

Pet Store 351

Chapter 351 Mysterious Girl

While the matches between the Top 10 went on, some senior guards were yawning at the borders of the Longjiang Base City.

They had grown tired of the invariable and desolate sight that they had to look at all day long.

Every now and then, some small beasts would come out of nowhere and put on a chasing show, which would be their “entertainment.”

It had been just another average day thus far, except for the ground which started to shake all of a sudden.

The laziness and tiredness was cleared away from their faces; they immediately focused their minds and tried to trace the source of the disturbance.

The vibration was approaching them swiftly. Soon, from the horizon, a huge figure that was over a dozen meters tall came running along.

One of the guards used a telescope to look. It was a ninth-rank dragon!

A dragon that had reached adulthood!

Still in shock, the guard suddenly noticed some people were sitting on the dragon’s head. This was not a wild dragon. It had a master.

While the guard was still looking into the telescope, his commander suddenly jumped out.

“Open the gates and prepare to welcome our guests,” the commander said at once.

The guards sprang to action. It seemed that their commander knew who was coming and those people had to be important.

Soon, the dragon arrived.

The guards stepped back and the gate made of stones found deep in the ocean was slowly pushed open. All the guards stood in line to salute the people arriving. Besides them, all the commanders, including a general, had also shown up to wait for their guests.

The dragon slowed down in front of them.

Four people were on top of the dragon’s head. A middle-aged man and a senior jumped off. They visibly slowed down as they approached the ground, landing softly. This action even surprised the commanders; the general was the only man who managed to keep calm and wear a smile.

“Thank you.” The old man smiled. He had a hunched back.

“You’re welcome. Our mayor has prepared a banquet for you.” The general smiled. He secretly stole a glance at the other two who were still on the head of the dragon.

Both were girls but one of them had to be the maid because she was standing behind the other girl with respect.

The girl sitting at the edge of the dragon's head was wearing a scarlet dress. She had a perfectly delicate face but there was some coldness in her eyes; her face was also devoid of expression on her face. She kept on gazing into the distance, not deigning to look at the guards even once.

The general didn't show any unhappiness, as he had been briefed about the girl's identity. It was normal that she wouldn't greet him because she had seen more than enough titled battle pet warriors.

The general inwardly heaved a sigh while maintaining that smile on his face. "This way, please. We have prepared vehicles for you."

The old man nodded. "Thank you, general, but our lady often gets car sick. We'll just head in like this."

Carsick?

The general was speechless. What a crappy excuse. You could just say that you didn't want to come down.

Of course, the general didn't say those words out loud. "It might not be convenient to be moving about with a dragon while in the city. How about you take my battle pet instead?"

The old man frowned and thought about the proposal. "My lady, what do you think?" he asked the girl. The girl finally removed her gaze from the distance and cast a look at the general. "Sure," she said after a moment of silence.

The old man was relieved. He nodded to the general.

The general curled his lips. He was a bit upset; not everyone was able to ride his battle pet. He was actually inviting them, having to adapt to their moods while seeking their approval.

Though offended, the general hid his emotions well; he summoned his battle pet immediately. It was a ninth-rank Storm Hawk, a pet of the wind family with a violent character.

As soon as the Storm Hawk came out, it began to flap its wings, stirring up dust. The girl suddenly hopped onto the pet's back,

Startled, the general hurried to comfort his Storm Hawk lest it would deem the girl an enemy.

Still, the general was too late. The moment the girl was hopping over, the Storm Hawk had already been enraged.

As the girl landed on its back, the Storm Hawk began to gather rich wind elements, with the intent to tear the girl apart.

Suddenly, the girl placed one hand on the back of the Storm Hawk and said one word.

"Halt!"

There seemed to be some ripples spreading from the girl's delicate hand.

The Storm Hawk's feathers trembled and the ground under its feet was also shaking.

Then, the heavy wind instantly died down, until it vanished without a trace.

The general could not believe this.

Did the girl just stop the Storm Hawk's killing intent?!

That was astonishing. His Storm Hawk had already reached the ninth-rank and was three ranks higher than the girl. How could she contain the hawk?!

Still, the elder and the middle-aged man didn't seem to be surprised at all. They had gotten used to it. They just showed a grin as they saw how stunned the general was.

The maid also jumped to the back of the Storm Hawk at this point, straight from the dragon's head.

The old man made a grabbing gesture in the air and the huge dragon disappeared. "Sir, let's go," he said to the general.

The general came back to his senses but he was still flustered. So, the people from that place were like this?!

The general realized that the girl wasn't minding him because of being overexposed to titled battle pet warriors. It was because she herself might have the ability of a titled battle pet warrior!

The general calmed himself down from his shock. He understood that he had embarrassed himself with that reaction. Without further ado, he hopped onto the Storm Hawk to join the others.

Before they took off, the general said to his commanders and soldiers, "Make sure you guard the borders. I'll be right back."

They saluted and shouted their agreement.

The round of matches had reached an end. The winners from the sixth to the tenth places had been settled.

Ye Hao was number eight and Su Yanying was number nine.

Number ten was taken by a battle pet warrior who was said to have been pursuing high grades in his studies.

Number seven was an explorer who had graduated from an academy a long time before.

Number six was the young man from the Zhou Family. That young man was not as powerful as Xu Kuang or Su Lingyue, but he could easily best the other participants. He had been demonstrating an overwhelming advantage at each turn.

His battle pets were qualified. His own skills, command, and strategy were all commendable.

Many people could tell that he had saved up some energy. Otherwise, he could have made it to the Top 5 and those matches would have been intense.

Night fell when the matches of the day ended.

Su Ping took Su Lingyue back home as soon as the matches ended, right after he said goodbye to Ye Hao and Su Yanying who went to see him.

Ye Hao and Su Yanying's journey at the Elite League had reached an end. From then on, they could sit down and enjoy the matches as part of the audience.

"Mr. Su, I'll be going to your store tomorrow," Ye Hao informed Su Ping.

Xu Kuang's win had provoked Ye Hao. Spending money? That was not a problem. He was from the Ye Family. Granted, he wasn't one of the core disciples but he had been born in the immediate branch anyway. Besides, he had done well by entering the Top 10. He would be given many resources and would not be in want of money.

"Sure. Any time you want." Su Ping nodded. He didn't bother to think about the reason for Ye Hao's unusual behavior.

Su Yanying forced a smile. She knew that Ye Hao was trying to compete with Xu Kuang.

She was becoming anxious by the thought that spending more money in Su Ping's store would mean more strength.

She had been born in the shantytown area. She did come from a well-off upbringing, but her family could never compare with Ye Hao's or Xu Kuang's. She had to make money all by herself.

It was over 10 o'clock at night when they got back home.

Su Ping was constantly thinking about how to freeload through the Heaven's Test so he grabbed a few bites and hurried back to his store. He didn't give his mom any chance to ask him questions. Before he left, he also told Su Lingyue to take a good rest because the next day's matches would be tough. She still had to compete in several and each of her opponents would be powerful, unlike before.

She could win all the way but that was not a reason to be relaxed; that was not a good habit.

Su Lingyue simply nodded without replying; she would obey him in every way when it came to cultivation and battle pets.

Su Ping left Su Lingyue at home to be bombarded by their mon's praise and went back to his store. He closed the door and first went through the sorting of the pets the customers left in his store that day.

He placed the pets in different groups, picked out the two for professionals training, grabbed Joanna, and went to the Demigod Burial.

Chapter 352 Heaven's Test for the Dark Dragon Hound!

After Su Ping arrived at the Demigod Burial, he merely waited at the random landing spot for a short while before a god was sent over by Joanna's true self, to escort them to her residence.

As soon as they arrived, Joanna summoned her trusted follower and inquired about Heaven's Test.

The answer was to Su Ping's relief.

It had not started yet.

But that middle-aged god had sensed the summoning and could initiate it at any time.

He was waiting for them to arrive.

That was Joanna's order before she left!

There was something else, another pleasant surprise. During the time that they were away, another two at the peak of the titled rank had sensed that their Heaven's Tests were approaching and wanted to go there to pass the test.

In the news Joanna had spread out, she mentioned that every one who showed up to pass the test would be given valuable artifacts to help them, and would also receive other heavy rewards as well. Many people at the titled rank were considering the offer. Who would want to turn down the free benefits?

Of course, some of the more prudent people chose to pass the test on their own.

They worried about the possibility of a conspiracy.

Su Ping was glad that things went well. Without further ado, he followed Joanna to meet those people.

Soon, they went to the place where the three about to go through Heaven's Test were living.

That was a hillside chamber on the mountain where Joanna's castle had been built.

At the moment, the three at the peak of the titled rank were outside, discussing something. Some at the True God Realm were there guarding, in case the three would run away. After all, they were in an important place.

The three at the peak of the titled rank were not pure gods. They were the result of gods mating with other races.

The middle-aged one who first arrived had the blood of the god race and of the sirens. Sirens were a race that originated from the Demigod Burial's distant past. Sirens were born to seduce.

Of the other two, one had the horns of a bull and a sturdy body, and the other one had a strong build with cyan inks on his body. Both had reached the peak of the titled rank and could make the breakthrough at any time.

When Su Ping and Joanna arrived with all the Celestial Gods and God Warriors, the three to be tested were startled. All of them stood up and looked at Joanna in fear.

"Your highness..."

"Your highness..."

The three seemed to be quite nervous.

Anyone of the three could have ruled over a continent on the Blue Planet. However, in front of Joanna, they were like kids who had been caught stealing candy. Su Ping felt speechless. He had stayed in the Demigod Burial for a long enough time to have become used to that scene. His vision had been broadened thanks to this.

“Hi.”

Joanna nodded. “Are you ready?” “Yes, Your Highness,” the three said in a hurry; they couldn’t help but stand up straighter as they answered.

Joanna asked Su Ping, “When do you want to start?”

“Now will be perfect. Will this place be okay?” Su Ping wondered.

“Of course.” Joanna smiled. “There’s no other place better than here. No one can break in here. I will have those people leave later, in case their aura affects the test.”

Since Su Ping knew little about this, he would just follow her advice. He nodded. “So be it. I will leave everything else to you.”

“Uh-huh”. Joanna gave out her orders. Soon, all the Celestial Gods on this mountain’s peak withdrew to the hillside. The three at the peak of the titled rank followed Joanna and Su Ping to the peak who were still accompanied by the God Warrior.

“There’s a defensive formation for the castle, but it can’t be activated to help you fend off the strikes or else the test will become harder. You will undertake the test in the sky. Have you brought the artifacts I gave you?” Joanna asked the three.

“Yes, we have. Thank you, Your Highness.”

The three nodded at once.

“Okay. Let’s start with you. Go ahead,” Joanna said to the middle-aged man who arrived first.

The middle-aged man nodded. He bowed to Joanna and flew up to the sky. He began to wear a serious expression, while he adjusted his mind to be ready to face the test.

Taking the test was not a joking matter. At the moment, he could only rely on his strength, his pet and the artifact Joanna had bestowed upon him. His influence and status in society meant nothing there.

The thought of Joanna’s artifact calmed him down a bit.

Su Ping summoned his battle pets immediately as the middle-aged person flew up. The Dark Dragon Hound and the Inferno Dragon hopped out. As for the Little Skeleton, since it had reached seventh-rank, it could no longer be trained there because the Little Skeleton’s death could not be reversed. Su Ping had to leave the Little Skeleton out of the energy refinement process.

This time, Su Ping’s focus would be on the Dark Dragon Hound and the Inferno Dragon.

Su Ping planned on saving the Purple Python for later, after the Inferno Dragon and the Dark Dragon Hound succeeded.

“Heaven’s Test...”

Su Ping gazed into the sky. This was his first time to observe Heaven’s Test. This was the test that people had to take to reach the legendary rank!

That would be hardly seen in a century on the Blue Planet!

Boom_!

When Su Ping looked up, there came a clap of thunder in the sky that was blue and unpolluted. The thunder was deafening; it seemed as if a heavy hammer had suddenly been thrown out of the void and were pounding on the sky. Su Ping was startled by the clap of thunder. Hearing the noise, the elementary rules of thunder that he had just learned were summoned in his mind; he could once again see the bolt of lightning that came into his mind the other day.

