

Han Jingru could not wrap his head around Fei Lingsheng's thoughts. However, it only made sense that he couldn't understand as he had no desires in this particular area. As for Fei Lingsheng, he could understand the reason behind her choice. It was almost impossible for one to reach the Alpha Stage and she knew that clearly. Hence, she'd grabbed the opportunity without hesitation when it appeared.

Han Jingru also knew her goals did not stop at the Holy Chestnut. In fact, she also hoped for Han Jingru to help her with his abilities. After all, she assumed Han Jingru was already an Alpha Stage fighter.

Han Jingru knocked on the front door when he arrived at Yan Qinghua's room.

As she was still resting, a junior sister opened the door for him.

When the junior sister saw it was Han Jingru, she lowered her head and blushed. "What brings you here, Master Han?"

Countless people from the Piaomiao Sect were fond of Han Jingru. The reason behind his popularity was due to The Elite 28 battle. Almost every girl in town had a crush on him as they kept a small copy of that particular picture of the battle in their pockets.

“How is Madam Yan doing?” Han Jingru asked.

“Madam Yan is still resting,” the junior sister answered.

“Master Han, please come in. I’m feeling much better now,” Yan Qinghua called out from inside the house.

Yan Qinghua was indeed resting in bed. However, her energy levels were immediately restored when she heard Han Jingru’s voice. Resting in bed to recuperate wasn’t as effective as seeing Han Jingru in person. He was the best cure for her injuries.

Besides, Yan Qinghua’s dangerously low energy levels were quickly restored after she consumed the Holy Chestnut. As for now, she was merely

absorbing the energy from the Holy Chestnut. She was also very likely to surpass her current stage if she uses it well.

Han Jingru smiled as he walked into the room.

A faint floral scent welcomed him as he entered the room. Although Han Jingru had no interest in other women, he couldn't help himself but secretly took a whiff.

“Are you alright, Madam Yan?” Han Jingru walked towards her bedside. Yan Qinghua seemed to have fully recovered. He noticed a healthy glow across her face as her red cheeks flushed, making her look somewhat seductive.

She was a very charming woman in the eyes of many men. However, Han Jingru had encountered countless women who had thrown themselves at him in the past. Therefore, he didn't think she was any special.

Yan Qinghua sat up and said, “Master Han, I'm feeling much better now. Thank you so much for the Holy Chestnut. But I'm afraid it was a waste

for you to use it on me.”

“To me, Jiang Yingying’s life was more important than anything else. I couldn’t imagine what would happen to her if it weren’t for you who had brought her back safely. Besides, it’s not a big deal. So don’t worry about it.” Han Jingru replied. Han Jingru was willing to risk anything in exchange for Jiang Yingying’s life, let alone a Holy Chestnut. Hence, Yi Qingshan had a death wish when he used Jiang Yingying as a threat against him.

“Master Han, perhaps the Holy Chestnut is nothing to you, but it’s a precious treasure that a glimpse of it would be a tremendous honor to me. Instead, I was even given the chance to consume it,” Yan Qinghua explained.

“In fact, I should thank you for saving my sister. If you don’t want to waste the Holy Chestnut, you should begin the Closed Door Training immediately. The energy from the Holy Chestnut will help you break through your current stage,” Han Jingru added.

Yan Qinghua had the same idea. She had no plan for it to go to waste since she had eaten it.

However, she had completely forgotten about the Closed Door Training when she saw Han Jingru.

How could I miss the chance to meet him because of a Closed Door Training? She thought to herself.

“Master Han, as for the Closed Door Training, I shall begin right away once I return to Piaomiao Sect. I promise to put your kindness into good use,” Yan Qinghua said. She did not want to spend her time in Jingru Sect to conduct her Closed Door Training. She was fully aware that it was her time to leave when Zhantai Liuyue returns to Jingru Sect.

“I won’t ask you to leave even when Madam Zhantai returns, so don’t worry about it. Jingru Sect and Piaomiao Sect are like family, so stay as long as you like. Besides, I’d advise you to begin the Closed Door Training as soon as possible for the Holy Chestnut to maximize its greatest value,” Han Jingru suggested.

Family?

Yan Qinghua's heart was moved when she heard that word. Although the so-called family Han Jingru mentioned was not what she had imagined in her mind, her heart was filled with content by the thought of how close they both were now.

“Are you sure, Master Han?” Yan Qinghua asked.

“Of course. Anyway, I have to go to the Dragon Emperor Palace. Please do have your Closed Door Training at Jingru Sect in peace, Madam Yan,” Han Jingru assured. Zhantai Liuyue and Huang Xiaoyong were still trapped in the Dragon Emperor Palace by the Emperor. He knew that if he doesn't show up, they won't be able to leave. Hence, he must make a trip there himself.

“Master Han, are still going to the Dragon Emperor Palace?” Yan Qinghua was confused.

“Yes, I have some matters to take care of. So, I'm leaving soon. I hope you can have a peaceful Closed Door Training, Madam Yan.” Han Jingru waved before he left.

She cherished their time together and wanted to spend more time with him as they share very few moments. Yet, she couldn't think of any convincing reason for him to stay as she watched him leave.

Yan Qinghua sighed heavily as the door closed.

“What's bothering you, Madam Yan?” The junior sister asked as she noticed her expression suddenly changed.

“I like Master Han,” Yan Qinghua said, frankly. She wasn't the kind to hide her feelings. She was just as direct and truthful with Zhantai Liuyue just as she was with her junior sister.

Once Han Jingru left Yan Qinghua's room, he hesitated at the thought of Fei Lingsheng's request. Although she was very clear with the terms and consequences of the contract, he thought it was an absurd idea to sign the contract with a Pinnacle Stage fighter.

In other words, there were many questions and worries about Fei Lingsheng's request that

bothered him. He dare not promise her lightly as he was not clear of what was on her mind.

Theoretically, signing the contract would only benefit him and he never had to worry about Fei Lingsheng plotting against him.

The moment the contract took effect, Fei Lingsheng would be under his control. It also meant that he was able to restrain her even if she planned to harm him.

After much consideration, Han Jingru headed towards the direction of Fei Lingsheng's room.

When Han Jingru arrived, he noticed that her door was wide opened. She was anticipating his arrival all this while.

Fei Lingsheng spotted Han Jingru and asked, "Have you decided? It's hard to come by a servant who possesses such qualities. Think about it, a Pinnacle Stage puppet as your servant who has the possibility of surpassing the Alpha Stage."

“You’re betting your entire life just to achieve the Alpha Stage. Don’t you think the stakes are way too high?” Han Jingru couldn’t comprehend Fei Lingsheng’s *persistence. What’s the point of becoming an Alpha Stage fighter who doesn’t have the freedom to do anything the heart desires?*

“My life would be meaningless if I fail to become an Alpha Stage fighter. It has been a dream of mine, and I’m determined to achieve it no matter what the price was,” Fei Lingsheng replied stubbornly.



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From Fei Lingsheng's stubborn eyes, Han Jingru could see that she had made up her mind. Perhaps, for someone like her, reaching the Alpha Stage was her one and only aim.

Although it was not something Han Jingru could understand, he could not state that Fei Lingsheng's persistence was something wrong. After all, everyone had different goals in life.

As for him, what he wanted was to resolve every problem he had before he looked for a peaceful place to spend the rest of his life there with Su Yimo and Han Xiang. However, before he could have his peace, he had to resolve the problems of which he had to be powerful.

Therefore, although Han Jingru and Fei Lingsheng's intentions for the goals were very different, what they had to do to achieve them was almost the same.

When Han Jingru walked to Fei Lingsheng, she bowed. She did not mind lowering herself in front of Han Jingru, as he was a man who had achieved the Alpha Stage. Those who could

achieve this stage deserved respect from everyone else.

Hence, even if Fei Lingsheng had her last chance to regret her decision as Han Jingru drew the contract symbol in front of her forehead, she did nothing. With that, she accepted the contract and from then on, Fei Lingsheng was Han Jingru's puppet of Pinnacle Stage. She was someone much stronger than Zhong Qishan was.

At Ximen family's residence.

Zhong Qishan and Ximen Jin were discussing the matter of Han Jingru and the Dragon Emperor Palace. Suddenly, Zhong Qishan's head shot up, and he looked toward Mount Phoenix.

"What's wrong?" Ximen Jin queried, baffled.

Similarly, there was a tinge of confusion in Zhong Qishan's eyes. "I don't know. I sensed something odd just now, but it disappeared very quickly."

"Is it something to do with Jingru Sect?" Ximen

Jin queried. Since the other man had looked toward Mount Phoenix, that meant whatever he sensed had something to do with Jingru Sect.

Zhong Qishan shook his head. As quickly as the sensation came, it dissipated at equal speed.

Zhong Qishan did not have the time to find out what was going on, and he too, was unsure if Jingru Sect had anything to do with it.

“I don’t know. Maybe,” Zhong Qishan confessed. Although he knew nothing of what happened, a sense of worry rose in his heart.

“Will Han Jingru and Dragon Emperor Palace become enemies?” Ximen Jin inquired. That was the question and Ximen Jin’s assumption from what they had been discussing a moment earlier. He was not afraid, of course. In fact, he was somewhat eager to find out. Now that the Ximen family was affiliated with the Han Jingru, no matter what he did, the Ximen family had to catch up with him.

The moment Han Jingru decided to go against the Dragon Emperor Palace, the Ximen family would

automatically become the Dragon Emperor Palace's enemy as well.

Nevertheless, it was not bad news for Ximen Jin. The Ximen family was growing stronger and more influential. Soon, their power would surpass the Emperor's tolerance limits. The repeat of the Bailing family's disaster was nothing but a matter of time now. The only way the Ximen family could escape this was to overthrow the Emperor.

To Ximen Jin, the only person in this world who could do this was Han Jingru.

"You already have an answer in your mind. Why do you still ask me?" Zhong Qishan commented. Although his reply was vague, both knew that there must be a reason for Han Jingru to suddenly build the Jingru Sect; he must have a grand plan in mind.

"I just hope that you can give me more reassurances. After all, going against the Dragon Emperor Palace isn't something anyone dares to do," Ximen Jin replied.

“You’re one insane man. If your grandfather were in your place, he would have tried to cut ties with Han Jingru by now. On the other hand, it’s as if you’re afraid Han Jingru won’t go against the Emperor instead.” Zhong Qishan shook his head, exasperated. The grandfather and the grandson were two very different people. Ximen Jin craved not for peace. Instead, he was quite aggressive. Even though this might result in the annihilation of the Ximen family, he still intended to go ahead with it.

“That old man has long lost his will to fight. If the Ximen family’s fate remains in his hands, we’ll be wiped out eventually. I’m the only one who can bring the family to its glory,” Ximen Jin scoffed. He held no respect for Ximen Chang in his heart. Although they were blood relatives, it meant nothing to Ximen Jin. Ximen Chang had poured time and effort into him just because he was looking for an heir for the Ximen family. The moment he had gotten the Holy Chestnut, his selfishness was exposed to the public. Moreover, Ximen Jin knew that Ximen Chang was only using him for many things. Therefore, Ximen Jin only seemed like a good grandson but deep

within, he was not.

“Your guesses aren’t incorrect. The Emperor will eventually get displeased with the Ximen family. If you don’t resist at the right time, you’ll end up like the Bailing family. I just don’t know how capable Han Jingru is right now,” Zhong Qishan uttered. He was now in the same boat as Han Jingru. If Han Jingru were to die in this, he would be doomed for death as well. Thus, all he could do was to pray that Han Jingru was truly capable of going against the Emperor.

