

### Chapter 151 - 149: Extreme Creation Mountain

It wasn't long before they finally arrived at the airspace of the Extreme Creation Mountain. During which, they were largely ignored by the patrols flying about on fierce and daunting mounts that resembled hawks. They had piercing eyes, sharp talons, and large bodies. On the bodies of each hawk was five cultivators, and they all had auras that were around Qing Qi's level, the First Stage of the Astral Core Realm, World Sea Phase.

They merely gave them brief glances and went on their predefined routes.

"These hawks are called Sentinel Hawks, and they have unique ocular spiritual eyes that can sense even the minute spiritual auras. Beneath their gazes, not even an ant can escape. The riders share this perception via a spiritual spell, allowing them to similarly miss very little. Of course, they're not Star-grade beasts, but they're useful." Bo Kay casually explained.

Nodding, Wei Wuyin's eyes drew to the approaching mountain that pierced into the sky. Being so close, one can truly see and feel the majesty and imposing height that it possessed.

"Incredible!" Wei Wuyin remarked in his heart. The Extreme Creation Mountain's design wasn't unfamiliar to him. In fact, it was designed in much the same way as the Scarlet Solaris Mountain but on a much, much grander scale. Around its bends were paved flatlands that had roads and tunnels that housed various buildings, people, farms, and more.

The entire view was exceptionally lively and exuding life.

He breathed in slightly and immediately smelled the traces of smoke, paper, herbs, and water. There were various rivers that twisted and turned in abnormal and nearly illogical ways. He saw a waterfall that rose instead of fell, and then twisted and shifted until it fell into a lake near a farm.

This was obviously an irrigation system supported by formations and arrays.

There were several lines of smoke being continuously expelled from buildings. As he paid a little more attention here, he realized they likely originated from smelting forges. There were small, medium, large buildings, but it seemed that there was a level limit, as no building reached a height that touched the foundation of the building above it.

*'Are they divided into strict levels?'* As he shifted his gaze, he realized that was the case. There seemed to be six different levels from bottom until the mountain reached the clouds. Lifting his eyes to view the clouds, he realized there was a small layer blocking his sight from seeing beyond. How peculiar.

As one traveled upwards, the buildings were more majestic, farms seemed to produce rarer and richer materials, and roads became less complex.

Traveling to and fro constantly were various land and aerial mounts carrying those wearing alchemist or scholar robes. There were others, but their dressing was unique and not set. These likely belonged to the Forgers or visitors from other mountains seeking services.

Bo Kay explained, "There's a total of nine levels on each mountain. There's no restriction or obstacles set to prohibit people from traveling to the first and sixth levels, but there's an unspoken rule that unless on official business or invited, it is considered immensely rude to travel upwards."

Wei Wuyin understood the logic behind it. Regardless of whether they were Alchemists, Forgers, or Architects, they were all useful to cultivators and sought out constantly for their abilities. For high-level ones, to prevent them from being bothered constantly, it was considered disrespectful to arrive unannounced. If that was the case, they had the right to deny that person entry on the basis of disrespect.

However, without requests and customers, how would they earn riches and fame, so it was merely an unspoken rule that allowed people some leeway. For example, if Wei Wuyin was visited unannounced but that person was offering a nice, juicy price for a specific pill, how could he refuse?

"As a Sky Noble, you'll be stationed above the sixth level, directly on the seventh. There, sky palaces are the norm, seated upon the sky layer that divides the sixth and seventh layer. Those at the Heavenly Commander rank, Imperial Sage rank, or Alchemic Kings are on the eighth level. This usually means most Imperial Sages of the Extreme Creation Mountain are just one level above you. As for the ninth level, that's only for the Grand Imperial Sage and members he extends his invitations to." Bo Kay looked at the sky layer that obstructed one's sight with yearning and desire.

While he was an Earthly General elder, he wasn't eligible to live on the seventh level. Only Sky Nobles and Imperial Sages of that specific mountain had that right. Of course, Wei Wuyin was the only Sky Noble that will be in the seventh level, and the only disciple that had the qualification. Most Alchemists at his level, no...all alchemists at his level were above five hundred years of age.

"To pierce the Sky Layer, you'll need a Sky Pegasus or a cultivation base at the Second Stage of the Astral Core Realm, the Sky Ruler Phase." The three lower-phases of the Astral Core Realm are: World Sea, Sky Ruler, and Soul Idol.

Qing Qi was at the World Sea Phase, Wu Jiao at the Sky Ruler, and Xiang Ling at the Soul Idol. Each phase had immense differences between them, and those at the Sky Ruler Phase could manipulate ambient mana of the world to fly, defend, attack, or suppress.

"You can't go?" Wei Wuyin asked.

Bo Kay sighed and helplessly shook his head. "I'm only a Lord Alchemist, and despite my cultivation base and ranking, I don't have the qualifications to enter the seventh level on any of the five mountains." Wei Wuyin could feel in his words the faint pain and struggles he must've had to endure yet still wasn't able to reach his goal.

"Well, you can come visit me anytime."

Bo Kay was taken aback. "...Really?"

Wei Wuyin smilingly said, "If you take me as a Brother, then really."

A big smile surfaced on his face covered in tribal-looking runic tattoos. It was tainted by excitement and happiness. From his eyes, he felt that Bo Kay would hug and kiss him endlessly if he could. Wei Wuyin backed away a step or two, they weren't at that step yet.

In his heart, Wei Wuyin sighed.

Becoming an alchemist was going on a path not supported by the heavens. The Alchemic Talent measured by the Eden Earth Sect meant one's compatibility with alchemical energies, their suitability to have an Alchemic Natal Soul, not their ability to refine or concoct.

Therefore, even if one had an insane amount of talent, unless they go down the path of an Alchemic Natal Soul, one without the power to protect their lives or their loved ones, they'll have to require endless studying and practice. It would be like trying to become a surgeon with only text books and no tools or instruction. Then, abruptly trying to perform surgery on someone. Only the smartest and most dedicated could hope to succeed.

When Wei Wuyin was on the Myriad Yore Continent, he believed the alchemic talent on the continent was underdeveloped and low due to the lack of legacies. He immediately came to realize that amongst the tens of trillions of intelligent lifeforms and billions of alchemists in the Tri-Vision Starfield, only a very, very, very small number could even become King Alchemists.

The Myriad Monarch Sect had trillions within its Astral Territory. Three planets and a dozen of flat earthly continents, yet it only had a few hundred King Alchemists. And it wasn't due to the lack of legacies, just the fundamentally and insanelly difficult path that was the Dao of Alchemy.

That being said, it was also the most prestigious path in the entire starfield. There was no occupation greater, not even forgers who craft all sorts of tools and armaments such as the Void Gates, or architects who create various arts, formations, arrays, and spells.

They all had their place in the world, but only alchemists offered the ability to change one's fate, their talent, and their peak potential.

Bo Kay felt like Wei Wuyin truly understood his struggles and felt closer to him. He said, "We'll pick up the sect designated Sky Pegasus for you. While you have this lovely crane, it has yet to reach the Star-grade, and can't penetrate the Sky Layer. Therefore, you'll need a means to enter and exit the Sky Layer."

Wei Wuyin caressed Bai Lin as he felt her aura fluctuate. "I'll ensure you reach the star-grade in the shortest amount of time." He could only comfort her with this. After all, how depressing would it be to not have a way to enter his residence in the immediate future? He'll be stuck up there or forced to have someone send him up and down every single time.

While disgruntled at her inability to help Wei Wuyin, she was intelligent enough to understand the situation. She knew Wei Wuyin's feelings, so she wasn't scared of being abandoned. It was merely temporary.

Before long, they arrived at a ranch on a flat part of the Extreme Creation Mountain on the sixth level. Wei Wuyin spotted a few hawks, eagles, and even pegasus being reared on this ranch. It seemed to specialize in taking care of aerial beasts. He swept his gaze and noticed various disciples, of varying different races. There was even a rather balanced ratio of females and males.

"It's High Elder Bo Kay! I heard he left to retrieve a future Alchemic King!"

"I wonder who he or she is. I hope it's a gorgeous lady!"

"Pfft. You horn-dog, even if it was a beautiful lady, it wouldn't be your turn to kiss her feet!"

"Oh? Then would it be yours?"

It seemed these disciples were quite animated as they discussed amongst themselves and observed with excitement in their eyes. Wei Wuyin came to realize his identity was widely spread and known already. There couldn't have been more than half a day since his identity was revealed to Xiang Ling, yet everyone already knew of his presence.

News traveled fast!

While they seemed to know of his arrival, they obviously lacked concrete details such as his gender and appearance.

Bo Kay didn't bother with these lesser disciples as the Sky Pegasus landed. He directly called out, "Elder Niu!" At the very same moment his voice rang out, yet to even disperse, a hurried set of heavy footsteps echoed out as a rather heavy-set, brown-skinned, and human man made his way through the gathering crowd of disciples. A few were sent tumbling down as he waved his meaty arms.

When he saw Bo Kay, his eyes brightened as he shifted to Wei Wuyin immediately. Unlike the others, he knew who Wei Wuyin was.

Wei Wuyin, a potential Alchemic King under forty years old, becoming one in a flat continental earth where the legacy barely reached that level! With his talents, he ascended to the peak of his world in seven years of study! Furthermore, he cultivated Saber and Elemental Qi!

He was a stupefying demon-tier level genius that couldn't be regarded with common sense. A one in a trillion, quite literally.

Even Bo Kay, an Earthly General rank Elder, hastily made his way over to meet this young genius. He likely acted with the utmost respect and friendliness, so how could a little Mortal Captain rank Elder like himself dare be discourteous?

He hurriedly threw his status aside as he deeply bowed, "Greetings Noble Wei and High Elder Bo!" He placed Wei Wuyin's address first. Most people of Bo Kay's status would take offense, but he only nodded in praise at Elder Niu's awareness.

Wei Wuyin realized the implication and hurriedly leapt off the pegasus and greeted with clasped fists, "Greetings Elder Niu."

Bo Kay leapt off next, his eyes briefly examining the situation. "Where's the assigned pegasus?"

Elder Niu replied, "Here." He whistled. Abruptly, a pegasus that was obviously young and smaller, about sixty-meters in height, flew over from who-knows-where and neighed.

With intelligence, it landed next to Wei Wuyin and lowered its head in respect and greeting. Even Wei Wuyin was shocked at this beast level of intelligence. It had to immediately assess the situation and understand that Wei Wuyin was his new owner.

Smiling, he caressed the pegasus's head and laughed.

Bo Kay nodded, seeing the acknowledgement proceed smoothly. Normally, the pegasus race were very arrogant, unwilling to be ridden by those without ability, but Elder Niu had definitely told this young pegasus of Wei Wuyin's talents.

He submitted instantly. After all, it wasn't just cultivators who could benefit from association with an alchemist. In the Eden Earth Sect, many alchemists collected beasts to be used for fights and traveling. They would be fed countless products to bolster their bloodline purity, fleshy body strength, and innate bloodline power.

An alchemist can induce evolutions and variations in a beast, going against the natural laws set by the heavens that limited their potential.

However, for pegasus, only King Alchemists have a very small chance to do so and Emperor Alchemists is pretty much guaranteed.

Bai Lin trotted over towards the pegasus, her eyes filled with inspection and arrogance. She made some communicating sounds as if she was barely giving the young pegasus who reached her height a passing grade.

"This pegasus is yours. It's not fully matured so it has room to grow. If you wish, you can try to help awaken its innate bloodline. If you do, it'll be faster than even me if I were traveling at full speed," Bo Kay said before talking to Elder Niu privately.

Wei Wuyin, Su Mei, and Bai Lin got familiar with the pegasus during which. The pegasus didn't hold an ounce of pride within and was very deferential to Wei Wuyin. The only issue was its size wasn't large like Bo Kay's, so Bai Lin couldn't comfortably sit on its back.

He intended to ask Bo Kay to take Bai Lin to his residence. There, she can stay and cultivate while trying to reach the appropriate level to breach the sky layer. When she did, he intended to leave this pegasus to Su Mei.

After explaining the situation to the pegasus, he understood. He also realized that as long as he served Su Mei diligently, he'll still receive his fair share of resources. This elated him to no end.

*These beasts sure are intelligent, aren't they?*

Bo Kay returned and passed a document to Wei Wuyin, "this is your proof of ownership. For now until death, even if you left the sect permanently, this pegasus would be yours."

Wei Wuyin was stunned by his words as he inspected the document. It had a unique aura and he felt he could track the pegasus, even control its life with it. For some reason, the document felt heavy despite being a piece of paper.

He spoke with Elder Niu briefly and learned a little about him. They exchanged transmission crystals and said their goodbyes.

"Let's go to your residence, shall we?" Bo Kay suggested.

Agreeing, they departed with him and Su Mei riding his pegasus while Bo Kay and Bai Lin rode on the other one.

As they shot upwards at tremendous speeds, the sky layer above was collided into. A tremendous force exerted on their bodies, and threatened to push them downwards. Wei Wuyin and Su Mei held onto the pegasus to resist this unimaginable force.

Wei Wuyin knew that if he could fly, even with his strength, he would be doubtlessly sent back down no matter how hard he tried. He didn't even comprehend where this force originated from, but the pegasus seemed to have a unique power to resist it.

