

Worth 411

Chapter 411: The Legend of the Dark Sect

“The Dark Sect?” Jin Duoming froze. This was the first time he had heard of this bloodline. He knew that Zhao Pinfang probably wasn’t referring to any bloodlines found on Earth. The Dark Sect clearly had something to do with the Divine Armament Catacombs. Based on his deductions, it should belong to an extraterrestrial civilization!

All kinds of thoughts surfaced in Jin Duoming’s head. He didn’t notice how Wang Baole’s eyes had narrowed slightly when the latter had heard the words “Dark Sect”. Emotions surged inside Wang Baole. He hadn’t expected Zhao Pinfang to know of the Dark Sect!

Wang Baole was still quite the adept at controlling himself. He simply appeared to look confused, opened his mouth, and asked a question.

“The Dark Sect?”

Zhao Pinfang hadn’t been paying attention to Wang Baole and Jin Duoming. His words might have seemed like a question, but he had actually been speaking to himself. He didn’t believe Wang Baole or Jin Duoming would know anything about the Dark Sect. This was a mysterious bloodline of the past, after all. Even he, who had spent years researching it, had only managed to come across a few clues after the discovery of the Divine Armament Catacombs and after studying the ancient greenish-bronze sword’s history accumulated in countless fragments.

“The Dark Sect... at the height of its glory, it controlled the universal cycle of rebirth, guarding the souls across the galaxies... one might even call the Dark Sect the master of death in the universe!

“In fact, I feel that there’s another name that suits them better... Heavenly Dao!

“Perhaps, they are the Heavenly Dao, perhaps, they are the Heavenly Dao given form, or perhaps, they are the ambassadors of the Heavenly Dao, tasked to protect and carry out the laws of the entire universe!”

“Based on the records found in some fragments, some initially believed the Dark Sect to be a fabrication, something that didn’t exist. However, as more and more ruins were discovered, and with the discovery of Dark Artifacts, there was conclusive evidence that the Dark Sect really did exist. Not only that... during the period when it existed, the height of its glory likely surpassed the imagination of those who came after it!” Zhao Pinfang had a look of dazed adoration in his eyes. His voice grew more agitated. It was heavy with anticipation, yearning, and reverence.

“Can you imagine that? Those of the Dark Sect wandering across the entire universe. Where there is death, there is someone from the Dark Sect guiding them... this wall painting depicts one of the Dark Sect, guiding countless souls of the dead beyond this dying, soon-to-be-dead star...

“Unfortunately... I’m unable to discern more from the few documents I’ve found... a long, long time ago, this person of the Dark Sect... disappeared. Perhaps he died, or perhaps he left. Regardless, he no longer exists.”

“But even if the Dark Sect no longer exists... what they left behind still remains. The Martian Divine Armament isn’t an ordinary Divine Armament. Based on my analysis and assessment, there’s a high chance of it being a Dark Artifact that was left behind after the Dark Sect period!” Zhao Pinfang inhaled a deep breath. He muttered softly to himself, then lifted his right hand and waved. Suddenly, the starry skies around them vanished and transformed back into the side of a cave. The black-robed man and the boat on the wall paintings had all disappeared as well. Everything had returned to normal.

Be it Jin Duoming or Wang Baole, their breathing quickened, and their heartbeats raced. To Jin Duoming, the Dark Sect seemed like a story from a long time ago. But this story had a direct relation to the Divine Armament Catacombs beneath the new city. It was as if the ancient past and the present had come together and layered themselves over each other. His eyes shone with a strange, brilliant light. Awe and yearning for the distant time which belonged to the Dark Sect, when the Dark Sect had wandered the universe, rose in his heart.

He also wanted to be so powerful that he could control death and reincarnation.

Wang Baole seemed as surprised as Jin Duoming was. However, the shock he was feeling inside his heart vastly exceeded what he was showing on his face. That was because he knew of the Dark Sect, and was practicing the Dark Art himself. Sometimes, he even felt that he himself might be somehow related to someone from the Dark Sect.

The impact and shock to Wang Baole was greater as he listened to the Dark Sect’s history with his current status. After all, Little Missy hadn’t revealed such details. She had only spoken briefly about it.

Zhao Pinfang’s words seemed to have opened a door for Wang Baole, towards a greater understanding of the Dark Sect. He had a greater knowledge of the Dark Sect. His yearning was different from Jin Duoming’s. He somehow sensed that if he continued to practice the Dark Art and reached the pinnacle of the mystic art, he might perhaps... be able to wander the universe as well?

The thought sent Wang Baole’s heart racing. His panting grew heavier. He and Jin Duoming stared at each other. Then, they turned and looked at Zhao Pinfang.

Zhao Pinfang had calmed down. He turned, his eyes falling on Wang Baole and Jin Duoming. He seemed to want to speak more about the Dark Sect, but his voice transmission ring vibrated then. He checked it and frowned. He ended the conversation and chose to leave.

Before he left, he summoned the illusory girl and got her to bring the two to visit three other labs. He also approved the construction of a research facility in the new city.

“I can approve the new research facility, but you must remember, the Divine Armament Catacombs concerns the Dark Sect. You have to be on your guard constantly. Once the wall disappears, perhaps we’ll be able to uncover part of the veil... the mysterious veil that has been concealing the Dark Sect for such a long time!” Having said that, Zhao Pinfang turned and was about to leave. There was anxiety in his eyes. The transmission had clearly contained news that was important to him. But as he reached the entrance to the third lab, Zhao Pinfang stopped in his tracks. He turned and looked at Wang Baole, suddenly saying.

“Wang Baole, cut down on your snacks and do more exercise. You’re a Primary Rank Three Noble and a city lord. You shouldn’t be snacking all the time. That’s hardly proper. You should work harder on your

cultivation as well, and reach the Core Formation realm as soon as possible!” He glared at Wang Baole, then left.

Wang Baole was slightly dazed. He thought there was something wrong with the final few words that Zhao Pinfang just said.

Why does he sound like my dad when he's not my dad! Besides, I'm already so slim, why do I need to go on a diet?

With doubts and grievance in his heart, Wang Baole and Jin Duoming followed the illusory girl and toured another three labs. However, the last three labs seemed more focused on the research and lab work, so they couldn't really understand what was going on. At the same time, they were still reeling from their knowledge of the Dark Sect. They were in no mood to check out what was going on in the last three labs. The illusory girl soon led them away and out of the research facility.

Only when they stepped into the teleportation array formation did Wang Baole finally feel his heart calm down. He turned and stared at the illusory girl who looked exactly like Little Missy. He turned and stared at the endless research facility, which seemed to hide countless secrets. He could sense that... there must be more secrets the Federation was hiding inside that it didn't wish to make public!

Maybe there's a Nascent Soul here. Who's to know? Wang Baole muttered secretly. He teleported alongside Jin Duoming and left with questions plaguing him.

When both of them appeared in the main Martian city again, they both released their breath at the same time. They didn't linger in the city. They boarded a cruiser and headed straight for the new city.

Jin Duoming was very satisfied with the visit. He had learned many pieces of secret information. The most important thing was that their proposal for a research facility was approved. He felt he had made a smart move by bringing Wang Baole along for this trip.

He hadn't told Wang Baole, but he had previously requested to visit Zhao Pinfang before, but the latter had ignored him. That was why Jin Duoming had thought hard about it. When he had applied again, he had included Wang Baole's name.

This round, Zhao Pinfang had agreed to have them over.

Jin Duoming had done quite a lot of preparations after obtaining the approval. He had thought about how Wang Baole might be embarrassed in front of Zhao Pinfang. He would have done something good if that had happened. The great Master Zhao didn't seem like the sort to kill the donkey when the grinding was done.

But Master Zhao only did a visual assessment without making any other moves... maybe he thinks that Wang Baole's not bad? That can't be possible. But if that's not the case, why would he reveal so many secrets, and even indirectly help Wang Baole come to an understanding of how to refine Dharmic Armaments... Jin Duoming had many doubts, but he was still happy with his gains.

As for Wang Baole, he felt that he had gained much as well. He had learned about a part of the Dark Sect's history and gained enlightenment on the Heavenly Evocation of Dharmic Armaments.

The former expanded Wang Baole's horizons while the latter was an immense practical help to his current stage in studying Dharmic Armaments.

But Wang Baole still felt that the way Zhao Pinfang had looked at him, and his final words, had been slightly strange. He thought about how Jin Duoming had invited him along. Even though he couldn't discern the details, he could still tell that Jin Duoming had made use of something special he had to gain an opportunity for the visit and also the approval for his request.

At that thought, Wang Baole raised his eyebrow. He suddenly patted Jin Duoming on the shoulder. He had something resembling a smile on his face as he spoke.

"Old Jin, you know, I've been studying Dharmic Armaments recently. I lack proper samples. Why don't you lend me fifty of those?"

Jin Duoming, who had been in a good mood, instinctively and hastily voiced his refusal when he heard Wang Baole's tone of voice.

"You might as well rob me blind. Do I look like I have so many Dharmic Armaments? No!"

"Really? Well, actually, I feel that there isn't really a need for a research facility in the new city, and I think Master Zhao seems to have some misunderstanding about me. It's alright, I'll just speak to the Governor when I get back. We won't go ahead with the research facility," Wang Baole said casually while snorting inwardly. He thought about how Jin Duoming had been planning to use his influence for his pet project. Why would Wang Baole agree to that without him coughing up something in return?

As soon as Wang Baole said that, Jin Duoming smiled wryly. He finally realized that Wang Baole was expressing his discontent. He was adamant about getting something out of this, by hook or by crook.

"One, I swear... I only have two on me. My family's not going to give me anymore. I can only lend you one!"

"You're giving me one? That's not appropriate. It's such a valuable thing. Fine, fine, since you're so sincere, I can't turn the gift down. It'll hurt your heart. Fine, I'll accept the gift. There's no next time." Wang Baole patted his tummy and shrugged. He had a look of exasperation on his face.

Jin Duoming was about to go crazy. He said he would lend it to him, not give it to him... but this wasn't the first time he had witnessed Wang Baole's complete lack of shame. Still, he couldn't bear the pain of losing a Dharmic Armament. He knew though, that if Wang Baole didn't get what he wanted, this jerk would really do something like send a voice transmission to the Governor. He thanked the heavens that Wang Baole didn't know the truth. Else, he would be asking for more in return... Jin Duoming gritted his teeth.

"Fine, but you have to promise you will let this rest!"

Chapter 412: Disturb the Grass, Startle the Snake!

It would have been all right if Jin Duoming hadn't said that. His words immediately sparked Wang Baole's suspicion. Upon seeing the expression on Wang Baole's face, Jin Duoming hastily waved his right hand and immediately pulled out a Dharmic Armament from his storage bracelet.

It was a flying sword!

It was red and exuded waves of heat as soon as it was pulled out. There seemed to be indistinct, piercing shrills ringing in the air. Within the waves of heat, one might even see the blurry image of a large phoenix appearing behind Jin Duoming. It stood within a vast ocean of fire that appeared to threaten to burn everything.

It was also a seventh-grade Dharmic Armament!

Wang Baole's eyes brightened at the sight of the Dharmic Armament. He knew how valuable a Dharmic Armament was. This flying sword was a seventh-grade Dharmic Armament, like his saber. However, it was clearly of better make than the saber. This difference was visible from the aura that the Dharmic Armament exuded.

