

Chapter 381 - 377: Original Heart

After Wei Wuyin gathered his thoughts, he was greeted by Su Mei. She rapidly flew toward him, inspecting Wei Wuyin's with her pure black eyes. When she landed, she wanted to say something but was uncertain what.

Wei Wuyin smilingly grabbed Wu Yu's ring and conjured a string of astral force, placing it around his neck. "Inspect the conditions of everyone present. Also, mark their names and backgrounds. For those who've died today, make a list. We'll ensure their families want for nothing for the next few centuries. As for those alive, give them each one of these elixirs." As he spoke, simultaneously sending a box containing vials of life-rejuvenating elixir, Su Mei's eyes lit up. She nodded, diligently shooting off to perform her task.

Wei Wuyin didn't have the time to feel guilt or sadness for those who've lost their lives. They were dead, there was nothing else left to be said or feel about it. He could only try to lessen the struggles their families would suffer or pain felt from their passing. While he knew this was merely a patch to some, most would be ecstatic from his support. Knowing the character of some living creatures, they might even yelp in happiness at the deaths of their kin.

Tuo Bihan heavily sighed. "Little Boss, you should warn us before you perform these experiments." He wasn't sure why Wei Wuyin was conjuring Void Portals or how, but Wei Wuyin kept performing one extraordinary feat after another without end. He could only bitterly smile at this.

Wei Wuyin realized that Tuo Bihan's naming sense was becoming rather consistent when he referred to him, somewhat shocked by this. Briefly taken aback by this consistency, he responded: "Sometimes, it's a spur of the moment." While most times it wasn't, this was a truly unexpected event.

He had no idea that his Astral Souls would provoke a tribulation that would send him across multiple starfields and almost make it his burial sight. He wasn't certain they knew.

Hearing this, Tuo Bihan was startled for a moment before his bitter smile became a little warm. In cultivation, there were numerous incidents outside of a cultivator's expectations. For example, nearly being trapped on the Bloodforge Continent for decades. There were times where experimentation and quick action had to take place.

If Wei Wuyin hadn't left the Bloodforge Continent, would the Grand Spirit Trials have happened? Would the Alchemist Association be merged with the Myriad Monarch Sect? Would he be the era-defining character named the Ascendant Emperor of Neo-Dawn?

Absolutely not!

Sometimes, risks had to be made for the future. He understood this principle.

Wei Wuyin glanced over at Long Chen's group, seeing Su Mei arrive to deliver a vial of elixir to Qing Qiumu. She turned to look at Wei Wuyin, her eyes coated by a faintly pink shade and brimming with wetness. She smiled gratefully, pouring it into Na Xinyi's mouth without question and helping her refine it. He frowned, realizing that his actions had brought a lethal danger to the lives of everyone present.

He didn't know how to feel.

Wei Wuyin lifted his right arm once more, inspecting his Bloodline of Sin tattoo. He was silent for a long moment.

"Lord Wei!" A soft voice resounded from his side, snapping Wei Wuyin out of his stupor. He turned to see the crimson dressed Xue Yifei walking towards him with a faint happiness in her eyes, but the core emotion was still sadness. She had just inspected the corpse of a nearby individual that was in front of them. They were a young woman no more than twenty-five whose cultivation base was only at the Sixth Stage of the Qi Condensation Realm. She had flopped dead right in front of them.

When she inspected her and sensed not a hint of life force, she couldn't help but feel a bout of sadness, seeing a little of herself in that young woman. While she tried to feign happiness, Wei Wuyin could see her beating heart through her eyes. This brought him some relief, despite not knowing Xue Yifei for long.

If she was emotionless, uncaring for others, then she would only be a manipulatively cunning woman with some intelligence, but she actually felt for someone she didn't know. While she was happy to see him, putting on a facade, this was merely a display of strength.

Perhaps she wanted to cry, perhaps she wanted to find the cause of that young woman's death, or numerous other things, but she masked it all behind her other genuine emotions.

Xue Yifei arrived, but right when she was about to speak, Wei Wuyin grabbed her and brought her into his embrace. His tall stature caused her to bury her head into his chest, feeling his powerful heartbeat that was throbbing with unsaid emotions. She was startled by the sudden embrace.

"I'm happy you're safe," was all Wei Wuyin said into her ear. Xue Yifei felt herself nearly melt into Wei Wuyin in a warm bliss. But this only broke her facade, causing tears to well within her hazel eyes as she recalled the numerous corpses nearby. She started to tear up before they fell like gentle streams.

Feeling the wetness on his chest, he felt as if Xue Yifei was crying for him by proxy. It was a strange feeling, making him realize that his emotions were more hidden and kept close, unable to spill so easily. While he didn't believe in holding onto guilt or regret, always with the mindset of moving forward, he was still human. Unintentionally causing the deaths of so many impacted his heart, no matter how little.

That being said, even if he slaughtered millions, as long as he wanted to, he would remain unflinching in the face of such carnage. But it was these moments that he felt like he was not an emotionless monster that lived for cultivation. He's reminded of his older brother's principles and morals, to never lose his original heart.

After Qing Qiumu had Na Xinyi drank the elixir, her life signs started to rapidly improve. This brought a wave of relief to their group, but everyone's emotions were in a turmoil. Long Chen was still silent, looking as all this took place. He didn't know what to say or how to say it. Even Long Tingyu was looking at him as if he was a stranger, tears flowing ceaselessly in her eyes.

Regardless of what he said, what excuses he used, he knew the truth. He had nearly allowed Na Xinyi, a woman who had helped him for so many years, to die an abrupt death. Even if he wasn't certain she

would die, that invisible force triggered his deadly crisis instincts, so he reacted. Therefore, it was certainly harmful.

But he...avoided her.

He didn't have an explanation.

Qing Qiumu finally lifted her wet and reddened eyes towards Long Chen. She bit her lower lip harshly, nearly drawing blood, before she took a deep breath to calm herself. Then, her eyes revealed a frightening serenity as she regarded Long Chen.

This caused him to feel a chill course through his spine, unable to understand why this calm gaze was more terrifying than her rage.

Qing Qiumu slowly spoke, "I didn't want to see it before, but now I know what type of person you truly are. I can't be friends with someone like you. Whatever relationship we had, consider it concluded." She slowly lifted Na Xinyi up, about to take her to someplace more suited to treat her.

"W-wait!" Long Chen's heart nearly exploded from those words, feeling his world start to collapse. He couldn't believe Qing Qiumu right now. They've been together for nearly two decades, traveling alongside each other, fighting together, and protecting each other, but she was willing to end all that because of one slip-up?

Qing Qiumu halted. She turned towards Long Chen, her expression still the picture of serenity. Her beauty at this moment lacked a hint of her usual warmth, feeling cold and distant.

Long Chen felt his mind tumble. Qing Qiumu was looking at him with those eyes? AT HIM?! A swelling sense of rage and anger emerged within his mind, feeling as if he was being unfairly judged on this matter. He had already given his explanation! She should trust him!

Then, like a bolt of lightning, he recalled the scenes of Qing Qiumu standing together with Wei Wuyin. They stood together like the perfect immortal couple, beautiful and warm. When his eyes shifted to Na Xinyi's face, recalling her choice, his anger erupted!

"After everything we've been through, you're JUST going to END it like that?! You...YOU! You must want to be his as well, right? RIGHT?! From the beginning, it's always been like that, hasn't it?! You were just looking for an excuse to leave me to be with HIM!! You'd rather be his than mine!" His words were spewed with all his negative thoughts, not even that organized.

Long Chen hadn't realized that his face had become contorted and twisted in rage, becoming extremely unsightly.

His actions and words caused the expressions of everyone present to shift, looking at him with shock.

Qing Qiumu's eyes flashed with a chilling coldness like never before, "You're delusional. I wasn't looking for an excuse, never had a reason to. But YOU could've protected Na Xinyi, saved her from nearly dying. If you can do this to her, what's to say about me? How can I trust you?" Her words were fierce and cold. She added: "And I'm not some possession of yours to begin with, so who I'm with or decide to be with has nothing to do with you."

"I-I...I didn't mean it like that Qiu'er..." Long Chen hurriedly explained with a frantic stutter.

Qing Qiumu had witnessed Long Chen in a new light, uncertain how this came about. The little boy that held dreams of one day reaching the stars had devolved into a spiteful individual, someone who lost their original heart. She didn't hesitate to walk away with Na Xinyi in her embrace.

Xiang Ling was startled by this development, but felt disgusted by Long Chen's words. She grabbed Long Tingyu and sought to leave, but Long Chen didn't simply allow that.

"Where do you think you're taking MY little sister?!" Long Chen aggressively questioned, his spiritual aura flaring as it pressed against Xiang Ling. Caught off-guard, she let loose a groan of pain. But she was similarly at the Soul Idol Phase, so besides a brief spell of pain, she regained herself. Without hesitation, her spiritual aura flared outwards to face Long Chen's.

But Long Tingyu cried out, "Stop!" Their spiritual battle came to an abrupt end, with Long Chen staring at Long Tingyu with seemingly crazed eyes. Long Tingyu had never thought Long Chen would attack her master, feeling unfathomably lost at the moment. All of her thoughts were a complete mess.

"Just stop!" She shouted again, grasping her master's hand with her own. "Let's go." She told Xiang Ling, who glowered at Long Chen with a hostile gaze. In the end, she took Long Tingyu and flew away.

Long Chen was frozen, only able to stare blankly at the situation. The last gaze Long Tingyu gave him was as if she was looking at a complete stranger. *'How am I a stranger? What is this?! Are you all abandoning me? ME?!'* His thoughts were in utter disbelief.

Soon, he felt a soft hand enter his own. Turning around, he saw Lian Yu gently smiling towards him. This caused his raging emotions and mental instability to become better.

"I'll always be here for you, no matter what." Lian Yu said with the gentlest expression, caressing Long Chen's heated cheek.

Chapter 382 - 378: Finding Comfort

While the events that involved various emotional developments took place, a silent and easily dismissible figure was observing it all. Wrapped in cloth of black, Ying's eyes roamed at the scene before him. The corpses of several hundred individuals were quietly laying on the ground in odd positions. They were of both young and old, strong and weak, but they had met their abrupt end without warning.

Uncertain what to feel, he remained silent. He didn't know what claimed their lives so quickly, which had given him a brief fright, nor why it did so. All he could understand was that Wei Wuyin had abruptly appeared via a black sphere, and after he landed, Tuo Bihan's panic was a precursor to their deaths. Whatever Wei Wuyin had brought to this area had led to these deaths.

The order issued by him to ensure the family of these deceased wanted for nothing was an attempt to do right, clearly feeling somewhat responsible for these actions. He understood that feeling of seeking redemption, but he also knew that Wei Wuyin wasn't one to regret or feel guilt for long. This was one of the reasons his presence brought Ying comfort.

Since being left to cultivate in the Bloodforge Continent, his heart was thoroughly alleviated of the internal suffering he felt. The words that Wei Wuyin had informed him regarding what was 'Evil' had changed his mentality, delving into the future over the constant and unchangeable past.

Via the Medical Institutes established in his name, he could see the future once more brightening in the chaotic state the Bloodforge Continent had been left in. There were numerous hopeful youths with desire to save and protect others, thanking his name for their opportunity to do so. They will certainly grow to save countless lives. And this brought profound relief to his state of mind and tainted soul.

He was ready to become Wei Wuyin's Shadow.

