

Chapter 61: The House is Gone Again

“Infernal Heavens!”

One could light up the air with that Invisible Heaven Flames, and then burn everything within one’s vicinity within one’s control.

This was the most difficult step illustrated in the jade scroll.

The practitioner had to risk their lives finishing all the prerequisites, and then develop a sense of the spirits of all things around them before he could ignite something remotely.

Xu Xiaoshou closed his eyes and attempted to find that spirit inherent in all things.

He opened his eyes the very next second.

“What’s happening?” he thought.

“I’ve finished the parts that require one to ‘risk one’s life,’ yet why...”

“Is this ‘sense the spirits in all things’ so d*mn easy as well?”

He didn’t even need to use Sense. He could easily perceive the spirit in all things in a fifty-meter radius just by using the sword intent needed to use “All Things are Swords.”

He caressed his chin and wondered if things were really just that simple.

“That would be improbable. How could the jade scroll be wrong, eh?”

“There were also the experiences of two prior practitioners recorded in it. Although I don’t know who they are, they shouldn’t have gotten this part wrong.

“They worked at it for months, so regardless of how much a genius I am, there’s no way I could get it right in just one second, right?”

He shook his head and closed his eyes, extending his senses.

He tried using the second way—the Passive Skill: Sense.

He opened his eyes again a second later.

“Gosh, this is strange. Why do I have the illusion that I’ve done it again?”

He cast away his doubts and skipped over the sensing part, getting to the last step recorded in the jade scroll.

He condensed the Infernal Spiritual Source inside him, bent over, then sprung hard. From afar, he looked as if he were about to self-destruct.

It went without saying that he wouldn’t just explode. The invisible Infernal Heavenly Flames would be released along with the burst, latching onto the spirits in all things.

Voom!

The shockwave spread all over the place.

He then looked around him and saw that nothing had changed.

“Failed, as expected eh?...” he thought.

He was exasperated, but just when he was about to try again, he heard that familiar sound again.

Puk, puk.

“So, umm...

“I did it after all?”

He looked around him, and found that everything seemed to be rather hazy—a sign of the Infernal Heavenly Flames at work.

He was immediately elated, yet what happened next wiped all that elation away.

Crack, crack, crack.

Bits of white flames began to dance in the building all around him, and crackling sounds were heard everywhere.

He was able to sense their presence, even if they were just sparks lighting up, and the flames covered everything in his place.

Unlike usual flames, which just combusted and burned away, his flames exploded as soon as they appeared.

The table, the windows, and even that bed which he had been reluctant to sleep on...

Everything cracked and then exploded to pieces.

White spots then appeared on every single broken piece, and invisible sparks were ignited, burning everything down so completely that not even ash was left behind.

“Oh my gosh, holy sh**!”

He staggered and almost fell to the ground, but he steeled himself and immediately crawled out of his room.

Boooooom!

Explosions were heard again as soon as he left the building, and the place exploded. Everything was in ruins.

Puk, puk, puk.

Vague white flames appeared on the broken pieces. There wasn't even the color or shape of fire to be seen anywhere, yet his place was already completely gone.

Drip, drip, drip...

It began to drizzle outside, and he felt miserable.

He watched everything with a dazed look on his face, and could only feel his heart ache.

“This was a new house. Godd**amnit!”

It hadn't been that long ago when the Spiritual Affairs Division had issued a mission and he spent a great many Spirit Crystal to build that house of his. But now it was all gone. Just like that.

His hair was completely drenched by the rain. Whatever bits of bloodstains that had still been left after training were all washed away, and bloodied water began to pool at his feet.

He sensed that his bodily injuries had all healed, yet he still felt a very noticeable pain.

He grabbed his chest and fell to the ground.

“My house, I'm very sorry!

“I promise that there will be no next time!”

He felt like crying, yet he had no tears to spare. If he'd known this would happen, he would have refined the seeds on his bed.

He'd thought that he would get to sleep on the bed sometime in the future. Little had he thought that the eternal farewell would come so quickly.

Puk, puk.

The house before him was burned until nothing was left. The rain wasn't heavy enough to extinguish that terrifying Infernal Heavenly Flames of his.

This utterly scared Xu Xiaoshou. If it hadn't been for his meticulous sense, he wouldn't have been able to tell that there were invisible flames burning. All he would have seen was the place being quickly burned down to the ground.

“Not even ashes left, huh...”

He insisted on staying around until the very last second, and was thoroughly frightened, as there really was nothing left.

The place before him was completely barren, without even charred marks suggesting that the place had been burned. It looked like the house had never existed in the first place.

“If I were to throw this onto an enemy...”

He shuddered in the rain, feeling a chill run down his spine.

Even he, the practitioner, was terrified.

That spiritual technique was nothing short of terrifying.

He let the rain falling from above slap him on the face before pointing his finger angrily at the night sky.

“You stupid thing up there! Give me back my house!”

Fzzzz!

As soon as he finished this line, the puddle in his place vaporized in an instant. The drizzle in the night had been rather cool, yet now the air felt scorching all of a sudden.

Arrrggghhhh!

He shouted at the top of his lungs at the sky. The raindrops, which had yet to fall to the ground, were evaporated while they were still airborne.

The young man in the compound stopped doing anything stupid, seemingly stunned by what had just happened. The drizzle in the air mingled with the rising mist, making the place look like some sort of paradise.

“Man, this is awesome...”

He clenched his fist, feeling utterly overwhelmed.

He had seen scenes like that in hot-blooded anime when he was younger, where one could cause the weather to change just by being angry.

Boooom!

Streaks of lightning flashed in the pitch-black night sky as thunder rumbled. He was utterly frightened.

“I’m sorry, I’m sorry. It’s my fault...”

He curled up and ran into an adjacent guest room.

...

Crack, crack!

Infernal Spiritual Source flared, drying his clothes and hair in an instant.

Xu Xiaoshou grabbed at his clothes and commented in astonishment, “Man, this is convenient.”

His only regret was that there were still some bloodstains left behind on his clothes from when he’d internalized the seeds. The rain couldn’t get everything off.

He grabbed his collar and sniffed, finding a rather mild stink emanating from himself.

“Seems like I need to take a bath after all.”

He looked around him and exasperatedly slumped onto a wooden bench.

The guest room was cramped, with only a dilapidated wooden bed without even a mattress on it taking over half of the space.

The only other things in the room were a small wooden bench and a short table with a corner missing.

Such a place naturally didn’t have a private bathroom. Having to wash himself meant that he had to fetch water from the well near the spirit pool in the compound.

He started to miss his own house terribly and swore to never act on impulse again.

He made it a point that if he were to ever again need to train and test things that he was unsure of, he would do so in the compound instead.

Nah, not the compound. Better do it at Goose Lake instead...

He recalled the time a while back when he'd trained at Goose Lake and broken the white jade fence around the lake. Yet, the next day, he'd found that it had been miraculously repaired.

"So long as I don't get caught, that place will really be a free training ground."

He tapped his fingers on the table, finding it to be a feasible option. He then wondered if he should actually take a bath right then and there.

He looked at the night sky. It was still raining out there, and sunrise was around the corner.

While a bath was imperative, he deemed that there was something else more solemn and important that needed to be done before he went to wash himself.

He rubbed his hands, looking forward to it. Then he saw the red interface in his mind.

Passive Points: 81032.

Chapter 62: High Spirits

Over 80 thousand Passive Points!

Refining those two Infernal Fire Seeds had alone given him over 40 thousand Passive Points each.

Xu Xiaoshuo was utterly baffled. If not for the fact that leaving the seeds in his body would cause him too much pain, he would have liked to be burned for days and nights on end.

"But I'm not a... well, umm... masochist..." he thought.

One way or another, he was fully capable of pretending to be beaten up by 40 to 50 people while actually enjoying the process, as if he were being given a full-body massage. He had no problem doing this. But then again, this was a lot different from leaving time bombs in his body that would explode at random.

"Let's just leave it at that," he thought.

"It's just too difficult to pull something like that off, after all."

He cherished his life very much. He then realized that he could easily trade the points for 50 Passive Keys.

That's right! Fifty Passive Keys!

With the two he'd gotten from the previous draw, he now had a total number of 52 Passive Keys.

He smirked like an idiot, feeling as if he'd gotten a swelled head.

There had been a time when he'd had to be cautious, even when trading for just several such keys, yet at present, he had gotten to the point where he could trade 50 keys without batting an eye.

"All that hard work just for this moment, eh?"

"As for why I left 30 thousand Passive Points behind..."

"Well, people need to have dreams, don't they?"

"I remember that I hit a double kill last time. If I were to get a triple kill this time, then convert 30 thousand Passive Points to Skill Points, oh boy, that would be insane..."

"Six plus three equals nine Innate-level Passive Skills, man!"

"Hehe, hahahahaha...."

He started gleefully imagining his future. He got so excited he slammed his hand down on the table, which he almost ended up wrecking due to almost having failed to control his strength.

"Let's get to it."

His expression turned solemn as his will came above that red wheel. Then he dumped 10 keys into it without a moment's hesitation.

"Hah!"

"RNGesus bless me!!"

The cramped guest room echoed with the loony young man's shot. Xu Xiaoshou then pressed his hands together in prayer, acting devout as he took a look at the Information Bar.

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

You got one key!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

"Go**amnit!"

“One key out of 10 draws? That’s it?”

“Damn you...” He clenched his fists, so frustrated he almost made to break something.

“Okay, calm down.”

“Now’s not the time to get angry, at least not yet. Forty more draws to go, after all.”

