

Refining 141

Chapter 141 – Sequentially Wasting Two People

Chief Manager Wu was overthinking the situation, but the reality was that Qin Yu was indeed in a very difficult position. As he struggled against someone else's divine sense, his complexion began to darken.

When he first reached the edge of the altar, a powerhouse had tried to sneak attack him. He hadn't thought too much about this, because this was something that Old Sea had told him about ahead of time. There were those that would try to suppress their competitors and although this was a relatively small number, it occurred in every competition and didn't count as violating the rules.

This was a competition for sea spirits, and since it was a competition, everyone was willing to go to the extreme. All that mattered was the result, not the process.

But now, as his divine sense was wrapped around the tray and he was pulling it close to him, two beams of divine sense leapt out at him, leaving him puzzled. Out of these two divine senses, he was a little bit familiar with one; it was the person who had sneak attacked him at the start. As for the other one, although it was a bit weak, it carried with it an extreme yin chill; it seemed that person cultivated some mysterious technique. As their divine senses collided it caused some hindrance to his own; this was a tricky situation.

If these two people had joined forces to wrest away the tray, then he wouldn't care much about it. But, these two people completely disregarded the tray and focused on attacking his divine sense, as if their sole purpose was to bring him down.

If it wasn't for Qin Yu's soul being as powerful as it was, it would have already been heavily damaged beneath the attacks of these two people and he would have had no choice but to withdraw from the competition.

Qin Yu's thoughts raced. He first thought of Bluesky Tower and Earthfault Spire. These two mighty sea spirit influences had suffered great losses because of him, so retaliation could explain this situation. But as he recalled how Old Sea had been ambushed by others, it didn't take him much longer to guess what happened.

Some people must have thought he would get in their way so they wanted to eliminate him ahead of time!

Qin Yu's eyes flashed with a cold light. The divine sense that wrapped around the tray suddenly scattered. The other competing sea spirit teachers were overjoyed. They thought that Qin Yu had been tired out and had no choice but to drop it, so each one of them sent threads of divine sense to quickly wrap around it.

In the blink of an eye, seven or eight rays of divine sense collided, twisting together and shakily pulling away the tray. For a time, no one could take the upper hand and seize it, but there was a tacit understanding that they would bring it as far away from Qin Yu as possible.

The two attacking divine senses paused for a moment as if they never thought that Qin Yu would just give up on the tray like this. In the next moment a cold chill began to rise up.

The altar trays were special treasures. They could resist the pressure from powerful divine senses without damaging the sea spirit within, and dragging them around consumed a great deal of energy.

In addition with the other sea spirit teachers who had taken the opening to struggle with him, Qin Yu was investing too much strength into grappling with it. At this time, letting go of the tray was the same as freeing himself.

Bang –

Boundless divine sense surged out like a tide, ruthlessly racing towards the two attacking divine senses. The previously wounded person was struck first. As the two tyrannical divine senses smashed into each other, there was a low and deep creek in the void, a sound that spread clearly throughout Prosperity Square. Countless sea race members dropped their jaws and sucked in a breath of cold air.

For one's divine sense to shake space, that was a sign of strength possessed only by Nascent Souls – it represented the sublimation of virtual to reality. But now, the collision of two divine senses was able to produce such a result. Could it be that their souls were so strong that they reached the edge of the Nascent Soul realm!?

Countless eyes swerved towards the source of the sound and soon locked onto the two opposing sides. A black-robed figure was standing calm and still, his aura slowly and steadily rising all around him. Not too far away was a skinny old man that was spitting out mouthfuls of blood, his face deathly pale.

This black-robed figure recently had an unrivalled spotlight in the capital city, and almost everyone instantly recognized him – he was the current chief sea spirit teacher of Sea Spirit Pavilion.

They all sighed inwardly. Grandmaster Ning was truly worthy of his fame. If he had such fierce abilities it was also natural for his soul to be incredibly strong. They looked at the vomiting old man with pity, thinking that he deserved this for managing to provoke that person.

As they were sighing for him, they saw the old man's eyes pop open. The old man struggled so hard that the tiny blood vessels in his eyes burst open, instantly turning his eyes bloodshot. This was the sign that he was galvanizing his soul to the extreme. The onlookers were shocked scared. This was only a competition and not a life or death battle, so was there a reason to go all out like this?

The crushed divine sense immediately reformed and rushed towards Qin Yu once more. It ignored Qin Yu's wild barrage and stubbornly hung onto him. At the same time, a chilling divine sense struck out like an icy snake, maliciously stabbing into Qin Yu's divine sense. An extreme icy aura poured in without end; it was actually able to use Qin Yu's divine sense as a tunnel to invade his main body.

Kacha –

Kacha –

A layer of black ice rapidly spread on the surface of the black robe. Even from far away, one could feel the horrifying ice cold aura emanating from it.

Chief Manager Wu angrily shouted, "Murder! This is murder! Open murder! Where are the organizers!? I demand an immediate pause to the competition!" With his eyesight he could see that besides the skinny old man, there was also another sea spirit teacher that was wildly attacking Qin Yu.

This sort of situation would absolutely never appear in a normal competition. As he thought about Old Sea's injuries he could no longer contain his rage and started to wave his arms and roar!

One of the competition staff responsible for maintaining order saw the ruckus and hurried over. They urged this honored guest to calm down, but after being sprayed with a mouthful of spit, they were frightened white and raced to report the situation through a spirit shell.

Outside the field, the audience began to notice what was occurring. Loud boos spread like a tsunami until it swept over the entire square. But, with the competition having come this far, there were already sea spirit teachers that had gone all out and managed to seize a tray. If they were to stop here, there would definitely be those that opposed.

So at this time, the competition committee members began to quarrel with each other and no one could come to a decision to pause the match.

Chief Manager Wu clenched his jaws and stomped over to the committee members. There were thunderous roars and it was clear that a violent conflict had begun.

The scene turned chaotic for a moment.

Qin Yu opened his eyes beneath his black robes. Feeling the cold growing in his soul, his eyes darkened. This was no longer attempting to stop him, but trying to heavily wound him and even kill him. No matter who was pulling the strings behind the scenes, they had now succeeded in angering Qin Yu.

Within his dantian sea, the 16-sided crystal suddenly burst out with blazing light, like a sun rising from the earth. Qin Yu's eyes turned crimson. They weren't bloodshot, but were like tumbling waves of blood, an immense combustion of flames!

"Ahh!"

Not too far away, a young and delicate-looking sea spirit teacher screamed out miserably, his entire face filled with fear.

Hu –

Burning hot flames burst out from his head. These were not true flames but a manifestation of being grilled alive; the killing might behind them was even more horrifying.

The sea spirit teacher was instantly charred red. The air bubble wrapping around him fiercely contracted and extinguished the flames. The committee members responded quickly. Someone immediately ran over to drag him away, but as they touched his body their hands were burnt and they pulled themselves back in pain.

The medical station wasn't too far away. The healer was experienced, but after seeing the sea spirit teacher's burnt appearance, he couldn't help but feel a tingle creep up their scalp. He put on a pair of safety gloves and after a brief inspection, sighed with sympathy. He waved to have the sea spirit teacher lifted away.

No matter how gruesomely injured the mortal body was, as long as one paid a high enough price it could be cured. But, the terrifying damage was the damage to the soul; it was like an eggplant roasted in a fire

that had completely withered away. It would be hard to tell whether this person's mind would be intact in the future, much less him still being a sea spirit teacher.

This person had been utterly crippled.

The skinny old man was horrified. He fiercely retracted his divine sense, wanting to separate it from Qin Yu's rampage.

But, it was already too late to retreat.

Boundless divine sense divided into several paths, each one carrying a burning hot heat. They were like several invisible sabers that sliced and crushed the old man's divine sense.

Puff –

The skinny old man spat out a mouthful of blood and collapsed.

The competition staff didn't have a moment to rest. They hurried over to drag the old man away. After the healer inspected him, he found that the old man's situation was a little bit better than the last case, but this person would have to live out the rest of their remaining life suffering the pain of their soul burning away before they died from the agonizing torture.

Thinking about it this way, the young man might be better off in suffering less.

Pa –

Black ice shattered on the black robes. Qin Yu's gaze swerved around, looking down at all others like a tiger sitting atop a hill.

Wherever his eyes turned, people would gulp. The divine senses competing for the tray had all drawn back.

Under the watchful eyes of everyone, Qin Yu pulled the tray until it slowly flew into his hands.

No one dared to compete with him!

The nearby sea spirit teachers cried out in woe. Holy shit, who the hell was this fellow that he would be so ruthless? This was only a competition, so was there a need to completely cripple someone?

From afar, one could hear countless breaths of relief. People were overjoyed that they didn't run into this ruthless man. Damn, this was too depressing. Just like that, two high level sea spirit teachers had been wasted!

Let alone the participating sea spirit teachers, even the onlookers were stunned silly. Everyone that had been booing over Qin Yu being ambushed suddenly shut up as they realized they had been mistaken. With such a ferocious fellow, anyone that tried to provoke him was simply asking to die.

With the tray in hand, the air bubble automatically floated down and delivered Qin Yu to the edge of the altar. But just as he took a few steps, a group of competition staff rushed over in a hurry.

An old turtle man was at the front. Sweat dripped down his face and although he occasionally wiped it with a towel, he still couldn't keep up with how much he was sweating. The originally dignified and regal

robes of the competition staff were already pasted to his body and he looked to be in an extremely distressed state.

“Wait, don’t go yet!”

A group of sea race people surrounded him.

Qin Yu turned around, his voice cold and low. “What is it?”

The old turtle man’s voice caught in his throat. Everyone had seen what had happened just now. Although he had been a bit cruel, his actions were absolutely in self-defense. But, the reality was that the situation was too bad. Throughout all the years that the sea spirit teacher competition had been held, besides the first few chaotic times as well as when it had changed from the capital city, there had never been other times when two high level sea spirit teachers had been crippled. If they didn’t issue some sort of punishment now, wouldn’t everyone act like that in the future? If that happened, how could they continue holding the competition?

The old turtle man’s eyes turned. He said, “Sea spirit teacher, you are suspected of using banned treasures in the competition and causing serious injuries to others. I ask that you momentarily suspend yourself from the competition and come back with us for an investigation.”

Before Qin Yu could even respond, a chair came flying through the air and smashing into the old turtle man’s head. Luckily, the old turtle man’s reflexes were fast enough that his head shrank into his shell, otherwise he absolutely would have been bloodied.

Chief Manager Wu brought the sea spirit teachers of Sea Spirit Pavilion with him as he raced over, shouting curses all the while. “Investigate? Why don’t you investigate your face! If you want to investigate go and investigate those two garbage sea spirit teachers and find out who is making them attack Mister Ning!”

Before the exasperated old turtle man could even take his head back out, Chief Manager Wu continued to roar, “Mister Ning is now tired and in poor condition! If your actions cause him to suffer any problems in the following competition, I guarantee that all of you will be done for! Just wait for the summons of my Sea Spirit Pavilion! Believe me, if I don’t bankrupt you and make you live out the rest of your lives begging on the ground, I will never give up!”

Chapter 142 – Oversleep

The old turtle staff member immediately paled and more sweat streamed down his face. “Chief Manager Wu, this is a misunderstanding, just a misunderstanding. This is our responsibility and we must clearly investigate the incident.”

“You do need to investigate. You need to find out just what sort of person would actually have the gall to recklessly attack my Sea Spirit Pavilion’s chief sea spirit teacher in plain public sight. Mister Goodra, you need to open your eyes wide and remember just what day it is today. Not only is this a provocation against Sea Spirit Pavilion but this action in itself is the greatest affront to the sea spirits!” Chief Manager Wu scowled. Then, he turned and eyed Qin Yu. “Mister Ning, you only have a day to treat this sea spirit, so please don’t delay yourself any further. Allow me to handle this matter.”

Staff member Goodra wanted to say something but was immediately sent scurrying back by a series of loud and angry shouts. "Let's go! I want to find the other committee staff members and ask them to take responsibility for this!"

The pitiful staff member Goodra was dragged away by Chief Manager Wu. He staggered along, and even when he tried to dispute anything he was immediately crushed into pieces by another series of shouts.

20 coral houses were prepared for the sea spirit teachers who had managed to seize one of the trays. Their entrances were guarded by staff members, and as they saw Qin Yu walk over, they glanced at each other with helpless faces.

The icy eyes shining beneath the black robes made their decision for them. The two sea race members drew back in shock, making sure that their heads were lowered. Although they were paid a high wage, it wasn't enough for them to risk their lives.

Qin Yu stepped in. With a flick of his sleeve, the door slammed shut, isolating all aura outside. This sort of coral house was carved from a giant coral base, and because of the unique material quality, it was excellent for array formations. It was able to block out any spying eyes and was specifically prepared to protect the privacy of these high level sea spirit teachers.

Old Sea had told him that these coral houses had been thoroughly inspected before they were brought out for use, so there shouldn't be any problems with them. Still, Qin Yu carefully scanned it with his divine sense. After determining that there weren't any problems, he took out a black stone. This was a special stone called a Silence Stone by the sea races. It could completely block out all sound and senses within a range of 10 feet so that nothing would be leaked.

After finishing this, Qin Yu sat down. He casually laid down the round tray in his hands, took out some pills, swallowed them, and closed his eyes to cultivate.

That was right. The ruthless and brutal Qin Yu who had sequentially wasted two high level sea spirit teachers beneath the gazes of countless people was currently cultivating.

The reason was simple. It was currently daytime and the little blue lamp was sleeping...

At this time, the competition outside was raging on like an inferno. Sea spirits were taken away one after another, and as there were fewer and fewer trays, the competition became increasingly intense. Two hours later, over 20 sea spirit teachers had been forced to withdraw from the competition because they had suffered heavy soul injuries. The sea spirit teachers who managed to seize a tray were too busy to think of resting. They swallowed some pills that mostly served to suppress their injuries and then they vividly buried themselves in their work.