On the other side, Han Jingru, who had made a contract with Fei Lingsheng, left Jingru Sect.

Huang Xiaoyong and Zhantai Liuyue were still trapped in the Dragon Emperor Palace, so Han Jingru had to head to the Dragon Emperor Palace again. Unlike the previous time, this visit would not be a peaceful one.

Han Jingru had killed the men that the Emperor had sent to Jingru Sect. Therefore, the Emperor would surely ask him about it on the next trip he made to the palace. If he could not give the

Emperor a good explanation, the war between the two would break out earlier than expected.

“Have you thought of an explanation for killing the Emperor’s men?” Fei Lingsheng asked. To her, it was irrational of Han Jingru to have done that. After all, those were the men sent by the Emperor personally. For Han Jingru to have chosen to kill them in this situation meant that he looked down on the Emperor.

As the Emperor of the nation, there was no way he would take a humiliation like this quietly. If he were to hold Han Jingru accountable for it, he was bound to face a major problem.

“Do you really not know why the Emperor is so powerful in the Dragon Emperor Palace?” Han Jingru asked her instead.

This was a question that many fighters of Pinnacle Stage wanted to find out. Unfortunately, no one had found the answer until now.

“If I knew, wouldn’t I have told you already? We’re in the same boat. If you die, I won’t have a

great life ahead either. But if you were to ask me to guess, I'd say it has something to do with the preceding emperors. This should be some sort of power accumulation that allows him to ascent multiple stages at once," Fei Lingsheng explained.

Multiple stages?

With the stage the Emperor is now in, if he is to ascend multiple stages, won't he reach the Alpha Stage?



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“Do you mean that he could reach the Alpha Stage?” Han Jingru wondered.

Fei Lingsheng gave him a firm nod. “Of course. How else would he be able to fight against Pinnacle Masters? However, I don’t think you’d need to worry because you’re at the Alpha Stage. If worse comes to worst, your fight with him will be a draw.”

Han Jingru laughed bitterly to himself. If that were the case, he was not sure if he could get a draw with the Emperor. After all, he was not actually in the Alpha Stage.

However, the question of whether the Emperor could achieve the Alpha Stage or that he was just at the simulated Alpha Stage still went unanswered.

Regardless, Han Jingru did not need to worry much about facing the Emperor. If the Emperor had an ace up his sleeve, how could he not have one as well?

The Ruby-eyed Python was already recovering

from its injuries. Its powers would be a huge boost to Han Jingru.

Subconsciously, Han Jingru touched his arm. With the little guy around, he felt much more reassured.

“Right. I heard that reaching Alpha Stage meant facing divine punishment soon. Is the divine punishment powerful?” Han Jingru continued to ask.

The divine punishment did exist, as one had to escape from the confinements of a mortal body to be a god. The process of divine punishment was the perfect ceremony for a mortal man to be freed from their mortal cage.

In the past, Fei Lingsheng was absolutely sure that the divine punishment was true. However, she was now starting to have doubts. After all, Han Jingru had reached Alpha Stage without going through any divine punishment.

“If I didn’t know you, I’d fully believe in this. However, divine punishment did not come when

you achieve Alpha Stage. Hence, I'm starting to doubt the authenticity of this," Fei Lingsheng remarked.

Han Jingru knew well why he had yet gone through the divine punishment. It was because he was still a distance away from the Alpha Stage. Even if he could fight with someone from the Alpha Stage now, it was because of the skeleton.

After all, this was a skeleton of an ancient fighter. The power it held was capable of rising Han Jingru's stage in the shortest possible time.

"Truthfully, I haven't reached the Alpha Stage yet. I'm still a step away," Han Jingru confessed.

"How can that be?" Fei Lingsheng looked at Han Jingru suspiciously. *If he can now easily kill Yi Qingshan, a Pinnacle Master, how powerful is someone at the Alpha Stage then?*

"That's the fact. That's the reason I didn't go through the divine punishment," Han Jingru responded.

Looking at Han Jingru's various expressions, Fei Lingsheng realized in confusion that there was a tinge of helplessness in there. It was as though he was eager to go through it. *What's going on?*

Divine punishment was extremely dangerous, and one might lose their life in a blink of an eye. Although Fei Lingsheng wanted to reach Alpha Stage, she was terrified of the divine punishment.

How can anyone in this world look forward to the divine punishment?

“Are you curious about the divine punishment, or do you really want to experience the divine punishment?” Fei Lingsheng inquired.

“I want to experience the divine punishment,” Han Jingru replied.

His answers confused Fei Lingsheng even more. In fact, she was starting to thinking that a screw was loose in Han Jingru's mind. *Does he have a death wish?*

“Legend has it, the divine punishment is mighty.

A normal cultivator would instantly turn to ash in the divine punishment, and even the person who's the target of the divine punishment might die in it," Fei Lingsheng explained.

"I know. That's why the more powerful the divine punishment is, the better I think it is." Once again, Han Jingru said words that Fei Lingsheng could not comprehend.

She had been living for so many years, and she was sure she was a smart individual. However, she had no idea what Han Jingru was thinking when he said those words.

"Why would you think in this way? If you want to commit suicide, you can do it in another way," Fei Lingsheng sighed.

"Commit suicide?" Han Jingru smiled before he answered, "I'm planning to take care of my wife and child. Why would I commit suicide?"

"If you don't want to commit suicide, why would you have such an insane thought? Do you think you'll have a better chance of surviving the

divine punishment the stronger it is? I won't believe in an absurd theory like this," Fei Lingsheng uttered.

Han Jingru shook his head and replied, "If the divine punishment is so powerful, will it kill the Qilin?"

His words stunned Fei Lingsheng and stopped her in her tracks.

Killing the Qilin with the divine punishment!

It was then Fei Lingsheng realized what Han Jingru was thinking about. However, it was truly an idea out of the box. She was sure that no one else but him would have thought of this.

Using the divine punishment to defeat the Qilin seemed ludicrous in the beginning, but the more she thought about it, the more she realized it was a brilliant plan.

Divine punishment was mighty, and if it could kill the Qilin, that meant Xenos would not have to worry about the reawakening of the Qilin ever

again.

However, things would not be as easy as it was.

Feeling that it seemed impossible, Fei Lingsheng could not help but refute, “You think of it as a feat too easy. You can’t control the divine punishment, and the divine punishment is meant for people. Why would the Qilin get caught up in it?”

Han Jingru knew the idea was too wild, but that did not mean it was impossible to execute. *How will we know if it’s impossible unless we try it?*

Moreover, divine punishment was the only plan Han Jingru could come up with to resolve the crisis.

A familiar of the Alpha Stage was much more powerful than an individual of the same stage. If the current fighters of Xenos were to go up against the Qilin, they would be wiped out. Hence, Han Jingru had to come up with an alternative plan.

“I’m just saying this is an opportunity. It won’t be the one and only plan. However, since we have the opportunity right now, shouldn’t we try it?” Han Jingru said.

Although Fei Lingsheng wanted to refute Han Jingru again, the words dissipated before they could leave her mouth.

It was a last-ditched attempt. After all, it was almost impossible to stop the strong the Qilin from destroying Xenos just by pure strength.

“How did you come up with such absurd thoughts?” Fei Lingsheng queried. She could not imagine anyone coming with such a plan, yet that was what Han Jingru had done. She was curious about what was inside that head of his.

“It’s important to know how to adapt. I’ve met with all sorts of obstacles since young, and I have to resolve them myself. That’s why I always come up with peculiar ideas to change my current situation. After so many years, I’ve gotten used to it. When I encounter any troubles, my brain will give me strange ideas,” Han Jingru chuckled.

Back when he was stuck in Han Residence, if not for his out-of-the-box thinking, he would not have been able to form a force of his own secretly. Everything had been made possible because of Han Jingru's crazy ideas.



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“What were you like when you were younger?” Fei Lingsheng was curious about Han Jingru when they started to talk about their childhood. After all, she grew up eating the Holy Chestnut, but her stage was still not as high as the latter. Many people were also curious about where he actually came from.

All the fighters of the Imperial Court were recorded by the Dragon Emperor Palace, even if they didn't join the palace. Han Jingru was the only one whose name wasn't recorded as the Dragon Emperor Palace didn't have any information about him. It was as if he had just descended from the sky out of the blue.

Even though the life and death of Fei Lingsheng were in his hands and he wasn't afraid that she would leak any of his secrets, he didn't plan to tell her such an important matter. Besides, if he had actually told her, she would definitely ask him a bunch of questions afterward. *I won't be such a fool and get myself into such trouble.*

“It seems like you've almost forgotten about your place,” Han Jingru observed icily.

Fei Lingsheng was evidently dissatisfied with his words. *I am indeed his servant. But how can he be so arrogant even when it's regarding such a trivial matter?*

“Just don't say it if you don't want to. Do you have to be so arrogant?” she said unhappily.

“Zhong Qishan wouldn't dare to talk to me with such an attitude so you better control yourself. Don't think that I would just let you act however you want just because you're a woman,” he reminded.

There wasn't a clear distinction between men and women of this world in Han Jingru's eyes. To him, there were only two types of people, his wife and daughter, and the outsiders.

Besides his wife and daughter, Han Jingru treated everyone else equally regardless of their gender.

If Fei Lingsheng had actually stepped over his bottom line, it wouldn't matter to him that she was a woman.

“Oh, that’s right. You’re still planning to get revenge for Bailing Wan’er, right?” The woman had no choice but to change the topic.

“It’ll happen anyway. I want to take over Xenos and the Three Nations. So naturally, I have to kill the Emperor,” Han Jingru replied.

She wasn’t even surprised anymore. After all, he had explained to her once before. The man had lots of weird ideas, and though his plan to take over The Three Nations was a bit too much, it was still one of his wilder ideas.

“Do you know why Xenos exists in the form of The Three Nations for such a long time?” Fei Lingsheng asked.

“The Dark Forest became the barrier between The Three Nations. Even though the nations have had years of war, it’s because of the existence of the Dark Forest that none of the nations can conquer the other nation,” he explained. The situation of The Three Nations was not by default, but it was due to their desperate actions.

Well, who doesn't have any ambitions?

Who wouldn't want the actual power to rule over all nations?

It was too bad that the Dark Forest was a boundary that they couldn't get past. As long as the Dark Forest still existed, the rulers of The Three Nations would never get the power to do so.

“Why do you have such a crazy idea when you know that? Aren't you being too naïve?” Fei Lingsheng asked.

“The main reason people are so afraid of the Dark Forest is because of the Qilin. What if it dies?” Han Jingru asked with a smile.

She immediately rolled her eyes at him. “Of course the Qilin will die. It will even die because of the divine punishment. After all, it's a plan made by you, the great Master Han. So how can it not work?”

Han Jingru knew that she was deliberately

mocking him but he didn't care at all. Fei Lingsheng wouldn't believe anything no matter what he said since it hadn't been successful yet.

At that moment, he took out a handful of Holy Chestnuts and she was instantly shocked at the sight of it.

It was the first time Fei Lingsheng saw so many Holy Chestnuts even though she had previously lived in the Dark Forest.

Now the man before her was holding them in his hands as if they were just a bunch of ordinary fruit.

“What are you trying to do?” she asked suspiciously.

“Don't you want to become an Alpha Stage fighter? One Holy Chestnut wouldn't be enough,” Han Jingru said.

Fei Lingsheng stared at him in disbelief. *Does he mean that he's going to give it all to me?*

“I- I didn’t hear you wrongly, did I? O-Or did I misunderstand you?” It was enough to see just how shocked she was when a Pinnacle Master like her was stuttering.

“Yes, they’re for you. You didn’t misunderstand me. Tell me if these aren’t enough,” Han Jingru said.