With the Dharmic Armament before his eyes, he couldn't be bothered to analyze Jin Duoming's words to find the trap in them. Even if there was a trap, so what? If this really turned out to be a losing deal for him, he'd simply come and ask for another Dharmic Armament. There were perks to being friends with the rich and wealthy.

Wang Baole nodded with satisfaction. He seemed to have agreed to what Jin Duoming said. Jin Duoming understood that such verbal agreements weren't reliable, but having one was still better than none. Regardless of the loss he was feeling, he could only sigh and throw the flying sword at Wang Baole. He sighed. He must have been in Wang Baole's debt in his past life. There was no other explanation for why he kept handing Dharmic Armaments over to him.

I'll just have to see this as an investment! With that thought in mind, Jin Duoming felt a lot better.

The two of them sat in the cruiser and headed straight for the new city. On the way back, Wang Baole played around with the flying sword. He even studied and extended his senses towards it. He could immediately tell the difference between the two Dharmic Armaments. When combined with his gains inside the research facility, he could barely wait to go into seclusion and conduct even more in-depth research.

Wang Baole had a feeling that he would definitely reach a breakthrough in his refinement of Dharmic Armaments after this seclusion!

The cruiser carried his anticipation as it sped forward and steadily approached the new city. While Wang Baole was studying the Dharmic Armament, Jin Duoming also started thinking about his own plans. He had come to Mars partly because of the head of his family's request for him to keep an eye on the Divine Armament Catacombs, and partly because he wanted to try and fight for the right to become the successor to his family clan.

After all, he wasn't the only one qualified to become the heir. He had to do his due preparations. Compared to what the other potential successors had chosen, Jin Duoming had initially planned to stake a firm claim over the family's businesses on Mars. However, his father had reminded him to tag along more often with Wang Baole. That was what had resulted in their first contact on Mars.

From the way he saw it, this mobile investment was a steal. He was an important key in breaking up the Martian stalemate!

But how did the old man know that Wang Baole would fly through the ranks on Mars? Jin Duoming had his doubts regarding the matter. He couldn't figure this out. He knew that regardless of how much the old man approved of him, if the latter chose not to reveal the truth to him, he would never get an answer out of the latter, no matter how persistently he asked.

This Wang Baole is really quite an interesting fellow... At that thought, Jin Duoming snuck a glance at Wang Baole, who was busy studying the Dharmic Armament. He thought about the series of events that had happened after Wang Baole had arrived on Mars. He felt a tinge of envy. At the same time, he also recognized Wang Baole for what he had done.

Time passed steadily as Wang Baole studied the Dharmic Armament and the other studied Wang Baole. Divine Armament New City soon appeared before their eyes.

The cruiser approached the city steadily and slowly landed in the port within Jin Duoming's city zone. Even though Wang Baole had made this trip secretly, there were still many people from the four Dao Colleges waiting alongside Lin Tianhao in the port for his arrival.

As soon as Wang Baole stepped out of the cruiser, he saw a smiling Lin Tianhao as well as other familiar faces. A sense of belonging and warmth rose in his heart. He gazed at the buildings around them. This was his city, he thought, and his spirits soared.

"Greetings to the City Lord!" Lin Tianhao said loudly. Those behind him quickly cupped their fists and saluted.

Wang Baole smiled and nodded at the crowd. He was about to announce the outcome of the visit, and inform everyone that a research facility was to be built in the city. However, just as he was about to speak, he frowned suddenly. His eyes fell on one of the Foundation Establishment realm cultivators from the four Dao Colleges in the crowd that had come to receive him!

He was a middle-aged man. His expression was that of respect, his eyes brimming with enthusiasm and passion. He was no different from what Wang Baole had remembered him to be. Except... he exuded a faint but, to Wang Baole's eyes, clear... Dark Qi!

Wang Baole's pupils contracted immediately. He was about to take a closer look when he sensed others exuding Dark Qi in the crowd. There were as many as five of them!

Wang Baole's heart leaped to his throat. He might have discounted one as an accident, but to have five in the group receiving him—that was simply horrifying. Wang Baole didn't act recklessly. He quickly retracted his gaze and continued to smile, but he was no longer in the mood to announce the new research facility. He left the port with Lin Tianhao.

During the return trip, Lin Tianhao stayed by Wang Baole's side, reporting the various incidents that had taken place in the city during his absence.

Wang Baole seemed normal while he listened to Lin Tianhao's reports, but he was observing Lin Tianhao closely as well. He verified that there was no Dark Qi on Lin Tianhao and let loose a breath of relief. He boarded the cruiser headed back for the City Lord's Office. As the group of people sped past, Wang Baole stood at the edge of the cruiser. His expression revealed nothing out of the ordinary. Secretly

though, he had made use of his access rights to the array formation and merged with the array formation. He began to inspect and gaze over the entire city.

Upon merging with the array formation, Wang Baole could immediately sense his Great Baole Array Formation filled with Dark Qi. The Dark Qi didn't originate from the catacombs but from within his city and its countless cultivators...

It was coming from them and being absorbed by the Great Baole Array Formation. This sent Wang Baole reeling. He immediately inspected the Great Martian Array Formation. Based on his sensitivity towards Dark Qi, he could also immediately sense a similar spirit energy within the Great Martian Array Formation.

Something's wrong! Wang Baole's breathing quickened. He turned and looked at Lin Tianhao. The latter was about to report on the Art of Longevity.

There's also this Art of Longevity. It suddenly appeared and was taken up very quickly by the population. We found nothing out of the ordinary after investigation, but together with the Deputy City Lord, we still decided to control its dissemination. Wang Baole's eyes suddenly narrowed when Lin Tianhao mentioned that point. He didn't interrupt the latter but continued to listen to Lin Tianhao's report. They reached the City Lord's Office. That was when Wang Baole suddenly issued an order. They would not be going to the office and would head to his residence instead.

When the cruiser reached his residence, Wang Baole got off as usual. He waited for Lin Tianhao and the rest to leave before entering his residence. The expression on his face immediately shifted to one of extreme seriousness. He activated the array formation and entered the chamber for seclusion. He sat down and crossed his legs, activating his access rights and merging with the array formation once again.

Once again, through the new city's array formations, he sensed Dark Qi inside countless cultivators in the entire city. With a solemn face, he pulled out the Art of Longevity that Lin Tianhao had sent to him. He studied it and found something amiss.

There's nothing wrong with this technique... nothing wrong if you practice it elsewhere. Only when you practice it in the new city, above the catacombs, where the air is heavy with Dark Qi, will something terrible and wrong happen!

It exploits the unique feature of the Great Martian Array Formation, which absorbs the population's Spirit Qi, and sends Dark Qi inside the Great Martian Array Formation... this cannot be the work of someone from the Federation. There's a great likelihood that it's the work of the Divine Armament Catacombs... but the monsters inside the cave are all without intelligence. How could they have come up with such a plan? This was what alarmed Wang Baole the most. He thought for a while and decided that the most important thing now was to expel the Dark Qi inside the practitioners of the Art of Longevity inside the new city!

Compared to finding the mastermind, this was a task more urgent. After all, as long as the array formation remained standing, the new city would remain safe and impenetrable. That was an unchangeable basic principle.

Perhaps I can kill two birds with one stone, and make the mastermind reveal himself! Wang Baole thought and finally came to a decision. He was going to be decisive about this. He was going to make a rash move and alert the enemy!

Before that though, he was going to have to make some preparations and refine a few special Dharmic Artifacts. It was fortunate that the entire city was a vast Eternal Fortress. Within it were core parts that only Wang Baole could access, where countless construction puppets were. Wang Baole had the ultimate advantage when it came to refining Dharmic Artifacts!

Chapter 413: To Overpower with Lightning!

Three days later, Wang Baole had readied himself. With the construction puppets and with adequate resources, he created ten thousand disc-shaped Dharmic Artifacts!

These special Dharmic Artifacts were linked to the central, smaller Great Baole Array Formation. Their purpose was singular. They were meant to counter the Dark Qi and absorb all Dark Qi from all practitioners of the Art of Longevity!

They also possessed a search function that allowed them to sense people with Dark Qi in them within a certain radius of the artifact. For those who had been practicing the art for a long time, they might face the risk of exhaustion and injury after Dark Qi was absorbed from their bodies. However, this would only happen to those who had reached a high level of the Art of Longevity. Else, there shouldn't be too much damage. He or she would only feel weakened temporarily.

Wang Baole planned to use these ten thousand Dharmic Artifacts to do a thorough search of the entire city and forcibly clear the city of Dark Qi. He was doing it using the artifacts instead of the Great Baole Array Formation. This was because he had assessed and knew that he shouldn't be utilizing the array formation so easily at the moment. If he left the array formation alone, the Dark Qi within it would remain dispersed. Once he activated it... it might increase the speed it was being contaminated and corrupted.

In order to clear the root of the problem, he would only activate the array formation after the entire city had been cleared of most of the Dark Qi exuding from his residents. When it seemed as if the source feeding into the array formation had been dealt fully with, Wang Baole would then have the confidence to get rid of the problem completely.

After having prepared everything, Wang Baole immediately issued his first order as the City Lord after his return. He didn't consult Li Wan'er or the other mayors. He had the power to make such unilateral decisions in such moments of crisis!

"The Art of Longevity is an evil art. Practicing such an art will have great adverse effects on one's body. It will suck one dry of life. It is like a poison. As long as it's not treated, it will forever plague and harm one's body!"

"Every city zone will be receiving its first batch of Dharmic Artifacts that will remove the adverse effects of the Art of Longevity. Practitioners may approach for treatment!"

“I want to emphasize again. This is an evil art. Anyone who continues to practice it will harm his or her own body and, at the same time, be breaking the law. Those who teach it will be punished more heavily!”

After the order was issued, an arrest warrant for the first three practitioners who had been spreading this art was also sent out. Li Wan'er and the rest were shocked. Wang Baole sent out a second order to them almost simultaneously.

“Kong Dao, Lin Tianhao, Jin Duoming, Wen Huai, Fang Jing, Chen Mu!

“The six of you are to immediately collect the Dharmic Artifacts. You will be responsible for your own city zones. Find all practitioners of the Art of Longevity and get rid of all signs of this evil art in their bodies. You have one day. You must complete this task within the day. This is an order! This art is an evil art. It is also corrupting the Great Martian Array Formation. You must know the consequences!

“Li Wan'er, you are responsible for supervising the mission and conducting an investigation. I want this Art of Longevity completely gone from the city tomorrow! If anything happens, don't blame me for what I do next. This was something that happened during my absence!”

Lin Tianhao and the others were all alarmed upon receiving the series of voice transmissions. Jin Duoming, on the other hand, handled them better. The rest all became solemn—Li Wan'er, especially. Her pupils contracted. She didn't hang around. She immediately got her people and started her supervisory work.

The Dharmic Artifacts that Wang Baole refined were all collected by the various city zones speedily. There were large-scale sweeps and elimination of the Dark Qi. Meanwhile, Wang Baole sat cross-legged in meditation in his residence. He narrowed his eyes and sank deep into thought. He sent a polite message to the few Core Formation realm cultivators whom the four Dao Colleges had sent over to guard him. Amidst the whole uproar, their task was to seek out the three initial practitioners with an arrest warrant. At the same time... they were also to locate the mastermind behind this entire incident!