1

He looked like he’d expected this to happen.

“This d*mned System is really getting ridiculous, and the rates are really dropping like nobody’s business. Worse still, the wheel is still covered in grey mist, and I have no idea how this thing works.”

He calmed himself, reminding himself that he was a man with a big heart who could stay unfazed in the midst of a storm.

With a boom, the table broke, and Xu Xiaoshou leapt up from his chair.

“Hah!”

“RNGesus bless me!”

Without giving any prior warning, he went on to make 10 more draws, thinking to catch the System by surprise.

Thank you for your patronage!

You got one key!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

You got one key!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

You got one key!

“D*mnn you, d*mnn you, d*mnn you!”

His face immediately turned pale, and he felt cold all over. He looked like he was struggling to even stand.

“Twenty draws and only four keys?”

“Do you have to play me like that?”

“Couldn’t you have at least pitied me for having gone through all that pain from refining the seeds?”

“Okay. Maybe it’s because the room has bad Feng Shui.”

He took a deep breath and opened the door and windows, then stood at a different place inside the room. He felt his mind become a lot clearer.

“Alright! Maybe luck will finally come to me after doing this.

“On to the next 10 draws!”

He leaned on the board near the window, pretending to be calm as he looked at the Information Bar.

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Fundamental Passive Skill acquired: High Spirits

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Crack!

He shuddered when he read these lines and ended up tearing the board away from the window, causing it to be wedged between his waist and the wall.

“There’s finally something!?”

He rubbed his eyes hard, and found that his eyes weren’t playing tricks on him.

He’d actually gotten something, but not only that. That something was a Fundamental Passive Skill no less.

“This is awesome!” He drew the piece of board behind him and smacked it out of reflex, reducing it to pieces.

Despite doing this, he still was unable to calm himself just yet.

That Fundamental Passive Skill that he’d last drawn—Eternal Vitality—was a godlike skill in his eyes. That skill had saved his life more times than he could bother counting.

That one skill alone had enabled him to extend his combat duration, refine the fire seeds, and more.

It had gotten to the point where he no longer needed Red Gold Pills, and at the moment, he'd gotten yet another Fundamental Passive Skill.

"High Spirits.

"That's quite a name," he thought, pondering what the name could mean.

Then he came to a sudden realization.

"Spirits, huh?"

He extended his will to observe his entire body, especially his energy reserves.

Fundamental Passive Skills would usually appear in his body somewhere, and the name of that skill suggested that it might very well be something for regenerating spiritual source.

"Just as expected..." The smile on his face couldn't have been any brighter.

It was just as he'd expected. The spiritual source regeneration rate in his energy reserves had been considerably amplified.

Having acquired Infernal Spiritual Source, the nature of his spiritual strength had seen a fundamental transformation, which naturally meant a drastic decrease in the rate of regeneration.

That one burst of Infernal Heavens hadn't just burned his house down. It had drained a considerable portion of his spiritual source.

Yet, that vicious spiritual source saw an increase in its natural rate of regeneration, returning to a point comparable to what it'd been before with his spiritual strength.

"H*ll, this is really gonna allow me to fight for a very, very long time."

He recalled his battle with Mo Mo.

He recalled that he'd almost been able to win near the middle of the match. The only thing that had prevented him from winning was him not being able to execute the third Blade-draw Technique due to low spiritual power.

If he'd had one such Passive Skill back then, he might have actually ended the battle right then and there, which would have prevented all that had happened after that, including being scalded by lava and such.

"This is really one godlike skill, man..." He mumbled to himself.

While the rate of regeneration still wasn't apparent at the moment, there was still room for growth.

He continued playing with the pieces in his hand, and his laughter drifted out of the room through the windows and door, becoming a part of the dark night.

"Breathing Technique, Eternal Vitality, High Spirits..."

"Auto-training, HP recovery, MP recovery..."

"Now that I've gathered all three godlike skills, I wonder if anyone will be able to stop me."

He couldn't help the smirk that came onto his face, making him look like an idiot.

He imagined himself charging into an army, his enemies all trying to overwhelm him with superior numbers, only to find after fighting several rounds that his HP and MP were all still full, baffling everyone around, causing them to eventually have no choice but to surrender and give him Passive Points as tribute.

This scene kept playing in his mind.

"Huh, huh, huh..."

"Huhh, hahaha..."

"Hahahahahaha!"

He laughed at the top of his lungs, sounding very arrogant. "No one can stop me, for I'm now a god!

"Time's up."

He returned to his usual calm, looking like nothing happened before.

He activated his spiritual source, causing the board to spark, then threw the board out into the rain outside.

1

Hehehe.

He gave a sheepish grin. "Twenty more draws to go."

Chapter 63: The Mystics of Drawing. Does it have Anything to do with Poses?

"Hah!"

"RNGesus bless me!"

1

Xu Xiaoshou continued shouting in the same spot, which he deemed his Feng Shui sweet spot.

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

You got one key!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

“I knew it...”

He read the Information Bar in silence, yet he wasn't sad.

Truth be told, getting just one Fundamental Passive Skill from 50 draws was already quite a bargain, but it still hurt to not get anything more.

After all, after getting something once, who wouldn't want another?

“Maybe I should change how I'm standing?”

“Hmm... no.

“It's more like luck doesn't strike the same place twice.”

He looked around the place, pondering what to do next.

“There's nowhere else to stand in here!

“This place is really a wreck.”

He looked outside the window, thinking that maybe drawing in the rain would bring him greater luck.

But wouldn't that look a little stupid?

“Whatever,” he figured as he climbed over the window and got to the compound.

Patter, patter.

The rain kept falling.

He then swept the floor with a low kick, kicking up quite a bit of the water that had collected on the ground and splashing it into the air.

“Hah!”

“RNGesus bless me!”

In the midst of such a beautiful scene, he clapped his hands together, sucking in all the luck brought by the rain.

You got one key!

You got one key!

Extended Passive Skill acquired: Recoil!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

“Holy sh**!

“I really got something!”

Shocked, he read the Information Bar, and was completely stunned for the moment.

“Something from all first three attempts and now a passive skill?

“Gosh, could I be any luckier?

“Okay, this is getting scary. Does one’s pose really have any effect on the draw?”

He felt like laughing like a maniac again. That passive skill was his second, which meant that he’d scored a double kill.

Taking into consideration that the two passive skills hadn’t appeared at once, and considering that it got harder and harder to draw something from the system, he wouldn’t get any luckier than drawing two passive skills in just 50 draws.

“Recoil.

“Something of great use once it’s leveled up.”

He could more or less tell what the skill could do from the name alone.

“When playing a game, one isn’t afraid of running into the enemy’s tank but of the injuries hitting said tank could cause.

“Now that I have both ‘Strengthen’ and ‘Recoil,’ I’ve just made myself into a literal meat tank.

“Coupled with ‘Sharpness’ and ‘Sword Technique Expertise’...

“I’ll have no problems attacking and defending, and now I could even give anyone attacking me a headache.

“This is dope.” The smirk on his face was so big and bright it twisted his face.

“Just who the h*ll could take me on, eh?”

He clenched his fists and hit them together at 30 percent strength.

There was a slight boom, and both fists bounced off of each other, just like if they’d just hit some spring invisible to the naked eye.

“Something isn’t right...”

He deliberated for a bit and found that Recoil wasn’t what he’d initially thought.

He figured that the effect that he'd expected was more akin to "backlash," but Recoil was more about "shock."

The recoil effect caused both fists to bounce far from each other, even though he'd used very little force.

"There really are ways one could make good use of this."

He was more overjoyed than disappointed. Compared to what he'd expected, the Recoil skill would actually be able to do a lot more to catch an enemy off-guard when aptly used.

He could just imagine. If his opponent threw a punch at him, he could just puff his chest out a bit, and his opponent would be sent flying uncontrollably. That would surely catch them off-guard.

If he were to throw the Sword Web Style at such a moment...

"Sheeesh!"

He was frightened by what he had in mind, finding what would happen to be terrifying.

He then wondered just why his skills would look so disgusting and annoying despite their very hero-like names.

Shouldn't they be skills of a hero?

...

He finished all 50 draws. Despite not being able to score a triple skill, being able to bag a double skill still made him very pleased with himself.

Huh?

"Why are there 10 more keys around?"

He read what was written below the red interface. It was stated very clearly.

Passive Keys: 10.

He was stunned, but he then recalled having got "you got one key" many times in that 50 draws.

"Take care of the pence, and the pounds will take care of themselves, eh?"

"Haha, d*mn, really?"

"Ten free draws after 50 draws?"

He was very gleeful. He wiped the rainwater off his face and looked around, then went on to squat on that decorative mountain nearby.

"With my back against a mountain and my front facing water, this has to be a place where ultimate luck flows!"

"Hah!"

"RNGesus bless me!"

He slammed his hands on the ground, thinking it was a pity an array of any kind didn't appear, as that might've heightened his chances.

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

You got one key!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

He was baffled.

"Sh**!"

Ten keys reduced to one. That highly anticipated third kill just wouldn't happen.

He squatted below that fake mountain and read what was below the Information Bar.

"Thirty thousand Passive Points...

"Have to leave 20 thousand for level-ups. This is my capital, and I can't afford to waste it!

"Ten thousand more...

"Okay, whatever, let's go!"

He then traded his points for nine more keys, gathering enough for 10 more draws.

He thought about leaving 10 thousand more behind, yet given that his skills and levels were already full, there was no need to leave that 10 thousand lying around. As such, he thought it would just be better to put them all into drawing while his luck was still good.