The profound meaning became vivid on his mind.

He seemed to have been enlightened.

But that feeling passed away in a flash.

Pop!

A bolt of lightning came and tore the clear sky. Electric arcs began to dance around wildly in the air.

More bolts of lightning surrounded the middle-aged man. In the sky above his head, a dark cloud floated over and grew. In an instant, the dark cloud had blotted out all the light over the peak of the mountain!

The dark had to be at least one thousand meters in diameter! "This Heaven's Test might is just so so..." the God Warrior escorting them commented with a smile.

Su Ping took his gaze away from the lightning in the sky and asked with curiosity, "Might? How can you tell?"

The God Warrior looked at Su Ping. Knowing that Su Ping was Joanna's honored guest and a mysterious human being, the former replied with a polite smile, "Mr. Su, here is the thing. The strength of the test can be seen from the scale of the dark cloud. Usually, the stronger the test is, the larger the dark cloud will be. After all, the dark cloud from which the lightning is generated needs to have energy ready as well. The scale of the dark cloud can be regarded as an indicator of the level of strength." "The cloud?" Su Ping stared at the dark cloud. He had a feeling that this reminded him of the ninth-rank skill, Thunder Storm.

Of course, this dark cloud was much larger than the one he could make using Thunder Storm. Besides, he could tell that this dark cloud was also conjuring a stronger power. Something special, something like the feeling of... destruction.

Such a sense of destruction was never seen in the Thunder Storm skill!

"Heaven's Tests vary from person to person?" Su Ping had other questions.

The God Warrior smiled. "Yes, naturally. The strength of the test is dependent on the strength and aptitude of the one being tested. Even though they are all at the peak of the ninth-rank, they have various strengths. Throughout the ages, the blessed talents always have to go through a dark cloud with a ten thousand meter range. The average ones would have to produce a cloud reaching a thousand meter radius to be good enough."

Su Ping had never expected that Heaven's Tests could be so complicated.

All of a sudden, he thought of a critical question. "If the Heaven's Test for this person is only average, when my pets freeload on his test, the effects they're going to get would also be average, right?"

The God Warrior was at a loss for words for a moment. He actually didn't have an answer. To be honest, he didn't even know why Su Ping was sending his pets to the Heaven's Test.

Joanna darted Su Ping a look. "In regards to strength, Heaven's Tests are only relevant to the one being tested. Your pets will only be refined by the test without receiving 'presents' from the process. As such, for you, the strength of the test is irrelevant!

"Think of water. When you try to wash something, the amount of the water flow won't be critical. Besides, the strength of the test will be more than enough to 'wash' your battle pets completely!"

Su Ping finally understood.

This Heaven's Test was common in strength but it could refine his pets nonetheless. The effect of the refinement had nothing to do with the strength of Heaven's Test.

"Then, what do you mean by presents?" Su Ping asked.

Joanna was apparently fed up with those nonstop questions. "You will know when you reach the legendary rank. It's like a reward given by heaven, by nature."

"All right."

While their conversation continued, the dark clouds in the sky were growing more and more violent. The bolts of lightning that were several meters thick created a suffocating environment.

Su Ping could feel that pressure on the ground. It wasn't the same thing as when he was facing a beast. This was something he couldn't figure out, something majestic and terrifying at the same time.

It was because of that terror that he was awed.

Su Ping looked up. He felt he was looking at the 'divine providence'!

"It's starting," Joanna cautioned him.

Su Ping instructed his Dark Dragon Hound to go first.

Following Joanna's advice, Su Ping didn't let both pets go together because it would increase the strength of the test by three fold!

Su Ping planned to have his pets take turns. Boom_! When the Dark Dragon Hound was within the range of the Heaven's Test, there seemed to be a hand stirring up the dark cloud in the sky. The cloud's size doubled rapidly and was able to reach a two thousand meter range. Even the hillside was covered by its shadow.

"Your Dragon Dragon Hound's strength is approaching the legendary rank," Joanna said calmly.

Su Ping nodded. After the Dark Dragon Hound went through skill strengthening, its combat strength had increased to 9.8, more powerful than beasts at the upper position of the ninth rank. But compared to other beasts of the peak of the ninth rank, the Dark Dragon Hound would not stand out yet.

Boom~!

Right then, the cloud over the middle-aged man's head began to tumble; the cloud's edge was extended further out, showing no signs of stopping!

In an instant, the dark cloud was extended to three thousand meters!

Joanna was surprised. And so was the God Warrior.

"That's how strong the... Dark Dragon Hound is?" Joanna frowned. The dark cloud would adjust its size based on the person tested, in regards to strength and potential. The higher the potential was, the stronger the Heaven's Test would be. That was why people would say "heaven was jealous of heroic geniuses". Su Ping was perplexed. Potential could also be an influential factor in Heaven's Tests? That was to say, people with great aptitude would have to endure a stronger trial, right?

Su Ping gazed at the Dark Dragon Hound.

What kind of Heaven's Test would the Dark Dragon Hound trigger?

The thundercloud kept on developing. Soon, it had grown to four thousand meters, five thousand and... from six thousand to seven thousand meters!

But the growth had not stopped yet!

The middle-aged man standing in the sky was confident at the beginning. However, as he saw how the cloud kept on stretching out, he couldn't help but begin to tremble.

He couldn't control his body.

His heart, liver, blood, and spleen were all shaking in fear!

In the blink of an eye, the cloud had reached ten thousand meters!

That was ten times the initial size!

Still, that wasn't the end!

The middle-aged man started to feel short of breath. His eyes were bloodshot, which indicated he was in extreme terror. He turned around and stared at the black dog that was using a Wind Feather skill to fly into the sky. His lips trembled and suddenly, he felt an urge to cry. He had researched Heaven's Tests.

He was a bit disappointed when he saw that his cloud was covering two thousand meters. But he was aware that he just had common potential.

However, the cloud began to expand as soon as the black dog joined him!

As he looked at massive thundercloud, the middle-aged man almost had a mental breakdown. The cloud could blast him to death!

Also, how could a dog have such a huge potential? What was the logic of that? "Ten thousand meters..." Joanna stood in a daze. She understood that Su Ping's Dark Dragon Hound was better than the other average Dark Dragon Hounds, having gone through multiple training rounds. Even so, she had never

expected that the Dark Dragon Hound would have been able to trigger such a powerful test. His Dark Dragon Hound could even compare to some powerful beings in the Demigod Burial!

The God Warrior was also staring at the sky in disbelief.

How could a pet have such great potential?

While they had surprised looks, the thundercloud kept on moving out...

The thundercloud was still tumbling over and over violently as it grew in size. Soon, the cloud had blotted out the light over the entire mountain.

Fifteen thousand meters, seventeen thousand meters... twenty thousand meters...

The development continued and there seemed to be no limit!

Joanna had turned pale by the time the cloud had expanded to twenty thousand meters. She thought of something. At this rate, not even the artifact she gave to the middle-aged man was enough to protect his life!

At this thought, she glared at Su Ping with complicated feelings. She wondered if she would be angrier or more frustrated.

He had created so much trouble for her by getting such a freaky battle pet involved!

I think I'll have to use the Shield of Ares. She took a deep breath. She placed her hand over her bracelet and suddenly, a small oval shield of golden color came out. The image of a handsome man was engraved on the shield.

She passed the shield to the middle-aged man with her mental power.

At the moment, the middle-aged man in the sky was about to pass out as he stared at the growing thundercloud. His mind was blank. He had never been so afraid before.

He regretted his decision. If time could be rewinded, he would have never gone there. This was indeed a conspiracy! In a state of desperation, he heard Joanna's voice on his mind; his anxiety was cleared away in an instant. He turned around and saw a golden shield flying toward him.

The middle-aged man was stunned as he got a clear look at the shield.

It was the shield!

The legendary Shield of Ares! An artifact that was well-known in the Divinity!

The middle-aged man stared in a daze and finally came back to his senses to grab it after it was close enough. Then, he heard Joanna's instructions.

His eyes reddened and he burst into tears!

He had experienced death and life in this short while!

Gratitude!

The middle-aged man gazed at Joanna, at her perfectly flawless face. He would commit that look into his memory. At this moment, he decided he would risk anything for her, even his life!

Taking a deep breath, the middle-aged man turned around. Calmness had returned to his face. He quickly built a connection between himself and the contract following her words.

Heaven's Test. Go ahead!

Chapter 353 A Thundercloud Fifty Thousand Meter Wide

As Joanna was passing the middle-aged man the Shield of Ares, the thundercloud was still expanding but the speed began to slow down.

"I think it's reaching its limit..."

Joanna gazed into the sky with a grave expression on her face.

The God Warrior had a solemn expression as well. A thundercloud reaching over twenty thousand meters was quite unusual. The Dark Dragon Hound even had the potential of a Celestial God!

They never took their eyes away from the clouds. Soon, the thundercloud stopped expanding. The thundercloud's reach finally stopped at about... twenty-seven thousand meters!

Su Ping, Joanna, and the God Warrior had a good enough sight to measure the diameter of the cloud with their naked eyes.

Grim-faced and shocked, the God Warrior glanced at Su Ping. All of a sudden, he understood why her highness Joanna would treat such a human being so respectfully.

This human being was not simple.

Staring at the piece of cloud, Su Ping said to himself, "That is a thundercloud that an above-average aptitude can summon."

Boom_!

The thundercloud over the mountain instantly began to dance. Countless bolts of lightning were flickering inside the cloud. It was as if a giant were smashing the cloud, generating a soul-shattering noise!

The middle-aged man stared into the thick thundercloud. He was still shaking in terror, even with the Shield of Ares. He took a deep breath to adjust himself. "Here it comes!"

Boom!

Abruptly, a bolt of lightning struck him.

The middle-aged man clenched his fingers and shouted. He first took out the artifact that Joanna had given him. This was something like an umbrella that was expanding fast while giving out a colorful hue.

The bolt of lightning landed on the umbrella. The majority of the force contained in the lightning bolt was neutralized by the umbrella and the rest of the force reached the middle-aged man, attacking his astral powers.

The middle-aged man mobilized his astral powers to offset the rest of the energy.

By the time the first bolt of lightning was gone, the middle-aged man had been drenched by his own sweat. Fear appeared in his eyes. He didn't know that the strength of the lightning could be this great.

So, this was how the test was going to be like?

The middle-aged man exercised great caution this time and directly placed the Shield of Ares in front of him.

As he readied himself, the second round of lightning was on its way. This time, there were three bolts of lightning.

Roar!!

The middle-aged man heard a growl near him. The Dark Dragon Hound was running forth. It was losing its mind!

Just then, the Dark Dragon Hound heard Su Ping's order. He was telling it to rush toward the lightning!

With its wise dog eyes, the Dark Dragon Hound could tell how terrifying the lightning was. But that evildoer was telling it to charge at the lightning without any defensive skills! This is a trap!

The Dark Dragon Hound even had an urge to hurt Su Ping.

When the Dark Dragon Hound first became Su Ping's pet, it did try to hurt him. However, the Dark Dragon Hound would go through more pain if it disobeyed.

There was nothing else it could do other than resigning to fate since it had such a demon as its master.

Roar!

Come on!!

The Dark Dragon Hound cried wildly as it threw itself at the first bolt of lightning.

The lightning fried the Dark Dragon HoundThe next second. Its fur was burned. Even its bones had become visible the moment the lightning struck.

That hurt so badly!

The Dark Dragon Hound was almost at the last gasp. However, it received a second order from that demon: he was saying to have another go!

@#¥%&!

The Dark Dragon Hound was furious. It roared to vent its rage, but eventually threw its body -filled with scars and wounds strung together like beads—to the lightning once more.

Soon, the second bolt of lightning smashed the Dark Dragon Hound to the ground. The hound's fur had been scorched yellow and its blood had dried out from the heat. The Dark Dragon Hound fell from the sky.

Su Ping could sense that the Dark Dragon Hound's consciousness was gone.

The moment before its death, the Dark Dragon Hound was in excruciating pain. But the death was quick so the pain didn't last long.

"Revive."