Chief Manager Wu was like a crane amongst chickens. He stood at the end of a round meeting table like a hero battling numerous rivals as he was engaged in a fierce argument with the competition committee members. Even so, he didn't seem to be at any disadvantage at all. Still, the back of his robes was matted with sweat. Though he was sneering and cursing, it could be seen just how great a pressure he had to bear.

The sea spirit teacher competition committee represented an incredible strength, and even with his status it was straining for him to deal with them. Fortunately, it was fact that Qin Yu was acting in self-defense, so even if his methods were a bit violent, it could pass as a reasonable excuse.

In the fiery ruckus, soothing music suddenly rang out from Chief Manager Wu's robes. He reached into his chest, pulling out a spirit shell and placing it near his ear. A look of respect immediately lit up his features.

In unison, the committee members that didn't want to give up on this matter and wanted to make Qin Yu into an example, suddenly lowered their voices. With Chief Manager Wu's status, if someone could make him have such an appearance, then it might only be that noble lady in Sega City who left the capital 70 years ago.

"Yes, I understand, I was just explaining the situation to the committee members. Yes, of course, please wait a moment." Chief Manager Wu looked up. "Chairman Xu, my family's mistress would like to speak with you."

Chairman Xu's eyebrows leapt up. He calmly received the spirit shell and then took several steps away. As he spoke with the most honored and noble lady in the sea region, his voice was quiet and low. There were some occasional chuckles and it was clear they were having a good talk.

After a moment, the conversation ended and he passed back the spirit shell. Chairman Xu returned to his seat and said, "Everyone, we are currently in the finals and in order to guarantee that the competition remains fair, how about we temporarily put this matter to the side and discuss the investigation again once everything has ended?"

Many committee members cursed inwardly. Once the competition ended the committee would also disband, so how could there be an investigation? They glanced at each other with helpless looks. And just as they expected, soon afterwards a number of neutral committee members expressed their support for Chairman Xu. The ones who had previously spoken against Qin Yu fell silent.

Seeing that nothing could be done, several committee members grimaced and lowered their heads, not saying a word.

Chief Manager Wu silently praised his mistress in his heart. Although she hadn't been in the capital city for many years, her prestige and fame still remained. With a mere spirit shell call, the entire situation had turned around. He cupped his hands together and coldly bid his farewells. His face darkened and he barked out orders, causing some Sea Spirit Pavilion cultivators to hurry away.

Even his mistress had been alarmed and had no choice but to intervene herself. It seemed that the one who planned all of this was a considerably strong character. If so, then it was obvious that their goal was a Purple Card sea spirit teacher. Only such a great harvest could drive such a powerful character to become enemies with Sea Spirit Pavilion.

He looked towards the coral house that Qin Yu was in and took a deep breath. Right now, he could only place all his hopes in Mister Ning. If he won, then this matter could be slowly investigated. But if he failed and Old Sea lost his position, that would set off a cascade reaction that would truly make things troublesome.

Time slowly passed. The first sea spirit teacher to cure their sea spirit emerged from their coral house after nearly six hours, taking away the first spot to enter the next round.

Afterwards, every now and then, another sea spirit teacher would appear. If they came out early, that meant they already succeeded. As for the others, they were still hard at work.

Qin Yu wasn't amongst these people.

Not only did this shock Chief Manager Wu, but it even went beyond the expectations of most people.

The special edition Supreme Book had caused Grandmaster Ning's reputation to reach far and wide. There were even those fans of his who said that he was the number one sea spirit teacher beneath the Purple Cards.

But now, six of the 20 available spots had been taken and the so-called number one beneath the Purple Cards had yet to make his appearance. It seemed he had encountered some problems during the treatment, or perhaps...during his fight where he crippled the two high level sea spirit teachers, he had been injured in the battle.

There were more people inclined to believe the latter reasoning.

After all, killing two sea pigs would require a considerable effort, much less two high level sea spirit teachers with formidable souls. Amongst the humans, there was an old saying that striking the enemy 1000 times would make one suffer 800 times also. It seemed there was some truth behind this.

Chief Manager Wu's complexion darkened. The temperature around him began to chill, so cold that ice seemed to form around his body. The entire group from Sea Spirit Pavilion quieted down.

Qingqing watched anxiously. While she tried not to overthink the situation, she knew the relationship between Grandmaster Ning and Leon, and knew that Leon would rise or fall with his teacher. If Grandmaster Ning became a Purple Card then her mother wouldn't meddle in her relationship with Leon, and in fact would actively encourage her. But if this didn't happen, the opposite might occur. While she was young and naive, that didn't mean she was stupid; she was well aware of the consequences.

Her eyes swerved to the side...

Leon was actually completely relaxed!

Having known him for so long there was no way she would be wrong. Right now he was daydreaming, and a very deep dream at that. His eyes were glossed over and his mouth hung open a little, occasionally moving as he spoke to himself.

Qingqing instantly sucked in a deep breath. She lifted her leg and mercilessly stamped down on his foot!

Leon leapt up into the air, howling as he grabbed his foot. He looked completely aggrieved. He had no idea how he had offended this young lady that she had actually stamped his foot.

In the quiet environment, this shout was particularly clear and loud. Everyone from Sea Spirit Pavilion instantly looked over. As they saw a young man and woman seeming to have a little quarrel, they couldn't help but twitch their lips.

Qingqing's face flushed red. She lowered her head in embarrassment. Still, she couldn't help but give Leon one ruthless glare, blaming this blockhead for causing her to lose face.

Chief Manager Wu had an ugly complexion. As Mister Ning's disciple and at such a critical time, not only did he seem utterly indifferent but he even had the mindset to play around; it was just ridiculous. He wanted to speak up and scold the young man but he suddenly had a change of mind. He softened his voice and said, "Leon, Mister Ning still hasn't come out. Aren't you worried?"

Qingqing's heart tightened. She looked up at him.

Leon had a blank look. He looked at a nearby coral as it turned murky blue and quietly said, "So it's almost been a full day. No wonder I felt so tired..."

Qingqing clenched her teeth as she saw Chief Manager Wu's ill expression. "If Mister Ning doesn't come out soon, he will fail."

Leon scratched his head. "It shouldn't be like that. With teacher's strength, it should be easy for him to deal with this competition." He glanced towards the coral house. "Chief manager, how about sending someone to knock on the door? Perhaps teacher has overslept."

Overslept...

Was this fellow really Mister Ning's disciple!?

After not seeing him for a short period of time, when did he start to tease people!

Chief Manager Wu gnashed his teeth. As more time passed, he couldn't help it anymore. He stamped his feet and moved towards the coral house. In any case, the time limit was almost up and even if Mister Ning was defeated, he still wanted to know what the problem had been.

The two staff guarding the entrance paled as they saw Chief Manager Wu approached. They hesitated, not daring to stop him. They had seen how Mister Goodra had been beaten up black and blue, and if this man had the guts to punch a committee member, there was no need to mention mere workers like themselves. And besides, to mess with this man was to mess with the entirety of Sea Spirit Pavilion; they decided to just follow him along.

Standing in front of the door, Chief Manager Wu took a deep breath. Then, he loudly knocked!

In truth, Qin Yu was quite famous right now. He was the most honored sea spirit teacher of Sea Spirit Pavilion's capital city branch division, the person for which a special edition Supreme Book had been exclusively made, and even someone who possessed such a strong soul that he was able to demolish two high level sea spirit teachers in a contest of strength. Thus, more and more eyes turned his way as the time passed. Everyone wondered – how could such a fierce and tyrannical figure inexplicably lose like this?

As Chief Manager Wu knocked on the door, this curiosity had reached the peak. Almost the entire audience of people was watching him, waiting to see what happened next.

But there was no response. Could he have fainted?

Just as Chief Manager Wu lifted his hand to knock once more, there was a light swishing sound as the coral door opened from within. A black-robed figure appeared. He stretched his waist, seeming to yawn. "Chief manager, what a coincidence; you knocked at almost the exact time that I set my alarm for." As Qin Yu spoke, he lifted a shell in his hand, one that was called a Time Shell.

This sort of shell formed a natural alarm clock after pouring a bit of magic power within. Once it used up its magic power, it would emit a loud sound. One could control the time delay through the amount of magic power they inserted.

At this time, everyone watching was left completely dazed.

Even someone as smart and calm as Chief Manager Wu dropped his jaw. He stuttered, "Mister Ning, you...you were really sleeping..."

Chapter 143 – Dangerous

Qin Yu nodded as if it were a matter-of-course. "I only needed a moment to complete the treatment. It was too boring so I decided to take this chance and have a little nap. You should remember that I was ambushed by others just now. I did suffer a minor injury, so I decided I might as well use this time to restore myself."

Of course, this was all a lie. The reason he hadn't appeared until now was because he had to wait until night arrived before the little blue lamp was able to be of use. Back at Sea Spirit Pavilion, Leon had once asked him the same question on behalf of customers who urgently needed their sea spirits treated and were left worrying through the day, and Qin Yu had used this response. Now, he was conveniently using it once more.

Leon brightened up as if he knew all this time. He happily said, "I told everyone that teacher must have overslept. I always urge teacher to rest more and earlier so that he doesn't tire himself out."

The surrounding Sea Spirit Pavilion cultivators all had strange expressions twisting their faces. Young fellow, is this really the point that you should be focusing on? Why did all of them feel an urge to punch this boy in the face all of a sudden? What, did someone think they were envious? Haha! They weren't, they weren't envious at all! Of course they weren't? Hah, hah...but why did their hearts hurt so much!

Grandmaster Ning, how come you don't look at us? Whether it is in status or intelligence, we completely crush this boy Leon!

Chief Manager Wu was someone who had survived numerous storms in his life. With his great will and control, he slowly lifted his dropped jaw. After a brief daze, he got back to business. "Ah, that's right, it's about time. Mister Ning, how about we hand over the sea spirit first?"

Qin Yu rubbed his forehead. "I'm still a bit groggy from sleeping. How about you ask the committee staff to come over?"

The reality was that they had already arrived, it was just that they were hesitating in approaching. One of these people had crippled two high level sea spirit teachers and the other had beaten up committee member Goodra and cursed him in front of everyone. Both of these fellows were violent and fierce, so who knew whether they would start punching if the result wasn't good? Approaching too soon was just far too dangerous.

Seeing a smiling Chief Manager Wu beckon him, the staff member whined inwardly. He hurriedly walked over, "Congratulations, it seems that Grandmaster Ning has successfully completed the treatment."

Chief Manager Wu said with restraint, "The sea spirit is here. I'll have to trouble you all too inspect it."

"Of course, of course." The staff member waved his hand and people immediately received the sea spirit. They placed it on a square jade plate. Countless tiny runes started to shine on its surface, covering the tray and sea spirit in a dim halo of light.

In one of the previous competitions there had been a sea spirit teacher who had used special forbidden medicines to make the sea spirit glow with vitality and cover up any flaws. He had moved onto the next round and achieved decent results. When the truth came out, a storm was set off. Even though the sea spirit teacher involved was heavily punished, he continued proclaiming his innocence and saying he was framed. As a result, the competition committee of that year was only able to passively react and there were even sea spirit teachers who began to call into question the fairness of the competition.

In order to prevent something similar from ever happening again, the competition committee had this custom examination treasure specifically made for this event; it could accurately sense the composition of medicines. While there hadn't been any sea spirit teachers that had tried to cheat this way in the last few hundred years, it was still preserved as a tradition.

The square jade plate glowed with a gentle light, without any fluctuations. The staff member smiled and said, "There aren't any problems. Chief manager, you may bring Grandmaster Ning to rest."

After the staff member left, Chief Manager Wu bitterly smiled. He quietly said, "Mister Ning, you really gave me a fright this time. Please don't do this to me again in the future."

Qin Yu nodded, not speaking much. While using the excuse of sleeping was convenient, it seemed to be a bit over-the-line for this situation. And sure enough, as he looked around he could see strange glances directed at him, as well as looks of...awe.

One of the Sea Spirit Pavilion sea spirit teachers that participated in the match suddenly trembled, his beard shaking like a tree in a storm. It looked as if he would fall on his back at any moment. Before this, he had been one of the more obvious and rude people who wouldn't deign to spare Qin Yu a glance. This old fellow's strength was decent enough, but his luck was too poor. He ran into a powerful enemy while he competed for a sea spirit and after several back and forths, was severely wounded and had no choice but to withdraw from the competition.

At this time, as he saw Qin Yu walking over, his face paled. He swayed back and forth, pretending as if he had fainted in the chaos. Luckily, someone rushed over and brought him away for treatment. There was just nothing else he could do. He couldn't afford to offend Qin Yu and he was too ashamed to go over and allow himself to be mocked. He might as well pretend to faint so that he could temporarily avoid the limelight.

Chief Manager Wu walked along, all smiles. His gestures revealed his confidence and joy. But, just after he boarded the carriage with Qin Yu and the door closed behind them, his face darkened and he said, "Grandmaster Ning, are you really not injured?"

Qin Yu shook his head. "I'm fine." His eyes flashed. "It seems that chief manager already knows what is happening."

Chief Manager Wu coldly said, "I'm not blind. It looks like someone is eyeing Old Sea's Purple Card position. What gall!"

Qin Yu remained calm. This wasn't too hard an assumption to make. He said, "Perhaps you might be able to find something out from those two sea spirit teachers."

Chief Manager Wu nodded. "I've already sent people. There is also the competition committee...hehe, if it weren't for some deliberate inside arrangement, how could those two people have possibly been lucky enough to be positioned right next to Mister Ning? When I was shouting at them just then, I looked around and locked down a probable target, and I've also sent some people to investigate him."

Qin Yu furrowed his eyebrows together. "Will there be any problems from injuring others? And, what about the sea spirit that was handed back to the staff?"

