spoke calmly.

Chapter 408: Revealing!

As Wang Baole and Jin Duoming were looking at the black jellyfish and listening to the illusory female figure calmly describing it, outside in the vast galaxy, beyond Mars and the Sun, an almost identical black jellyfish was cruising quickly in space.

This black jellyfish was extremely large, almost as large as a celestial cruiser. Numerous tentacles were flailing as its body moved, as if it could reduce the distance between space bit by bit. It looked like it was charging forward, but was actually shape-shifting continuously!

This black jellyfish was the Sea Glutton mentioned by the illusory female figure!

Right now, even though the body of this jellyfish was pitch-black such that outsiders weren’t able to see through it, in reality, there were actually three cultivators sitting with their legs crossed inside it!

The three people were all middle-aged men with solemn expressions. They were clearly individuals who had been stained with blood and were proficient at killing. That was especially so for one of them, who had a red centipede crawling on his face, as if connected to his flesh and blood. Occasionally, it wriggled, making him look extremely frightening.

Their manner of dress was different from that on Earth. Instead of long robes, they donned scale-like armor, which seemed to have other miraculous functions. In addition, as the three of them meditated, waves emerged from their bodies. Those waves appeared to have been hidden by the black jellyfish, but inside the jellyfish’s body, it was extremely obvious, and sufficient to suppress all Core Formation realm cultivators.

The trio were... Nascent Soul realm elites that were superior to Core Formation realm cultivators!

It was also at this time that the jellyfish, which was shape-shifting in the galaxy, suddenly stopped. When that happened, waves emerged from its body, breaking the meteoroid in its path to powder.

In reality, this jellyfish didn’t even care about the meteoroid that it had broken to pieces. It stopped momentarily in the galaxy and was no longer black. Instead, a brilliant light glowed from it while it adjusted its head position slightly, as if trying to find something.

Finally, after deciding on a direction, the colorful glow from its body grew even more brilliant. At the same time, the trio who were meditating with crossed legs opened their eyes almost simultaneously, revealing their pupils that were of a different color than that of people on Earth!

Their pupils were red, and perhaps it was due to the color, but after the trio opened their eyes, a vicious force that was extremely ruthless emerged. One of them even licked his lips and began laughing.

“Who would have thought that there were still signs of civilization here...”

“Shall we go take a look?” Another person followed. The two of them eventually looked at the last person, the cultivator with a red centipede crawling on his face.

This person’s eyes were distinctively redder. He touched the centipede on his face gently and began speaking calmly.

“Go and take a look. If there are no high-level cultivators, then destroy it and take away its Stellar Source. If a high-level cultivator is present, then decide the course of action based on the situation!”

As he spoke, the other two people nodded their heads. Soon, they adjusted the state of the black jellyfish. Before long, the black jellyfish which had stopped in mid-air suddenly picked up speed, shifting forward. Its goal this time was... the Solar System!

At the same time, in the Anti-Spirit Bomb research facility on Mars, Wang Baole’s gaze had already shifted away from the black jellyfish within the metal walls. He exchanged glances with Jin Duoming and felt like they had widened their world view.

In reality, no matter how widely knowledgeable Jin Duoming felt about himself, he was still immensely shocked by everything in the research facility. The duo moved continually along the passageway, entering the research facility while following the illusory female figure’s lead.

Along the way, they saw countless research staff who were wearing their uniforms. They didn’t care much about Jin Duoming and Wang Baole’s arrival. Instead, they were busy moving around, as if there were so many things on their hands that they had no time to pay attention to their surroundings.

The reason Wang Baole and Jin Duoming had come was to view the research facility, as well as pay Zhao Pinfang a visit. Therefore, the illusory female figure had received the notice and didn’t bring them to research room number three. Rather, she led them on a tour of the research facility, starting from room number one.

Soon, as Wang Baole and Jin Duoming reached the end of the passageway, a region half the area of Dao Mountain Mist Academy appeared before their eyes. There were many people here, as well as many pieces of high-level equipment that Wang Baole wasn’t familiar with.