A dramatic search-and-extermination exercise unfolded across the entire city, swift like lightning. Wang Baole's reaction to his discovery had been harsh and brutal. He had first declared the Art of Longevity an evil art. This would shock and alarm most practitioners. After all, they knew very clearly that to practice an evil art in the Federation was a heavy crime!

Wang Baole had also pointed out that practicing such an art would severely affect and wear on one's body. It would drain one of life. It was like a poison that spread throughout the entire body, difficult to drain. This would inspire the practitioners' terror. They wouldn't only stop practicing, but they would begin to feel anxiety and fear.

The moment when they were feeling anxiety and panic, Wang Baole revealed a glimmer of hope. That was the first batch of Dharmic Artifacts in each zone that could treat this disease. Such hope, at such a critical moment, was enough to move passive practitioners into action. This would increase the ease and efficiency of those tasked to seek out the practitioners.

With such a series of implicit hints and explicit orders, if there remained those who were stubborn and couldn't be persuaded, Wang Baole also presented a stern and serious warning in his orders. The arrest warrant for the three original initiators was a fine example!

The lightning-swift exercise soon erupted across the entire new city. Bans and searches commenced in every city zone. There were plenty of cultivators who approached the administration of their own accord.

As the search went on, the Core Formation realm cultivators from the four Dao Colleges were also taking note of any clues that surfaced. They followed the tracks and began their hunt for the mastermind.

In the midst of this sudden exercise, Wang Baole didn't once make an appearance. He continued to sit cross-legged in his residence. He merged with the array formation and was waiting for the moment when the root of the problem was exterminated. That was when he would address and resolve the hidden dangers in the array formation.

He had also made other preparations. He got Kong Dao and Jin Duoming to instruct their guards and escorts to stand guard around the residence. This was to prevent the mastermind from trying to attack him, the leader of the exercise.

Time passed steadily. Wang Baole's orders had been issued decisively, and Li Wan'er also realized the seriousness of the matter. She pushed the investigations and search on forcefully. Finally, late that night, the search of the entire city was completed. Almost all practitioners of the Art of Longevity were rid of the Dark Qi inside them.

Li Wan'er had even led the team into the autonomous zones and conducted the search personally. Chen Mu, who hadn't been diligently following orders, also finally completed the search in the autonomous zone.

Kong Dao and Lin Tianhao were the ones who had been the most thorough in the entire exercise. The search in their zones had been beyond rigorous. Even Jin Duoming couldn't compare. Kong Dao, especially, had sent a voice transmission to Wang Baole late in the night. He had reported decisively that there wasn't a single person in his zone who continued to practice the Art of Longevity. All past practitioners had been rid of the Dark Qi in their bodies!

Wang Baole heard Kong Dao's report. Lin Tianhao's and the others' reports followed swiftly. When Li Wan'er reported on behalf of the three autonomous zones, Wang Baole finally let loose a sigh of relief in his heart. However, he knew that this was still not over. He continued to wait.

Two hours passed. He finally received the voice transmission from the Core Formation realm cultivators of the four Dao Colleges.

"We've arrested all three perpetrators, but we didn't find the mastermind. After interrogation, we found that the three... were only puppets!"

Wang Baole frowned when he heard the news. He had created a great spectacle and destroyed the other's plans within a single day. The mastermind should have retaliated. Be it attempting to come after him or through any other methods; there should have been traces of his presence. With so many Core Formation realm cultivators searching and keeping a lookout, such traces would have been difficult to hide. They should have been able to follow such tracks and caught him.

Who would have known things would turn out this way...

Unless the mastermind immediately hid himself as soon as trouble started brewing, he didn't care about the destruction of his plans... or perhaps, he has already achieved his goals? Wang Baole frowned. He pondered for a while but didn't have an answer. He knew that this wasn't the time for deep thoughts. He took a deep breath and immediately activated the array formation over the entire city. The array formation roared to life and attempted to cleanse itself of all hidden dangers!

This is the mastermind's last chance. Let's see if he's able to control himself! Wang Baole knew that once the array formation was cleansed of all hidden dangers, it would revert to its original secure state. Even though it had suffered damages, but its foundations were strong. This meant that the efforts of the other party had all been for nothing.

That was why he had concluded that the other party would definitely make a move now. He had prepared for that. It was as Wang Baole had predicted, with a slight variation... the black-robed man didn't interrupt Wang Baole's attempt to cleanse the array formation. At that moment, he appeared soundlessly in mid-air above Wang Baole's residence!

He stood in the air, clothed in black robes, clearly visible yet undetected by anyone. It was as if he didn't exist.

His eyes, hidden beneath the black robes, glimmered with a ghostly light. They seemed to be able to pierce through all walls, see right into the hidden chambers of Wang Baole's residence, and stare straight at the meditating Wang Baole!

"Is that really a Dark Child?" The black-robed man murmured. He seemed hesitant. After a while, he seemed to have made up his mind. He raised his right hand suddenly and pointed a finger towards Wang Baole.

"We'll just have to find out!"

Chapter 414: Continue Bragging

Intuition wouldn't be able to accurately assess whether one was a Dark Child. One needed to sacrifice part of his vitality from his very core to reach for and nudge at the other's true essence. If that didn't trigger a response, one would then be able to conclude firmly that the other wasn't a Dark Child!

The black-robed man hadn't intended to make use of his own life essence as he hadn't thought that Wang Baole was a Dark Child. The Dark Sect had fallen a long, long time ago, becoming a mere legend. There remained few signs in this world that still proved it had existed before.

The sudden appearance of someone who might be a Dark Child invited incredulity from the black-robed man. After all... even during the height of the Dark Sect's glory, there had been few who had been able to become a Dark Child.

Due to his rank and status, the black-robed man didn't know what conditions existed that allowed one to become a Dark Child, but in the depths of his memory remained the fear and horror the Dark Sect inspired during those days in the past. He could never forget the days when he hadn't become an Artifact Spirit. He had trembled before a mere ordinary disciple of the Dark Sect.

Now that so much time had passed, and with him falling into a deep sleep then waking up again and continuing this cycle repeatedly, his memories had grown blurrier when he tried to remember the past. His awe and fear of the Dark Sect hadn't faded away though, regardless of how much time had passed.

In fact, it could be argued that... the Dark Sect was his prison, and the Dark Child, his master!

Any Dark Child could easily control it. He had no means of fighting back. He couldn't devour his host and master. This was the scars of the past, the laws that had been branded deep into his life essence in the distant past.

He couldn't fight back. He couldn't make them stir. This was his fate!

That was why he didn't want to and indeed didn't believe that there was still a Dark Child in this world!

But the corruption of the array formation had been exorcised in a lightning-swift manner. He had secretly sensed the creation of those Dharmic Artifacts as well. Despite thinking it impossible, he still felt uncertainty over the matter. He knew what it meant if a Dark Child really appeared. He found that unacceptable. That was why he had come here. That was why he was sacrificing his own life essence to test the truth and set his heart at ease.

That was why he had pointed at Wang Baole!

It seemed like an ordinary action, and it didn't draw the attention of any of the Core Formation realm cultivators. However, it appeared to form a link with the heavens and earth. It spoke to the stars and formed an indescribable, strange energy wave. The black-robed man's pointing of a finger seemed to pierce through space, the walls, disregarding everything as it raced towards the secret chambers where Wang Baole was!

The energy wave suddenly flooded the insides of the secret chamber. It was infused heavily with Dark Qi. It held the black-robed man's life essence and contained him in his entirety. It appeared before Wang Baole and transformed into a wide gaping mouth that no one else could see. This wide mouth was an illusion. It was about to swallow and devour Wang Baole, who was sat in meditation and cleansing the array formation, whole!

It was as the wide mouth was about to swallow him whole that Wang Baole seemed to sense something amiss. He opened his eyes suddenly. Others might not be able to see this wide gaping mouth, but he immediately saw it, clear as day, when he opened his eyes. His pupils contracted immediately. His heart stuttered. Before Wang Baole could do anything, suddenly, the Dark Fire inside his body seemed to wrestle free from his control and erupted inside his body!

As if sensing the violation from a subordinate, the Dark Fire instinctively showed its power and authority!

A ghostly light appeared instantly in Wang Baole's eyes. Where his pupils were, appeared, instead, the Dark Fire. An indescribable cold erupted at that instant. It plunged the entire secret chamber into an iciness. The Dark Fire that had just erupted surged out from Wang Baole's body alongside the chill, expanding and surging outwards!

Inside the secret chamber, away from the eyes of others, Wang Baole's entire body was covered in a towering Dark Fire. An endless and overwhelming air of authority surged from his person. He seemed

invincible and impenetrable. The wide mouth clamped over the Dark Fire and let loose a scream of agony.

It was like an ordinary person swallowing fire, and the screaming wide mouth started to melt before one's eyes. Everything happened in a blink of an eye. The gaping wide mouth that had been formed from the life essence of the black-robed man was burned to crisps. It tried to fall back, but the Dark Fire came after it, seemingly with an intention to punish it for its offense!

At that critical moment, the wide mouth—in its desperation to escape, and in its fear and panic—collapsed into itself, dodging the Dark Fire's relentless pursuit and saving itself!

This was only possible because the black-robed man was simply that powerful, while Wang Baole's Dark Fire was only in its infancy. Else, even if the black-robed man had allowed his life essence to scatter and disperse, he would still not have been able to escape the attack of the Dark Fire.

Everything had happened extremely quickly—from the appearance of the black-robed man to his test, and finally to the retaliation of the Dark Fire. Outside, in the sky, no one could see the black-robed man and how he had self-destructed a part of his life essence. His face was colored in alarm. He instinctively fell back hastily, retreating hundreds of yards. His eyes, hidden beneath his robes, were colored with indescribable horror and incredulous shock.

"The Dark Fire... this... this is impossible!" The black-robed man shouted. The flames that no one could see, that were rising to the skies from Wang Baole's residence, were clear in his eyes. It was a black fire. It exuded not heat but an incomparable chill. It seemed to be able to stir spirits and send the wheels of rebirth spinning. This fire held an important meaning for the black-robed man. It exerted a control that he couldn't fight against!

The sight of it sent the black-robed man, already shaking in his soul, trembling once again. His breathing quickened significantly, and his whole body was swaying. His inner world seemed to have been ripped apart.

Dark Fire. How can there still be Dark Fire in this world? He... he truly is a Dark Child! The black-robed man trembled. He was besieged by a sense of incredulity.

The Dark Sect has fallen. How can there still be a Dark Child?

"Damn it!" The black-robed man roared in fury and madness. He couldn't control the indescribable fear that was taking over his body. He didn't wish for a master to appear so soon after he had obtained freedom. He found that impossible to accept. Madness and a fierce murderous intent slowly appeared in his eyes.

It was colored with caution. After a long while, he gradually calmed down. He stared unblinkingly at Wang Baole's residence. He was silent for a long while. Then, he slowly disappeared.

So what if he's the Dark Child... I can't go near him, and I can't attack him for fear of inviting a backlash... but I can still strike indirectly and get him killed!