Fei Lingsheng felt goosebumps all over her body. *Judging by his words, it just means that he has more Holy Chestnuts besides the ones he’s holding now!*

“Don’t tell me you’ve been living in the Dark Forest just like me. Otherwise, how is it possible that you have so many Holy Chestnuts?” Even though Han Jingru had told her once that he had more than one Holy Chestnut, she didn’t expect him to have so many. It was a rare item to most but it became such an ordinary thing in his hands.

“Yeah. Would you believe me if I told you I was raised by the Qilin?” he said.

Fei Lingsheng subconsciously shook her head.

The Qilin was in a state of deep sleep. Not to mention, with the fierceness of that familiar once it awoke, there was no way it could raise a human.

“So do you want them or not? I’m going to keep them if you don’t want them. My hand’s tired,” Han Jingru reminded.

She was afraid that he would go back on his words so she quickly snatched the Holy Chestnuts from his hands.

“You really don’t regret giving them to me? It’ll be too late when I finish them up later,” she said, still unable to believe that he was being so generous.

“I need you to remember something. Once you feel a sign of leveling up to a new stage, or you feel the divine punishment coming, you must let me know immediately,” Han Jingru replied.

Confusion flashed through her eyes for a second but she quickly understood what he meant.

So he has other motives for giving me these Holy Chestnuts.

He's going to deal with the Qilin through divine punishment.

So where does the divine punishment come from?

It must be the one during the period of my divine punishment, right?

“Are you using my divine punishment to deal with the Qilin?” she asked.

“What else do you think? Did you really think I'm so generous?” Han Jingru said matter-of-factly.

“But what about me? Without the divine punishment, how am I supposed to be freed from my mortal cage?” Fei Lingsheng asked.

The former's face turned cold at that. “Fei Lingsheng, did you forget about your place again? You're just a puppet. When did you get

the right to speak so freely?”

She gritted her teeth upon hearing that. The woman still hadn't gotten used to her current status and would subconsciously try to reason with Han Jingru. *Given the situation, I really didn't have the right to care about this.*

He was her owner now, and her chance to level up to another stage was given by him. How could she go against what he wanted her to do?

“I couldn't tell previously but who knows you are such a sly man? You've been planning this since the beginning, haven't you? Otherwise, you wouldn't have formed a contract with me, right?” Fei Lingsheng asked.

“Why should I keep someone who isn't useful by my side? You should be grateful,” Han Jingru said indifferently.

The more she got to know Han Jingru, the more she realized that he wasn't such a simple person. Besides, it was hard to see just how sly he really was with his usual friendly facade.

It was even to the point where Fei Lingsheng felt that she had been fooled by him and had asked for it.

She couldn't help but feel a sense of impending crisis. *I wouldn't know when I'm ever going to die when I have ties with someone like him.*

However, Fei Lingsheng didn't have the chance to back away now. The moment she formed the contract with Han Jingru, she had already given him everything.

However, when she thought about it carefully, she realized that his plan was actually feasible in some way.

The divine punishment was mighty. If they could actually use its power to get rid of the Qilin, it was actually a good thing to Xenos.

“You’re actually really ambitious. Out of everyone in Xenos, I’m afraid you’re the only one who would think of something like this,” Fei Lingsheng couldn’t help but sigh in admiration. Though it was a scary plan, it was rare for someone to actually think of something like this.

“You might actually be the key person to getting rid of the Qilin. Don’t you want to be the Messiah of Xenos?” Han Jingru asked in a joking manner.

She rolled her eyes in response. “Even if I became the Messiah, I’d still be your servant, wouldn’t I?”

“Don’t worry. Besides the two of us, no one else will know. To them, you’re still a strong Pinnacle Master and the best fighter in Xenos,” he replied with a smile.

Fei Lingsheng didn’t care much for dignity, it wasn’t important to her anyway. Otherwise, she wouldn’t have shown up as a beggar in front of Han Jingru. Besides, she actually hoped that she could catch up to him.

There are legends about the Alpha Stage. I wonder if there's a different world above that stage?

No one can be sure of it. Maybe I'll get a chance to prove it exists if I stay by him.

At the Dragon Emperor Palace, the Emperor's trusted aid frantically went to look for him.

“Han Jingru and Fei Lingsheng are already making their way here to the Dragon Emperor Palace,” the former informed.

The Emperor nodded before saying, “Tell our men to leave the house. Try to not let him find out about this.”

The trusted aide looked troubled. *Huang Xiaoyong and Zhantai Liuyue hadn't left in so long. Han Jingru must've guessed that they are locked up in the Dragon Emperor Palace, that's why he's on his way here. How is hiding the truth by telling our men to leave even possible? Han Jingru isn't a fool after all!*

“Your Majesty, I’m afraid that Han Jingru already knew what happened,” he said.

“Of course he knows. Why would he return so soon if he doesn’t know?” the Emperor replied with a smile.

His trusted aide was puzzled by his words. *And here I thought his Majesty was treating Han Jingru like a fool.*

But since his Majesty knows that he knew about the situation here, why bother to hide the truth?

“Knowing something and actually seeing something are two completely different things. Would he even dare to blame me if I told our men to leave? Even if he knows what had actually happened, he still has no choice but to suffer in silence,” the Emperor said disdainfully.

Realization hit the former. *So his Majesty is only doing this to put up a show. He wants to use his status to pressure Han Jingru, forcing him to keep silent about the incident.*

There really wasn't anything wrong in doing this but the Emperor's trusted aide couldn't help but feel worried. He had a feeling that something was bound to happen. After all, the first time Han Jingru came to the Dragon Emperor Palace, he had fought against the Emperor. Based on that alone, it was obvious that he didn't respect the Emperor at all.

"Yes, your Majesty," the trusted aide replied. He could only follow as he was told since it was the Emperor's orders.

After he left, the latter's face turned cold.

The first time he pressured Han Jingru with his aura, the latter actually seemed calm. The Emperor had to look into the latter's strength again because the latter was the first person who made him feel threatened. So naturally, he was worried.

After all, even the Pinnacle Stage fighters couldn't fight against his absolute power once they show up in the throne room. However, the appearance of someone like Han Jingru

undoubtedly destabilized his position.

“Han Jingru, I just don’t believe that you’ve no respect for me at all,” the Emperor muttered to himself.

Soon enough, Han Jingru and Fei Lingsheng entered the city. However, both of them didn’t meet with the Emperor immediately. Instead, they went to the latter’s house.

The men outside the house had left right away under the orders of the Emperor, so nothing looked odd when they arrived.

But how could someone as smart as Han Jingru not know what was really happening?

“It seems like the Emperor is being wary of you since he didn’t dare to attack your disciple directly. And his men left immediately before you even arrived.” The woman sighed inwardly as she spoke. In the past, the Emperor would always go his own way and follow through with his plans. When dealing with the Bailing family back then, one word from him and they were all killed. But

now, the Emperor was being so secretive when dealing with Han Jingru.

This was the advantage of being powerful. With such great power, even the Emperor would have to treat you with respect.

“What do you think he would do if I just took them away with me?” Han Jingru asked with a smile.

Fei Lingsheng’s eyes twitched. *He obviously means that he isn’t going to meet the Emperor. But isn’t that too disrespectful?*

If he really dares to do so, the Emperor would never let him leave the Dragon Emperor Palace so easily.

“You’re not kidding, right? How is it possible that the Emperor would just let you go if you left just like this?” she questioned. At the same time, she silently prayed that he wouldn’t actually do it. If not, his fight with the Emperor might be moved forward. It was obvious that causing a scene at a time like this would be irrational. After

all, the Dark Forest was their number one enemy now.

“Let’s just try. I want to see for myself just how far I can push him. Besides, I don’t need his permission on my plan to get rid of the Qilin. So the easiest way to do this is...” Han Jingru stopped talking halfway through his sentence.

“Is to what?” Fei Lingsheng couldn’t stop herself from asking.

“I won’t tell you yet. You will know when it’s time for you to know.” The man deliberately held her in suspense.

She felt so uneasy as though a cat was scratching at her heart with its claws. *Han Jingru definitely has a plan in mind but he isn’t telling me. How can I stand it?*

“Can’t you just tell me now? Must you make me suffer like this?” Fei Lingsheng grumbled as she looked towards Han Jingru.

“Seems like you still don’t know how to be a

servant. The basic requirement of a servant is that they must comply with whatever their master says. You don't have the right to ask so much," he replied coldly.

She gritted her teeth angrily but there was nothing more she could do.



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When they stepped into the yard, Han Jingru immediately saw Huang Xiaoyong and Zhantai Liuyue in the pavilion.

His disciple was stunned for a moment when he saw him. Then, he ran towards the former excitedly.

“You’re finally back, Master! I thought I wouldn’t be able to leave this place forever. I miss you so much.” The only thing Huang Xiaoyong lacked was snot and tears to complete his act.

Han Jingru said indifferently, “You’re not that good in terms of strength, but your acting skills are impressive. You look like you’ve had a great time here. There’s a beauty with you after all.”

Chatting with Zhantai Liuyue every day was indeed something Huang Xiaoyong looked forward to. But compared to leaving this place, he’d much prefer to leave. Because in the end, he could only admire someone like Zhantai Liuyue from afar. He didn’t have the guts to even imagine what could happen between them.

“Master Han, how is your sister?” The woman walked towards Han Jingru. Her ears were reddish, probably because she saw someone she fancied.

His disciple finally snapped back to his senses upon hearing her words. He quickly asked, “Where’s Yingying, Master? Why isn’t she here with you? Did something happen?”

That big mouth of yours just can’t say anything good, can you? Han Jingru couldn’t help but kick Huang Xiaoyong as he said, “Don’t worry. Yingying will still be alive even if you’re dead.”

The latter smiled in response. “Great. That’s great. I haven’t confessed to Yingying yet, so I hope nothing happens to her.”

Han Jingru sighed. Even though he had once thought about pairing Huang Xiaoyong and Jiang Yingying together, the latter’s performance was barely passable. How could she like him if he were like that?

“What breed of toad are you?” he asked.

“Breed? Toad? What do you mean, Master?”
Huang Xiaoyong asked in confusion. He didn’t understand what his master meant.

“Why do you think you’re worthy of my sister?”
Han Jingru asked disdainfully.

The former scratched his head. Back then, he took most pride in being a governor’s son. But this status was basically a joke to Jiang Yingying. Not only that, but he also wasn’t even a match for her in terms of strength.

How am I worthy then?

Despite racking his brain, he couldn’t think of a reason.

“Master, do you mean I should give up?” His head drooped as he asked in an extremely weak voice.

Han Jingru took in a deep breath and had a sudden urge to beat Huang Xiaoyong to death. Compared to all the flirts on Earth, he was basically useless.

“Madam Zhantai, it must’ve been hard on you these days. You wouldn’t have met with these things if I didn’t ask you to come to the Dragon Emperor Palace with me,” he said apologetically. He couldn’t even be bothered with his disciple anymore.

Zhantai Liuyue quickly shook her head while saying, “I just couldn’t leave this place for a short while. How is that having a hard time, Master Han?”

“Alright, it’s about time. Let’s go,” Han Jingru said.

Upon hearing that, Fei Lingsheng quickly grabbed hold of him before saying, “You’re really not planning to go meet the Emperor?”

“Of course. Don’t you want to know what I’m actually planning to do?” he asked with a chuckle.

Zhantai Liuyue was shocked when she heard their conversation. She thought that Han Jingru had already gone to meet the Emperor, but who

knew that he didn't even go to the throne room.

But this is ridiculous.