Of these, the most eye-catching were the tens of giant crystal vats erected in the region. The vats were transparent, each with the circumference that approximated the arm lengths of tens of people. It was touching the ceiling and the ground from top to bottom, and was filled with a translucent fluid that was submerging a frightening corpse that took Wang Baole by surprised when he saw it!

Every one of those corpses looked extremely frightening. There were some who were very well built but were headless, others who had nipples as their eyes and belly buttons as their mouths, and there were even a few who had the upper body of a female but a lower body of a snake!

At the same time, there were also fire-men whose bodies were made of flames despite being submerged in fluid, as well as fierce three-headed giant dogs.

Wang Baole even saw a dragon with wings, a creature from the West as described in the ancient myths!

“This... This...” Wang Baole’s first thought was that he had entered the wrong place, as he pointed at the headless burly man while looking with shock at the illusory female figure.

Jin Duoming, who was beside him, also gasped. However, he seemed to have heard about the research room one and managed to remain calm somehow.

“Research room one, also known as the Mythical Research Center, is the place where research on every single mythical creature that has been discovered on Earth is done. In addition, attempts at recreating them will be made based on the Spirit Inception Era’s unique methods. Of course, you can even consider it as a form of revival!

“Only a portion is shown here. The hundreds of sculptures in the Federation cannot be placed randomly. In reality, we have found signs of existence for every single mythical god placed there!”

Wang Baole’s breathing quickened, his heart trembling vigorously. The tour of the research facility hadn’t ended, but to him, it had already opened up a whole new world before him. He even felt that he was starting to get into direct contact with the real secrets of the Federation!

It was also after seeing everything that Wang Baole suddenly realized that what he knew about the Federation previously was just the tip of the iceberg!

Even though Wang Baole had made similar guesses previously, it was never as shocking as seeing it with his own eyes.

This shock remained strong, shaking Wang Baole’s emotions and thoughts long after he had left research room number one. It kept churning until he arrived in research room number two with Jin Duoming

The moment they stepped in, Wang Baole’s riled emotions were once again thrown into chaos. He stared with his eyes wide. If research room number one allowed Wang Baole to notice signs of ancient mythical beings existing, then research room number two showed him the glory of the Spirit Inception Era!

There was a mountain here!

The mountain was located in the heart of research room two. It wasn’t very big, only over a hundred feet tall, and was completely black. However, any cultivator who saw this mountain would have their cultivation being activated uncontrollably, as if it had been strongly attracted. That was the case for Wang Baole and Jin Duoming as well, as their cultivation now seemed impossible to control and on the brink of breaking out of their bodies.

Their minds instantly buzzed with activity, as if they were about to explode. Thankfully, research room two seemed to have been specially equipped. The illusory female figure, seemingly having expected this to happen, immediately waved her arm. Instantly, a suppressive force was felt, alleviating the raging cultivation in Wang Baole and Jin Duoming’s body.

After a while, Wang Baole and Jin Duoming finally managed to compose themselves. Their breathing quickened, and before Wang Baole could speak, Jin Duoming hurriedly asked.

“Could that be the... Stellar Source?”

“Stellar Source?” Wang Baole was shocked. It wasn’t the first time he had heard those words. Now, as he looked at the mountain, his heart was beating with shock. He turned to look at the illusory female figure for an answer.

“The arrival of the Spirit Inception Era means that not only humans, but any creature can cultivate. This is the case for the star as well. The star could be deemed as another form of life, and the so-called Stellar Source is its core, which is also a very precious item in a star!

“It’s a pity that the Spirit Inception Era is still in its juvenile stage. Therefore, there aren’t many Stellar Sources that were formed from the planets in the Solar System. What you see are parts of the Stellar Source from Mars!”

As the illusory female figure explained, Wang Baole’s heart trembled. He wanted to speak, but was immediately shocked as he vaguely felt that there was another form of existence in the interior of this Stellar Source!