"No wonder the pegasus or a Sky Ruler cultivation base to enter!" As he remarked with amazement, he realized the Sky Layer extended several dozen kilometers upwards. Because of the force, their speed was slowed down considerably and it took them an hour before they broke through.

Like a drowning man experiencing air, they all took a deep breath simultaneously, even the pegasus.

It took a few seconds before they could reacclimate to the vastly different degree of pressure between the sixth-level and the sky layer. When they entered the seventh-level, the pressure was reset.

He had to pop his ears, revealing an expression of ecstasy as the ambient sounds re-entered his senses.

Inspecting the surroundings, he was bewildered. The world before him was covered in golden mist. This mist was nearly translucent but it gave everything a faint golden glow.

Bo Kay excitedly remarked, "This is Astral Essence!" As he said this, he took a deep breath and hurriedly absorbed the mist. He suddenly seemed to be brimming with energy.

Astral Essence!

Astral essence was a higher state of the essence of heaven and earth that cultivators living on planets and continental flat earths used. It is a byproduct of various complex astronomical and planetary factors, but to put it simply, this astral essence originated from the stars in the starfield. In fact, planets and flat earthen continents had cores that possessed a unique form of gravitation power that can attract and retain essence in its atmosphere.

All essence originated from the stars, but astral essence was diluted by the planet's atmospheric and unique forces as it descended, making it the normal essence people were familiar with.

The sky layer acted as a divider of sorts that prevented those forces from diluting the essence. Even still, this astral essence absorbed was called low-grade astral essence. The quality spiked in the ninth-level, but it was still only considered low-grade astral essence. Supposedly, one can only absorb high-grade astral essence while within the dark void, and cultivate directly atop the star to absorb peak-grade astral essence. Of course, that was incredibly unrealistic without an unfathomably high cultivation base.

It'll be difficult to refine the chaotic essence into astral essence, not even considering the act of traveling in the death zone that was the dark void.

Su Mei and Bai Lin exclaimed in wonder as they breathed deeply. They were recklessly absorbing this astral essence without any courtesy. This benefited their fleshy bodies, bloodline, and spirit.

Su Mei could feel her mind, matter, and essence start to rise considerably. The innate energies she produced were all starting to transition into high-grade naturally, without needing to be birthed with high-grade essences!

Wei Wuyin felt the conversion of essence to his own various energies was much easier. His elemental origin, yin, yang, and yin-yang energies were all of a high-quality nature to begin with, so they didn't experience any rise.

After an hour of non-stop cultivation, Bo Kay said, "I'll bring you to your new home. It should be ready by now." He pointed towards the various palaces that were like the Wu Astral Tower, they stably lingered in the air and used the Sky Layer as their foundation. Each palace was as grand as an immortal abode, glimmering with astral essence and profound power.

Wei Wuyin excitedly nodded. The entire seventh-level was filled with this astral essence, so regardless of where he was on this level, he'd be able to absorb it with a breath. He couldn't help but feel like this sect was incredibly accommodating!

## **Chapter 152 - 150: Examination - Wen Mingna**

Myriad Nascent Dao Pagoda.

The little over one hundred elites of the Myriad Yore Continent were cultivating quietly. The ambient air was tense and solemn as everyone was diligently trying to increase their strength by any amount. The guillotine that was the Myriad Yore Continent left their necks stiff and their hearts cold.

Barely a day had passed since they were left by Xiang Ling, but none of them dared to enter the Myriad Nascent Dao Pagoda.

A few minutes after Xiang Ling left, an overconfident youth at the Seventh Stage of the Qi Condensation Realm made his way inside with smiles and excitement. At that time, everyone was raring to go to test their mettle, but few wanted to be the first one to do so.

When he entered the pagoda's doors, all eyes followed him without exception, and the pagoda's first floor released dim light, and then no more than a few seconds later, a horrific at-death shriek echoed out with thunderous volume. It was heart-trembling and fear-inducing, and very, very brief.

The first floor subsequently returned to normal but the disciple didn't exit.

*Is he dead?* Was the thoughts of everyone. As they turned their heads and saw the fear and uncertainty reflected in each other's eyes, there was no need to exchange words—He's definitely dead.

It was then they all understood that Xiang Ling's words were by no means scare tactics. They would die if careless; if unworthy; if foolish.

Long Chen, Wu Baozhai, Lian Yu, Na Xinyi, Lin Ziyang, and Ming Shufeng were seated in a circle while cultivating their hearts out. Between their brows was a wisp of dark air formed by the unfathomably intense pressures that pressed heavily upon their souls. None of them wanted to die here.

Na Xinyi had generously shared the resources that Wei Wuyin had given her, but unfortunately, it wasn't enough for them all. It seemed that dastardly Wei Wuyin had only given enough for effectively one

person, three at most, and if split further, was unequal and unbalanced. Because of this, the Spirit Ton was given to Lian Yu, Ming Shufeng, and her.

As for the Sublime Sun Pills, they were split to the only Sixth Stage cultivators amongst them: Ming Shufeng and Lian Yu.

As for the Yin Nether Elixir, she and Wu Baozhai were the recipients.

Wu Baozhai had her own Spirit Ton Elixir obtained before, bought off Wei Wuyin from earlier.

Since Long Chen and Lin Ziyang were at the Eighth Stage of the Qi Condensation, they didn't have any use for these products. In the end, it was limited anyhow, so they had to give them to those who needed it.

Ming Shufeng pouted, as her combat ability was the lowest present, she had the lowest chance of success. "You should've asked for more."

"..." Na Xinyi's left eyelid twitched a little.

"We'll be fine," Long Chen comforted and said. In his opinion, they didn't need Wei Wuyin's help, but even if he said this, no one would not use those alchemical products. After all, their lives were on the line.

"..."

The crowd ceased their cultivation as a figure rose up and started walking towards the Myriad Nascent Dao Pagoda. Their eyes were like uncanny motion lights as they followed their figure's every step. They didn't dare to not pay attention!

It was a young woman. She looked to be in her early-twenties, but her actual age was closer to forty years old. Her short hair, styled in a blonde layered crop with highlights, and an exceptional countenance. She was definitely a beauty with light brown eyes and pink lips.

She had a cultivation base at the Sixth Stage of the Qi Condensation Realm, and for her cultivation, she was exceptionally young. Those at this level typically had three to five hundred years of lifespan.

To possess her cultivation level at her age, she was definitely a genius, but only in regards to the Myriad Yore Continent.

"Isn't that Wen Mingna? She's the third princess in this generation of the Wen Country!" A handsome youth quietly said to his friend, but who were the elites present? How could they not know the identity of every person present.

"Mn. It's rumored she had the highest natural talent amongst the Wen Clan. It was said she had the greatest chance of becoming an Astral Core Realm expert in the last three hundred years! I wonder how far she'll make it," his friend waved. Many wished a beauty like her would make it far, or at the very least survive.

Wen Mingna was brave, and a wisp of determination flickered between her brow. *'It's unlikely I'll be able to assail the Seventh Stage of the Qi Condensation in a decade or two, so it's best to struggle for an opportunity now than wait for later. If I leave here in fear, who knows if I'll survive or be turned into a plaything by other strong cultivators?'*



Her thoughts were exceptionally clear and honest. She knew that the cultivation world was cruel, and those with natural beauty and weakness would often be used and abused without mercy. It was that way in the Myriad Yore Continent, so there was a high-chance it was like this, or even worse. Especially since she was still a virgin.

She no longer had her father and grandfather to protect her, so she needed to grasp at a straw of a backing. If the Myriad Monarch Sect was truly one of the five hegemonic forces in the entire starfield, then that's where she wished to go!

The various conversations and hushed whispers about her were tuned out. She had steady and strong steps as she entered the pagoda.

Shroom!

The First Floor lit!

Everyone waited with bated breaths, clenched fists, and tight hearts. If Wen Mingna could make it through, then their chances would increase as talent mattered and not cultivation base! If she failed, then it meant it was incredibly likely the cultivation base was heavily factored into the test results!

"..."

A second.

Ten seconds.

A minute.

No scream was heard and the floor remained lit, but everyone remained incredibly tense.

Ming Shufeng was more nervous and anxious than everyone present. She was a Seer and could normally catch a glimpse of heavenly trends. Similar to how she deduced that Wei Wuyin would die if he embarked on the choice to refine the Absolute Zero Ice Essence, she could normally determine the fates of others. But due to her lacking cultivation, and the fact the Myriad Nascent Dao Pagoda was constructed and tainted with karma of the Astral Core Realm, she couldn't determine a single whisper of heavenly trend from it.

This meant she had very little certainty that her life would be secured if she took this test. Perhaps it would be best to leave prematurely, and make her path slowly. When this thought entered her gaze, she turned to Lin Ziyan and Long Chen. She felt this was the correct choice. Regardless if it were in talent or cultivation base, she was severely lacking.

Unwilling to risk her life, she planned her departure in her mind. She'll embark on another path, and hopefully grow and develop without the umbrella of a Blessed. At least, for now. And preferably a female one...the threat of falling for a male Blessed drove her insane.

Lin Ziyan saw Ming Shufeng nervous and then a determined expression. She was the only one amongst the group that knew Ming Shufeng was a seer. "Anything?" She wondered if Ming Shufeng saw the fate, and sent her a spiritual message.

Ming Shufeng turned her ocean blue eyes to Lin Ziyang and sighed in her heart. She shook her head. If she wasn't beside Lin Ziyang, she wasn't sure if she would be able to live a good life. Not all Blessed had a happy ending, and if their fortune and fate runs its course, those behind them were the most affected. It was a heartbreaking reality.

"She made it to the second floor!" A person exclaimed with a trace of insane excitement in his eyes. The first level was now emanating a rainbow-colored luminescent light, and the second floor became lit just like the first floor before.

This discovery reinvigorated the hopes of all the young elites, their eyes brimming with various intentions and bolstered confidence. The first youth to challenge the pagoda lasted a few measly seconds before his untimely demise. However, Wen Mingna had passed the first level after a few minutes!

This meant the criteria for ascending the pagoda varied based on the individual. What that criteria was was an unknown, but they had guesses. It could be based on cultivation base, which meant it measured the strength one possessed at that phase. If that was indeed the case, cultivating was pointless and, in fact, a detrimental action.

Those who recently ascended had very little control over their newfound cultivation, and they needed months to solidify their cultivation base before their comprehensive combat power was stabilized.

It could also be determined by age and cultivation. If so, cultivating and making breakthroughs had obvious benefits, but only if you neared a breakthrough. After all, who knew how long it'd take you to ascend to the next stage? The test might be harder than if you took it now.

There was also the possibility it relied on other intricate factors or both of these factors. Regardless, it sparked a bright hope in each of their hearts.

"She's on the third floor now!" Wen Mingna had made it to the third level in a few minutes. The amount of time it took was just slightly higher than the second floor. They were all either silently and loudly rooting for Wen Mingna to pass this examination and give them true hope. Furthermore, she could tell them about the examination.

As if hearing their encouragement and prayers, within an hour, Wen Mingna had ascended to the sixth floor! Her momentum was fierce up to that point.

"Wen Mingna is an exceptional figure of youth and talent. Blessed with a high status since birth, endless teachers, and tailored made cultivation methods and challenges. She's nearly the peak representation of our Myriad Yore Continent's talent and potential! It's possible she'll become a disciple with ease!" A chubby youth with bright eyes and shivering cheeks spoke vigorously to the others. His words held a sentiment that many agreed upon.

Long Chen frowned, his eyes focused on the sixth floor that was dimly lit for quite a while. Na Xinyi abruptly asked, "Where do you think Wei Wuyin lands in terms of talent within the continent?" Her words were nearly compulsive, unable to stop her mouth from speaking.

She bit her lower lip as the eyes of the group turned to her.

Wei Wuyin was a figure of legend within the Myriad Yore Continent. In fact, he's a legend that had no legend. He was abrupt in his rise and has always been. He went missing for ten years. When he returned, he could slay Hu Jiwei with a single strike. He could calmly threaten and later severely maim an Astral Core Realm expert. Also, he was an Alchemic King!

Despite not having any achievements outside of the Scarlet Solaris Sect ten years prior, he was a memorable figure today, especially to these youths who personally witnessed his actions and abilities.

"He's the highest peak," Lian Yu honestly answered. "However, that's now. In the future, I'm sure Long Chen will be the highest peak in the Myriad Monarch Sect."

Long Chen looked towards her. He felt a surge of warmth in his heart. Reaching out to grasp her hand, he smiled at this beauty. Just as he was about to say some words, a hellish screech echoed from the pagoda.

Na Xinyi bit her lip harder. *'But what if I want to be the highest peak?'*

### **Chapter 153 - 151: Examination - Skill Is Talent**

Sheng!

A sound resounded. All of a sudden, a figure shot out from the walls of the sixth floor of the pagoda like a ghost, phasing through it like an intangible ghost and plummeting at a diagonal angle. It was like a meteorite as it was engulfed by various energies.

Bam!

The elites jumped, caught off-guard as the figure smashed heavily into the ground. But there wasn't an expected earthen crater where it landed. Instead, it was like a sandbag hitting a floor of reinforced steel. It bounced slightly and then went still.