Wei Wuyin held Xue Yifei's soft body for a few more moments before he let go, his eyes scouring the area. He soon located Ying and Xiao Bai. Turning back to Xue Yifei, he saw her tear stained face of Xue Yifei, feeling that he understood her a little more. If Yuan Longshi was cruel, temperamental, murderous, uncaring, and merciless, then Xue Yifei was the exact opposite. She seemed to be kind, understanding, a lover of life, caring, and merciful.

When he recalled her willingness to die, to accept her fate in exchange for her two servant girls, he smiled. "Let's go," he said as he used his hands to gently wipe away her tears.

Xue Yifei had always been an emotional young woman despite her intelligence, and she cared for others, even if she didn't know them. While she had grown to hide her thoughts under a neutral expression and other emotions due to royal politics, it was spewing out at the moment.

She lifted her hazel eyes to see Wei Wuyin's handsome face and strong gaze, feeling a degree of warmth and comfort, allowing her to comfortably reveal her feelings. This feeling was strange, considering they hadn't met in person for long. While they exchanged countless transmissions, it was different in person. Furthermore, there was an air of mystery that made him hard to read.

Nodding her response, she sniffled a little.

Tuo Bihan could only watch all these events as a spectator, feeling ignored. He couldn't help but bitterly laugh. Beauties truly took up all one's attention. He didn't blame Wei Wuyin, however. He was aware of Wei Wuyin's personality by now, already forgoing trying to determine what had led to this.

"Grand Sage Tuo, I hope you can assist Su Mei." Wei Wuyin turned to him and delivered his request. Of course, Tuo Bihan had long since accepted his status as a subordinate, so it was entirely unnecessary to formulate it as a request; it was an order to him. He nodded, continuously pumping his astral force from a distance into those still breathing.

Tuo Bihan flew off. No one could've predicted this event would happen, causing the untimely deaths of hundreds while dozens of others were hanging on with a single breath. He furrowed his brows. This was truly a series of unfortunate deaths.

Wei Wuyin and Xue Yifei arrived near a lively Xiao Bai who was somewhat shaken from the sudden collapse of these little humanoid lifeforms. It had even used his giant hooves to nudge at a corpse, finding it completely unresponsive. After uttering a neigh, the corpse trembled slightly from the soundwave but nothing else happened. To it, this entire event was curious.

But when it saw Wei Wuyin, all these thoughts faded away as it smiled and joyfully moved about. Wei Wuyin, Xue Yifei, and Ying didn't waste time as they leapt atop Xiao Bai and took off.

While they were soaring through the skies, Wei Wuyin looked down after feeling a burning gaze directed at him. He saw the dark, gloomy, and blazing eyes of Long Chen. Those rancorous eyes emanated endless negative emotions and killing intent.

Wei Wuyin narrowed his eyes slightly. He hadn't paid much attention to Long Chen's group drama, handling his own matters. However, when he saw that gaze, he couldn't help but consider ending Long Chen then and there. It was a fleeting thought, however. He still had Wu Yu's protection, and he didn't want to invoke his Calamity of Hell too early.

Wei Wuyin only slightly grinned at him, turning his eyes away as if saying that Long Chen simply wasn't worth his time.

On the ground, Long Chen held Lian Yu's hands as he watched Wei Wuyin abscond from the scene on Xiao Bai. When he looked at that figure riding away freely with a nation-toppling beauty, his heart couldn't help but throb with fury and hatred. But when he saw that grin, his eyes nearly bulged out of his sockets. A torrent of raging emotions chaotically exploded in his heart.

"Ow! You're hurting me," Lian Yu's soft voice resounded filled with pain. Long Chen jumped in shock, turning to see his hands tightly clenched around Lian Yu's. He had nearly crushed her hand, causing his heart to panic as he hurriedly let go. Apologizing in hopes of diffusing the situation, fumbling with his words as the thought of Lian Yu also leaving him emerged in his thoughts.

"It's okay. I'm fine," Lian Yu rubbed her reddish hand with a placating smile. She turned her water-like gaze towards Xiao Bai and said words that caused Long Chen to grow dazed, "I understand. I feel the same way."

Long Chen, for a long time, wasn't able to speak any words. For some reason, he understood what she meant and he had never felt so fortunate. He embraced Lian Yu tightly, feeling her warmth and the softness of her body, as if never wanting to let her go. Seeing her not reject him in the slightest, even hugging him in return, he felt a lively feeling resurge within his mind.

She was his only remaining light left in his life. The events of today were unpredictable. He felt thoroughly abandoned by those he once called his friends and his lovers. Furthermore, they seemed to be choosing his most hated enemy as their reason to betray him. It shattered his heart, but there was still this beautiful figure that sought to pick up the pieces.

"I love you, Lian Yu."

Lian Yu's eyes effused a light of extreme satisfaction. She thought, *'You'll all regret your choices one day.'*

Chapter 383 - 379: Seeing More, Step By Step

Three days had passed since Wei Wuyin's return. The deceased were expertly handled, and news of the event was explained away as an unfortunate accident with a Void Gate malfunction. While there were some individuals who were suspicious, there was no proof to suggest otherwise. Furthermore, the floating conspiracy theories involved the Ascendant Emperor of Neo-Dawn, a subject not one wanted to touch.

The luxurious compensation to the deceased had also brought great relief to these grieving families. This was especially the case for those families of the Null Disciples who worked near the Void Gate. A few of these families were relocated, given protection by the Myriad Monarch Sect, and directly regarded with more importance than others.

This shocked individuals, but it only showed that the sect was taking full responsibility for this incident. It highlighted their ability to handle matters in the most thorough fashion. The overall opinion of the Myriad Monarch Sect had even improved as a result.

Wei Wuyin and Su Mei were standing in the central hall of his Sky Palace. She was currently detailing her report on the measures taken place, including the various compensations given to the family of those who died. Su Mei had always been vastly superior in handling tasks, far better than Wei Wuyin at handling these matters.

Wei Wuyin calmly listened, approving of her actions. To those who died without families, they were investigated to understand the cause. If they had grudges left unfinished, they would be sealed. Due to the common event of familial eradication, there were a few that had no more than a few friends in life. These individuals, as their proxy, Su Mei had already dispatched individuals to seek out revenge.

"That is all, Lord Wei." Finishing, Su Mei bowed her head slightly.

Wei Wuyin understood her, wryly smiling as a result. While he was reluctant to inform others of what happened, he had never kept answers from Su Mei. While he hadn't divulged everything about himself to her, and she was tactful in not even wondering about certain matters, this concerned his life.

He explained, "I've ascended to the Soul Idol Phase."

Su Mei's eyes brightened. She was shocked, unable to tell. Usually, those at the Soul Idol Phases would ripple with a strong spiritual aura indicating their stance. It was this spiritual aura that caused Xiang Ling to ensnare the minds of those lower-realmed cultivators with ease when she first revealed herself on the Myriad Yore Continent. She couldn't tell Wei Wuyin's cultivation base at all, shocking her.

He continued, "The way I did so was a little abnormal. As you know, the Soul Pulse Rings become larger the greater the Manifested Spirit Energy required to grow one's Soul Idol. The greater the foundation, the more difficult the trial. When I challenged the tribulation, the Soul Pulse Rings exceeded the starfield, sending me far, far away."

"..." Su Mei's pure black eyes betrayed her shock and surprise. She had challenged the Soul Idol Astral Tribulation too, understanding that it would shift one to the next ring as long as one sought to continue. It was invisible to others, but she started on the ground and exceeded the Ninth Level of the Sky Layer of the Myriad Monarch Main Planet, sending her out of the planet's atmospheric protection. Fortunately it was only for a mere moment.

She had returned after experiencing the Chill of the Dark Void, feeling as if she had almost embraced death.

To exceed the starfield, didn't that mean he was sent far, far away?! She couldn't imagine the level of foundation required for that.

"I traversed through the starfield, this one, the next, the next, and the next. I was brought countless miles away by the last Soul Pulse Ring. I had to use a simplified version of an art I'm currently developing, trying to create an instantaneous Void Gate to conjure a Void Portal at any location. I used that to bring me back. If I hadn't, the Chill of the Dark Void there would've taken my life.

"The deaths of those individuals were due to the Chill of the Dark Void that I inadvertently brought back, far stronger than our own. That's what happened." After saying this, he lowered his eyelids in thought.

Su Mei's heart was quaking in shock, still reeling from the fact that Wei Wuyin was sent across starfields. STARFIELDS! She had a lot of other questions, but she felt it was all unnecessary. She swiftly regained her composure, "As long as you're okay, Lord Wei."

Wei Wuyin snapped out of his thoughts and warmly smiled, "As long as I'm okay." They exchanged glances, a momentary silence formed that produced an interesting atmosphere.

Su Mei lowered her gaze, "If there's nothing else."

Wei Wuyin chuckled lightly, "You can go; handle the rest of your matters." He saw Su Mei lightly nod before leaving, watching her departing figure with a fleeting haze in his eyes. When she finally escaped his view, his eyes lifted to the ceiling.

A faint ardent glow burned within his silver irises, suffused with astonishing spiritual strength. As he progressed in his cultivation, he became more exposed to the various mysteries of this world. He had gained some answers along the way, but the questions continued to pile forth. When will there be a time when he could understand all these thoughts plaguing his thoughts?

With his newfound strength, he could see more with the Eye of Truth, perceiving the world trend a little more clearly. He now felt as if this starfield was at the precipice of ruin and slaughter. He didn't know how or why, but he knew that it was traveling towards that direction.

Tens of trillions of lives slowly and unknowingly traversing towards a horrid fate. He wasn't certain if it had to do with his exposure to those devastated starfields or that starfield with the gargantuan Solar Star with that mysterious ring encircling it, but a foreboding sensation continued to batter his thoughts since.

While Wei Wuyin wasn't certain if it was due to that or an entirely different reason, he still could 'see' its approach. But he had no idea how to handle such an event. Could he even become strong enough to resist in time to prevent the starfield's ruin? A fate that might end with the destruction of their starfield?

"..." Wei Wuyin stayed silent for an entire hour, simply standing in place in contemplation.

"One step at a time. Plan ahead, but never forget to look down and steadily take each step." He recalled the words of his older brother, knowing that far-reaching plans often caused individuals to forget the process. He was facing his own calamity, unable to spare the extra time to focus on those other issues. He could only prepare for it, but remain focused on his own improvement of strength—individual and group.

Even if this starfield was destroyed, he would still etch out a way of survival for himself and those he sought to protect.

"I have to handle a few matters, then have Tuo Bihan organize the Gateway Door Entry. There's still something I need from there, and it might elevate my strength, even solve a few of these mysteries plaguing me. First, I'll leave for the Alchemic Association, see what they want. With all their scheming, I'm quite curious." He took a deep breath as he started to make plans, including how to further cultivate his strength.

He had forged Nine-Ringed Soul Idols, but that was only the 'typical' limit. A Soul Idol still contained an extremely high amount of unrefined Manifested Spirit Energy and Soul Pulse Ring Fragments within themselves that can be used to advance further. It was this very power that allowed Tuo Bihan to jump from the Six-Ringed Soul Idol to the Nine-Ringed Soul Idol. He always had the latent power to do so, and those alchemical products extracted such potential.

The Spiritual World Ascension Elixir was an eighth-grade elixir that can be taken three times max to refine the latent energies and fragments within a Soul Idol, bringing out greater potential by formulating three Soul Idol Rings. These rings could be weaker or as strong as normal rings, depending on the quality of the elixir. If low-quality, it would be weaker, while high-quality would be equal, and peak-quality having even greater strength than normal.