As the black-robed man departed, inside the secret chambers of his residence, the uncontrollable Dark Fire inside Wang Baole gradually disappeared and returned inside his body. Wang Baole gasped. He had

an ugly expression on his face. He knew that the mastermind behind the Art of Longevity must have tried to attack him.

He pondered for a long while. Then, Wang Baole continued to cleanse the array formation. He finally completely cleansed the array formation late that night. Staring at the array formation as it finally resumed normalcy, his heart was finally at ease.

My Dark Fire attacked without prompting. It seemed to be able to counter the attacker... Wang Baole fell deep into thought. He lowered his head and stared at the ground. Deep beneath the ground was where the Divine Armament Catacombs lay.

The Dark Sect and the Dark Artifact... Wang Baole fell silent. He thought for a long while before he took out the black mask and entered the hallucination realm. He found Little Missy.

This time, Little Missy appeared. She was still her beautiful self. Her back was towards Wang Baole, and she seemed to be gazing into the distance, thinking.

Before Wang Baole could speak, Little Missy's cold, clear voice rang out.

"The research facility that you visited earlier. There is a piece... a shattered fragment of the mask in the facility. It contains a part of my original essence..."

"Ah?" Wang Baole immediately realized what was going on when he heard that. He had compared both and come to similar conclusions, but he wasn't here for this. He quickly spoke.

"Little Missy, is the person who attacked me earlier also a Dark Art practitioner? And, Master Zhao said that the Divine Armament here is a Dark Artifact... and, just now, my Dark Fire appeared automatically without any prompting. Didn't you say that we shouldn't reveal our Dark Fire easily? But it erupted on its own. What happened there?" That was what Wang Baole was desperate to find out at the moment.

"..." Little Missy, who had her back towards Wang Baole, was clearly stunned. There was suspicion and doubt in her eyes. She hadn't noticed or sensed any attack. She hadn't sensed the Dark Fire inside Wang Baole suddenly appearing without prompting. After all, she wasn't one of the Dark Sect!

Her reaction was swift, though. She got a vague idea of what had happened from what Wang Baole said. She felt sour with envy and bewildered at the same time. She thought to herself, *You're asking me? Who do I get the answers from...* Regardless, she had to keep up her pretense. She was silent for a while. She felt that she should give Wang Baole an impossible task that would end this entire topic about the Dark Sect. Else, if this continued, she'd be exposed for a fraud one of these days...

She lifted her chin and said casually, with a deep unfathomable air about her.

"Fine, since you already know, I'll stop with the hiding. There indeed is a Dark Artifact here. I left it here ages ago. It's nothing fantastic, but it would be appropriate for you to use it. If fate allows it, you can simply take it!

"I can't even be bothered to deal with whatever tried to attack you earlier. It's just a lowly Dark Servant!

"Don't overreact the next time. Remember, we cultivators of the Dark Sect wander the galaxies. Stars may collapse, but space remains constant. You should be calm and firm in whatever you do!

“Alright, I’m tired. You can leave.”

Chapter 415: Take Responsibility for One’s Actions!

Little Missy waved her hand after saying that. The hallucination realm grew blurry instantly, and a wave of spirit energy surged outwards, shoving Wang Baole out of the realm.

As the hallucination realm resumed its peace and quiet, Little Missy, the ethereal beauty in Wang Baole’s eyes, hastily let loose a breath of relief. She patted her chest as her exquisite brow frowned. There was a troubled and frustrated expression on her face. She even stomped her foot.

Someone attacked him earlier? Why didn’t I sense that... and the sudden appearance of the Dark Fire, how would I know about that? This freak, hasn’t he got other things to do? Why is he asking me all these questions?

Luckily, the guy surnamed Zhao revealed quite a bit. Else, I’d have been exposed today... Little Missy was troubled, and her head throbbed. She was beginning to regret her past braggings and exaggerations.

That can’t be on me. Who would’ve thought that he would really be able to master the technique? Doesn’t that make him a freak?

Luckily, I’m smart and gave this freak an impossible task! I don’t believe he can really retrieve the Dark Artifact down there! At that thought, Little Missy’s heart was set at ease. But soon, it dropped again. She began to doubt herself. Every time she felt that something was impossible to accomplish, this guy would quickly prove her wrong and show her what a freak was truly capable of...

That can’t be possible... even though I don’t know if what’s lying below is indeed a Dark Artifact or not, but I can sense the terrifying aura that’s resting below... right, it should be fine. He can’t possibly succeed! Little Missy quickly comforted herself. She laughed. She must have slept for too long. Her head must be muddled. Else, why would she think that Wang Baole, at the Foundation Establishment realm, had any chance of getting his hands on what was obviously a rare treasure?

I’m trying to let him understand that he should do things slowly and play by the book. Right, that’s right. This is all for his own good! She grew pleased with herself at that thought. Without knowing it, she started humming a tune. Then, she started to feel weird. This was a tune that freak Wang Baole had hummed before. She was irked momentarily and changed to another tune...

While Little Missy remained pleased with her quick wit, Wang Baole, pushed out from the hallucination realm, was sitting inside the secret chamber. He went through what Little Missy had said. He began to see reason in her words. At the same time, he felt slightly incredulous.

She said the treasure underground was something she’d left behind in the past? That’s a bit too fantastical, isn’t it? Her bragging knows no bounds... Wang Baole’s first reaction was disbelief, but he soon began to doubt himself. He thought back to his interactions with Little Missy. He realized that she had never deceived or misled him, not once. As long as it was something she said, he would be able to get it done.

These repeated incidents led to Wang Baole's self-doubt. He began to consider the possibility that Little Missy had really left the artifact behind.

If that's really the case, there's nothing wrong with me trying to get my hands on it. Perhaps this really is what it is. Little Missy has always been right. Her origins are a mystery. She might have been some really important figure who had come from the ancient green-bronze sword. Wang Baole grew excited at that thought. He remembered the Dark Servant that Little Missy had mentioned. He suddenly felt that the guy who had tried to sneak attack him hadn't been that impressive or powerful.

I thought he must be someone impressive, but he turned out to be a servant. Wang Baole immediately felt a sense of superiority. He slapped his tummy happily. He increasingly felt that Little Missy had been a great help to him.

But the reason that I'm able to achieve what I've achieved is through my own blood, sweat, and tears! Wang Baole took a deep breath. He reminded himself not to be overcome by pride. He also shouldn't shirk the responsibilities and burdens that came with his achievements and throw said responsibilities onto Little Missy. After all, he was a good man who was capable of shouldering his own burdens and taking responsibility for his own actions.

Since I've worked so hard, I'm not going to pretend that I wouldn't have become what I have become today even if I didn't have Little Missy. Wang Baole believed that his system of values and morality had always been positive and on the right path. At present, he was on cloud nine. He remembered what he learned about the Anti-Spirit Bomb theory at the research facility.

The collision of antimatter and matter...

Wang Baole thought for a bit. He decided he would try to create a collision and fusion between Spirit Qi and Dark Qi, and test for any changes that might result from it. However, regardless of the number of attempts, he didn't earn any conclusive findings. The two energies counteracted the other naturally. As soon as they collided with each other, they vanished.

Wang Baole found that unfortunate and was at a loss. However, he still believed that his theory should be correct. The reason he didn't achieve the results he expected was because of insufficient knowledge on his part. He was missing something.

Fine, let's just set this matter aside. When the time is right and the conditions ripe, I can come back to this again. Wang Baole set aside his experimentation with matter and antimatter. He inspected the city's array formation again. Finally, with his heart set at ease, he retreated into seclusion and began his study of Dharmic Armaments.

After his recent trip to the research facility, he had gained great knowledge and understanding regarding the Heavenly Evocation step in the cycle of creating Dharmic Armaments. He had intended to immediately retreat into seclusion and mull over his findings after he had returned. He had wanted to test out his understanding. This had unfortunately been delayed by the incident of the Art of Longevity. Now that everything had been resolved, despite not being able to capture the mastermind, Wang Baole clearly felt that he held the upper hand over the other. Little Missy had said so, that he was only a lowly servant.

He set his emotions aside and began the process of understanding and testing out the Heavenly Evocation step in the refining of Dharmic Armaments.

Time passed slowly, and three days went by. The clean-up following the Art of Longevity fiasco continued. It was impossible to clean everything out within a single day. There were still a few areas scattered here and there, and a few stray cultivators not yet identified. They required the respective zones to continue with their investigations. They didn't pose that great of a problem, however.

There was also the proposal for the mass migration of residents to the new city, which had been approved by the Federation and the Martian administration. Soon, batches of cruisers carrying the new population arrived in the new city.

They were mainly the residents from the main Martian city, though a portion of them had come from Earth. They had been able to amass such a huge population due to the strong promotional efforts by the Federation and the Martian administration. In addition, great perks and subsidies were also being given out. That had led to a smooth migration process.

As the batches of residents arrived, great numbers of low-ranking Federation officials also arrived. With the surge in population, the lower administrative levels were clearly understaffed even though the upper levels were sufficiently staffed. The combined efforts of the four Dao Colleges and the other political forces wouldn't be enough to handle everything. The Federation and the Martian administration had to provide their people as well.

Li Xiu... was one of them. He didn't seek his father's help but had relied on his own strength and ability. He followed the newly migrated residents and arrived on Mars. The first thing he did when he arrived wasn't to seek out his own sister or his brother-in-law in name, but went to find Wang Baole.

He had known Lin Tianhao previously. That was why after Lin Tianhao had reported the findings from the first round of the Art of Longevity incident at Wang Baole's residence, he then opened the floor for Li Xiu's entrance.

"City Lord, I'm still in the midst of tidying up the data on the practice of the Art of Longevity in the various city zones. I'll be able to consolidate the detailed information in a few days and report them to you then. In addition... Li Xiu has arrived on Mars. He's approached me and requested to see you."

"Li Xiu?" There was a strange expression on Wang Baole's face after he heard what Lin Tianhao said. He agreed to see Li Xiu. Li Xiu, having heard the news, immediately arrived at Wang Baole's residence with great excitement and eagerness.

Upon seeing Wang Baole, Li Xiu quickened his steps. He cupped his fists in greeting and said loudly.

"Xiu'er greets his brother-in-law, the City Lord!"

Lin Tianhao was dazed. Wang Baole raised his eyebrow. He had a half-smile on his face as he studied Li Xiu. He said casually.

"Speak properly. Your brother-in-law isn't the City Lord, he's a mayor!"

Li Xiu didn't seem the slightest bit embarrassed. He raised his head and thudded against his chest. There was a look of indignation on his face. He said quickly.

“Li Xiu only knows one brother-in-law in his heart, and that’s you, City Lord. Chen Mu, that rascal, I don’t approve of him at all. What’s up with him, anyway? He isn’t as good looking as my brother-in-law, he’s not as capable, and he’s not as slim. There’s his rank as well. He’s only a Primary Rank Four Noble at his age. He’s trashier than trash!

“Don’t worry, brother-in-law. I’ve come to Mars to station myself in his autonomous zone. I’m going to keep a close watch on that bastard. There’s no need for you to do anything. I’ll find a chance and get rid of him myself. This bastard should try looking into a mirror. He’s an absolute toad. How dare he try to fight my brother-in-law for my sister!”

Lin Tianhao seemed not to have reacted to Li Xiu’s words, but his eyes narrowed slightly. He could sense, slightly, the arrival of another threat after Liu Daobin’s arrival...