Chief Manager Wu coldly sneered. "It's been dealt with. No one will bring up this matter again until the competition is over, and by the time the competition is over, the committee will be useless. If they want to continue any investigation then they need to pass through the doors of my Sea Spirit Pavilion first! As for the sea spirit, I have already left behind a mark on it. I believe they won't do anything to it, otherwise the reputation of the committee will be completely ruined."

He hesitated for a moment and then said, "Mister Ning, I won't hide this from you. The one eyeing Old Sea's position is likely to be a powerful figure. When I mentioned that the matter of injuring those two had been dealt with, that was because my mistress personally called in from Sega City, otherwise this definitely would have become an issue."

"Is chief manager saying that I am now in a dangerous position?"

"Yes!" Chief Manager Wu stoically said. "In order for this other party to arrange all of this, who knows just how much time and effort they must have spent. Old Sea has fallen for their trap, now you are the only barrier left in their way. If I was in their position, I would not allow my plans to fail like this. I would decide to remove you from the equation."

Qin Yu lightly said, "Since chief manager is being so open and honest with me, there must be some methods you have so I can feel peace of mind."

Chief Manager Wu's eyes brightened. "That's right. I ask Mister Ning to rest assured. I guarantee upon my name that no matter who this other party is, they can give up any ideas of harming you." His eyes hardened. "Many people are curious just what background my Sea Spirit Pavilion has that we can develop to this scale in a mere hundred years. But, they will soon find out."

A day passed. Out of the 20 sea spirits, seven had been cured. Eventually, 13 sea spirit teachers wearily left their coral houses and handed over their sea spirits.

They were placed back on the altar. The second round of fierce competition began.

In this round, six sea spirits were healed.

The third round was incomparably brutal. Nearly every several breaths of time there was a sea spirit teacher that would spit out blood. The air bubble protecting them would retract around them, forcing them out of the battle.

Finally, almost half of the remaining sea spirit teachers were wounded and the seven sea spirits were brought into coral houses.

In normal times, after three rounds of competition, the 20 people headed to the next round should have been decided. But perhaps because some sea spirit teachers were too heavily wounded or perhaps they had used up too much of their soul force – no matter what the reason was – by the time the third day ended, there were still some sea spirits placed back on the altar.

The reason that the success rate was higher in normal times was because normally speaking, after the 20 sea spirits were taken away and treated, the ones that failed would sell the information related to their sea spirits in the upper circles. As long as one was willing to pay a certain price they could obtain information about the sea spirit they wanted to treat, and thus the success rate of treatment was usually higher after every round.

There were still failures in the third round. This might have been because some sea spirit teachers didn't manage to buy the information they needed, or perhaps it was because of something else.

The fourth round began.

Even with Qin Yu's standard, he was still shocked by how ruthless this round was. He thought he was lucky to have been brutal enough to obtain a spot in the first round, otherwise if he were to end up in the fourth round, even he didn't have full faith he could emerge unscathed.

A sea spirit teacher had an overjoyed expression. Just as he was about to obtain the last sea spirit, his body suddenly tensed up and his eyeballs popped out of his head. He spat a mouthful of blood and fainted to the floor. In that instant he had withstood the wild barrage of over a dozen divine senses. In the crazy onslaught, he was already lucky enough to be able to save his own life.

And this was only an ordinary sight in the brutal battlefield.

High level sea spirit teachers were wounded one after another and were forced to leave. The remaining ones had blood red eyes boiling over with rage. Slowly, the scene began to spiral out of control, leaving the committee staff sweating in panic. If there were severe injuries and casualties, then the next great sea spirit teacher competition would be affected; it might even be cancelled by His Majesty.

At this time, the committee staff quickly responded and offered a solution.

The final sea spirit would be obtained by whoever had the strongest and purest soul force. After debating over it for some time, the panting sea spirit teachers accepted this proposal.

The committee staff urgently borrowed a soul testing treasure from the royal palace and brought it to the square. The remaining sea spirit teachers that could still move all struggled back to test their ability. Even the old sea spirit teacher from Sea Spirit Pavilion that had 'fainted' upon seeing Qin Yu suddenly rose up and ran over upon hearing the announcement. As he leapt up from his bed, several caretakers couldn't help but stare at him with disgusted looks.

In the end, the one who won was a cowardly sea spirit teacher who thought he lacked strength and so hadn't competed in the brutal fourth round. He managed to win by the tiniest sliver, and looking at his smile that reached his eyes, it could be seen that he was shocked senseless by his victory.

The committee staff had already made an emergency change in the rules. If a fifth round were to occur, then the situation would really spin out of control. This was especially true because they had been forced to borrow a special soul testing treasure and had received a harshly worded reprimand from His Majesty.

Thus, the clearly weak and ordinary sea spirit teacher only used half a day to 'cure' the last sea spirit. After careful inspection, the committee staff announced that there weren't any problems with it. As for whether or not there really was a problem, only they knew.

There was a sea spirit teacher who was upset enough that he raised an objection. He had been placed in second during the soul test and had just barely been eliminated. However, what happened was that he was pronounced as trying to sabotage the competition by the committee staff and forcefully expelled, and also banned from competing for the next 30 years. After that, everything calmed down.

At this point, the 20 people advancing to the next round were announced.

Chairman Xu spoke up, his voice echoing through the square. "Right now, we will have the altar make a final judgment upon the 20 sea spirits. The top two competitors will face off against each other to determine just who has the qualifications to challenge for the Purple Card."

Hum –

The white jade altar erupted with light.

The 20 trays were all summoned forth, instantly flying from the hands of the committee staff and soaring towards the altar.

Chapter 144 – Black Riders

The altar was the same as the bell that hung outside the royal palace. Both were artifacts dating back to ancient times and both had unimaginable uses. For instance, the altar was able to reflect the quality of spirits. The 20 sea spirits that were chosen for the competition were carefully selected; they were all of the same rank and the difficulty of treating them was also the same.

When the 20 trays entered the range of the altar, they all simultaneously began to emit a pale light, just like the altar itself. This proved that the 20 sea spirits had already been restored to normalcy. As time passed, the light that the trays emitted also began to change.

Several trays began to glow with an increasingly rich color. The white light burned away to slowly reveal a deep blue. This proved that for these several trays, the quality of sea spirit had surpassed the normal level and were now considered excellent.

A formidable sea spirit teacher could not only treat the wounds and sicknesses of sea spirits, but also help them increase their strength. Of course, only a small portion of sea spirit teachers could accomplish this and they were considered amongst the peak existences of sea spirit teachers.

There were differences in how deep the blue lights were, and in normal situations, the final two contestants would be chosen from these sea spirits. But at this time, countless sea race members cried out in alarm.

Counting both inside and outside of Prosperity Square, there were almost a million sea race citizens gathered. As they cried out together, their collective gasps were like a billowing clap of thunder that reverberated through the world.

Beneath the gaze of countless shocked eyes, a touch of purple suddenly appeared on one of the extremely deep blue trays. It was like a drop of purple ink that fell into water and rapidly dispersed outwards. This purple light was incredibly faint and pale amongst the deep blue, but even so, it was noble and extraordinary, as high and lofty as the clouds overlooking the earth.

This was because this color represented an entirely different level!

The sea races revered the color purple. This purple light indicated that not only did the sea spirit increase in strength, but it had made a qualitative breakthrough.

A change in quality represented a change in its essential nature.

With a sublimation in nature, that represented a whole new leap in quality.

This sea spirit had exceeded its original level, surpassing all the other as it reached all new heights.

The sea spirit teacher competition had been held many times before, but there were actually very few times when this color purple would appear. And from those several times, the overwhelming majority of those sea spirit teachers had gone on to defeat the Purple Card sea spirit teachers they chose, becoming new legends in their own right!

In other words, the one who cured this sea spirit had an extremely high chance of becoming a new Purple Card!

Countless eyes gathered towards a corner of Prosperity Square. There were seven or eight carriages stopped there, and those carriages were now swamped with people. Each one of those people was a high ranking individual of the capital city and they were now praising and congratulating freely, all of them with looks of awe and respect.

A Purple Card did not even have to bow upon entering the royal palace. They were genuinely great existences of the sea region, powerful masters that stood high above all others.

The Qing Family Patriarch and Madame Qing pushed into the crowd, wanting to join in on the inner circles that were offering their congratulations. But, before they could approach, the cold eyes that landed on them made them stop in their tracks.

The Qing Family Patriarch revealed a look of anger, but he was held back by Madame Qing. That graceful woman continued to maintain a calm expression with an unassailable smile. They absolutely could not leave because even if they stood here, in the eyes of the commoners they were still one of the top elite families of the capital city.

In the middle carriage, a young man sat down cross-legged. He frowned upon hearing the noise and chaos outside.

A fat old man sat across from him, stroking his beard and smiling. "They are congratulating you. Young Master Jin, you are even more powerful than before. You should definitely be victorious this time."

The young man faintly replied, "I know."

Calm and restrained, this was confidence!

The fat old man smiled, an expectant look in his eyes. Once they successfully passed this round, the plan that their family had prepared for all these years could continue.

But suddenly, an even louder clamor sounded out from beyond the carriage. Those high ranking citizens of the capital city all gasped again, their jaws dropping open as dumbfounded expressions crossed their faces.

On the altar, another tray gushed out with purple light. It complemented the precious Purple Soul Flower within, making it seem even more dazzling.

Up until now, there had never been a situation in the competition where two purple lights reflected against each other. The audience was stirred into a frenzy, and their cheers seemed to tear through the waters and into the skies.

First they had seen Mister Ning sequentially cripple two high level sea spirit teachers and had also seen Chief Manager Wu smash committee member Goodra with a chair. Now, they were able to witness two purple lights bloom one after another.

It was worth it! The price of their tickets was worth it!

There were people outside who were too cheap to purchase tickets or were too late in doing so. They didn't expect the people on the grandstands to leap onto their feet and roar. Without seeing it through their own eyes, they would miss out on a topic to brag about for the rest of their lives.

Chief Manager Wu's tense expression suddenly broke into smiles. As he looked at the calm and tranquil Qin Yu across from him, he couldn't help but burst out in admiration.

This was true confidence!

As he recalled how his nervous expression just now must have been noticed, he revealed an awkward look. But, he soon calmed down. As long as Qin Yu could win, then let alone turning himself into a joke, he was willing to do even more shameful things.

Qingqing was ecstatic. She hugged Leon and laughed and cheered. Only by doing this could she release all the pent up joy in her heart.

Leon clumsily responded to all the congratulations around him. He watched as the previously arrogant sea spirit teachers suddenly tried to be much closer to him, as if they couldn't wait to drag him to the side and pledge brotherhood.

The Qing Family Patriarch and Madame Qing suddenly discovered that they were surrounded by people. Those high ranking capital city nobles that had warned them away with their eyes before were now smiling at them and greeting them. They apologized for their disrespectful actions just now, and the atmosphere seemed incomparably peaceful.

In just a short moment, a great number of invitations were extended to the two of them. Their hearts shook with joy and they smiled as they exchanged greetings.

Someone asked how Miss Qingqing was doing at Sea Spirit Pavilion, and commented that she seemed to be in a very good relationship with Mister Leon.

The Qing Family Patriarch looked at his daughter that was happily hugging Leon, and his eyes twitched. He originally wanted to blurt out that this was all nonsense, but apart from feeling a bit sour in his heart, he didn't feel any anger at all.

Mister Leon? Heh, these high ranking nobles didn't seem to care about any sense of face at all. Just a little before this they had been referring to the boy as someone who had managed to step into some dogshit luck.

Madame Qing calmly responded. She said that her daughter was only work friends with Grandmaster Ning's disciple, and while they had a good relationship, it wasn't anything too special.

The upper circles favored this type of vague and meandering speech. The clearer they spoke the more unclear they wanted to be. And sure enough, the envy in their eyes became even thicker.

In the middle carriage, the young sea spirit teacher paled. "Mister Ning...how is he still alive?"

The fat old man bitterly smiled. "We've already sent people to deal with him, but it seems we have underestimated his strength. The two high level sea spirit teachers we spent so much time raising have already died."

That was right, they had both died, and the fat old man had personally ordered their deaths. This was because only the dead could keep secrets. Even his master didn't want to directly face that respected lady in Sega City.

The young sea spirit teacher clenched his teeth. "Kill him. I don't want to see him again!"

The fat old man hesitated and then nodded in agreement. He sighed inwardly. What happened in the competition had already stirred up attention. Once Mister Ning died suspiciously, it would surely set off a massive storm. There was even a chance that the plans his master had arranged over all these years might be exposed and destroyed.

But with things having come this far, it was no longer possible to retreat. He recalled the instructions his master had left him and his face darkened. He lightly rapped the carriage door and the four guards standing outside simultaneously moved into formation. Powerful auras erupted from all of them, blocking all outside interference.

The fat old man pulled out a spirit shell. Then, he calmly said, "Move from the shadows. Eliminate all obstacles no matter the price."

He placed the spirit shell back in his chest and warmly smiled. "Young Master Jin, the matter has been handled."

The young sea spirit teacher humphed. He closed his eyes in meditation.

The two traces of purple light left the entire competition committee shaken. They all paled, unsure of what to do.

The results spoke for themselves and there was no one willing to argue anything else. After a brief time, Chairman Xu announced the results: Safesea City's Jing Guanjin and Sea Spirit Pavilion's Mister Ning were tied for first. Three days from now, a match would be held that would determine the champion of the sea spirit teacher competition.

Leon and Qingqing bid their farewells. After stepping onto the carriage, Sea Spirit Pavilion's slowly sailed out the square.

The cheers of countless sea race citizens were like a tide as they chased after the caravan, all of them shouting out praise and expressing their reverence.

But as the caravan drove out from the square and turned onto the main road leading back to Sea Spirit Pavilion, the tall building windows on both sides of the street were suddenly smashed open. 20 black-clothed figures leapt out, their bodies emanating a terrifying smell of blood.