There was a Ninth-Grade Variant called the Soul Deity Invoker Elixir. It was named after its seemingly divine properties, allowing one to exceed the natural limits of a Soul Idol, and only worked on a naturally formed Nine-Ringed Soul Idol. Furthermore, the amount of unrefined Manifested Spirit Energy and Soul Pulse Ring Fragments of a Nine-Ringed Soul Idol was far, far greater than the others. All this unrefined potential would be refined into a single ring, the Tenth Soul Ring.

His eyes couldn't help but glow with an excited radiance. If he could forge a Ten-Ringed Soul Idol, with all four of his Astral Souls combined, he couldn't fathom the level of strength he would reach. This would give him absolute certainty in traveling inside the unknown realm environment of the Gateway Door.

He calmly recalled the materials needed to concoct this elixir, once more realizing he only had very limited attempts. There was a unique material, Soul Ash of the Divine Jade, that he only had six of, meaning he had six tries. And that was after scouring for it for years from various markets, offering obscene prices. If there was more, it simply wasn't in the hands of anyone knowledgeable of its value.

He decided to concoct this heaven-defying product.

If he succeeded...

Chapter 384 - 380: Meeting Of The Sages

The Myriad Monarch Sect as of late had become a beacon of change and development, encapsulating the future. With the news of Wei Wuyin's acquiring of the Alchemist Association spread, the world couldn't help but simmer in anticipation.

There were numerous vibrant discussions from vivacious women and high-spirited men on who will be the next Reamlord of the starfield. With their ascension, the cascading effect of the Myriad Monarch Sect's indomitable rise would be written in stone.

While the world was experiencing a noticeable shift, the Myriad Monarch Sect's five Grand Imperial Sages assembled within a particularly impressive Sky Palace settled on the eighth level of the Sky Layer. Directly above the Extreme Imperial Mountain, the meeting was ongoing.

A large round table separated the five. They stood on sides and formed a perfect circle with five symmetrical points. Tuo Bihan faintly seemed to be positioned within the leader position, his aura thrumming with extraordinary power. As a newly ascended Realmlord, he hadn't been able to control the vast and impressive spatial energies within his body causing faint ripples to emit from him at times.

As it did, Zen, the Grand Imperial Sage of the Extreme Imperial Mountain and overseer of the law and order of the sect, would squint her reptilian eyes. A wisp of envy would flit through those eyes.

Tuo Bihan had a faint smile, careless and lazy, seemingly not changing from before. He still wore his signature grey robes, sported his grey hair, and had a lazy demeanor, but that intertwined with his powerful aura made him feel imposing instead.

"...finished handling the matter of the survivors. They're being treated by our top Medical Sages. Furthermore, Heavenly King Wei has provided numerous seven-grade life rejuvenating products. They should all make a full recovery after a year or two." Yao Zhen gave out his report, clearly feeling a little out of sorts as he spoke in a semi-fluid formal tone. The event wasn't the issue, but his duty of handling this task.

As a demon and the newest Grand Imperial Sage, he wasn't typically one to handle this, but it was Wei Wuyin's request, so he tried his best. Fortunately this was a matter that needed mere overseeing, as he was not one typically handling logistics. With a faint sigh at the end, Yao Zhen's eyes of violet flame trembled slightly.

Tuo Bihan smiled at Yao Zhen, a hint of pride in his eyes.

Zen coughed lightly, "Good." Her eyes glanced at Tuo Bihan, and her face became somewhat unsightly, a mixture being not knowing whether to cry or laugh. She could only take a deep breath and say, "Besides the matter of the survivors of the Chill Incident, we should discuss the regulation of the Myriad Monarch Sect's rules. As you all know, the ranking of Sages are determined by the highest phase cultivator present within the sect. Before, the highest standard was the Sixth Stage of the Astral Core Realm, the Gravity Emission Phase, and so the highest official ranking set that as a precedent.

"With the ascension of Grand Sage Tuo, we'll have to reassign the power structure of the sect, upping the overall standard of acceptance, as according to the sect's rules. With those at the Seventh Stage of the Astral Core Realm, the Realm World Phase, also known as Realmlords, being the entry requirements to the Grand Imperial Sage rank.

"This means all Elders, Disciples, and Sages will have a change in entry requirement, thereby shifting the Power of Authority." Zen said, her voice turned a little monotone at this point. This was the way of the sect and has been for a while, having experienced this shift quite regularly. Typically, this was merely for the decreasing quality of the sect, so this will be the first time it was used to alleviate the ranking requirements.

Ji Changkong's expression contorted slightly, his emotions quite complex after hearing this. Qin Rui sighed, but showed no resistance. Yao Zhen pouted a little, but he remained silent.

This was a rule established by the Founding Monarch Wu Yu to deal with the inevitable consequences of the King of Everlore's departure. He was keenly aware that the sect would decrease in quality, and so would the overall world. At the height of the Myriad Monarch Sect, the lowest type of elder, Mortal Captain-rank Elders, had the entry requirement of the Fourth Stage of the Astral Core Realm, Spatial Resonance Phase. While Nascent Dust and Mortal Common Disciples hadn't changed, the requirement to be an Earthly Warrior Disciples were the Third Stage of the Astral Core Realm, and Sky Nobles were the Fifth Stage of the Astral Core Realm.

Heavenly Kings, this demonically talented and highest form of disciple, had to be a Realmlord before the age of five hundred. The overall standard of cultivation during the King of Everlore era was simply that high. A clear reflection difference between now and then. The Imperial Sages, Primal Imperial Sages, and Grand Imperial Sages were held to an even higher standard, with the cut off being Realmlord, Timelord, and Starlord level respectively.

With these rules finally brought up, the five Grand Imperial Sages would be reduced to one: Tuo Bihan. As the only Realmlord present, he would be the only one who can officially have such a high level of Power of Authority.

The five individuals were all extremely talented, having their fair share of fortuitous encounters and events happen to them, but this position that fought, bled, cried, and killed for would soon be stripped from them. But they held no animosity towards Tuo Bihan, only frustrated envy.

This wasn't a rule he had even brought up, clearly not minding if they were to ignore it, but there was already talks. There were numerous elders and sages who sought to elevate the sect, wishing to reverse the sect's failings with this display. It was to show the world that the standard of quality in the Myriad Monarch Sect had risen!

Zen began to list off the changes that would happen with this, including the demotion of a few Imperial Sages and Prime Imperial Sages. For example, Mortal Captain-rank Elders would no longer have an entry of the First Stage of Astral Core Realm. While the upper-limit of the Third Stage will remain, the Second Stage would be the entry requirement. Roughly 60% of all elders were about to be demoted to an Honorary Elder-like position with very little Power of Authority.

The landscape of the entire sect was about to shift.

"Does anyone have any input?" Zen inquired.

"..." None of them had. It was merely regulations and rules, a type of way to keep the peace and order of the sect.

Seeing no objections, she nodded. "Then, the order will be placed into effect over the course of the coming weeks, giving transitional time. During which, the Power of Authority will be given a waning influence to prevent radical abuse out of desperation. As for Grand Imperial Sage Qin Rui, Grand Imperial Sage Ji Changkong, Grand Imperial Sage Yao Zhen, and myself, Grand Imperial Sage Zen, we'll be considered as Prime Imperial Sages from henceforth. Furthermore, we'll no longer possess full authority over our respective Extreme Mountains, regulated to overseers until a Grand Imperial Sage of appropriate level is selected. Until then, Grand Imperial Sage Tuo Bihan will have full authority over the Extreme Penta Dao Mountains and their subsequent duties."

"..." Ji Changkong bitterly smiled. Knowing it and hearing it, they truly hit a little too different.

Zen then unexpectedly turned to Tuo Bihan, "Grand Sage Tuo..."

"Hm?" Tuo Bihan maintained his lazy smile. He was under no pressure, fully going to delegate the duties of overseeing the mountains to their former Grand Imperial Sages. He enjoyed a comfortable life so he barely managed his own mountain, let alone willing to for the others.

"I must ask: How did you ascend, becoming a Realmlord?" This question perked up everyone present, even Qin Rui. This was a question on everybody's mind. After all, Tuo Bihan was a purist cultivator and he was less powerful than that legendary purist of the Sacred Light Palace, and the latter failed miserably.

How did he succeed?

Tuo Bihan's brows faintly lifted, but it wasn't a secret. With Wei Wuyin not restricting his right to speak of certain matters, he was free to say what he wanted. As for this, it truly wasn't much to remain a secret. The world already had an inclination as to how, so why keep the suspense?

"Do you guys know of the Spiritual World Ascension Elixir and the Spatial World Ascension Elixir? They are high-tier and peak-tier alchemical products, capable of further refining one's Soul Idol and Spatial Resonance, reaching a higher level post-ascension."

Zen gasped lightly. The others wore shocked expressions. How could they not know about these legendary elixirs that were heaven-defying? The Alchemic Dao was renowned for its abilities to redefine an individual's talent and foundation, and these two elixirs were ample examples of how it was done in the Astral Core Realm. It was rumored that a sufficiently good quality version of these products can elevate a Six-Ringed Soul Idol and Six-Ripple Spatial Resonance to Nine.

Tuo Bihan then explained what had happened. Then, he faintly revealed the nine rings and nine spatial rings of his cultivation base. This left them stupefied.

Qin Rui's heart clenched in disbelief, an explosive shock was erupting in her heart. "Wei Wuyin concocted them for you?" She was so shocked that she called Wei Wuyin by his direct name, but no one besides Tuo Bihan noticed and he didn't care. Even if Tuo Bihan decided to concoct these products, he might take decades and only produce impure-quality products.

While they were aware of Wei Wuyin's heaven-defying talent, much like the King of Everlore's, they couldn't help but still find it incredibly shocking. It was hard to rid one's mind of preconceptions long since accepted since the beginning of their cultivation.

Tuo Bihan nodded, not denying it. Wei Wuyin hadn't changed his grade of light energies because that was permanently set. Even the Refraction World-Light Elixir offered no help in this regard. The only foundational factors of cultivation phases that could be changed retroactively was the Soul Idol and Spatial Resonance. These two tribulations left the body with unrefined energies that can be used to extract their latent potential.

"...I see." Zen's expression was a little ugly. She recalled her assault and berating of Wei Wuyin during that moment in the hall, her expression twisting a little more. She had a relatively decent relationship with Wei Wuyin, even having him give her little requests here and there, but after that incident, there were no requests given to her. She received no more products for her descendants or herself, leaving her certain that her actions had left her out of his favor.

A similar thought emerged in Ji Changkong's mind, realizing that standing by Long Chen had caused a noticeable change in treatment by Wei Wuyin's envoys.

Qin Rui frowned. While she wasn't in the same position as them, still receiving requests from his subordinates, also receiving some sixth-grade and seventh-grade essence-based products, she had chosen to remain chaste and uninvolved. While she had her own pride, for some reason she felt that it was very unlikely that Wei Wuyin would invest into her.

While Wei Wuyin would respect her choice thoroughly, likely to feel that her integrity and manner of carrying herself was worth investing in, he wasn't aware of it. At this moment, she bore no difference than the others. And it was unlikely she would speak to him about this matter directly, it'll just come off very odd.

"I've decided not to be your woman, remaining chaste until I desire otherwise." There was no man that wouldn't find that strange and somewhat offensive. It had to come from a third-party, and even then it had to be said correctly so as to portray her in a good light while avoiding insulting the other party.

But this belief of hers was confirmed after Yao Zhen, the only one who was actually given a little more duties than before. "You've joined Wei Wuyin's faction?" His words were sudden, prompting the others to turn their eyes over.

