

PARAGON OF SIN

Chapter 12 - 12: Mind Over Death

A tempest of crimson blood, loose organs, and fragments of bone roared into chaotic existence. A storm of violent qi battered the environment and all those around.

Wei Wuyin was seated at a far off corner, but the raging wind and violent qi smashed into his silver qi ward. His qi circulated to strengthen his body and hold his position. A heavily crashing thud resounded next to him.

He turned instinctively amidst the distorted area and saw a sword embedded into the wall. It was cracked and nearly in pieces, but what was shocking was the blood that drenched it.

"That's...He Long's sword?" If it wasn't for the fact that his mind had already calculated the possibility, he would've gasped in shock. Instead, his gaze turned calm. He Long was dead.

His eyes searching the area and trying to find the figure to verify his belief. Then he looked at a detached finger nearby that rolled with the sword in a much quieter fashion. That was He Long's delicate finger.

He realized that finding a body, or at least an intact one, was highly unlikely. He Long hadn't fashioned a defense or retreated and his identity as a sword cultivator meant his body was a lot weaker than other cultivators his level. His qi was used to temper his sword rather than his body. He wasn't like Mei Mei with nearly fifty years of time to do both. Being vaporized was a possibility.

Soon, the dust settled. As it did, he faintly gasped in wonder. Godlord Lin was standing next to the Heaven Heart Monolith without batting an eye. Despite being so close, not a hint of blood or flesh was ten feet from her. It was an area of absolute cleanliness.

He saw a pale faced Shu Yang bleeding from his lips, a fresh wound on his face from the explosion, and holding his chest while heaving heavily. Shu Yin held him tightly and established a ward of protective qi. He could see faint traces of tears at the corner of her eyes.

Yan Zhu and Li Yang's cultivation was higher than the rest, and they weren't as close as Shu Yang. Not to mention, they had noticed Tao Gui's chaotic expansion. They had retreated with the utmost swiftness, remaining untouched.

Jiu Lang noticed first and was relatively unharmed, but Qu Gui was nearly a figure of blood. Her cultivation base and body was the weakest, and so her reaction was the slowest. She staggered as her eyes showed signs of lapsing into unconsciousness, but she hastily circulated her qi to accelerate her healing.

Godlord Lin ignored all this and calmly said in her soft, uplifting voice, "You only have fifty-three days left. All those who don't reach the first level at minimum will be unable to claim any placement. Not only that, you'll lose your status as a Core Disciple from henceforth."

Her words caused all their hearts to grow cold.

So heartless!

Two were injured, two were dead, and the others were filled with fear, but she still wished for them to continue. And, if they didn't, she was going to have their status revoked?

However, no one doubted her words. In fact, they knew that if she said it was so, it was so. As a Godlord, there was no way the sect would offend her for them. If she killed them this very moment, they'll likely pin the victims with all sorts of justifiable crimes, and the world would move on.

Wei Wuyin swept his gaze over the surroundings and frowned. However, he was confident in his own comprehension and intelligence. Not to mention, the path he was taking was a lot safer than using just the vague method's description.

He calmed his mind and entered a cultivation state. Even with the dense smell of death and blood, his mind still entered such a profound state.

His mind's eye seemed to be birthed, linked to his metaphysical qi. By manipulating the spirit formed in his Heart of Qi with his mind, he could influence that very mind. This was incredibly dangerous, but the entire purpose of one's formed spirit was to give commands to the four aspects of qi. It was linked to the soul and acted as the brain center for one's qi.

Normally, one would use their mind's thoughts to drive the spirit which would relay commands to the metaphysical qi. It was like the spine and nervous system of one's motor functions.

The profoundness of this was why spiritual sense existed and how qi could be directly controlled. With the four systems of mind, matter, spirit, and essence connected into one, they can influence and interact with each other. If Wei Wuyin wanted, he could use his Heart of Qi to accelerate his own healing like Qu Gui or block off memories within his mind.