"..." Silence reigned supreme for several seconds until the figure started to twitch. Everyone noticed the figure was covered in not just various energies but blood as well. It was like a completely blood drenched figure!

And it was alive!

The chubby youth with bright eyes had a dim and dark expression as he eased his way forward cautiously. After careful inspection did he exclaim, "It's Wen Mingna!"

"Are you an idiot? Of course it's her! Who else could it be?!" A burly elite shot forward and arrived beside Wen Mingna, his eyes heavy and solemn. Wen Mingna's current condition was harsh. She was completely covered in her own blood with scars covering about seventy-percent of her body. Even her face suffered injuries. Furthermore, these energy traces weren't qi, but legitimate elemental and weapon-type of energies. There had to be at least eight or nine types here.

"Gah..." Wen Mingna coughed out a wad of blood, clearing her throat.

The burly elite bent down and asked, "What happened?"

The chubby youth's expression changed. "Are you an idiot? Can't you see she's severely injured!" Unfortunately, he didn't have any way to solve this. He turned to ask the others, "Can anyone use healing arts?"

"I..." Wen Mingna tried to speak, but her body was battered and broken. With her qi exhausted, her spiritual energies drained, she was truly in a horrible state.

"If she recovers, she can tell us what she experienced!" The burly youth hurriedly said, afraid she would croak at any moment.

Lian Yu and another female youth stepped forward. They were naturally curious about the examination and needed answers. They walked forward and used water and wood qi to nourish and repair Wen Mingna's body in unison. It was incredibly effective as her scars and blood lost were being dealt with.

After ten minutes of diligent and consistent treatment did Wen Mingna heal enough to a sufficient state to speak and move. She slowly and arduously lifted her upper body with clenched fists and teeth. In her tightly clenched right hand was a shiny object that was quite notable despite the blood.

No one asked her about it and just waited for her to speak.

But they knew at least one thing:

She failed!

After calming her state of mind, she swept her exhausted and bloodshot eyes to observe everyone's waiting and curious looks. She sighed in her heart. Her words were dispirited but clear.

The first floor was designed around qi control and swift thinking. When she entered, she was met with a vanishing floor and a surface of water below. She had already mastered walking on water, so she easily stood on its surface without falling through. After being cautious, she realized there were shark-like beasts infesting the waters. If one fell through, they'd be eaten and killed.

This was likely what happened to the first person who entered. If one was caught by surprise, rendered shocked by fear, or unable to execute the ability to walk on water, they would be killed.

The second test was similarly an expression of qi control. It required the continuous control of nine different objects at the same time. It was a puzzle where you can either move all nine pieces or none at all. To split up your qi in this matter was very difficult.

You had a time limit. If you failed to succeed in that time limit, three four-legged wolf-like beasts would be released and tear you to shreds. They were constantly roaring at her trying to distract her, and the ticking of the timer was heart-racing.

The third test wasn't much different and focused on qi control. There was a Spiritual Formation that drained one's innate energies from your body and you needed to use your qi to prevent the siphoning. As one got further to the door, the siphoning force continued to increase.

If you're unable to complete it in time, you'll be turned into a dry and empty husk.

The entire crowd was startled. A few was happy that they hadn't taken these tests. Each one of these were achievements of those accomplished in qi control. Some of them weren't even able to walk on water, let alone turn one into nine or use qi to control their innate energies.

Those were very high-level expressions of qi.

The next three tests were about overcoming puppets. The fourth test was facing one puppet at your cultivation level, the fifth had three, and the sixth had nine. These puppets used pure energies and spiritual spells. They linked together via a spiritual formation that connected their senses and spiritual energies. If you didn't sever the formation, then they would have an absolute advantage in sense, rendering your spiritual spells useless while enhancing their own.

"The first three tests qi control and the fourth through sixth test comprehensive combat strength, knowledge of spiritual formations, and spiritual strength?" The burly youth felt startled. He was absolutely garbage in all of this except combat strength.

He couldn't help but gulp loudly. If he had been careless, he could've died.

Wen Mingna clenched her right fist tighter as she said with a hint of unwillingness, "When I passed the fourth test, the pagoda gave me this emblem." She opened her fist and revealed the shiny silver object that, despite being wrapped in her bloody fist, was completely clean. It said: Myriad Monarch Sect - Null Disciple."

"Null Disciple? What's that?" A youth asked. According to Fairy Blessed Spirit, didn't she say there were only five disciples?

"It's the equivalent to an honorary disciple!" Wen Mingna answered through gritted teeth.

"A servant disciple?" The burly youth was shocked. Passing the fourth test was merely enough to become a servant of the sect? While honorary disciples sounded nice, they were just servants who worked, not official disciples. All the young elites here knew that.

Wei Wuyin had gotten his start as an honorary disciple in the Scarlet Solaris Sect. If he heard this, he would've treated it as an entry ticket and nothing more. After all, your future limits were based on yourself. But the various high-born youths here were disgruntled and in disbelief.

In the end, a few were happy that as long as they were capable of passing the fourth test, they wouldn't be killed but sent out of the pagoda with an emblem.

"The talented are the skilled. This is such a hard criteria. If what you say is true, then even a first stage cultivator at the Qi Condensation Realm could pass these examinations as long as they were skilled enough." The chubby youth extrapolated the true point of the test.

A few felt certain that they could pass these tests, especially now that they knew about it.

"But...would the tests be the same for everyone?" A scholarly-looking youth with glasses asked with a tinge of uncertainty.

"..."

That's right...different cultivation levels, ages, even gender could influence the tests. A creeping fear of the unknown unexpectedly swelled in their hearts. To determine this, others had to enter. However, if the test was different or more difficult for them because their cultivation bases or their ages were higher than wouldn't their fates be unfortunate?

Long Chen gazed at the Myriad Nascent Dao Pagoda. A determined look emerged in his eyes as he looked towards the horizon Xiang Ling and the other took off in. *'I'll succeed, and then I'll meet you again.'*

Wen Mingna was a mess of emotions, but as she held the emblem in her hand, a wisp of resolute determination entered her heart. If she had to start low, then so be it. The examination only proved she was far from a normal disciple, but she was in a new world, and as long as she worked extra hard, she'll definitely reach greater heights!

She wouldn't give up; she can't ever give up.

### **Chapter 154 - 152: Power Of Authority**

Two days later.

In the middle of a dark and dusky night, the gloomy clouds silently shifted below a magnificent sky palace.

...survive in darkness, life passes...

...survive in darkness, life passes...

...survive in darkness, life passes...

Covered his satin sheets that glistened with astral light, Wei Wuyin tossed and turned in his bed with tightly furrowed brows and lips that whispered endlessly.

"Ah!" His figure abruptly awoke from his sleep, exclaiming in frightful horror and heartrending pain. His pupils were like tremors as they were unable to focus amidst their ceaseless shaking and cold sweat drenched his body almost as if it had just rained.

"Haa...haaaa...haaaaaaaa..." Heavy pants and breaths resounded as he slowly regained his sense of reality.

"A nightmare...again..." his heart felt horrible and his mind was in utter chaos, seeking reprieve in his memories and realization of his current, safe and secure reality. Lifting his hands, he realized they were trembling and even with his cultivation, he couldn't do anything to stop it. He felt powerless.

That day, when he forcefully deciphered the descriptions of Hell, he had experienced an ungodly and unimaginable amount of tortuous, life-agonizing pain that seeped into every crevice of his mind, body and soul. It was unrelenting as it plagued him in his dreams, and even during the normal day, he had to suppress this feeling of lingering agony.

"Will it never end...?" Wiping the cold sweat from his brows, he felt uncertainty in his heart. The Calamities of Hell was divided into eighteen different levels, and seemed to be a sharp, ruthless

guillotine bearing down on his neck. Every breath, every heartbeat led to an inevitable event that could effortlessly claim his life.

It was a horrifying life to live.

Before, he had mostly brushed it off with his nonchalant attitude that accepted death. It was his heart covering his fear, but now that he was determined to face and overcome the trial, the fear was ceaselessly springing forth.

He sat up on the edge of his bed, looking at his right arm.

Karmic Luck Value: 585.7.

First Calamity: Survived - 7/7.

Second Calamity: Suppressed - 40 Years.

*'I still have forty years left. Unfortunately I can't trigger the trial at this very moment.'* Sighing endlessly, he touched his heavily beating chest. The key to overcoming the Second Calamity was in his heart and mind. He felt at least seventy percent certain that he would not perish.

Unfortunately, he had no way to speed up the Calamity of Hell, so he was plagued by these horrors.

*'What the hell am I thinking? If I experience the Second Calamity now, wouldn't I have to experience the third sooner?'* He clenched his right fist and realized the faultiness in his thinking. In life, it was better to have an extra moment of it than to not. Rushing would only ensure failure.

Furthermore, he could use this buffer to enhance his cultivation base. The further he reached, the closer he would get to the Realm of Sages, wherever that was. Every step, no matter how small, was beneficial.

*'But I can't rush that either. I need to ensure my cultivation base is the best it can be before I reach the Realm of Sages. After all, the Soul of True Sin is merely a buffer for the eradication forces of Hell towards my existence. I can only be certain if my strength is reliable and firm.'*

Taking a deep breath of rich astral essence infused air, he felt greatly comforted and soon relaxed. The trembling of his hands came to a stop and his body no longer felt constricted and cold.

For the last two days since he arrived at this Sky Palace of his that lingered atop the Sky Layer, he had remained here to slowly cultivate and digest the rules regarding the sect.

*'The hierarchy of this sect is rather strict. No wonder Xiang Ling kept saying that unless one had a backing of a greater ranking member, they would be forced to adhere to the orders of higher ranking members. This is an actual rule of the sect.'* As he pondered, this bit of information truly caused him to rethink things. This sect was by no means the same as the Scarlet Solaris Sect.

This was because of their strict adherence to subordination. The entire sect was like a loose military system, infused with sect traits. Rankings for authority can be given a numerical designation for ease of understanding.

Those disciples at the Null Disciple rank were literal slaves without any authority. They were forced to handle the most trivial matters for half the day, every day. They were sometimes assigned to Mortal Common disciples to handle basic matters, such as delivering messages.

They could be said to be the number 0. Their status was worth absolutely nothing.

Nascent Dust disciples were very low as well. They didn't have to do compulsory tasks, but they had to complete at least one daily task each and every day or suffer punishment. After three failures, they would be crippled and sent out of the sect.

It was an insanely harsh punishment that seemed extreme, but the tasks weren't that difficult and they could even work under Mortal Common and Earthly Elite disciples to fill their daily quota. This was mostly to incentive them to join factions.

As for their numerical value, they could be given 0.5. They were considered half-disciples at most.

Mortal Common disciples were all Astral Core Realm experts or Lord Alchemists. They were given a solid 1.

Earthly Elites were valued at 2.

Sky Nobles were valued at 3.5.

Heavenly Kings were valued at 4.5.

As for elders, even they weren't exempt from the rule of hierarchy and compelled to follow the orders, even if the order came from a disciple.

Mortal Captains had 1.5-2.5. Those at the First Stage of the Astral Core Realm, the World Sea Phase, were valued at 1.5. At the Second Stage of the Astral Core Realm, the Sky Ruler Phase, they were valued at 2. At the Third Stage of the Astral Core Realm, the Soul Idol Phase, they were valued at 2.5.

This meant his status as a Sky Noble exceeded all Mortal Captain elders, and his order was absolute law. Of course, there was the matter of jurisdiction. If he was outside the Extreme Creation Mountain, he was given a minus 0.5 in value, so his authority was lesser, but he didn't have to listen to those with his previously equal authority either. This applied to everyone.

The three main mountains, the Extreme Origin Mountain, Extreme War Mountain, and Extreme Creation Mountain were the only ones subjected to these values. While demons in the Extreme Demon Mountain also were required to follow this rule, they were closed off with only a few demons amongst them. Most demons were under the other three mountains besides the exclusive or weaker ones that are looking for peace.

The Extreme Monarch Mountain only had elders, and within its confines, only the authority of Imperial Sages was legitimately recognized. It was essentially a neutral zone, but disciples couldn't stay unless assigned there.

As for Heavenly Commanders, they were rank valued at 3.5. These were high level elders, but they were below Heavenly Kings, even in their own territory.



Imperial Sage: 4.

Prime Imperial Sage: 6.

Grand Imperial Sage: 10.

These values were concrete and inviolable.

To give an example, if Wei Wuyin left the sky palace and descended, as long as it was an Earthly Elite disciple or lower, he could have them do a handstand for an entire seven days. While he can't bring intentional harm to them, he could assign them tasks or tell them to fuck off and they had to.

If they had grievances over his orders, or refused to do so, they could lodge a complaint in response. If reviewed and accepted, the one delivering the order would be subjected to punishment ranging from demotion, crippling, and even death. They were similarly strict against the wild abuse of power.

However, if the complaint was rejected. Their actions were tantamount to insubordination and they wouldn't be demoted, but imprisoned, expelled from the sect, crippled, and/or executed on the spot.

It was just that harsh.

That was authority.

Of course, there were some exceptions and that's where factions come into play. According to the sect's rules, factions were group organizations developed by Sky Nobles, Heavenly Kings, and Imperial Sages.