Su Ping brought the Dark Dragon Hound back to life.

The Dark Dragon Hound's dead body turned into puffs of energy that reshaped it.

Su Ping gave out his command once again, "Go."

The Dark Dragon Hound's eyes turned red and it stared at Su Ping.

All it could see was the calmness in Su Ping's eyes.

After two seconds of eye-contact, the Dark Dragon Hound was the first to look away. The pet mauled the surrounding vegetation, acting like a crazy dog. Even so, the Dark Dragon Hound once again shouted and dashed to the sky after venting its anger. That scene stunned the God Warrior. Revival? The middle-aged man was ready for the third round of lightning. The Shield of Ares helped him go through the second round easily. He was left astounded when he noticed that the Dark Dragon Hound was approaching once again.

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What's with that dog?!

The Dark Dragon Hound was staring at the thundercloud above with its blood-red eyes.

The Dark Dragon Hound showed its teeth!

Roar! Roar!

It bellowed furiously.

The middle-aged man was dumbfounded.

At that very moment, the third round of lightning came. There were nine bolts of lightning!

Thick purple bolts of lightning were growing rapidly, and then suddenly descended from the thundercloud. For a time, the thunder resounded, the lightning flashed, and the entire sky was illuminated.

Roar!!

The Dark Dragon Hound made a dash for the lightning. Two bolts of lightning later, the Dark Dragon Hound collapsed on the ground.

The other bolts of lightning landed on the middle-aged man.

Su Ping didn't want to waste time waiting while the Dark Dragon Hound was brought back to life so he told the Inferno Dragon to join the fray. The Inferno Dragon had been trembling in fear. The moment the Inferno Dragon saw the Dark Dragon Hound's actions, it had understood why they were there. The

Inferno Dragon would not stomach this. The dragons' inborn dignity enabled the Inferno Dragon to remain standing.

Su Ping's command startled it; the dragon jerked its head and turned to look at Su Ping. There was a troubled expression in the Inferno Dragon's eyes, a never seen before situation.

The Inferno Dragon stared at him.

It was asking with its eyes, "Do I have to go?"

Su Ping replied with a look of his own. "Yes, you do."

The Inferno Dragon's eyes looked as if saying, "Can you send someone else?"

"No" was the answer conveyed by Su Ping's eyes.

The Inferno Dragon wanted to stall for a bit longer but Su Ping had begun to force it with the power of the contract.

The command that appeared on its mind made the Inferno Dragon shake. It couldn't waste another second. The pet darted a look to the burnt Dark Dragon Hound, which filled it with immense fear; it eventually worked up the courage, roared, and dashed toward the lightning like crazy.

Roar!!!

The dragon's roar echoed throughout the mountain.

There was a sorrowful tinge in that roar. The Inferno Dragon threw itself at the lightning with its back against the wall.

Scared by the sudden dragon's roar behind him, the middle-aged man almost dropped the Shield of Ares. He looked from the corner of his eye, only to see a dragon wearing a twisted expression.

No good.

What's the deal with the dragon?!

When the Inferno Dragon entered the thundercloud's range of influence, the phenomenon suddenly began to boil again, as if a fire had been thrown into the cloud.

This time, the range of the thundercloud increased to over thirty thousand meters and eventually stopped at about thirty-five thousand meters!

Along with the thunderbolt's growth, the bolts of lightning also became thicker.

The Inferno Dragon charged toward the lightning head-on. The next second, the Inferno Dragon was struck; its scales cracked and fell.

The pain made the Inferno Dragon grimace. The dragon's roar became even louder. The second bolt of lightning boiled its blood, which was oozing out all over by this point.

Then came the third bolt of lightning.

This time, the inferno Dragon cracked, it was completely soaked with blood. It was even hard to tell whether it was a dragon or not.

Following that was the fourth bolt of lightning. The Inferno Dragon was falling like a meteorite, soaked by blood. The Inferno Dragon smashed into the mountain and the ground caved in. "That scale..."

The God Warrior stood aghast. He didn't know that the dragon was more powerful and had greater potential than the Dark Dragon Hound.

The Dark Dragon Hound had only endured two bolts of lightning whereas the dragon had sustained four!

That was twice as many! Of course, part of the reason was that the dragons were innately stronger than Dark Dragon Hounds. They weren't of the same species.

Besides, neither of the two pets was using any defense skills. Otherwise, they would have lasted longer.

Right when the Inferno Dragon crashed against the ground, the Dark Dragon Hound was just coming back to life and Su Ping ordered it to try again.

Joanna looked away from the thirty-five thousand meter thundercloud and said to Su Ping, "Your dragon has a very good aptitude, even when compared to a Celestial God."

Su Ping was baffled. "How can you tell?"

"Usually, the scale of the thunderclouds triggered by the very best candidates for the legendary rank is something like this," Joanna replied. Su Ping finally understood. "How large was the thundercloud when you took your test?" Su Ping asked in curiosity.

Joanna raised her eyebrows and darted him a casual look. "Just fifty thousand meters. That's all." She remained composed.

Su Ping was taken aback by that.

Fifty thousand meters? 'Just'? That's all?

What a show-off!

"Huh, you don't say."

Su Ping gave a hollow laugh. An idea crossed his mind: he wondered how large the thundercloud would be if he had gone up there.

Chapter 354 Su Ping's Growl

Su Ping was itching to try

The worst that could happen was that he would have to spend energy points on his revivals.

However, compared to the benefit of refining his energy with the Heaven's Test, Su Ping believed that the energy points would be well spent. This was something that he might only be able to encounter with luck, not by searching for it!

Since Heaven's Tests could better his pets, it should be able to improve his energy as well.

His own strength and powers also mattered. Only after becoming powerful enough could he control fiercer and tougher pets. Otherwise, violent pets like the Inferno Dragon and the Dark Dragon Hound wouldn't have obeyed him, let alone act like lambs in front of him.

"I want to have a try," Su Ping said to Joanna.

After a second of surprise, Joanna came to understand Su Ping's intention. She inwardly produced a forced smile; only someone like the undying Su Ping was able to rely on the Heaven's Test for training.

18.

Heaven's Test was a trial and a disciplinary action of sorts. However, for Su Ping, the test had become a training tool. It even seemed as if heaven were working for Su Ping... "Go ahead," Joanna said. She sighed to herself. She would be lying if she said she wasn't envious of him. There would be so much she could do if she had had his abilities.

Su Ping nodded.

The fourth round of lightning had started.

This time, there was a greater number of lightning bolts. Lightning flashed and thunder rumbled as 18 bolts of lightning were coming into being. That was too much for the middle-aged man to bear all by himself.

If he were there alone, his Heaven's Test would have ended after merely three rounds, once the thundercloud's energy was exhausted. He would have merely triggered a thundercloud with a diameter of one thousand meters.

However, the fact was, he had to face the fourth round.

The tension growing out of the thundercloud was becoming more and more intense, rather than decreasing. There should be a fifth, or even a sixth-round coming!

"Shield of Ares..."

The middle-aged man was nervous. The only reliance he had was the shield.

Boom!

The lightning struck.

Roar!!

The Inferno Dragon threw itself at the lightning and withstood the strike with its physical body alone. That bolt of lightning was stronger than ever before. One bolt after and the dragon's skin was split and its flesh torn. Blood was spilling out from all over its body.

The dragon didn't stop. It shouted and shouted as it approached the second lightning bolt.

Boom!

That one broke the dragon's wings.

Boom!

The third lightning bolt came right after. Like a huge hammer, it pounded on the dragon and pushed it to the ground. The dragon's scales were scorched and curled. Both the Inferno Dragon's soul and consciousness had died.

In its first try, the Inferno Dragon was able to go through four strikes. This time, it had deceased after three.

The fourth round of lightning strikes was much more powerful than before.

Whoosh!

Su Ping brought the Inferno Dragon to life at once. At the same time, he flew up to the sky, not willing to "waste" the following lightning strikes.

Bang!

A bolt of lightning went after the middle-aged man and landed on the umbrella in his hand. But the strike went through the umbrella and smashed into the Shield of Ares.

The Shield of Ares gave out a faint golden hue and turned into a sphere that completely covered up the middle-aged man.

The lightning strike was unable to break the sphere.

After this, the middle-aged man felt some relief. Excitement came into his eyes. No wonder the Shield of Ares was famous throughout the Divinity. The shield was indeed worthy of the fame!

Right then, the lightning strikes stopped forming

No more lightning bolts were attacking him. All the remaining lightning bolts went back into the thundercloud.

What is going on?

The middle-aged man was puzzled.

Immediately afterward, he noticed that the thundercloud began to tumble, like boiling water. Then it started to move and expand quickly; just as if boiling water were being poured onto a bowl already filled to the brim.

The thundercloud was growing again!

The middle-aged man was dumbfounded.

He heard a noise. He turned around, only to see Su Ping, the human he had briefly met, who was flying to reach him.

What...?

The middle-aged man was stunned. He knew that this young human being was not simple. He was a human being but all the local gods treated him with respect. The middle-aged man had once asked the guards and was informed that the human being was Her Highness Joanna's honored guest.

Considering Joanna's status, one could imagine how special her guest would be. "You..." The middle-aged man didn't understand why Su Ping would go there. He had no idea about Su Ping's strength. He sensed that Su Ping was weak but who could tell him whether Su Ping was hiding his abilities or not?

If Su Ping were like a Celestial God or a God Warrior, then the strength of the Heaven's Test would increase to a level that he would hardly be able to imagine!

After all, Heaven's prestige was not something to be challenged!

Even when the most powerful gods wanted to help out the younger generation, the only way was to give the latter some artifacts. The former were unable to intervene personally or else the Heaven's Test would regard them as participants. If so, Heaven's Tests would no longer be fitting for the young by then. Su Ping stood by the middle-aged man in the air. He was also baffled, wondering why the lightning strikes had stopped. But he soon understood, since he noticed how the thundercloud was growing.

The Heaven's Test was preparing a big move. It seems that my potential is better than that of the Inferno Dragon or else this test wouldn't have reacted like this, Su Ping thought. This realization delighted him. Heaven's Tests turned out to be a quite fair "judge."

"I wonder how large it's going to be..." Su Ping was looking forward to seeing the result, to have a clear sense of his potential.

He could see the ratings of his pets' aptitude but the system didn't allow him access to see his own rating. The system knew but would not tell him, so he didn't have an accurate idea.

Boom~!

The thundercloud tumbled and grew to a greater size.

In the blink of an eye, the cloud's diameter expanded to forty thousand meters and gained momentum, with no signs to stop.

"No way..." The God Warrior standing on the ground was unable to believe this. He was even a bit scared. He could tell that Su Ping was merely at the sixth rank and he wasn't hiding anything. He was sure that he wasn't wrong about Su Ping, unless Su Ping turned out to be at a rank higher than his.

Based on his experience and interactions with Su Ping, the God Warrior was certain that Su Ping was not faking his rank. He, indeed, was at the sixth-rank.

Forty thousand meters...

Su Ping had the potential of a God Warrior!

If others would find out about this, many great forces in the Divinity would try to recruit him!

A God Warrior would be at the upper class in the Divinity.

After all, more powerful than the God Warriors would be the Major Gods, which were few and far between in the entire Divinity.

The God Warrior wore a solemn expression. Before that day, he had been treating Su Ping with respect and it was merely for Joanna's sake. But after such a revelation, Su Ping's personal potential was enough reason to be respected.

On the other hand, Joanna watched as the thundercloud expanded further. She didn't appear to be surprised at all.

She was well aware that Su Ping had more potential than his pets; he was the master, after all. Since his pets could progress in this cultivation site, there was no reason that he couldn't do the same.

Besides, Su Ping would not die for real while he was there. He had skills that could reverse time.

Su Ping was being backed by a mysterious and terrifying entity. Joanna believed that Su Ping was that someone's student. It was understandable that a student of someone like that would have the strength equal to a God Warrior.

Boom_!

The thundercloud was rolling over and over and soon, its diameter had increased to fifty thousand meters.

The entire mountain was under the shade of the thundercloud. The many True Gods and Celestial Gods were all gazing at the huge thundercloud in surprise.