The Emperor locked Huang Xiaoyong and me up in the Dragon Emperor Palace in order to force Han Jingru to head to the palace. If he isn't going to meet the Emperor, it just means he's ignoring the latter's existence.

“Master Han, have you presented yourself to the Emperor?” she couldn't help but ask. The woman was on the same page as Fei Lingsheng. *If Han Jingru doesn't meet with the Emperor, he wouldn't be able to leave this place.*

“What?” He smiled slightly. Those words didn't suit him at all. *Since when do I have to present myself to someone and ask for his approval when I'm going to do something?*

“Don't worry, Madam Zhantai. As long as I'm here, I'll make sure that you will leave this place safely. I'll even make sure that the Piaomiao Sect wouldn't be dragged into this mess,” Han Jingru told her calmly.

Zhantai Liuyue knew how capable he really was. If he could promise her something like that, he definitely wasn't joking. But she felt that there was no need for him to get into a fight with the Emperor since the latter ruled over most of the fighters of the Imperial Court. And these people were definitely a team of extremely powerful people. That was why she felt that it wasn't a smart move to go against the Emperor.

“I'm not doubting your strength, Master Han. I'm just worried that the Jingru Sect would struggle if you went against the Emperor,” she reminded.

Han Jingru smiled at her response. Of course, he understood the reason. *However, as long as the Emperor dies, I can have his throne and I won't have to worry about these things anymore.*

The reason why Han Jingru was trying to plan a coup at this point wasn't that he desired it. To him, money and power were just like a fleeting cloud and passing smoke. He didn't care about them at all. However, for his plan on the divine punishment to work, he had no other choice but to do this.

He didn't want anyone to criticize his plan, nor did he want anyone to stymie his plans.

The best way to avoid any trouble was to kill anyone who got in his way.

“Madam Zhantai, if the Emperor dies, no one would give me trouble anymore,” he said.

Zhantai Liuyue's eyes widened at that. No one had the guts to say such a disrespectful statement in the Imperial Court. Even if it was just a thought in their mind, it wasn't something an ordinary person dared to do.

But now, these words had actually come out of Han Jingru's mouth.

Fei Lingsheng was equally shocked.

Although she knew that he was going to fight with the Emperor someday, she didn't expect it to come so soon.

“Have you gone crazy, Han Jingru? You're going to strike now?” she asked. Fei Lingsheng

couldn't understand why he chose to do it at a critical moment like this. In her opinion, it was best that everyone worked together to get rid of the Qilin.

Among the three of them, Huang Xiaoyong looked slightly calmer than the other two. Even though it still shocked him, but weirdly enough, he felt it was only a natural thing to do when his master said it. *It's just killing the Emperor, right? Others didn't dare to even think about it. But Master can definitely do it.*

“He needs to die for my plan to kill the Qilin to go smoothly. Otherwise, do you think he'd agree to it so easily?” Han Jingru asked.

At that moment, Zhantai Liuyue was breathing rapidly when she asked him, “Master Han, I heard that the person who kidnapped your sister is Yi Qingshan. What happened to him?”

Han Jingru knew Zhantai Liuyue asked the question with the intention to check his abilities. Hence, he didn't hide anything and answered without hesitation. "How dare he kidnapped my sister! He should have prepared to die. Therefore, I killed him."

Zhantai Liuyue suddenly trembled and nearly lost her footing.

"I have killed him!" Han Jingru actually killed a Pinnacle Master while the way he said was as though it was impartial for him to do so.

"By the way, he didn't even have a chance to resist," Han Jingru continued saying.

Zhantai Liuyue was breathing more rapidly.

Zhantai Liuyue thought that there would be a fiery yet earth-shattering battle against a fighter like Yi Qingshan. None of the Pinnacle Masters had been involved in the long battle amongst The Three Nations. This was due to the fact that they were just too strong. A lot of innocent people would be harmed and countless cities would be

ruined once these Pinnacle Masters engaged in the battle.

However, such a strong fighter didn't even stand a chance against Han Jingru.

This implied the stage Han Jingru was at. His skills were certainly higher than any Pinnacle Masters as he managed to defeat Yi Qingshan.

The Alpha Stage! His level might have reached that legendary stage!

“Madam Zhantai, do you still have any questions?” asked Han Jingru.

Zhantai Liuyue shook her head. She dared not question upon knowing that Han Jingru had managed to kill Yi Qingshan. Maybe it was not worth mentioning the Emperor's abilities to him.

It might seem like wishful thinking for others to kill the Emperor. However, it might be a piece of cake for Han Jingru.

Upon seeing Zhantai Liuyue's frightening

expression, Fei Lingsheng whispered softly, “There is no need to brag. Only someone was killed after all, right?”

Although Fei Lingsheng’s voice was very soft, Han Jingru still managed to hear it clearly. Despite that, he did not retort.

As a matter of fact, what she said was true. There was nothing to boast about since only a person was killed.

“If Madam Zhantai don’t have any questions, then we’ll leave at once.” Han Jingru added.

“Alright.” Zhantai Liuyue didn’t hesitate further as she had made up her mind to follow Han Jingru’s footsteps even if it would mean to go against the Emperor.

She was willing to place her bet for a person capable of killing Pinnacle Master.

Many people were shocked when four of them left the courtyard to proceed to the city gate immediately.

Those people were ordered to watch over Han Jingru's movement closely. From the understanding of the ordinary people, he should have gone to the throne room to meet the Emperor. Instead, who would have thought that he decided to leave instantly.

Soon, that news spread into the ears of the trusted aide. He was stunned upon hearing that. As he did not know how to react to that news, he proceeded to inform the Emperor.

So he ran towards the throne room very quickly.

The Emperor was not amused upon seeing his trusted aide in a panic-stricken state. After all, that trusted aide was his right-hand man. Yet, he acted in such an apprehensive manner.

“What happened to you lately? You don't even seem to possess a bit of regal dignity,” The Emperor commented.

His trusted aide also wished that he could maintain his composure. However, the fact that Han Jingru decided to leave the Dragon Emperor

Palace instantly made him feel uneasy.

The trusted aide reported, “Your Majesty, our spy reported that Han Jingru along with his gang is heading towards the city gate. It looks like they are going to leave the Dragon Emperor Palace.”

“What!” The Emperor banged the table while standing up as he was filled with rage. He was expecting Han Jingru to meet him but unexpectedly, the latter decided to leave without doing that.

“Your Majesty, what should we do now? We can’t just let them leave,” his trusted aide asked in a panic. A lot of fighters within the city had been paying attention to this incident. If Han Jingru were allowed to leave so easily, the Emperor’s reputation would be ruined. Who else would still respect the Emperor in the future?

The Emperor gritted his teeth as he was dying to have Han Jingru cut into pieces.

He never thought that Han Jingru would be so disrespectful to him! *Han Jingru, do you really wish to go against me? You are confident that I can’t kill you, aren’t you?*

“Your Majesty, Han Jingru is reaching the city gate soon. What shall we do now?” his trusted aide asked again.

The Emperor responded with an expressionless face. “Since he dares to challenge my authority let him pay the price. Gather all the fighters. I want to show them the Emperor’s might.”

The trusted aide’s expression changed upon hearing the Emperor’s order as he had to get involved as well!

Han Jingru was unlikely to escape this time as the punishment was meted out by the Emperor, himself. It was not a small matter as he might possibly meet his end at Dragon Emperor Palace.

“Yes,” his trusted aide answered briefly. He then immediately assembled the fighters of the Dragon Emperor Palace.

The Emperor’s murderous intent had arisen. At that point in time, he had no regard for the help

offered by Han Jingru in fighting against the Qilin. Anyone who dared to challenge him would face death.

“Han Jingru, I have already given you the opportunity with due dignity. Yet, you were wishing for death. Now, don’t blame me for your misfortune.”

Meanwhile, many fighters had already gathered around the Dragon Emperor Palace’s city gate even when Han Jingru and his gang had not reached there. All of them knew about his act. In addition, they were just standing there acting as the spectators to witness his tragic fate.

“Han Jingru is an ungrateful wretch. How dare he challenges the Emperor’s authority? It looks like he has grown too big for his boots after dealing with The Elite 28,” One of the fighters mentioned.

Another fighter expressed confidently, “I would like to see how he can leave the Dragon Emperor Palace unscathed as the Emperor has taken the matters into his own hand. It will be impossible

for him to stand a chance to survive.”

“Well, I think we should thank him. If not for him, we will not be able to have the honor to witness the Emperor’s might,” The fighter mocked.

The people gathered there were talking to each other and they all agreed in general that Han Jingru would not be able to pull through today.

Soon, Han Jingru and his gang reached the city gate. By then, the city gate had been flooded with many fighters blocking it. If he wished to leave, he would have to fight his way out.

“Looks like you have really angered the Emperor. I wish to see how you deal with all the fighters in the Dragon Emperor Palace.” Fei Lingsheng mulled. Those people were bought in by the Emperor which indicated that His Majesty desperately wished to teach Han Jingru an unforgettable lesson. At the same time, he wanted these people to witness what would be the consequence of challenging him.

“This is good. Let these people witness how the Emperor will die so that they will obey me. This will save me a lot of troubles as I don’t have to go around to create an impression.” Han Jingru smiled.

Zhantai Liuyue became a little perturbed upon seeing such a scene. Nonetheless, she was looking forward to it when she saw Han Jingru was full of confidence. *Can he really overthrow the Emperor’s reign in the Imperial Court?*

If the Emperor were defeated in today’s battle, Han Jingru would become infamous in Imperial Court.

“Master, you need to make an all-out effort against the Emperor. It would be nice to have the Emperor defeated completely.” Huang Xiaoyong said as if he was trying to stir up the atmosphere.

Fei Lingsheng stared at Huang Xiaoyong fiercely upon hearing what he had just said. From her point of view, it was not the right time to fight against the Emperor as he had never shown his real power. In addition, Han Jingru shouldn't have challenged the Emperor at this moment.

However, Han Jingru didn't react too much to that as he just smiled.

On the other hand, Zhantai Liuyue became nervous, despite knowing that he surely had the capabilities to compete with the Emperor after knowing how he crushed Yi Qingshan. As a matter of fact, the Emperor had been ruling the Imperial Court for many years. Thus, she was really fearful of him.

“All these fellows looked down upon my master. You'll see my master's true power a moment later.” Huang Xiaoyong reproached the people around him who disdained his master as he had been holding Han Jingru in such high regard. Meanwhile, he had no regard for the Emperor. Hence, the ridiculous remarks made by those people hurt his ears.

“Han Jingru, are you serious? These fighters won’t remain standstill once the Emperor starts to attack. You need to understand that there are few hundred fighters inside the Dragon Emperor Palace.” Fei Lingsheng couldn’t help but reminded him again. She hoped that he could reconsider his decision because it was still possible to withdraw at this point in time and not shooting himself in his foot.

“Don’t tell me I have to either apologize to the Emperor or kneel down before him to admit that I am wrong? A lot of people are watching. Thus, he won’t let me off so easily.” Han Jingru said calmly.

“Tolerate for a moment to promote peace, isn’t it good?” asked Fei Lingsheng.

“Fei Lingsheng, are you afraid that you are being dragged into this conflict or fear that you will no longer able to obtain the Holy Chestnut if I were to die?” Han Jingru looked at her. She was still of use to him. Otherwise, he wouldn’t allow her to tag along with him. He disliked her even if she was just a puppet to him because she looked

weak before him as she was worrying too much. There was no way he would back down now.