Those not at these ranks, such as Prime Imperial Sages, Elders or lesser rank disciples, were unable to create their own faction. If they did, it'll be immediately disbanded and those participating would be heavily fined or imprisoned.

Those who decide to be a part of a faction received an unexpected but immediate benefit: while their authority doesn't rise, no one at their Faction Leader's authority had the right to give them any orders or assignments.

For example, Wei Wuyin's subordinates wouldn't have to follow any disciple besides a Heavenly King's direct order, and any Imperial Sage not of his mountain was similarly unable to order his faction members around.

After learning this detail, he was more intrigued at how complex the web of backing and connections were in the sect. It had to be very ferocious as joining a faction was a must unless you wished to be actively targeted and controlled by those with higher authority.

Unfortunately, if you join a faction, you were at the complete and utter mercy of your faction leader. Regardless of their order, you were forced to follow under the threat of certain death. After all, you chose that faction.

This meant any faction leader could gather all their females or male members and strip them naked, slowly enjoying every last one to their liking or force them into an orgy. If they refused, the gallows awaited.

Similarly, if they ordered you to castrate yourself or remove an eye, it was a fate you couldn't avoid except in death. So to safely join a faction, it was paramount to understand the faction leader's personality and intentions.

Of course, you can send in an order of withdrawal from said faction, but it must be approved by a Prime Imperial Sage personally or your Faction Leader. This was a difficult thing to do and can take a considerable amount of time to process and be approved. After all, Prime Imperial Sages were busy figures.

Wei Wuyin reviewed all this information and slightly smiled. From the outside, the sunlight was slowly piercing through the gloomy and dusky darkness of the night. As the light seeped into his silver eyes, brilliant ambition that had once fallen had emerged once more.

"I'll make my own faction, to obtain a foothold in this new, grander world." His heart was set. No one knew that this simple decision made after a harsh nightmare was going to shake the Myriad Monarch Sect and the entire Tri-Vision Starfield for generations and generations to come.

### **Chapter 155 - 153: Imperial Merit**

As the sun's rays brightly lit the inside of his quarters, Wei Wuyin lifted his body and stretched. Without much consideration, he donned his disciple robes. Unlike Elders who wore multicolored robes, disciples donned their Mountain's specific colors, but this only mattered to the Extreme Origin, Creation, and War Mountains.

Extreme Origin Mountain: White.

Extreme War Mountain: Scarlet.

Extreme Creation Mountain: Black.

"Forming a faction." Quietly muttering, Wei Wuyin left his room. This was a process that had to be completed in person and officiated. Not only did one have to possess enough status to establish a faction, but they needed to have earned a sufficient amount of Imperial Merits.

In basic sects, this could be considered contribution points, but they had a slight difference in terms of the standard functions and method of obtainment. For normal disciples, Imperial Merits were earned after applying for it. Missions issued by the sect did not give Imperial Merits, but specific rewards. This could be a voucher for a storehouse alchemical product of a certain grade, time in a treasured cultivation grounds or resources.

As for Imperial Merits, they were applied for and truly based on merits. At any point in time, you can turn in a portfolio of your completed tasks, this even included daily tasks done by Null Disciples and Nascent Dust Disciples. This would then be subsequently judged by a twelve-person tribunal that would determine what you should receive individually. Then, they calculated the mean of that numerical value; that's what you received.

Afterwards, your personal portfolio of completed tasks and merits would be wiped clean, completely reset.

This made earning Imperial Merits both fair and easy. It was like 'additional' benefits for your contributions to the sect. It was being officially recognized! But Imperial Merits can directly be exchanged for any resource, time in treasured cultivation grounds, used to commute a criminal charge, and many more such as creating a faction.

"The importance of establishing a faction is the ability to rapidly accumulate Imperial Merit as a group." To establish a faction, he needed to accrue a total of 100 Imperial Merits. This would give him the right.

Normally, earning a single Imperial Merit could take years, but creationists like himself had ways to earn this at a rapid rate: Alchemical Products, Armaments, and Brand-new Arts/Spells/Arrays/Formations designs. While there were missions assigned for specific products, these usually included fifth or sixth-grade products. There's no one who'd randomly issue a global seventh-grade order.

It was a highly unrealistic expectation, so most simply visit the alchemist in person and pray they'll accept their money. Alchemists did not need to perform tasks as they can directly gain Imperial Merit by simply delivering completed alchemical products.

According to Bo Kay, this was due to the endless demand for products. There could never be enough, but very few would offer products to the sect, so they essentially set down this benefit to entice others.

A single sixth-grade, high-tier product was worth a single merit and a peak-tier product was worth three merits. This related to low-quality products, not high or peak as their reward was a tad bit higher.

As an alchemist that has an unreasonably amount of random sixth and seventh-grade alchemical products, he could easily earn a hundred merits, and much, much more.

After setting his goal in mind, he exited his room and the sky palace onto the Sky Layer foundation.

The Sky Layer was an oddity. At first he thought it wasn't solid, but it was. Well, it was more like a strange blend of solid and gas, capable of acting as a foundation for a sky palace. While formations and arrays helped support this state, it was mostly due to the unique qualities of the Sky Layer itself.

Kree!

Lifting his head, he saw Bai Lin soaring freely through the skies while breathing in massive amounts of astral essence. It seems this environment was insanely beneficial to beasts and cultivators alike. For example, despite being here for two days, Su Mei was unable to suppress her breakthrough into the Eighth Stage of the Qi Condensation.

She was currently consolidating her cultivation. Shockingly, despite having a Divine-type Natal Soul, she hadn't immediately ascended to the eighth stage due to her own suppression. He had originally thought it was merely his own advantages due to the uniqueness of his Natal Souls combined with the Divine-type enhancements it received. But it was completely due to herself, shocking even him.

But as he recalled her battle with Na Xinyi and their inability to bring out the most basic ability of 'creation' that typically those at the sixth stage of her realm possessed, it made some sense not to leap too far. It was best to acclimate in your stage of cultivation so you don't lack foundational knowledge in the future.

Woosh!

Bai Lin arrived before him with blazing golden lights emitting from her eyes. They seemed sacred, pure, and contained a strange worldly truth. His eyebrows furrowed as he realized the Golden Phoenix Fruit Bai Lin consumed truly had endless benefits, constantly influencing her.

Kree!

"Oh?" Wei Wuyin felt Bai Lin's spiritual intent. *'You're about to undergo a transformation?'* He pondered for a moment, inspected her body with his spiritual sense and felt the seething blood within her body. It seemed as if it was boiling and changing color, becoming golden.

"Is this the Awakening of the Phoenix?" When he obtained the records of the Beast-Taming Sect, he learned of the legendary and mythological traits of phoenixes. One of these traits was called the Act of Awakening. It was a process of rebirth that would have their bloodline powers unlock their inner potential.

Phoenixes was said to be determined in strength by how many awakenings they underwent, the more the better. Since this was her first awakening gifted to her by her bloodline, this meant she was approaching closer and closer to that legendary state.

*'Would this crane become a true phoenix one day?'* This thought sounded ridiculous, but as he observed the proud and contentful expression of Bai Lin, he felt it was more and more possible. If she did, how majestic and world-shaking would she be?

"Go. Undergo your transformation. I'm going down for a bit, so I'll be back soon." He smilingly held out his hand. Bai Lin shifted her head to lightly receive Wei Wuyin's caress. Her eyes that radiated pride and contentment was replaced by glee and relaxation. She seemed to enjoy this greatly despite Wei Wuyin's hand being slightly larger than a single feather of hers.

Fweet!

He whistled.

Bai Lin's head lifted abruptly and seemed ready to take flight, causing galewinds to form.

"Not you!" Wei Wuyin laughed. Usually, he whistled to get her to come to him, so her response was based in reflex. She had a keen sense of hearing and even greater response time. It was this very whistle that led her to him after the collapse of the Tree of Eden.

Woosh!

A winged existence as large as Bai Lin shot into the air and brandished its wings that flowed with faint jade light. It neighed and stomped, making its way towards Wei Wuyin and Bai Lin.

Bai Lin let loose a faint grumble as she lowered her wings. Right, she couldn't leave the Sky Layer yet. In fact, she tried yesterday but only got repelled. Her strength wasn't at the Star-grade yet, so she could only wait for her first awakening. When she did, she knew her strength would reach a sufficient level of power! Then, this pegasus shall be gone!

The adolescent Sky Pegasus arrived beside Wei Wuyin and lowered its head. Wei Wuyin softly caressed it too, and it neighed in delight, but he didn't have the same feeling as when he caressed Bai Lin. Perhaps it was the difference in texture, but he enjoyed touching Bai Lin more.

With a shrug, he flashed atop the pegasus's back. "Be diligent in your transformation. Don't make mistakes!" After those cautious words were said, the pegasus shot upwards and dove like a hawk seeking its prey. It smashed into the Sky Layer and penetrated it with utter ease.

Unlike Bai Lin, and despite being a young pegasus, it was still a star-grade beast. While its combat strength might not rival an Astral Core Realm cultivation at this moment, it was still stronger than the Qi Condensation Realm level of power.

Descending was much faster than ascending, as merely a few minutes was required before they exited.

When they did, Wei Wuyin's eyes once more witnessed the hustling, the bustling, the lively, air produced by the hardworking men and women of the Extreme Creation Mountain. There were areas similar to Common Growth Villages where farms, greenhouses, stables, and more were set up for various agricultural activities.

It was quite a sight to see on a mountain of all things. The waterfalls that ascended, twisted, and descended was a surreal sight as well that would likely cause most mortals' worlds to be turned upside down.

*'Bo Kay said that I have to build up my portfolio and turn those marked and recorded achievements to the Extreme Monarch Mountain for Imperial Merit and then sign up for permission to form a faction. That's the start. Then, I'll need to find members.'*

His decision to establish a faction had always lingered in his thoughts from the very moment he heard of its possibility. When he was a Core Disciple of the Scarlet Solaris Sect, he had his own faction with talents such as Han Yu, the one who possessed a rare aquatic bloodline. It was through this faction that he established a powerbase and authority.

While due to the rules of Authority here, there were slight differences, a faction was an army and a tool of deterrence. Furthermore, he intended to do many things in this sect and world; he wasn't the type to struggle for everything with his own hands. Why do so when one can have subordinates to do that?

When he took down the remnant forces of the Violet Moon Sect, he had rarely taken action personally. This was the life of a true elite, a true expert. And that was to have other experts under your command.

If he wanted to establish the firmest and strongest foundation using the Dao of Alchemy as the basis, then he needed time, resources, and true authority. He couldn't remain idle while cultivating, nor was he that type of lazy individual.

*'I don't believe that the Myriad Monarch Sect is an unsurpassed existence nor an uncontested one. Every force has its enemies and rivals, and since the existence of Evil Cultivators and traitors exist, there is likely conflict happening constantly. Moreover, enemies from within the sect is a possibility.'*

Jiu Lang was a prime example of an enemy within the sect. Since his rise, she was intent on using him as a stepping stone and crushing his potential as a threat to herself.

Everything was a competition in the world of cultivation, because the most crucial and universally accepted fact of the world was: Cultivation is difficult.

This phrase, this saying, and this universal law had never changed and will never change regardless of how high you reach. Even in the Myriad Monarch Sect; even in the Myriad Monarch Astral Territory; even in the Tri-Vision Starfield.

If he wanted to establish a strong foothold, not just in the Myriad Monarch Sect, but the entire starfield, he needed to ready himself for battles, challenges, and intense competitions.

"Go!" Wei Wuyin ordered the sky pegasus to descend onto the sixth level, the Alchemic Dao Pavilion. There was one on every level, besides the seventh through ninth. It was designed to accept the submission of alchemical products for Lord Alchemists and above, as well as filing an application to issue a global mission order to the alchemists.

Most cultivators looking for sixth and seventh-grade products would visit here to redeem product vouchers of that level or Imperial Merits.

When his eyes descended onto the building, his heart was instantly moved!

#### **Chapter 156 - 154: Alchemic Dao Pavilion**

The building wasn't tall, colorful, or dazzling by any means, but it was exceptional! It was two-stories with two floors and shaped like a rectangle laid flat. Its black walls were unassuming and unappealing, and it lacked any esoteric markings or artistic designs. In truth, in terms of appearance, it was rather ordinary.

However, when his eyes met this rather ordinary building, his heart knew it was no such thing! That was because its entire existence was structured entirely from solidified alchemical energies.

The. Entire. Thing.

From its doors, windows, to its walls, ceiling and floors. Even from up high, Wei Wuyin could tell this was a building entirely constructed using the ability of 'creation' to an extreme. He had heard that, if a cultivator's strength reaches a certain extent, that energies, qi, or astral force can gain true permanence. What permanence meant was its ability to interact and exist in the world like true objects, only vanishing when destroyed or corroded by time.

"Incredible!" This single word of praise summed up his entire thoughts that were drowned in awe. While this might seem like an irrelevant gesture, or even a waste of effort, to have a building constructed from alchemical energies would have endless benefits to alchemists. It was the constant exposure that could enhance one's control or affinity to alchemical energies.

This is like a person swimming in water year-round would be far more attuned with the movements of water. Take this and incorporate an alchemist's ability to control alchemical energies, needing to use it to concoct products effectively, and you have a natural training center that can help improve an alchemist's skill.