Tuo Bihan didn't hide it. Just like the King of Everlore in the past, only those he invested in due to whatever reasons were capable of ascending beyond the Astral Core Realm. There was very little difference in today's climate.

Nodding, he said: "The little boss has a way with words. Since he needed me, I answered the call." While he was faintly speaking in a joking manner, he couldn't help but glance at Qin Rui. Her decision meant cutting off her path to a Mystic Ascendant. There was no reason Wei Wuyin would randomly decide to invest in someone who wasn't loyal to him nor thoroughly invest in those who aren't his direct subordinates or women.

Even if he had a million eighth-grade products, this just won't change. As for the wanton spread of products? If they all had to compete, they might not even be able to afford it as they fought off the others in the starfield. They could only wait until Wei Wuyin placed some products of a high grade in the mission rewards batch, which will be fought over with even greater ferocity.

As for just asking? If it was so simple, everyone would've done so. He had once brought up Qin Rui and Yao Zhen in conversation, saying they had good talent but a weak foundation due to the era, but Wei Wuyin merely smiled it off. It wasn't cold, it was practical; thus, he understood.

Yao Zhen's pair of violet flame eyes grew in intensity, betraying his interest. There was a difference between being loyal to Wei Wuyin and loyal to the sect. Due to the rules, the Grand Monarch Lineage would always be the prime rulers of the sect, and unless someone destroys it, that's how it'll be.

Zen's breathing became somewhat heavy, a wisp of regret within her eyes. With her foundation, she would certainly die challenging the Realm World Astral Tribulation. A forlorn expression emerged on her face.

"..."

Tuo Bihan realized that, besides Yao Zhen, everyone else had become quiet and emotional. He was speechless, uncertain what to say. He couldn't help but think: "Is this how those during the King of Everlore's era felt?"

He randomly wondered if there were other cultivation societies beyond the Dark Void, if they were as reliant on alchemists as them.

"Haaa...Let's discuss the Gateway Door's finalizing date and conditions." Deciding to change the subject, he brought up the Gateway Door, a topic that had been discussed for so long. It was approaching the time for the Elemental Heaven Pavilion and Myriad Monarch Sect to send their members to scour the unknown.

Chapter 385 - 381: Trial Of The Divine King

As the world underwent a noticeable shift, preparing for the shift of the next great era, the Elemental Heaven Pavilion had two individuals that weren't as concerned.

In a particular palace in the Elemental Heaven Pavilion, on planet Divine Element, these two figures were quietly situated. One of these figures, a male youth, was in the lotus position while cultivating. Nine differently colored streams of watery lights were swarming around him like butterflies. Opening his mouth, breathing in, the nine streams converged before him, merging together until they became white. Then, they entered his mouth with great precision.

After a swallowing motion, a light breath was released from the male youth. When he opened his eyes, revealing a pair of grey irises in a sea of pristine white, his pupils flashed with white light. After this, he stretched out his arms, inducing a series of popping noises from his bones.

With a relieved moan, he smiled while observing his hands, turning them over and clenching them. With just that clench, a forceful amount of power was released causing the air to distort slightly.

The other figure was a woman, still sporting scarlet hair and a veil that concealed her every expression. She was quietly observing Lin Ming.

After he concluded his cultivation, she said: "You've improved greatly."

Lin Ming stood up, grinning after the praise. "It's been difficult," he said, remaining humble and modest, but only he knew the truth in his heart.

Senior Sister Lin silently frowned as she said with a hint of emotion, "Cultivation is difficult." Those three words were the holy mantra to every cultivator, and you'll only truly understand it when you embark on the path of cultivation. Your innate talent can only get you so far. Your environment can only get you so far. Your teacher's can only get you so far.

When she thought of this, she faintly sighed with melancholy.

Lin Ming noticed this, turning and realizing his Senior Sister was feeling quite complex. "Something wrong?" Asking, he walked closer to her.

She didn't react to this, merely responding, "I hope you succeed in obtaining the complete Inheritance of Master. If not, you might realize how difficult cultivation can become." While she didn't mean any ill-will with saying this, these words carried heavily ominous implications.

Lin Ming was startled, "What do you mean?"

Senior Sister Lin merely shook her head, changing the subject. "What harvest have you obtained from fighting Zuhei?"

Lin Ming frowned, realizing that his Senior Sister seemed to be a little different today. He decided to answer her questions and not pry too deeply, "I've gained numerous insights into the execution of Spiritual Strength. I've never realized how it can be used to integrate and infect the spiritual aura of others. When I fought him, he used his unique Intents of Battle and Slaughter to cause my Spiritual Aura to fluctuate wildly, even causing me to struggle to maintain control. Still, it reduced my fighting strength by twenty percent.

"The Elemental Origin Intent is a part of the Material Dao, not the Ethereal Dao like Battle and Slaughter, so I've gained more insights into the difference and how that applies to the aspects of spirituality, such as Spiritual Strength, Spiritual Aura, and Spiritual Sense. My own Elemental Origin Intent is more adept at suppressing energies and bringing the world's power to my use. I balanced out the difference there." As he explained a little bit of his absorbed insights, he furrowed his brows.

Zuhei was a monstrously strong cultivator, and while he was older than him by nearly two hundred years, he was incredibly powerful and talented. He possessed two Intents and an astonishing powerful physical body. That was the greatest fight he'd experienced since entering cultivation, a true high-level battle.

Senior Sister Lin nodded in approval. The difference between Ethereal Intent and Material Intent was a holistic principle that could define battles. It was similar to the usage of Internal Power and External Power, influencing them respectively. While these Intents can affect both sides, it wasn't nearly as great.

"But if I can complete my Elemental Origin Intent, I'll be able to eclipse its spiritual influence, even negate it entirely." Lin Ming added, feeling like his path hadn't ended.

Senior Sister Lin nodded, "Elemental Origin Intent is a high-level fusion-type Intent. You're still far off from completing it, bringing it to the next level, but if you can: You'll certainly become Master's Chosen." Her eyes behind the veil shone with an impassioned light. But thinking how difficult it was the complete Elemental Origin Intent, that light dimmed.

Lin Ming's confidence wasn't diminished by his Senior Sister's words, only feeling that he still had some more work to do. As for the term 'Chosen', he felt a wave of anticipation in his heart. He couldn't help but ask, "Senior Sister Lin, why did Master choose to pick his Chosen in this starfield? Why not where he comes from? Isn't the environment better, serving as a benefit to nurture greater talents?"

Senior Sister Lin was a little dismayed at this, not reproaching Lin Ming for still referring to her Master as Master despite not being officially accepted. She quietly said, "He did, he has, no, he is using the

Aeternal Sky Starfield as the main area to select talents. But he was born here, raised here, and he had established a Chosen Trial before he departed. This is why I'm here, inspecting the Chosen Trial he left behind to ensure it remains active.

"If it wasn't for those *despicable* people ambushing me, I would've only inspected it to ensure nothing was wrong and then left right after. But I suffered injuries, met you, and now you're on this path. Fate is quite interesting, no? I don't know if I should thank them for helping discover you or not. You've reached levels on your own with very little instruction, but in a better environment with higher level teachings, very few have reached your level.

"But remember, this trial was his first but it might be even more difficult than the one's in the True Element Sect. This is because the trial was established based on the standards of this starfield's golden age, when Master acted under the name of the Divine King, and the insides are still developing. In fact, you might find yourself a competitor within the trial. Master liked to do this, and that person might very well be stronger than the present you." As she said these words, explained these things, Lin Ming's expression couldn't help but change.

While he felt a bit of pride, he also felt a bit of pressure from her words. He might have to deal with a challenger inside the trial? Also, the standards of the golden age? He felt his fighting spirit wildly blaze. He clenched his fist, looking at it as if it contained his hopes and dreams. "I'll become a Chosen of the True Element Sect. Everything else can only be my stepping stone to the peak."

Senior Sister Lin lifted her gaze and quietly murmured in an uncertain voice that no one but her could hear, "You might have a competitor outside too." When she thought about the recent changes to the starfield, the era of the Ascendant Emperor of Neo-Dawn, she couldn't help but feel unknown emotions.

She knew in her heart that Wei Wuyin couldn't be compared to the mythic figure of the King of Everlore. It was impossible, and the only reason he could claim victory against the so-called Princess of Everlore was because of poor instruction and the flaws in her Alchemic Astral Soul. But he did have Elemental Origin Intent; if he entered the trial, knowing her Master's mysterious and cunning ways to handle things, they might very well clash.

There can only be one victor within the trial...

Chapter 386 - 382: Soul Deity Invoker Elixir

Within the thoroughly sealed area of Wei Wuyin's Alchemy Room, there were several exquisite lines of light that flowed from the walls, floor, and ceiling in a beautiful array of multicolored light streams. These streams contained an aura of extreme sharpness alongside a distinctive aura of alchemic energies.

They were like fireflies as they circulated at the edges of the room, while a gorgeous manifestation of a planet, solar star, and lunar satellite was seemingly merged into one. These light streams belonged to Wei Wuyin's Saber Formation designed to restrict the expansion of the unique phenomenon conjured when a ninth-grade product reached completion, the Stellar Manifestation of the Mortal Sovereign.

It was this custom-made formation infused with the free-flowing oppressive powers of the saber alongside alchemic energies ability of Containment. He had to also exert his incredible control over the world's ambient mana to pacify it. If it wasn't for all these qualities, he would find it extremely difficult to prevent the Stellar Manifestation of the Mortal Sovereign from erupting. After deploying the

formation, Wei Wuyin was capable of freely concocting these products without fear of causing an uproar with each success.

At the moment, he stood before his Nine Element Eclipse Cauldron with an unsightly and contemplative expression. His lips twitched as he observed an item floating within his cauldron's empty space. After a helpless sigh was released, he made a grabbing gesture towards the air and brought the object into his grasp.

It levitated just an inch away from his palm. The object was a single drop of cyan-colored liquid that seemed to contain a myriad of images and variations of these images within. It moved and twisted on its own, as if it had its own will and sentience. It was as if it had its own soul.

As he inspected it, how it possessed its own power, and its spiritual aura that caused his soul to seemingly feel extremely exhilarated at the mere sight of it, he couldn't help but reveal a wry smile. This was the Soul Deity Invoker Elixir, a high-tier, ninth-grade elixir.

This was the first high-tier product of the ninth-grade that he concocted, and he expected that with the rise of his cultivation base, he would have an easy time concocting this product. After all, he only had six Soul Ashes of the Divine Jade, and there was no extrapolation of more during the alchemy process. He needed to use the entire speck of ash in the concoction process.

But reality was rather harsh. His emotions were feeling rather helpless and a little disappointed because he had just finished all six concoctions, but he had outright failed five of them. If it wasn't for his insights into his failures of the first five, his ability to adapt incredibly swiftly, he might've failed all of them.

He thought that the difficulty between a low-tier and high-tier ninth-grade product would only be increased by a few times, capable of being offset by his own cultivation improvements, but it wasn't. It was almost a thousand times more difficult! He was extremely surprised by this development, feeling as if it was absolutely outrageous.

He had numerous advantages during the concoction process, such as the Celestial Eyes of Spiritual Divinity, Zenith Origin Soul's Mana Influence, an Alchemic Astral Soul supported by three other impressive Astral Souls, and an unfathomably deep comprehension of Alchemy. With these advantages, he couldn't fathom its difficulty would rise so abruptly from a single tier.

"I wonder how other Mortal Sovereigns like the King of Everlore were capable of overcoming this issue..." He muttered under his breath in heartfelt admiration. The King of Everlore had devised and concocted the Ever-Rebirth Pill, a peak-tier pill that could even reconstruct the physical body of a Mystic Ascendant Realm cultivator.