"First, create the cast." He whispered to himself, slowly forming a cast construct in his mind. It was shaped in a very large rectangular block. He started to carve into the mental construct to form a single double-edged arming sword with perfect symmetrical portions kept in mind.

If it was split in half, he wanted both swords to be a perfect match for each other. He also wanted it to be that, if combined, they would form a perfect construct. His intentions were not to create a clone right off the bat, but something with a failsafe to it.

There were also two more details in mind. He needed it so that the size of the sword was capable of containing exactly double of his mind's size. Normally, to measure 'size' of one's mind was nearly impossible, but thanks to his spirit's intimate connection to his mind, he had a good grasp on it.

The last detail is that he needed the split halves to function completely as an independent sword. Otherwise...

After forming the cast according to those exact details, he started to initiate the most dangerous aspect, the dissolution of one's mind. This was the same as melting his memories, thoughts, and sense of self-control. This could lead to an explosive rebound or render him retarded in an instant.

However, he wasn't an idiot. He couldn't avoid the risk of mental damage, but he could avoid an explosive rebound caused by qi deviation.

He took a deep breath and started to expel his qi. Without any hesitation, his body was like a steam producing machine as qi was sent outwards wildly. He may have drawn the notice of others, but he couldn't pay attention to them.

He expelled all of his qi in a surgical and quiet manner. He also forcefully stopped the rotation of his Heart of Qi, preventing it from refining more qi from the essence of the world.

"Gurgle!" A wad of blood sprayed out from his mouth, staining his teeth crimson. However, as if expecting this, he spat out more and wiped his mouth. Even slowly and surgically removing his qi would cause all sorts of damage to his flesh and organs. It was like when Mei Mei attempted to redirect her qi outside of its intended nature and nearly spat out blood, but much worse.

The accumulated damage left him feeling weak. Any cultivator could kill him at this moment as he was no different than a mortal. While his body was strong, he had no strength to resist.

"Dissolve!" His memories of his life flashed through his mind, every thought he had ever mustered flowed through him, and his ability to focus was slowly deteriorating.

Bang!!

He suddenly heard an explosion and a heart-wrenching scream filled with unwillingness and hatred, yet he didn't stop at this moment. He was wholeheartedly focused on one thing. It was the most difficult part and if he failed, his entirety would vanish.

His memories flowed into the cast like molten metal. However, the cast was half-filled. Luckily, the 'mind' portion connected to his spirit still had a trace of his consciousness. Using his spiritual sense, he connected with that portion of the mind and started to create a thin, hollow layer over the cast.

Now, the sword looked filled, but wasn't. Only half was.

"Cool!" He used his spirit and portion of his mind to restart his Heart of Qi, slowly it absorbed the Essence of Heaven and Earth, producing metaphysical qi. He hadn't known how much time had passed.

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Only when a drop of qi was birthed did he use that qi as a coolant, dripping it over the forged sword. A refreshing feeling washed over him and he felt his sense of thought and memories return.

He took a sudden gasp of air, greedily breathing in all he could to ensure he was alive. His body was covered in thin sweat, and his vision swam wildly.

He saw six figures. They were all looking towards him.

Wait...six?

As he tried to account for his memories, he realized there should've been seven. There was Jiu Lang, Ling Ya, Yan Zhu, Shu Yang, Shu Yin, Qu Gui, and Godlord Lin. He Long and Tao Gui died.

So...why was there six?

As he slowly regained his mental ability, he realized that Qu Gui wasn't there. Qu Gui had taken Mei Mei's core disciple rank and thus should've been here.

As everyone looked at him, he looked at Godlord Lin. She said, "You're close. In your current state, your mind wandering is dangerous." Her words seemed to have doused his desires.

Right.

His current mind may be whole, but in truth, it was half-filled. He can't be careless and if the balance breaks, then he may very well lose his mind still.

He closed his eyes and started to initiate the cloning method. Now that he had an appropriate mould for his clone, he just needed to fill it in and ensure a divider existed between both halves.