Wei Wuyin's arrival upon the pegasus wasn't ignored or concealed. In fact, quite a few people sent their gazes his way and some directly stilled after seeing Wei Wuyin. News had traveled fast, and many knew that a youth had appeared with an unofficial Alchemic King status.

Furthermore, out of the three main mountains for disciples, the Extreme Creation Mountain had no prior Sky Nobles or Heavenly Kings. This had lasted for a thousand years, so how could they not be shocked? Wei Wuyin was the first Sky Noble in a thousand years!

And this was due to the skill vs time vs talent factor in the various paths Creationists take. Typically, they'd require half a millennia before having a chance to become an Alchemic King. This meant all Alchemic Kings, everywhere in the Myriad Astral Territory, were beyond the age of five hundred. Furthermore, many of them were in the Astral Core Realm.

While they didn't have Alchemic Natal Souls, they did have a high cultivation base and can infuse their astral force with alchemical energies to supplement the success rate and refinement times of their concoctions. This was why no official Alchemic King thus far, amongst the few hundred Alchemic Kings, were at the Qi Condensation Realm.

"Isn't that the unofficial Alchemic King? I can't believe he's descended from the Sky Layer so quickly!"

"I know, right? He should wait until he reaches the Astral Core Realm and then establish himself, otherwise he might be pushed in all sorts of issues."

"Pfft, what do you know? He likely already has a faction he's a part of. Otherwise, wouldn't he just be a big piece of meat to the others? They would come tearing and clawing for that meat!"

While he landed, his enhanced hearing allowed him to eavesdrop on many verbal conversations. He noticed the surrounding disciples, be they Null, Nascent Dust, or Mortal Common were animatedly discussing him. Their tones were filled with curiosity, guess, and even concern. A few were intrigued and he felt spiritual fluctuations as if they were transmitting messages.

*'Right...Sky Nobles can join factions. Usually, they join Heavenly Kings or Imperial Sages, supplementing their own strength.'* As he recalled this nearly forgotten detail, his eyes flitted with a contemplating light.

He knew that since he descended, then others would surely send their representatives to invite him to join them in their faction, but he intended to form his own, so that was a direct conflict with his desires.

*'I wonder if anyone will try to impede me if I refuse them?'* This thought caused a particularly cold and interested smile to tug at his lips. He was filled with expectation. *'Who will be the chicken?'*

There was an old idiom that said: one has to kill the chicken to scare the monkeys, and he felt like seeing how well this applied in practical situations.

He jumped off the pegasus and briskly walked towards the Alchemic Dao Pavilion beneath the whispering and interested gazes of these disciples.

A few female members couldn't help but whisper to themselves, "Wow! He's so handsome...can one even be that good-looking?!"

"..."

"He's..."

Wei Wuyin realized that they couldn't even finish their sentences as they stared, one was even staring at him like a piece of meat. He could've sworn he saw droplets at the edge of her lips. He didn't mind this; in fact, his looks were given to him by his mother and father, so he was proud of it.

He walked into the door, feeling the aura of alchemical energies immediately upon entering.

"Greetings, Sir." A Mortal Common Disciple seemed to be established here as a greeter, immediately walking forward and catching his attention. It was a young woman with short brown hair and a short stature. Despite her actions, she was a legitimate cultivator at the Astral Core Realm.

He didn't inspect her too closely as he asked, "Where do I turn in products?"

The woman glanced at Wei Wuyin's attire and softly smiled after realizing he was an alchemist. From his age, she felt he was at least at the Expert Alchemist level. "It depends. Are you turning in an issued mission order or seeking Imperial Merit?"

"Imperial Merits."

She nodded and proceeded to use her fingers to illustrate directions to reach the Imperial Appraiser. This was a special position that alchemists can hold to appraise the grade, tier, quality, and purpose of the product. Those who were truly exceptional can even deduce the concoction techniques used on the product down to the type of cauldron to the cultivation base of the alchemist.

It was a praise-worthy occupation that requires the keenest of eyes and senses.

He thanked her and was about to leave, but the young woman hurriedly spoke.

"Wait, sir! The Imperial Appraiser on this level will only accept sixth-grade or higher products. If you submit anything lower, he might use his authority on you in frustration." The young woman earnestly warned. It seemed she was worried that Wei Wuyin hadn't known this detail. After all, he seemed new to this Alchemic Dao Pavilion. Very rarely do people ask her for directions. Instead, she would be given inquiries in regards to active missions or if certain products were available so as to save others from a long and tedious walk.

"Oh? I understand," Wei Wuyin realized that each Alchemic Dao Pavilion had their requirements as to the level of standard. Her good intentions weren't lost on him, and he smiled.

This smile caught the girl off-guard as her heart nearly skipped two beats, but it most certainly skipped one. *'How did I not notice how...how...'* Her thoughts stalled as well.

Wei Wuyin didn't know why he had this effect on certain women. He knew Wu Baozhai had been similarly affected, but she regained herself rather swiftly. It wasn't as if in this cultivation world good-looking features were of any actual benefit, unless you were a woman.

After all, even if he was handsome beyond imagination, what woman would give herself to him if he lacked talent, strength, ability, or backing?



Only when these factors were added did his facial features actually matter. Anyways, he withdrew a small jade bottle with a fluid ounce of liquid within and grabbed the young woman's hand beneath her disbelieving and admiring gaze. He gently placed the bottle in her hand and said, "Thanks."

After, he left without another word.

As she watched his departure, she was still in a haze. Her heart was fluttering for seemingly no reason and her face was growing hot. Wei Wuyin's touch had sent literal butterflies through her entire body and caused her mind to pause.

"What did he hand you?" A male greeter walked forward and said with a pouting expression. From his eyes, one could see the light of jealousy and a hint of anger.

"I..." Just as she was trying to reclaim her calm, a figure arrived through the door with immense presence, startling her. Her eyes were drawn away and noticed a hulking figure with muscles on top of muscles. His tanned-skin, thick eyebrows, square-jaw, and thick black beard gave him a wild and ferocious appearance. This coupled with his glaringly scarlet robes were exceptionally intimidating.

His eyes swept briefly towards the two greeters, and they were sent into a stunned state from his forceful gaze. '*Gu Hao?!*' Their thoughts were synchronized as their expressions changed immediately. The hulk of a man, Gu Hao, snorted coldly as his eyes swept the area as if looking for someone.

Gu Hao ferociously stomped away and took an entirely different direction than Wei Wuyin.

"He's going to the mission board? But he's not an alchemist..." the male greeter said suddenly.

About two dozen more disciples arrived simultaneously, seemingly interested in the events that were likely about to unfold. A few hastily followed Gu Hao while a few others tailed slowly with soft steps, clearly a little fearful.

"What the hell?!" The male greeter was shocked by what was happening. He moved to grab a Nascent Dust Disciple, using his Astral Core Realm cultivation base to force him to stay behind. "What's happening? Why is Gu Hao here?"

The Nascent Dust Disciple was startled after being restrained and seemingly captured against his will, but he didn't dare show complaint on his expression. The interrogation sent his heart into a panic as he answered with trembling haste, "The potential Alchemic King and only Sky Noble of our mountain just arrived here! Gu Hao is...he's..."

The male greeter immediately came to a realization, not needing to hear more, he released the disciple to scurry away and pondered with an intrigued expression. "It seems our mountain is going to get a little lively, huh?"

The female greeter was silent. "Maybe...not?" Those words were spoken with uncertainty.

"Huh? Why?"

"Well...I think he went to the Imperial Appraiser, not the mission board." The female greeter said with a hint of disbelief.

The male greeter looked towards her with disbelief. "How do you know?"

"Because...I think he just gave me this..." She lifted the bottle with a firm grasp, nearly treating it like a precious treasure. Within was a fluid ounce of blue liquid that gleamed with ghastly light.

"Is that..." the male greeter focused for a moment. When he examined the bottle, he didn't find anything special with it at first, but upon closer inspection, his eyes widened abruptly.

"Th-tha...that's..."

The female greeter fiercely nodded while clutching the bottle, "Yin Spirit Tears, a seventh-grade elixir!"

Just as those words escaped her lips, the bottle vanished from her grasp as if it was never there. Before she could react, there was a young woman dressed in white robes that were examining the bottle with a focused gaze. She had thin eyebrows, an oval face, with soft peach lips and a tall stature. She was nearly six feet six inches, towering many males in the world.

Her long legs were slightly revealed as her robes had a well-done cut at one side that reached to her upper thighs. It was quite alluring and revealed her exquisite whiteness. Her green eyes brightened slightly as she gave a small exclaim of surprise.

"It really is Yin Spirit Tears! He can already concoct this?! I...can't let that muscle man beat me to him." The young woman said as she vanished, taking the Yin Spirit Tears with her.

"..."

The two greeter glanced at each other for a moment and then simultaneously said:

"She stole it!"

Their hearts were sent into panic as they rushed to catch the young woman, their eyes flared with rage and a hint of madness. That was a seventh-grade elixir! How priceless was that? You bitch, give me back my elixir!

But they went in Wei Wuyin's direction while the young woman followed after Gu Hao, so they weren't even chasing her.

### **Chapter 157 - 155: Bestowed Status**

The female greeter's directions were truly spot-on. It took merely a few glances and steps to arrive before a counter that reached up to the torso of the average man. Wei Wuyin's swept his gaze over this area casually and noticed a sign hung above. It read: "Jin Hao - Alchemic Appraiser".

"Jin Hao..." Quietly muttering, Wei Wuyin saw a skinny old man with a dark-grey beard and hair on the other side. He was sitting in a grandfather rocking chair that squeaked everytime it leaned back. Dressed in a set of dull grey robes, he seemed to be an ordinary old man that didn't release a speck of aura, but Wei Wuyin's instincts told him that this man was exceptional and dangerous.

Casually leaning on the counter, Wei Wuyin noticed that the old man was having a snooze, his eyes closed and his mouth slightly opened. "Alchemic Appraiser, Jin Hao!" Wei Wuyin wasn't polite, directly shouting at the man.

"Jus...lik...dat..." The old man trembled awake while mumbling something nearly indistinct, but felt perverted. After the old man gained his bearings, he looked around and a glint in his eyes seemed ready to rip, shred, and murder someone's existence.

Wei Wuyin coughed loudly, causing the dull grey eyes of the old man to focus on him instantly, but he didn't feel any fear at this piercing gaze that seemed to contain injustice and grievance.

"I'm here to submit products." Wei Wuyin's words and intent was clear.

The old man was taken aback, looking around for a second as if unsure if this was the right place he slept. When he finally realized that he hadn't been kidnapped and placed elsewhere as a prank, he turned towards Wei Wuyin. He said with a shrug of his shoulders, "You have the wrong place, little boy. This is the Alchemic Dao Palace at sixth level, only Lord and King Alchemists are accepted here."

Wei Wuyin didn't feel offended. He understood that many forwent the opportunity to formulate a Alchemic Natal Soul, thus they had to cultivate the Dao of Alchemy with second-hand means. This disparity kept the Alchemic skills ceiling rather low, the age to skill ratio quite high, but it was acceptable in the end. After all, choosing this path meant forgoing the ability to cultivate according to the Heavenly Daos.

As for him, while he had an Alchemic Natal Soul, it was concealed. Therefore, he was seen as a thirty-seven year old alchemist based on his life aura and outfit. To those of this old man's cultivation, that would be an easy thing to determine, and it was rightfully to assume he wasn't an exception.

He didn't bother explaining and directly retrieved his token and placed it on the counter, pushing it to the edge so the old man could see. Clearly the old man was curious as he eyed Wei Wuyin, but he was also lazy. He waved his hand from his chair and the token flew into his palm.

"Hmm...Sky Noble?" His eyebrows lifted, looking at Wei Wuyin. Then, he said something that took Wei Wuyin completely by surprise: "You have silver eyes."

Wei Wuyin didn't expect that comment and merely responded succinctly, "I do."

"..." The old man was quiet for a moment and looked at the token. He finally got up from his chair and stretched for a moment, causing his bones to creak and crack.

Pop!

A particularly satisfying pop resounded as he reached his lower back and let out a moan of relief. He walked over to the counter slowly and pushed the token across the counter towards Wei Wuyin. "If you get a chance, you should visit the Martial King's Dao Pavillion. There, you'll find a Cultivation Method called Celestial Eyes of Spiritual Divinity. You should cultivate it if you can, and if you can't, then that's fine too."

Wei Wuyin frowned slightly. Celestial Eyes of Spiritual Divinity? That's quite an arrogant and lofty name.

Ornn!

A sharp pain stung his right arm, his eyes lifted his right sleeve as he saw the shifting characters. While he still didn't visually understand these characters, he knew what they meant. It was still a strange feeling to know yet not know.

Karmic Luck Value: 585.7→565.7.

First Calamity: Survived - 7/7.

Second Calamity: Suppressed - 40 Years.

'A full twenty?' He had lost twenty karmic luck in a single moment. He tried to sense the changes and influence of the Heavenly Daos, but it didn't exist. What did that mean? While he was ignorant of its particular sensation before, he was quite familiar with its distinct touch now. It felt like an echo in the mind, leading one to a compass which led to something else.