In a few short breaths of time, the guards of Sea Spirit Pavilion suffered heavy losses. The 20 assassins were like ghosts, rapidly flitting towards Qin Yu's carriage. This sight shocked all the sea race citizens that had been following the caravan. Young ladies screeched out loud as they were pulled away.

The entire crowd was in upheaval as if a riot had broken out.

After the changing of the throne, it had been many years since there had been such a public assassination attempt on the streets. Some elderly sea race citizens shivered as if they were reliving those bloody years.

In the carriage, Chief Manager Wu had a cold look. He didn't reveal anything even as his guards died.

Qin Yu opened his eyes. "You were waiting for them?"

Chief Manager Wu nodded. "Ever since Old Sea was wounded, it was impossible for there to be any following calm. Since Mister Ning has revealed enough strength to pose a threat to their plans, it is only natural that they would try to eliminate you." His gaze turned even icier. "While I did make plans, they were only there as a last measure. I never imagined they would try to kill you in public view."

He reached out and made a gesture.

Rumble –

The earth shook. The chaotic crowd was shoved to the side. Countless people cried out in misery as they fell to the ground. But just as they were about to curse at whoever had pushed them, they glanced back and shut up upon seeing the fully armored warriors who had done so. These warriors rode tall and mighty seahorses and were completely wrapped in armor. Their appearance left everyone shivering with a cold sweat.

The royal family had whale monster guards, and this was of the signs of their strength and status. But, their strongest defensive force was recognized as the royal black riders. This was a mystical force. No one knew who controlled them and no one knew where they were stationed or even how many members they had.

Their most famous battle occurred during the changing of the throne. 3000 black riders rode straight into the capital city, encircled the old royal family, and slaughtered seven of their top masters. Although they had suffered severe losses during that time, the black riders established themselves as an unsurpassed battle force.

Thus, even though the black riders hadn't appeared in the world for a long time, their legends still circulated through the capital city.

Chapter 145 – Assassination

The crowd fell to an eerie quiet. Countless people watched on with open mouths as this current of black riders swarmed out like waves from hell, surging from all directions and surrounding the assassins.

Without any command, the black riders suddenly divided into 20 small groups. Each group had three black riders that surrounded an assassin, and their black dragon spears came stabbing out in unison.

The seemingly unstoppable assassins fell into a brutal life and death struggle. In the face of the black riders, their exquisite assassination skills were useless. They tried to flee but they were desperately blocked.

The black riders bled and the assassins died.

The sharp tang of blood filled the street. Faintly, people recalled the capital city in the past; the black riders had also fought like this.

Puff –

The last assassin was simultaneously pierced by seven dragon spears. Horrifying strength ravaged his body and ripped apart his insides.

The assassin's eyes widened, filled with regret. And just like that, he died.

There was no mercy granted. This was because these were all excellent assassins, and if they dared to attack publicly in the capital city, then they must have already been prepared to die. Even if considerable effort was expended to capture them, the only thing they would receive was a body killed by poison. With the black riders' ruthless and direct methods, they decided to simply kill off all enemies in the simplest and easiest way.

At one end of the street, atop a tall building, a fat old man gently shivered. A few drops of dirty tears dripped out from the corners of his eyes.

He was heartbroken!

It had taken him dozens of years of arduous labor to slowly raise this assassin squad, but just now, almost half of them had been lost.

Moreover, he could only stare helplessly on as they all died and he wasn't able to save them at all.

Black riders! Damn it all, they had actually sent out black riders!

It was no wonder his master feared that noble lady in Sega City so much; she actually wielded control over such a horrifying power. What could the ruler of the royal palace be thinking? After mounting the throne, he actually let her control such a vital strength of the royal family.

But now, it was useless to think upon these things any further. His incorrect judgment had led to the death of many of his assassins, and this also meant that it was no longer possible to directly erase this obstacle. This was because the black riders were considered the most formidable defensive force in the sea region, and up until now there had been no one who had ever broken through them.

The fat old man turned and walked away. While he wasn't worried that people would discover him and suspect him, he was pressed for time and had many other things to handle.

Peace returned to the street. The 60 black riders arranged themselves into a line. Some of them were injured and blood flowed thick from their black armor, but even so, their backs were straight and tall and the black dragon spears in their hands didn't tremble in the least.

As the surviving guards looked on in awe, the black riders took over their duties and slowly circled around the caravan as it returned to Sea Spirit Pavilion. On this day, the appearance of the black riders inevitably solved the puzzle for many people about what the true background of Sea Spirit Pavilion was, and when they did, their minds shivered with shock.

Qin Yu looked out at the calmly riding black riders. They moved in complete unison, including the rhythmic sounds of their mounts and even their breathing.

This sort of well-trained sea race army was unimaginably strong. He even suspected that as long as there were enough black riders, even Nascent Souls would be trampled over. Compared with these people, the cultivator alliance army fighting in the Southern Empire seemed like nothing but a ragtag bunch of misfits.

There didn't need to be too many. If 5000 black riders rode onto the mainland, they could completely crush both the demonic and righteous sides. Perhaps only the supreme royal family of the sea region had the chance of controlling such a dreadful strength.

Chief Manager Wu was full of praise. "The black riders are one of the strongest forces in the sea region. Their appearance is enough to guarantee that Mister Ning will never come to harm." His eyes were filled with desire. There was no one in the world that wouldn't want to control such a force.

But besides the royal family, there were only a small minority of formidable tribes who had the abilities to set up such an amazing fighting force; the other sea race influences could completely forget about it. It wasn't that they weren't allowed to, but simply that they weren't able to afford it. To create an army that was entirely made up of powerful sea race members, the total cost of doing this would be astronomical!

They smoothly arrived at Sea Spirit Pavilion. Then, the black riders dispersed, vanishing from sight. But no one doubted that if Sea Spirit Pavilion was attacked, they would appear as soon as possible.

Chief Manager Wu stepped down from the carriage, his eyes solemn. "The black riders can protect from any frontal attacks. As for what follows, I guarantee that Mister Ning will be completely safe."

....

Old Chao was in charge of Sea Spirit Pavilion's cafeteria. He had worked there studiously for dozens of years, and because of his sincere attitude, skillful cooking abilities, and open and honest smile, he was well-liked by the employees of Sea Spirit Pavilion, and was considered a relatively popular figure.

An order came down from above to have him cook a nutritious medicinal meal. He considered himself an experienced individual who had seen many things, but even he was shocked by the materials given to him to cook the meal. Disregarding the other materials, just some of the soul-nourishing materials were so valuable that they could be sold at auction.

Old Chao gathered his wits. He scrubbed his hands, changed into new clothes, and then tidied himself up. It was only then that he started to carefully process the materials and cook the meals under the watchful gaze of several guards. Good materials needed to be handled by a skilled chef. Only by controlling the degree of heat and time could one properly stimulate the properties of the materials without making them too difficult to absorb.

Washing, cleaning, cutting, chopping, the materials were prepared and placed into a 30 year old soup cauldron, and then water was poured in. Old Chao looked at the several guards around him and revealed an awkward expression. Which chef didn't have their own unique skills? And most of these were passed down from generation to generation. They weren't even willing to allow their children to look, much less spread these secrets to outsiders.

The guard captain smiled, "Old Chao, we all know your rules here. We'll turn around and you cook a bit faster, alright?"

Old Chao nodded again in thanks. Once the guards turned around he began to blend in the soup and various other ingredients. His actions were smooth like passing clouds and flowing rivers, and after a time, he smiled, "Good." He lifted a hand and poured in some cooking wine. As the fire deepened over time, a rich fragrance began to spread out.

Several guards gulped. The guard captain chuckled and scolded them. You bastards really shouldn't have any thoughts about this. Just smelling something like this is your luck, so wake up!

Old Chao smiled as he cooked. Two hours later, the medicinal soup was ready. He lifted the pot and inspected its color. As he smelled it, he nodded. This was just right. But, it needed to be drunk while hot, otherwise the medicinal efficacy would fade away.

The guard captain waved his hand and someone immediately took out a new food box and placed the medicinal soup inside. He smiled, "Old Chao, let's have a drink tonight. I will prepare the materials and you can cook them."

Seeing Old Chao nod, the other guards wanted to join in on the fun but were quickly rebuked. They carried the food box and walked away in a hurry. After they left, Old Chao started to clean up the mess. And once he was finished, he vanished through the rear door where trash was taken out. From that day, Old Chao never returned. Listening to others, it was said that he decided to retire.

That night, the guard captain died a violent death in his home. It was natural that no one would mention dining together again.

...

Business at Sea Spirit Pavilion carried on. Perhaps it was because of Mister Ning, but everything seemed far busier than normal. So many guests arrived that the consultants didn't even have a chance to rest their feet.

A family of three customers walked in. The lady and her daughter were quite beautiful and the melon-like husband received many envious gazes. While he was gracious about this, from time to time he would vigilantly sweep his eyes around, glaring back at the heated gazes directed towards them like a dog protecting its food.

A consultant stepped forwards to welcome them. They chatted happily before heading over to a counter to register. Just as the exchange was going to be finished, the beautiful mother blushed red and whispered something in a low voice. The consultant smiled and motioned with her hands.

The man looked at her, unhappy. He was too busy to stay so he could only nod with a bit of resentment and advise her to return as soon as possible.

Humans needed to answer the call of nature and so did the sea races; this was even true for a beautiful young wife. As she walked forwards, she swayed from side to side, drawing the gaze of a consultant. Their eyes bumped into each other several times and the young woman blushed red. A look of anticipation crossed her face, leaving the consultant panting within.

She arrived at the washroom. Yes, that was right – the sea races also called it a washroom, a very elegant and clean name. The young woman eyed the handsome consultant one last time before walking in.

15 minutes, 30 minutes...

The consultant waited for a long time but the beautiful woman didn't come back out. As for the melon-like man, he seemed to complete all his matters, so he took his daughter and left early.

...

For the sea races that had taken human form, the truth was that they weren't any different from humans. They ate, drank, slept, and produced a great deal of trash. With so many people gathered in the capital city, taking care of general hygiene was a vital task. Thus, beneath the massive capital city, there was a vast series of sewage pipes that led to a distant trench. This was to ensure that the capital city and the surrounding environment wouldn't be affected.

Every day, there was a massive number of workers who would enter temporarily closed sewage pipes. They would clean and repair the inside to maintain them.

A group of workers responsible for cleaning the sewage pipes walked in. As they stepped into the dark, one could hear their laughs from afar, as if someone had said a very bold joke.

The workers gradually vanished within. As they walked deeper, they began to split up, scattering towards their respective work areas. Six workers separated themselves from the group and after a moment, fell silent. They turned off the lighting equipment on their heads, looking like a bunch of mice scurrying in the dark. Then, carefully, they opened a sealed gate that normally wasn't opened, and walked in.

...

Qin Yu was sleeping quite well.

Ever since entering the sea race capital city, he had always been tense about his environment. But now that he was certain there were people protecting him, he was able to relax a little.

He slept without dreams. When his eyes opened again, he was full of energy as if he had been completely cleansed. His strengthened soul seemed even clearer than before.

This was the way to relax.

As for the following match...was that even something he needed to consider?

Leon hurriedly stood up and bowed at his teacher. He hesitated and said, "Teacher, about the Skysea Wings..."

Qin Yu waved his hand dismissively. "I already said I would give it to you two. Just accept it."

Leon was filled with gratitude. "Thank you, teacher!"

Qin Yu walked to the tea set placed on the worktable and lit the fire. Qin Yu began to boil the tea as Leon respectfully stood to the side.

Leon knew that while his teacher was boiling tea, he was also calming his mind and wouldn't like to be disturbed.

But they were still interrupted by a knock. Leon quickly walked over to the door to reveal a slightly weary Chief Manager Wu. As he saw Qin Yu boiling some tea, he forced out a smile. "Mister Ning, you seem to be enjoying yourself!"

Qin Yu smiled. "Chief manager, you arrived just in time. Come, sit down."

Chief Manager Wu took out a food box. "This is some medicinal soup. Have a taste, it is good for your health." He watched Qin Yu pour tea and shook his head helplessly. "Mister Ning, you should know that in order for this soup to be brewed, from purchasing the supplies until it was cooked and sent here, seven people have died. Not only did a long-time food supplier of my Sea Spirit Pavilion die, but also some guards and even the chef who cooked my favorite dishes."

Chapter 146 – Sound Shell Network Station

The voice from beneath the black robe was calm. "Chief manager still hasn't found any clues?"

"We have, but when the suspect dies any clues we have usually come to a dead end. If there is something we can investigate, it is most likely the 20 assassins that tried to kill you on the street. Perhaps the person manipulating things behind the scenes also knows how bad it looks to try and kill you publicly like that, but they will need to give an account of their actions, even if it is only to keep the mouths of others from flapping." Chief Manager Wu's complexion turned ugly. "Mister Ning, do you know where our clues finally led us to? It is an escort company within the capital city, one that relies on orders from Sea Spirit Pavilion to earn a profit. That's right, it is the own business of our Sea Spirit Pavilion!"

To look up the source of the assassins and find that they were coming from his own house, it was no surprise that Chief Manager Wu was so angry.

Qin Yu shook his head. "It looks like whoever wants to kill me is extremely meticulous."

Chief Manager Wu quietly said, "Mister Ning, rest assured that with the black riders outside, no one would dare to come in. As long as you stay here, I can personally guarantee that no one will ever manage to harm you."

Time was unpredictable. Sometimes it was unbearably long and sometimes it rushed like a raging river, passing by in an instant.

On the third day.

Sea Spirit Pavilion looked no different than any other day, but the internal defenses were on the highest alert possible. Even the sewer pipes deep underground were being guarded against any foul scent. But, the countless methods that had been used in the past two days seemed to have vanished without a trace. As the Sea Spirit Pavilion guards saw everything remain calm and uneventful even at noon, they all glanced at each other with confusion. Could the other party have given up?