They had never triggered something of such magnitude when they took their tests. This was a sign of a peerless, proud son of heaven emerging!

As the gods stared in astonishment, the thundercloud kept on growing; in an instant, the diameter had reached sixty thousand meters, and it kept on reaching further out.

Seventy... eighty... ninety...

A hundred!

In a few minutes, the diameter of the thundercloud had expanded beyond the hundred thousand meter mark!

The God Warrior was so frightened that his eyes stared woodenly and his jaw was slack.

That size indicated a potential equal to that of a Major God!

An outstanding Major God no less!

Was this young man so terrifying?

The God Warrior was well informed and had lived for a long time. Even so, he had rarely seen a thundercloud of such a scale. Whenever such a thundercloud was triggered, the entire Divinity would be alerted!

At the moment, no one—from the peak of the mountain to the foot of the mountain—was making any sound.

All the True Gods and Celestial Gods were astounded and standing with open mouths.

“A hundred thousand meters...”

Joanna was taken aback. She kept her gaze on the young man hovering in the sky. With the help of her true self, Joanna had managed to get her hands on many valuable items and blood of special creatures, being able to build up a body like this. She had never realized that Su Ping also had such potential.

Potential and talent couldn't have explained this and rich resources alone were not the answer. One had to be extremely fortunate and blessed!

In the sky.

The middle-aged man standing next to Su Ping had gone numb. For a long time, he let his mouth hang open; he simply was unable to shut his jaw close.

Who am I?

Where am I?

What am I doing?!

There was such a mess in his mind.

Was this his Heavenly Test?

The thing above his head was his Heavenly Test?!

He was feeling a strong urge to turn around and run away. He would readily pass his chance for this test to anyone!

The middle-aged man turned to look at Su Ping with a desperate look on his face. He was stunned by what he saw.

He saw an intense glow, shining brightly around Su Ping!

There seemed to be some tattoo depicting a totem, glistening over Su Ping. The shape was like... a bird of fire!

The middle-aged man was once again confused.

So hot!

Su Ping was not in the mood to mind what others were thinking, or even the Heaven's Test itself. He felt he was burning up, and something was about to burst out of his skin.

He lowered his head and saw that his veins were popping out and he could see them clearly through his skin.

But not all the veins. Some blood vessels remained invisible. The parts where the blood vessels stood out were forming a pattern, a pattern of a... Golden Grow!

Su Ping stood in a daze.

He was cultivating the Solar Bulwark and was merely at the first rank. There was but a mere trace of the Golden Crow's energy within him. It came as a surprise, for the trace of energy to be forced out by the Heaven's Test.

So, it was true. Heaven's Tests could recognize a person's potential.

Su Ping took a deep breath and tried to contain this burning energy. That energy went back into his body and began to roll in waves. He gazed into the thundercloud. At that very moment, he was feeling the urge to burn something and be burned at the same time!

Finally, the thundercloud stopped growing.

That was one hundred and twenty-six thousand meters!

That was the thundercloud's final diameter.

When the cloud stopped expanding, the energy within began to tumble, forcefully, albeit slowly. Soon, the interrupted fourth round of lightning came smashing down again. This time, there were 36 bolts of lightning!

Thunder roared and lightning flashed!

Su Ping felt the lightning glare was blinding his eyes.

Still, he aimed at one of the lightning bolts and threw himself at it. As a matter of fact, he believed that the lightning bolts would go to him voluntarily.

Bang!

Su Ping began to tremble right when the lightning bolt made contact with his body. Then his mind went completely blank. His sight, hearing, and tactile sense were fading away.

He couldn't even feel his body.

But that sensation lasted for merely one second, then all the feeling surged back; the tearing pain, the burns, and the piercing sense, they all went back to his mind.

It was excruciating!

Su Ping clenched his teeth. Truth be told, he couldn't even feel he was doing that; he just did it instinctually. He didn't shout. He was soldiering through!

He was going through the baptism of pain. His will of steel made him look up into the thundercloud. He picked out another bolt of lightning and dashed over!

Bang!

He felt the lightning strike reach him. The level of pain was instantly doubled. He thought his blood and astral powers were boiling and soon, were burnt up.

His consciousness died.

Darkness came over him, the darkness that seemed to have been waiting for him for a long time.

Darkness was the only constant in his repeated training

Revival!

He could see light again. Su Ping opened his eyes and saw that he had woken up on top of the peak. He saw that the lightning was still roaring. The Dark Dragon Hound and the Inferno Dragon were staring at the thundercloud in fear, lacking the courage to try again. "Go!" Su Ping bellowed.

Having received the order, the Dark Dragon Hound had no other choice but to run to the lightning

Soon, the Dark Dragon Hound turned into a dead body and fell.

"You go!!"

The Inferno Dragon flew up, screaming and shivering

Several seconds later, its corpse fell to the ground as well.

Su Ping didn't stop. The moment the Inferno Dragon was going to fall, Su Ping had already jumped up. He revived the Inferno Dragon the second it died while he was charging toward the lightning

Pain. Torn apart. Burns!

Su Ping believed that this had to be what hell felt like.

Maybe, this was hell.

At this moment, the area covered up by the thundercloud was hell!

Su Ping could have stopped the training easily. He could have comfortably stayed on the ground. But he drove out the idea as soon as it came into his mind.

To become strong, he had to endure pain!

A journey to strength without experiencing pain would have been incomplete!!

Roar!!

Su Ping shouted wildly and a dragon's roar came out from his throat!

His bellow was spread across the entire mountain and even to the city!

Even though he was a human being, he had cried out like an animal in a gods' city because of the pressure from the Heaven's Test!

The God Warrior was frozen on the spot.

He couldn't understand why Su Ping could come back to life and why Su Ping would do something so pointless.

He was freeloading in another person's test and would not get the "reward" in the end. So, this was all just for training?!

But that was no training. It was a trip to hell, over and over!

The God Warrior couldn't figure out why a human being at the sixth-rank could have such willpower. What must have he gone through to train his mind like this?

This time, the God Warrior was not the only one stunned. Even Joanna was wearing a surprised look.

She had always had the conviction that Su Ping was just some lazy fellow blessed with good fortune. Yet, at this moment, she finally saw the truth, and the reason why the young man was so intimidating.

His determination and his resolution to tackle every challenge!

She remembered their days at the store. He wore such a big smile when he was taking money from his customers. He was such a money slave. Right then, seeing him drenched in blood, shouting under the thundercloud, she wondered if this were a different person.

A different person?

Maybe, he was just revealing his true self.

Chapter 355 Success During Heaven's

Test

Ruthless and brutal!

Su Ping stood no chance to fight back against the lightning bolts. The only leverage he had was his willpower and determination!

Boom!

Boom!!

The bolts of lightning emerging from the thundercloud had become fiercer by the second, also thicker. They were going to wipe out every living creature!

With a bang, Su Ping encountered another lightning bolt. His body was torn and tattered; again, he collapsed at once. There was some mist around him. It was because his blood had been vaporized by the high temperature. He fell from the sky, like a motionless stone tainted with blood.

He lost his consciousness.

Revival!!

The moment darkness came to him, Su Ping had ordered his own return.

The light was within sight. Su Ping opened his eyes and the first thing he did was to command the Dark Dragon Hound and the Inferno Dragon to head toward the lightnings.

The Dark Dragon Hound and the Inferno Dragon were unable to fight back. They worked up the courage and made a dash for it. Still, the lightning bolts had smashed them down soon after.

The Dark Dragon Hound was the first to go and the first to fall. After it died, the Inferno Dragon went up immediately.

Roar!!

The dragon was blasted open and blood rained down!

The bolt of lightning pierced the huge dragon and it lost its wings.

The Inferno Dragon couldn't even remember how many times it had gone through that pain. In the beginning, the dragon was scared and timid. But then, the dragon had become fearless, having surrendered its mind to craziness!

Soon, several lightning bolts struck together and the Inferno Dragon fell from the sky, like a piece of charcoal.

While Su Ping brought them back to life, he had stepped into the lightning again to take his turn.

Test!

Death!

Revival!

Repeat!

The three of them went one after another and undertook the trials repeatedly. The God Warrior had lost his ability to talk.

He couldn't even remember how many times Su Ping and his pets had died.

They were struck again and again and they came back to life.

The God Warrior had no idea why would Su Ping be able to come back to life or why he insisted on repeating such actions.

Did it not hurt?!

Joanna was full of troubling emotions. That was the first time that she had seen Su Ping training along with his pets. She had heard from Su Ping that repeated pressure and stress would inspire the pets' growth.

But she had never realized how heartless he could be, even to himself!

He was even harder on himself than on his
pets!

"He..." Joanna moved her lips, but eventually said nothing.

In the sky.

The middle-aged man was motionless.

He believed that his will would have been crushed after one round. How could this human being take the pain for so long?

The look in his eyes changed from surprise, to fear and to admiration and respect. This human being had disrupted all of his previous views and judgment of the human race!

Boom_!

All of a sudden, he heard a loud noise in the sky.

The middle-aged man was startled. He looked up at once. There was a swirl in the middle of the thundercloud. The sixth-round was going to be more intense than the previous five rounds!

The entire thundercloud had been stirred up by that swirl and was caving in toward the swirl. The swirl bore complete darkness within; no lightning nor cloud could be seen inside.

Bang!

Without any warning, a bolt of lightning that could light up the entire world came into being at the center of the swirl.

The lightning bolt traveled so fast that it reached the middle-aged man instantly.

The umbrella in the middle-aged man's hand was spinning and it helped drive away some of the energy. However, this lightning bolt was too thick and the umbrella was merely able to fend off part of the energy. The rest landed on the Shield of Ares.

Bang!

A golden glow burst out from the Shield of Ares. Behind the middle-aged man emerged a golden giant holding a shield. That was also a manifestation of the Shield of Ares, only dozens of times larger. The shield neutralized most of the energy and the remaining part of the energy was worn off by the middle-aged man's astral powers. He was unhurt. The middle-aged man was a bit relieved but he had not let his guard down.

Su Ping placed himself in front of the umbrella. At the moment, he was the middle-aged man's first barrier to fend off the lightning

Bang! Soon, the second lightning bolt came down.

Piercing pain. Burns. Hurt...

Su Ping could not even have a clear sense of that pain before he was reduced to dust. Yes, this time, he died without leaving a full body!

Revival!

After he came back to life, he ordered the Inferno Dragon and the Dark Dragon Hound to take his place so as not to waste anything.

"I cannot believe that the first seal of the Shield of Ares was undone..." The God Warrior commented the moment he saw the huge golden giant image behind the middle-aged man. That man represented how the Shield of Ares came into being. He had once been a famous powerful god in the Divinity.

Joanna gazed at the sky quietly.

Bang! Boom!

The swirl was spitting out lightning bolts that were increasingly thicker and more violent.

The Dark Dragon Hound, the Inferno Dragon, or Su Ping would stand in front to act as the first barrier between the middle-aged man and the bolts of lightning. The second barrier was the umbrella and the last one the Shield of Ares.

The ninth bolt of lightning came. Su Ping was merely near the edge of the lightning when he felt he was burning up and his skin was scorched. He turned into a pile of dust the second he touched the lightning bolt for real. He died before he even had a chance to feel the actual power of the lightning!

When Su Ping came back to life, the ninth bolt of lightning had passed.

The middle-aged man remained unharmed.

The Shield of Ares fended off all the strikes for him.

The thundercloud in the sky spun around and then... faded away.

The dark cloud disappeared in the air. Sunlight broke free from the center of the cloud, casting brilliance over the mountain.

The stress over the mountain could no longer be felt.

"Has the test... ended?" Su Ping stared blankly.

He darted a look at the middle-aged man.

Standing in the sky, the middle-aged man's energy was growing stronger. He appeared to be ten times as powerful as before.

Roar!

The middle-aged man shouted as if to let out some extra energy.

"That fellow must be completely freaked out." Chuckling, the God Warrior shifted his sight from Su Ping to the middle-aged man.

Anyone would have been scared by this. A thundercloud that should have a diameter of one thousand meters eventually reached a hundred thousand meters. Anyone would have felt hopeless by such a calamity.

