

Refining 691

Chapter 691A – Ash Line Grass Discovered

It was impossible to guess what she was thinking from her expression. Feng Qing nodded and said, “Soon, Sky Declaring Pavilion will conduct a large-scale hiring meeting for beast trainers. If you tell me your individual information and beast trainer rank, I will help you complete your registration. Like this, you will be able to enter Sky Declaring Pavilion through normal processes and you will not arouse any suspicions.”

“Name, Ning Qing. Blue Sea realm cultivation. Beast trainer rank...mm, Silver Moon, higher order.”

Feng Qing fiercely looked up, surprise in her eyes. Beast trainers were divided into three sections: Manifold Stars, Silver Moon, and Great Sun. These three were also further divided into orders of lower, middle, and higher.

A Silver Moon higher order could politely be called a grandmaster.

With the immense strength of a Divine Dao being and the long years for which they lived, it wasn't impossible for them to become higher order Silver Moon beast trainers just by casually experiencing it. But, what was that 'mm' at the end? Could it be that Qin Yu still had something hidden in reserve that could be considered even stronger?

But these doubts could only be hidden in her heart. Feng Qing was smart enough to not delve further. “There are still over ten days until the beast trainer invitational. In the meantime, would you like me to make further arrangements for you?”

Qin Yu said, “No need. Just give me the address. I will head there at the appointed time.”

Feng Qing spoke some more, also detailing where the beast trainer invitational would be held. After Qin Yu recorded it, he stood up and said, “Miss Feng Qing, we shall bid our farewells here then.”

He stepped out. Without turning his head, he said, “About my situation, don't let Zhou Li know. I don't want to cause further complications.”

Feng Qing respectfully nodded. When she lifted her head, Qin Yu had already left. “This person, is his soul injured so he can't move his divine sense?”

If this was true, his injuries were far heavier than she first guessed.

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Zhou Li knew when Qin Yu left. It was already the evening of the second day and he still hadn't returned. Was it because of her attitude? For something so minor, he had missed out on his chance of meeting Miss Feng Qing, a noble one who had the possibility of changing his future life and destiny. How stupid of him!

Someone with such a weak heart would be doomed to live a lifetime of mediocrity without any achievements.

Across from her, Feng Qing's eyes flashed. But still, she couldn't suppress her confusion and puzzlement. "Zhou Li, is he really your fiancé?"

In Zhou Li's mind, this doubtful tone had an entirely different meaning. Her face flushed red and she utterly denied it. "No! It's just...I received some benevolence from him once. It's because I was forced by my elders that I temporarily agreed...but, I absolutely will never be with him!"

She couldn't take a liking to such a man with no prospects or skills.

"Ah...so it's like that..." Feng Qing muttered beneath her breath. When she looked at Zhou Li, there was a strange look in her eyes.

Feng Qing was an intelligent woman. She soon guessed what had happened. The reason for this connection between Zhou Li and Qin Yu must be because the Zhou Family had given a great deal of help to Qin Yu when he was injured. And because of this, he looked after them closely.

To think that a Divine Dao being was actually so pathetic and unbearable in the eyes of Zhou Li, Feng Qing couldn't help but wryly smile. It was true when they said those blessed with good fortune never realized they were fortunate...in the future, if Zhou Li learned the truth of all this, what sort of expression would she have?

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With the speed of the purpleback bluewing ants, even with Qin Yu carefully concealing his whereabouts, he still smoothly returned to Wali Village in two days. Without accident, this would be his last time here. Saying goodbye to the old couple was one reason for returning, but bringing away the chicken overlord who still hadn't woken up was another.

"Ahh. Ahh." The granny wagged her fingers, a worried look on her face. Ever since Qin Yu left, she hadn't been able to get a good night's rest.

The old man was also feeling anxious but he tried hard to maintain a calm demeanor. He nodded at Qin Yu and said, "It must have been a difficult trip for you."

He was even more satisfied with Qin Yu. Without knowing whether it was fortune or woe, he followed an immortal out on a trip. This alone was sufficient proof of the quality of Qin Yu's character. If A'li could end up with this young fellow, it would be her good fortune!

Qin Yu smiled. He said, "Old sir, granny, you have no need to worry. The reason the immortals called me over was because A'li has had a splendid performance so far and was noticed by an even more formidable influence. She will become one of the close assistants of a certain young lady. You two can rest assured that this is a good thing. A'li will surely have great achievements in the future and she will definitely be filial towards the two of you."