It took him twenty years to develop and concoct it according to the records and Wu Yu, making Wei Wuyin feel awed by his feat. This concoction process of six products was completed in a month's worth of time, and it was the longest concoction he'd ever done. He had to take it slow to gather sufficient information on each concoction and attempt to avoid any mistakes.

There were details within the concoction process that, even though his Celestial Eyes could perceive, he couldn't make heads or tails of without studying it thoroughly. There were even unique explanations he had to devise to overcome certain challenges, displaying his impeccable ingenuity and ability to grow as an Alchemist.

He withdrew a jade vial that was etched with a profound formation. The vial could only contain an ounce of liquid, a reflection of one complete elixir. The drop of cyan liquid flowed into it and transformed into an exact ounce of liquid.

He inspected the vial for a while, only heavily sighing after observing its calm state. He wasn't certain if it truly had a soul-like quality and it'll develop sentience. While he'd never experienced it before, there were rumors that products could gain an elementary sentient will if of a high enough grade.

He faintly suspected only peak-tier or Mystic-Rank alchemical products could do so by either touching upon the Mortal Limits or exceeding it.

"Only one..." This was the first time he had a complete and utter lack of materials to freely concoct. One of the main characteristics of the cultivation world was its excessive abundance of materials and herbs, but most of these materials and herbs were volatile and required specific cultivation methods to digest and refine; Otherwise, one had to use the Alchemic Dao to make it gentle enough and easy to refine for all cultivators.

However, he discovered that high-end resources like the Soul Ash of Divine Jade were still extremely rare due to its unique creation requirements. It required a failed Soul Impartation of the Heavens. The area or item would then leave a speck of spiritual ash that would linger for a thousand years, creating a unique environment that could allow cultivators at the Foundation Establishment Realm to easily reach the Qi Condensation Realm via interacting with their own souls.

While its uses were very low-grade, it was extremely rare.

That being said, he had numerous other supplementary and core materials to make dozens, if not hundreds, more. It was simply that single material that was extremely rare.

Now he was met with a dilemma: Who would receive it? He had four Astral Souls yet one completed product. Fortunately, he could mobilize the entire starfield in hopes of acquiring more, but that might take time to gather. The venture into the Gateway Door officially starts in a few weeks, giving him very limited time.

Despite having already given out the order halfway through this month of concoction, there was no news as of yet. This meant it might take a few months or even a year or two. Fortunately, the unrefined Manifested Spirit Energy and Fragments of the Soul Pulse Ring would remain until the Realm World Phase ascension, so he had an enormous amount of time to scour the worlds.

Furthermore, he had immense influence and could mobilize the entire starfield off his name. He had offered incredibly gracious rewards for obtaining it such as Great Astral Sea Pills, an low-tier, eighth-grade foundation product that helped him reach the one-centimeter size of his Astral Core. A frenzy was certainly being created due to it.

"There's only one vial; who's getting it? I'll let you four decide," Wei Wuyin communicated with his four Astral Souls, leaving the decision in their hands.

"..." Eden always refined products last, so its silence was thoroughly understood by everyone. With it bowing out automatically, the other three were left to decide. But...

"Yeh! Yeh! Yeh! I WANT!" Ori wasn't as patient, being extremely direct with its wants. Its excited yelps were quite cute, causing Wei Wuyin to chuckle.

"I am the Void! Time is within my will. There is no difference between now and an eternity," Kratos scoffed in refusal. While it spouted absolute nonsense that didn't really make sense, like usual, it was clearly refusing to take the elixir first.

"Tch." King said only his signature sound before retrieving his aura and connection, a clear sign of its refusal to jump at being first. Perhaps it was its pride, perhaps it was something more.

Wei Wuyin faintly smiled as he felt their true thoughts, his heart warmed as he inspected Ori. There was no way any of his Astral Souls would compete with Ori, especially considering how they were so protective of it during the Soul-Pulse Manifestation Tribulation. Despite being the oldest, it was often treated as the youngest and most precious member of the four.

He felt it had to do with its personality that seemingly lacked a strong will, being playful and easily excitable. While Eden was the most responsible and seemingly caretaker of the others' needs, a likely attribute borne due to its intelligence, allowing it to take lead in their escapades. The other two were more like odd brothers, with King arrogant edginess and Kratos propensity to spout utter unintelligible nonsense. Both of which had difficulty conveying their thoughts as clearly and freely as Ori.

"Ori, you're up." Wei Wuyin smilingly declared.

"Yay! Me first! Me first! Me first!" Ori externalized, appearing as a small star of white light with infinite activity and variations on its surface. It's spirited air was quite extraordinary, but what was shocking was its size!

Unlike before when it was one-centimeter in size, it was clearly bigger now! After ascending to the Third Stage of the Astral Core Realm, manifesting a Soul Idol, the limitations of his cultivation base for Astral Force quality had been lifted, allowing a new and higher limit to form.

With all the pre-prepared Great Sea Astral Pills and other mental, physical, and spiritual energies amplification products, he was quickly pushing his Astral Cores to their limits once more. He wondered what size the end-result will be!

Ori swooped in while he was distracted by his whimsical thoughts and absorbed the vial, bottle and all.

Wei Wuyin's lips twitched...

.....that was expensive.

Chapter 387 - 383: Alchemist Association Headquarters

Time flowed on and there was merely seven days left before the Gateway Door expedition was to be held, causing the Myriad Monarch Sect and Elemental Heaven Pavilion to be raving with activity to prepare their disciples. No one knew of the dangers that might be met within or if it'll be a disaster or an opportunity for these disciples. It was this sensation of venturing into the unknown that invigorated the spirits of these disciples, believing that the unknown always held extreme riches waiting to be plundered.

After all, Gateway Doors were merely spatial entrances that led to tiny worlds that were formed by Realmlords or higher. Realmlords were renowned for their Worldly Domain and Spatial Force, and with the latter, they could slice into the folds of space and isolate an area sufficient to house a tiny world.

These tiny worlds were divided into two types: Secret Realms and World Realms. The secret realms were often the locations that Realmlords, Timelords, and Starlords established as the storage unit for their Storage Rings. There were very few true spatial rings in existence, such as Wei Wuyin's, that contained their own independent realms.

Storage Rings were mobile keys and doors to locations in the real world, and acted as miniature-like Void Gates that brought items and objects from one location to the other. It was extremely easy to fashion, even Qi Condensation cultivators can form a small, elementary formation using space-attributed essence stones and materials.

These secret realms often contain an unfathomable amount of wealth and resources within. Those left by ancient experts who had their storage rings destroyed or simply died without extracting everything, leaving growing herbs behind.

This was the case for some secret realms left behind by Ancient Experts from older eras, and the four hegemonic forces had these uniquely constructed secret realms as well where they safely stored their most precious objects and wealth. This was their 'vault'.

The second, World Realms, were true tiny worlds that could range from the size of a continental flat earth or a planet with its own ecosystem, but it required an extreme amount of effort and resources to establish. These realms were often used as a training field for disciples or an escape plan for the expert's lineage.

The four hegemonic forces had several Gateway Doors leading to secret and world realms established by Wu Yu and the other Grand Monarchs, and the secret realm stored all their most valuable treasures and legacies, while world realms contained their descendants or training locations. If the forces were ever besieged and destroyed one day, they could retreat within and survive in secret.

Finding Gateway Doors was exceptionally difficult. It required a little bit of luck and a sufficient cultivation base that rivaled its creator. Even then, it might take up to a century of searching to accurately pinpoint it. Only those who had the means to find it or knew its location could find it with ease.

Therefore, everyone was extremely excited about this Gateway Door, knowing that regardless of the reason for its construction, they won't suffer a loss as long as they had a little bit of luck. After all, training locations or storages of treasures were the dreams for cultivators.

While this event neared, there was a planet within the starfield called Myriad Transformations. It was small in size, having a diameter of twenty thousand kilometers. There were some flat continental earths, such as the Myriad Yore Continent, that had larger surface areas. From afar, it held a unique beauty as its waters reflected a crystalline light.

It looked like a jewel in the far distance, precious and beautiful.

It was named after the founder of the Alchemist Association, and it was said to have been created by his request using the effort of numerous Starlords. There were numerous Starlords of the old era that had tried their hands at creating a planet, but many failed. There were even some Mystic Ascendants that hadn't achieved this feat. Even the Bloodforge Emperor only successfully constructed a continent for his descendants, the Bloodforge Continent.

The name, Myriad Transformations, was called this due to the Alchemist Title of the Founder, the Myriad Transformations All-Alchemist. He was one of the few alchemists, alongside the King of Everlore, that held the right to obtain the 'All' attached to their title.

It meant they had the ability to concoct each of the four products to their grade with astonishing success rates. Only the most talented and extraordinary alchemists of their generation can obtain that prefix. Unfortunately, the Myriad Transformations All-Alchemist was born after the King of Everlore had long since departed.

He was recorded as an Emperor Alchemist with an Alchemic Soul, having never ascended to the Astral Core Realm due to his lack of a Everlore Ascension Pill. The Alchemist Association had been built by him as a way to protect alchemists who sought the Alchemic Dao, braving the weakness of an Alchemic Soul.

He had forged numerous Starlords in his limited lifespan, establishing connections that would last for millennia to come. As it still stood today, remaining as a neutral force, this was evidence of its legacy. Furthermore, it was said that the Alchemist Association was the only reason that the cultivation society hadn't devolved further. If he hadn't forged loyal cultivators to protect alchemists, who knew what could've happened.

There were even faint whispers of forcing others to cultivate Alchemic Souls to mass produce products, making pill slaves. If it wasn't for the Alchemist Association, no, the Myriad Transformations All-Alchemist's foresight, who knew what would've happened to the Alchemic Dao.

He was widely heralded by Alchemists as the savior of the Alchemic Dao. It was woefully unfortunate that his cultivation was limited, making his life exceptionally short.

The headquarters of the Alchemist Association was located on Myriad Transformations and had been since it was formed. Despite its small size, none of the hegemonic forces would underestimate its Planetary Formation. With the wealth of alchemists, they certainly had the most complex and invested formation that had been worked on by generations of elite formationists through the eras.

On this planet, there was a Void Gate before a grand tower that touched the clouds. The tower was white with various beautiful markings of seven different colors that correlated to the Alchemic Dao over its surface. It glimmered with a faint radiance that made it seem like a holy object descended from beyond the heavens.

There were tens of thousands of alchemists dressed in uniform robes standing before the Void Gate, many squirmed about in anxiety. On their uniforms was the elegant embroidery of a cauldron shooting out stars. They anxiously looked at the Void Gate as if expecting the arrival of a great figure. With their current orderly formation and proper wear, they were well prepared for a grand welcome.

At the forefront of this group was a handsome middle-aged male with a seemingly unshakable calm disposition and lofty demeanor. He stood upright, as if pride and tranquility was etched into his very

bones. His pair of cyan eyes and short golden hair paired extremely well with his milky white skin and pointed ears. As an elf, he was a fine member of his species.

Beside him was a young elven woman with a veil concealing her outstanding looks, as if trying to spare the pain of men and women alike who saw her but were unable to even touch. Her daintily slim form and ample bosoms allowed her too to be a fine member of her species.

Qingye Yun and Qingye Ying were calmly observing the Void Gate. While normally a Void Gate was a one-way portal, if there were restrictive formations set on the planet to prevent abrupt invasions and one did not have a unique Void Disk to bypass this formation, they would need to connect two Void Gates together.