He'd made his decision. "Let's do this!"

The 10 draws resulting from the acquisition of Recoil confirmed his conclusion that drawing was a mystical thing that had more or less something to do with how one went about it.

"Right. Feng Shui spot, check."

He then glanced around the place. This was his compound, so there was naturally no one else there.

He laid low on the ground on all fours.

“Well, this should do it.

“But man, it sure looks embarrassing.

“Good thing that there’s no one around.

“Just this once...

“No next time!”

He narrowed his eyes and didn’t look around, thinking that doing so would keep people from noticing what he was doing.

He also did his best to keep himself hidden under the shadows of that fake mountain, as he thought the place was definitely some powerful spot.

He felt for sure that the System not throwing something his way definitely had something to do with his posture.

He was feeling so thoroughly embarrassed that he shouted “RNGesus bless me!” inwardly instead of out loud before dumping all ten keys into the wheel.

This was how the Information Bar looked like next:

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Thank you for your patronage!

Pfftt!

He spat blood right then and there when he saw this, and felt like he was about to pass out. He didn’t think the System would deal him such a fatal blow in the end.

All 10 draws and nothing!

Not even a single “You got one key!”

“So, the story has to end in a tragedy forever, eh?”

He wiped something off of his face, not quite sure if it was rainwater or tears, before dejectedly getting up.

Passive Points: 21008.

His eyes lit up. There were still 1000 points extra, and he wondered if he would score a miracle with just a single draw.

He traded the 1000 points for a key and dumped it into the wheel without a moment's hesitation.

Thank you for your patronage!

...

Boom, boom, boom.

Explosions were immediately heard in the compound, and several craters were seen in the ground.

...

Passive Points: 20008.

Passive Points: 8

High Spirits (Innate, level 1)

Recoil (Innate, level 1)

He dusted his hands and nodded with satisfaction. While it might look like he had lost everything in that one night, things were actually the opposite.

Eight major passive skills! All eight at Innate levels!

"This is perfect!" He immediately stood up and walked into the room. He was all drenched.

"Time to wash up.

"And head to bed!"

Chapter 64: Visitors in the Rainy Night

Fat geese patrolled the lake as the winds blew, and the rain drizzled, creating a hazy mist as two men walked in the night.

"Hey, Kong, dun ya think that we should be lying in bed with butiful gals?"

"Ze weather, ze weather, makes people sleepy, man..."

Two men in black cloaks were walking along Goose Lake. One with the hood up and one with the hood down.

Shao Yi wore his hood tight around his face as he took another mouthful of booze from his gourd then clasped his stomach as he belched.

Blurgghh!

Feng Kong took a look at the weather. The rainy night was blocking the sunrise, yet first light would come soon nonetheless.

“Times like these are when people are least guarded.”

He focused and leapt far away, advising his partner, “Don’t drink before you kill. It’ll affect your judgment.”

Shao Yi paused what he was doing with his hands, yet he maintained his speed and kept up with him.

“Oh, relax. It be fine.

“Dis no problem. I was about to tell ya to put your hood up. Rain wud get in the way of your sight, you know? That wud get in the way of you killing.”

Feng Kong wiped the cold rainwater off his face and said, “The rain is cold. It wakes me up.”

Shao Yi clapped his gourd and twitched an eyebrow.

“You see. Difwent people, difwent taste...

“I like dwinking, you like rain. We got what we both want. Nice, right?”

The corners of Feng Kong’s mouth twitched. He stayed silent for quite a while before saying, “No problem with dwin... drinking. Could you at least speak like a normal person?”

Ptuih!

Noting that his speech was getting affected by that of his partner, Feng Kong decided to just shut up.

“Hehe...” Shao Yi was enjoying himself. “Ya dun like what ya hear?”

“Yeah.”

“Well, I dun like your cold a** face too, looking like a saint or sumfing.”

Feng Kong stopped, looking very annoyed.

“What? Let’s go!” Shao Yi was exasperated.

“Do you know what you’re saying?” Feng Kong’s tone of voice plummeted, making him sound like some emissary of some icy hell.

“I know. We sud go back to sleep!”

“...”

Feng Kong took a deep breath. His partner must be really drunk.

“Forget it. No point being petty with him,” he thought. “There’s still business to take care of.”

He took flight again.

Shao Yi tipped his hood back a little with a shaky hand. Even though his face hadn't been drenched by the rain, it was still drenched in a cold sweat.

"Holy sh**, what did I just say? Am I looking to die?"

"That guy is Feng Kong, the Bloody Hands man!"

"Good thing I managed to blow it over. Kong probably won't kill me after this."

His partner's low, icy tone after his slip of the tongue had immediately rendered him sober, and he'd simply decided to play around and play dumb after realizing that he'd said something wrong.

The consequences would've been disastrous otherwise.

Shao Yi wiped all that cold sweat off of his face and adjusted his expression, immediately following after his partner.

The rain kept falling, and seemed to have gotten even heavier.

The geese at the lake huddled together as they gathered around the jade fence, trying to take shelter from the rain.

Well...

Nice try, though.

...

The speed at which the two moved along that winding path slowed considerably.

"Dis way, right?"

Shao Yi looked around him, and, truth be told, it had been quite a while since he'd last gone to the Outer Yard. In fact, it'd been such a long time that he almost forgot his way around. It was fortunate that the place had hardly changed. Otherwise, he wouldn't have been able to somewhat find his way around.

He then saw someone in the woods, and was quite surprised.

"Are disciples of the Outer Yard so huddoking? Raining and still working?"

"Well, back den I stayed in that common house for a year. There were so many people in there and training was just impossible, so I had to come out..."

"Inner Yard is a nice pwace, I hub my own pwace, and gals..."

Shao Yi reminisced as he continued drinking, totally oblivious to the fact that Feng Kong was getting increasingly annoyed.

He took a gulp and went inside an empty compound.

The compound was covered with an array, and only rainwater could get inside. There was also a huge field before that barrier, which was huge and could fit many people inside for training.

"Tsk, rich kid, huh!"

“Back den, I...”

“Shut up!” Feng Kong cut him off. “The target’s right in front of us, and you still wanna yap away? Did you forget what I taught you?”

Gulp... Shao Yi scratched his head sheepishly. He opened his mouth to answer the question, then shut up the next moment.

He took another gulp to steel himself and added, “Kong, just let me do this one, and you stay behind and watch. You dun need to do this in the first pwace, so...”

Feng Kong shot him a look, causing Shao Yi to immediately shut up and pretend to zip his mouth shut.

“Get going.

“Be mindful of how you do it. Get it done with a single hit.”

Shao Yi nodded, and the gourd in his hand disappeared. He brandished two short swords, which he held in a reverse grip, and hid the blade in his sleeves before walking up to the place.

He lifted his hand.

Then he knocked on the door.

...

The skin before him was so supple and had such a nice glow. Even though Xu Xiaoshou was unable to see the face clearly, he no longer cared.

He reached out and was about to touch said skin...

Dum, dum, dum!

When rushed knocks came from the front door.

“Oh, d*mn you!”

The supple body disappeared before his eyes, and he lunged at it in an attempt to catch it.

Crack!

Noise was heard from the bed, and he somehow lost his balance, like he’d missed a step, and then fell hard onto the ground.

His eyes flew open, his heart still racing. His eyes were full of displeasure.

“Just one more step!”

Dum, dum, dum!

The knocking was heard again.

He then looked at the door, feeling very, very annoyed.

“Just who the h*ll is so damn senseless, huh?” he thought. “What are they doing showing up at such a time?”

“As**ole. Can’t you just let me sleep?”

“Why do you wanna get in the way of me sleeping?”

He put on his shoes and slowly walked to the living room. He put up his spiritual source to serve as an umbrella and shield himself from the rain.

He’d just washed himself not too long ago, yet had been waken up by all that noise not long after lying down. He couldn’t afford to get himself drenched.

He rubbed his drowsy eyes and walked past the compound before long. He put a hand on the handle.

The wind blew and seemed to wake him up. He halted.

“Hold on!”

“Just who the h*ll is sick enough to come look for me at such a time?”

He started to become suspicious. He had hardly any friends in the Outer Yard, and had only gone to the library with the staff back in the afternoon the day before. That meant that there was just no reason for anyone to come looking for him.

He’d even prepared to give himself a few days off.

“Staff members looking for me at such a time?”

He felt that his turn of events was rather ridiculous. As such, he focused and extended his Sense through the barrier to check out what was going on out there.

A man wearing a black cloak, his face concealed under the hood, was standing outside. Despite the dark of night, he was still able to clearly make out the man’s expression.

The man looked plain, and seemed to behave very courteously, as he didn’t keep banging on the door.

Huh?

Another one right behind him?

“Sh**, is this guy sick or what. It’s raining, and he’s already wearing something with a hood, yet he took to revealing his face and standing with his arms crossed in front of his chest?”

“What’s with all this pretense?”

“Who the h*ll would bother looking at you during the night?”

He sensed that something was off, yet he was unable to place what exactly was wrong.

More importantly, he didn’t know either of these two people, and he wondered why they were here in the first place.

Furthermore, he wondered why they’d showed up at such a time.

The sound of the rain seemed to have gotten louder than before.

His hand remained resting on the handle, yet he didn't just pull the door open, nor did he pull his hand back. His heart rate quickened somewhat as he took a look at the night sky.

"A rainy night..."

"Someone's here to kill me?"

He felt his skin crawl, yet he found the thought rather ridiculous. He must've read too many novels. Why would someone come to kill him without good reason?