“Is there something else inside?” Wang Baole raised his hand and pointed at the Stellar Source, before looking towards the illusory female figure.

Jin Duoming was shocked. He didn’t sense anything, while the illusory female figure glanced at Wang Baole several times. Her facial expression suddenly changed. It appeared that she had never imagined that Wang Baole would be able to see through part of the Stellar Source’s interior!

Chapter 409: The So-Called Heavenly Evocation!

“City Lord Wang has graduated from the Dharmic Armament Pavilion of Ethereal Dao College. Is there a possibility that you can already sense the Heavenly Evocation segment now?” The illusory female figure suddenly spoke as she looked at Wang Baole.

Wang Baole was shocked, and soon noticed Jin Duoming’s bewilderment. Therefore, he took a look at the Stellar Source mountain and immediately realized that Jin Duoming couldn’t sense the object present in the Stellar Source.

Through the words of the illusory female figure, Wang Baole instantly understood what existed inside the Stellar Source.

“Dharmic Armament?” Wang Baole spoke softly.

“There are three ninth-grade Dharmic Armaments in the Stellar Source. Segregated from the outer environment by the Stellar Source, even Core Formation realm cultivators are unable to sense them. Only those Dharmic Armament cultivators who are capable of refining Dharmic Armaments, or those who could sense the Heavenly Evocation segment would be able to sense it.” As the illusory female figure spoke, she glanced at Wang Baole several times. The fact that Wang Baole had reached the state where he was able to sense the Heavenly Evocation at his tender age shocked her.

On the other hand, Jin Duoming was even more surprised, and he widened his eyes and looked incredulously at Wang Baole. Wang Baole didn’t tell anyone about his attempts at refining a Dharmic Armament, and therefore few people knew about it. Wang Baole had unknowingly reached a high level in the refinement of Dharmic Armaments.

“Why are the Dharmic Armaments placed in the Stellar Source? Could it be related to the Anti-Spirit Bomb?” Wang Baole didn’t care about Jin Duoming’s facial expressions, instead, expressing his queries immediately.

In reality, coming to this research facility, seeing the Stellar Source, and realizing that there were Dharmic Armaments within it, he suddenly had a premonition that perhaps... the Heavenly Evocation segment—which he wasn’t particularly clear about, and didn’t have a complete understanding of—could gain some traction here.

If it was a question asked by others, the illusory female figure might not answer it. That would be the case even though Wang Baole and Jin Duoming’s application had been approved. However, after thinking about it, she looked at Wang Baole, seemingly realizing that Wang Baole was now caught in a bottleneck. She sighed and gestured before nodding her head.

“Before introducing the relationship between the Anti-Spirit Bomb and the Dharmic Armament, you must first know what the Dharmic Armament is exactly!” As the illusory female figure spoke, she raised her right hand and pointed. Instantly, the black-colored Stellar Source mountain became blurry and gradually turned translucent, revealing the three ninth-grade Dharmic Armaments within it!

“These are Dharmic Armaments!” Wang Baole turned to look immediately. After seeing them clearly, his pupils constricted. Even Jin Duoming, who had seen a ninth-grade Dharmic Armament before, was also shocked by everything that laid before his eyes.

Right now, in the transparent Stellar Source, extraordinary Dharmic Armaments were present. There was a black dragon the length of one’s arm, a firebird covered in golden flames that was giving off a golden glow, and a stone man who was holding a flash of lightning in his hands!

Regardless of whether it was the black dragon or the firebird, a suppressive force emanated from them. Like the stone man wielding the flash of lightning, an astonishing aura radiated from their bodies. Even though it was blocked by the Stellar Source, it was still as if the gods had awakened, and could easily send shock waves in all directions.

“All these are Artifact Spirits? Impossible! They’re not Artifact Spirits!” Wang Baole’s breathing quickened. He suddenly felt that there was something incorrect about everything he had learned about Dharmic Armaments!