But the middle-aged man didn't have to exert a great effort. The artifacts that Joanna had given him carried him all the way to victory. It was just that the process had been mentally exhausting...

The middle-aged man survived the test successfully. He didn't reach the legendary rank.

He became a True God.

Having vented his emotions, the middle-aged man descended. First, he cast a glance at Su Ping, and then he ran to Joanna. He gave her artifacts back and got down on one knee to express his gratitude.

Chapter 356 Shocking Result... Going Back Home

Joanna took over the umbrella and the Shield of Ares. She nodded to the middle-aged man as a reply to his expression of gratitude, assuming a calm and reserved air. Joanna turned around to ask Su Ping, "Do you want to go on?" Su Ping took a deep breath. "Yes!" He nodded.

Joanna curled her lips. "They can keep on holding back their energy to take the Heaven's Test tomorrow. You can take a rest today."

"No, thanks. Have them do it today to get it over with," Su Ping replied.

He was determined. Joanna heaved a sigh but didn't say anything else to him. "Your turn. Go and get ready. Take this," Joanna said to the bulky man with bull horns.

She threw the Shield of Ares to him casually.

The horned bulky man caught the Shield of Ares. It was as if he had only realized what was going to happen right then. He was no fool. He remembered what Joanna told them and what he had just witnessed. He was well aware that the three of them were taking the Heaven's Test there for the sake of that human being.

That human being was taking advantage of their Heaven's Test!

The horned man was unable to understand why the human being was doing this. He assumed that it was an experiment. The thundercloud with a diameter of one hundred thousand meters was still vivid on his mind. He took a deep breath and held the Shield of Ares tightly; he would have never agreed to take the test without it.

Since the previous man had successfully passed the test, the horned man's mind was not as burdened, even though he could predict what was going to happen next.

"Yes, your highness."

The bulky man with the horns replied obediently before he flew to the sky.

While he was ready to trigger the Heaven's Test, Su Ping used this window of time to check the changes in him.

Just then, he had been busy dealing with the bolts of lightning and didn't have time to inspect himself. After a careful look, he noticed immediately that the changes in him were big.

He remained at the intermediate position of the sixth rank.

However, the astral powers in the cores of his cells had been condensed and the amount was less than half of what he had before!

But the remaining amount of astral power was almost transparent, an indication of absolute purity! Su Ping felt like a heavy load had been lifted off from his body, giving him a relaxed and light-weighted feeling. He thought he could fly up just by standing on the spot.

Every pore was breathing in and out.

He was relaxed but powerful!

That is what the astral powers are going to be like after being refined by Heaven's Test...

After a moment of inspection, Su Ping suddenly thought of something.

With a buzzing sound, a bolt of lightning came into being in his palm. The cracking noise sounded as if countless birds were chirping.

That was fast!

Su Ping almost scared himself.

His energy release was two to three times faster than before!

If the former flow of energy could be compared to a bike, the current flow of energy would be a sports car! Su Ping then tried other skills of the thunder family.

Thunder Sprint.

Hiss!

Electric arcs covered him up in an instant, stimulating him. He believed that he could reach a thousand meters as soon as he took one step! Thunder Cloud!

Energy gathered and surged inside him. The next second, a dark cloud appeared above his head. Still, the moment the dark cloud emerged, it had been torn apart by something unfathomable.

Su Ping came back to his senses. He looked up and noticed that the bulky man with the horns had successfully triggered the test. A large thundercloud was growing.

The dark cloud that Su Ping had generated was consumed by this thundercloud.

Su Ping didn't mind that. In fact, he was rather thrilled.

The dark cloud came into being in an instant, in about one second!

That fact filled Su Ping with excitement. Before that day, he would normally have to use more than three seconds to prepare such skills!

The energy refinement was able to shorten preparation times by several folds!

In a battle, the summoning speed to get a skill ready was like drawing a blade. The one able to draw the blade quicker would be the person making the kill, even before the enemy pulled the sword out!

Su Ping had a sense that his astral powers used to be as heavy as an iron rod.

But they were as light as catkins right then.

Still, the lighter astral powers could generate the same effect!

As a matter of fact, because of this lightness, he could "wield" his astral powers faster for a better impact!

That was the result of energy refinement!

Su Ping's eyes glowed. The suffering he had gone through was worthwhile!

“It’s coming.”

He heard Joanna’s voice.

Su Ping gazed into the sky. The thundercloud triggered was one point five thousand meters wide, a bit larger than one produced by the middle-aged man.

Su Ping took a deep breath and made up his mind.

“Get ready!” Su Ping commanded his two battle pets.

The Dark Dragon Hound and the Inferno Dragon saw another round of Heaven’s Test coming. They had just relaxed, but they had to crawl up on high alert, again.

They looked at Su Ping with their watery eyes, trembling, but that begging could not change anything. They received Su Ping’s command. The last glow in their eyes died down and all hope was dashed to pieces.

As the Dark Dragon Hound and the Inferno Dragon invaded the Heaven’s Test, the thundercloud, as though enraged, grew again. Just as before, the diameter increased to more than one hundred thousand meters when Su Ping joined them.

Joanna noticed that the thundercloud was still growing slowly.

In the first Heaven’s Test, the thundercloud was one hundred and twenty-seven thousand meters but this one was one hundred and thirty-three thousand meters!

Had the Heaven’s Test noticed that Su Ping’s strength was increasing after such a short time?

Joanna forced a bitter smile to herself. Su Ping had endured so many bolts of lightning. No wonder he could be empowered. The Heaven’s Test would refine the energy inside him to the extreme. She suspected that the purity of Su Ping’s energy could even compete with the purity of a god’s energy!

He was at the sixth rank but his energy had such purity. This would be a disaster to the other battle pet warriors at his rank!

“This guy...”

After rounds and rounds of revivals, not long afterwards, the horned man had passed his test, which also ended after six rounds.

After him, it was the turn for the man with the tattoo.

Same as the first two, he also had the Shield of Ares to protect himself.

Just like before, Su Ping took advantage of his revivals and joined the test.

Two hours later, the man with the tattoo finished his test. This time, the thundercloud had a diameter spanning one hundred and thirty-five thousand meters, two kilometers more than before.

Joanna noticed this. She understood that the effect produced by the tests was diminishing. After all, there was a limit to energy refinement.

While it was true that Su Ping was getting less and less benefit from the thundercloud, a one hundred and thirty-five thousand meter diameter was still stunning and threatening.

Joanna was having a bitter feeling; to think that her thundercloud was merely a little over one hundred thousand meters.

She had a talent and potential that was rare even in the Divinity. Even so, she was still second to Su Ping the freak.

Su Ping was merely at the sixth rank and there was a lot of room for him to grow. When he reached the peak of the ninth-rank, who could tell whether his potential would be even greater? Joanna shook her head. She couldn't even begin to think about that.

Although upset, Joanna kept a firm hold on her confidence. After all, potential just that, potential. If she wanted to, she could kill Su Ping right then.

No matter how great his potential was before he could grow up, he was still weak.

Only the good die young! If it weren't for the protection given by her true self, Joanna wouldn't have lived thus far.

Su Ping was a talent this day but he could end up a dead body the next. There was no telling if he could make it to the day when he could fully develop...

Joanna was a bit relieved after reaching this conclusion.

However, she suddenly remembered something... death didn't seem to be a problem for Su Ping.

Her face began to twitch.

"Your highness, are you feeling unwell?" the God Warrior asked in a hurry. "Piss off."

"As you wish..."

After the three men passed their Heaven's Test, Su Ping was finally able to rest.

Su Ping left it for Joanna to take care of the three. The only wish on his mind was to find a place to relax.

After each revival, his strength would come back, but the mental fatigue remained.

He called over the Dark Dragon Hound and the Inferno Dragon. Su Ping thought of going to the spring, which was the only place his soul could enjoy some comfort. It would also release the tiredness in his body.

He said goodbye to Joanna. He managed to easily find the way to the spring and threw himself into the water.

The Dark Dragon Hound and the Inferno Dragon were glad that the hellish training was over. Joyfully, they jumped into the spring and enjoyed themselves.

While Su Ping was relaxing, Joanna was deeply troubled. She was dealing with many reports coming to her from various sources.

The Heaven's Tests had stirred up a huge sensation!

Three thunderclouds with a diameter of over one hundred thousand meters emerged above the mountain.

The strange scene had not only stunned the guards on the mountain but also alerted the citizens. Some of the more powerful gods flew out from their homes or training places and headed to the city wall to look at the phenomena.

One thundercloud with a diameter of over one hundred thousand meters would mean the coming of a blessed talent.

There were three in a row... What? Was there a meeting of blessed talents?!

Everyone was stunned speechless. Even a single talent of such caliber would become famous in the entire city. As things were, three of them showed up that day, and they passed the test in the same place. How unimaginable!

Soon, this information was quickly leaked from the city and was spread out in less than half a day!

Many powerful forces were showing interest to know the truth.

Joanna was the one in command there and all the major forces were aware of the identity of her true self; someone who was second only to the Superior God, a goddess of war that had established her name at the early ages of the Divinity. Her true self had a strength very much like the Superior God and she was almost peerless in the Divinity.

As such, no major force would dare to go and ask her directly. They had to use other, more prudent ways to get information.

Talents that could trigger a thundercloud with a diameter of over one hundred thousand meters!

Three of them!

The major forces believed that recruiting and training any one of them would guarantee them another ten thousand years of prosperity!

After all, gods had a long life expectancy. Ten thousand years was not a long time for the god race.

Joanna was speechless after being notified of all the inquiries. Apart from herself and her trusted followers, no one would believe that it was the same person who triggered the growth of all three thunderclouds.

Besides, this one person would never join any of those forces... Even if he did, he would only be a disaster for them!

Joanna remembered all the benefits that Su Ping had snatched from her. She wondered if she should introduce him to some of them.

That way, he would not have his sights on her alone. At the very least, someone would be her companion in this misery.

But soon, she dismissed the idea. After all, that force would later learn about Su Ping's secrets and that mysterious store. That way, if someone else were to become his employee, then she would not be the only one going to the Archean Divinity.

She could allow others to visit the Archean Divinity, and they could work together so that this Demigod Burial, the lost land, could return to the Archean Divinity.

However, she had to be the first to enter the Archean Divinity.

She had to have all the leverage in her hand!

Therefore, before she could go, she would not allow anyone else to arrive before she did.

She heaved a sigh. Having no other choice, Joanna had to bite the bullet and clean up after Su Ping.

Joanna stopped all the questioning.

At the same time, after Su Ping recovered in the spring, he went to find some gods to test his abilities.... In that process, he would still ask the latter to "show him mercy." No matter how strong he was at the moment, he could not have survived the strikes from legendary battle pet warriors, let alone those True Gods. The ones who were eligible to guard the mountain for Joanna were the stronger ones among the True Gods, who were much more powerful than legendary battle pet warriors on the Blue Planet.

Several days went by. While he trained, he had become aware about the disturbance he created. No wonder Joanna disappeared for days. It seemed that she had been busy dealing with all those major forces in the Divinity.

Su Ping had no plan on joining any forces; Joanna was enough to satisfy all his needs at the moment. Joining other forces would not do him any good. Rather, it would slow him down. He did not want to find another employee in the Demigod Burial, unless the Superior God showed up in person, which was unrealistic.

After several days of training, Su Ping had completely digested the progress he made during the Heaven's Tests; he gained a clearer idea of the benefits he received.

Apart from the refined energy, his body had become more resistant to thunder and lightning

That also applied to the Dark Dragon Hound and the Inferno Dragon.

The level of resistance was high. Su Ping was even able to neutralize some ninth-rank lightning skills by half!

As for the generic lightning, he was immune to that.

Besides, Su Ping noticed that he had better strength and defense. His body was still that of a human, pale and delicate. That and his handsome face gave him a vulnerable look.

However, his skin was almost as sturdy as some dragon's scales!

As such, even some armor-piercing bullets would only leave marks on his skin!

Su Ping had a feeling that inadvertently, the Heaven's Test had helped him finish the mission related to attribute strengthening.

Ten days later.