He felt that his social life was rather decent and that he had never made any enemies.

All three of them were patient. All three of them were quiet. All three of them didn't move.

He sensed that the man outside the door was still courteously waiting.

The night was silent again all of a sudden. There was a wooden door, and three figures standing around it.

The rain, on the other hand, was loud. It resounded far and wide along with the knocks on the door, and through the noise a familiar song could be heard:

"Little pig, little pig, let me in..."

"Dum, dum, dum."

Chapter 65: You've finally Found Me

Shao Yi frowned.

"He isn't home?"

He'd been waiting for quite some time now, yet there were no movements from inside. Someone would've answered the door by now if there was actually someone home.

Being woken up in the middle of the night like that, anyone would have at least been irritable enough to check who was at the door.

He looked at the barrier wrapping the wooden door. It was entirely impossible to break through it with sheer force alone, and doing so would definitely cause some noise.

But then again, dawn would soon come. He couldn't just keep waiting.

"Whatever," he thought. "Just do it, then."

He drew his short swords from his sleeve and was about to attack when another hand pressed his hands down.

Feng Kong's voice pierced right through the barrier.

"Xiao Qixiu of the Spiritual Law Division here."

“Open the door.”

On the other side of the door.

Xu Xiaoshou was immediately alarmed and wanted nothing more than to just run, but he stopped himself nonetheless.

The man mimicked Xiao Qixiu’s voice so well that if his Sense hadn’t told him what the two outside looked like, he would have actually opened the door right then and there.

At the moment, the man knocking on the door was holding two short swords.

If at this moment Xu Xiaoshou still hadn’t been able to guess what these two outside were up to, he’d be better off dead.

“What the h*ll is happening?”

“Why are there people here to kill me?”

He was flustered and broke out in a cold sweat. He wracked his brains, yet was unable to find a way out.

He extended Sense to its greatest range, yet the two at the door still looked like they were common folk and seemed to have no powers at all.

However, he was able to tell that these two were at least at Innate Level, and they were anything but common, even among those at Innate Level.

Being at Spiritual Cultivation Level meant that he was able to detect a specific mystical aura signature unique to those at Innate Level, making it easy to tell them apart.

These two were well-guarded that it was obvious they were trained in some kind of powers for concealing their powers.

It was entirely possible that these two were professional killers.

Dread was written all over his face.

The spirit place was protected by a massive array, which made it impossible for those outside to get in without permission unless they were exceptionally and unbelievably powerful.

He was able to immediately rule that out, judging from the age of those two.

As such, there was the question of where such powerful Innate Level fighters could be from.

There was only one answer to that question.

The Inner Yard.

He immediately shuddered all over, wondering why the h*ll someone from the Inner Yard would want to kill him.

He wracked his brains looking for a solution, but his neurons felt as if they were dying en masse at the moment, as his brain simply refused to come up with a possible reason behind this.

But he knew that if he didn't make it through the night, this place would be his grave.

The harder he wracked his brains, the more afraid he became.

According to what he knew, the only one from the last batch who'd joined the Inner Yard was Su Qianqian, and no one else had joined the batch before hers. He knew next to nothing about the batches before that.

Yet, that information was more than enough.

If those people were truly from the Inner Yard, then they would have already reached Innate Level two to three years ago.

"What the f**k?" he thought.

"What kind of a joke is this?"

"What have I done to warrant the two of you coming after my head?"

"And since when have I done anything to offend the two of you?"

He was so terrified that he almost fell to his knees. He extended his Sense at those two after developing some early speculations.

"The one nearest to the door seems to have some bit of Innate presence, yet the one behind him..."

"Sh**!"

"At the very least, one is at the peak of Origin Court level, and the other is at Voidness Level or maybe even higher."

His heart sank right then and there.

Even at early and middle sub-levels after breaking into the Innate Stage, there would still be such a large gap between them that even someone at Spiritual Cultivation Level 10 wouldn't stand a chance at fighting them.

Worse still, the two outsiders' cultivation level was far higher than those early and middle sub-levels.

The way he saw it, the two standing outside weren't just Inner Yard fighters; they were reapers coming to claim his life.

He wasn't arrogant enough to think that just because he'd managed to draw two Innate Level passive skills and had acquired Infernal Heavens that he was capable enough to fight against those at Innate levels.

He certainly wasn't about to think that he could fight two of such beings.

If he were to do such a thing, it'd be the same as handing his head over on a silver platter.

"How should I go about this?"

"Running is impossible. No way I could escape from these two."

“But if I just stay around...”

He gulped, feeling very frustrated. The chances of him dying were so staggeringly high that he felt that he'd reached the end of his journey.

...

On the other side of the door.

The two looked at each other. They basically knew what was going on.

Either no one was inside, or their target knew who they were.

Although the latter was unlikely, it was nonetheless a possibility.

According to intelligence, the champion of the Wind and Cloud Contest from the Outer Yard, despite being known to only be of Spiritual Cultivation Level Eight, had Innate-level physique and Innate Sword Will, so there was no telling what else their target was capable of.

“Let's move!”

Feng Kong tilted his head, and Shao Yi's aura burst right then and there, coalescing raging spiritual source on his short swords. He looked like he was about ready to cleave a mountain.

Creak.

The barrier parted, and the wooden door opened.

“Sh**!”

Shao Yi immediately pulled his aura back, but the attack had such a massive amount of energy in it that cutting it off in the middle almost caused him to spit blood.

The two of them looked at each other and saw the cautious look in each other's eyes. Each immediately put his guard up.

Something was definitely wrong!

They were professional killers, and Feng Kong had almost been able to get the red hunter token of “three joss sticks,” which meant he was naturally sensitive to danger. He knew full well that one had to give one's all, even if one only had to kill an ant.

Feng Kong wouldn't have tagged along on this mission otherwise.

“Get inside.”

Both of them cautiously headed into the compound, and the next second, they were stunned by what they saw.

The ground...

Why were there so many craters inside?

Had a war been going on in here?

While having one's own compound among those of the Outer Yard was considered quite an achievement, the quality of such establishments was nonetheless far below that in the Inner Yard. They looked around and felt the place to be rather empty.

It seemed that the place was even larger than their own.

"No, hold on.

"It feels like... Something is missing in here?" Shao Yi thought.

He took a look in the adjacent wooden shack to the side and found the place to be rather shabby.

"Why live in such a broken hut? Are you telling me that Xu Xiaoshou could afford a compound, yet not a house?"

"No, that's not it.

"This is probably the guest room!"

Shao Yi seemed to recall something as he looked at the side of the shack and found only a huge, empty space.

"Shouldn't there be a main house over here? What happened to it?"

It turned out that the empty, vast feeling they'd sensed before was basically due to private compounds found within the spirit palace that basically consisted of a main house and a guest house.

Yet, this place, which should have had a main house on it, was vacant.

"What's the meaning of this?"

"What the h*ll just happened here!?"

Shao Yi was frightened.

Checking out terrain was a necessary skill for any killer, and surveying the terrain was something that they could almost finish in less than a second.

Furthermore, Shao Yi seemed to immediately realize something after seeing the odd way things were placed and all the craters on the ground.

He wondered if there had been a huge battle fought in the compound.

"Who goes there!?" Feng Kong, who was right beside him, shouted. Shao Yi was startled, and he turned around, finding a lean figure standing on top of that fake mountain in the hazy rain in the night.

Xu Xiaoshou?

No!

Not necessarily him. Maybe the other guy from that huge battle.

Shao Yi wasn't the only one speculating this. Feng Kong's speculation was basically the same. Both of them thought that there was more going on here than what they'd expected.

The assassination attempt, which they'd initially thought would be an easy job that they could finish as soon as Xu Xiaoshou opened the door, had become something of an enigma instead. Even after entering this place, they felt that a lot was at play here.

That figure on the fake mountain never turned around. He simply hung his head low and sighed eerily. A croaky voice was then heard.

"You've finally found me, huh? That's rather unexpected..."

"You're being slow."

The pupils of the two assassins contracted. They wondered what he meant.

"What the h*ll...: they thought.

Chapter 66: Is He Xu Xiaoshou or Not!?

"He's Xu Xiaoshou!" Shao Yi said telepathically. His tone was utterly serious.

"He's not Xu Xiaoshou!" Feng Kong glared at that figure on top of that fake mountain. "Xu Xiaoshou was at level eight. This one is at level nine."

"He made a breakthrough!"

"Hehe, is there such a coincidence?"

"He doesn't dare to turn around! His silhouette matches Xu Xiaoshou's description almost entirely! His level of powers is definitely not at Innate level! He's wearing white clothes, and no assassin would be stupid enough to wear white!"

Shao Yi bombarded his partner with all that information, which he knew that Feng Kong would be able to process within a breath's time. Feng Kong would be able to even speculate more than what he put forth.

Yet, he deemed it necessary to word his opinion nonetheless. He needed his partner to give him the greenlight.

Even if said greenlight would have plunged Shao Yi into a whole lot of trouble in just an instant, it would nonetheless allow Feng Kong to escape.

"Could it be truly as simple as it looks?"

Feng hesitated. He had to admit that he was stunned.

He was frozen in place, even if that man before him had a 99 percent chance of being Xu Xiaoshou.

Yet, he couldn't help but wonder what if that wasn't his target.

All the crater on the ground, a main house that was nowhere to be found, and someone was clearly in the compound yet no one answered the door.

He wondered what caused all of that.

Shao Yi was totally fine having Feng Kong throwing him into the fire and risk it, yet he wondered if he should or could be so cold-blooded.