According to the sayings of the four Dao Colleges, the Dharmic Armament combined Heaven and Earth power and was a supreme Dharmic Treasure formed after integrating the Artifact Spirit within it, which was why it was termed ‘Armament’!

The Dharmic Armament originated from the refinement technique recorded on the fragments of the ancient greenish-bronze sword. That led to the clan involved in refining treasures, and as more fragments related to treasure refinement were discovered, Dharmic Armament cultivators from each faction emerged. At the same time, it continued using the same naming convention as that recorded on the ancient greenish-bronze sword fragment.

“The Dharmic Armament knowledge that the Federation is teaching now isn’t wrong. However, it lacks a core ideal. It is not that they were ignorant. Instead, it is the Federation’s rule that they couldn’t disseminate the skills willy-nilly. For seventh- and eighth-grade Dharmic Armaments, there would be no

effect on the refinement process regardless of whether they are aware of this core principle. It is only important to understand this core principle when refining a ninth-grade Dharmic Armament.” The illusory female figure spoke softly, with a hint of chilliness in her voice. She didn’t do it on purpose but based on instinct.

“What you’re seeing is indeed not the Artifact Spirit, but the bare image formed through the transmogrification of a ninth-grade Dharmic Armament. In reality, the so-called Heaven and Earth power are formed by the combination of the will of every single item, which naturally includes all those mythical beings that had existed since ancient times. After their deaths, they didn’t dissipate. Instead, they integrated into the will of Heaven and Earth!

“However, even though their will existed before the Spirit Inception Era, we are unable to sense or use it. The emergence of the Spirit Inception Era and the progress of the cultivation civilization allowed us to now have the ability to feel it, and also gives us the right to use it!

“The Heavenly Evocation segment in Dharmic Artifact refinement, in reality, requires one to sense the will of the mythical beings that exist between Heaven and Earth and draw their will into the Dharmic Artifact to transform it. They use the Artifact Spirit as a medium for their will so that, to a certain extent, they would reincarnate and allow continuation to occur!”

“This is the core of a Dharmic Armament!” Jin Duoming was a little confused about what the illusory female figure was saying, but to Wang Baole, her words were like a bolt of lightning that struck his head strongly, making his body tremble and his mind buzz noisily with activity. Even his breathing stopped momentarily.

He widened his eyes even more. The feelings he experienced when researching the Heavenly Evocation resurfaced in his mind right now. There seemed to finally be an answer for those failures. There was finally a lead to all those sensations.

“So this is it!” Wang Baole felt that the confusion he had about Dharmic Armaments had significantly dissipated. He seemed to be able to catch a glimpse of his path ahead, and it could be said that this trip to the research facility was a golden blessing, even if it were to end right now.

Noticing that Wang Baole had understood it, the illusory female figure’s cold voice sounded once again.

“There are many mythical beings that have existed since the beginning of Earth. Furthermore, they differed in power. Therefore, the draw needed to refine the seventh-grade Dharmic Armament is relatively easy, and if one was lucky, it was even possible to refine an eighth-grade Dharmic Armament. However, since ancient times, there are just too few Heavenly Evocations capable of supporting a ninth-grade Dharmic Armament...

“At the same time, there is a very high demand in terms of the materials and Artifact Spirits needed. All these restrictions resulted in the fact that there are now less than thirty ninth-grade Dharmic Armament in all the factions of the Federation, including those amongst commoners!

“As for the relationship between the Dharmic Armament and the Anti-Spirit Bomb... To a certain degree, you can equate the power of the Anti-Spirit Bomb to the force that forms after a ninth-grade Dharmic Armament implodes...”

“This involves the theory of refining a Dharmic Armament, which is also how the will of the gods are being carried. However, that isn’t all. At the same time, it involves the collision between Spirit Restriction and antimatter.” With that, the illusory female figure didn’t continue. In reality, the reason she revealed those core top secrets was that she had received notification that she was allowed to say them.