Joanna had finally gotten rid of all the major forces looking for information. On the surface, peace had been restored and no one was paying particular attention anymore. But under the surface, no one could tell.

Joanna was exhausted after the 10 day period. After all, she could not talk so casually with those forces, the way she did with Su Ping.

If it weren't for the fear caused by her true self, they would have straight-off gone to the mountain and snatched the talents away from her.

Joanna was well aware that this was just the beginning. Those major forces would most likely send someone to keep an eye out near her place. She could do nothing about this. Luckily enough, as long as the Superior God didn't give the command, those people would not invade her territory. Joanna only wished that she could get enough points so that she could visit the Archean Divinity as early as possible.

If she could find the path to become a Superior God, those forces would no longer be a problem for her.

Before she left, Joanna gave some orders to some of her God Warriors and then went to a place where no one could see them and returned to the store with Su Ping.

After they arrived, they could see a gentle light being cast in the store through the window.

A new day had begun.

Chapter 357 Two Skills

"Ding!"

"Confirmed: the host's battle pets have achieved 'energy strengthening' and 'property strengthening'. '30% completion of [Elementary Trainer mission]. The host can draw second and third rewards. The host shall finish drawing the rewards within three minutes," the system stated all of a sudden. But Su Ping was not startled this time, since he was expecting the announcement.

"Property strengthening?"

Su Ping, however, was surprised to hear this. He remembered how he had become more resistant to lightning and how he had made progress in his strength and defense. He didn't know that those belonged to the property strengthening part.

That was to say, freeloading Heaven's Tests had helped him complete two parts of the mission.

The remaining part of the mission had to do with enlightening. After getting the Guide to Enlightening, the mission would have been accomplished entirely. "Begin," Su Ping said, in case three minutes would pass. The rolling wheel that he was familiar with emerged. The many rewards were giving out a faint glow.

Su Ping's cue made the disc begin to turn. A moment later, Su Ping stopped it.

The disc gradually stopped and a book hopped out.

“Phoenix Flame Refinement (Elementary-level).”

Su Ping was surprised. A refinement method?

“Please pick up the reward.”

“Okay.”

“Use it now?”

“Later,” Su Ping replied. He wanted to draw the second prize first. The book of Phoenix Flame Refinement turned into a beam of light and went back to his storage space. Su Ping darted one look and began to draw the second reward. The wheel started to move again. Soon after, Su Ping stopped it. Another book jumped out.

Strength Enhancement (Elementary-level).

Su Ping raised his eyebrows. It seemed that the three rewards were related to his achievements. For example, after he finished with the skill strengthening part, he got the Elementary Rules of Thunder which could be used to better the skills of his battle pets.

The Refinement book should be related to his energy refinement; it should also be able to help refine his battle pets’ energy.

As for the Strength Enhancement, that clearly was because of the property strengthening, and the effect should be the same as the other two.

Su Ping picked up the Strength Enhancement and activated the two skill books in his storage space without hesitation.

First was the Phoenix Flame Refinement.

Whoosh!

The book of Phoenix Flame Refinement turned into a puff of energy that was submerged into his forehead. A ton of information entered his mind.

In a daze, Su Ping seemed to see a phoenix flying freely in front of his eyes, flying through the vast world. That was a creature that could be compared with dragons, and there were fewer phoenixes than dragons because phoenixes were not really capable when it came to reproducing. This was an almost endangered kind.

Whoosh!

With the phoenix flying around, the fiery flame was swept across the world while burning away.

Countless substances in the world were dissipated, decomposed, and refined under the blazing flames. In the end, only a very small amount of substances remained, emitting a dazzling light.

Su Ping could see the composition of each blazing flame and the decomposing process of each substance.

That strange view opened up his mind.

A long time later.

Su Ping came back to his senses. The sight of the store returned to his eyes. He realized that less than half a minute had passed in reality. That everlasting scene he saw had only taken a short moment.

“Phoenix Flame... Refinement,” Su Ping mumbled to himself.

From the information he received, he learned that this refinement was the actual use of Phoenix Flames to purify energy; such flame was the original, which could only be found in phoenixes that were at the legendary rank. The Phoenix Flame was pure and of high temperature.

A phoenix would resort to the Phoenix Flame whenever it went through a life-threatening crisis.

Using the Phoenix Flame would hurt the phoenix itself.

Using such flames would shorten its life. As such, although phoenixes had a much longer life than other creatures, they still would exercise caution when using this power.

At the same time, the Phoenix Flame was terrifying; it could easily consume everything it touched!

Su Ping didn't have the constitution of a phoenix; this skill was not something he could master. Still, according to that skill book, he had understood the working mechanism of the Phoenix Flame and he could run a simulation of a human-made Phoenix Flame inside him!

Of course, a human-induced Phoenix Flame would certainly be much weaker. That being said, the refining effect would be practically the same as the real deal. Besides, using this skill would not burn away his life; it would only consume some of his energy.

“Gather!”

Energy began to gather in Su Ping's body and a flame quickly came into being.

It was more like a cluster of sparks than a flame.

The cluster's outline resembled the shape of a phoenix. Su Ping commanded with his mind and the spark-made phoenix began to chirp happily and fly around inside Su Ping as if it had life.

Wherever the spark-made phoenix flew past, the astral powers contained in the nearby cell cores would begin to boil, and there would also be a faint puff of steam. That was a sign that the filth was being burnt off.

Su Ping was surprised to see that the astral powers inside him could be refined further by the Phoenix Flame, even after he had gone through the Heaven's Tests.

That was to say, there were still many foreign matters in his astral powers. Su Ping thought about it and found this understandable. Maybe astral powers were pure only in plain sight. If he were to look under a microscope, he would probably see different things. The beings above the legendary realm would have even purer energy!

None of the refinement processes could be done overnight. They were arduous tasks that would involve long-term effort.

Su Ping let the spark phoenix stop. He wasn't planning on continuing with the refinement for the time being. With just that short testing, he had sensed that he was losing energy and the pressure on his spirit was increasing. In a few hours, his astral powers would have been exhausted and so would his spiritual power.

He didn't know that energy refinement could be so laborious.

He had to drive Su Lingyue to the venue that day. He wanted to stay in his best condition lest someone would ambush them on their way.

After all, he had learned the method and he could start the process any time in the future.

Next, Su Ping began to absorb that book of Elementary Strength Enhancement.

The name said "elementary" but that wasn't how Su Ping saw it at all. He had grown used to how strange the system's categorizations were.

Several minutes later.

Su Ping had digested the book of Strength Enhancement as well. It was similar to the most basic energy grooming methods used by trainers on the Blue Planet.

There was some difference, though. Strength Enhancement was not entirely about energy grooming; there were more intricate things. Apart from energy grooming, Strength

Enhancement also included energy stimulus and strength increasing runes.

Energy stimulus had the function to revitalize the original cores in the cells to inspire the cells' potential.

The strength increasing runes was a process where runes were inscribed directly on the inner walls of the cell's original cores. In a way, it resembled the strength augmentation skills that warriors used on their battle pets. However, the latter only had temporary effects that could be rendered useless by other skills, because the strength augmentation's runes would only be set over skins and surfaces.

On the other hand, the strength increasing runes would become a part of the inner walls of the original cores, as if formations were engraved on them. The strength increasing runes would constantly enhance the astral powers inside the original cores. The effect would be everlasting, unless heavy injuries destroyed all the original cores in the cells.

After all, when all the original cores inside the cells were broken, that being would turn into smoke and ashes!

Strength Enhancement was one of the skills that belonged to the property strengthening category. There were other skills such as Spirit Enhancement, Speed Enhancement, and Defense Enhancement.

The skill Su Ping obtained would only aid him with the strength part.

After he digested the information, the first thing that popped into his mind was that he wanted to try engraving the speed augmentation and firmness augmentation runes—two of the four basic

augmentation methods used in the Federation-onto the inner walls of his original cores in the cells. That way, he would have more than one skill in the property strengthening category. However, the process was hindered the moment Su Ping tried to engrave the first speed augmentation runes.

The runes were unable to produce any reaction from the stored astral powers. To put it simply, the speed augmentation runes were far too rough to influence the astral powers.

Su Ping was a bit depressed to see his test fail.

It seemed that he had to rely on the lucky draws or the system's shop to get the other property strengthening skills.

"I only used the Strength Enhancement method on the cells of one finger and it has indeed helped double the finger's strength."

Su Ping slowly stuck out his middle finger.

The middle-finger was more powerful than the rest.

The middle-finger's strength was doubled, and this was relative to the original strength of his finger. Similarly, once he exerted a strength equal to fifty kilograms, the runes would increase this to one hundred kilograms... By the time he could exert a strength equal to two hundred and fifty kilograms, the enhancement would turn that into five hundred. The effect would be permanent!

"If I can engrave the runes on this entire arm, and then use the 'Fist of Exorcist'..."

Su Ping smacked his lips. He couldn't even begin to imagine that power.

Chapter 358 Eight Hundred Thousand

Su Ping continued to engrave Strength Enhancement runes on the rest of his fingers. At the same time, using his mental power, he checked the store and looked at the clock on the wall. It was already after eight in the morning

"The finals today..."

Su Ping smiled. Finally, the Elite League was approaching its end.

After the matches at the Longjiang Base City, the winners would continue their journey at the Sub-continent District level. But Su Pin didn't care about that. Su Lingyue would go on behalf of the Longjiang Base City and how far she was able to go would no longer matter. After all, even the prizes for the global champion were barely adequate.

As to the reward of receiving instructions from a legendary battle pet warrior, Joanna could easily do that.

It wasn't necessary to waste time and energy on that.

As for the store's reputation... Once Su Lingyue won first place at the Longjiang Base City, having upheld the promise of making her the champion-as well as any promotion made by her in the future-would be enough for the Pixie Pet Store to become well-known in the Longjiang Base City. By then, the store would be crowded every day; to gain more fame would be pointless. The Longjiang Base City was

enough to keep the business going Su Ping felt full of energy just by thinking about it. He only had to ensure that Su Lingyue was well-protected for the rest of the day.

He stored the pets trained in the Demigod Burial back in the nursing pens and took out the scroll; he told Tang Ruyan to come out and prepare for business.

Tang Ruyan had become used to that life. Every time she got out from the scroll and saw that it was morning, she would already know what she needed to do without Su Ping telling her. She would head to the bathroom, get cleaned up and Su Ping would have already opened the door when she went back to the store.

That day, merely seven or eight repeated customers were outside.

Su Ping invited them to enter.

Most of the repeated customers were there to pick up their pets. Su Ping noticed that there was a drop in the number of customers and he believed that it was because of the finals being held that day. Most people would stay at home or go to the venue to watch the finals since nobody would want to miss out.

“Teacher!”

Someone ran into the store not long after Su Ping had opened his door. He waved at Su Ping.

It was Xu Kuang. Su Ping only glanced once, not acknowledging Xu Kuang’s greeting.

The repeated customers were surprised to see Xu Kuang there, and their surprise grew as Xu Kuang shouted ‘teacher’ to address Su Ping. One of the customers was a student from the Phoenix Peak Academy and he did know that Su Ping wasn’t just the store owner, but an advanced-level teacher at the academy. However, the other repeated customers were not privy to that information.

As far as those customers knew, he was just a gentle and kind young man who ran the store and was kind of... addicted to money.

“Isn’t that... Xu Kuang?”

“One of the Top 5?”

“I’ve heard about him. His battle pets were trained in this store, and the store had actually claimed he was going to make it to the Top 5 for sure!”

“Is that really him?”

The customers were curious, including the student from the Phoenix Peak Academy, even though he already knew that Su Ping was a teacher at the academy. Xu Kuang had won a place in the Top 5 and even overpowered the title-ranked judge. A guy like Xu Kuang could even surpass the other advanced teachers at the Phoenix Peak Academy.

A guy like him was calling Su Ping ‘teacher?’

“Teacher, I’m here.” Xu Kuang ran to the counter, excited. “I want to rent the Dark Dragon Hound again today!” Su Ping darted him a look. “Go to the back of the line.”

“Right away.”

Xu Kuang turned to the back of the line joyfully.