Wang Baole eyed Li Xiu. He felt extremely pleased. Even though he thought Li Xiu had many areas requiring further improvement, he wasn’t without his positive qualities. This honesty of his, for example, in speaking the truth, was quite a good trait.

“Mayor Chen is a Federation official as well. It’s not appropriate, you calling him a bastard. Don’t do it when you’re in public.” Wang Baole was clearly inwardly soothed, despite his stern words.

Li Xiu’s eyes flashed. He knew that he had done a good job with his flattery. He hastily voiced his agreement.

“Since you have such a grudge against Mayor Chen, as a City Lord, I’m not in a position to interfere. Even if something should happen, it’ll be seen as a domestic dispute. The most I can do is to mediate the situation.” Wang Baole gave Li Xiu a meaningful look, then picked his teacup up.

Li Xiu was a smart person. Else he wouldn’t have paid a visit to Wang Baole as soon as he had arrived on the planet. He immediately knew what Wang Baole was trying to say. He knew that Wang Baole had accepted his declarations. After musing carefully over Wang Baole’s words, he realized that Wang Baole was hinting that he still needed a guarantee.

“City Lord, brother-in-law, don’t worry! I’ll get this done quickly!” Li Xiu thudded his chest. He felt invigorated and excited. He had thought this through clearly before he had arrived. He was going to declare loyalty to Wang Baole. He was a much better option than Chen Mu.

After all, he only had one sister. That meant he could only trade her once. Compared to selling her to Chen Mu, he might as well choose Wang Baole. He and his father diverged in their views. The lunar incident had inspired an indescribable sense of awe and respect on Li Xiu’s part with regard to Wang Baole. The degree of this awe and respect had grown with the elevation of Wang Baole’s status and rank. It had reached the heights of adoration.

Chapter 416: Knocking on the Door in the Middle of the Night!

Seeing that his charisma had prompted Li Xiu to greet him so respectfully, Wang Baole felt that, other than being equipped with the quality of being the most handsome person in the Federation, he had other qualities that were worthy of being learned by others.

In his delight, he sent Li Xiu away and handed other miscellaneous matters over to several other mayors. He then went into seclusion to research the Heavenly Evocation step of Dharmic Armament refining.

He had thought about the insights gained in the research facility during his tour of the research facility previously. However, there were time constraints then. This time, he planned to completely master the Heavenly Evocation, and at the same time, he didn't plan on neglecting his cultivation. He increasingly felt that he was close to reaching the perfected Foundation Establishment realm.

As for the refinement of his Intrinsic Dharmic Artifact, Wang Baole had always been on it. Now that he had completed the other tasks at hand, he meditated with his legs crossed and took out a red flying sword and a black saber. The moment he took the two Dharmic Armaments out, an astonishing suppressive force was given off. Previously, Wang Baole didn't know of the source of the suppressive force and had thought that it belonged to the viciousness of the Artifact Spirit.

However, right now, after understanding the Heavenly Evocation, Wang Baole was extremely clear that the Dharmic Armament was merely a carrier, and that was the same for the Artifact Spirit as well. The real suppressive force that emerged and made the force of the Dharmic Armament so astonishing originated from the so-called god that existed previously!

The so-called god is perhaps a ferocious beast or a has-been cultivator... Wang Baole was deep in thought. As he murmured, he felt for the two Dharmic Armaments once again. Vaguely, he seemed to be able to see the former figures of the two gods ruling heaven and earth.

Even though all of it was just Wang Baole's imagination, he was very clear that he was on the right path now. Since it was difficult to imagine the will of the gods that had previously existed, the only way to achieve that was through the two Dharmic Armaments.

Therefore, with that sensation and thought, Wang Baole gradually allowed himself to blend together with the two Dharmic Armaments in order to seek the will that existed inside and find signs of its consciousness. He wanted to sense the will of the gods while in the space between heaven and earth, so as to call the others over.

This process was a slow and long one. Even though Wang Baole was aware of the right direction, he still needed time before truly mastering the Dharmic Armament's Heavenly Evocation segment.

He was clear that he couldn't rush through this matter. However, he was confident that as long as he carried on, it was just a matter of time before he succeeded. Therefore, as he meditated and gained insights, days flew by.

Three days passed quickly.

In those three days, Wang Baole set aside all other miscellaneous matters. As he immersed his heart and soul fully in gaining insights into the Dharmic Armaments, his consciousness seemed to be truly integrated with the Dharmic Armament. It was as if he had left Divine Armament New City and was now loitering in between the heavens and earth on Mars. As he loitered, he heard murmurs and seemed to have noticed some illusory figures, as well as felt the remnants of the consciousness of the gods that had once existed on Mars.

However, all of this was general and not detailed. Wang Baole had only managed to feel it briefly, and even though he had wanted to attract it, he was unable to accomplish it. It was as if he was transformed into a similar kind of consciousness, floating continuously under the laws of heaven and earth.

After an unknown period of time, as he loitered, Wang Baole's body suddenly shook. He sensed the existence of a very strong consciousness that was on a scale that surpassed everything else a distance away!

This consciousness was strong like the sun and was like a bonfire compared to other forms of consciousness. Even though Wang Baole had only gently touched it, the ferocity of this consciousness was sufficient to make him tremble. At that moment, a loud shrill reverberated in his mind.

"Kill, kill, kill, kill!"

The screams that emerged from this consciousness were extremely ruthless, and its killing intent was so strong that it could destroy the heavens and earth. Wang Baole was unable to withstand it at all, and as he trembled, he spewed a mouthful of blood. He opened his eyes immediately, and even his breathing was extremely rapid. He quickly lifted his head, as if his vision could pass through the wall to look at the Mars firmament.

Which god did that consciousness belong to? Wang Baole took a deep breath, extremely shaken. He managed to calm down briefly after a long while, but as he recalled the madness and ferocity of that consciousness, he was still gripped with shock.

It should be the Heavenly Evocation stage that I reached just now, right? Or rather, was that the legendary fugue state that is similar to that in the Spirit Inception Era? Wang Baole wiped the perspiration off his forehead. He had qualms but also realized the danger of the Heavenly Evocation. At the same time, he was filled with curiosity and anticipation towards that deranged consciousness.

If I could attract it and create a carrier for it, then... my Dharmic Armament megaphone could possibly succeed! With that thought, Wang Baole was filled with hope. He thought that perhaps he had proceeded with the wrong step. He should first complete the carrier, as if setting a trap in place...

That's not right. I am a master, and my intentions must be upright... what I'm creating is not a trap. I am trying to allow the gods that have passed to reappear, so that they could, to a certain extent, reincarnate! With that thought, Wang Baole instantly felt that he had a duty, and he was pleased with his realization.

With that satisfaction towards himself, Wang Baole ended his seclusion. Thoughts about the material needed to make the Dharmic Armament carrier darted around his mind. The material should have two aspects. Firstly, it must be a precious refinement material, and second, it should contain the Artifact Spirit.

Regardless of whether it was the first or second aspect, it wasn't easy for Wang Baole to fulfill them despite him being the City Lord. As he thought about how to go about doing it, he suddenly grew alert and lifted his head to look at the door of the secret chamber.

The moment he turned to look, he seemed to have heard loud sounds of someone knocking on the door of the secret chamber. The voice that followed sounded urgent and even affected the simple array formation that he had set for his residence.

Why is she here? Wang Baole thought. Through the array formation of his residence, he could sense that it was his neighbor, Li Wan'er, that was outside his secret chamber.

It was now the wee hours of the night. It was pitch-black outside, and Li Wan'er's sudden visit made Wang Baole frown. He thought about it as the knocking grew even more urgent. Li Wan'er had even sent a voice transmission to Wang Baole through the voice transmission ring. In that voice transmission, there was only one sentence...

"Help me..."

With that sentence, the knocking stopped suddenly. Through the array formation, Wang Baole saw that Li Wan'er, who was outside, had already fallen unconscious.

That shocked Wang Baole. He immediately stood up and stepped out of the secret chamber. With all his focus, he activated his cultivation and the two Dharmic Armaments. He even notified the Core Formation Dao guardians from the four Dao Colleges before opening the door of his residence.

Even though he didn't sense any external threat the moment he opened the door, he still activated his two Dharmic Armaments, forming a suppressive force that swept the outside environment.

When he made sure that there was no danger, he suspiciously approached the unconscious Li Wan'er. Li Wan'er looked pale as she trembled. She had lost consciousness, and her lips were black.

She's poisoned? Wang Baole was taken aback. He lowered his head and placed his hand on Li Wan'er's forehead. The moment he touched her skin, his eyes widened and his breathing quickened, a look of disbelief on his face.

He didn't hesitate and immediately carried Li Wan'er into his residence. At the same time, he notified the Core Formation elites from the four Dao Colleges to guard the outside environment. After that, he carried Li Wan'er into the secret chamber.

When he reached the secret chamber, he grew solemn, frowning as he looked at the unconscious Li Wan'er.

There is no Dark Qi coming from her body. However, it's as if there's a bottle filled with Dark Qi in her body, extremely chaotic and on the brink of breaking open at the slightest touch!

That was the reason Wang Baole was shocked. It was obvious that when he saw Li Wan'er previously, he didn't sense any Dark Qi from her. Even now, he still couldn't sense it just by looking at her. It was only when he touched her and released his Spirit Qi to take a detailed look in her body that he sensed it.

Why is she in this state? Could it be that she cultivated the Art of Longevity as well? However, even so, why is she different from others? Doubts arose in Wang Baole's mind, but he didn't hesitate. Li Wan'er was the Deputy City Lord, and even though there were conflicts between them, he couldn't leave her to die—especially so considering the experiences they had been through together.

Therefore, he took a deep breath and raised his right hand, pressing it once again on Li Wan'er's forehead. The devouring seed in his body instantly exploded, forming a suction force to absorb the Dark Qi in Li Wan'er's body in order to remove the danger!

Chapter 417: Healing Injuries...

The concentration of the Dark Qi in Li Wan'er's body shocked Wang Baole as he absorbed it. It was so concentrated that if he were a little bit later, Li Wan'er would have died!

It was perhaps inappropriate to call her a dead corpse. Rather, she would have become a living dead person, with the possibility of being controlled by others without the hope of redemption.

That made Wang Baole extremely solemn. Not only did he have to save Li Wan'er, but he also had to get to the bottom of what exactly happened to her. At the same time, he had to find out whether an incident like this was the exception or the norm, and if it was the future plans of the mastermind.

It was as if another crisis was happening even before the previous one was settled. Wang Baole took a deep breath and further activated the devouring seed. However, even if he put in all his effort in absorbing it, the Dark Qi inside Li Wan'er's body was so concentrated it was almost viscous, and her body was weak and unable to withstand the continuous absorption by Wang Baole's devouring seed.

Therefore, it was challenging to return everything to normal in a short period of time. The only option was to let her rehabilitate after every absorption and carry on the next day. Several days passed like this in order to remove the danger while restoring her foundation.

Even though he was unable to remove everything at once, Wang Baole could still allow her to regain consciousness. Therefore, as Wang Baole continued absorbing and healing her, after five minutes, Li Wan'er's body moved, and her eyelashes fluttered as she slowly opened her eyes.