Fei Lingsheng was speechless. However, Han Jingru's words pierced her heart as she was slightly frightened. As a matter of fact, both of them were in the same boat. If he were to die, she would find it hard to live as well. Moreover, if the Emperor were to find out that she had submitted herself to Han Jingru and bound by a contract, she would be in a hot soup.

Although Fei Lingsheng looked as young as her appearance, she didn't possess any passion that young people had. As a Pinnacle Master, she would need to be extra cautious all the time.

“Senior Fei, why are you by Han Jingru's side? Are you planning to go against the Emperor together with him as well?” An old man inquired politely while stepping forward. At the same time, he martial saluted while bowing to Fei Lingsheng.

These words certainly put Fei Lingsheng in an awkward position as this type of question would

force her to take her stand in front of the public. She was reluctant to get caught in this situation.

“Senior Fei, the Emperor will be here soon. We advise you to stay away from this fellow to prevent any ill fate. I guess Senior Fei is aware of the Emperor’s strength within the Dragon Emperor Palace. Why risk your life with this fellow to go against the Emperor?”

More people joined in to advise her after the old man spoke to her.

Han Jingru didn’t sense any kindness behind the advice from these people. Instead, he felt like a threat. Based on that, it seemed that Fei Lingsheng hadn’t left any good impression on them.

Shouldn’t a Pinnacle Master be revered by many people?

Why do so many people having such a strong hostility against Fei Lingsheng?

“Fei Lingsheng, are you not ready to tell them

about our relationship? Since the incident has brewed to the current stage, the contract should be disclosed to the public,” Han Jingru said in a calm tone.

Fei Lingsheng was surprised as they had agreed earlier that the contract would not be revealed to others. However, Han Jingru had requested her to disclose about the contract in the eyes of the public now.

Although Fei Lingsheng had prepared herself that this relationship would be revealed to outsiders, she was still having difficulties disclosing it under such circumstances. On top of that, her reputation as the Pinnacle Master would be ruined in the eyes of many people once the contract was being disclosed.

Nonetheless, that was a fact that Fei Lingsheng couldn't deny. In addition, she still wished to obtain the Holy Chestnut from Han Jingru. Thus, she had no choice but to obey him.

Fei Lingsheng felt it was troublesome to explain on the matter. Therefore, she decided to let them

see the truth directly.

Fei Lingsheng explained to the surrounding people while displaying her forehead with the imprint of the contract. “I have already entered a contract with Han Jingru. Now, I am just his puppet.”

Everyone was shocked by her speech. They were shocked to see her forehead which showed the imprint of the contract.

From their viewpoint, this type of imprint should appear on the head of familiars. *How on earth can it show on the forehead of a Pinnacle Master?*

“How can this be possible? Fei Lingsheng has become his puppet!”

“No, it must be my imagination. Even a Pinnacle Master is no match for him?”

“Previously, it was said that Zhong Qishan, the strongest fighter of The Elite 28 from the Ximen family has become his puppet. I thought it might just be an exaggeration by outsiders. I never

thought that it was real!” another fighter added.

The atmosphere was filled with shock from the surrounding people as Han Jingru had done something that none of them dare to do.

Firstly, the act of putting the imprint of the contract on the human body was already unconvincing to many. Yet, he did that to Fei Lingsheng, a Pinnacle Master. As a result, it was even more shocking and harder for people to believe that.

As the nearest person around Fei Lingsheng, the amount of shock that Zhantai Liuyue felt was even more than anyone else. As a matter of fact, she could see the imprint on Fei Lingsheng's forehead more clearly than anyone else. It was not fake or something that both Han Jingru and Fei Lingsheng made up to frighten those people.

However... how was this even possible!

Han Jingru must have done something for a highly skilled Pinnacle Master such as Fei Lingsheng to become his puppet willingly.

Zhantai Liuyue had been regarding Fei Lingsheng as her idol for years while wishing to follow in her footsteps. However, this hope was dashed instantly. *What is the point of becoming so powerful if a Pinnacle Master could become someone else's puppet?*

“Master.” Huang Xiaoyong swallowed his saliva. Although he didn't have any regard for Fei Lingsheng when he was around with Han Jingru, he was still shaken after he knew that she was just his master's puppet.

“Master, how did you do it? Huang Xiaoyong couldn't help but query.

Han Jingru ignored him while he proclaimed to those who disdained him, “Whoever wants to challenge me upfront is welcomed. Let me assess your strengths as a so-called fighter.”

Normally, this type of provocation should have resulted in mocking from the public. However, the atmosphere was completely silent as none dare to respond to Han Jingru.

Even Fei Lingsheng had turned into an obedient puppet, who else would dare to challenge Han Jingru?

Moreover, it would be inevitable for others to doubt Han Jingru's true strength ever since Fei Lingsheng became a puppet.

There were rumors since long ago that Han Jingru did not show his actual ability when he battled with The Elite 28. Although many did not believe it as they assumed that was already Han Jingru's limit, the truth had revealed and changed their opinion.

Han Jingru was actually stronger than Fei Lingsheng.

If it weren't for that, why would Fei Lingsheng be willing to surrender herself to Han Jingru and become his puppet?

"Looks like this group of so-called fighters are only a bunch of cowards," Han Jingru taunted as he saw there was no response from these people.

These words were enough to trigger these people. It was such a pity that no matter how livid they were, all they could do was to endure it silently. No one would stand out and risk their own lives.

Surviving was more important compared to fighting for vindication after all.

“Where is the Emperor? This guy is getting too arrogant. It is intolerable.”

“Just bear with him now. When the Emperor arrived, he will pay for his impudence. We can watch him begging on the floor.”

The people who did not dare to confront Han Jingru were hoping that the Emperor could arrive faster to counter his aggressive acts.

The Emperor did not disappoint them. He finally showed up not long later.

“The Emperor is here. He is finally here.”

“Han Jingru, the Emperor is here. You will pay for your arrogance.”

“You are in the Dragon Emperor Palace. This is the Emperor’s territory. You will get what you deserve.”

The moment those who were afraid of Han Jingru heard that the Emperor had arrived, they were all relieved. They eventually picked up the courage to speak to Han Jingru.

Han Jingru smirked. *These rabid dogs are smart though. They are barking only when their owner has arrived.*

“Han Jingru, I can’t believe I underestimated you. You really have the guts to come and challenge me in Dragon Emperor Palace. You’re going to die today.” The Emperor’s voice was heard before he appeared.

His words made everyone excited and their blood was running hot.

In a blink of an eye, the Emperor appeared in front of Han Jingru. Nobody noticed how he came. It was like teleportation.

At the moment, it was obvious that he was stronger than usual. His body radiated a powerful aura as if he could kill everyone with a raise of hand.

“Your Majesty, this guy is speaking very rudely and paying absolutely no respect to you.”

“Challenging the Emperor will only mean death. Long live the Emperor!”

“Long live the Emperor!”

A group of people was shouting out the commands. They were all hoping for Han Jingru’s death.

The Emperor slowly raised his right hand and they immediately stopped the shouting. It was a pin drop silence.

“Han Jingru, although you are a fighter and you are worth the support of Imperial Court, what you’ve done today marks the end of you,” the Emperor said.

“It’s up to you however you want to battle. I can’t wait to take over your place today,” Han Jingru taunted.

The Emperor stiffened. He could not believe Han Jingru still had the guts to be so arrogant in this very crucial moment.

Kill him?

In the Dragon Emperor Palace, even the fighters from Alpha Stage wouldn’t dare to say that!

“Are you digging your own grave too?” The Emperor turned to Fei Lingsheng. He was hoping she would stand on his side instead.

Everyone only knew that the Emperor was extremely strong in the Dragon Emperor Palace. However, what they didn’t know was the stronger he was, the shorter his lifespan. After all, he didn’t own the power and would need to borrow the strength from the fighters around him. However, the power had a negative impact on his body. Consequently, the stronger the power he acquired, the more damage there would be to his

body.

If he could get Fei Lingsheng to help him, she could help to split the negative impact from the power. Thus, it could help him reduce the damage and injuries on him.

However, the Emperor was in despair after what he saw.

The contract imprint appeared again on Fei Lingsheng's forehead. "I have signed the contract with him. Now, I am only a puppet who takes orders from him," Fei Lingsheng said.

A puppet!

This word gave everyone, including the Emperor a shock.

As the Imperial Court's top fighter, Fei Lingsheng is willing to become Han Jingru's puppet? What is going on?

"Don't be too surprised. That was really nothing to me. I mean, Yi Qingshan died terribly because

he didn't comply with my rules," Han Jingru laughed as he said.

Hearing this, everyone was shocked.

Ever since he lost contact with the elders from Jingru Sect, the Emperor could not get in touch with Yi Qingshan. Now that he heard Han Jingru's words, he knew clearly that he had killed Yi Qingshan.

Yi Qingshan was also a fighter from the Pinnacle Stage, how could there be no news about his death?

Unless, he didn't even stand a chance in front of Han Jingru?

"You killed Yi Qingshan?" the Emperor questioned.

"Without much effort," Han Jingru answered.

"Including my people?" Since Yi Qingshan died, the Emperor could only imagine what happened to the others.

“It was a pity. He was blown to bits,” Han Jingru mocked.

The Emperor’s face turned cold as ice. He smirked and it made him look extremely devilish.

“Han Jingru, I will take your blood today as a sacrifice to the dead souls,” the Emperor said. At that moment, powerful forces started to gush into the Emperor’s body from everywhere around the Dragon Emperor Palace.

The Emperor was advancing to another level. Everyone could see with their eyes.

He was getting stronger and stronger!

People around could not help as they exclaimed. *Is this the Emperor’s true power in the Dragon Emperor Palace?*

No wonder even fighters in Pinnacle Stage were afraid of him. This level of strength had far surpassed a Pinnacle Master.

Without hesitation, Han Jingru summoned Ruby-

eyed Python.

When battling Yi Qingshan, Han Jingru had the ability to crush him. However, in order to fight the Emperor, he had to get stronger. Thus, he was making use of all his power as he would not want to lose due to his carelessness.

As Ruby-eyed Python appeared, it had a body with a length of hundreds of meters. The Dragon Emperor Palace was covered in its shadow.

“The Ruby-eyed Python. It’s the Ruby-eyed Python!”

“Isn’t this the legendary familiar? I can’t believe he is the owner of the Ruby-eyed Python.”

“Rumor has it that Ruby-eyed Python was killed a thousand years ago. Didn’t expect to see it alive.”

In the west district suburbs outside of the Dragon Emperor Palace, there was the Beast Battalion of Imperial Court. It was the strongest power in Imperial Court. However, those familiars were sprawled on the ground. The power of Ruby-eyed Python was too intimidating as it clouded the entire Dragon Emperor Palace. When facing the stronger enemy, the familiars knelt on ground as a sign of respect. The sole existence of Ruby-eyed Python had completely defeated the Beast Battalion.

Fei Lingsheng lifted her head and was at a loss for words. Initially, she thought she knew Han Jingru quite well. After all, he had confessed to her about his strength. Now that she had seen this, she was surprised to know that he still had this trump card.

The Ruby-eyed Python!

Aside from the Qilin, this has got to be the strongest familiar!

No wonder he had no fear for the Emperor. With the help of this familiar, the Emperor would have

no way in winning the battle.

“I can’t believe it, Master is also a Beastmaster.” Everyone was scared to death, but Huang Xiaoyong seemed extraordinarily excited. Regardless of the Manticore that was lying on the ground by his side shivering, he was still delighted.

The stronger the Master, the prouder the disciple.

“Are you surprised?” Han Jingru turned and asked Fei Lingsheng as he smiled.

She took a deep breath as she was not just surprised but terrified.

The Ruby-eyed Python was too strong of a familiar. Nobody dared to think about it.