Chief Manager Wu coldly sneered. He strengthened their defenses, believing this was a plan from their enemies to lower their guards. Until the finals ended, they could not lower their vigilance in the least.

But on this day, there were no more assassination attempts. Instead, a guest came requesting to visit Mister Ning.

Chief Manager Wu personally handled this. It was unknown what the other party said, but he had an incredibly grim complexion. He roared several times and pulled out a spirit shell. After a short conversation he hung up and took a deep breath. "I will go and ask Grandmaster Ning. You had best guarantee that there are no problems."

The visitor was bald with a large belly, just like a happy buddha-like figure. His small eyes were calm and nonchalant. Since he was willing to come here, he clearly didn't care about such threats. He cupped his hands together and said, "I will have to trouble chief manager over this."

Chief Manger Wu left in a huff. He soon arrived on the seventh floor and knocked on the door.

Leon opened the door before respectfully moving to the side.

Qin Yu wasn't cultivating. While Sea Spirit Pavilion had tight defenses, it was always best to be careful. He glanced over, a light flashing in his eyes. "Chief manager, is there a problem?"

Chief Manager Wu opened his mouth, a bit unsure of what to say. He bitterly smiled. "Mister Ning, I came here to invite you to see a guest."

Qin Yu furrowed his eyebrows.

Chief Manager Wu quickly explained, "Someone has a Sea Spirit Card that my master issued in the past. I ask that Mister Ning please come and visit the holder of the Sea Spirit Card. The Sea Spirit Card is a special token that my master sent out at the founding of Sea Spirit Pavilion as thanks for all the help received. With this special token, one can ask Sea Spirit Pavilion to agree to certain conditions.

“These past years, the Sea Spirit Cards have been taken back one after another. I never imagined that this other party would have managed to obtain one for themselves, and my master cannot walk back on her promise. But, I can agree to give Mister Ning 3 million spirit stones as compensation. The black riders will also follow you and I myself will bring masters along too. As long as I’m present, mister will not come to any harm at all.”

Qin Yu raised his eyebrows. After a brief moment of thought, he said, “Very well, I agree.” He was also quite curious as to who wanted to kill him.

Chief Manager Wu apologetically said, “No matter what, this is my Sea Spirit Pavilion wronging Mister Ning. Hah, please wait a moment, I will immediately arrange everything.”

Qin Yu thought for a moment before calling Leon over and giving him several orders. Leon nodded and left, soon returning with a black box.

Chief Manager Wu returned. “Mister Ning, please.”

There was no loud show or burst of chaos. On the other side of the door were only four people. They waited there, their faces stern and humorless. Each of them carried two narrow long swords on their back, and just by passing near them one’s body would feel pain, as if these people were somehow covered with sharp, invisible thorns.

“Since there are spies in our guards here, we cannot allow them to protect you anymore. These four sea mantis swordsmen all come from Sega City; you can fully trust them.” Chief Manager Wu explained.

They stepped onto the carriage. After departing, the black riders slowly gathered around them.

Following the carriage, the group slowly made their way down the street. This conspicuous group instantly attracted countless eyes. They immediately guessed who was in the carriage and were startled. It was a dangerous time to leave the safety of Sea Spirit Pavilion and yet this person actually dared to venture outside.

Arriving at Foursea Hall, the carriage came to a stop and the black riders dispersed, each one keeping an eye on their surroundings. Chief Manager Wu stepped down first. He looked around and only after a moment did he step back and allow Qin Yu to come out.

A fat and bald man greeted them, a joyful smile on his face. “My master is overjoyed that Mister Ning could make an appearance. He is currently waiting in the banquet hall. Please, come with me.”

Several of the black riders split off to follow along. Chief Manager Wu and the four sea mantis swordsmen walked into Foursea Hall. The staff within smiled, not caring too much about this. It was only upon entering a reserved room and seeing the similarly silent black riders waiting that Chief Manager Wu’s pupils shrank.

“Little Wu, I was the one who extended the invitation. I have some words to speak alone with Mister Ning, so how about you wait outside.” An elderly voice sounded out from within.

Chief Manager Wu revealed a bitter expression. He respectfully bowed and said, “Yes, I understand.” He turned towards Qin Yu, his eyes unreadable and said, “Mister Ning, please rest assured that since it is

this gentleman who invited you here, you need not worry about your safety. I will be waiting for you outside.”

Qin Yu’s eyes flashed. He pushed open the doors and entered.

The reserved room was extremely big, the table was giant, and there were many, many dishes.

Steam wafted into the air. Fragrance filled the senses.

Two chairs were laid out, facing each other.

The one sitting across the table was an old man in embroidered robes. His eyes were clear and insightful, as if they could see directly into the hearts of others. As he saw Qin Yu enter, he smiled and said, “Mister Ning, please take a seat. Come and taste these dishes that I prepared. The chef is one I borrowed from His Majesty; I hope that it can suit your tastes.”

Simple and easy, this was a way of showing utter superiority.

Qin Yu didn’t refuse. He sat down, picked up some utensils and started to eat. The flavor of the dishes was actually quite good. As the thin slices of meat entered his mouth, their aroma flew straight into his heart.

The old man had several beautiful scales on his forehead. Unfortunately, Qin Yu wasn’t too familiar with the various sea races, so he couldn’t guess who this old man was. At this time he was a bit curious, and a bit of appreciation glinted in his eyes.

The two didn’t speak a single word. In the reserved room, there was only the sound of chewing and swallowing. The old man didn’t seem to have a good appetite; after a while, he placed down his bowl and chopsticks. He looked at Qin Yu rapidly eating food and sighed with envy, but didn’t urge him to finish any faster.

Ever since he had achieved the Demon Body, Qin Yu’s appetite was many times above that of his previous state. The table was left a mess as most of the food ended up in Qin Yu’s mouth. He washed it down with tea and then comfortably said, “Thank you for the hospitality.”

The old man smiled. “To eat is luck. When I was young, I ate even more than you did. But what a pity, I have grown a little old. Even if I wanted to eat that much, it is a bit difficult for me. So you know, young people should lead a comfortable life like this so they don’t regret it later. For instance, don’t be a pitiful old man like me.”

Qin Yu didn’t know what tricks the old man was trying to play, so he merely smiled in response.

“Mister Ning is young and promising, so why do you want to waste your golden years in this vain and ridiculous capital city? Why not go sailing through the sea with this old man and play for a bit? My shark ship has just been completed and it is ready for its maiden voyage. Any sort of delicious food or fun game can be found on board. Also, I have a treasure room built within that carries the majority of the items I’ve collected in my life. If Mister Ning wants to visit, you can freely choose a few items from inside.”

Qin Yu lightly replied, “I thank you for your good intentions. If you aren’t in a hurry, then you can wait a few days for me. Once the sea spirit competition ends, perhaps I will agree.”

The old man shook his head. "This matter cannot wait. The ship launches today, a good day."

Qin Yu responded, "Then I'm afraid I will have to disappoint you."

The old man frowned. "Mister Ning doesn't want to further consider this?"

Qin Yu stood up. "No."

Once Qin Yu reached the entrance, he paused upon hearing the old man once more. "Mister Ning, you are very young so you shouldn't recklessly rush any decision. There are all sorts of valuable items in my collection, even things that can strengthen the soul. I'm sure that it will be more than enough to satisfy you."

Qin Yu didn't even glance back. "Treasures are good, but my word is heavier. Since I made a previous agreement, I can only refuse."

He pushed open the door.

The bald and fat man suddenly rushed forwards, growling, "Grandmaster Ning, I thought you were a smart man so I never expected you to make such a stupid choice. I am very disappointed!"

Qin Yu glanced at him. "And who are you?"

The fat man's breath caught in his throat and his face turned even uglier. "Do you think that just because the grandmaster said some kind words to you, you can stand atop the highest heavens? How could Young Master Jin..." He suddenly stopped talking as he realized he said something he shouldn't have. He clenched his teeth, "Surname Ning, this was your final chance. Don't blame me for reminding you!"

Chief Manager Wu had a worried expression. He paced back and forth not too far away. As he heard the door open he hurried over, and as he saw this scene unfolding before him, he coldly said, "Steward Wang, just what are you doing?"

It was clear that he recognized this person.

Steward Wang sneered and turned to leave.

Chief Manager Wu started to speak but hesitated.

Qin Yu said, "Let's go."

They left Foursea Hall and the carriage quietly drove down the road. Before Chief Manager Wu could say anything, Qin Yu suddenly said, "Chief manager, do you happen to know anyone at a sound shell network station?"

Chief Manager Wu was stunned. He couldn't follow his train of thought and simply nodded.

The carriage changed directions.

...

Later, Qin Yu came out from a small sound shell network station, accompanied by black riders on both sides. Just now, there had been another suicidal strike on their carriage. Chief Manager Wu had a grim expression as he was interrogating someone they managed to catch after a great deal of effort.

“Mister Ning, let’s hurry and return!” Before he could ask Qin Yu what he had done, the sharp-eyed Chief Manager Wu suddenly realized that several black riders who were normally expressionless were suddenly looking at Qin Yu a bit peculiarly.

“Mm, let’s go.”

Mounting the carriage, it wasn’t long before there was a long knock. Director Jin opened the window and pushed in a sound shell while looking at Qin Yu with shock.

Chief Manager Wu started it. After a moment of static, this well-crafted sound shell started to broadcast a clear audio signal.

The words within were fine and nothing seemed out of place. But after Steward Wang left, the words he roared out left one piecing together everything.

Young Master Jin....

Everyone knew that one of the sea spirit teachers who was still in the race to challenge for a Purple Card was named Jing Guanjin.

The network station message continued:

“This is an audio message sent out by our network station upon the deepest fear of death. According to our sound experts, the Grandmaster Ning spoken of in the audio is the Sea Spirit Pavilion’s Mister Ning. It is hard to imagine just who dares to ruthlessly threaten a high level spirit teacher that is participating in such a grand and illustrious competition, and just what sort of diabolical story lies behind it all. This station will continue reporting on this broadcast for you...”

The radio announcer’s voice in the sound shell droned on in a solemn tone. As for Chief Manager Wu, all he heard was a buzzing in his ears...

Chapter 147 – The Power of Inspection

When people reached a high enough level of status, a certain degree of tacit understanding would be formed between them; these were the so-called ‘unspoken rules’. There had been numerous assassination attempts at Sea Spirit Pavilion the last two days, but the outside world knew nothing about them and the traces of their occurrence had been quietly erased. This was a manifestation of these ‘unspoken rules’. Everyone at that level had to abide by them; if they didn’t and if they tried to break these conventions, they would be recklessly pushed back by everyone at that class level and would eventually disappear or be destroyed.

For instance, what Qin Yu had done.

Although it was unknown what the outside situation was, one didn’t need to be a genius to understand that once all these behind-the-scenes conspiracies were exposed, it would inevitably stir up a giant storm. The sound shell network station that had taken the risk of releasing this news had easily

accomplished their purpose; they had become the hottest channel to listen to and there was no one who hadn't heard of them.

"Mister...Mister Ning...you..." Chief Manager Wu babbled on, unsure of what to say.

Qin Yu lightly said, "I am very angry."

With a single sentence, all of Chief Manager Wu's complaints were blocked. He thought about how Qin Yu came from the Skyspirit lineage which was isolated from the outside world and it seemed understandable that he would do something like this which destroyed all the established rules.

With a bitter smile, Chief Manager Wu picked up a spirit shell and made several calls. He hoped to suppress the story, but he clearly underestimated just how nosy the people in the capital city were. With such a massive story being exposed, it instantly became the most talked about topic in the capital city.

The situation had blown out of control!

As the old man in embroidered robes stepped out of Foursea Hall, a subordinate came up and reported the new development to him. He bitterly smiled; he never imagined that the young man would play such a card.

Steward Wang stamped his feet and shivered with rage. Although the sound shell network station hadn't listed any names besides him and Qin Yu, which high level figures in the capital city didn't know who they were?

If they mishandled what happened next, it would be a tremendous loss of face!

The old man waved his hand, interrupting Steward Wang's tirade of revenge. "Enough. I've already done what I can, and I will consider this as repaying a past favor. No matter what happens next, this matter no longer has anything to do with me. Pass down the order: the shark ship will depart ahead of time to avoid the spotlight."

Steward Wang didn't give up. "Master, are we just ending things like this? This will be a stain upon your honor!"

The old man's expression was faint. "Wang Gui, you've followed me ever since you were a child, and I believe that I have never treated you unfairly. You have also saved up a considerable amount in the capital city these years. Take those things back and return them, and do not ever mention this again."

Steward Wang complied in a cold sweat.

The carriage soared straight to the wharf. The old man looked out the window with an absent expression. It had been many years since such a character appeared in the capital city. This Mister Ning was truly a bold and interesting person. He really wanted to know just how this game would play out in the end.

A massive ship was anchored at the wharf. It was constructed using the skeleton of a great shark as the foundation. It created a massive shadow in its wake, its aura bold and overwhelming.

"Master, where shall we go?" The captain respectfully asked.

The old man smiled. "Since we have no guest onboard, there's no need to make up an excuse. Let's begin hunting." He glanced back at the capital city one last time before stepping onto the ship.

The shark ship soon began to move. It quietly pushed through the waters before vanishing from sight.

Chief Manager Wu soon obtained news of this. He wiped the cold sweat from his face and let out a long breath of relief. If the old gentleman didn't blame them then it would be much easier to deal with everything. He took the initiative to accept an interview and explain the situation. Mister Ning had been attacked multiple times in the last three days and repeatedly encountered dangerous situations. He argued for Qin Yu and tried to guide public opinion to their side.