Just that information alone had a significant impact on Wang Baole. When he heard about the collision with the antimatter, for some unknown reason, the first thought that surfaced in his mind was the Spirit Qi and Negative Spirit Qi, which was also known as the Dark Qi, colliding together. He wondered if that could also produce an astonishing force.

However, he was unable to test it out right where he was. After committing it to his memory and as the illusory female figure left, he carried on, occasionally turning to look at the Stellar Source mountain. He was thinking about when he would have a Stellar Source mountain of his own. He vaguely guessed that it might be the key to him refining a ninth-grade Dharmic Armament.

Even though Jin Duoming wasn’t very clear about this matter, he had seen Wang Baole’s reaction and how deep in thought he appeared. He immediately realized that this trip was immensely helpful to Wang Baole, and with that, he began to think actively and concluded that he had to place a higher bet on Wang Baole.

In this way, the duo who had different thoughts followed the illusory female figure and left research room number two. As they continued down the passageway, they entered research room number three, which Zhao Pinfang was in and was also the final destination of their journey.

Even though there were many research rooms in the research facility, with at least tens of them at one glance, they weren’t all accessible to Wang Baole and Jin Duoming. Looking at where Zhao Pinfang was located, one would know that they would only be able to view three research rooms at most.

Research room number three looked different from the previous two rooms. The moment they stepped in, a research room that had no equipment, no Stellar Source mountain, and no research staff was presented before Wang Baole. It couldn’t even be considered a research room, and was more like an ordinary mountain cave!

However, on the walls of the cave, a mural of the cosmos was carved. On that mural, numerous stars dotted the night sky, and there was a gray planet amongst it. The planet seemed to have reached the end of its lifespan, and was now in the process of breaking apart. Uncountable spirits who looked to be in excruciating pain were emerging from the disintegrating planet and congregating into a stream.

Wang Baole didn’t pay much attention to all that. The moment he entered, his gaze, as well as that of Jin Duoming’s, uncontrollably landed on a middle-aged man whose back was facing them. He was looking at the mural and the spirit stream!

A blue-shirted man, who looked like a scholar and had a head of gray hair that appeared like a silver river, stood there, like a mountain. Even though he didn’t turn back, an indescribable suppressive force was emanating and spreading in all directions from his body!

He was the lead spirit researcher, the Dao partner of the Martian Colony Governor, Zhao Pinfang!

Chapter 410: Lone Boat, Black Robe, and Lantern Oar!

With his blue shirt and gray hair, an indescribable air of classiness emerged from his back view. It was elegant, yet prideful, as if all the different qualities had combined and formed a unique charisma that made everyone before him lower their heads with unworthiness.

That was so for Jin Duoming. After meeting Zhao Pinfang, he immediately greeted him respectfully.

“Little Ming hereby greets Uncle Zhao.” Jin Duoming spoke hurriedly. In reality, he knew very clearly that this man before him didn’t rely on his relationship as someone’s Dao partner to attain his current status. Instead, it should be said that Zhao Pinfang’s importance to the Federation resulted in him having a Dao partner. Other than his exceptional qualities, his progression process was also extremely smooth.

However, compared to the fame of the Martian Colony Governor, Zhao Pinfang wasn’t well known amongst the commoners. He was only prominent in the upper ranks of every faction of society.

Wang Baole had wanted to greet him too. However, hearing that Jin Duoming addressed himself as ‘Little Ming’, he couldn’t help and almost laugh out loud despite Zhao Pinfang’s back view making him feel immense pressure. Wang Baole was still well aware of what he needed to do and immediately greeted Zhao Pinfang as well.

“Little Le hereby greets Uncle Zhao.”

Wang Baole’s words caused Jin Duoming to raise his eyebrows as he glanced at Wang Baole. Noticing Wang Baole’s facial expression upon addressing himself as ‘Little Le’, he didn’t say much, instead, preparing himself for a good show.