If that man before them was not Xu Xiaoshou, then he would most probably be some terrifying figure who was even more capable than he was at concealing his powers, possibly even some among those 33 from the Inner Yard who had disappeared for a long time.

If he were to keep his hands to himself, catching sight of that silhouette would nonetheless allow him to live.

If he were to make a move, it would have given that man a reason to end them both right there and then.

He wondered if that was a fair price to pay for someone like Xu Xiaoshou.

Shao Yi was getting restless, after not hearing anything from his partner.

Feng Kong is hesitating!

He was stunned to find that his partner was actually hesitating.

It was worth noting that hesitation on the job was something terrifying to a professional killer.

Boom!

Flashes of lightning were seen in the sky and the rain became even heavier.

The compound was all silent, with only rustling noises were heard.

The man on that fake mountain remained silent, and the two who were puzzled as to what they got themselves into were silent as well. Both parties probably had a lot of questions going on in their minds, yet both parties knew one thing very well.

The first one to speak first, loses.

...

Doubted, Passive Points +1.

Doubted, Passive Points +1.

Doubted, Passive Points +1.

“...”

The Information Bar had lines rolling over and over. Hundreds of messages were actually seen in less than a minute.

Who is that mysterious guy standing on top of that fake mountain...

Do you even need to ask?

That's Xu Xiaoshou, of course!

His reason for being dressed in white? He couldn't get changed in time!

Why wouldn't he turn around? That's because he's Xu Xiaoshou!

Yet, why did he dare to stand before both of us?

Well, that's because he couldn't do anything else!

Xu Xiaoshou's legs were actually wobbling at the moment. If the two of them were to attack right away, he probably wouldn't be able to evade in time.

Yet, from what he could tell from his earlier observations, those two were...

Very patient, meticulous, and wouldn't act before making sure of things.

All of that being signs that they were trained killers.

At the same time, both of them were definitely capable of complex thoughts. At the very least, he could tell that the one at the rear was around, forcing both of them to speculate even more.

They definitely would speculate more. That's just how it'd be!

It was rather ironic that his compound was in such a state because he was being impudent with testing his attacks before, yet that state of things around was the thing that saved him at the moment.

He wondered if he could have them think what he wanted them to think, having them think what he let them think about what they were thinking or not thinking, and then think more on what to think, so as cause them to think even more and then confuse their thinking...

Xu Xiaoshou was feeling rather dizzy.

He knew very well that he had to think, for that was his only way out of this predicament at the moment.

One way or another, the two of them were very smart and very, very highly trained fighters. Fighting such people head on would be akin to throwing eggs at a stone wall. As such, he had to resort to smarts.

The question whether he could remain alive would be dependent on how much of his brains that he could use.

His strategy was to intimidate them so as to be able to firmly be on the offense, to have them think that he was someone else, based on bits of information that he fed them one way or another.

He was doing so as to have them ask themselves.

Who is he actually? If he's Xu Xiaoshou, why would he dare to stand before both of us? What causes the compound to look like this?

If he isn't Xu Xiaoshou, then he would be someone here to kill Xu Xiaoshou, which explains what happens in the compound. But we ran into him somehow and his powers are far above us, yet why isn't he killing us to silence us right away?

Xu Xiaoshou was feeling himself shaking inside out.

He had to keep his identity constantly shifting between the two at all times, so to prevent them from getting an affirmative answer. That was the only way to keep them speculating, and then keep being confused.

He wondered if he could really speculate what both of them were thinking without error.

That would be impossible.

As such, he kept quiet as well, so as to prevent giving his true identity off.

He saw that at times, giving possibilities to rule out when dealing with clever people, would bring about unexpected results instead.

As such, he simply said some enigmatic sounding things, and that was enough to cause the information in his mind to refresh like crazy. He knew that he partially succeeded in what he was trying to do.

Even if his chances of being able to intimidate them into inaction were 99 percent, if they were to try to attack him instead, he would definitely be doomed.

As such, he had to think about what to do next.

Truth to be told though...

He didn't know what else to do.

While he was having his back against them, his Sense allowed him to clearly perceive their facial expression, which served as his greatest weapon at the moment.

The silence between both parties continued. All three of them had their own agenda. Both parties were waiting for the other to speak first.

The 'doubted' lines in his mind dwindled considerably and he was getting very anxious.

Those two assassins were clearly more patient than he imagined, so much so that he was unable to find any way to misdirect them further.

This can't go on any longer. I have to say something. If I wait any longer, it'd be them going on their second round to verify who I am instead.

But... what should I say?

He knew that what he was about to say next would determine if he would live or die, and he hesitated.

"Heh, so you two are here to kill Xu Xiaoshou as well?" He lowered his voice.

"It's a pity that you came late." The line was enigmatic.

What the hell was that?

I'm practically telling them that I've just killed the guy myself! Gosh, only idiots would do that.

...

Feng Kong kept his gaze locked on that man on the fake mountain, not letting any bit of information slip past him.

Sweat and rainwater drenched the back of his head. He was shivering from inside out.

He was still in his belief that the man before them was Xu Xiaoshou, yet despite their steely performance, he wondered why nonetheless.

Why is that guy still able to keep himself up like that!?

He gave a very subtle look at his partner, who accepted the message right away.

Move!

“Hah?”

A sarcastic snicker that was very flighty, yet it stopped Shao Yi from moving nonetheless. The man on that fake mountain then lowered his head and mumbled, “you’re running out of patience then...”

Both of them were able to hear what he just said, yet the sarcasm in his tone was unmistakable.

He acted like he was playing a game of cat and mouse with them, that their fates were sealed and that he simply enjoyed watching his prey struggle.

Feng Kong’s pupils contracted and he was shivering all over.

He is able to see!

That guy hasn’t even turn around yet. Just how is he able to tell that extremely subtle communication between me and Shao Yi?

“Are we going to get him or what?” Shao Yi was going crazy.

He could an oaf and still be able to tell that both of them were playing psychological games, yet it was a game that he couldn’t be a part of, so he could only wait for Feng Kong’s signal.

At present.

That signal was lost again.

Oh, for the sake of the heavens!

Shao Yi was at the edge of going nuts

Chapter 67: Keep Guessing

Feng Kong hadn’t yet given Shao Yi an answer when the man on the fake mountain just snickered, his tone utterly cold.

“You wanna run?”

“You’ve had your chance...”

The air around them seemed to heat up as these words fell, so much so that even the rainwater started to fizzle and immediately evaporate.

Shao Yi was shocked, but it wasn't what was happening in their surroundings after the man's words that shocked him. What shocked him was what the man said.

"Run?" he thought.

"Who the h*ll is trying to run here?"

"I'm not even thinking of running!"

"Wait, no..."

"Oh, don't tell me..."

He then looked at Feng Kong in fright, unable to believe his eyes that his partner, who was usually so confident, was so frightened that he wanted to run.

Feng Kong turned to meet his gaze, and Shao Yi was shocked to find that there was a different look in his eyes.

"Wait, he's getting scared?"

A killer running out of confidence right before the fight. What kind of a fight could there be anymore?

Shao Yi, who'd been composed this whole time, was now utterly terrified.

...

"Shao Yi's getting scared? He's thinking of running?" This was Feng Kong's inner thoughts.

He turned to look at his partner, and found that the terror in his eyes had grown. He knew right then and there that the situation had gotten completely out of control.

"Shao Yi is being led on!" he thought.

"He might've gotten intimidated, or it could be because of me..."

"If it's the latter, boy, that guy over there really is something." Feng Kong was feeling unsettled.

One way or another, no fight could be had at the moment anymore.

The man on the fake mountain was simply too sure of himself and had just the right handle on how to play mind games. The time he'd given the two of them was only enough to unsettle them for a brief moment. It wasn't enough to give them more time to think.

It'd even gotten to the point where he and his partner were now mentally desynchronized.

Just when he was figuring out what to do, he caught the man on the fake mountain flap his sleeve, then shroud his hand with fire elemental spiritual source.

"Spiritual source?"

Feng Kong felt like his soul had practically left his body and like he'd been cast in some icy hell.

“Spiritual source!”

“He’s not Xu Xiaoshou!” Shao Yi’s telepathic message was one of utter, unconcealed terror.

Xu Xiaoshou might have been able to immediately make a breakthrough into Spiritual Cultivation Level Nine right after the matches were over, yet regardless of how much of a genius he might be, there was utterly no way that he could then make yet another breakthrough into level 10 right after that and even break into Innate Stage.

That man before them, whom they guessed to be at level nine of powers, was actually able to conjure fire elemental spiritual source. That meant that he was definitely someone at Innate Stage who had concealed his powers.

He fooled both of us!

He definitely isn’t Xu Xiaoshou!

“Run,” Feng Kong lowered his tone and said.

Shao Yi immediately retreated and caught up with his partner.

“Do you really think you can run away?” the man on the fake mountain chuckled. Both of them felt that everything around them was shaking before they could even get out of the compound, so much so that even rainwater from the sky seemed to be suspended midair, making the scene utterly harrowing.

Crack, crack, crack!

A vortex was seen on the water collected on the ground. Bubbles popped one after another. The water was actually boiling.

Xu Xiaoshou wanted nothing more than to have them run as far as they could. It’d be best if they could run all the way to the ends of the world and never return, yet he had to do something to make sure that they stayed around.

If he were to simply stop attacking right after the two of them ran, it would blow his cover.

Furthermore, he somehow felt that the cunning one among the two was setting him up by running.

He couldn’t afford to give the other party a chance to do something.