Since he was at the end of the line, the customers standing in front of him would turn around and look at him frequently. It was thrilling to think that a talent who had stunned the entire Longjiang Base City was standing so close to them.

Soon after, the customers picked up their pets. Since Xu Kuang was there, they held back the urge to go to the test room and they left directly after saying goodbye to Su Ping.

Su Ping didn't understand why the customers would forgo trying out the effects of the recent training. He did not mind that, though; the point of the test room was for it to be used.

“I want to rent the Dark Dragon Hound again.”

Finally, it was Xu Kuang's turn. He couldn't waste another second after he approached the counter.

Su Ping had anticipated that Xu Kuang would visit him for this reason again. “Haven't you made it to the Top 5? Why do you want it again?”

Xu Kuang realized that Su Ping wasn't that willing to lend him the Dark Dragon Hound again. “Teacher, the matches are between the Top 5 today. If I don't use your Dark Dragon Hound, I might have to stay at the bottom!” Xu Kuang said in a hurry. “That still makes you one of the Top 5.”

“Well... That is technically true but people are having high expectations of me, thinking that I can win the championship, second place or something. If I'm just No.5...” Su Ping cut him off, “You want the championship?” Xu Kuang was freaked out. He knew he had said the wrong words. “No, no, sir, I know that the champion must be your sister. I will give up at once if I meet her on stage. I won't fight her. I promise!”

Su Ping didn't pay attention to Xu Kuang's promise. If it came to that, Su Ping believed he could secretly go against the rules and take control of the Dark Dragon Hound. That was not the right way but since he had promised Su Lingyue the championship, he had to guarantee that she would win.

“Second place is the same as fifth place. Both are going to be forgotten,” Su Ping argued.

Xu Kuang forced a bitter smile. “It may not make much of a difference for you, but that means everything to me. Please let me have it. Please.”

Su Ping heaved a sigh. It seemed that Xu Kuang was unable to hold back the urge to show off.

“Fine, one last time. Don't rely on this, unless it's some special circumstance. Training your own battle pets is the right way to go,” Su Ping said.

Xu Kuang was overcome with unexpected joy after seeing that Su Ping had agreed. “Do not worry. After this Elite League, I promise that I will work on myself. I'll try my best so that I can reach the Top 5 without relying on external help in the future!” Xu Kuang nodded at once.

“That’s your own business. You don’t have to tell me,” Su Ping said indifferently. “The price to rent the Dark Dragon Hound is going up today. It’s eight hundred thousand astral coins per hour. Are you sure you want to rent it?”

“Eight hundred thousand?” Xu Kuang was caught off guard. The price was half a million the day before. How could it have gone up by three hundred thousand in one day?

“Can I know the reason... of the price increase?” Xu Kuang asked carefully.

Su Ping answered, “Because I want to.” Xu Kuang was speechless. He supposed that he might have been too excited before, that is why Su Ping took advantage of it and drove up the price.

Xu Kuang heaved a sigh. Alas. Old ginger is hotter than new.

“Fine, so be it.” Xu Kuang made up his mind. At the same time, he was thinking about the job advertisement and promotion job offers that he received after he won the Top 5 the day before. Those people had paid advance deposits which in total was a larger sum than the money he had to pay Su Ping to rent the Dark Dragon Hound.

He could have afforded it even if the price went up to a million per hour and it would still be worthwhile!

Su Ping cast a look at Xu Kuang who pretended to feel sorry for the money paid. This guy is a terrible actor, Su Ping thought to himself.

Although the price had gone up to eight hundred thousand astral coins per hour, Su Ping didn’t feel the least bit ashamed. After all, the Dark Dragon Hound could bring Xu Kuang immense benefits and improve his reputation even further. He would never find such benefits in other pet stores!

Xu Kuang was getting a good deal!

The system was the one setting the price and Su Ping was unable to change it. Besides, he had become used to seeing those “affordable prices.”

“Pay up,” Su Ping said and summoned the Dark Dragon Hound.

Xu Kuang paid the fee as soon as he saw the Dark Dragon Hound.

Same as the previous day, eight hours.

Su Ping took out the rental contract for Xu Kuang and charged him for that as well.

That is sixty-four thousand energy points... Su Ping felt good about the energy points. He told the Dark Dragon Hound to behave and stop making such a big scene.

The Dark Dragon Hound had almost killed the judge and the participant in the previous match. Su Ping was worried that Xu Kuang would lose control again this day.

The Dark Dragon Hound was still afraid of Su Ping because of the previous Heaven’s Tests. As such, the Dark Dragon Hound nodded right away. As the rental contract came into effect, the contract between the Dark Dragon Hound and Su Ping became vague. That was a feeling that didn’t sit well. Indeed, Su Ping had yet to become used to renting out his own pets.

It was then that Su Lingyue arrived with a food container in her hand.

Su Lingyue was surprised to see that the store was almost empty. She looked at Xu Kuang and the Dark Dragon Hound. "That is my brother's, right?"

Xu Kuang grinned from ear to ear. "Yes, I'm using it temporarily." Su Lingyue nodded and turned around to hand the food container to Su Ping. "Your breakfast."

Su Ping opened it and dug in at once.

He finished breakfast quickly. Since there were no more customers, Su Ping decided to close the shop; Joanna would be spared from having to receive customers for him this day.

"Let's go."

Su Ping told Su Lingyue to wait outside while he stored the subtly bitter Tang Ruyan in the scroll and told Joanna to remain in the nursing pen. Having done that, he went out and closed the door.

Chapter 359 Gathering of Family Heads

"Let's go together."

Xu Kuang stood by the car, ready to jump in and get a free ride. "Don't you have a sports car?" Su Ping glanced at the orange sports car parked behind them, the one that Xu Kuang drove to get there.

"The more, the merrier." Xu Kuang grinned.

Su Ping was somewhat at a loss. He didn't try to talk Xu Kuang out of it, though. After all, the back seat was empty.

Su Lingyue got into the front passenger seat. When she heard Xu Kuang's words, she couldn't help but dart him a look of sympathy.

Xu Kuang found that look strange. And yet, since Su Ping didn't turn him down, Xu Kuang jumped into the backseat happily. He wouldn't miss out on such a good opportunity to improve his relationship with Su Ping.

"Sir, what kind of result do you think I should get?" Xu Kuang grinned and his words were wild.

Su Ping darted a glance at Xu Kuang from the rearview mirror and grabbed tight on to the steering wheel. "You? You get what you can get, unlike me. I get what I want to get. Don't be so arrogant!"

It took Xu Kuang a while to fully understand Su Ping's words. "Sir, you're good!" Xu Kuang exclaimed.

"Sit tight."

"Huh??"

Su Lingyue had already fastened her seatbelt quietly and grabbed the handle by the window.

Bzzz!

Since Xu Kuang was leaning forward, he was violently pulled back to his seat by the inertia; that was the position he remained in for the rest of the trip.

Looking at the view flying past them outside the window, Xu Kuang suddenly understood why Su Lingyue had given him such a strange look...

“Sir...”

His cry of misery penetrated the car and echoed on the street.

Since this was the day of the finals, the street was empty and nothing could stop the car.

It was nine in the morning by the time they arrived at the venue. The match would begin at 10. They still had an hour.

Su Ping got out of the car, safe and sound. Su Lingyue was sweating a little bit. On the other hand, Xu Kuang was clutching his knees, panting, as if he had just finished an intense workout.

Su Ping led the way and headed to the corridor.

Su Lingyue and Xu Kuang followed him. “Look, isn’t that Su Lingyue?”

Several participants had reached the Top 100 in the corridor. Their journey at the Elite League had already reached an end. That being said, they still had the privilege to enter the venue from the designated corridor.

Those participants stopped on the spot and made way for Su Lingyue and Xu Kuang, although there was enough for the two to walk past, to begin with.

Xu Kuang had caught his breath by then. He raised his chin with pride.

Su Lingyue, on the other hand, was experiencing complicated emotions. She suddenly remembered a random comment made by Su Ping once.

When you were the weak one, as you walked on a ten meter wide road and just one pedestrian around, he would still stand in your way.

But when you were powerful, and you walked on a meter wide road with ten pedestrians, they would still find a way to make room for you!

At this moment, to the others, she had become powerful.

The corridor was spacious, but the others would still stop and make room for her.

They would make a way for her even if there were no road!

Su Lingyue looked at the person walking in front of her and smiled.

“Yes, it is Su Lingyue and Xu Kuang!”

“They’re here together. Do they know each other?”

“Odd. Who is the dude walking in front of them? I don’t think I’ve ever seen him before.”

“Well, look at his age. I think he is younger than us. Is he a participant?”

They stepped out of the corridor. The venue had already been crowded by the time Su Ping, Su Lingyue, and Xu Kuang arrived. It had always been like this.

On the stage, some popular singers were already trying to warm up the atmosphere, making it like a full-blown concert. People were cheering, although not as loudly as they would during matches. Still, it was a lively scene.

The three of them stood there for a while. Soon, many people noticed Su Lingyue and Xu Kuang and they were welcomed with pleasantly surprised exclamations.

Since more and more people were noticing them, Su Ping didn't waste any more time. He showed Su Lingyue and Xu Kuang to the staging area down the staircase.

The spacious staging area had been changed into the VIP seatings and it was fully occupied. The Top 5's staging area had moved to the second row by the stage. Five seats had been set up for them and they were no longer those made of plastic, like the ones used by the general audience, but tailor-made sofas.

The front row was for the titled battle pet warriors from the major families and the government.

As the three of them found their way to the staging area, they were accompanied by cheers. More and more people were turning to see them. For a moment, few people were paying attention to the singer.

Amid everyone's attention, Su Lingyue and Xu Kuang went to their seats.

Two of the finalists were already there.

One was Qin Shaotian.

The other was Ye Longtian.

The two of them turned around when they heard the cheers.

Qin Shaotian raised his eyebrows when he saw Su Ping. He had learned from Qin Shuhai that he was a powerful young man, and that he would have won a place in the Top 5, had he participated. Unfortunately, Su Ping was no longer qualified to take part in it; his rank was too high.

"Well?"

Ye Longtian kept his gaze trained on Su Lingyue and Xu Kuang for a moment. He suddenly noticed the young man walking in front of them. "Who is that guy?" he asked curiously. Qin Shaotian threw him a look from the corner of his eye. "Someone you cannot beat."

"Really?"

Ye Longtian didn't feel comfortable. This person seemed to be a few years younger. How was it possible that he couldn't beat that guy?

"Hmm, stop trying to be so mysterious." Ye Longtian didn't care for Qin Shaotian's words.

Qin Shaotian kept silent after that.

At the moment, titled battle pet warriors from two major families had taken their seats. This time, it wasn't only the family elders who had shown up, but also the family heads. After all, this was the finals, the last day!

The family heads who had arrived were from the Ye Family and the Zhou Family.

It's him!

Zhou Tianlin, the family head of the Zhou Family, turned around when he heard the uproar. The look scared him. He looked past the girl and the boy who had everyone's attention and kept his eyes on the young man that no one was paying particular attention to. It's that guy! He's here!

Zhou Tianlin felt his blood was freezing. But he did gradually relax, knowing that Su Ping was not there because of him, based on his family's follow-up investigation.

The guy was the store's boss and it was only natural that he would make an appearance with the two who had used the services in his store.

That guy... Zhou Tianlin was full of complicated emotions.

Sitting next to him was Zhou Tianguang who was also experiencing a rush of troubling feelings. But he quickly calmed down; his thoughts could no longer be read on his wrinkled face. But his eyes were blinking. It was difficult to ascertain what he was thinking.

Sitting next to him was the family head and an elder from the Liu Family. They saw Su Lingyue and Xu Kuang walking down. The elder whispered something to the family head and the latter nodded. "Who is the guy in front of them?" the Liu family head suddenly asked.

The elder had just noticed the young man.

He only gave a casual look, but the elder sensed something strange. That young man appeared to be ordinary but he was producing an odd aura.

Out of instinct, the elder felt scared.

It was akin to the times when an animal ran into its natural enemy.

That feeling was foreign to him. It only made him uncomfortable.

With a frown, the elder of the Liu family said to the family head, "I think the young man is the boss of that store, some freak who renewed his youth."