At the same time, Zhao Pinfang, who had his back to them and was looking at the mural, had a look of bewilderment flash across his face. However, he regained his composure quickly and slowly turned around.

The moment he turned around and Wang Baole saw his looks clearly, even he, who thought of himself the most handsome person in the Federation, felt guilty of that thought. Despite having reached middle age, Zhao Pinfang’s handsome facial features and appearance showed that he was extraordinary. It wasn’t difficult to imagine that he was definitely an extremely suave man in his younger days!

Even though he was middle-aged and covered with a head of gray hair, he was still elegant, which made the impact of his handsome looks even greater.

Everyone here is a man... Wang Baole sighed deeply as feelings of jealousy surged continuously in his heart. He quickly suppressed it, but still felt that Zhao Pinfang looked familiar, just that he was unable to recall when he had seen him.

While Wang Baole felt bewildered, Zhao Pinfang, who had turned around, looked calmly at Jin Duoming and Wang Baole.

His gaze merely swept across Jin Duoming, but it was more focused on Wang Baole as he inspected him in detail for a moment. In the end, he snorted.

That shocked Wang Baole and sent chills into his heart. Zhao Pinfang retracted his gaze and turned around again to face the mural. From the beginning until the end, he didn't say a word.

That made Wang Baole even more nervous and uneasy. He quickly glanced at Jin Duoming, his eyes revealing his intention to ask about the situation. Jin Duoming also blinked, trying to convey the message that he wasn't sure what was going on either.

Wang Baole took a deep breath. He felt that something was amiss but didn't know where the problem lay. He began making speculations in his mind.

Why is he staring at me? He even snorted... That's not right. There's something wrong here. Could it be... Wang Baole thought about it, and a thought suddenly flashed in his head. He was thinking about whether Zhao Pinfang, like his Dao partner, had really wanted to ask him to be their son-in-law!

Seeing that Wang Baole was growing concerned again, Jin Duoming laughed and didn't bother to explain the situation. He stood obediently at the side. As for Zhao Pinfang, he didn't care about the worries written clearly on Wang Baole's face. Instead, after staring at the mural for a long time, he opened his mouth slowly and spoke the first sentence since the trio had met.

"Come closer, the two of you. Tell me what you see in this mural."

As Zhao Pinfang's calm voice reverberated, Jin Duoming stepped forward immediately and looked extremely serious as he inspected the mural. Wang Baole also quickly put aside the emotions that he was experiencing and stepped beside Zhao Pinfang, raising his head to look at the mural.

He had glanced at the mural previously, and now that he was looking at it up close—at the devastated planet, and at spirits from the planet's deceased individuals accumulating into a river as they blended into the cosmos—the mural looked a little bizarre. However, it was difficult to see what was going on exactly, especially since Wang Baole was still thinking about the weird glance that Zhao Pinfang threw at him. Therefore, Wang Baole didn't speak; instead, he pretended to look at the mural in detail.

However, as he looked, Wang Baole's pupils suddenly constricted. He was previously a distance away and didn't feel it strongly, but now that he was near it and observing the mural, he suddenly felt an aura emanating from the mural...

That aura was so weak that others were unable to sense it. However, to Wang Baole, who was trained in the Dark Art, it was extremely familiar. To confirm what he had felt, he even went forward to touch it. The moment he touched the mural, Wang Baole was shocked. He was very sure that it was Dark Qi that was being given off by the mural!

"Little Ming, you go first." As Wang Baole was still reveling in shock, Zhao Pinfang spoke calmly.

Jin Duoming quickly responded. After thinking about it for a brief moment, he spoke with a deep voice.

"Uncle Zhao, to me, there is a deep meaning being conveyed by the mural. Even though I am somewhat ignorant, I can tell that this mural is conveying a message of hope. For example, the death of this galaxy, as well as the emergence of the spirits, all these are extreme expressions. I feel that revolt would occur when things become serious, and this extreme description perhaps encompassed hope as well as an opportunity that I am still unable to fathom!"