The granny let out a long breath of relief. She clasped her hands together, joy filling every wrinkle of her face. In this world, true Buddhism existed. An ascetic monk once journeyed to Wali Village and rendered help to the villagers. After that day, the old granny had become a firm believer in Buddhism.

The old man was obstinate. He humphed and said, "A girl should be careful and try not to show off too much. She should diligently learn some skills from the immortals; what is she stirring up attention for?"

He waved his hand. "Let's not talk about her. Old woman, you go kill a chicken. I'll go into the village and get some wine. Young Qin has worked hard enough. Tonight the two of us will drink well."

The granny smiled and nodded. She turned to go and grab a chicken.

Qin Yu held back the old man and lifted a round bamboo wine barrel. "You can stay here. I'll go and get the wine."

When Qin Yu returned with the wine, the granny still hadn't started chopping the chicken. When she saw Qin Yu she quickly waved her hands.

The old man lightly coughed and helplessly said, "The old woman is saying that the chicken in your room hasn't woken up in several days. It's most likely not going to last much longer. Since it's sleeping, she thinks it's best to kill it now and eat it. It won't taste any good if it dies."

Qin Yu almost burst out laughing. If the chicken overlord knew that he had almost been chopped up and cooked, his expression would definitely be interesting. He suppressed himself and made up a story, saying that he had grown up with this chicken and thus had extremely good relations with him. The granny seemed to praise Qin Yu and pat his shoulder.

The old man put on a stern face. "It's just a feathered beast. Even if you have some friendship with it, you shouldn't be so rigid!"

Dinner was rich and sumptuous. The old man made an exception and drank a few more cups of wine than usual. When his face was flushed red, he pulled Qin Yu close to him and said that he should marry A'li sooner and have several kids. When Qin Yu heard this a cold chill swept over him and he hurriedly excused himself back to his room to rest.

For the next several days, Qin Yu stayed at home. After herding the black-horned sheep, he would follow the old man to study woodworking.

Although Old Man Zhou didn't say anything, from his occasional smug smile and times he stroked his beard, it was clear that he was satisfied with Qin Yu's learning speed. Afterwards, Qin Yu became the main worker and was occasionally directed by Old Man Zhou. Old Man Zhou sat back in his chair and drank, looking happy with what he saw.

"Young Qin, this set of furniture you crafted is well done. In carving out the patterns, you have already surpassed me in this aspect!"

"I'm lucky that you were teaching me."

Even though Old Man Zhou knew that Qin Yu was talking nonsense, he still laughed happily. Qin Yu walked over and picked up a cup of tea, drinking it in one gulp. "Old sir, is this the last work that you need to complete?"

Old Man Zhou nodded. "Yes. After this I will be able to rest for several days."

Qin Yu smiled and put down the teacup. He thought earnestly about what to say for some time, but he had underestimated the insight of an old person. The sudden silence caused Old Man Zhou to furrow his eyebrows together. His lips moved and he asked, "Young Qin, do you plan on leaving?"

Qin Yu was startled. He then sighed and nodded, "Yes." He wanted to explain himself, but he was interrupted by the old man. "There's no need to say anything. If you must leave, you surely have your reasons for doing so."

Old Man Zhou let out a light breath. "Youth is your capital. While you are young, it's also good to take advantage of these years to explore the world. But you have to remember. In the outside world, people have dark and dangerous hearts. Don't allow yourself to enter risky situations. After all, it's impossible for good luck to accompany you everywhere."

Qin Yu bowed respectfully. "Thank you for the reminder. I will definitely be careful."

"Don't forget. If there is ever a day when you feel tired, then return to Wali Village. Whether I and the old woman are here or not, this place will always be your home. There will always be a bowl of rice and a warm bed here for you."

Qin Yu's heart warmed. "Old sir, I will remember your words!" Not wanting to ruin the mood, he changed the topic. He jokingly said, "Remember, you and granny have to take the pills that I left behind, one per month. The longer you live, the younger you might become; you even might be able to live longer and even give A'li another family member."

"You scoundrel! Get away from me!"

When the sun rose the next day, the skies were dim and foggy. Qin Yu left the Zhou Family. Glancing once at the courtyard, he turned and walked away.

To him, the ordinary and warm mortal life was in itself a form of luxury. It was time for it to finish!

Chapter 691B – Ash Line Grass Discovered

Mister Rong sat behind a desk, a light and happy expression on his face. As he basked in the congratulations of his disciples, his face glowed with a healthy red light.