The moment she opened her eyes, she saw Wang Baole. That was especially so as the two of them were very near each other, and because Wang Baole was rushing to save her just now and didn't bother too much about other things, directly placing Li Wan'er on his lap.

Therefore, when she opened her eyes and noticed how intimate she was with Wang Baole, Li Wan'er took a deep breath. Even though she remained calm on the surface, she sat up naturally and moved back, sitting opposite Wang Baole, before revealing a complicated look in her eyes.

"Go on, tell me what happened." Wang Baole stared at Li Wan'er, asking with a low voice, in no mood to care about other things.

Li Wan'er lowered her eyelids slightly. After taking a brief moment and calming down, she looked at her own body and began talking about what had happened.

"In order to prove the Art of Longevity, I personally cultivated it for a period of time, but I stopped after just a brief moment. However, for some unknown reason, the speed of my cultivation was unbelievable..."

"I have only practiced it for two days, yet I have reached another level..." Li Wan'er frowned, incredulous at that.

“Another level?” Wang Baole was confused. He hadn’t practiced the Art of Longevity himself and merely studied its mnemonic. Therefore, he wasn’t as acquainted with it, unlike Li Wan’er, who had experienced it personally.

“Only the first part of the Art of Longevity has been made known. If cultivated to the extreme, it is possible for one to breakthrough to the second part. However, the cultivation technique for the second part doesn’t exist.”

“At the same time, once the second part is reached, all aura will be kept within, without any abnormalities...” Li Wan’er explained. Listening to her words, Wang Baole frowned yet again.

“Why didn’t you say so earlier? Do you know that if I were just a minute late in saving you, you’d perhaps not be how you are right now?”

Li Wan’er was silent and didn’t speak.

Wang Baole looked at the stubborn Li Wan’er and sighed. Even though she didn’t say anything, he could guess the reason. The two of them were now so distant and were considered enemies to a certain extent. Therefore, with Li Wan’er’s personality, she wouldn’t have approached him for help and would have tried to resolve everything by herself.

In reality, that was just the case. Li Wan’er hadn’t thought about asking Wang Baole for help. On one hand, she wanted to suppress it with her own cultivation, and on the other, she wanted to use the Dharmic artifact that Wang Baole had refined to dispel the evil aura by herself.

However, after trying it for a few days, not only did she not succeed, the situation made a turn for the worse. That was especially so tonight, as when she tried to dispel the evil aura, she felt a sense of something luring her!

That sensation wasn’t clear cut, and it was as if she had lost control of her body. With sheer will, she forcefully regained control of her own body and realized that she was like a bag filled with acid, with the acid continuously corroding her internal organs and making her extremely weak. At the same time, she was unable to resolve the problem. In that life and death situation, she had little choice but to seek Wang Baole’s help.

As a stubborn person, that was an extremely difficult thing to do. She felt embarrassed to reply to Wang Baole and therefore kept her silence. However, she knew her limits, and suddenly spoke after remaining silent for a while.

“Before I lost consciousness, I felt something luring me. While I was still awake, I arranged for someone to go to the place where that sensation originated from. However, I only know the general direction, and am not sure if they found the source of it.”

“Don’t fret about this for now. Take care of yourself first.” After Wang Baole heard the details, he immediately sent out instructions using his voice transmission ring, before looking at Li Wan’er again.

“Your injuries are severe, and it isn’t possible to cure everything in a day. I need about half a month’s time. For now, let’s continue.”

“... Thank you.” Li Wan’er lowered her head and spoke softly.

Soon, the process of healing continued. Previously, Li Wan'er was in a coma and unconscious and didn't feel much. Now that she was extremely alert, she blushed, and her body trembled. Wang Baole inevitably felt something unusual as well.

As Dark Qi infiltrated not just her body, but also occupied all her flesh and blood to the extent that it was about to combine with it, Wang Baole had to touch every part of Li Wan'er's body. This was to make the process of healing even more effective and for his devouring seed to absorb the Dark Qi from her flesh and blood...

The contact was separated by clothing, but gradually, in the silence of the secret chamber, Li Wan'er's hurried yet suppressed breathing became louder. Wang Baole also couldn't help but feel his heart palpitating even more rapidly, especially when he thought about the incident where the both of them warmed each other up in the evil cultivator's cave.

Right now, it was more intense than before. After all, in the evil cultivator's cave back then, it was pitch-black. However, in Wang Baole's secret chamber, everywhere was well lit...

Seeing that Li Wan'er had shut her eyes and feeling the tremble of her body, Wang Baole blinked as his heart rate increased. An evil thought uncontrollably arose in his mind...

Li Wan'er seemed to have sensed something and opened her eyes suddenly. Biting her lips, she stared sternly at Wang Baole.

"Wang Baole, you..."

"Quiet! Do not talk during the healing process." Wang Baole stared, slapping hard at Li Wan'er's buttocks. He felt its bounciness while frowning as he spoke.

Being slapped and hollered at by Wang Baole, Li Wan'er, who had wanted to warn him not to take advantage of her, was taken aback. As she hesitated, Wang Baole sighed, waving his hand and extinguishing the lights in the secret chamber.

"I hope that this would calm you down. I'm trying to heal you here!" Wang Baole was thick-skinned. Even though his heart was beating quickly and he was thirsty with lust, he appeared stern and serious on the surface, despite the lights being extinguished.

It might have been the dark surroundings or the bewilderment caused by Wang Baole, but Li Wan'er chose to stay silent. Even though her breathing grew more rapid, she didn't say anything further. To a certain extent, she seemed to have reached acquiescence...

However, Wang Baole felt that he was an upright gentleman with values. He continued the healing process in extreme detail; it was just that the process took quite a while. He felt that he was being responsible and serious, and in this way, after treating Li Wan'er by touching her all over her body, an hour had passed.

In the process of Wang Baole healing Li Wan'er, the cultivators sent by the both of them had already completed the search in the specific region that they were ordered to go to, but they didn't find anything.

However, in another direction within Chen Mu's autonomous zone, there were over a thousand people in a secluded location standing expressionlessly. There was no Dark Qi given off their bodies, but if Wang Baole were there and contacted their bodies to sense what is going on inside, he would definitely find that each one of them was like Li Wan'er, with Dark Qi contained in their bodies like a Dark Qi bomb!

On the ground before them, a large array formation was drawn. The black-robed man stood beside the array formation and spoke calmly.

"Let's begin!"

The moment he said that, the over one thousand expressionless individuals immediately lifted their heads. Within their empty gaze, a look of madness was revealed. Each one of them stepped into the array formation slowly, and the array formation instantly absorbed every part of their bodies into nothingness...

When these thousand-odd individuals had all disappeared in the array formation, a blue glow emerged from the center of the array formation.

Taking a closer look at the glow, it looked like a seed!

Picking up the seed, the black-robed man examined it briefly, looking a little regretful but still revealing a smile.

It's a pity that we don't have much time and only managed to produce one of these. However, it should be enough to destroy the Dark Child...

What's next, is to choose a cooperative individual to carry out the task...

Chapter 418: Able Man!

After seeing Li Wan'er off, Wang Baole felt a headache. The mastermind that was in hiding made him feel that the matter was urgent. Thankfully, he felt that he had an advantage, as, after all, it was merely a Dark Servant. From that term, it could be seen that in the eyes of the Little Missy, that person was just a servant, while he was the master.

That thought made him feel a sense of relief.

That is nothing much. I still have Little Missy. If anything doesn't go well, I'll get Little Missy to help, and suppress that servant!

However, if I were to engage the help of Little Missy, I'll have to put in some effort to convince her. Wang Baole was deep in thought about the matter, and also felt that his life was filled with challenges. He had to depend on himself for everything in order to remove all obstacles through his own effort.

With that sentiment, Wang Baole began thinking about how he could coax Little Missy. At that moment, Lin Tianhao also sent a voice transmission requesting to visit Wang Baole to report the details of the investigation, as well as the results of the investigation of the various zones.

Due to the frequency of Wang Baole going into seclusion, his residence had become his office to a certain extent. Soon, Lin Tianhao arrived. Having stuck with Wang Baole for a considerable period of time, Lin Tianhao had changed from the person he was back in the Dao College. Right now, he was no longer as arrogant and quiet, and instead was dependable and experienced.

However, that was just an image he put on in front of Wang Baole. In reality, when he was in the company of others, Lin Tianhao didn't speak much. His quiet demeanor hadn't disappeared and was simply buried deep in his bones. To others, he was like a poisonous snake, and the relationship that he shared with Wang Baole meant that if he protected Wang Baole's interests, he could protect his own as well. Therefore, names like 'lapdog', 'crazy dog', and 'poisonous snake' were often applied to him by people who were unhappy with Wang Baole.

Right now, as he arrived, Lin Tianhao first poured a cup of tea for Wang Baole, placing it in front of him. Then, he stood in front of him instinctively, without even thinking that it didn't match his status or that he was trying to get into Wang Baole's good books. Instead, he felt that as a subordinate, he should reciprocate the things that the superior he respected had done for him, and the act of pouring a cup of tea reflected the respect he had for his superior.

Wang Baole was also accustomed to this treatment. Therefore, he took a sip of tea as he listened to Lin Tianhao's report.

"City Lord, there were no abnormalities found during yesterday's inspection of the area..."

"In addition, the inspection of the various regions in the entire city has been completed. The data acquired, as well as the conclusion, are detailed here..." As he reported, Lin Tianhao passed a jade slip to Wang Baole.

"In the six regions of the new city, the people who cultivated the Art of Longevity are unevenly distributed. Most of them are located in Chen Mu's autonomous zone, followed by that of Fang Jing's. It is then followed by my zone, then Mayor Kong Dao's, and lastly Mayor Jin's... As for Mayor Wen Huai's region, there is no one cultivating the Art of Longevity at all, which seems weird..." With that, Lin Tianhao looked as if he was bewildered. It appeared that he felt that the findings were bizarre and unimaginable.

Hearing that, Wang Baole also felt somewhat confused. After looking at the data listed in the jade slip, he realized that just like Lin Tianhao had reported, there ranged from tens to hundreds of thousands of Art of Longevity cultivators in the various zones, but none at all in Wen Huai's zone.

It might be a little too much of an exaggeration to say that there were none of them at all, but since there were no records, it meant that in reality, the number of people who cultivated the Art of Longevity was extremely low. If not, even if the data was faked, it wouldn't be possible to be fabricated to this extent.

"What's going on? Wen Huai is capable." Wang Baole was curious. He thought that he had perhaps belittled Wen Huai, and he swept his gaze at Lin Tianhao.

Lin Tianhao had a weird expression on his face. He hesitated for a moment and began to speak softly.

“I have tried to find out the details of the matter, but... Vice Mayor Liu Daobin would like to invite you to take a look at the situation by yourself...” Lin Tianhao knew the reason behind the matter. After all, he was in charge of handling the intelligence, and if it were in a different scenario, he would definitely not have passed on Liu Daobin’s message.

However, right now, he felt that it would be better for him if he were to be more cautious around people like Liu Daobin. There was no point in offending or tricking him on a whim, as he felt that he saw a brand new face of Liu Daobin through this incident.

“Oh?” Wang Baole laughed. He recalled that Liu Daobin was now Wen Huai’s assistant. Liu Daobin didn’t send a voice transmission directly to him and instead leveraged on the outcome of this incident to invite him for an on-sight investigation through the proper procedures. Wang Baole was not at all opposed to that, as he had also wanted to see for himself what exactly was going on in Wen Huai’s zone.