“So this is your trump card? Is this why you were never afraid of the Emperor?” Fei Lingsheng asked.

Han Jingru frowned and answered, “I summoned the Ruby-eyed Python to make sure I win the

battle, but even if I don't have it, the Emperor is still no match for me.”

His words made Fei Lingsheng rolled her eyes. It looked like he was underestimating the Emperor.

After taking the former Emperors' power, the Emperor's current stage was almost at the Alpha Stage. She couldn't believe that he dared to utter those words.

In fact, Han Jingru said that because he actually had his capability. His simulated Alpha Stage was not the usual one. No ordinary people could understand the power that was given by those two pieces of skeletons. Moreover, Han Jingru had not tested his own limitations so far.

The Emperor who was initially extremely confident to fight Han Jingru was now troubled after he saw the Ruby-eyed Python. It was an ancient familiar after all. The legendary Qilin was known to be the only familiar stronger than the Ruby-eyed Python. They could easily swallow a fighter of Pinnacle Stage. Although he was currently in the Alpha Stage, it would not be easy

to conquer the Ruby-eyed Python.

Most importantly, the problem was not only the Ruby-eyed Python for he also needed to fight Han Jingru. It just made the situation seem more difficult.

Until that moment only the Emperor knew the reason behind the arrogance and confidence of Han Jingru. It was indeed out of his expectation.

However, quitting was not an option anymore. The only thing the Emperor could do was to get rid of the troubles in front of him. Otherwise, once his power was drained out, he could no longer remain in the Alpha Stage.

“Han Jingru, you are depending on an animal to win the battle?” the Emperor questioned. He was planning to provoke Han Jingru this way to avoid fighting with two opponents at the same time.

Han Jingru was not foolish though. It was impossible for him to fall for such gimmicks.

“Are you afraid now? If you are willing to leave

the Dragon Emperor Palace and your throne, I can spare your life," Han Jingru offered a solution.

The Emperor's expression became gruesome. Leaving the throne would be extremely insulting. He would rather die.

"How dare you say that. You will pay the price today," the Emperor said callously. In the speed of lightning, he flashed beside Han Jingru.

Everyone was excited to watch the Emperor in battle. Most of the people were hoping that the Emperor could kill Han Jingru to reinstate his prestigious position and authority. However, since the Ruby-eyed Python appeared, there were some changes in their attitude.

Initially, they assumed that Han Jingru would be dead, but as they saw the presence of the Ruby-eyed Python, they became very uncertain.

With the support of the ancient familiar on Han Jingru's side, it was uncertain that the Emperor would be able to win the battle.

“The battle today could possibly bring major changes to Imperial Court.”

“The Ruby-eyed Python is too strong of a familiar. Even the Emperor will have a hard time battling it. Don’ tell me this guy plans to take over the Emperor’s position!”

“I can’t believe it. We are actually witnessing such a battle.”

As the audience were discussing, the battle had started.

The sky above the Dragon Emperor Palace turned dark and cloudy all of a sudden. The strong force had caused people of lower stages to fall and they could only crouch on the ground. At that moment, Huang Xiaoyong lied on the ground facing up because the pressure was too high. He would rather deal with it in silence than strain himself from fighting against it.

Moreover, he could now watch the battle in the sky clearly in that position.

“Ugh, they are too fast. I can’t even see anything clearly. I can’t believe I will not get to witness Master’s glorious moments in the fight,” Huang Xiaoyong complained.

Most of the people were experiencing the same thing as Huang Xiaoyong. They couldn’t even see the battle of the Emperor and Han Jingru clearly. Only Fei Lingsheng, who was a fighter of the Pinnacle Stage, was able to catch some of the scenes.

Although the fight could not be seen clearly, with Han Jingru’s power and the support from the Ruby-eyed Python; he was obviously on the winning side.

“Looks like it’s really time to have a new Emperor,” Fei Lingsheng said in awe. The fight had not ended yet but judging from the situation, Han Jingru would most probably win the battle.

Hearing from her, Zhantai Liuyue asked, “Fei Lingsheng, did you say that Han Jingru will win for sure?”

“Although the Emperor had not erupted with his biggest power, it is the same for Han Jingru. Both of them are reserving their real power. However, with the existence of the Ruby-eyed Python, it will be tough for the Emperor to win the fight,” Fei Lingsheng said. This was something she could never even imagine, but she finally believed it as she witnessed it with her own eyes today.

Zhantai Liuyue could not help herself but swallowed a lump. In her opinion, Han Jingru was always a fighter but today the term “fighter” had a clearer explanation in her perception.

He was strong but to what extent?

It looks like he was so strong to the extent that the Emperor is no match for him!

“Well, he is my Master. Of course, the Emperor is no match for him. All of you are fooled by the Emperor’s power. In my opinion, only Master is the strongest. The rest of them are trash,” Huang Xiaoyong ridiculed. Although he never thought Han Jingru was this strong, he would not give up

the chance to boast.



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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Xia Nation. Mount Jingwu.

Every one of the entire Xia Nation had their eyes on this place. A woman had made all the fighters of Xia Nation failed. But not a single one of them knew her name. Under the support of a herd of people, Yi Qingshan as the top fighter of Xia Nation had not shown up yet. As a result, most people think that he had gone into hiding. Rumors had it that he was not a match for her and was avoiding her. Consequently, the woman's status had climbed up to the top.

Even the Emperor of Xia Nation was helpless.

Recently, since too many masters had lost to her, nobody dared to challenge her further.

She had achieved a lot in Mount Jingwu and had dominated the place.

As a Cultivator, winning battles meant that she had won recognition for herself. Though it was something to be extremely proud of, she showed no happiness on her face.

Even the people who lost to her named her - the beautiful ice queen.

Of course, she was not cold to everyone. She would only show her gentleness to her daughter.

“Mom, where is Daddy? You told me he will come and get us.” The little girl snuggled beside the lady, looking tired.

The woman who had put all the fighters of Xia Nation in fear then caressed the little girl’s head. “Xiang, Daddy is not here, but we can’t leave yet.”

“Why?” The girl asked as she lifted her head peculiarly.

The woman gazed at the Dark Forest. Not long before this, there was a strong force that erupted there. She knew the force came from a high-level familiar. In order to leave Xia Nation and move to another nation, they had to go through the Dark Forest.

If she were alone, she would risk it. With her

daughter by her side, she wouldn't do that. She couldn't imagine what she would do if an accident were to happen to her daughter. Also, she could not let that man lose his daughter whom he loved wholeheartedly.

“It's very dangerous there. Mom can't fight those monsters alone,” the woman explained.

The little girl waved her tiny fist and asked, “Mom, is there a monster that you can't beat?”

“Of course. Mom is not the strongest out there,” the woman said naturally.

The little girl shook her head. Within this period, she had witnessed the fighters who were beaten up by her mother. As far as she was concerned, her mother was the strongest. Thus, those monsters were nothing to her.

“Mom, is Daddy stronger than you?” the little girl asked out of curiosity.

The woman was stunned. She answered hesitantly, “Now, Daddy is not stronger than

Mom yet, but he will be in the future. The monsters are not even his match.”

“Yay!” The little girl celebrated in excitement. She danced in glee. “Daddy is the best. Daddy is the best.”

At the moment, the woman glanced in the direction of Imperial Court. Although it was very far from away, she could feel the forces of the battle slightly. It was a battle between two high-level fighters. The level was even higher than the Pinnacle Stage.

The woman laughed and said to the little girl, “Xiang, I know where Daddy is.”

Hearing this, the little girl turned around looking. “Where is he? Is Daddy here?”

“No worries. Daddy is battling a monster. Once he won, he will come over here,” the woman explained as she was looking forward to her husband’s arrival.

The little girl then took a deep breath and uttered,

“Daddy, you must win and come take me and Mom home.”

“Jingru, I can finally feel you. I am happy to know you’re alive,” the woman said under her breath. A breeze blew and tears rolled down the woman’s cheek. She was not sad and they were indeed tears of joy.

At that moment, a man appeared in front of them

He was the Emperor of Xia Nation. This was not his first visit. However, he was always rejected but he wouldn’t give up. This was because this level of fighter was worth his time and effort to persuade.

“You’re here again,” the woman said blandly.

The President smiled and answered, “Even if you reject me tens of thousands of times, I will still come again.”

“I will not join Xia Nation because I have found the person I am looking for,” said the woman.

President's face became dull. Her words meant that she was prepared to leave Xia Nation. It was definitely a bad news to him because if this strong fighter joined another nation, she would pose a huge challenge to Xia Nation.

Also, Xia Nation's top fighter Yi Qingshan had sacrificed in Imperial Court. This just made things more difficult for him.

"Where is he?" the Emperor could not help but asked.

Usually, she would have just kicked him down the hill. However, she was in good mood that day, thus, she didn't mind wasting some of her time.

"There." She pointed in the direction of Imperial Court.

The President's face turned extremely gloomy. This could be the news that he dreaded. As there was a strong fighter who showed up in Imperial Court and he was also the one who killed Yi Qingshan. If this woman joined Imperial Court

too, the pair could immediately crush the two other nations.

“I heard there was a fighter in Imperial Court recently. He can’t be the one you’re looking for right?” the Emperor asked.

“What is his name then?” the woman asked.

The Emperor knew the condition of Imperial Court very well. Han Jingru’s name had shocked the entire Imperial Court after all. His spy had already reported this to Xia Nation.

“His name is Han Jingru,” the Emperor said.

Hearing the name, the woman put on a broad smile on her face.

Before she could speak, the Emperor had guessed the answer. The person she was looking for was indeed Han Jingru. This could be the worst nightmare ever. If both of them came together, Imperial Court would be the strongest to the extent that even Xia Nation would have to bow down to Imperial Court.

“Can I know your name? Since I can’t make you stay, I need to know the person who had won all the fighters of Xia Nation,” the Emperor said in dissatisfaction.

The woman smiled and said, “Su Yimo.”



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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Apart from the dark clouds hanging over the skies of Imperial Court, bolts of lightning and peals of thunder filled the atmosphere, signaling the arrival of a storm.

However, such things were not caused by climate changes. Instead, this unnatural change was because of the battle between Han Jingru and the Emperor. Indeed, this was an earth-shattering battle.

On top of that, they were at a stage where even a Pinnacle Master fighter like Fei Lingsheng was not able to witness the battle process. *This is the true world of many fighters. Compared to people I assumed to be fighters before, this is a completely different league altogether.*

The Alpha Stage was the aspirational stage, the stage that could transform the heavens and the earth. Now, that is a real fighter.

“Senior Fei, are you still able to see Master Han?” When Zhantai Liuyue looked up, all she could see were dark clouds, the occasional lightning, and the sound of thunder. There was no

trace of Han Jingru at all. This worried her because if the man were to lose this battle, not only would they be unable to leave Dragon Emperor Palace, the entire Piaomiao Sect would be affected as well.

The leader of the Piaomiao Sect did not fear death. At this point, she no longer had the right to choose whether she lived or died. Even if she had to face death, she could only accept it. However, she did not want to involve so many people from the Piaomiao Sect just because of this incident. Hence, she still hoped that Han Jingru could emerge victorious.

Fei Lingsheng shook her head and said, “I can’t see him. But, don’t worry. The Emperor’s strength is slowly diminishing. I’m sure his condition must be on the decline.”

The Emperor’s strength came from the outside world, after all. If the battle could not be completed within a short time, his energy consumption would definitely be faster, which will cause him to be weaker over time.