As he thought this, the old man walked forward and said, "Boy, what would you like me to appraise?"

Wei Wuyin recalled that there was a time where he hadn't felt anything personally, and that was when it was used to influence someone else. Did the Heavenly Daos just influence this old man to do something that would present me with an opportunity? Was it something he wouldn't ordinarily do?

Wei Wuyin's frown deepened.

He decided to not hold anything back. If this man was judging him and would offer him an opportunity based on his skills, then he had to bet it all. He couldn't determine this old man's cultivation, so he might as well. Without hesitation, he brought out four seventh-grade products, of four different product types—Pill, Pellet, Paste, and Elixir. They were stored in clear jade bottles that were tinted in color by their unique auras.

The old man frowned slightly as he looked at Wei Wuyin curiously. From the moment those bottles appeared, he saw their types. Typical alchemists generally had one type of specialization, not four. This was quite peculiar.

In fact, dividing your time between products was ill-advised. Most Alchemists were given exceptional titles based on their specialties, such as the Diamond Pill King or Yin Elixir Empress followed by their surname. This would look like: Yin Elixir Empress Xiao, a female Alchemic Emperor.

"The young are truly rash," the old man commented aloud before picking up a bottle. It contained a seventh-grade pill called the Sky World Pill. It was peak-tier amongst the seventh-grade, but the pill itself was merely low-quality. Wei Wuyin hadn't experimented enough to improve its quality, but it was his highest tiered pill concocted thus far.

According to its description, it can infuse the Sea of Consciousness with a flood of unique mana that sharpens one's senses towards it. This unique mana would temporarily change one's senses and perception of the world, allowing them to observe and analyze the ambient mana of the world.

This state was similar to enlightened or a short-cut to understanding and comprehending the world's mana to grasp its profoundness. Unlike the Qi Condensation Realm, which is often referred to as a Realm of Accumulation, the Astral Core Realm required comprehension of the next stage to ascend, and then one needed to overcome the subsequent Astral Tribulation to finalize the advancement.

The Sky Ruler Phase, or otherwise the Second Stage of the Astral Core Realm, required one to grasp the world's mana, to feel it, to sense it to another level from the Sixth Stage of the Qi Condensation Realm,

the False Reality Phase. This pill essentially guaranteed this state, and unless one was a complete idiot, it would be able to create a Sky Ruler!

"...This is?!" The old man clearly recognized this pill and his expression vividly shifted into one suffused with shock. "A Sky World Pill?!" His heart was racing, and it was so loud that one could hear it.

He carefully withdrew the pill and rolled it in his palm. After feeling its unique aura emissions, he shouted: "This is truly that pill!"

Not even looking at Wei Wuyin, he hurriedly checked the three other products. "A Yin Nether Tears? That's a high-tier elixir capable of enhancing a female's innate yin energies, strengthening their sea of consciousness, and heightening perception! This can alter female talent entirely!"

"The Boundless Rejuvenating Paste? This...this can heal most external injuries, and it can even heal hidden injuries that may affect battle prowess or cultivation efforts!" This was a paste that emanated an immense amount of life energies suited for healing. It was entirely white but shone like there was colorful glitter embedded into it.

"The Volcanic End Pellet?!" Besides the first two, the paste and pellet were merely low-tier, but their grades were peak-quality.

Wei Wuyin observed his startled expressions and felt that he had done the best he could. In truth, these were his best products to date with the most practical and widely wanted effects. For example, the Volcanic End Pellet can cause injury to a lower-phase Astral Core Realm expert if used right, and if used absolutely right, it can even kill one!

The old man stared at these products for a moment, his eyes returned to their usual calm. This shift was quite quick and unexpected, and he returned each product to their respective bottle. He turned his gaze to Wei Wuyin and those dull grey eyes of his were in a haze.

"Silver eyes...ha...haha...hahahaha..." He started to slowly laugh until it became full-blown. His eyes were smiling, and with a grin, he said to Wei Wuyin, "I'll take these products and mark in your token that you've earned 10,000 Imperial Merits." He waved his hand and the token that Wei Wuyin had yet to retrieve returned to his palm. A flash of light later, he threw it towards Wei Wuyin.

When Wei Wuyin found it, his eyes twitched a little. His token was no longer the standard silver, but a golden. Furthermore, the title "Sky Noble" had changed to "Heavenly King" with a spiritual mark that stated his Imperial Merits.

"Were the products worth ten thousand merits?" He asked with a bit of hesitation. It hadn't said this in a way of someone looking a gift horse in the mouth, but moreso as someone who felt cheated. A high-tier sixth-grade product was worth a single point, but a low-tier seventh-grade product was worth at least a thousand merits, and this was the lowest quality of those products. Let alone a peak-tier product.

He should have a few thousand more, no? Maybe ten thousand morem

The old man frowned and waved him off, "Little fellow, you've turned in your products. There's a rule, you can only earn ten thousand Imperial Merits maximum a year."

"I..."

Woosh!

Before Wei Wuyin could protest, feeling somewhat cheated, his vision flashed and he arrived outside the Alchemic Dao Palace. Calmly looking around, he shrugged a little. Did his luck backfire? After all, just the existence of those pills were enough to give him a Heavenly King status. He was just waiting to take the examination to become an officially recognized Alchemic King.

*'I guess not all lucky chances can lead to better gains.'* Wei Wuyin shrugged, whistling and calling forth to pegasus as he rode off. He hadn't noticed that no one was outside the entrance as he did, his mind focused on his plans of establishing a faction.

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After Wei Wuyin was sent off, the male and female greeter arrived in a fuss. They saw the old man at the corner and directly ignored him, they looked left and right to find sight of the young woman or at least the new Sky Noble of their mountain. Finding him was the same as finding her.

The old man yawned, returning to his rocking chair and started to sleep again.

Step!

At that moment, a middle-aged man with a proud expression arrived adorned in a luxurious alchemist robe with decorative images of pills made from golden fabric. He arrived at the corner and ignored the old man, he turned his gaze towards the two greeters who seemed to be scanning the world with ill-Intent.

"What are you two doing? Stop littering around my work station." He casually tried to shoo them away.

The two greeters saw the middle-aged man and birthed respectful expressions and postures. "Apologies Goldlight Pill Lord Jin, we're simply looking for a customer that came over." The young girl explained with a tense expression.

Jin Hao was a renown individual amongst the disciples and elders and was a high-level Alchemic Lord. If he developed ill-feelings towards them, they'd lose their jobs and more. It totally wasn't worth it.

Jin Hao swept his gaze carelessly, "No one's here. So leave." He didn't say anything more as he stood at the counter and simply waited while standing.

The two greeters frowned, but didn't dare talk back. They left with slow footsteps. The male greeter sent a spiritual transmission: "Are you sure you gave him the right directions?"

The female greeter truly thought she gave him the right directions. Could she have made a mistake or was he directionally challenged? In any case, they had to find him and then that thief! With hot vigor, she increased her walking speed.

### **Chapter 158 - 156: Martial King's Dao Pavilion**

*'Haaa...to think I'll be cheated. I wonder what were the Heavenly Daos original intentions?'* He was truly baffled as he considered this matter. He knew that the quirks of these lucky chances changed greatly and seemed to have defined limits but similarly wide rules. For example, to be given an opportunity to avoid a Calamity cost no Karmic Luck Value, but benefiting off it did.

It was a give and take, with safety requiring a sufficient amount of 'love' and 'attention' from the Heavenly Daos. Of course, this was merely a fabricated escape opportunity. Even without it, one can avoid the calamity and even benefit from it. That required intelligence, strength, and sometimes cunning out-of-the-box thinking.

Another was that one can lose Karmic Luck Value by coming into contact with a possible chance. The young (maybe) Blessed in Golden Milk City that he came across had passed him by without a single notice from the Heavenly Daos, yet his Karmic Luck Value decreased. This was a similar situation.

At that time, he needed to realize and act according to a certain script to benefit, and the level of his benefit varied. Who knew what would've happened if he interfered and killed those chasing after that young boy or brought him away safely?

Perhaps a string of tailored events that would've established karmic ties between them; who knows?

He had an assumption that Long Chen's adventures and meeting of beauties likely had this rule. If anything, he had to give him his due praise from always taking advantage of his opportunities. But, perhaps there were countless other beauties that he rejected and therefore lost value but gained nothing.

He didn't know, but it was a thought. Anyhow, he had somewhat lost out on this one, and it cost him twenty points. Even though that old man was likely a Prime Imperial Sage or even the Grand Imperial Sage and sole Emperor Alchemist of the sect, it still didn't matter.

*'If this is a protective talisman to help me grow safely beneath his protection, then that's utterly fucking worthless. I'd truly lose out on that one.'* Wei Wuyin's thoughts were clear, and he wasn't an idiot, easily noticing that Jin Hao was not that ordinary-looking old man. Unfortunately, he always had ways to protect himself in any given situation. Even against Astral Core Realm experts, they wouldn't necessarily be his match nor threaten his life, and to put himself in danger intentionally had never been his way of doing things.

In the end, he could only sigh. Whatever he gained from this, he could only hope that in the future, he could abuse it to its most effective limit.

"Let's go to the Extreme Monarch Monarch," he said to the pegasus who neighed and soared towards the central mountain. "According to that old man, the Martial King's Dao Pavilion has a unique method that might be suitable for me. The Celestial Eyes of Spiritual Divinity. If I were to make assumptions extrapolated from its name, then I assume it had connections with the 'Divine' characteristics my spirits took."

After muttering this, he decided to browse the Martial King's Dao Pavilion to find methods to cultivate his Saber and Elemental Natal Souls, especially methods suitable for the Astral Core Realm. This needed to be done, and he was intrigued.

A brief delay in forming his faction wouldn't bring him any harm. With that thought, he laid back and allowed this pegasus that seemed to already know the location of every important location in the sect fly freely.

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In the Extreme War Mountain, at the seventh level, an effeminate yet seemingly gorgeous young man was cultivating atop a pond with dense mists composed of astral essence. His thin eyebrows quivered slightly as his ring glowed with a dim light. He retrieved a transmission crystal. A moment later, his gorgeous appearance turned slightly unsightly.

"What do you mean you 'lost' him?" The voice was unfathomably deep, completely unlike the effeminate appearance. It seemed like it could never come from this young man, yet it did. Realizing he spoke pointlessly, he hurriedly sent a frustrated message through the crystal.

On the other side of this line was Gu Hao, who seemed to be covered in sweat and had faint wounds on his body. He was outside the Alchemic Dao Pavilion and his expression was harsh and frustrated. It seemed as if he had just finished a tough battle with a difficult opponent.

He sent: "Yes sir. It seemed he left immediately after arriving. Those at the fifth level said they saw him leaving, likely traveling to the Extreme Monarch Mountain."

After a rather tedious exchange, Gu Hao was left with gritted teeth. When the exchange was over, he gritted his teeth and looked at the body of a young woman who had her clothes torn and left bloody on the floor. She was still breathing, but weakly so.

"Miao Yu, you overconfident, idiotic, and annoying little bitch! If you hadn't interfered and challenged me to Imperial Combat, would you be reduced to your state? Hmph, since you dared to challenge, then don't say anything tonight." He reached forward, the world's mana shifted and wrapped around the body of the young woman.

There was a huge crowd that seemed to have been watching this fight with intense eyes, but most of them had eyes filled with pity.

"To think Miao Yu would lose to Gu Hao...and she even bet over her authority and autonomy to Gu Hao, tch." A disciple spoke with pity.

"Yeah...she'll lose her virginity and become his slave for a year...ah, woeful is the world when a good flower is ruined by a-"

"Shuush! He's right there, idiot." The disciple hurriedly grabbed the other speaker and brought him away.

Gu Hao brought over Miao Yu's body but when he sensed her state, his lips twitched. He spat and stomped his feet before smacking his palm, taking Miao Yu's storage ring, while Miao Yu's body, no, warm corpse, was thrown away like trash. She had ended her life with the last bits of her remaining strength, shattering her sea of consciousness and heart.

At the moment, her lifeforce was rapidly dissipating, and no one had the means to save her.

"Dumb little bitch. You challenge me to an Imperial Match and then take your own life when you lose? Fucking pathetic," he angrily spat before taking a step and flying away.

When he left, everyone moaned for the newly deceased for a brief moment. Then, they went about their lives. Regardless, events had come to an end, and it was an exciting watch, but they still had tasks and cultivation to do.



The male and female greeters were similarly watching but they could only bite their lips in frustration. Gu Hao had taken the ring, and likely the Yin Nether Tears. Their hearts were full of grievance but had nowhere to cry.

Just as they were about to leave with sadness in their hearts, a flash of light blinded them for a moment and then within the female greeter's hand, a bottle filled with blue liquid emerged.

"That little fellow wanted you to have it, so you should have it." The voice was fleeting and distant like a whistle.

Shocked, the female greeter looked at the bottle and heard those words. Before, she was full of grievance, but now she was incomparably happy so her tears fell like rain. "Thank you!"

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*'So this is the Martial King's Dao Pavilion?'* Wei Wuyin stood before a tall, wide, and squarish building on the first level of the Extreme Monarch Mountain. Unlike the Alchemic Dao Pavilion, the Martial King's Dao Pavilion was a single building that stored all of the cultivation methods within the sect.