"He's the one who turned the Zhou family upside down?" The family head turned around and looked at Zhou Tianlin and Zhou Tianguang. "Two old foxes," the Liu family head said to himself as he saw how calm the two were. "Yes." The elder of the Liu family remembered this as well. He wore a grave face. At that moment, the elder understood where his discomfort was coming from. It was because of this suffocating sense.

That young man was most likely at the peak of the titled rank!

An old monster in the clothes of a youngster!

“Go.”

Su Ping told Su Lingyue and Xu Kuang to find their seats by themselves. The only thing he could do was to accompany them up to that point. Su Lingyue had to finish the rest of the journey on her own.

“Okay.” Su Lingyue nodded. She bid farewell to Su Ping and went to her seat.

“Wait and see. I will try to win second place!” Xu Kuang grinned. “Don’t force yourself. Don’t get hurt,” Su Ping said.

Xu Kuang never expected that Su Ping would say such caring words to him, which meant more for Xu Kuang than winning a good place. A second of daze later, a more brilliant smile blossomed on Xu Kuang’s face. “Will do!”

“Good.”

Su Ping nodded and left.

Su Ping went to the family member’s area and found an empty seat for himself. It was the last day of the competition; he had to make sure that nothing untoward happened to Su Lingyue. He didn’t feel sleepy thanks to the loud cheering. He watched the singer with interest and enjoyed the exciting ambiance.

“Mister Su!”

He heard someone calling him.

It was Fei Yanbo, and with him came a middle-aged man and a beautiful lady. Following them were more than a dozen students, including Luo Fengtian and the girl with the ponytail.

“Mr. Fei.” Su Ping nodded and greeted him.

Running into Su Ping again was a pleasant surprise. He introduced Su Ping to his two companions at once. “Mr. Luo, Ms. Lin, this is Mr. Su, an advanced teacher at the Phoenix Peak Academy. Don’t be fooled by his young age. He is a titled battle pet warrior!”

Titled?

Both Mr. Luo and Ms. Lin were astounded. They couldn’t believe that the young man engrossed in the singing performance was a teacher, not to mention being a titled battle pet warrior.

If it weren’t for the fact that Fei Yanbo had been acting the same as usual, they would have suspected that he was having a mental breakdown.

“Titled?” Mr. Luo seemed to be in his forties. He eyed Fei Yanbo with doubt, his eyes clearly showing doubt, afraid that Fei Yanbo was saying some nonsense. Fei Yanbo understood what Mr. Luo was thinking. The thought of Su Ping’s unusual talent filled him with bitterness. It seemed that he would have to deal with people’s questionable looks every time he made the introduction. “It’s true,” Fei Yanbo said immediately with a low voice, but he gave an affirmative look in case his two colleagues would belittle Su Ping and offend him.

The two were speechless. However, since Fei Yanbo had insisted, they had to regard Su Ping as someone that might be a titled battle pet warrior.

“Mr. Su sure is young and promising.” Mr. Luo smiled.

Ms. Lin appeared to be quite detached. She nodded to Su Ping but remained silent.

As to the students following them, apart from Luo Fengtian and the other few who had engaged in a fight with Su Ping, the others were unable to believe Luo Fengtian’s words.

Titled? Seriously? He clearly was their age.

“Mr. Su, is this seat taken?” Fei Yanbo wanted to sit with Su Ping.

Su Ping could hear the student’s discussion. He said to Fei Yanbo, “The seat is free. Besides that, Mr. Fei, it would be better to not introduce me like this. I really am not a titled battle pet warrior.”

Fei Yanbo smiled. He would have had doubts but Fei Yanbo was convinced that Su Ping was at the titled rank after he witnessed how the young man killed the two young men from the Liu family.

Judging by the pattern of the spattered blood, he could tell that the two had been strangled to death by an energy hand.

He asked the working staff from the government and confirmed his suspicion.

Not a titled battle pet warrior? Don’t kid around!

“I know, Mr. Su, you’re not trying to show off. I know.” Fei Yanbo grinned a knowing grin.

Chapter 360 The Sixth Player!

Su Ping was at a loss for words. He wanted to say “you don’t know sh*t.”

But, being the gentle, refined and handsome man that he was, he did his best to avoid using those words so freely.

Mr. Luo and Ms. Lin were beyond words as they witnessed how much Fei Yanbo was trying to butter up Su Ping. That being said, they did sit down next to Fei Yanbo. They had no idea how the young man managed to fool Fei Yanbo who was always sharp-witted. How could he have fallen to the kid’s deceiving words?

After he sat down, Fei Yanbo tried to initiate a conversation with Su Ping. “Mr. Su, I think it’s highly likely that your sister is going to win first place.”

Su Ping gave a perfunctory reply, “Yeah, I guess. She is here for the championship, to begin with.”

Mr. Luo and Ms. Lin became dazed for a second. Mr. Luo asked Fei Yanbo, “By winning first place, you mean...”

Of the Top 5, there was only one girl. So...

Mr. Luo and Ms. Lin remembered that the girl was Su Lingyue, surnamed Su, and Fei Yanbo had just addressed the young man as Mr. Su...

“Alas, look at me. I completely forgot about that.” Fei Yanbo patted his head and continued, “Miss Su Lingyue is Mr. Su’s younger sister.”

Both Mr. Luo and Ms. Lin were stunned still.

The students that were trying to eavesdrop on the conversation were similarly astounded.

That talent Su Lingyue who had renounced the world splendidly was the younger sister of this young man here?

Su Lingyue had gained influential fame which was spread all across the Longjiang Base City. Every barber knew her. Those students were considering her as a milestone that they could never reach. Even the teachers would view her as a rare talent. They would have never guessed that the glamorous girl was related to the young man next to them. She was his younger sister! Mr. Luo and Ms. Lin looked at each other; both could see the surprise in the other's eyes. They trusted that Fei Yanbo would not lie on such an important matter because lying would entail a great cost.

"So..." Mr. Luo had a hard time finding words for a second.

She was his sister?

So, why was one of them sitting down here, unnoticed and the other one was standing on the stage, being the center of attention?

As for the statement made by Fei Yanbo, claiming that Su Ping was at the titled rank, it had completely slipped from Mr. Luo's mind; he didn't believe that for a second. He had never heard of a titled battle pet warrior that young. Even if there were such a person, he would have risen to fame. The last Elite League had taken place three years prior, but no one had seen this young man compete back then.

Fei Yanbo observed the looks on the faces of his colleagues. He smirked. Finally, I'm not the only one freaked out.

Su Ping darted a glance to the gloating Fei Yanbo but said nothing. He turned his focus back to the pre-show on the stage.

Yu Weihang glanced at Fei Yanbo and whispered a question to Luo Fengtian, "Mr. Fei always says that this person is a titled battle pet warrior. Is that true?"

Luo Fengtian had been staring at Su Ping's back. Upon hearing her question, he turned to her and nodded. "Very likely. Anyways, he's quite strong. Not even Mr. Fei can beat him." Yu Weihang was unable to believe it. "Are you sure? How is that possible? Mr. Fei is at the eighth-rank and is about to make the breakthrough to the ninth rank, to later become a titled battle pet warrior. How can he lose to Su Ping?" "That's the truth. You can ask them." Luo Fengtian was never chatty. He didn't bother to explain and threw the conversation to the other students sitting next to him.

Those were the students who had visited the Phoenix Peak Academy with Luo Fengtian the last time. They nodded to Yu Weihang. "It is true."

"It was because of him that we lost." "You know that we were basically crushing the Phoenix Peak Academy. It was him that came out and defeated us. Mr. Fei's Abyss Snake was hurt by him. You asked about that. Remember?"

"He's right. That guy is a freak. Do not provoke him."

All those students wore scared looks. Yu Weihang suddenly felt puzzled, since this young man was Su Lingyue's big brother.

Was he really that powerful?

He could defeat Mr. Fei. That was to say, if he were to participate, he would have been one of the Top 5, right? A moment later, Yu Weihang finally passed the initial stage of surprise and threw out another question, "Then... why isn't he participating?"

The other students looked at each other. None was able to answer that question.

Luo Fengtian frowned. He had asked the same question in the past but later came up with an answer. "Mr. Fei said that he's a titled battle pet warrior. He is at a rank higher than the limit."

Yu Weihang was speechless.

Titled battle pet warrior... at his age. How surreal this was.

It was getting closer to the appointed hour. People were getting more and more passionate. One after another, the family heads and the elders from the major families arrived and took their front row seats.

"Hmm, that guy is always the last to come. How pretentious!" Sneering, the elder of the Ye family stared at the empty seat that belonged to the Qin family.

The family head smiled. "Those superficial things are not determinant factors when judging a person's strength." Only after the family heads of the other four major families had arrived did the family head and elder of the Qin family appear, while accompanied by a middle-aged man. Qin Duhuang, the family head of the Qin family, was still wearing his signature smile as he greeted the other family heads. One might even mistake this as a leader meeting his subordinates.

Sitting on their chairs, the other family heads flashed fake smiles. They remained seated while they shook Qin Duhuang's hands; however, the other elders had to stand up and say a few words. They had to keep up appearances after all. Letting people see that they weren't close with the Qin family was not necessarily a good thing. "King of Swords!"

It seemed that the family heads were surprised to see the middle-aged man walking with Qin Duhuang. King of Swords, Qin Shuhai. He was one of the most famous members of the second generation in the Qin family. He would usually travel around rather than stay at the Longjiang Base City. It was said that he was good at forging friendships. No one was able to tell how many connections he had made over the years and that was why all the major families were a bit afraid of him.

"Fancy seeing all of you here, my old friends. Do remember to come to the Qin Chamber for some tea." Qin Duhuang kept that smile on his face as he took his seat. He looked just like any other mild, old man.

And yet, those who knew him and his title were aware of how cruel he could be!

One would not get the wrong title, but the wrong name.

"Old Qin, you have a promising child in your family." Mu Beihai, family head of the Mus, smiled a sincere smile as if he was genuinely happy for Qin Duhuang.

Qin Duhuang smiled. "You flatter me. He should learn more. Were it not for the judge, he would have died."

"No, you cannot say that. I have to say something to defend Shaotian. He's a good kid. He can control an eighth-rank Bloody Servant when he is still at the sixth rank. He couldn't have done that if he didn't have a mind of steel. The only thing to blame is the strangeness of this year's Elite League. No one could have expected the appearance of those two freaks. You never know what will happen next!"

Mu Beihai wore a pitiful expression.

Qin Duhuang smiled.

Liu Tianzong, the family head of the Lius, sat there and listened calmly. He could sense that the others were sizing him up though they kept it hidden. Those people were waiting to have a good laugh at his expense! A glint of depression and killing intent flashed past his eyes as he thought about the participants from his family.

No one from the Liu family had made it to the Top 10!

Not to mention the Top 5.

He wouldn't have attended if it weren't for the fact that people would castigate him and claim that the Liu family was a sore loser. Of course, he made an appearance not only to show that they didn't mind those trivial matters. More importantly, he was there to see with his own eyes how the girl dead set on becoming the champion would suffer a crushing defeat.

Competing against the Liu family?

Winning first place?

Help is on my side, though! As he thought of that mysterious girl, Liu Tianzong could not help but put on a sneer. Indeed, the Liu family had lost. However, even heaven was helping them. How fortunate!

While Qin Duhuang and the other family heads were still chatting, all of a sudden, they all stopped because they turned their sights to the corridor.

Seven people walked out from that access.

The three to the right were the titled battle pet warriors from the government. All of them exhibited immense power, like sharp swords that could come out of the sheath at any time.

Of the three to the right, the old man was wearing a strange robe. Just by looking at the style of his clothes, it was evident that he wasn't a local.

Walking next to him was a middle-aged man, standing up tall and straight.

A delicate girl holding a sword was closer to the center.

At the center was another girl wearing a bright red dress with some tassels dangling close to the ground. She appeared to be slim, and the look on her face indicated that she belittled everything and everyone. Nothing, other than coldness, was expressed by her eyes. She had arrived!

The representatives of the major families were taken aback.

Qin Shuhai squinted his eyes. Those from that place came after all.