Since things had come this far, there was no way to suppress it any further. He might as well seize this change to launch an attack on their enemy instead. Perhaps this Young Master Jin had a poor personality and would be affected by all the criticism. If so, then Mister Ning's chances of winning would be much higher.

Like this, all doubts and suspicions gathered on Jing Guanjin. As he was almost universally detested, someone finally stood up to speak for him.

Chief Manager Wu had expected this. After all, no matter how much his enemy tried to wash himself clean, what happened was a fact. But, he never imagined that the one to make a move next would be such a heavyweight character.

The one he drew out was the third ranked of the ten great Purple Cards, Grandmaster Wu Zetian, a man renowned for being horrifically cynical and dangerously irritable. He personally came out and denounced Sea Spirit Pavilion as being vile and shameless, and attempting to harm his disciple Jing Guanjin with malicious intent in mind.

It was like a star fell into the sea, causing a dreadful storm. All of the people who were repudiating Jing Guanjin in the capital city suddenly fell silent. The ten great Purple Cards were existences that danced amongst the highest clouds in heaven, and in the eyes of the ordinary sea races, they were legendary and unsurpassed characters. With Grandmaster Wu Zetian personally coming to Jing Guanjin's defense, this became the strongest proof of his innocence.

For a time, rumors rose from all directions and wild conspiracy theories were flung about. Sea Spirit Pavilion was transformed from a persecuted victim to a despicable villain who was willing to do anything to win. Although there were already numerous theories, the appearance of Grandmaster Wu Zetian caused countless nosy individuals to fan the flames of conspiracy.

And it was when everyone was focused on this matter that Grandmaster Wu Zetian accepted an interview in the capital city. He spoke out once more, "The ten great Purple Card sea spirit teachers represent incarnations of the sea spirits in the world. Not only does one need to have superior skills, but they also require a noble character. In view of the actions of the sea spirit teacher surnamed Ning from Sea Spirit Pavilion, I have obtained the consent of two other Purple Cards to exercise the power of inspection."

The media flew into a frenzy as if they had all gone insane at once. This news spread throughout the entire capital city at the fastest speed. Newspapers, sound shell networks, video channels, all sorts of media spread out the image of Grandmaster Wu Zetian's cold eyes and his solemn voice.

There were those people who didn't know what this news meant. They were mocked ruthlessly before numerous people explained the situation to them. The so-called power of inspection was a test given to new Purple Card sea spirit teachers by established Purple Card sea spirit teachers. It required three Purple Cards to uniformly agree, and the inspection would be led by the leader.

In other words, if Qin Yu really obtained the qualifications to challenge for the Purple Card and succeeded, then he would be personally tested by Grandmaster Wu Zetian. If he lost, he would lose his status as a Purple Card.

A Purple Card sea spirit teacher possessed a venerated status and they had a great influence upon the sea races. Behind their birth and rise were countless contests and tests. To start the power of inspection was the equivalent of smashing someone into the dust so that they never rose up again. It was an act of ultimate endless enmity. It had only happened twice in history. As a consequence, top influences had vanished into thin air and powerful families with deep legacies had become mortal enemies, their hatred extending even until now!

Grandmaster Wu Zetian succeeded in stealing the limelight and all eyes were turned to him. The damning audio recording soon disappeared, and the small sound shell network station that first played it was bought out the next day with a large amount of money. All people involved were bribed with more money and it seemed as if nothing had happened.

Chief Manager Wu was left in a nervous sweat. He had investigated but never thought that Jing Guanjin had hidden himself so deeply so that no one knew he was the disciple of Grandmaster Wu Zetian. Although Grandmaster Wu Zetian was ranked third amongst the Purple Cards, it was said this was only because his temper was far too impatient and irritable; in truth, he was no weaker than the first two Purple Cards.

It could be said that Grandmaster Wu Zetian represented the peak of all sea spirit teachers in the sea region! Even if Mister Ning came from the lineage of Skyspirit Sages, he was still young, so how could he possibly be Grandmaster Wu Zetian's opponent?

To be honest, the true problem that Chief Manager Wu worried over was what Mister Ning would do facing a competition where it was impossible to have any harvests. Just what would he do? On one hand he wouldn't gain anything at all and would become Grandmaster Wu Zetian's enemy. On the other hand, it was clear he could earn rich rewards for choosing another path.

And his worries weren't baseless. Someone approached the Qing Family and through Qingqing to Leon, sent a message: if Mister Ning were to withdraw now, he would receive compensation of 30 million spirit stones.

This was an incredible amount. Considering the current situation, it was a truly sincere offer.

When Chief Manager Wu rushed over, Qin Yu was drinking tea. During these two days of idleness he had come to like relaxing in this manner. Seeing Chief Manager Wu's anxious appearance, Qin Yu said, "Chief manager, please rest assured that since I made a promise to you, I will not renege on my words. I will try my best in the competition."

Chief Manager Wu gratefully smiled. He thought about it for several breaths of time and then clenched his teeth, saying, "Mister Ning, do not worry. As long as you can help Old Sea and defend his status as a Purple Card, my Sea Spirit Pavilion will give you enough compensation."

He took out a spirit shell and left, making a call to Sega City.

Chief Manager Wu returned after a moment. He took out a storage shell, "Mister Ning, my master was informed of your decision and is extremely thankful to you. There are 10 million spirit stones in here, and regardless of whether you win or lose in tomorrow's finals, this is yours. And, if Old Sea is safe, we will gift you another 20 million spirit stones."

Qin Yu didn't refuse. After all, in the eyes of outsiders this was something he deserved. In his mind though, he never placed Wu Zetian in his eyes.

So what if he was the third ranked Purple Card? With the little blue lamp in his hand, he could completely disregard anyone when it came to sea spirit plants!

And to start the power of inspection?

Qin Yu's eyes flashed with a cold light. Perhaps I won't give you that chance!

...

Prosperity Square, the final match.

In a carriage, a fat old man anxiously said, "Young Master Jing, it seems that Sea Spirit Pavilion has offered the other party enormous benefits, so only then would he refuse so strongly. Do you have full confidence in your victory today?"

Jing Guanjin was fully confident. "Father has already poured the rest of the Skyspirit power into my body. Today's competition is mine to win!"

The fat old man calmed down. He warned, "Even so, it would be best if you put your whole-hearted effort into winning. This matter is simply far too important."

"I know what I need to do!"

Beneath the royal palace, the sound of a bell rang out.

Jing Guanjin coldly sneered. He pushed open the door and stepped down from the carriage.

Not too far away, the carriage from Sea Spirit Pavilion opened and a black-robed figure emerged. Their eyes met each other.

Like sharp needles meeting, they could feel the chill in the air.

Jing Guanjin was tall and straight, his looks delicate and handsome. His cold and callous appearance enhanced his bearing, making him seem like a dragon amongst men.

In comparison, the black-robed Qin Yu seemed somewhat suspicious, as if he were hiding something.

Perhaps all intelligent races couldn't help but subconsciously judge others based on their appearance. Because of this, countless noble ladies and young charming misses screamed out in joy upon seeing Jing Guanjin, their cries seeming to empower him, their cheers filling his ears.

The two of them moved towards the altar together. Two large coral houses were placed on the square with a white-robed and barefooted priest standing in front.

In a voice that only the two of them could hear, Jing Guanjin coldly said, "Mister Ning, anyone that becomes my enemy will not have a good end. I guarantee that you appearing here today will be the greatest mistake of your life!"

Qin Yu suddenly paused. With everyone's eyes on him, he took out a black wooden box from his chest. He opened it and the words that were spoken replayed themselves. The recording box had clearly been tuned to play back words louder, and the fine quality of it left the enhanced sound undistorted. Jing Guanjin's words were revealed to the public.

Qin Yu closed the recording box and lightly said, "I've already made a recording once, so how come you couldn't remember it? Moreover, please match your character with your appearance. If you want to say something then do so openly and honestly."

He left behind a Jing Guanjin that was gasping and shivering with rage and stepped forwards.

The cheers of countless young ladies and misses suddenly stopped. At this moment, the glorious and radiant image they had built up in their hearts had come crashing down!

Chapter 148 – Suspicious

The parties watching the final competition from all over felt their lips twitch. This Grandmaster Ning loved recording others to the point of obsession. As for Jing Guanjin, he was simply a completely useless piece of trash. Even though he knew that his opponent liked to play cards that defied all common sense, he still delivered himself up for ridicule.

This was a struggle that involved the qualifications to challenge one of the Purple Cards. Thus, all ten Purple Cards had arrived to observe this match. They were situated in a hall within the royal palace, watching through an array formation that was synced with the square.

Old Sea's complexion was pale and wan; it was hard for him to cover up his weariness. He looked at the projection and saw Qin Yu walking up the altar. A light smile lit up his face. "For some people, what does it matter if they use all the tricks up their sleeve? In the end they'll be humiliated."

Although his voice wasn't too loud, it was just loud enough that everyone in the hall could clearly hear him.

Wu Zetian's complexion sank, his eyes dark and sharp. "What is the meaning of playing some small tricks to win an argument? If you really want to compete, what matters is your own strength!"

Old Sea had a faint expression. "This is only a small humiliation; what follows will be a great humiliation. So, that's why I said that some people will be humiliated eventually. My apologies, I seem to have become a bit too talkative after being injured. I hope that no one is offended."

The Purple Cards all had strange expressions. At such an important time, how could the atmosphere be like this?

Grandmaster Wu Zetian opened his mouth to respond but he was interrupted. "That's enough. The match will soon begin."

In the light projection, Jing Guanjin and Qin Yu stepped onto the altar.

The white-robed and barefoot priest said, "The two coral houses have been fully prepared. In order to ensure fairness, the altar will monitor both sides; I hope that you do not use anything you shouldn't. Moreover, the time allotted for the match is two days. You may freely use this time as you wish."

As he spoke, he flew away.

Jing Guanjin coldly snorted. He moved towards the left coral house.

Qin Yu stepped to the right.

Upon entering the coral house, he carefully probed around. After making sure there wasn't a problem, he took out the Silence Stone. His complexion immediately turned glum. This was because he wasn't sure whether or not the existence of the little blue lamp could be detected by the altar.

The ten great Purple Cards had no way of finding out what was occurring within the coral houses. But, the two sea spirits had already absorbed a specialized sensing nutrient fluid. By using the power of a treasure and special methods, one could remotely sense the changes occurring to the sea spirits.

At the start, there were no changes to the two sea spirits. This was normal procedure. After all, sea spirit teachers were not gods, and no matter how formidable they were, they still needed a period of time to inspect the sea spirit plants.

One hour later, fluctuations in the strength of one of the sea spirits began to appear. After a short pause, it started to rise at a slow pace. This indicated that the problems of the sea spirit were being solved.

It was Jing Guanjin.

The Purple Cards watched with dignified expressions. If these people were able to bloom from the countless sea spirit teachers, then there simply wasn't any need to argue about their strength. Moreover, with their careful observational abilities and rich experience, they could approximately judge the strength of the healer. This was vital to the challenge ahead.

After all, theoretically speaking, any of the 10 Purple Cards could be challenged. And of course, just as this thought appeared in their minds, their eyes inadvertently swept over Old Sea. They glanced at him with sympathy and also a dark sense of relief.

Old Sea didn't have any expression, but he cursed all of these Purple Cards in his heart. That was right, he was viciously cursing them in his heart. Purple Card sea spirit teachers had a brilliantly blinding halo, but that was only something that had been attached to them by the outside world. In reality, they were ordinary sea race citizens and they also had their own joy and hate, their wants and desires.

For instance, Grandmaster Wu Zetian. At this time he was stroking his beard and smiling, his aggressive demeanor fully satisfied. Occasionally he would glance to the side with a cold glint shining in his eyes.

Jing Guanjin was of a high and noble birth, and he possessed mind-boggling talent to be a sea spirit teacher. After teaching him with care and patience, he was absolutely a top figure amongst all high level sea spirit teachers. In addition to that, in order to ensure that he would emerge victorious no matter what, that mighty person had poured his strength into Jing Guanjin's body. Even Wu Zetian eyed this strength with overwhelming envy, so how could Jing Guanjin lose here?

Time slowly passed. Jing Guanjin progressed quickly and smoothly, and soon he had figured out the problem with the sea spirit and was now beginning to enhance its strength. But it was at this time that something occurred, a sight that left the observing sea spirit teachers shaken.

The light around the sensing treasure turned increasingly bright. This was an indication that the strength of the sea spirit was rising. This was something they could also accomplish, but what shocked them was that this enhancement of the sea spirit didn't stop. Moreover, it was continuing at a horrifying pace like it had no intention of slowing down.

For example, if a sea spirit was considered to have 100 points of strength, increasing it to 110 was simple. But increasing it to 120 would be more difficult. And as the sea spirit became stronger, it would become increasingly challenging.

Such a stable rate of enhancement meant that Jing Guanjin possessed formidable skills. He intended to control the rate of strengthening, and the Purple Card sea spirit teachers knew exactly what this meant – he wanted to promote the sea spirit to the next level!

This was the only reason he would need to maintain such a stable speed and establish a firm foundation for the transformation of the sea spirit. A number of Purple Cards were startled. They were all aware of the rank of sea spirit used in this competition, and even if they personally tried, it would be hard to promote a sea spirit of that caliber to the next level.

This Jing Guanjin could be called immensely confident!

A smoldering heat burned from deep within Grandmaster Wu Zetian's eyes. The reason he agreed to teach Jing Guanjin was because he had taken a liking to his talent and also because that mighty figure had promised to grant him a strength he had only ever dreamed of. If he could obtain it, then he could become the most powerful sea spirit teacher in the sea region. The other Purple Cards wouldn't even come close to comparing to him.

Of course, being able to push Sea Lingdao out of the ten Purple Cards was another driving force behind his decision. Hatred had formed between these two old men many years ago. Rumors said that it had involved a woman, but no one knew the exact details and no one dared to openly gossip either.