Supposedly, it was reinforced by Spiritual Formations set up by the five Grand Imperial Monarchs. It was an initiation of sorts. Because of that, it was regarded as one of the most protected buildings in the entire sect.

He entered and realized it was quite empty. While there were some people, there weren't very many. This was like a bookstore in the mortal world. His senses were immediately assaulted by the scent of paper, leather, and cotton cloth that were typically used for book covers.

*'Physical records?'* He didn't think a sect as advanced as the Myriad Monarch Sect would employ such mortal efforts. He expected spiritual jades used to inscribe information, not written words.

Perhaps it was because writing had intent and an understanding of the mindset of the writer at the time. It might allow one to enter a state of enlightenment? He didn't really know, but he enjoyed books better than spiritual jades.

When he scanned spiritual jades, it was like all the information was copy and pasted into his mind all at once, but with a book, he could take his time and read every single thing, word by word.

An older woman was reading a book while wearing oval spectacles with black frames. She didn't bother looking up towards Wei Wuyin and simply lifted her finger and pointed. Following that point, Wei Wuyin saw a board that listed the various rules of the Martial King's Dao Pavilion.

He hadn't realized it before, but this building was at the maximum height for a level, and contained nine floors. According to these rules, each floor stored various methods of varying abilities.

It also warned that the higher the floor, the more highly ranked and typically more difficult the method. To travel from the first floor to the second, one had to pay 1 Imperial Merit. The third floor required 5 Imperial Merits.

This continued to increase by random amounts, but the ninth floor required 1,000 Imperial Merits. After reaching that floor, you were free to browse the information as you pleased, but no books can be taken

out. This meant you had to read and memorize everything you wanted. You can even inscribe it into a spiritual jade, but the various books and scrolls could not leave the premises.

He nodded, finding the stairs and ascending. The stairwell twisted in a spiral and at each floor there was a door, and at that door was a spiritual formation that seemed to require your token to activate it. This formation likely automatically deducted points.

He continued to climb until the ninth floor and entered, paying the 1000 Imperial Merits.

This was an absurd amount of Imperial Merit. It might take an individual an entire century to earn this much, and that's by taking high-level missions. For alchemists, they truly had the get-merit-quick scheme set up for them. Too bad the alchemists of this sect couldn't fully abuse this.

Furthermore, alchemists had almost no need to cultivate high-level cultivation methods with incredible difficulty as it'll take away from their time concocting, studying, or enjoying life. They already cultivate the Dao of Alchemy, why place more on their plate?

The ninth floor room was filled with bookcases and stands of individual books with plaques that stated their name and a brief description. He didn't want to bother reading too much, because unlike the Scarlet Dao Temple, this place had tens of thousands of thick, heavy books. So he swept his gaze on the names and covers of each book.

After several minutes, he realized there was no book titled Celestial Eyes of Spiritual Divinity on the ninth floor. "Wait...why did I automatically assume it was on the ninth floor?" Almost immediately, he realized his mistake. With a bitter laugh, he looked for methods that would help his Saber and Elemental Natal Souls while filling up his knowledge on the full Astral Core Realm.

He found two suitable books. Well, no. His Natal Souls found their own books. They externalized and left his body without his will once more, snatching specific books and bringing them into his hands. Once more, he could only bitterly laugh.

The first book was titled: "Elemental Origin Intent - A Guide of Nine into One."

It detailed Elemental Energies and how it was incomplete as the nine elements hadn't fully become a single type of energy, but a raw mixture without a cohesiveness. It was like how yin and yang energies needed mana to merge into yin-yang energies, the nine elemental energies required a type of Intent called the Elemental Origin Intent to create Elemental Origin Energy.

It was rare, and supposed the Divine King Han Xei had written this book and distributed it in hopes of finding a successor.

*'Again with the Divine King Han Xei looking for a successor...'* He would think the Heavenly Daos was gearing him to obtain that mantle, but it didn't seem like it. After all, he had similarly heard that the Divine King Han Xei's hidden trove of legacies had been found and a successor was obtained.

If he had to make a guess, it was properly that young man he saw with that mysteriously beautiful woman at the Myriad Yore Continent's gathering. He had an air of the elements about him, and since he was a Blessed, it made sense.

He had learned that, like the King of Everlore, the Divine King Han Xei had ascended from the continent, not died. In fact, he went on to become a founder of one of the five hegemonic sects after the King of Everlore's disappearance. Despite being an era apart, they still met in the end, and the King of Everlore had even helped Divine King Han Xei in the history records.

*'I wonder how many methods and paths he left for others to become his successor?'* He didn't think the Divine King Han Xei hadn't made numerous preparations to find his successor. After all, he publically released all this information to pique interest. It was even in the Myriad Monarch Sect.

At least he was very open with the spread of information. In fact, wasn't the King of Everlore the same?

Anyways, putting aside these two mysterious figures, the saber cultivation method was called a single word: "Saber."

It was written with a sharp edge and seemed boundlessly tyrannical and lethal. He felt his spiritual sense prick just reading the title. It contained a natural intent that seemed to infuse with the world. Quite exceptional!

It detailed a proper list that Cultivation Methods had, spiritual spells, spiritual formations, saber-type arrays of both Qi and Astral design, including qi and astral arts. It highlighted Saber Intent, and its next level: Saber Heart Intent.

It's full name was Heart of the World, World of the Saber Intent.

After spending several hours reading each word and committing it to memory, he left.

After memorizing those two books, he could only descend and return back to the first floor. The old woman still had her nose deeply in a book.

"Excuse me, do you know where the Celestial Eyes of Spiritual Divinity is?" He asked patiently.

The old woman didn't even lift her head as she pointed a finger, and swiped. A book from one of the numerous bookcases on the first floor flew out of the shelf and slid on the counter to Wei Wuyin.

Wei Wuyin's left eyelid twitched erratically. *'It's on the first floor?! With that name?!'*

### **Chapter 159 - 157: The Records Of Fuxi, Imperial Combat!**

"..." His level of skepticism was quite high as he lifted the book and saw the ordinary characters inscribed in its hardened surface: The Celestial Eyes of Spiritual Divinity, the Records of Fuxi.

Fuxi...

Wei Wuyin frowned. This name felt both familiar and unfamiliar. He flipped open the book and proceeded to reach each character on the front page. Immediately, he was welcomed by an esoteric and eccentric diagram that seemed to depict the sky, heaven, rivers, mountains, marshes, earth and flame. But they were divided, disjointed yet oddly harmonious.

The first words read: "Let there be fire, let there be words, let there be safety, let there be prosperity, and the future of the known."

His heart shook intensely, and his vision felt as if he was plunged into a body of yellow water. His lungs felt tight and breath was struggling to escape, but he couldn't breathe no matter how hard he tried. Within this world of water was a light. When his silver eyes met this light, his eyes shook and the world fragmented and shattered into an infinite amount of pieces.

*'A flame?'*

His thoughts were said and the world returned to normal, but his hands were shaking without end. He couldn't think or focus.

Closing his eyes, he recalled the experience of pain that dwelled upon his mind since that day with Ming Shufeng.

...survive in darkness, life passes...

...survive in darkness, life passes...

...survive in darkness, life passes...

The horrific, inhumane degree of pain that plunged him into an indescribable terror resurged and his hands that trembled only intensified, but his thoughts became focused and stable.

After a deep inhale and a powerful exhale, he regained himself. Opening his eyes, his silver eyes remained clear and without a hint of taint. *'That was the yellow river...'*

If it was someone else, perhaps they would be shocked by the existence of the Yellow River, but not him. He had read the Scripture of Sin and understood the intricacies of Hell. While the Yellow River was not specifically Hell, it surrounded the Eighteen Levels of Calamity that tortured sinful souls until total cleansing.

The Yellow River was a segue for souls of the deceased. It was the location said to store souls, allowing them to exist there and await their time for reincarnation. But the Yellow River shouldn't be something he could see or experience, yet he did.

"What is the origin of this book, and who is Fuxi?" He muttered quietly to himself. After calming his thoughts entirely, he continued to read the book in its entirety, but he experienced no more sudden immersions of imagination or intent. Instead, it detailed the story of Fuxi and the Cultivation Method for the Celestial Eyes of Spiritual Divinity.

According to the book, Fuxi was a benevolent entity that loved humans. He was a teacher, the most prominent and illustrious teacher of humanity, and gave them instructions on how to create fire to warm their bodies, cook their food, and light the darkness. He taught them how to fish and hunt, to grow and sustain themselves amidst a barren world. He taught them how to perceive the future so that they would no longer fear the future.

This was all it described.

"Fuxi..." He committed this name to memory. After spending several hours to inscribe every syllable and character of the book into his sea of consciousness, he calmly closed the book and slid it across the counter. "Thank you," after those words were said, he left.

When he left, the lady placed her book down and looked his way. Her eyes were curious and contained a faint trace of interest. "Did he see?" Her words were said verbally yet not a single ounce of sound was heard by those surrounding her or Wei Wuyin. When he left, he hadn't turned around.

"Silver eyes...?" Her eyes flashed briefly before sending the book back to the shelf. She returned to her book, giving it her full attention.

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Wei Wuyin left the Martial King's Dao Pavilion and was met with an unexpected, populated scene. It was already night, with the three suns' orbit being perfectly positioned to enable night. In truth, the Myriad Monarch Sect experienced night once a month at most, and today was that fated day.

In front of him was his pegasus being restrained and kept quiet, its legs were bound by shackles. There were at least ten thousand people all over, and that was merely on the ground. In the skies, aerial beasts floated and circled about containing tens or even dozens of people on their backs. These individuals were all peering down with interest.

The ten thousand numbered crowd were a mix of disciples and elders. He could see scarlet, white, black, and multicolored robes littered throughout. Their auras were also varied, with some at the Qi Condensation Realm while a few at the Astral Core Realm.

He frowned slightly, lifting his gaze to see a hulk of a man gripping a chain that led to his pegasus's shackles. He stood upon the air with an imperious gaze and wild air. This man was donning a scarlet robe, indicating his status as a member of the Extreme War Mountain.

Wei Wuyin didn't show any fear, walking forward with utter calm as he regarded the man in the sky. "You can let go of my pegasus now." His words were uttered with the most even cadence imaginable, as if this was an expected scene.

In truth, Wei Wuyin was truly calm and without a hint of ripple in his heart. The only thing he felt was a tad bit displeasure at his pegasus being chained. While it wasn't going to be his primary mount, it was still an affront to his name by binding his beast.

As the age-old saying suggests, before acting against the dog, one should first consider their master.

Gu Hao coldly snorted. He yanked the chain that he held, a surge of worldly power sent itself into the restrained pegasus. It caused the pegasus's organs to rumble, spitting out blood and kneeling on the ground; It was severely injured.

"Oh god! Gu Hao is not a character one should offend!"

"Tch, what did we expect to happen? Gu Hao isn't here to bring this new Sky Noble into the fold with gentle methods."

"Miao Yu would've been gentler, haaaa..."

Wei Wuyin didn't frown. He lifted his arms and fixed his sleeves a little, straightening out his robes while seemingly unaffected.

Gu Hao coldly said, "I represent the Grand Axis Faction, led by the Sky Noble Ji Muzhao of the Extreme War Mountain. This is an invitation to join our faction, leading the Myriad Monarch Sect to greater heights."

Gu Hao's words might seem like he was inviting, but it was a blanket threat.

Wei Wuyin finished straightening his clothes and said, "Ji Muzhao? Alright. He's the chicken."

"...What? The chicken?" The crowd was startled by Wei Wuyin's words, unsure of its meaning.

Gu Hao frowned and coldly snorted. "Will you accept or do I have to invoke Imperial Combat?"

Wei Wuyin thought about Imperial Combat. According to orientation, Imperial Combat was generally used to settle matters between disciples, but it can be taken to an extreme. Those of the same rank can't refuse a challenge of Imperial Combat, and the challenging party can set the initial terms. The challenged party can set a date, location, and their own terms which can not be refused.

This was how most things were settled, but very rarely do people enact it because the difference amongst those in the same rank wasn't very high. Those who were Mortal Common disciples were all experts at the First Stage of the Astral Core Realm, the World Sea Phase; those at the Earthly Elite were all experts at the Second Stage of the Astral Core Realm, the Sky Ruler Phase; those who were Sky Noble disciples were all at the Third Stage of the Astral Core Realm, the Soul Idol Phase.

While the differences between phases were incredibly massive, nearly insurmountable without extreme differences, but within the same realm, there were very little differences unless one was an absolute elite. Furthermore, those who had a higher degree of combat strength to surmount a realm would be given a higher rank by special exemption, so this made things fair.

However, Wei Wuyin was originally a Sky Noble and thus could be challenged by other Sky Nobles or their subordinates by proxy without the ability to refuse. This was why many were startled by his decision to descend. His arrival was a storm that would cause all sorts of blood and rain to descend. In fact, Miao Yu was already a casualty of this event.

How unfortunate...

"Unfortunately for you, I'm not a Sky Noble." Wei Wuyin calmly stated, looking at Gu Hao.

"What?! Not a Sky Noble? Was his status revoked?" The crowd went wild with speculation, and a mixture of guesses flew, but no one thought of the truth.