He saw that the shape of his mind's eye had changed, becoming a half-filled sword. The thin layer around and through it seemed to vaguely reveal a second sword connected but also independent from the first.

He just needed to fill it with raw, untainted thoughts. He decided to do so. The unfilled half started to rapidly fill with fluid from nowhere. This was his essence, his yin essence giving form from nothingness.

He didn't derive it from his cultivation base, his Heart of Qi, but from himself. It didn't describe how one should clone or what one should use, but he felt this was the most appropriate.

His own yin essence was little as he was a man, but he had dual cultivated with a Three-Point Yin Body and wildly strengthened his own yin as a result. By using the excess left, that which was unneeded for his cultivation, he filled the second half.

Now, his sword was completed with one filled with his memories, and the other ready to accept new thoughts and memories, to once more give form from nothing. When the sword solidifies from its liquid state, it would become a second mind.

If he uses it right, he could split the two and execute them to do different things, such as form a second Heart of Qi.

He calmed himself down as he felt his breadth of mind expand rapidly. He felt his thoughts were a lot less occupied and far more free. "Was this how a newborn baby felt? A child can naturally learn things, even full languages, but an adult has its difficulties. If I wished to fill this mind with knowledge, will I become like those prodigies?"

This thought and feeling left him in awe.

Only then did he open his eyes, revealing a silver eyes that contained deep, fresh intelligence. As he looked around, he saw Godlord Lin looking at him and the others in deep cultivation.

"How...long?" He asked.

"You have forty-five days left," Godlord Lin replied.

Forty-Five days meant only fifteen days passed, so he cultivated for five days. He felt a painful wave of hunger. Luckily, he was a cultivator who birthed elements, otherwise he would die from natural dehydration.

"What happened to Qu Gui?" He couldn't help but ask. Did she undergo qi deviation? In fact, he felt that talented females shouldn't have any issues with this portion, so he was naturally curious. With their innate yin energy, they could easily finish all the steps. Of course, as long as their method was appropriate.

"She was killed."

However, Godlord Lin didn't speak. It was Jiu Lang who did. She had already cloned her mind, her eyes revealing a freshness similar to his. He didn't know what method she used, but it had obviously worked.

"Killed?" Wei Wuyin was inwardly shocked. Killed? Not qi deviation?

Jiu Lang looked at Ling Ya and smiled. That smile looked like it wanted to watch the world burn, but her beauty made it hard to resist the temptation to watch it with her.

Ling Ya was meditating, obviously cultivating as well.

"Qu Gui tried to kill you the moment your mind slipped," Jiu Lang stated.

Wei Wuyin frowned. Qu Gui tried to kill him for what? He had barely any dealings with this woman, so why would she? And how did she not succeed? He was vulnerable beyond belief and couldn't take action. If she wanted to kill him, and no one acted to protect him, how did he survive?

"Godlord Lin interfered, directly killing her." Jiu Lang cleared up his questions.

He got up with a struggle and bowed deeply to Godlord Lin in thanks. While Qu Gui would eventually be executed because she would've killed him in the end, he wouldn't be alive in that case.

"She feigned her cultivation state and waited for you to reveal weakness or die, like her entire purpose in life was to kill you with her. Like a certain someone did...for love," Jiu Lang added. Han Yu had died in a suicidal attack in much the same fashion.

"..." Wei Wuyin's gaze flashed to Ling Ya, the light of killing intent flashing within.

"No need to dwell on this. You all have forty-five days left. Those who focus fully on cultivating the method will have no worries of dying prematurely. Continue." Godlord Lin ordered. It seemed her entire intent was for them to cultivate the technique, since Wei Wuyin was earnestly cultivating it while Qu Gui wasn't, she acted.

Grateful, he once more bowed before readjusting his state. His Heart of Qi absorbed the Essence of Heaven and Earth before converting it into metaphysical qi with elemental and yin energies. He was ready to continue.