Jin Duoming's reply sounded exciting to Wang Baole. That wasn't simply viewing the mural. Instead, it was a profound interpretation of the depiction on the mural. At the same time, Wang Baole also noticed that after Zhao Pinfang heard the reply, he nodded his head slightly. Instantly, Wang Baole realized that it was a form of assessment!

Prominent figures all like to throw out assessments upon meeting someone, huh? Wang Baole sighed and was thinking about what to say when he heard Zhao Pinfang's voice.

"Wang Baole, it's your turn!"

"Tsk..." Wang Baole was unhappy. He felt that Zhao Pinfang was biased against him, referring to Jin Duoming as Little Ming and sounding warm when talking to him. In contrast, when speaking to him, he called his name directly. It appeared that Zhao Pinfang had some preconceived notions about him.

Even though he didn't know where the preconceived notion arose from, but his temper was worked up as he turned to look directly at Zhao Pinfang.

"Master Zhao, different people would have different interpretations about the meaning of this mural. Little Ming feels that it conveys a meaning of hope, while I feel that it is more like a ritual. However, regardless of the varying views, all these are guesses. I have a different interpretation of this mural!"

"This mural hails from the Divine Armament Catacombs on Mars!" The first half of Wang Baole's sentence didn't generate any reaction from Zhao Pinfang. However, the second half made Zhao Pinfang immediately turn to look at Wang Baole.

This time, his eyes no longer carried an intent to inspect Wang Baole. Instead, a look of curiosity was apparent.

"Why do you say that?"

"Based on my intuition!" Wang Baole raised his head, speaking calmly with his hands behind his back, trying to hint that Zhao Pinfang was biased and that he had a temper as well.

Jin Duoming blinked and stepped back. He felt that the way Wang Baole was speaking to Zhao Pinfang would easily earn him a beating. As for Zhao Pinfang, he looked even more curious, and that look of curiosity gradually transformed into a look of appreciation, as if he was very satisfied with Wang Baole's answer. While Jin Duoming was still bewildered, Zhao Pinfang laughed.

"There were many before you from the Federation who have viewed this mural previously. However, Wang Baole, you are the first one who managed to point out the origin of this mural without knowing about its background!"

"You're no doubt the City Lord of Divine Armament New City who suppressed the catacombs. Your exploration of the catacombs seems profound, which has helped to hone this intuition of yours!"

"You're right. This mural indeed originated from the Divine Armament Catacombs on Mars. It was one of the items discovered by the various factions when they first entered the catacombs those years back!"

"This mural is unique. It is ever-changing, and under different lighting conditions, other hidden images can be seen on it!" As Zhao Pinfang spoke, he raised his right hand and flailed. Instantly, in research

room number three, the lighting was transformed. The surrounding caves disappeared, replaced by the cosmos!

It was as if the trio had been teleported into space. As they stood in the vast cosmos, the surroundings and the mural were completely integrated together. Rather, to a certain extent, it could be said that the trio had been transported into the world within the mural.

It was also at this moment that the image on the mural was transformed. Even though the planet was still devastated, and the uncountable spirits were still flowing into a river, outside the planet, at the end of the spirit river, a black Lone Boat appeared in the cosmos!

On this black Solo Raft stood a man in a black robe. This black-robed man was holding a unique oar, where a light hung!

Lone Boat, Black Robe, Lantern Oar!

The path of the Lone Boat seemed to be able to separate light from darkness. The glow from the Lantern Oar was like the guidance from a light tower. As the black-robed man proceeded forward, the river of spirits behind him no longer looked to be in pain. Instead, they seemed to be in peace as they moved along.

“Have either of you heard about the Dark Sect?” In the cosmos, Zhao Pinfang’s voice, which carried a meaning of utmost respect to the point of addiction, reverberated softly. It wasn’t a question; he was just mumbling to himself.