Therefore, arrangements were made. Since it was an official visit, many people were sent. A notice was also given to Wen Huai beforehand, informing him to make preparations to receive Wang Baole.

An hour later, accompanied by Lin Tianhao, Wang Baole and company arrived at Wen Huai’s autonomous zone with much fanfare. When they reached, Wang Baole and Liu Daobin were already waiting to receive them. Having seen Wang Baole from afar, and even before Wen Huai said anything, Liu Daobin had already run forward, greeting Wang Baole a distance away. He was extremely agitated and spoke loudly.

“Daobin hereby greets the City Lord! City Lord, please allow Daobin here to speak my mind. It is such a surprise to see you, and I have so much to say that I would like to seek your approval to express my thoughts!” Liu Daobin’s voice could be heard in all directions. Wen Huai, who was scolding Liu Daobin for moving so quickly under his breath. He had originally wanted to greet Wang Baole as well, but after hearing what Liu Daobin said, he was slightly taken aback. He began thinking about whether Liu Daobin had any dirt on him and had wanted to take the chance to report against him.

Wang Baole, who was initially approaching from afar with a smile on his face, suddenly had a flash across his eyes the moment he heard Liu Daobin’s words. Even Lin Tianhao and company, who were following behind him, were somewhat shocked.

“Daobin, speak your mind, whatever it is!” With huge strides, Wang Baole approached Liu Daobin, helping him up as he spoke amiably.

Liu Daobin was so agitated that he was trembling a little. Looking at Wang Baole, his voice reverberated, filled with excitement.

“City Lord, Daobin would like to seek forgiveness from you. When I saw you approaching from afar, I was indeed taken aback and was a little delayed in greeting you. I haven’t seen you for so long and felt a little adrift when I suddenly noticed you. It was as if I had seen a god, one that was so handsome that it surpassed every single person in the entire Federation. The thought that such an extraordinarily handsome individual was my City Lord made me so excited that I wasn’t able to maintain my image, and for that, I would wholeheartedly accept any punishment you give me!”

Hearing Liu Daobin’s words, Wen Huai’s eyes widened as he gasped. It was as if he had just seen a different side of Liu Daobin. He wasn’t the only one who felt this way. Regardless of whether it was Wen

Huai's subordinates or Lin Tianhao and company, everyone who heard what Liu Daobin had just said was surprised. They all looked at Liu Daobin with bewilderment, and many were cursing him for being shameless under their breaths.

Even Wang Baole was shocked. He was thick-skinned, but even he felt embarrassed hearing what Liu Daobin had just said. Despite that, satisfaction and pleasure arose in his heart naturally upon hearing Liu Daobin's words. He was extremely satisfied, but on the surface, he remained stoic and even chided Liu Daobin.

Liu Daobin hurriedly accepted Wang Baole's scoldings, and a look of relief appeared on his face. He felt that Wang Baole's criticism towards him was an honor, and he didn't forget to curry Wang Baole's favor after Wang Baole was done chiding him.

"You're right, City Lord. City Lord, you carry great responsibilities on your shoulders, and your legacy impacts everyone from past to present. Your future is also vast and full of hope! Daobin here is direct in my words, and I couldn't hold back the words in my mind, and that was why I revealed everything that I was thinking in my heart."

Upon hearing that, Lin Tianhao gasped. He felt that the threat that Liu Daobin posed towards him had grown even stronger. As for Wen Huai, he threw several more glances at Liu Daobin. As he cursed Liu Daobin under his breath, he also felt jealous. He thought about how he was Liu Daobin's direct superior but was immediately disregarded by him the moment he saw Wang Baole. He had also never heard Liu Daobin say something pleasing to him before...

Coupled with that sentiment, Wen Huai also felt even more helpless as he thought about the situation in his autonomous zone. He felt so embarrassed that he didn't want to be responsible for bringing Wang Baole on a tour of the zone. Liu Daobin, on the other hand, also seemed to have no intention of inviting Wen Huai along. Liu Daobin took the initiative to accompany Wang Baole, taking on the responsibility of introducing the autonomous zone to him.

In this way, the group of people gradually entered the autonomous zone after Liu Daobin's exaggerated act of currying Wang Baole's favor. They had only just entered the zone when gasps of shock emerged from the mouths of the visitors, and they widened their eyes.

What made them so surprised was that in the autonomous zone, there were two giant sculptures erected on either side of the main pathway. The sculptures were both of Wang Baole!

Wang Baole was taken aback once again. He looked at Liu Daobin, who was full of respect for him, and then back at the surrounding buildings. He looked confused but didn't say anything. Instead, he continued walking down the path, and that was when his mind, as well as that of his followers, began to buzz noisily with activity.

In that autonomous zone, there was an uncountable number of sculptures of Wang Baole, and they were all of varying sizes... There was one every few hundred meters, each of them in a different pose, all of them trying to showcase how heroic Wang Baole was!

Chapter 419: The Icing on the Cake!

Seeing the surprise on the visitors' faces, and that even Wang Baole had widened his eyes in shock, Liu Daobin gloated secretly in his heart. He took a look at Lin Tianhao, laughing silently in his heart as he thought about how even though Lin Tianhao had achieved whatever he had now based on his abilities, he still fell short compared to himself.

After all, he wasn't only capable, but also had the ability to suck up to Wang Baole. The latter skill, to him, was equally important as the former skill. It was something that his father had exemplified and taught the importance of to him since he was young. He constantly reminded him about it, and he couldn't forget the words that his father had said while slapping his thigh one fateful day after he had a drink.

"Humans, they all like to hear pleasing words. Any human would love hearing them. Only horses and cows wouldn't like them. However, you have to remember these are all fluff. Do you know what fluff is? Do you know what it means by the icing on the cake? If you have the cake, and the icing, then I don't have to worry about your future anymore. So, Daobin, when you have mastered this skill, you are already a step ahead of everyone!"

At first, Liu Daobin didn't care much about what his father had said. When he first gained admission to Ethereal Dao College, his life plan was to become a Dharmic Armament Master, but as fate would have it, his plans were thrown off course after he met Wang Baole...

As such, he followed the path that his father had been on. On this path, he increasingly felt that his father didn't have it easy. At the same time, based on what he knew about sucking up, he developed his own extended theory about it.

Many times, there is no need to use words to suck up to others. Silent actions are superior to overt presentations, and that represents the highest level of skill! Liu Daobin gloated and didn't mention anything much regarding the sculptures. Instead, he continued leading Wang Baole and company, who were still in shock, and carried on with the tour. As they walked, statues of Wang Baole appeared before the eyes of the crowd one after another. Gasps of shock gradually vanished, and while still in that state of surprise, even Lin Tianhao conceded to a certain extent.

They felt that there was no need to continue viewing. It was imaginable that in Wen Huai's autonomous zone, Wang Baoles would be on every street and alley... Therefore, they all looked towards Wen Huai with pity.

Wen Huai was expressionless, as he had already grown numb to everything. From the time Liu Daobin had erected the first sculpture in the autonomous zone until now, where Wang Baole sculptures had grown innumerable, he had gradually gotten used to everything—including the fact that Liu Daobin was using this method to brainwash his subordinates...

That resulted in him losing more loyal followers. He even began to feel that even though the disciples from the Galactic Dusk Sect only knew how to kill, when compared to Liu Daobin, they were relatively purer and child-like.

It wasn't that no one had seen through those tricks. It was just, on the one hand, Wang Baole was authoritative, and on the other, Liu Daobin didn't try to hide his intentions; he was clearly telling everyone that he was sucking up to the City Lord, and there was nothing that anyone could do about it.

As such, the others were really at wit's end as to how to stop him. Only, there was no way they could stop Liu Daobin from sucking up to Wang Baole. At the same time, they didn't want to create misunderstandings between themselves and Wang Baole... Therefore, the number of sculptures grew.

While Wen Huai felt unhappy and experienced a complex of emotions, Lin Tianhao and company all remained silent. Wang Baole was surprised, but also felt curious. Looking at the sculptures, he felt that they were all extraordinarily handsome, and he looked at Liu Daobin with even more satisfaction in his eyes.

Having caught Wang Baole's gaze, Liu Daobin felt energized. He thought that his efforts this time around were extremely worthwhile. However, he was also clear of his limits, and that it was insufficient to merely suck up to others. Therefore, he began speaking cheerfully to Wang Baole.

"City Lord, are you here today to find out why there is no one cultivating the evil cultivation technique of the Art of Longevity?"

Hearing that Liu Daobin had taken the initiative to bring up the matter, Wang Baole grew even more satisfied, and the smile on his face grew even wider. He pointed at Liu Daobin and smiled, looking at Lin Tianhao and company who were beside him.

"Take a look at that. We didn't ask, but he has taken the initiative to answer our question."

Lin Tianhao smiled, and the people around also cooperated as they revealed a friendly smile while looking at Liu Daobin.

"City Lord, the reason why no one here is practicing the evil art is that I have strengthened everyone's understanding, such that everyone clearly knew what they should and shouldn't do. In addition, I have also perfected the system of reward and punishment, which resulted in this zone that is so full of energy!" Liu Daobin hurriedly spoke, and his words were extremely pleasing. However, everyone, including Wang Baole, had managed to catch something that didn't match up.

Lin Tianhao cleared his throat and sent out a voice transmission to Wang Baole, explaining the results of his investigation to him. As Wang Baole listened, his expression grew awkward. After combining that information with what Liu Daobin had said, he immediately understood what was weird about the situation.

In reality, since Liu Daobin arrived in Wen Huai's autonomous zone, he took charge of the local disciplinary department, and also perfected the whistle-blowing system, such that the process of doing so was extremely simple. At the same time, every piece of reported news was handled in the shortest time possible. Various degrees of punishment were meted out to those involved, while the ones who reported the news were rewarded!

He continuously advocated, and secretly found, many followers which he led personally. Gradually, after all the effort that he put in, he made whistle-blowing a collective consciousness in Wen Huai's autonomous zone...

Even though there were no whistle-blowers initially, as the number of people who began reporting grew, everyone became increasingly cautious and began whistle-blowing themselves. They would report everything that they were unhappy with, regardless of whether it was a trivial or serious matter.

At the same time, a group of people who had reaped the benefits turned into professional whistle-blowers. Through that, they accumulated large amounts of resources and Spirit Stones needed for cultivation.

Even Wen Huai was helpless. He had the intention to handle the matter, but when he recalled that Liu Daobin was a representative of Wang Baole, he gave up.

As everyone grew accustomed to whistle-blowing, the first cultivator who had come to spread the Art of Longevity was reported by hundreds of people as a result of his suspicious movements. He didn't even manage to stay for half an hour before he was taken away.

At that time, Wang Baole hadn't put in place the regulation to prohibit anyone from practicing the Art of Longevity. However, the sudden emergence of this cultivation technique, though not unusual in the other zones, was seen as a serious offense in this zone where everyone was engaged in the practice of whistle-blowing. Regardless of whether it was an issue, everyone chose to report it, as they would get rewarded if it ever became a problem.

Even if it wasn't a problem, it was a chance to prove that they were responsible and serious in their jobs.