Gu Hao shrugged. If his status was revoked, they'll still bring this young Alchemist to their side by challenging him or using force. After all, he was an Earthly Elite and can freely challenge Wei Wuyin still, unless he became a Mortal Common disciple.

"Make your choice," Gu Hao's aura continued to dominate as she looked down upon all heaven and earth, including Wei Wuyin.

Wei Wuyin nodded. "I, Wei Wuyin, challenge Gu Hao to Imperial Combat. My terms for victory are not relevant, as I invoke Death of Self." His words rippled as he retrieved a golden token and lifted it upwards, a faint trace of light shot into the sky.

"I Invoke my right as Heavenly King of Extreme Creation Mountain to force this challenge!" Wei Wuyin's voice was loud yet unfathomably calm. Just as his words finished, a figure flashed into existence. It was an indistinct figure, but its power warped the world and pressured the hearts of the crowd. They couldn't even reach as their breaths were stuck in their lungs.

"Imperial Merits must be exchanged for a forced challenge. 100 Merits! Do you accept?" This voice was grand and boisterous, imposing and filled with boundless authority.

'A Heavenly King?! He called a Prime Imperial Sage?!' Gu Hao was deeply shocked. He easily understood the implications of this.

"I accept!" His golden token light dimmed and flashed, its points went from 9,000 to 8,900.

The reason Wei Wuyin had to force this challenge was because a lower rank disciple can refuse an Imperial Combat challenge from him, and Gu Hao might try to run away, regroup and survive for a little bit longer.

But Wei Wuyin wasn't willing to breathe the same air, live under the same sky, or exist in the same sect as Gu Hao for a second longer. His act of injuring his pegasus might not have caused him to react much, but this was no different than spitting in his face. How could his rage be small?

"If Heavenly King Wei loses to Earthly Elite Gu, then all Imperial Merits, rights, and life or death matters will be handed to the other party without any interference! You may begin."

A spherical field the size of a kilometer erected by the Prime Imperial Sage's power, separating the crowd from Gu Hao and Wei Wuyin. The pegasus was brought away as well, the chain dispersing and ensuring that Gu Hao no longer had control over its life or death.

Wei Wuyin calmly smiled, "You got your wish. If you defeat me, you can make any request, my life is yours. But if I win, well..." That smile turned into a grin, "Next year will be the anniversary of your death. I'll be sure to show respect by enjoying a bottle of fine wine for your sacrifice."

### **Chapter 160 - 158: The Death Of Gu Hao**

"Heavenly King? How is that possible?!" A disciple exclaimed from behind the spherical barrier. His eyes were fixated on Wei Wuyin's figure. The golden light from earlier could only originate from a Heavenly King's token, and only they can force a challenge against a lower rank disciple on a neutral or their own mountain.

"Are you dumb, stupid, or dumb? Can't you see that he must've officiated his status as an Alchemic King!" A more knowledgeable disciple exclaimed, causing waves of gasps and shaking eyes suffused with disbelief.

If Wei Wuyin was truly officiated, then his ability was confirmed. How terrifying was an Alchemic King from the backyard continental flat earths who was younger than forty?! He was likely the youngest Alchemic King in the last five thousand years. He might even be younger than the King of Everlore!

While this couldn't be confirmed, this simple thought caused a multitude of hearts to chaotically tremble. Especially those who knew he was born on the same continent. Was this the second King of Everlore?!

And, he didn't have an Alchemic Natal Soul?! How exceptional was his natural talent towards the Dao of Alchemy? How fearsome! How peerless!

Gu Hao's expression was no longer arrogant, but twisted and ugly. A Heavenly King? An Alchemic King before forty? His heart was similarly beating without end, and this person seemed intent on taking his life! While he had regret, there was no pill he could take.

Perhaps Wei Wuyin could concoct one, but he surely wouldn't give it to him!

"I..." Gu Hao actually didn't dare to make a move, rendered speechless and confused.

Wei Wuyin didn't bother. "Your faction is called the Grand Axis Faction? Good. Since they want to use tyrannical tactics against prestigious alchemists, showing no respect for them, then they're a scourge in this sect. After your death, I'll be sure to ensure their destruction."

His words were calm, but cold hisses resounded behind the barrier. If it was anyone else who dared to say this, perhaps they would wildly laugh and jeer, but it was a Heavenly King and an Alchemic King under forty. If he said this, then there will be countless ways to complete it.

When they thought of this, they realized why Wei Wuyin fearlessly descended from the Sky Layer: He was a Heavenly King!

Only Heavenly Kings can avoid all Imperial Combat challenges, and even other Heavenly Kings can't challenge others. These figures were the peak of the sect, and while the sect mostly allowed them to do as they pleased in some matters, bringing each other down or ensuring mutual destruction wasn't allowed. They could fight with their factions, but never each other.

Of course, this right also extends to their subordinates so that Heavenly Kings can't threaten other Heavenly Kings with their loved ones.

While their belief was wrong, they still came to this conclusion. As for Gu Hao, his eyes frowned and then a hint of wild madness entered his gaze.

"You're just a Qi Condensation Realm expert while I'm at the Second Stage of the Astral Core Realm! Our differences are as great as heaven and earth, and I can stomp you to death with a single breath!" Gu Hao wasn't an idiot; idiots would never be able to arrive at his cultivation. He knew their differences, and if he acted, then his victory was assured.

Wei Wuyin looked at Gu Hao and sighed. The Dao of Alchemy was a complete Dao; it was not incapable of combat. He retrieved three black pellets from his ring and calmly clenched his fist.

Boosh!

A vast amount of black gaseous fumes and clouds started to diffuse rapidly, seeking to consume the entire inside of the spherical barrier with this cloud of black gas.

Gu Hao's eyes narrowed as he acted swiftly. He tried to use the ambient mana of the world to restrict the gas, but it continued to spread. He retreated, believing the black gas was poison of some sort, stepping on air, he retreated and executed a brown-colored astral ward that radiated an earthen aura.



He touched the edge of the spherical barrier, and a hint of fear entered his eyes. The fear of the unknown was always terrifying.

But the gas didn't seem to affect him, only spreading to the entire barrier and then started to rapidly dissipate. In a few seconds, everything returned to normal.

Wei Wuyin slowly walked on the ground. After all, he couldn't step onto the air or use the world's mana to fly. Well, neither could Gu Hao anymore.

"Ahhhhh!" A scream echoed and a large, hulking figure fell several hundred feet in the sky and smashed heavily towards the ground. He seemed to be constantly trying to grasp the air, step on the air, but to no avail.

Boom!!

Wei Wuyin retrieved five glass-like pellets filled with glittering multicolored light. He threw it towards the ground and it smashed against the ground, and a flash of light exploded and brightly lit the entire barrier.

The crowd was utterly shocked, and nearly blinded. When they regained their sights after a few seconds, they saw Gu Hao climbing out of his man-made crater with bloodshot and enraged eyes.

"What did you do?! WHY CAN'T I CONTROL THE WORLD'S MANA?!?!" He was hysterical; completely terrified at what he had just experienced. For some reason, he couldn't manipulate the world's mana as a Sky Ruler, causing him to fall powerlessly to the ground. This was a feeling he hadn't felt for two hundred years.

Wei Wuyin shook his head, rolling up his sleeves. "You haven't noticed?" His eyes looked towards Gu Hao with a tinge of pity and questioning of his intelligence.

Gu Hao felt his heart race as he started to instinctively try to establish an astral ward against any uncertainties. Even though Wei Wuyin was unfathomable, he still couldn't defeat him, a Second Stage of the Astral Core Realm as a Qi Condensation Realm expert! He had Astral Force! Without the ability to control the world's mana, he could still obliterate him with astral arts.

"..." Gu Hao stilled. His expression was unnatural as his eyes bulged, looking at his hands and torso. With a sense of urgency, he touched his naval and tried to feel his dantian and Astral Soul, the evolved form of a Natal Soul.

"WHAT DID YOU DO?!?!" Gu Hao screamed with utter horror, fear warping his expression as he felt a sudden and abrupt sensation of powerlessness.

Wei Wuyin continued his brisk stroll towards Gu Hao. "You know what happens if your spiritual energies are sealed? Well, I guess you do know."

"What?! His Spiritual Energies are sealed?!" The crowd went wild. This was a drastic development and the worst nightmare for any cultivator. Spiritual energies originated from the spirit, which had long since merged from the Heart of Qi, and become a Natal Soul. This Natal Soul would become an Astral Soul, but the spirit was still unfathomably crucial as it was the brain center.

Typically, a cultivator controlled their spirit with its spiritual energies linking with their sea of consciousness. This was how spiritual sense was born, a sixth sense borne from the unification of spirit and mind. But if spiritual energies flow was sealed, then so was the link between mind and spirit.

They no longer had a pathway to their spirit, no longer could control their Qi or Astral Force. Furthermore, they can't even use spiritual spells.

They were essentially rendered mortal.

Wei Wuyin experienced this when his spirits went dormant when he lost his memories. He had no connection with his spirits until they awakened and reconnected with his mind.

"Now it's just me and you, man on man. You seem to have a fine body, let's see how strong it really is." Wei Wuyin calmly said, finishing rolling up his sleeves properly to reveal a set of well-defined muscles.

"You like to bully beasts? Well, let's see if you can handle a beating." He moved his fingers a little, cracking his knuckles and stretching his arms.

Only then did the crowd come to the realization that Wei Wuyin hadn't just sealed Gu Hao's spiritual energies, but likely his own. Those pellets had taken his ability to manipulate the world's mana and then sealed their spiritual energies?! How terrifying were Alchemists?!

But...

Gu Hao's mind similarly came to that conclusion, but his eyes were still suffused with a hint of confidence. Even if it was false, he clung onto it vigorously to beat back the impending, soul-crushing fear of death. "You sealed both our spiritual energies? Foolish! My body has been refined by astral force, enhanced elemental energies for four hundred years, yet you're not even forty! You think you can match me in a fist fight?!" He clenched his fist and was ready for a brawl; he would bash this fellow to death!

"Uh huh." Was Wei Wuyin's only response. Then, he kicked off.

Woosh!

His figure was insanely fast, covering the remaining distance between Gu Hao and him in a short moment. His eyes were calm as he pulled back his clenched fist and lanced it forward at Gu Hao's head.

Gu Hao's eyes widened. Without his spiritual senses, he viewed the world normally, and his mortal senses weren't refined. He only saw Wei Wuyin vanish and a big fist soaring his way. He couldn't even exclaim before it smashed against his nose.

Woosh!

Bam!

He flew like a thrown chicken, flailing by instinct trying to fly until he smashed against the barrier. His body was definitely refined to an extraordinary point as his body hadn't gone splat. He slid across the barrier, seemingly unconscious.

"Oh? Did I hold back a little too much?" Checking his fist, he expected Gu Hao's head to at least distort until disfigured. The fact he hadn't meant his head was very hard. "Well, at least you didn't die immediately." With those words said, a cold chill ran down everyone's spine.

Wei Wuyin kicked off again, his right leg pushing forward in a stomp that roared towards Gu Hao's right leg.

Crack!

"AHHHHH!" A resounding bone-snapping sound erupted from Gu Hao's right leg. But it didn't end, Wei Wuyin proceeded to stomp again and again and again, aiming for the three remaining unbroken limbs. He was ruthless, striking at the most concentrated parts of muscle and bones.

Horrific, nightmare inducing shrieks echoed out ceaselessly. The groans of the pained and frustrated shook the world. Wei Wuyin wasn't merciful and took his time, after knowing his limits of strength and what Gu Hao could withstand, he truly held nothing back.

So the crowd was left to watch a show.

A show of one man torturing a helpless expert that flailed. When he tried to verbally beg, a foot stomped towards his jaw and crushed his teeth and tongue. Even his screams became drowned by the breaking sounds of his body and bones.

"..."

"..."

"..."

Ten minutes passed. That pain-filled scream had long become a begging whimper which turned into a crying whisper which turned into silence—deathly silence.

The spherical barrier dissipated, concluding the outcome.

Wei Wuyin stood there, his hand and feet drenched in blood. His figure was absolutely terrifying, and many couldn't help but feel true and unfathomable horror in their hearts. Especially how calm he looked throughout, nary a smile nor a frown in sight.

"This can be considered as revenge for injuring my mount without considering me. Now," Wei Wuyin calmly declared as he looked towards the crowd.

That was just for injuring your mount?! Such a horrific death?

Wei Wuyin pulled out his golden token and it became brightly lit, shooting a tower of golden light into the clouds.

"I, Heavenly King of Extreme Creation Mountain, hereby issue an order of extermination on all official members of the Grand Axis Faction with these conditions.

"If anyone can cripple a Mortal Common disciple of the Grand Axis Faction, you'll obtain a free peak-tier, sixth-grade alchemical product. Earthly Elite disciples will be worth a low-tier, seventh-grade alchemical product of their choice. If anyone can kill or cripple Sky Noble Ji Muzhao of the Extreme War Mountain,

they'll be able to obtain three low-tier, seventh-grade and one high-tier, seventh-grade alchemical product of their choice! Also, if they can bring me his head personally, then I'll owe them a favor!"

"..."

"..."

"...WHAT?!?!"