As such, he had to make a move, yet it couldn’t be something that would make them unable to run away.

That was because everything he’d done before was actually just pointless bluffs.

He pulled Infernal Heavens on them by heightening the temperature around them, adding to the pressure, to make them mistake him for someone powerful enough to affect the weather whenever he got angry.

He then pulled All Things are Swords on them, causing everything around to shake, so as to create a harrowing scene that said “I’m about to hit you” without exposing his sword will.

“So...

“Was all that enough to scare them off?”

Xu Xiaoshou extended the range of his Sense to the limit. His heart was beating so fast that it felt like it was about to leap out of his chest, but it eventually calmed down instead.

He saw that the cunning one that wasn't wearing the hood had halted the other one's movements right after the both of them had gotten to the door, stopping in place.

“My cover's blown?” he thought.

“Did I do something wrong?”

He immediately stiffened.

Doubted, Passive Points +1.

Doubted, Passive Points +1.

“...”

Lines rolled over and over on his Information Bar again. Something was definitely amiss.

He wracked his brains and processed the hundreds of possibilities abound, and was still unable to find the problem.

At that moment, he felt his skin crawl.

...

“He set me up!

“He was bluffing!” Feng Kong thought.

Feng Kong didn't care for the puzzled look in Shao Yi's eyes. His mind came back to work yet again.

The man on that fake mountain looked terrifying and had managed to make the scene as terrifying as he could. Yet, the most puzzling thing was that he was still trying to scare them, even when they were about to run.

But then again, there was one thing that was the most puzzling of all.

He still wouldn't turn around.

Feng Kong smirked. “Hah! Got you now!”

His act of taking Shao Yi and running was in itself a ruse. The fact that the other man wasn't doing anything to attack him, who had already slowed down, was a sign that something was amiss.

All the doubt he'd had before was immediately dispelled. He could now say with certainty that this man was Xu Xiaoshou.

Feng Kong then told his partner telepathically, “Shao Yi, keep up with my rhythm, we first...”

“Have both of you forgotten that this is my turf?” An eerie voice was heard, cutting off Feng Kong.

Voom!

The array in the compound was activated. The barrier shrouded the entire place, and the door snapped shut.

Feng Kong got tongue-tied right there and then. He looked at the barrier, which was well within reach, and felt his mind twist into knots.

“Isn’t he Xu Xiaoshou?” he thought.

According to his judgment, that man was indeed Xu Xiaoshou.

Yet, he wondered why that man would dare to trap both of them inside if he were indeed Xu Xiaoshou.

Shutting the door after invaders had gotten inside was one surefire way of getting oneself killed.

Feng Kong was dumbfounded, and tried his best to think.

“Can it be...”

“That he isn’t Xu Xiaoshou?”

“Or that...”

“He’s Xu Xiaoshou, but he managed to guess what I guess what he guessed what I guessed?”

“...”

“This is ridiculous!”

“Who the h*ll would go about guessing like that in such a stressful environment?”

Feng Kong was completely thrown into disarray. The activation of that array had truly messed up his thoughts.

“There are still ways around this, so long as we umm... stay focused!” Feng Kong’s eyes were filled with nothing but visible tension.

Shao Yi was totally oblivious just how many thoughts were zipping through his partner’s mind in that instant and simply got excited after hearing his partner tell him to keep up.

Kong finally regained his composure. “This is great!” he thought.

He immediately asked telepathically, “Kong, what do you mean rhythm? You...”

“Shut the f**k up!” Feng Kong shouted in a rage.

Shao Yi was completely dumbfounded, wondering what had just happened.

Feng Kong turned his head, and his eyes were completely bloodshot. He had almost been able to streamline his thoughts again, making sense of what that man on the fake mountain was trying to do.

Yet, that one line from Shao Yi had trashed everything so badly, that there was simply no recovering his thoughts again.

“It’s over.”

“We’re done for.”

All that was seen in Feng Kong’s eyes were panic. He had lost it.

He’d lost all sense of judgment.

Before Feng Kong could process what was going on, the voice behind him came so near that he felt like it was right beside his ear.

“Turn around. Look at me.”

Feng Kong’s heart almost immediately stopped beating, and he wondered if he knew what he was thinking.

That was the only thing that Feng Kong felt sure of—that the man on that fake mountain wouldn’t dare to turn around. That was the only thing that he relied on.

Yet, the other man had seen right through him just when he was in a mess.

He wondered if that man had actually been able to pinpoint his thoughts all along.

Feng Kong wanted to turn around, yet his neck seemed to have stiffened, as he was unable to move at all.

After all...

To a killer...

Being seen meant death.

Chapter 68: Help

Shao Yi didn’t think that much. The less one thought, the better one’s life was his motto. He turned around to look at the fake mountain.

“Huh?” he thought.

“No one’s around?”

He caught a silhouette in his periphery not far away, causing him to immediately turn around.

He saw a man in white clothes with his hair messily draped over his shoulder. His arms were behind his back.

This was the man who was standing on that fake mountain.

He came to stand right in front of Shao Yi.

Shao Yi’s pupils contracted. The man had his head hung low, obscuring his face, yet the clothing he was wearing was noticeably tattered.

That man's clothes seemed to have been torn by a sword, and the exposed skin was all bruised and battered.

There were also vague bloodstains on said clothes that had almost all been washed away by the rain.

Shao Yi wasn't stupid. While he was unable to keep up with the terrifying thought processes exhibited by those other two, he still had basic judgment.

Judging from the extent of the man's injuries, gashes from sword attacks, and bruises...

Coupled with the fact that Xu Xiaoshou had Innate sword will and Innate Level physique...

Shao Yi could tell that the man wasn't Xu Xiaoshou.

Yet, the man had fought Xu Xiaoshou.

So the real Xu Xiaoshou...

Was dead!

"What th..."

The rain was heavy, and he dared not even turn his head around, so Shao Yi just simply stared at that man in white in the rain, feeling the scene to be rather eerie for some reason.

Brroooooom!

A rumble of thunder was heard, and the man in white lifted his head all of a sudden.

"Holy sh**!"

Shao Yi was so frightened that he kept backing away from the man until his back hit the wall. "Xu Xiaoshou!?" he uttered in fright.

"What kind of insanity is this?" he thought.

He'd just speculated that the man before his eyes wasn't Xu Xiaoshou, yet when the man had looked up, he'd shown a face with features completely identical to Xu Xiaoshou's.

"Now I see why Kong was so scared. Thinking is a frightening thing indeed."

"He's Xu Xiaoshou!" he shouted.

Feng Kong couldn't help but turn around when he heard Shao Yi's shout.

Lightning flashed across the night sky, and glimmers of silver light were seen on the man in white's face.

Both of them looked at the messy-looking man at the same time and grinned, yet their grins were anything but sincere, as that face before them felt like it belonged to someone else, and everything felt wrong.

They felt their skin crawl.

This was so d*mn terrifying.

Feng Kong was so confused that he lost all his powers of judgment. Even Shao Yi, who had just learned to think, felt like his brain was frying.

Was this guy Xu Xiaoshou or not? That was the question that came to each of their minds at almost exactly the same time.

“I’m Xu Xiaoshou.”

The man in white seemed to have read their thoughts and grinned again.

Oh, they weren’t going to buy that!

That crawling feeling became more intense. The two of them looked at each other, and the fear in each other’s eyes was as clear as day.

Even if this man was indeed Xu Xiaoshou, they still wouldn’t be able to attack him.

The scene was utterly harrowing.

“Run!”

“Run!”

They each said at almost exactly the same time. Shao Yi held his short sword in reverse grip and cut open the barrier. A rumble was heard as a fissure was torn right there and then.

“Just stay behind and rest if you’re tired of playing. What’s the use running anyway?” Xu Xiaoshou said coldly.

The lines on his Information Bar were no longer refreshing, but that didn’t mean the two had confirmed his identity. On the contrary, he’d finally been able to confuse the two of them.

He was Xu Xiaoshou, yet he was not.

The fear of the unknown was what struck fear in the minds of those two. As for whether he was actually Xu Xiaoshou or not, that was beside the point.

Yeah...

To them at least.

Although he would’ve very much liked to just let them go, he had to keep playing along.

This might just be another one of the guy’s scheming tricks, no?”

He couldn’t afford to take chances.

Seeing the two of them getting ready to leave from that fissure in the barrier, he drew the finger blade behind his back and almost turned that eerie smile of his into the real thing, just for the sake of playing along.

Blood splattered with the snap of a finger.

“Infernal Heavens.”

He did nothing but tilt his head, and invisible fire suddenly burst from Shao Yi's body. The sound of something burning was heard.

In Xu Xiaoshou's eyes, this spiritual technique of unknown level was his only weapon at the moment. All the others were just too telling, or were used at too far a distance to cause significant damage.

Drawing Hiding Pain was definitely out of the question, as there was no way those two wouldn't recognize the sword.

Yes, the only technique he could use now was Infernal Heavens. Terrifying might, yet unknown to anyone.

As expected, dread was written all over Shao Yi's face when that invisible flame began to burn. Shao Yi summoned spiritual source to defend himself, yet the flames burned his spiritual source all the same.

He panicked. "What the h*ll is this!?"

By then, he'd already come to see the man by the name of Xu Xiaoshou as a living manifestation of terror and malice. He suffered a psychological breakdown as soon as the "ghostly flames" began to burn.

"Shao Yi!"

The fissure in the barrier wasn't that large, but Feng Kong had already gotten through. After seeing that Shao Yi was still on the other side, he shouted, "Run, I'll cover you!"