This was why they were all here, all waiting for a single person to arrive.

Roommmvvvv!

Weeeeeng!

Various sounds resounded from the Void Gate, causing the hearts of those present to clench. The initiation of various internal gears were seemingly spinning and formations were revolving.

The Void Gate started to flash with silver light, and its silver arc's empty space started to rapidly flash with colorful, dazzlingly attractive lights. A thin, multicolored curtain started to descend from the top of the arc to the floor. If anyone was sensitive to bright and colorful lights and were prone to seizures, these flashing lights would induce them with a hundred percent certainty.

A figure soon emerged from this curtain.

A collective gasp and various murmurs sounded.

As the figure emerged, its silver eyes swept the surrounding curiously. "I'm finally here," the figure whispered as its eyes were attracted to the giant silver tower that radiated a majestic holiness.

Qingye Yun's emotions stirred, but in the end, he calmly smiled and said respectfully with a slight bow. "The Alchemist Association's Grand Association Master, Qingye Yun, greets Ascendant Emperor Wei! Welcome!"

Qingye Ying followed directly after, "The Alchemist Association's Saintess, Qingye Ying, greets Ascendant Emperor Wei! Welcome!"

Then, a collective kneel resounded from the alchemists of all ages, races, and genders. It was as if there was no difference between them as they were one, those who pursued the Alchemic Dao.

"THE ALCHEMIST ASSOCIATION GREETES THE ASCENDANT EMPEROR, WELCOME!" They shouted in practiced unison, creating an awe-inspiring scene. With all of them kneeling, it was extremely impressive.

Wei Wuyin's robes fluttered from the sheer wind generated by their voices. A faint smile formed on his face, "And what a welcome it is."

Chapter 388 - 384: Myriad Transformations Tower

Experiencing the grand welcome ceremony performed by the Alchemist Association left Wei Wuyin smacking his lips in awe and admiration. He knew this wasn't simply due to the merger into his faction, but a wholehearted display of respect and reverence they held towards him and his identity as an alchemist.

The Void Gate behind him started to whine down, the colorful veil dissipating like smoke against a strong wind. Its deactivation signified that there would be no newcomers.

This surprised Qingye Yun deeply. He stared at Wei Wuyin's tall and imposing figure. *'Did he not bring Grand Sage Tuo?'* His expression betrayed his skepticism despite his usual calm demeanor. Wei Wuyin was a marvelous talent, and within his realm of cultivation, his foundation was unimaginably deep and unmatched in this era, but he still traveled here alone. If they had any ill-intent...

Wei Wuyin ignored Qingye Yun's wandering thoughts, inspecting the magnificent silver tower before him. He had read about this tower that represented one of the greatest alchemists in the starfield's history, the Myriad Transformations All-Alchemist. While it was rumored his cultivation base was rather lacking, his skill, innovation, foresight, intelligence, and gumption was not.

He had seen the potential for ruin that might plague alchemists and forged a force that could safeguard and represent the rights of alchemists. This force would later become the foremost authority on the Alchemic Dao beyond the King of Everlore's era. While there were Evil Cultivators that sought to use ill-means to gain strength, there wasn't a force in this world that would conceive the notion of forcefully enslaving alchemists due to its presence.

As for the tower, it didn't simply represent the Myriad Transformations All-Alchemist; it signified the freedom to pursue the Alchemic Dao. While Wei Wuyin revered the King of Everlore for his talent and revolutionary influence surpassing eras, he deeply respected the Myriad Transformations All-Alchemist in a far greater capacity.

In history, the King of Everlore was notoriously selfish, only supporting forces and individuals he'd taken a liking to. This was a well-known fact and practice still used by Alchemists today. While these figures later defined the next coming eras, the Myriad Transformations All-Alchemist was selfless and expressed unity and togetherness for all alchemists. The Alchemist Association was proof of that and the inherent difference between these two extraordinary figures.

The very culture of alchemists today only existed due to the existence of the Myriad Transformations All-Alchemist. Therefore, he silently paid his respects to the tower as he observed it with radiant eyes.

Only after a long moment did he return his gaze to the kneeling alchemists. With a faint smile, he said: "You may all rise. I, Wei Wuyin, thank you for your gracious welcome. Allow me to offer my own greetings." He clasped his hands, bowing slightly to these alchemists and the tower before him.

As he did, the kneeling alchemists were initially startled by his gesture, but a faint glimmer of respect and appreciation emerged in their bright and shocked eyes. They hadn't expected the Ascendant Emperor of Neo-Dawn to reveal such a humble side. A few who worshipped the image and idea of Wei Wuyin felt their eyes swell with hot tears, feeling as if the saying often passed from the wise that idols never matched one's expectations were sometimes and rightly false.

It was a small gesture, but one that wouldn't be forgotten.

Qingye Yun smiled with heart. He realized that Wei Wuyin was simply saying that he trusted them by coming here alone, and it caused him to feel a little reproach for his own thoughts. What ill-intent would they possibly have? In this starfield, alchemists might compete but they were bound by a sense of unity and a pursuit of a great Dao.

Qingye Yun gestured as he said, "Ascendant Emperor Wei, this way." His hands shifted and the gathering of alchemists parted a path leading to the entrance of the tower. Wei Wuyin stepped forward and walked this parted path. Qingye Yun and Qingye Ying followed along, their eyes revealing a hint of rare and raw emotions.

A few of the older, more involved, alchemists were similarly emotional. Wei Wuyin could even glean a wisp of hopefulness within their eyes, prodding his curiosity. It didn't take long before he entered the tower and was met with an extremely luxurious sight.

He hadn't noticed from afar, but when he saw the faint shimmer of seven-colored light from the floor, he realized the floor had been forged from astral stones refined by alchemic energies and intermixed with a unique earthly enriched stone. Just the feeling of walking invigorated the senses, stimulating one's cultivation.

For an alchemist, they would feel at home. He swept his eyes and observed the walls, noting they were similarly refined but with a variety of different elemental energies. This place wasn't just suitable for the Alchemic Dao but for overall cultivation. The price to construct such a high-quality foundation was likely incredible.

He saw thick, decorative pillars with characters etched on each of its four sides that released a faint glow. He noticed there were seven pillars and they pierced through the bottom floor all the way up, likely to the last, acting as the supporting beams of the tower.

When he observed these characters, he realized each pillar had a character that signified one of the aspects of the alchemical process. Amazed, he used his Celestial Gaze to inspect them.

He realized these pillars were interconnected further down, likely reaching the very core of the planet. Only then was he enlightened that this was likely the central formation core for the Planetary Formation. With that in mind, he held even more awe in his heart.

There were other decorative items on the first floor, including statues depicting Alchemic Emperors from past and present. He even saw Tuo Bihan's likeness on one of these statues. It seemed to de-age him by roughly twenty to thirty years, revealing a sporty and muscular man. This was completely different from his slim and old appearance today.

Qingye Ying arrived beside Wei Wuyin, her tone was neutral, neither subservient nor overbearing. "The Myriad Tower of Seven Paths is the true headquarters of the Alchemist Associations. As long as it stands, so will the Alchemist Association." A hint of pride leaked from her voice, betraying a smile beneath her veil.

"Impressive," Wei Wuyin commented simply.

Qingye Ying frowned slightly, but she remained silent. There was a hint of discontent towards Wei Wuyin, seemingly seeking a more awed reaction. Unfortunately, Wei Wuyin was too enthralled with inspecting the contents and depth of the tower, exploring its mysteries revealed by his Celestial Eyes.

Qingye Yun and Qingye Ying escorted him to a hall, traveling to what seemed like an isolated box embedded into a wall. They walked into this box, prompting him to follow. With curiosity in his mind, he followed along.

Thun!

A sudden sound erupted, with a faint shifting movement of the box. Then, shocked by this development, the open portion of the wall seemingly closed, sealing the three inside. But Wei Wuyin wasn't panicked by this, merely inspecting the two with him. Seeing how they were calm, with Qingye Ying stealing a glance at his reactions, he didn't ask any questions. He hadn't waited for long when he felt a feeling of being in motion.

He was traveling upwards. This lasted for a few seconds before the wall separated into two portions, revealing a new scenery. With his Celestial Eyes, he realized that the area they were in was hollow, and there were various formations uplifting the box they resided in.

"How creative," he remarked. This wasn't the first time he was shocked by ingenious developments. When he arrived at Golden Milk City, he was thoroughly shocked by their Emporium. It had multi-layered floors and moving staircases powered by earth-attributed formations.

Qingye Yun and Qingye Ying left the box, with Qingye Ying saying: "This is a Vertical Motion Shuttle. Its quite suitable for movement through the tower, considering its reach beyond the Sky Layer. It offers quick and convenient movement throughout the tower, with several of them installed within the tower in various areas."

Wei Wuyin was awed. He nodded, wondering as if this unique shuttle could be installed in the mountains. How convenient would it be to travel the six levels of the Penta Dao Extreme Mountains for disciples then?

Qingye Yun finally brought him through a hall filled with portraits and scrolls detailing important events in the Alchemist Association's history. As he spotted a few events he recalled in history, there were a few he hadn't.

There was a picture of a ship-like vessel flying through the air, arriving before the tower. This intrigued him, as it contained an object he'd never seen. While he knew of sea voyage ships, he never saw one that could fly through the skies, descending to a planet. If they existed, he sure as hell never knew of it. This sparked his curiosity.

As if noticing his focus, Qingye Ying explained: "That painting is named 'Void Voyager Descends A New Destiny'. It's dated a few years after the Alchemist Association was fully founded."

"Void Voyager? Is that the ship?" Wei Wuyin inquired, his interest piqued.

Nodding to confirm, Qingye Ying added: "It is said that it carried an Envoy of the King of Everlore."

Her words caused Wei Wuyin to be taken aback by surprise. An Envoy of the King of Everlore? Thinking of the timeline, the Alchemist Association was birthed shortly after the finalizing of the Imperial Heaven Starfield Era, the time Grand Monarch Wu Yu laid claim to the entire starfield after the King of Everlore's departure.

It should've been roughly three hundred years since the King of Everlore's departure. But how come Wu Yu said that he'd never heard from the King of Everlore after his departure? Surprised, he remained curious. He waited for Qingye Ying to clarify, but she remained silent, causing him to twist his lips with dissatisfaction.

Soon, the trio arrived at a great door that stood at ten meters in height and had numerous esoteric etchings on its surface. Even Wei Wuyin couldn't comprehend their meanings or purpose.

Qingye Yun withdrew a medallion with a cauldron spewing out stars on it from his breast pocket. He held it to the door, causing a sporadic eruption of white light for a moment before the door started to push on by some strange, undecipherable power. His Celestial Eyes weren't capable of seeing the truth, startling him.

Whatever was happening vastly exceeded his cultivation base, to the point where his Celestial Eyes were unable to perceive its qualities. "Mystic Ascendant Realm..." Wei Wuyin muttered under his breath before Qingye Yun gestured at the entrance.

"Ascendant Emperor Wei, you must be wondering why our actions thus far have been odd, especially with the continuous wagers. It is because of this. This is the Gate of the Myriad Excellence Tower, a tower structured by the Myriad Transformations All-Alchemist and the Envoy of the King of Everlore." Qingye Yun explained, but he didn't step into the door.

Wei Wuyin frowned slightly, his eyes were unable to see within nor discover how it was remaining so concealed. He turned to Qingye Yun with deep interest. "Gate of the Myriad Excellence Tower? It leads to another tower? Like a Void Gate?" It was only after Kratos squirmed slightly did he realize the faint hidden power of space within.