However, Han Jingru was already at the simulated Alpha Stage. Not only would his weaknesses remain concealed for a longer time, but he also had the assistance of Ruby-eyed Python, which would definitely help ease his burden. Therefore, Fei Lingsheng felt that the Emperor was destined to lose from the very beginning, and it was just a matter of time as they awaited the results.

“Madam Zhantai, is there even a need to worry? Master is so powerful; he will definitely win this. Come on, be like me and relax!” Huang Xiaoyong was lying on the ground as he remarked carelessly. From the beginning, he had never been worried about Han Jingru and had never thought that the man would lose this battle.

Zhantai Liuyue glanced at Huang Xiaoyong; she wished she could share his attitude and approach. However, there were too many people from the Piaomiao Sect counting on her - it was impossible for her to be so carefree.

Up in the murky skies, Han Jingru was indeed at an advantageous position. The existence of the

Ruby-eyed Python had given him a huge boost. In fact, battling the Emperor was an easier task than he had expected. Up to this point of the battle, Han Jingru had not experienced much pressure. On the other hand, the Emperor was clearly unable to endure it for much longer due to the loss of energy.

“Do you think you still have a chance to win this?” Han Jingru said coolly. His voice pierced through the layers of clouds until it was relayed to the Emperor’s ears.

The Emperor looked like he was in a huge mess. From the moment he assumed the position as Emperor, he had never been in such a disheveled state before.

At this very moment, there was unwillingness written all over his face. His rights as Emperor had never been challenged by anybody in Dragon Emperor Palace. Therefore, he had never expected someone to battle him in Dragon Emperor Palace itself, not especially when he was still reigning as Emperor.

If he were to keep losing strength like this, he would definitely lose this battle. However, he was not about to give up so easily.

“Did you really think this was my limit?” The Emperor gritted his teeth.

Would I still be the Emperor if I could be taken down so easily?

Of course, Han Jingru did not assume that these were his actual limits.

“Alright, show me all of your trump cards. Otherwise, you will lose all chances to showcase your talents,” Han Jingru replied.

The Emperor grimaced. It was not that he was unwilling; it was simply too dear a price to pay. He was already losing precious years of his life for using the strength of Dragon Emperor Palace. If he were to forcibly enhance his strength once again, he would be closer to death despite winning this battle.

However, there was still some difference between

being closer to death or to die instantly.

“Han Jingru, you brought this upon yourself. Let me show you what it really means to be powerful.” The Emperor psychotically absorbed all the energy that surrounded him. Not only did this give him an immediate power boost, but it also even made his physical body swell up.

One after another, the fighters that were gathered at the city gates began dropping like flies. In a mere blink of an eye, they turned into dried-out corpses as if their lives had been sucked out in an instant.

Fei Lingsheng was extremely shocked to see such things happening. She knew that these people had fallen like that because their energy had been sucked out by the Emperor, who was already showing signs of weakness. Under such circumstances, his powers would increase once again.

“Be careful and come closer to me,” Fei Lingsheng told Zhantai Liuyue and Huang Xiaoyong.

Even though Huang Xiaoyong did not understand what had happened, the sight of those strangely dried-up corpses told him that something must have gone very wrong in battle. He quickly listened to Fei Lingsheng and struggled to crawl next to her

“What’s going on here?” Surprised, he asked the woman.

The latter hurriedly explained, “The Emperor absorbed all of these people’s energy. He used their lives to increase his own powers within a short period of time. It looks like he wants to engage in a final battle with Han Jingru now.”

“What a ruthless move! How many people have died because of this?” Huang Xiaoyong shuddered at the sight of the fighters who were falling one by one. Thankfully, he had Fei Lingsheng to protect him, otherwise, he would become a dried-out corpse like the rest.

How many people have to die?

Fei Lingsheng could not help but sigh. The

Emperor's actions will definitely cost the lives of most fighters from Dragon Emperor Palace. To defeat Han Jingru, the man had already disregarded all consequences. Under such circumstances, even if he were to win, Imperial Court's strength would still be deeply impacted. If the other two countries were to find out about this, they would definitely launch military attacks against them. By then, Imperial Court would likely become a captive state.

“I didn't expect him to use such a tactic. Hey, it's gonna be up to you later. We have to launch one deadly strike because we have no time to lose. Otherwise, all the fighters in Dragon Emperor Palace would have to die.” Han Jingru told Ruby-eyed Python. He had clearly seen what had happened at the city gates. Even though nothing happened to Huang Xiaoyong and Zhantai Liuyue - they had Fei Lingsheng to protect them - the Emperor was already going crazy. If the man were still not stopped, the three would become the Emperor's energy source in no time.

The two people were not especially close to Han Jingru, but he was still an honorable man. Since

they had followed him to Dragon Emperor Palace, he will not allow them to die there.



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The Ruby-eyed Python stuck out his tongue to show that it understood Han Jingru.

The latter had always been used to the fact that the Ruby-eyed Python understood human nature. The only thing that it couldn't do was to communicate in human language. Otherwise, there was nothing that it could not do in terms of communication.

“Go ahead. You can attack from the front while I look for chances elsewhere,” he said.

With that, the Ruby-eyed Python dashed out, and in a blink, it had already appeared before the Emperor.

The Emperor was in the midst of absorbing energy from others, and he snorted, “You beast, get out of my way!”

He landed a punch on the Ruby-eyed Python's skull, and a huge roll of thunder sounded from the sky.

The animal was forced to retreat several hundred

meters. It was swaying but was not hesitant at all when it made its swift second attack.

“Again? You beast! Since you seek death, I will fulfill your wish!” The Emperor’s swollen body had already reached three meters in height. He looked like a giant, and every swing he made with his fist brought with it a whoosh of the wind.

The Ruby-eyed Python did not avoid him this time. Instead, it used its skull to endure one more punch. After all, its job was to gain the attention of the Emperor, giving Han Jingru a chance to attack.

It retreated another hundred meters. The Ruby-eyed Python swung its head, looking like it was already a little dizzy, while its eyes became redder.

“You want to ambush me? Han Jingru, you’re merely seeking your own death.” The Emperor sent out another punch, but this had no effect on his reaction towards Han Jingru.

When the latter appeared behind him, the Emperor turned about very quickly.

When their two fists met, there was a loud crash like exploding thunder.

Han Jingru and the Emperor both retreated dozens of meters. Even though they were both injured by each other's power, the latter was clearly recovering faster due to the continuous flow of energy into his body.

“Man, this has gone too far.” Han Jingru secretly gritted his teeth. When he had the chance, he did not kill the Emperor as he wanted to see the limits of the Emperor's power. At the same time, he wanted to display his own limits. However, this was not how he had pictured it going at all.

He could not calm himself down after being shaken by the Emperor.

When his opponent made his next attack, Han Jingru was not completely prepared for it.

With that one punch to his abdomen, the man was

sent flying across the air like a shooting star.

When the Emperor saw this, he did not give him any breathing space before following him closely once again.

One punch was followed by another.

The tables had turned, and Han Jingru was now the one who was being beaten up relentlessly.

This was because the Emperor was still continuously absorbing other people's energy throughout this process - he was growing stronger every second.

Han Jingru was incredibly regretful by now, but there was no use being sorry under such circumstances.

When he was slammed against the stone wall after one punch by the Emperor, his whole body was embedded into the stone. Like an earthquake, it caused huge tremors. Rocks began rolling down the mountain, causing an avalanche.

“How could this have happened?” Han Jingru was sent flying through the layers of clouds this time. When Huang Xiaoyong saw this, he could not believe his eyes. *Master was so close to victory... How could the Emperor beat him up to this embarrassing state?*

Fei Lingsheng took a deep breath and said, “He brought this upon himself. Currently, the Emperor already possesses an undefeatable power. If Han Jingru had killed the Emperor earlier, all these would not have happened.”

There was some anger in the woman’s tone because she did not understand the motives behind Han Jingru’s actions. The man had a chance to kill the Emperor, but he had given up on that chance. Right now, the Emperor’s power was still growing rapidly, and this was a fatal strike for Han Jingru.

“What can we do? Is there a way we can help him?” Huang Xiaoyong asked anxiously.

“Help?” Fei Lingsheng snorted and said, “Based on your Fifth Stage strength? Please, you don’t

even qualify to be their cannon fodder!”

“Fei Lingsheng, I don’t qualify to be their cannon fodder, but how about you? You’re a Pinnacle Master fighter. Are you telling me you have no intention to help? You’re Master’s puppet. If anything happens to him, the Emperor will not let you off easily either.” Huang Xiaoyong looked at the woman with dissatisfaction. *How can she look so disconnected? Is this what a puppet should be like?* If Han Jingru were to die, she would not live either.

Fei Lingsheng glared fiercely at Huang Xiaoyong.

However, there was no fear to be seen in the latter; he stared squarely back into her angry eyes.

“Even I don’t have the actual power to be of any assistance,” she said.

She did not wish for Han Jingru to die. This was because if he were to die, the first thing the Emperor will do would definitely be to kill her.

However, in the face of a situation like this, she was helpless. The Pinnacle Master had no leverage or power whatsoever in such a battle.

Boom boom!

At this moment, a large booming sound exploded from the mountain range. Han Jingru had shattered the entire mountain.

The man slowly emerged raggedly amidst the rubble.

“Han Jingru, this is the price to pay for challenging me. This day next year will be the anniversary of your death!” the Emperor declared. The energy that was consolidated in him was enough to give Han Jingru a fatal strike. Therefore, he could single-handedly decide the man’s life or death.

Even though Han Jingru looked disheveled, there was a slight smile at the corners of his mouth, as if he were not at the least worried about his current situation.

“Do you think you’re the only one who can become powerful in an instant?” he said coolly.

The Emperor burst out laughing when he heard that. He was the only one in the entire Xenos who knew how to exercise this tactic. Apart from this, there was no other way to increase one’s power in an instant. Therefore to him, Han Jingru was merely bluffing.

“Up till now, you are still so obstinate. I’ll send you on your way then. Hopefully, you can still be so boastful in the depths of hell, the Emperor said and prepared to take action.

At that moment, the sky changed colors instantly, and innumerable energies rushed towards Han Jingru, flowing rapidly into his body from his head.

The man’s clothes immediately dissolved into powder.

Zhantai Liuyue and Fei Lingsheng looked down immediately when they saw this situation.

However, Huang Xiaoyong looked on with much gusto and exclaimed, "There's a dragon under Master's groin!"

When the two women heard that, both of them felt even more embarrassed.

In order not to continue this sort of awkward atmosphere, Zhantai Liuyue asked Fei Lingsheng, "Senior Fei, what's going on? Master Han seems to have swirled the energies around."

The latter shook her head. She did not understand what was going on either.

This spiritual power from the heavens and the earth was important for every cultivator. In fact, it could be said to be the root of every cultivator.

However, to her understanding, it was not possible for one to directly move the spiritual power around.

"I don't know how he did it either. However, his powers will definitely increase faster than the Emperor. This purer spiritual energy can explode

with powers that the Emperor's tactics cannot combat," Fei Lingsheng replied.



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“How is that possible? How could that be?”

“Why is it like this?”

The Emperor began talking to himself out of shock when he felt Han Jingru’s transformation.

To directly absorb the spiritual power from the heavens and the earth in such a manner was something that he had never heard of. If not for seeing it with his own eyes, he definitely would not believe that there would be someone out there in the world who would use this method to inflate his own power.

However, he was forced to believe it now with the truth in his face.

Moreover, he knew that he was no match for Han Jingru after the man had employed such a method to inflate his powers.

None of the past Emperors have been able to survive strikes of this level.

“Who are you? Is it fated for me to die in your

hands?” The Emperor was filled with fear, but he was helpless in the face of such a situation.