Shao Yi tried his best to resist the eerie flames on him. To the naked eye, nothing appeared to be wrong with him at the moment, as Infernal Heavenly Flames were completely invisible.

"You know what I mean!" Shao Yi said something puzzling. Xu Xiaoshou then saw the man outside immediately bolt.

"What's happening?" he thought.

"Some kind of code?"

Feng Kong, who was running as fast as he could at the moment, was the only one who knew that Shao Yi was proficient in seven escape techniques, while he, on the other hand, only knew Blood Escape. As such, Shao Yi was the one who covered him whenever things went south during missions.

Yet, Shao Yi would quickly catch up before long every time, running before Feng Kong with his wine container, drinking as he shouted at Feng Kong with his weird voice, telling Feng Kong to run faster.

Pfft!

Feng Kong couldn't help but snicker at the thought.

He was very confident of Shao Yi's proficiency in escape techniques. The way he saw it, no one could keep up with someone proficient in seven escape techniques.

He'd never expected this mission tonight to turn so weird, and he wondered if someone else had been assigned by Brother He to kill Xu Xiaoshou.

He could've told the both of them!

"It's okay that he doesn't trust a lunatic like Shao Yi, but he doesn't trust me as well?" he thought.

"H*ll!"

...

"Sawwy, Kong."

"Maybwe I won be going back dis time..."

Shao Yi was feeling bitter. He was at the peak of Innate stage, and yet he was utterly incapable of resisting the "ghostly flames."

Was this some kind of demonic art?

He'd never seen such eerie spiritual technique at work before.

The flames seemed like they could burn down just about anything, and it took them mere moments to chew through over half of his spiritual source. He figured that he would be doomed by the time his spiritual source finally ran out.

Shao Yi looked at the man in white in the rain and tightened his grip around the short sword in his hand.

"Why isn't he attacking?" he thought.

"Does he wanna see me burn to death?"

"Some twisted way to enjoy himself..."

"Maybe, in the eyes of such formidable ones, this bit of power of mine makes me little more than an ant, eh?"

"Whatever, I'll just keep buying time then."

"Kong, don't ever, ever come back..."

Doubted, Passive Points +1.

Belittled, Passive Points +1.

Ridiculed, Passive Points +1.

Cursed, Passive Points +1.

...

Xu Xiaoshou had no idea what the other guy was thinking. He simply kept up his unfazed façade, trying to make the scene as harrowing as possible.

He tried his best to vaporize the rainwater falling from the sky, stirring up vortexes on the ground and shaking the fauna all around them.

That was all.

He couldn't afford to attack.

Once he did so, the truth of him still being at level nine would be completely exposed.

He deemed that he would then be pummeled by that man before him.

He knew that despite the man looking stupid, that man was still at the peak of Innate Stage.

Xu Xiaoshou was actually panicking deep down.

"What should I do? What should I do?" he thought.

"Can someone at Spiritual Cultivation Level nine beat someone at the peak of Innate Stage?"

"Someone help me!"

"Help..."

Chapter 69: Exposure

Crack, crack, crack...

The invisible Infernal Heavenly Flames kept burning, and Shao Yi was visibly struggling.

Despite being protected by spiritual source, after being exposed to such scorching power of such a peculiar nature for such a long time, his body had been burned red hot all the same.

A faint steam could be seen rising, and there was the smell of burned flesh in the air.

"Judging by the time, Kong should be a long way away by now..."

Shao Yi struggled to keep himself together as he resisted the pain. He had little spiritual source left at the moment, and if he were to stay around any longer, he probably wouldn't be able to run.

"Thinking that you've bought enough time and that it's time to run, eh?"

That cold voice was heard once again, sending shivers down Shao Yi's spine.

"Is this guy really human?" he thought. "How is it possible that he always knows what I'm thinking?"

Xu Xiaoshou kept up his nonchalant façade. He turned his gaze to the seemingly endless rain, yet his Sense allowed him to observe every muscle in Shao Yi's body.

His observation had gotten so keen that he could know if Shao Yi was about to take a p*ss or a dump from the clenching of his butt muscles.

Shao Yi's spiritual source had almost run out, yet being able to stay behind to cover his partner meant that he must have something up his sleeve.

Xu Xiaoshou figured that the man either had some surreal, high-level technique for escaping or had truly thought of staying behind to fight to his death.

If it was the former, that would be entirely okay. But if his intention was the latter, Xu Xiaoshou would be in deep trouble.

As such, Xu Xiaoshou had no choice but to keep encouraging thoughts of running away in the other man through his words.

Yet, at the same time, he was also afraid that after escaping the man might find something amiss and then come back with the other one.

He'd really be done for if that happened.

As such, Xu Xiaoshou made up his mind. Though he would have liked very much for that man to just leave, he knew that the man had to stay behind.

The man had to stay behind as a dead body.

As for how to go about reducing him to a dead body...

Xu Xiaoshou saw that to be quite a problem...

...

Shao Yi was utterly terrified, yet he was unable to delay any longer. The longer he stayed, the worse his condition would become; he had to leave right away.

However, the man spoke again just when he was about to escape.

"Do you really think you're the one buying time here?"

"I'm buying time as well..."

Shao Yi's body stiffened. He wondered what that man was getting at.

He wondered if the man had sustained some kind of injury when fighting Xu Xiaoshou before and was recuperating at the moment.

Seeing that Shao Yi wasn't saying anything, Xu Xiaoshou kept talking just to buy more time. "Do you really think your friend can escape?"

He spouted whatever came to mind. "You're not the only one who's going to stay behind tonight. That guy won't be out there for long."

Shao Yi was terrified, and he checked his soul and aura all over, yet was unable to find a mark on him.

"Impossible!"

"You don't even know us. How could you leave a mark on us?"

Xu Xiaoshou was dumbfounded. First, because of the man's peculiar accent. And second, because of the mark he was talking about.

"What mark?" he thought.

"This guy really has one hell of an imagination!"

“Whatever. Better some response than nothing at all. So long as I keep at it, I’ll have no problems delaying the guy.

“The longer he burns, the less spiritual source he’ll have left in him, and I bet he doesn’t have any spiritual techniques like ‘High Spirits.’”

“So,” Xu Xiaoshou continued calmly. “You think you’re combusting all on your own all of a sudden?”

“What does he mean?” he thought.

“Combusting on my own?”

Shao Yi’s heart skipped a beat as he suddenly recalled that the man in white had never even touched him, yet he’d immediately ignited with those “ghostly flames.”

This guy...

Was utterly terrifying!

“No, I can’t stay here any longer,” Shao Yi thought to himself. “If I stay around, who knows what else will hit me. If I can’t run...”

“Then instead of just sitting around, I should do something!”

Xu Xiaoshou, at that moment, was totally oblivious that his attempt at delaying that man had had the opposite effect, and kept droning on. “Let’s play a game...”

Swoop!

A beam of black light was shot at him, immediately cutting him off mid-sentence.

Xu Xiaoshou’s Sense never stopped. When Shao Yi shot the short sword in his sleeve like a bolt of lightning at him, he simply flicked his finger condescendingly, acting like some really, really powerful warrior.

Clang!

The work of Recoil coupled with Sharpness deflected the blade, which was tens of meters away, right then and there, and it flew into the wall, getting lodged there.

He was completely baffled the next second. Two of his fingers seemed to have gotten plastered together midair, and he couldn’t pull them back.

“Sh**!” he thought.

“D*mn. What have I done? Why did I flick the blade away with my fingers?”

“Why couldn’t I have just dodged it instead?”

“Help!”

Shao Yi was also dumbfounded. He’d initially thought of throwing the short sword, finding an opening, and running.

Yet, after seeing what happened, both of his legs felt like molten lead had been poured into them, preventing him from moving.

His eyes were filled with disbelief, and even his voice became shaky as he said, "Innate Level physique?"

"No..." Xu Xiaoshou took a deep breath. "That's incorrect."

"Huh?"

"That was actually '10 Sections of the Finger Sword.'"

"Huh!?"

Shao Yi was feeling as if the world were falling down around him, and he was no longer able to think at all.

"This guy is Xu Xiaoshou!" he thought.

Yet, how could he be Xu Xiaoshou??

But that Innate Level physique...

None of the 33 in the Inner Yard had something like that!

This was definitely Xu Xiaoshou!

Shao Yi felt like his eyes were about to pop out of his sockets and like his brain were about to explode, as he found the revelation utterly unacceptable.

If this man were indeed Xu Xiaoshou, then his level of powers were simply that of someone who had just made a breakthrough into Spiritual Cultivation Level Nine, which would make him little more than an insect in Shao Yi's eyes.

"Both of us actually got played like that for so d*mn long?" he thought.

"And he actually scared Kong so much that he bolted?"

Doubted, Passive Points +1.

Doubted, Passive Points +1.

"..."

The lines kept popping up on the Information Bar in his mind. Xu Xiaoshou knew that he wouldn't be able to keep that under wraps for long.

He was exasperated that all the effort he'd put into pretending to be bigger than he actually was had all been for naught because of that one flick of the finger. No one would think that he was really just doing such a thing out of habit.

One's habits could really bring about one's doom.

"Sorry for lying. I'm Xu Xiaoshou.

“You’re a good person...”

Shao Yi was fuming. He was so enraged that he was about to suffer internal hemorrhaging.

He siphoned his spiritual source and was about to attack, when he found that he had little to spare by then.

“You have no spiritual source left, which means that you won’t be able to beat me.”