This surprised him because the level of spatial power within this Gate of the Myriad Excellence Tower exceeded any other spatial energy signature he'd ever come across. Even Tuo Bihan's spatial force was severely lacking.

Qingye Yun's eyes brightened, realizing that Wei Wuyin's reputation for being perceptive and intelligent was not false. With a deep breath, he turned to Wei Wuyin. With a tone of manic excitement, "Yes, it indeed does! In fact, it leads to another starfield entirely!"

Chapter 389 - 385: Divisions Of Talent

Wei Wuyin's emotions stirred, giving this seemingly ordinarily sized door another look. This was a gateway to another starfield? Which? Could it be...

His thoughts rapidly started to circulate as he contemplated the implications of this, including the bits of knowledge he'd obtained thus far. Wei Wuyin regained his calm extremely quickly. "This must've been left behind by the Envoy of the King of Everlore. It's a Void Gate, right? To where?"

Qingye Ying was incredibly shocked by how calm Wei Wuyin was, feeling utter disbelief at the moment. When she first learned of the existence of this Gate of the Myriad Excellence, she had a stupefied expression for at least an hour. Was this a difference of mental stability? She pouted beneath her veil, revealing a cute appearance that no one but Wei Wuyin could see.

Qingye Yun felt impressed by Wei Wuyin's composure, nodding inwardly in approval. He answered, "Yes. Shortly after the Alchemist Association stabilized its foundation, an Envoy of the King of Everlore descended. While I only have journals and records left by my ancestors to extrapolate from, what I can gather is that it was left for a future successor."

"Future successor?" Wei Wuyin turned his head to see Qingye Ying's cute pout, and when she noticed his gaze, she stuck out her pink tongue, believing no one was capable of witnessing her actions.

Qingye Yun confirmed his thoughts, "It was stated that all those who can manifest an Alchemic Astral Soul can enter the Gate of the Myriad Excellence Tower. What was recorded had been somewhat contradicting and vague, but what was consistently clear was that it led to another starfield and it was linked to a force with deep connections to the King of Everlore.

"Those who enter will be...much like your sect's discipleship, accepted by that force to continue their cultivation and obtain the legacy of the King of Everlore. If it wasn't for such a long time having passed, I believe it might've been a trial for a special type of disciple for the King of Everlore himself!" Qingye Yun was excited by the theory but also depressed. There had been more than eight thousand years since the end of the King of Everlore's Era, he was likely long dead.

"This is why you wanted me to help you? To enter this gateway and obtain discipleship from whatever lay on the other side?" Wei Wuyin was confused. Did Qingye Yun realize that he had an Alchemic Astral Soul? But he could've sworn it was very, very difficult to perceive. He didn't think Qingye Yun, an expert at the Sixth Stage of the Astral Core Realm, could sense it when others at his level with stronger senses and closer proximity couldn't.

"Yes, but not for you. All those without an Alchemic Astral Soul are unable to breach the gateway, repelled by a powerful force. Some have even been directly crippled." Those words verified that Qingye Yun was in the dark of his Alchemic Astral Soul, but this only served to further Wei Wuyin's confusion.

Wei Wuyin glanced at Qingye Ying, "She's the one you've chosen?"

As if offended somehow, Qingye Ying snorted softly to reveal her displeasure. She was a genuine Alchemic Astral Soul Alchemist with a boundless future; Unlike a particular someone, it was obvious that she was one who would venture into the world beyond and experience grander things.

"If that's the case, and you believe I can't travel through the gateway, then why do you need my help? After all, Saintess Ying has all the requirements to enter," Wei Wuyin said skeptically.

Qingye Yun's expression twisted slightly and even Qingye Ying's eyes flashed with a solemn light. A gust of depressed air suffused the atmosphere. The medallion within Qingye Yun's hands released a soft sound at this moment, prompting the door to close with a heavy thud.

The trio turned their eyes to the now-closed door. Wei Wuyin had never seen such an exquisite Void Gate, finding it quite interesting that something of this level had been constructed thousands of years

ago. He couldn't help but draw a link to the Ancient Void Gate found on the Bloodforge Continent. While they might not have a direct link, he felt as if they might've been constructed for the same purpose.

When he recalled losing a potential Ascendant candidate, someone who prematurely wielded exceptional spatial force before the Realm Lord level, he frowned with contemplation, reaching for the crescent moon necklace that always hung around his neck. This was likely the key to the Ancient Void Gate, similar to Qingye Yun's medallion.

He had obtained this from the first Blessed he'd killed, an unnamed Commander, and it contained the Spatial Jade Crystal. This crystal was refined with boundless lifeforce and transformed, allowing Kratos to become a Void Soul. There was also a book that required a unique spiritual spell to perceive. If he recalled correctly, it had three pages and only three words: Will, Void, and Weapon.

While he was pondering the possibilities, Qingye Yun finally ended his solemn silence with a heavy sigh. Wei Wuyin quickly made a mental note to check the contents of that book later.

"You're right. By all means, Qingye Ying should be able to enter the gateway, but there's an additional requirement we hadn't discovered and it was more implied than anything else. To develop an Alchemic Soul, you know there's a base requirement to do so, right?" Qingye Yun asked, seemingly wanting Wei Wuyin to reach a conclusion.

Wei Wuyin didn't find this annoying, merely started to ponder. His mental processing speed was empowered by four Astral Souls and extremely high-grade alchemical products. He swiftly started to evaluate possible issues. Then, a few seconds later, his silver eyes glowed faintly.

"Alchemic Talent." After stating this, Wei Wuyin turned to inspect a seemingly downtrodden Qingye Ying. Her head was lowered and her fists were tightly clenched. When Wei Wuyin entered the Eden Earth Sect, his Alchemic Talent was tested. It was only after it was discovered to be impressively high that he became a disciple to the Eden Earth Sect's Sect Master. He was forced to cultivate a unique method and birth his third spirit, which would later become Eden.

He understood the concept of innate talent, and it was how the body interacts with specific energies. For example, Qing Qiumu had the greatest wood cultivation talent in the starfield for thousands of years, having a triple set of innate qualities, which elevated her compatibility with wood energies. Even Na Xinyi had a high compatibility with Yin Energies, similarly elevating her talent.

There was also neutral-based cultivation talent, which was the rate at which one absorbed ambient essence or essence from objects. Wei Wuyin was quite talented in this regard, but he knew that Su Mei was even greater. This didn't factor his four Astral Souls that can externalize, amplifying his refinement speed by tens of thousands of times.

Many sects used this standard to give a projection of one's future limit. While the Alchemic Dao could accelerate your cultivation, it was either extremely expensive or time-consuming to practice for normal cultivators. The only way for it to help the average cultivator was to reach a very high level of skill, like Tuo Bihan, or possess a wealthy background to purchase products from others.

Qingye Yun nodded, similarly looking at Qingye Ying. "Alchemic Talent..."

Wei Wuyin blurted out in revelation, "So she had the requisite talent to develop an Alchemic Soul, but she had ruined that talent. I'm assuming it had to do with the impurities within the Everlore Ascension Pill she took? It's all about adapting the physique to unique energies, so it makes sense the impurities would influence the same line. Now, while she fits the basic requirement of an Alchemic Soul, her compatibility with alchemical energies have been severely reduced to below the acceptable threshold."

Qingye Ying was shocked by Wei Wuyin's quick deduction, further clenching her fists and biting her soft lips.

"Yes," Qingye Yin admitted. "She had taken a highly impure-quality Everlore Ascension Pill. While we had numerous Alchemic Emperors concocting this pill, it was still ninth grade and extremely difficult. We had failed for millennia, but when we succeeded, it was the highest acceptable impure-quality pill. And while it thrust her into the Astral Core Realm, it thoroughly ruined her natural talents. We hadn't expected it to be so thorough, and our plans to remedy the situation after the fact became pointless. It's not just for alchemical energies, but her Astral Soul can't absorb ambient essences to cultivate."

This time, Wei Wuyin was thoroughly shocked. He used his spiritual sense to inspect Qingye Ying, completely forgetting about etiquette. She didn't reject his spiritual sense in the slightest and he silently inhaled cold wisp of air soon after. He wouldn't have imagined she was crippled without seeming to be crippled.

Her path to cultivation was over.

"How is she recovering her expended energy?" He inquired. She had clearly concocted properly and restored herself as well during the All-Alchemic Clash.

As if expecting the question, "She's using an astral formation inscribed on her dantian and meridians, interconnected with her Astral Soul acting as independent meridians and forcefully gathering, refining, and injecting energies into her cultivation base. It gives off the illusion of her state being normal."

Wei Wuyin couldn't help but equate such deception to Wu Baozhai's Primal Yin concealment formation, giving the illusion of her intact virginity.

"..." The room went quiet for several awkward seconds.

"Haaa...okay, but why me? Why did you think I was needed for this?" Wei Wuyin finally got to the point, realizing that even if Qingye Ying did enter the gateway, she would likely be rejected either by the gate or the force beyond unless they had a solution to her issue.

It was finally here, prompting Qingye Yun's expression to become serious. "For you to reach your current level without an Alchemic Astral Soul, you must have the lowest-grade of Overlord-level talent, at least. There's an ancient method left behind by one of my ancestors, it's called the Meridian Grafting Method. We would remove Qingye Ying's tainted portions of her meridians and graft yours to her body, allowing her to regain her talent to cultivate."

Wei Wuyin frowned, shockingly adding: "So I see. But the Meridian Grafting Method only allows someone to acquire a portion of the other's talent as a result, and if you used with someone with low talent, she still wouldn't be able to enter the gateway, defeating the purpose. But what's Overlord-level

Alchemic Talent?" He had an Alchemic Astral Soul, so he knew he had the bare minimum of talent at least, but he wasn't sure about this 'Overlord-level'.

Qingye Yun didn't think Wei Wuyin was familiar with such an obscure method, finding it quite shocking.

Qingye Ying chimed in, "When the Envoy of the King of Everlore arrived, he brought along a tome of exceptional information. One of the things detailed was the division of innate talent, not factoring in unique qualities like a Physique or Meridians. There's five levels outlined: Null, Standard, Excellence, Overlord, and Chosen, and each level, besides Null, was further divided by Earthly, Worldly, and Heavenly grades."

Wei Wuyin was intrigued by this division. When she started to explain, he felt his horizons broadened. To cultivate any type of specific Spirit, one needed to reach the 'Heavenly Standard-level' of talent. As for anything beneath it, they simply couldn't absorb and refine the pure essence required for conversion. Of course, there were alchemical products that could bypass this issue.

The Null-level of talent meant either a cripple or a complete incompatibility with various energies. He recalled Zuhei's horrid response to Spatial Energy, likely revealing his Null-level talent, and realizing that there were numerous alchemical products that serve to enhance talent.

He hadn't understood what it truly meant to 'improve' talent until this moment when the differences were clearly outlined. Enlightened, he realized an issue. There were no Alchemical Products that enhanced Alchemic Talent in his memory.

As if reading his thoughts once more, Qingye Yun added: "There's many different purification products, and with a few centuries of effort, we can entirely remove the tainted portions of Qingye Ying's meridians and physique, but her innate talent would forever be damaged. And unfortunately, there's no known way to increase one's alchemic talent. While a formation is a stopgap measure, it can not replace personally refined essence and energies, making it impossible to improve one's cultivation base."

Wei Wuyin nodded in agreement. There were many ways to detoxify the body from any level of impurities with time, but even if he used a ninth-grade product to do so, removing it in a few months or a year, her talent was already decimated by her actions. There was nothing he could do except provide pills to elevate her talent.