Old Sea saw Wu Zetian's gaze and coldly sneered before closing his eyes. Secretly, he was feeling a little anxious inside. Little friend Ning, little friend Ning, you cannot disappoint this old man!

To be a Purple Card or not be a Purple Card wasn't as simple as it seemed. Once he inherited the position, there were essential responsibilities he had been forced to bear. If he were to lose the Purple

Card...well, no matter how much he tried to maintain his calm, he still couldn't help but feel a bit of panic.

But at this time, Old Sea's prayers didn't come true. Jing Guanjin's results surpassed all expectations. The sensing treasure that indicated the quality of the sea spirit was already emitting a dazzling light. Yet near it, the other sensing treasure seemed gray and lifeless. From the start until now, it hadn't revealed the slightest change.

This left the Purple Cards increasingly perplexed.

Today's competition had truly opened their eyes. One person had started with an incredibly potent opening, but the other person seemed to have given up and hadn't even made a move yet.

Mm? Could he have really given up?

Grandmaster Wu Zetian received the congratulations of many other Purple Cards. Some of them looked at him enviously. Their relationships weren't too poor to begin with, and with Old Sea being the sacrificial lamb today, they didn't need to worry about being chosen. All of them knew just who Jing Guanjin would challenge.

Master and disciple would both become Purple Cards; just how magnificent was this scene? Upon reaching the level of a Purple Card, being able to find an outstanding descendent that they could pass their legacy onto was also something to be jealous of.

Grandmaster Wu Zetian was incomparably modest. But no matter how he tried to hide it, everyone could sense a smugness hidden behind his smile. He glanced at Old Sea, thinking that even though the two of them had fought for so many years, in the end he would be the one to emerge victorious!

Beneath Old Wu's stare, Old Sea couldn't hide his anxiousness any longer. He coldly stood up and left, taking out a spirit shell from his chest.

When Chief Manager Wu heard the news, he was scared silly. The first thought that popped into his mind was whether or not Mister Ning had fallen asleep. But, he knew this was impossible. Mister Ning knew how crucial this competition was, so how come he hadn't made a move yet?

Suddenly, Chief Manager Wu stiffened. He recalled how the old gentleman had left, seemingly without blaming them at all...had Mister Ning already agreed to the conditions and was acting everything out afterwards?

Once this thought formed, he could no longer suppress it. He paled, sweat dripping down his forehead.

Clearwood frowned. She had disappeared several days ago and it was unknown just what she had been doing all this time. "Chief manager, what is it?"

Chief Manager Wu hurriedly reiterated what Old Sea had told him and vaguely mentioned his own speculations. Of course, he spoke in a low voice so that only the two of them heard him.

Clearwood's complexion changed and she seemed to become even more nervous than Chief Manager Wu. The two of them urgently discussed the situation while sending someone to find Leon.

Chief Manager Wu coughed, "Leon, these past three days, has there been anything unusual about Grandmaster Ning? For instance, has he seemed to hesitate or something?"

Leon thought carefully and shook his head. "No. Teacher has been quite normal."

Chief Manager Wu cursed himself. Even he hadn't noticed anything out of the ordinary, so how could a hairless baby boy like Leon possibly know anything.

Clearwood took a deep breath. She waved for Leon to leave.

Leon took several steps and suddenly swiveled around. He cupped his hands together and said, "Chief manager, Manager Clearwood, although I don't know what has happened, teacher is worthy of your trust. He will definitely win!"

He bowed after speaking and walked away.

Chief Manager Wu's complexion was dark and gloomy. He quietly said, "With things having come this far, we can only choose to trust him."

Clearwood turned and walked away.

"Manager Clearwood?"

"Even if we choose to trust him, we still need to complete plans for the worst possible outcome." Clearwood didn't turn back. "I certainly hope I won't need to use what I have prepared, but if Mister Ning has betrayed us, he will definitely pay the price for his actions."

At this time, the heavily suspected Grandmaster Ning certainly wasn't sleeping. He was sitting in the coral house, his face full of worried distress. The sudden change in rules to the match had left him cursing his luck.

The little blue lamp was his great secret and he would have to give up on this competition rather than reveal it. But, the problem right now was if he admitted defeat without doing anything, just what would Sea Spirit Pavilion do? While he didn't know that the icy Manager Clearwood had already made preparations, it didn't take much to guess this.

He was afraid that Sea Spirit Pavilion would really flip over in anger. Thinking of this, Qin Yu couldn't help but shake his head. It turned out that sometimes the most unexpected little thing could lead to a dire crisis.

He thought about it all day. It was only when the time-sensing coral in the corner of the room turned a faint blue that Qin Yu bitterly smiled.

Recently he had been refining soul strengthening treasures to enhance his soul. And as his soul was strengthened, shouldn't he be more intelligent than before? But, why did he feel as if he had become stupider? That's right, he couldn't take the little blue lamp out as it might be detected by the altar, but if he didn't take it out, that would be more than fine!

He picked up the jade box that was placed atop the spacious work table. It was filled with top quality nutrient fluid and emitted a light fragrance. A seven-leaf herb lay inside, its roots gently swaying, as if he had its own consciousness.

As he held the jade box, there was a flash of light and it vanished from sight.

Qin Yu focused his senses. If there was anything strange he would immediately take out the jade box.

One breath, two breaths, three breaths –

The altar remained peacefully silent.

Chapter 149 – Can I Eat That?

Jing Guanjin exposed his formidable abilities. As the time-sensing corals emitted a hazy blue light, the extremely potent power that the magic tool emitted finally stopped and fell into a long silence.

The Purple Cards didn't relax. Instead, the look in their eyes became increasingly complex. This was because they knew that Jing Guanjin's skills didn't end just here. Once he rested, he would complete the promotion of the sea spirit to the next level.

In just a single day, all of the preparations had been completed and at a speed faster than anyone had expected. Sure enough, there were those amongst the younger generation that possessed outstanding talent. The coming waves would eventually crash into the beach and replace the old sand!

Up until now, the other sea spirit had yet to show any change. In fact, the light around its sensing treasure seemed to darken with time and become increasingly dire.

Grandmaster Wu Zetian's smile widened. He had used assassins in the streets, countless other secret methods, and even paid a tremendous price to have that old shark help in secret, but each attempt had ended in failure and he had even been struck back by a completely unconventional trick.

But now, it seemed that this other party had finally bowed in compromise. And the reason? It must have been because of himself! It seemed that when he mentioned starting the power of inspection, his words had frightened that so-called Mister Ning silly.

This left Grandmaster Wu Zetian's heart filled with disdain and even more self-satisfied. He glanced to the side and couldn't hold back his words any longer. "Old Sea, has your Sea Spirit Pavilion's Mister Ning fallen asleep? Unfortunately, the altar is sealed away so that no one can enter. If no one wakes him up, I'm afraid that he will lose. Once that happens, if anyone were to be humiliated, I fear they might be left miserable."

Old Sea paled.

When it came to arguing, there had never been anyone who surpassed him. His status had grown over the years and as he grew older, it became rare for him to personally admonish anyone. But if anyone were to mention the man known as Curse God Lingdao in the past, who wouldn't shiver in their boots? He thought back to that one year where he alone had faced off against 37 sea spirit teachers, and in that great war of words nine previously arrogant people had to be carried away on stretchers. Even now, no one had surpassed that accomplishment.

But at this time, he was truly left speechless. He knew that the more he spoke the more face he would lose, so he simply closed his eyes and pretended he didn't hear anything. His expression was calm and his back was straight, but his heart was falling. Even someone from the Skyspirit Sage lineage would

purposely lose in a competition? It seemed the world as he knew it had completely changed. Or, perhaps he had grown too old and it was time to give up his position.

At this time, an unexpected sound startled him from his thoughts.

Old Sea's eyes flashed open. He saw the dim light of the sensing treasure, a treasure he had wanted to smash apart just now, emit a faint trace of bright light.

His heart was stirred to excitement. You brat, you finally began!

At this time, the sensing treasure started to hum and buzz, almost as if it were crying.

Old Sea was shocked, but joy immediately lit up his face. This sort of situation would only appear when the sea spirit was accepting a powerful infusion of energy.

He cried out deep in his heart. All of those sorrowful and depressing thoughts he had were immediately crushed to pieces. Old Sea suddenly felt that this world was incredibly beautiful.

In particular, he loved Wu Zetian's murky and somber expression. He lightly coughed.

"You know, there are some people that never change in this world, no matter how many years pass. They still have that same old wild and overly arrogant temper and like to draw early conclusions no matter how ridiculous they are. You would think that after being humiliated so many times before that they would remember, but they seem to keep forgetting." Old Sea sat down in his chair and leaned back comfortably. "This competition is far from over!"

Everyone here was smart enough to know that Sea Lingdao was intentionally putting on a calm and almost flippant act. But, they were too busy to bother with him because a question was running through their minds. The rapid infusion of energy was enough to cause the sensing treasure to hum and cry; just what had Sea Spirit Pavilion's Mister Ning done?

Wu Zetian's complexion darkened. He watched with a cold expression as the sensing treasure gradually lit up. This proved that everything he assumed before had been a joke. It would be difficult for even the ten great Purple Cards to pour in so much energy so quickly. Perhaps the boy had been making preparations during his long silence.

Yes, there were indeed some unique and isolated sea spirit teacher inheritances that possessed unbelievably wonderful techniques. Wu Zetian had once seen one before. After days of preparations, one was able to inject a special type of energy into a sea spirit within a short period of time, achieving the effect of healing and promoting it.

It seemed that this Mister Ning was also skilled in something similar. That was right, it had to be something like this!

Grandmaster Wu Zetian settled on this thought.

If one had never heard of this secret technique then they were sure to be incomparably shocked. But, if one knew the specifics then they wouldn't consider it anything at all. He glanced at Old Sea and sneered inwardly. Just you wait, this secret technique cannot continue much longer! Perhaps it might only last a short while longer. No matter what it was, it wouldn't be able to compare to his student, Jing Guanjin.

Grandmaster Wu Zetian's calm demeanor left the other Purple Cards surprised. They thought that he would be flustered at this time. Could he have another hidden card in his hand, or was there another reason?

Time quietly passed.

A quarter hour.

Grandmaster Wu Zetian shuffled about in his chair. He thought that this Ning fellow had a bit of skill.

One hour.

Grandmaster Wu Zetian coughed, a bit of caution rising in his eyes.

Two hours.

Grandmaster Wu Zetian's face darkened.

Four hours.

Grandmaster Wu Zetian couldn't take it anymore.

No, it was more accurate to say that within this hall, all ten Purple Cards couldn't contain themselves.

Hum –

Hum –

The sensing treasure continued to cry out!

They could also achieve this sort of horrifying infusion of high intensity energy. But, none of them were capable of continuing for four whole hours without interruption!

No one could!

But the reality was right in front of their eyes.

They all looked at Old Sea with inquisitive eyes. As they saw his calm posture, they all began to speculate in their hearts.

It seemed that this old fellow Sea Lingdao knew the reason for this.

There were some Purple Cards that were on good terms with him. They tried to probe him but were met with laughs and waved off. Seeing that he had no intention of speaking about it, they could only suppress their thoughts, no matter how curious they were.

As for Old Sea, as he saw the surprised looks of those around him, he couldn't help but feel exhilarated and amazed. This was truly worthy of the Skyspirit Sage lineage; it was unimaginably powerful.

It was unknown how much time passed, but the sensing treasure suddenly stopped humming. Wu Zetian hurriedly looked over and with a cough, his complexion became even uglier. The energy fluctuations representing Qin Yu's sea spirit had actually surpassed those of Jing Guanjin. Even if it was only by a little, it was enough to shake his mind.

No one noticed that in a corner of the room, a time-sensing coral had turned a pale red.

With a dismal look, Wu Zetian lifted a finger beneath his robes and gently tapped a spirit shell.

...

Jing Guanjin opened his eyes and took out a spirit shell from his chest. This specially refined spirit shell didn't possess the ability to converse with others, and in addition to some other preparations, it was able to avoid the monitoring of the altar.

At this time, the spirit shell was shaking. It emitted a 'tap tap tap', as if an invisible finger was gently striking it.

Jing Guanjin's complexion turned ugly. He never thought that the spirit shell he hid in his chest would actually start moving. This meant that his opponent's performance was better than his own.

Damn it all!

Jing Guanjin took a deep breath and revealed a serious and dignified expression. It seems that his father's worries had been justified and this Ning fellow was indeed difficult to deal with.

But, so what?

With the Skyspirit power in his hand, he could still fight even if he faced the ten great Purple Cards!

That was right, the so-called Skyspirit power was the strength of the Skyspirit Sage that Old Sea spoke of. Unfortunately, the one who possessed it was not Qin Yu but Jing Guanjin. Of course, Jing Guanjin didn't originate from the family lineage of the Skyspirit Sages. Rather, he had a good father who had used some particularly cruel and bloody methods to obtain this strength.

While this competition could be called a battle between Jing Guanjin and Qin Yu, the truth was that it should be called a battle between the Skyspirit power and the little blue lamp instead!

With a flick of his sleeves, the shining jade-like sea spirit in front of Jing Guanjin suddenly rose into the air. A finger fell. As his fingertip touched the sea spirit, faint and pale traces of white power were poured into it without end. The branches and leaves of the sea spirit swung about as if they were cheering and its fluctuations of energy rapidly rose.

Like this, the sensing treasure connected to Jing Guanjin's sea spirit became even brighter and more dazzling. In just a moment, it caught up to Qin Yu and took the lead once more.

He was about to promote the sea spirit to the next rank!

...

The sea region was incomparably vast. Its total area far surpassed the surface land and it contained countless incredible treasures. As the royal family that ruled over it all, they were naturally the richest family in the entire sea.

Thus, it was natural for the royal palace to be luxurious.