After hearing about it, Wang Baole didn't know whether to laugh or cry. On the other hand, Liu Daobin was feeling extremely delighted, thinking that he had handled the matter with perfection. However, he still felt that he should further show off his efforts. As such, he tried to appear responsible and loyal, announcing loudly to Wang Baole.

"City Lord, when the Art of Longevity first emerged here, even though there were no civil regulations, Daobin here remembered the City Lord's teachings and didn't dare to let my guard down one bit. At the same time, I didn't want to disappoint you, and couldn't allow any mishaps to happen. Therefore, I prohibited all the cultivators here from practicing the Art of Longevity. I had wanted to come to a firmer decision after observing the situation, but something untoward happened."

"Thankfully, the City Lord is heroic and so capable that you managed to foil the sinister plan that could have shaken the foundation of Mars and the new city. Daobin hereby represents the thousands of cultivators in the zone to thank the City Lord for saving our lives!" As Liu Daobin spoke, he greeted Wang Baole deeply with cupped fists.

Seeing his act, the other cultivators in the zone who surrounded him hesitated briefly before bowing towards Wang Baole. Even Wen Huai and company were helpless, seeing that everyone had followed suit. They had no choice but to express their gratitude as well, no matter how unwilling they were.

Lin Tianhao was utterly dumbfounded by what he had just seen. His vigilance towards Liu Daobin grew, and he hurriedly bowed towards Wang Baole as well. Immediately, as words of gratitude sounded all around him, Wang Baole was speechless, but also extremely pleased. He chided Liu Daobin briefly, but his appreciation of him grew even more obvious.

They carried on with the tour for a while longer, and after confirming that everything in the zone was under Liu Daobin's control, Wang Baole left with Lin Tianhao after praising Wen Huai.

At the same time, as they left, in an office located inside Chen Mu's autonomous zone, Chen Mu was staring expressionlessly and coldly at a middle-aged cultivator in front of him.

“Who are you?” Chen Mu spoke slowly.

That cultivator was dressed in a Daoist robe from the Five Generation Sky Clan. He was one of Chen Mu’s assistants and had always been cautious around him. However, today, without any instruction for him to come, he appeared suddenly and bizarrely in front of Chen Mu. His demeanor and expressions differed from usual, and he seemed to be an entirely different person. To a certain extent, Chen Mu could feel a sense of danger wafting off of him.

“Fellow Daoist Chen, it doesn’t matter who I am. What matters is that I have links to the Art of Longevity. You can get someone to apprehend me and pass me to Wang Baole. Alternatively, you can give me, as well as yourself, a chance. Let me represent my master and have a discussion with you...”

Chapter 420: Breaking Off Relations

“Interesting...” Noticing that this former assistant of his had transformed into an entirely different person, and was speaking so calmly and confidently to him, Chen Mu gradually narrowed his eyes.

As the eldest son of the Chen family, he was well acquainted with knowledge related to cultivation from a young age. That was something that the four Dao Colleges was unable to teach. After all, the four Dao Colleges had so many people to nurture, but the Chen family of the Five Generation Sky Clan only had to focus their attention on nurturing their own child.

At the same time, there were suspicions that the Five Generation Sky Clan had once passed the ancient greenish-bronze sword and brought back a mysterious cultivation technique. No one, even Chen Mu, knew whether there was any truth to that. However, he was clear that the knowledge about cultivation that his family had surpassed that of other factions greatly.

For example, he knew that there was the saying of transferring one’s soul to another physical body. Even though one had to be a Nascent Soul in order to achieve that, he also knew that there were numerous other methods of controlling puppets, as well as related skills that could allow one to control others’ minds. He couldn’t do any of that, but he knew that the people who could were elites.

Therefore, he didn’t act carelessly in front of the subordinate that had suddenly appeared before him. He was vigilant, but he wasn’t afraid. He was assured of his safety due to the fact that he had the protection of the Dao guardians around him, as well as that afforded by his Patriarch. It was possible for him to hold off an elite for a brief moment while help came.

At the same time, Chen Mu was genuinely curious about the master that this former assistant of his had mentioned. He didn’t like Wang Baole one bit and was filled with hatred towards him. Therefore, naturally, he wouldn’t apprehend a criminal for him. Chen Mu looked deeply at the subordinate before him and sat there without a word.

There was no need to elaborate further on this silent agreement. The intention had been made known clearly, and the middle-aged cultivator smiled in response.

“Fellow Daoist Chen, my master only has one target, which is Wang Baole. However, due to certain peculiar circumstances, he is unable to handle the matter personally, and will need your help.

“When the task is completed, my master promises to convey his gratitude with a puppet at perfected Core Formation realm!”

Chen Mu raised his eyebrows and laughed chillingly in his heart. He felt that the middle-aged cultivator’s words were a little abrupt and unconvincing. Furthermore, he didn’t even try to hide his intention of using him as a murderer. Even though Chen Mu wanted very much to kill Wang Baole himself, he wasn’t a foolish person and could easily guess that he was being used.

This wiped out the interest that he had initially. He wanted to see the guest off, but at that moment, the middle-aged cultivator who stood before him laughed and made a move by himself. However, just before he left, he placed a small drum before Chen Mu!

The small drum was blood-colored. The moment it was taken out, a concentrated bloody aura was immediately given off. An indescribable level of evilness also spread from within. At the same time, an astonishing suppressive force emerged. The suppressive force was on the same level as that given off by someone who had perfected Core Formation realm, and that shocked Chen Mu severely.

“This item is the seed of the puppet. Dao Cultivator Chen, it is meant to aid you in your consideration. If you agree, you can sound the seed. In due time, my master will reveal to you the method of nurturing this seed.” As the middle-aged cultivator spoke, he took a few steps back before turning to leave. As he went away, his body began burning without a sound. When he finally stepped out of the shed, his body had turned to ash, which was scattered into space.

Looking at the sinister-looking drum, and then at the body that was burning in flames, Chen Mu instantly grew solemn. He knew that he had no choice but to treat this matter very seriously.

However, he didn’t touch the drum. Instead, after thinking deeply about what to do, he summoned someone over to bring the item back to his family clan, in order for them to study it and decide what to do with it.

At the same time, Wang Baole, who had left Wen Huai’s zone after his inspection, satisfyingly returned to his residence with the intention to continue cultivating and researching Dharmic Armaments.

In the middle of that very night, with darkness shrouding the area and silence in the air, Wang Baole’s voice transmission ring and the door of his residence sounded out simultaneously. It was Li Wan’er again...

Wang Baole was well prepared for this. After all, the Dark Qi inside Li Wan’er’s body wasn’t something that could be completely removed after one or two tries. He opened his eyes and took a look at his voice transmission ring before opening the door to his residence, where he saw Li Wan’er standing outside.

Li Wan’er didn’t say a word and stepped right in expressionlessly. She didn’t even need Wang Baole to lead the way and headed towards the secret chamber directly.

Wang Baole blinked. After closing the door, he felt that the entire situation was a little unusual. That was especially so when he thought about Li Wan’er’s provocative figure, which made his heart pump even faster uncontrollably. He cleared his throat and entered the secret chamber, beginning the healing process...

The healing process this time around felt even more familiar for both Wang Baole and Li Wan'er, especially after the lights were extinguished. The process was exactly the same as yesterday's, shrouded in an indescribable atmosphere.

However, Wang Baole was still satisfied with his character. He felt that he was a gentleman and was doing all the healing in order to save someone. He was serious and responsible and didn't have any untoward thoughts. It was because he needed to heal Li Wan'er that he had no choice but to feel her all over.

Just like this, days passed. The healing that took place between Wang Baole and Li Wan'er seemed to have become their shared secret and their new norm. Their relationship grew even more unusual. In the day, when the two of them were in the office, everything seemed to proceed normally. Regardless of whether Li Wan'er was reporting her findings or discussing matters with Wang Baole, she was cold and expressionless, no different from how she was before.

Sometimes, she would even use harsh tones when the matter involved Chen Mu.

However, once night fell, Li Wan'er would come to Wang Baole's residence on her own and enter the secret chamber by herself. Even though she still appeared cold and distant, the moment the healing process started after extinguishing the lights, she seemed to have turned into an entirely different person. She panted and her body was hot to the touch, and even though the two of them didn't do anything out of character, the touchy healing process was even more intimate than the time they were trapped in the cave.

That often made Wang Baole confused as to which was the real Li Wan'er. However, he felt that it was all exhilarating. It was even more so if he had a very heated argument with Li Wan'er in the day, as during the night, he would grab Li Wan'er even more forcefully. Li Wan'er, on the other hand, would tremble vigorously after being forcefully grabbed by Wang Baole, but she didn't show any signs of rejection or resistance...

There were several times where Wang Baole almost lost control and lost his virginity. However, he still remained gentlemanly and controlled himself well. It could be a misconception, but it seemed that the more he acted that way, the more Li Wan'er would engage in an even more heated discussion with Wang Baole over issues regarding the city the next day.

Gradually, Wang Baole got used to it. Twenty-odd days like that passed, and as the Dark Qi inside Li Wan'er's body was cleared completely, Wang Baole ended the healing process with regret.

Before she left, Li Wan'er looked deeply into Wang Baole's eyes. Like all the other times, she didn't say a word and left.

How rude. She didn't even thank me for that. Over the month that passed, it was tough for me to heal her every day. Wang Baole thought in his mind while feeling extremely disappointed.

Three days passed in this disappointment. At noon on the fourth day, Wang Baole left his residence and headed to his office. Inside the office building of the City Lord, Li Wan'er—the beautiful yet cold lady who was wearing a tight-fitting uniform—was looking angrily at Chen Mu, who was now in his office.

“You don’t need to look at me in that manner. The construction of the autonomous zone requires even more resources and support, and it’s not overboard for me to ask you to transfer your manpower and authority of the new city to me.” Chen Mu spoke calmly as he sat there. He was here today to ask for more manpower and authority from the new city, as that was the only way he could carry out preparations and plans to prevent Li Wan’er from turning against him.

In reality, he had already proposed this idea for over half a month. Every single time, Li Wan’er had rejected him, and that was why he had come personally today, angered by the matter.

Li Wan’er panted vigorously. She would have long exploded in anger based on her temperament. However, as she kept in mind that her father and the Chen family had formed an alliance, she simply took a deep breath to calm herself down, despite being extremely annoyed at how overboard Chen Mu was.

“Chen Mu, once I transfer the authority, I would be severely affected if any problems arose. We need to plan out everything and look at the whole picture. Furthermore, the purpose of me being here is to pave a smooth path for you...”

“Don’t mention anything about helping me. Your aim of coming here is to make it convenient for you to have a secret relationship with Wang Baole!” Chen Mu frowned, and a chill flashed across his eyes. In order to accomplish his goal, he decided to agitate Li Wan’er.

“Chen Mu!” Hearing that sentence, Li Wan’er slammed the table, almost unleashing her wrath.

“Slamming the table at me?” Chen Mu laughed and slammed the table loudly as well. After that, he threw out a jade slip towards Li Wan’er.

“Look at the footage in the jade slip. Let me tell you, Li Wan’er, you have no choice but to hand over your authority to me, regardless of whether you’re willing or not. If not, I’ll hand over this jade slip to your father. I don’t care whether he would be angry, but I will never be made a cuckold!”