But as a wielder of an Alchemic Astral Soul, she needed to refine or convert essence into alchemical energies to promote her strength. It was similar to how Ori had to absorb the materials of the nine elemental essences to regain its strength or amplify the 'essence' portion of its power. The other way was conversion via intent, transforming ordinary essence into a specific attribute.

Normally, this wouldn't be an issue due to Alchemical Products, but there was no alchemical energy product that existed. In fact, he was shocked to discover that nothing within the Alchemic Dao supported the Alchemic Dao, at least to his knowledge.

Her path of cultivation was truly over unless she used a drastic method like the Meridian Grafting Method. But even that had issues, and she might not even exceed Null with someone else with Heavenly Standard-level talent. As for Excellence-level talent, he wasn't certain if they knew someone of that level or how rare it was.

What he didn't know was that even Heavenly Excellence-level grafting might produce a Null-level talent or a Worldly Standard-level talent at best, meaning it still fell short.

It was why even Lin Ming's Senior Sister, Senior Sister Lin, someone with vast more experience and knowledge, had completely dismissed Qingye Ying. She was practically an invalid to the Alchemic Dao.

He furrowed his brows tightly, "You want me to sacrifice a portion of my talent and give Saintess Ying another shot at cultivating?"

Thud!

Qingye Yun uncharacteristically kneeled before Wei Wuyin with both knees on the ground, nearly kowtowing to him. "Yes! I understand the sacrifice we're asking of you, and we're willing to devote the entire Alchemist Association to you for as long as our lineage exists!"

Wei Wuyin, "..."

Chapter 390 - 386: Rejected

The ensuing silence was oppressively stifling. This was especially so for Qingye Ying. As an innately flawed alchemist and cultivator, Wei Wuyin was her one and only hope to view greater pastures and touch upon heights of the Alchemic Dao. If he refused, it wouldn't be wrong to say her future would be severed.

Qingye Yun had thrown away his dignity and kneeled before Wei Wuyin, an action that he'd never perform otherwise, but this was the only chance for his alchemist association and Qingye Ying. He felt a wad of saliva throb his throat, his lips felt dry as his knees trembled.

Wei Wuyin's silver eyes swept the duo with an indifferent gaze, something he rarely adopted. He glanced at the unique Void Gate that led to world unknowns with a connection with the King of Everlore. After a very long moment, he lightly shook his head.

Qingye Ying paled, her clenched fists caused her knuckles to become white.

"To obtain a portion of my innate talent towards the Alchemic Dao, you've schemed to peacefully acquire my acceptance to this procedure. If it wasn't for the meek manner in scheming, I'd have destroyed your so-called lineage for this. So I'll be clear, I have absolutely no intention of performing the Meridian Grafting Method for someone else, now or ever," Wei Wuyin's voice was cold as he spoke.

Shivers ran down Qingye Yun's spine, causing his heart to sink and his hope to shatter. He stayed in his kneeling position for a long while before he took a deep breath, lifting his body upright, and regaining his signature calm composure. It seemed that while disheartened, he had prepared himself for this outcome.

Qingye Ying's eyes emanated a bitter light. She disapprovingly and frustratedly said, "You don't know the true powers of an Alchemic Astral Soul. Your feats might seem impressive, but I haven't been able to cultivate my strength, so it makes sense that you were capable of beating me! If I still had my normal talent, with time, your skills would be insignificant! Furthermore...furthermore! You don't have an Alchemic Astral Soul so it's impossible for you to touch upon the peak of the Alchemic Dao!"

Wei Wuyin didn't know whether he should laugh or scoff at her words. Not only did he have an Alchemic Astral Soul, it was merged with the Eden's Mind Dao, and had the unequivocal support of three other equally terrifying Astral Souls. During their clash, he hadn't even exerted a tenth of his current abilities. After all, he had long since become an Mortal Sovereign Alchemist.

If anyone should venture into that gate and be exposed to a greater cultivation society, a greater legacy of the Alchemic Dao, then it should be him; not some failure of an alchemist and cultivator.

He shrugged internally at her words, "I don't have any solution to your issue. Perhaps they exist without requiring the sacrifice of myself, but that isn't my problem to figure out. Moreover, even this method isn't a guarantee of success, probably leading to the damnation of us both. Your action of using an impure Ninth-Grade product would definitely have consequences, consequences you would have certainly predicted, so you won't receive any of my sympathy."

Qingye Yun didn't deny his accusation. They were the Alchemist Association, the foremost authority of the Alchemic Society within the starfield, so they knew of the likely scenarios, this being one of them. He maintained his calm demeanor, saying: "I understand."

There was no ill-will within his words, seemingly an otherworldly acceptance. This caused Qingye Ying to panic, her hopeful future slowly dissipating before her eyes. She had given up power to become an Alchemist with an Alchemic Soul, even risked possible death to consume an impure ninth-grade pill, just to search for the peak of the Alchemic Dao. Her heart felt as if it was shattering into a million pieces, her eyes becoming extremely wet and red.

Qingye Yun knew that Qingye Ying was still a youngster, so her emotions were still unstable, especially in the face of hope. He could only sigh in his heart.

"I am, however, quite curious. How did you determine my talent was at this so-called Overlord-Level?" Wei Wuyin asked curiously. He wasn't able to perceive raw talent. There was no rubric to follow and he had nothing to compare himself to, so he wasn't certain.

Qingye Yun glanced at the door once more, a forlorn light flashing through his gaze as he buried the last of his hopeful wishes. He replied, "Your alchemic abilities betrayed this. Otherwise, how else can you wildly improve so much in under a decade? You had even concocted a Transcendent-quality product, signifying your outstanding talent."

Wei Wuyin furrowed his brows. The way Qingye Yun said 'transcendent-quality' was as if he had long since known about it. This startled him slightly. But why did transcendent-quality indicate his talent? He was truly quite clueless on various advanced states of alchemy.

Qingye Yun moved his eyes away and focused on Wei Wuyin, a faint knowing smile emerged on his face.

Wei Wuyin felt as if Qingye Yun was reading his thoughts, predicting them somehow. It wasn't just this one time but several times the duo seemed to glean into his inner thoughts, answering questions he pondered on without his asking. Seeing that faint smile, he felt as if this was more likely somehow.

Qingye Yun uncannily explained, "The tome left behind by the Envoy of the King of Everlore detailed more than just the divisions of talent, but the divisions on product quality and their inherent requirements. It was likely left behind so that we could strive towards making it, I believe at least. The

five qualities of Mortal-rank products, as described in the tome, are: Impure, Low, High, Peak, Transcendent.

"When you succeeded in concocting the highest grade, it was a given. Because in the tome, it was stated that only Mystic-Rank Alchemists of legend or those of Earthly Overlord Talent have the faint potential at concocting Transcendent products of the Mortal-Rank."

Wei Wuyin was sent into confusion, his mind circulating swiftly. He had already confirmed that his Zenith Origin State produced unique personalized mana within his Astral Souls, and when this mana was integrated with products, it could elevate their quality. However, he wasn't able to replicate another set of Transcendent-quality products, so this alluded to his previous speculation: during the process of gathering and infusing ambient mana, something unique had been introduced that exceeded the Mortal Limits.

However, when he sought clarification, Qingye Yun only helplessly replied that there was nothing of detail within the tome. His eyes revealed a wisp of helplessness. The reason why 'only' Earthly Overlord-level talents or Mystic-Rank Alchemists were capable of concocting this quality was simply unclear, but it being mentioned was evidence of Wei Wuyin's minimum talent range.

This caused him to frown, deciding to learn more about the divisions of talent and how they impact cultivation and concoction alike. The profundities within these concepts don't appear to be small or insignificant.

At this point, Qingye Ying couldn't keep her emotions hidden as she started to audibly sob. Behind her veil, drops of tears fell like two streams from her face. If anyone heard these sobs, their heart might soften into cotton and feel the need to console, even make a promise to help her no matter what. This was especially the case if a man was aware of her beauty, their male instincts would flare without reserve.

But Wei Wuyin was wholly indifferent towards this tearful display. Just as he was about to say something, she reached for her veil and pulled it off, revealing her reddened eyes and gorgeous countenance to the world. She looked to Wei Wuyin with those cyan-colored eyes of hers dripping with tears and grievance.

While biting her lips, she aggressively declared, "If you agree to the Meridian Grafting Method, I'll...I'll become your wife! I'll be yours!" Her words were spoken with all her might, clearly at the edge of her wits. It seemed she was making a great and unreasonable sacrifice with this. Even Qingye Yun was startled by her proposal.

But she was met with an immediate response: a cold chuckle. "You? Become my wife? What gives you the qualifications?!" Wei Wuyin felt this was ridiculous. Her act of seemingly sacrificing herself felt insulting to him, as if he wasn't worthy unless she was backed into a corner and forced. Was her beauty supposed to be so great that any man should kneel before her, seeking her approval and touch?

Qingye Ying was deeply taken aback, taking several steps back and her stream of tears stopped. She was utterly baffled by Wei Wuyin's vicious reaction.

Wei Wuyin scoffed, "Don't embarrass yourself. In my eyes, you're an essence stone in the astral market, and with your crippled state, you're even less." His words were spoken coldly, indicating her value to

him. To think she felt that her beauty or body was enough of a bargaining chip to have him even consider losing a portion of his talent. How laughable! How arrogant!

Wei Wuyin didn't lack beautiful women by his side nor in his bed, and she wasn't even unique in any way. He wasn't Long Chen, he didn't need women to elevate his position and help him ascend to the peak. That type of fortune wasn't something he wanted to rely on. Even if she belonged to some ancient alchemist lineage and would eventually solve her current issue somehow, he felt that with enough time, he would easily achieve far beyond her achievements.

He had half a mind to reveal his Alchemic Astral Soul, truly allowing her to understand her value to him. He could similarly reveal his Alchemic Stars of Mortal Spirituality, the gift of attaining the Mortal Sovereign Alchemist level, and deal an even greater blow. But he didn't. There was absolutely no benefit in doing so nor was she worth the effort.

Qingye Ying felt her entire body tremble violently. She hadn't expected this vicious rejection, her pride in shambles. There was a reason she wore the veil at all times, and that was because her beauty would elicit far too strong a reaction from males. It was so great that there were elders that wanted to devote their remaining lifespan to her, just for her favor or a glance.

Even Qingye Yun's eyelids twitched upon hearing that "an essence stone in the astral market" comment. That was quite a burning insult that felt scathing to him by association. A single astral stone was worth a million essence stones, so an Astral Market only dealt in astral stone, essentially exemplifying its worthlessness.

He could only sigh in his heart, unable to even defend his own many-great granddaughter. After all, she was trying to sell herself off like some cheap whore, an act he couldn't approve of. And he even felt more inclined to Wei Wuyin's perspective, seeing that Qingye Ying was ruined and essentially useless, unable to rival the current Wei Wuyin in talent or abilities.

Wei Wuyin, on the other hand, was the Ascendant Emperor of Neo-Dawn. He had an outstanding cultivation foundation at the age of less than fifty that eclipsed this era, and was an Emperor Alchemist that could rapidfire concoct products of the eighth-grade. Qingye Ying truly had nothing important to offer except her body and a beautiful face, nor was she worthy to even become his wife by cultivation standards. Maybe a concubine, if even that.

Seeing that Qingye Ying was sent into silent shock trying to process the situation, Wei Wuyin turned to Qingye Yun and asked: "That tome left by the Envoy, do you still have it?" Wei Wuyin was quite intrigued by this item, and he wondered what else was detailed within it.