Warm and exquisite jade paved the floor. Discs floated in the air, serving as lamps, illuminating artistic jade carvings all around. Every inch of this hall exuded opulence and prestige. A large throne faced north to south and was carved with a massive dragon circling it. The material was deep purple and it resembled both wood and metal.

There was a figure sitting on the dragon throne. He wore finger-clawed dragon robes and an emperor's crown above his head. His face was plain and prestigious, indifferent to any anger. Though he sat entirely still, the potential of the world seemed to converge upon his body. He was the ruler of the sea races and dominated the endless sea region, controlling the billions and trillions of lives below him. He was the master of this royal palace and the most mighty and influential person between the heavens and earth.

Without any exception!

"How goes the competition?"

"Your Majesty, both sides are still struggling against each other. Victory and defeat cannot be decided just yet."

The sea race ruler's eyes shined. "Oh, that is a bit strange."

No one knew what he meant by 'strange'.

If His Majesty didn't speak, no one dared to say anything else. After several breaths of silence, the sea race ruler waved his hand. "It's no problem, let it be. How fares the investigation into the Netherworld Sea Region that I assigned you?"

"There have indeed been some changes in the Netherworld Sea Region, however we don't know the exact situation right now. But, Old Shark has set out early to begin the hunt. Hopefully he can bring back clearer information on the situation."

"Mm. Concerning this, inform me as soon as you learn anything. Do not delay."

"Yes."

"And where is mister right now?" The sea race ruler suddenly asked.

"Reporting to Your Majesty, Old Turtle left a message saying that the weather has become cold, so he has gone into hibernation."

The sea race ruler chuckled. With Old Turtle's cultivation, if he went hibernating because it was too cold then perhaps the entire sea might have frozen into a block of ice already. This reason was a bit too half-hearted. He helplessly said, "He must be feeling leisurely. Push things back for me so he can relax." He waved his hand, "Fall back. This Solitude wishes to be alone."

If the sea race ruler wanted to be alone, no one would be bold enough to ask him who needed to be alone. It was just that up until now, there hadn't even been a shadow of a person within the large and empty grand hall. It was unknown who he was speaking with and who he wanted to fall back.

The hall quieted down. The man sitting on the dragon chair remained as stiff and straight as before, as if he had merged into one being with it; as if he were one with the entire hall.

It was like he had been sitting here for countless years, and he would continue sitting here until the end of time.

...

Ding –

With a low and clear ring, the light atop the sensing treasure began to gather unto itself and turn a faint light purple.

This meant that the promotion of the sea spirit had been completed!

In the coral house, Jing Guanjin's complexion was pale but a sneer hung at the corner of his lips. With the Skyspirit power in my hands, who dares to fight with me!?

Mister Ning?

What is that? Is that something I can eat?

Chapter 150 – A Sad Story

Currently, the inedible Qin Yu was refining the 3000 year old sea blue bellvine flower that Old Sea had gifted to him. The medicinal efficacy was truly incredible! Perhaps he had misjudged its value earlier. If he really wanted to trade it, even 2 million spirit stones might not be enough.

Pa –

The last bit of blue color vanished from the bellvine flower. The petals wilted and withered until it eventually disintegrated into dust.

Qin Yu put the dust away. Before he left the capital city, he couldn't leave behind any suspicious hints.

For instance, this dust.

He silently calculated the time; night would arrive soon. Qin Yu contemplated the situation and took out the seven-leaf herb. He was deciding whether or not to allow it to continue bathing beneath the sea blue light for another night.

When it came to sea spirits, the little blue lamp had an unimaginably powerful ability to enhance them!

This was something Qin Yu knew of before he even entered Sea Spirit Pavilion.

If the little blue lamp's effect of accelerating the growth of spirit plants was considered one, then its ability to strengthen sea spirits was at least 10.

That's right, this was a completely unreasonable ability!

Thinking about it over and over, Qin Yu decided to let the seven-leaf herb stay in the storage bag for another night. After all, that cold and overly arrogant Jing Guanjin was still Grandmaster Wu Zetian's disciple, so it was best to be a bit more careful. Qin Yu could imagine a situation where he was full of confidence but was instead utterly humiliated in the end, and he didn't hope for this to occur to him.

He turned his hand and took out a soul-strengthening treasure that Chief Manager Wu had purchased from another great city in the sea region. Qin Yu closed his eyes and started to refine it. Another night was almost enough time to improve his soul force further; he couldn't let this time go to waste.

But what he didn't know was just how this decision he made would force our cold and overly arrogant friend Jing Guanjin into a dead end, and what sort of tragic fate he would eventually suffer.

A completely self-confident man who mocked his opponent for biting off more than he could chew, but in reality the man who was being mocked was actually closing his eyes and diligently refining treasures.

If anyone saw this scene, they definitely wouldn't be able to help but laugh because this situation was truly ludicrous.

But the following story was awfully sad –

Night arrived. The time-sensing coral followed its instincts that had developed over hundreds of millions of years. An enzyme started a reaction within, creating a transformation. Soon, the last traces of red turned into blue.

Following this, within the storage ring, a foot of sea blue light quietly bloomed.

And in a hall within the royal palace where the ten great Purple Cards were, the sensing treasure connected to Qin Yu's sea spirit began to wildly hum as if it were caught in a storm.

That's right, such an intense and consistent infusion of energy could only be described as caught in a storm.

The clever Grandmaster Wu Zetian had already learnt his lesson and he maintained a calm demeanor without any reckless boasting or taunting at all. Even so, as he listened to the loud buzzing sound, he still felt fear and apprehension rise within him.

Damn it all! Just who was this Ning fellow that he was so hard to deal with!?

His eyes widened. He stubbornly glared at the sensing treasure as its light became increasingly bright and rich, and the speed...the speed also seemed faster than yesterday's.

This simply defied all common sense!

When it came to enhancing a sea spirit's energy, as it grew stronger it became increasingly difficult. But what Grandmaster Wu Zetian didn't know was that the seven-leaf herb had already adapted to the little blue lamp's strength yesterday, so it was able to absorb even more energy today and advance even faster.

Suddenly, the humming of the sensing treasure came to a stop. Then, in front of shocked eyes, the light quietly gathered in on itself, turning into a light purple.

It had broken through.

Without any preparations and without needing to gather energy for an all-out attempt, the haphazard infusion of energy had pushed the sea spirit to a higher level.

This style left the Purple Cards sucking in a deep breath.

This junior was vicious!

Grandmaster Wu Zetian seemed to choke on himself. He violently coughed and hacked, his loud coughs and shaking covering his actions.

Within the sleeve of his robes, he rapidly tapped the spirit shell.

Jing Guanjin sat cross-legged on the floor. Even after resting for a long time, his face was still deathly pale. In the end, what he had been given wasn't his own. In order to activate the Skyspirit energy, he had to consume a massive amount of his own strength.

Suddenly, his eyes flashed open. He pulled out a spirit shell and listened to the fast tapping sounds it produced. His face filled with shocked anger.

His first thought was – this is impossible!

He had galvanized the Skyspirit energy to force the sea spirit to advance to another level of quality in two days. Just what did that Ning fellow have that could accomplish this?

But, the loud and increasingly rapid tapping sounds clearly reminded him that this was reality. Wu Zetian would never play around with him like this.

He ruthlessly struck the spirit shell. Far away in the royal palace, Grandmaster Wu Zetian seemed to feel his disciple's anger, so he stopped tapping.

Jing Guanjin took a deep breath and calmed his thoughts. He placed the spirit shell on a table nearby. After some time, his composure had been restored and his posture was tall and straight yet again.

You want to fight with me? Surname Ning, you are far too presumptuous!

Bang –

Vast and boundless monster energy raced through his body. The Skyspirit energy within his dantian was spurred on as it began to slowly flow through his meridians, passing through his fingertips and into the sea spirit. He could clearly sense that as the Skyspirit energy entered it, the sea spirit cheered in joy and grew increasingly strong.

With each breath of time, it grew stronger!

Two hours later, Jing Guanjin felt dizziness cloud his mind. He lifted a hand and tapped the spirit shell four times.

Tap tap tap tap –

This was a question – what was the situation like now?

Soon, there was a response.

Tap tap –

Two times.

This meant...that it wasn't good.

Jing Guanjin narrowed his eyes and sucked in a deep breath. He clenched his teeth and forcibly dispelled his dizziness.

Surname Ning, you are indeed hard to cope with. But even if you have a hundred methods in your hands, you will still lose today!

Skyspirit power, continue pouring in for me – never stop!

Rumble –

Monstrous energy galloped through his body.

Another 2 hours passed –

Tap tap tap tap –

Tap tap –

It still wasn't good!

The sixth hour.

Jing Guanjin was paper-white and his eyes had turned a faint red.

The eighth hour.

Jing Guanjin wobbled. He grabbed the work table with both hands, desperately holding on.

He had no choice but to bet everything he had. He knew that his father had numerous children and the only reason he held any regard for him was because of today's events. If he could smoothly accomplish his mission then he would undoubtedly reap all the attention and affection of his father. He would be destined to climb to the summit of the highest clouds in the future.

But if he were defeated...

The preparations had been made for a long time and an incredible price had been paid. Even the precious Skyspirit power had been granted to him.

Jing Guanjin didn't dare to imagine the consequences of failure.

So, he could only go all-out!

Ten hours.

Jing Guanjin's shivering fingers tapped the spirit shell. His hair was a mess and his eyes were bloodshot. His elegant robes were matted with sweat and he leaned against the work table, barely managing to stand up.

Grandmaster Wu Zetian soon responded.

Tap tap –

Not good.

Tap tap tap tap –

Hurry up.

Tap tap tap tap tap –

This boy is stronger than you!

Jing Guanjin spat out a mouthful of blood. He toppled onto the worktable and his forehead smashed into the spirit shell. He was already unconscious. Luckily, he didn't feel the pain of his forehead being struck and left bleeding, and he slumped to the ground.

Within the palace, the spirit shell in Grandmaster Wu Zetian's hand nearly leapt up. He violently coughed once more to cover the sound, his heart shocked by the sudden response.

Looking at how much strength was placed in striking the spirit shell, Jing Guanjin's situation should be good. Although he might have temporarily fallen behind, there was a chance he would overtake his opponent.

Grandmaster Wu Zetian looked up and frowned. The sensing treasure connected to Jing Guanjin was silent right now. His thoughts raced and he was left overjoyed. Could Jing Guanjin be hiding some other hidden card?

That's right, this must be what was happening. If he had stopped right now, then he must be saving his energy...for the final stretch!

He was indeed worthy of being that mighty figure's most cherished descendant. His formidable strength was truly startling. If Jing Guanjin hadn't met a freak like that Ning fellow, he would have already won. In fact, he wouldn't have even needed to have people ambush Sea Lingdao. With Jing Guanjin's strength, he could have seized a Purple Card himself.

Grandmaster Wu Zetian sat straight and steady. He waited for his disciple to turn the tides in the final critical moments and shock all the old fogies watching. He looked around every now and then. Although he didn't reveal an expression, he sneered inwardly. Just wait and see – this competition isn't over yet!

There were two Purple Cards that were on good terms with Wu Zetian. They had received an immense amount of benefits from him and had authorized him to use the power of inspection. Right now, they couldn't help but be curious.

"Brother Wu, your disciple hasn't moved in a long time. Is everything alright?"

Wu Zetian's complexion was inscrutable. "Don't worry, Jing Guanjin is fine."

His disciple had struck the spirit shell so hard that he could clearly feel his firm resolve and power from this distance. He surely had to be in good spirits.

More time passed.

"Brother Wu, there still isn't any movement."

"Don't worry."

"Cough cough...Brother Wu, it's almost daytime."

“Don’t worry.”

“Brother Wu, the competition will end soon.”

“Don’t worry.”

“Brother Wu, the competition has ended.”

“What...nonsense!”

Grandmaster Wu Zetian stamped his feet. “It was almost afternoon when the match began two days ago. There should still be four hours, so how could it have possibly ended!?”

Although they were on good terms, everyone here was a Purple Card sea spirit teacher and were dignified characters. They certainly didn’t like being scolded in public. The man said, “His Majesty personally passed down the other. He said that if the competition continues on, people will die...”

The message had been delivered a moment ago. Because Grandmaster Wu Zetian’s attention was completely focused, he hadn’t noticed this. He was left in a daze.

The other Purple Cards looked at him with especially strange expressions.

Grandmaster Wu Zetian suddenly regained his thoughts. He stood up and rushed out.

His Majesty had said that people would die if the competition continued. He was clearly referring to the two competitors.

And Jing Guanjin already hadn’t made any movements for a long time...

He rushed out of the royal palace and out of the palace gates. Beneath the bell that had stood there for countless years, Wu Zetian watched what was happening with a deeply pained look. He watched as his proud and confident disciple was lifted onto a stretcher and brought down the altar.

Jing Guanjin’s robes were almost completely soaked in blood. That dazzling red ignited a flame in Grandmaster Wu Zetian’s chest, fed with rage and anger.

“Who was it!? Who did it!? Who injured my disciple! With so many people watching, you dare to injure someone in the finals of the great competition! Your courage is higher than the heavens!”

The grandmaster’s roars attracted countless eyes. The audience that had been waiting patiently for two days were immediately sent into a frenzy. They all shouted out their support for the grandmaster and demanded that the committee give them an explanation.

The competition committee soon responded. Just as Grandmaster Wu Zetian’s roar faded away, a number of committee members appeared with awkward expressions. The one leading them was committee member Goodra. There was no other way about it. Everyone knew that the turtle race possessed powerful defensive abilities, so of course he had been given the task of explaining. If he was beaten up, at least he could protect himself.

After the others from the committee gave their greetings, including the stoic Chairman Xu, committee member Goodra shrunk down his head and said, “Grandmaster Wu, I ask you to please be patient. We

have already investigated the injury and have verified that no one attacked him. Rather, he...struck himself.”