The only thing that could turn the Emperor’s luck around was to give Han Jingru a fatal strike when he was in the process of absorbing the spiritual power.

Therefore, the Emperor did not hesitate, immediately striking in the attempt to end Han Jingru’s life.

“No...” When the Emperor suddenly disappeared, Fei Lingsheng subconsciously cried out loud.

“What happened?” Huang Xiaoyong asked anxiously. *Master is clearly becoming more powerful, so why did Fei Lingsheng utter “No?” Did something happen?*

“The Emperor is about to take action right when your Master is increasing his power. This is definitely bad news for Han Jingru,” Fei Lingsheng explained.

Huang Xiaoyong gritted his teeth angrily.

“Doesn’t this despicable person dare to battle face to face with my Master?”

Fei Lingsheng smiled helplessly. *At this juncture of life or death, why would the Emperor care whether the tactics were honorable?* Killing Han Jingru was his only survival route. Moreover, if he successfully killed Han Jingru, who would dare say he had used dishonorable tactics?

At this moment, Han Jingru still had his eyes shut; it was as if he had no awareness of the Emperor’s intentions at all.

The man was greedily absorbing the spiritual power of both the heavens and the earth, as if he had a scrumptious meal right in front of him. No, he could not bear to stop right now.

Bang!

Suddenly, a huge sound exploded from the skies. The spiritual energy created a shape and sent ripples through the air.

The Emperor was instantly forced to retreat about

a hundred meters away, and blood kept flowing at the side of his mouth.

“How did this happen?” The Emperor’s heart skipped a beat. He had taken action silently in the attempt to take down Han Jingru in one strike, but the man did not even struggle when his spiritual energy forced the Emperor to retreat. Not only did the latter fail to attack his opponent, but he also had to suffer from serious injuries in the meantime.

There was no visible change in Han Jingru. In fact, he looked very relaxed, as if he just had a huge meal.

“Such strong powers. Even without a deliberate effort to move it around, you’d still be able to stop the Emperor. It seems like I’ve been overthinking this,” Fei Lingsheng sighed as she said that.

Even though Han Jingru did not return the punch, the spiritual energy within him had automatically protected him. Even though Fei Lingsheng was unable to explain this kind of situation; she knew

that the Emperor was at a dead end by now. In this situation, he couldn't hurt Han Jingru. When the latter finally decided to retaliate, it would spell death for him.

“He is a Master indeed. It doesn't even matter whether he is taking action deliberately,” Huang Xiaoyong said with pride on his face.

Fei Lingsheng did not rebut Huang Xiaoyong because he could definitely afford to be boastful now. With a Master as powerful as this, he had every right to boast about him.

In fact, the woman began to envy Huang Xiaoyong. *How fantastic would it be to have a Master like that?*

“Seems like Master Han is going to be the next Emperor. Congratulations!” Zhantai Liuyue said with a smile.

Fei Lingsheng nodded in agreement. Suddenly, her face changed, and she looked towards the Emperor.

“Oh no!” she exclaimed subconsciously.

“What’s going on? Now that Master has already taken control over the battle, what else could happen?” Huang Xiaoyong was unhappy with Fei Lingsheng’s sudden screams of despair and hopelessness. There was no fighting spirit in her at all.

“The Emperor is about to take action against us,” Fei Lingsheng stated fearfully. She had felt energy locking her in - this air came from the Emperor himself. That could only mean that he will turn his target to them instead.

She and Zhantai Liuyue may not be that important to Han Jingru, but Huang Xiaoyong was his disciple. Therefore, it was plausible that the Emperor would take him as his hostage.

When he heard that, Huang Xiaoyong was so frightened he immediately hid behind Fei Lingsheng. After all, Han Jingru still had his eyes closed - he definitely would not be able to take care of them. If what the woman said were true, that the Emperor wanted to kill them, no one

could stop that from happening.

“That can’t be... What use would it be to kill us?”
Huang Xiaoyong said.

Looking grim, Fei Lingsheng did not say anything. This was because the Emperor had already vanished from her sight. This must be a sign that he was about to take action.

“What is your Master doing? We’re going to die if he doesn’t open his eyes to see what is going on with us.” Fei Lingsheng looked at Han Jingru through the light anxiously. Based on her power, she could barely protect herself, let alone protect both Huang Xiaoyong and Zhantai Liuyue.

At this moment, Han Jingru was not merely relaxing and enjoying the infusion of the spiritual power from the heavens and the earth.

Just some time ago, a voice appeared suddenly in the man’s head.

It was a deep and powerful voice.

It told him that it was very interested in him.

Han Jingru could not ascertain the source of this voice, but he soon realized that it was one from the Dark Forest.

The man had pictured his first meeting with the Qilin. However, he had no idea that his first meeting would turn out like this.

Moreover, the Qilin could communicate with human language, which was something Han Jingru did not expect.

“Why do you want to destroy Xenos?” he replied with his mind.

“I am the true master of Xenos. The humans snatched my territory away, so shouldn't I take back what is rightfully mine?” the Qilin replied haughtily.

Han Jingru frowned. He was not familiar with the history of Xenos, and he did not know what had happened between the Qilin and the humans in the past. However, it was a powerful magical

creature, and perhaps it really had ruled over Xenos before humans came along.

However, the world was in a constant state of flux. Now that they were in more sophisticated times, it was perfectly reasonable that the position of the ruler was replaced.

“Is the Dark Forest not enough for you?” Han Jingru asked.

“We shall see. You wish to go against me too?” the Qilin asked.



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Even though there was a large distance between himself and the Qilin right now, Han Jingru knew that the familiar had not restored to its peak performance level. This was why it was still at the Dark Forest. However, it was still very strong - it was definitely not the right time to have a conflict with it.

Nonetheless, it was not possible to ask him to bow down humbly in front of a beast.

Sooner or later, there would be a battle between him and the Qilin. There was no need to boost other people's morale while reducing his own motivation.

"There is a difference between man and beast. I have no choice but to stop you since you're trying to destroy Xenos," Han Jingru said.

"Hahaha... I pity you, ignorant humans. Do you really think anyone can be my opponent?" The Qilin burst out laughing maniacally.

Refusing to admit defeat, Han Jingru said, "Isn't it true that you were locked up at Dark Forest?"

Since the formation at the Dark Forest could lock you up, you are not that invincible after all.”

“You ignoramus, I did that on purpose. I had to use deep sleep to conceal my chakra. Back then, all those people were my pawns. That was all there was to it,” the Qilin said.

Han Jingru’s brows deeply furrowed at that.

What on earth is going on?

Why does it have to conceal its chakra?

“Why did you have to do that?” he asked.

“I’m from a Higher Realm. I have enemies there. Back then, I had to hide from him. Therefore, all the formations you’re so proud of are part of my larger plan. I have even contributed my energies to this formation before,” the Qilin jeered.

The Higher Realm.

Apart from the Earth and Xenos, there’s actually an Ether Realm.

Han Jingru was shocked momentarily before quickly regaining his composure. This was because he had realized that this was nothing special.

Wasn't it completely plausible to have another universe exist apart from Xenos and Earth?

Just when he was about to understand more about this Higher Realm from the Qilin, a blood-curdling scream found its way into his ears.

“Master!”

It was Huang Xiaoyong, and he sounded like he was in excruciating pain.

Han Jingru opened his eyes, and a bright white flash cut across the horizons. Right now, he looked like a God of War. He was radiating white light, his power making him seem as if he could destroy the heavens and the earth!

Both Fei Lingsheng and Zhantai Liuyue were deeply wounded; they lay on the ground motionlessly.

The Emperor had caught Huang Xiaoyong by his neck with a chokehold. Just a little more strength from the former, and Huang Xiaoyong's life would end right there.

“Han Jingru, if you don't want your disciple to die, get out of Dragon Emperor Palace immediately,” the Emperor threatened Han Jingru.

The latter laughed a little and said, “I wanted to leave, but you stopped me from doing so. Yet now you want me to leave?”

The Emperor looked conflicted. He had made Han Jingru stay back because he wanted to take his life. He had not expected the man to become so strong.

“Cut the crap. I will end him immediately if you don't follow my instructions,” the Emperor warned.

Looking rather helpless, Han Jingru shook his head. “Do you really think I can't do anything now that he's in your hands? You have probably

never seen the use of absolute power.”

Absolute power?

A hint of suspicion flashed across the Emperor's face. Moments later, he felt shocked by a force. His fingers could not move as he remained rooted to the ground.

He panicked at the sight of Han Jingru taking steps towards him. He tried to break free from this mysterious force, but his efforts were to no avail.

“What's happening? What's going on?” The emperor was fearful, and his eyes showed it. He knew very well that the moment Han Jingru got closer to him, he could only do his bidding.

“This is absolute power. I am way stronger than you are. How could an ant prove its strength against an elephant?” Han Jingru said coolly.

He did not miss the opportunity to teach his disciple a lesson when he walked past Huang Xiaoyong. “Now that you know the importance

of true power, you'd better not miss training from now onwards."

The man could not say anything because the Emperor had his neck in a chokehold, but his eyes told Han Jingru that he would not take things easy from there on.

Han Jingru raised his arm, and with one chopping motion, the Emperor's hand was broken.

Huang Xiaoyong quickly pried the man's fingers away from his neck before tossing the arm away.

"Master, how shameless is this idiot? He could not defeat you, so he took action against us instead," Huang Xiaoyong panted.

"People always bully the weak ones. How are you not clear about that now? Don't be the bullied one from now on," Han Jingru said.

The other man bowed low and said, "I will remember your teachings, Master."

"H-Han Jingru, please, let me go." The Emperor

gave up all hope at the sight of his broken arm. He knew that he was not Han Jingru's opponent, so he finally gave up his dignity as the Emperor and pleaded with the man for mercy.

“What did you say? I couldn't quite catch that. Louder!” Han Jingru shouted coldly.

Every single fighter from the entire city now had their eyes on him. If they were to hear what the Emperor had said, the man would definitely be ridiculed. However, he had no choice - this was his only chance of survival.

“Please, I beg of you, let me go,” the Emperor said loudly, deliberately allowing the entire Dragon Emperor Palace to hear his plea.

Huang Xiaoyong glanced at the Emperor disdainfully. He used to put the head of Imperial Court on a pedestal, only to realize now that he had no principles at all. *What Emperor? He's but a spineless rat!*

“Master, Madam Zhantai and Fei Lingsheng do not look good. Let's not delay them any help any

further," Huang Xiaoyong reminded Han Jingru.

The latter nodded and told the Emperor. "I could have let you go earlier if you had not done such a deed. Don't blame me for the consequences you shall suffer since you have hurt my friends."

At that, he raised his arm, and a flash of white light cut through the Emperor's body.

A bloodied line ran from the tip of the latter all the way down to his toes.

Han Jingru had sliced the emperor into two halves with one air chop of his arms!

The highest leader of Imperial Court was defeated just like that!

At this moment, all the fighters of Dragon Emperor Palace fell onto their knees.

When Han Jingru returned to the city, the chanting from the crowds could be heard across the horizons.

“Welcome, Your Majesty.”

“Welcome, Your Majesty.”

“Welcome, Your Majesty.”

Now that the last Emperor was dead, Han Jingru was naturally seen as the new Emperor. Nobody dared to voice any objection as his power was enough to shut them all up.

“Master, never in my wildest dreams did I think I would be the Emperor’s disciple one day.” Huang Xiaoyong felt like he was in a dream, where he had suddenly become the emperor’s disciple. This was no ordinary honor and his father would be incredibly excited to find out about this.

The Chen family from Longyun City would probably be wetting their pants by now.