Xu Xiaoshou knew that man’s condition like the back of his own hand and advised, “Leave now and I’ll pretend that you were never here, and I’ll just go back to sleep?”

“You’ll be sleeping in a coffin, because I’m going to make sure you’re dead!” Shao Yi rushed at him with a short sword in his hand.

It was frustrating enough being duped and seeing one’s beliefs crumble before one’s eyes, and worse still, Xu Xiaoshou had taunted him like he was all high and mighty, and that was something Shao Yi wasn’t going to take lying down.

Berated, Passive Points +1.

Nice!

Xu Xiaoshou leapt and quickly retreated.

He’d been afraid that the man before him would actually cool down and run away just to call his friend.

He totally didn’t expect the man to lose his cool so much that he’d choose to fight instead.

“Even though a Spiritual Cultivator at the peak of Origin Court level is very powerful, do you seriously think you can fight when you’ve no spiritual source left?”

“You really think that that frail body of yours will be of any use?”

Despite his thoughts, Xu Xiaoshou was still running as fast as he could.

Although it was fun jeering at his enemy, if that man had somehow retained even a bit of spiritual source, it would be enough to take him out.

“I can’t afford to give him any chances,” he thought.

“I need to make sure that all of his spiritual source is burned away before I can make a move.”

Pursued, Passive Points +1.

“Huh?” he thought.

“What the h*ll?”

Chapter 70: Wearing Him Down to Nothing Right Then and There

The longer Shao Yi chased after Xu Xiaoshou, the angrier he got. He had come to firmly believe that this man was Xu Xiaoshou.

He wondered just how cautious Xu Xiaoshou was for not daring to fight him, even when he was already in such a miserable state.

He regretted everything.

He thought that he should have just blasted that pretentious idiot down as soon as he'd gotten the chance back then instead of wasting time trying to figure him out.

If he had attacked just once, Xu Xiaoshou's cover would have been completely blown.

But then again, he was also curious as to just how Xu Xiaoshou had managed to mess that compound up in such a short period of time.

There was simply no way anyone would have been able to do that, conventionally speaking.

Furthermore, being able to make such a huge mess could also mean that Xu Xiaoshou knew that they were coming before they came, and Shao Yi wondered how that was possible.

That kid was only at Spiritual Cultivation level eight or nine, man!

Shao Yi shuddered to find that Xu Xiaoshou was already at level nine.

That meant that he had also coincidentally made a breakthrough in his training.

He became increasingly confused about everything, and wondered just how Xu Xiaoshou had managed to do all of that in such a short period of time.

The more he thought about it, the angrier he got.

Shao Yi glared at the man before him, who was evidently very good at running, before eventually running out of patience and shouting, "If you're a man, stay where you are!"

Xu Xiaoshou was amused. "You're here to kill me and you're telling me to stop running?" he thought. "What do you want me to do? Roll over, put my neck to your sword, and really make it easy for you to kill me?"

"Catch me if you can!" he shouted.

"..."

Shao Yi took a deep breath and stopped. He was already at his limit.

If it wasn't for those "ghostly flames" burning him, he could have had the kid kneel before him. The flames were just too troublesome. If he were to keep chasing, it would only be a matter of time before his spiritual source was depleted, which meant that he could really just die on the spot.

He realized that he had to run.

"You wanna run? H*ll no!"

Before he could manage to turn around and bolt, Xu Xiaoshou, who was running in front of him, turned around and pounced at him with clenched fists.

Shao Yi was going crazy. "What is wrong with this kid?"

“Does he, like, have eyes on the back of his head?” he thought. “Eyes that can read minds, even?”

He wondered just how Xu Xiaoshou was able to read his every move with utter precision.

“Let’s go, then!”

Seeing Xu Xiaoshou charging at him, Shao Yi immediately summoned his short sword from the wall and waited for the chance to strike.

“Huh? You’re not running away now?”

Xu Xiaoshou stopped, then ran again.

Shao Yi: “What the f**k?”

“Godd*mn you!

“Oh, this kid really knows how to play tricks.”

At that moment, it didn’t just feel like the world was crashing down around him. It felt like death was imminent. He was about to be torn to pieces!

At that moment, Xu Xiaoshou stopped and slowly turned around, smirking like a demon as he walked up to Shao Yi.

“I’m guessing... that you’ve run out of spiritual source?”

Shao Yi’s heart sank. He checked his energy reserve and found that his spiritual source was indeed about to be depleted.

“That as**ole...” he thought.

“He’s buying time!”

At that moment Shao Yi full realized that despite looking like a lunatic, Xu Xiaoshou was actually wearing him down with the “ghost flames,” and he knew that he would definitely be worn down to nothing if the situation continued.

“Calm down!” he thought.

“I can’t afford to be infuriated.”

He realized that he’d made a fatal mistake that no professional killer should’ve made. He immediately calmed himself down and sneered, “Do you really think you can take me down with your ghost flames?”

“What else, then?” Xu Xiaoshou slowly walked up to him.

Shao Yi chuckled. Had this kid gone crazy? He really didn’t think he could just replenish his spiritual source?

He flipped his hand, and a pill appeared on his palm. He looked like he was about to throw into his mouth.

Yet, Xu Xiaoshou, who was still walking up to Shao Yi, must've predicted this from the start, because he sucked hard, and the pill disappeared, disintegrating into a fine mist that hovered over him.

He only took one-tenth of the pill's power, and let the rest scatter into the air.

Shao Yi was completely baffled.

Just what kind of demonic art was this?

He then took out yet another pill, not believing that Xu Xiaoshou could pull the same trick again, yet despite trying as hard as he could to hold onto the pill, it still took Xu Xiaoshou only one sucking breath to draw all that spiritual energy away.

Shao Yi fell to his knees, suddenly feeling as if the world before him had gone dark.

Despite being at the peak of Origin Court level, this was his first time feeling like death was imminent, even though he was only fighting an insect who was at Spiritual Cultivation level nine.

"Thank you for your pills. Anything else?"

Xu Xiaoshou only shuddered slightly and showed no other signs of wavering.

He was controlling the might of Breathing Technique, enabling him to suck in only the right amount of spiritual energy needed.

Those weren't his own pills, and he deemed that it was enough to take just a whiff. The rush of taking in more would cause him to go out of control, and he wasn't about to give that man who was out to kill him any chances.

Crackle, crackle.

Shao Yi was evidently unable to resist the terrifying might of the Infernal Heavenly Flames now that his spiritual source was near empty. His face immediately twisted.

He knew that he had nowhere to run. His physical body wasn't all that strong, and his spiritual source was almost gone, making escape impossible.

"I just wanna know right now if you really are at Spiritual Cultivation Level nine," Shao Yi asked disparagingly.

There was no way he'd believe that Xu Xiaoshou had only that bit of powers. He deemed that the kid had duped everyone from the Outer Yard.

Xu Xiaoshou seemed to relax his guard. "Oh, conventional powers are not my forte," he said.

Shao Yi hung his head low in silence, gritting his teeth as he resisted the flames, which had almost charred his entire body.

"Can I ask you a question?" Xu Xiaoshou asked.

Shao Yi looked up at him.

"What level are you at?"

Shao Yi had been prepared to stay mum or take everything he knew to the grave. He totally didn't expect Xu Xiaoshou to ask this instead, and he wondered what his level had to do with the assassination attempt.

"Origin Court level. Peak." Shao Yi didn't conceal the fact.

"Peak at Origin Court level?" Xu Xiaoshou repeated the line and stayed silent for a bit before uttering, "So weak..."

Shao Yi was completely baffled.

Blood was seeping out of the corners of his eyes and spurting from his mouth. He clenched his fists tight all of a sudden, yet then quickly released them.

Oh ho?

He was already done for, then?

Xu Xiaoshou had long been aware of this from Sense, yet he just kept yapping away. "So, your friend. He's at Voidness level?"

"Yeah."

"Your name?"

"Feng Jia."

"Your friend's?"

"Shao Kong."

"Hehe, like I'd buy that."

"..."

"Why the f**k did you bother asking then!?" he thought.

Shao Yi was so p*ssed he was speechless. His entire body started spasming. The Infernal Heavenly Flames had shrouded his entire body by this point, and he looked like he would be reduced to dust the next second.

"Any last words? Spill."

Xu Xiaoshou never let his guard down. Despite looking high and mighty, as if death didn't concern him, he was extremely tense at that moment.

"He's nearing his end, eh?" he thought.

"Self-destruct?"

"Or is he gonna teleport out of here?"

Xu Xiaoshou had no idea what would happen next, yet he'd already inwardly listed out all the possible tricks the man might have up his sleeve, determined not to give that man any chance at escape.

Bloody mist burst from Shao Yi as Xu Xiaoshou continued to ponder. All of Shao Yi's soul and power was amplified in an instant and charged at him with a thrust of his sword.

"Die!"

"I knew it..." Xi Xiaoshou thought.

Caught off-guard, he fell back, yet when the two were about to touch each other, a black beam shot out from his chest, punching through the bloody figure.

Pfftt!

Despite having put his hand up to block it in the nick of time, Xu Xiaoshou's chest was nonetheless pierced by Shao Yi's short sword.

A mysterious force deflected both parties away, and the next sword attack from Shao Yi missed, punching only through the air.

Which was where Xu Xiaoshou's heart should've been.

"How can this be?" Shao Yi's expression was that of shock.

"Reverse Sword Style"

Before Shao Yi could get himself together after being sent flying, the sound of a sword slicing through the air was heard, and Hiding Pain shot out and cleanly sliced his head off.

Blood sprayed everywhere.

The kill was as clean as could be.