The dark star ice serpent had suddenly risen to the next level. All of the high level figures within the sect were overjoyed and they immediately ordered a blockade of all outgoing news in order to give their opponents a surprise in the Beast King Battle that was supposed to happen two months later. They also gave Mister Rong a massive number of gifts, all of them incomparably precious and priceless treasures.

As Mister Rong's disciples, these several young people all enjoyed the glory of the spotlight. Moreover, the higher the status their teacher had in the sect, the more invisible advantages they would obtain. Today, several disciples of other beast trainer grandmasters all looked at them with envy, leaving them proud and happy for a long time afterwards.

Mister Rong had a calm and steady personality. He soon composed himself and lifted a hand, gesturing at everyone. "Alright. Since I have drawn the attention of others, you should all handle your matters with even more caution from now on. Do not let success go to your head, otherwise others will ridicule me for not teaching my disciples well."

"Teacher is right."

"We disciples will remember your words."

“We will not cause teacher to lose face.”

Looking at these respectful disciples, Mister Rong revealed a satisfied expression. They were all young people with outstanding talents. As long as they tried hard and gave their best, they were sure to have considerable achievements in the future.

But at this time, he revealed a surprised look. He said, “Ziyue, you are frowning. What concerns might you have?”

Xiang Ziyue respectfully said, “Teacher, this disciple is only confused. Why would the dark star ice serpent suddenly rise to the next level? According to the statistical data we have collected and its recent performance so far, even if everything proceeds smoothly it would still require half a year before it gathers the necessary accumulations. Moreover, although the dark star ice serpent has risen to the next level, with its strength increasing, and its other various data points within a normal range, its mind seems to be dispirited and it is in a state of deep slumber right now.”

Mister Rong revealed a look of praise. “Very good. Ziyue, you were able to come up with an objective observation based on the real data provided and you didn’t let the joy of the moment crowd out your rationality. That is a very rare accomplishment. In all honesty, although I had confidence that I could help the dark star ice serpent reach the next level, as you said, it would have still required a period of time. For it to have suddenly transformed, I am also confused. If you have some extra time you can try to unravel this mystery. Perhaps you’ll make some other harvests too.”

Xiang Ziyue picked up a nearby jade slip that had the data recorded within. He nodded and said, “Yes, teacher. I will spend some time on this task and report to you once anything is found.”

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First Moon Mountain Range ran north to south for almost a million miles. Even though the terrain was dangerous and monster beasts prowled all over the land, it was because of this that there was a rich plethora of resources here. All of this together also attracted a massive number of cultivators to join in. After the long years, several hundred cities had risen throughout the forested mountains. In the dim of night, they were like pearls that illuminated the pitch black darkness.

Midmorning City was the largest and most dazzling of these hundreds of pearls. Sky Declaring Pavilion was one of the strongest recognized influences in First Moon Mountain Range, so they naturally established themselves in the city.

Buzz –

Buzz –

A low and deep buzzing sound rapidly faded away. Around a mountain away from Midmorning City, Qin Yu calmly stepped out, observing the city at night.

One of the addresses that Feng Qing left for him, where the Beast Trainer Invitational was supposed to be held, was in Midmorning City. But, this wasn’t the closest place to Wali Village. He had purposefully chosen a further location and made some deliberate detours before he arrived here in order to prevent any future disasters from happening to the Zhou Family.

His thoughts stirred and the muscles on his face began to move, slowly transforming into that of a completely common and ordinary-looking man. Besides a pair of deep eyes, if he was placed in the middle of a crowd no one would spare him a second glance.

He tidied himself up a little, adding on some signs of travel weariness. Then, he walked towards Midmorning City. There were only two days left until the event began.

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After the dark star ice serpent rose to the next level, it seemed dispirited and spent more of its time sleeping than awake. Luckily, this condition only lasted for three days before it was restored to normal. This caused the high level figures of the sect to let out gasps of relief. Xiang Ziyue also felt as if he could hear the disappointed sighs of several other beast trainer grandmasters.

Following his teacher these past three days, he had busied himself with inspecting the condition of the dark star ice serpent. He had been so busy that he wasn't even able to get an ounce of sleep in. It was only now that he finally had some free time to himself.

After washing his face and just before he was about to rest, Xiang Ziyue suddenly thought back to the conversation he had three days ago, when he mentioned to his teacher his confusion about why the dark star ice serpent would suddenly rise to a new level.

"Should I rest first before I investigate?"

After hesitating for a few breaths of time, Xiang Ziyue let out a long breath. Then, he slapped himself awake and plodded his way to the study. There, he took a look at the jade slip with the recorded data of the dark star ice serpent.

He knew that his talent was only considered normal. The reason he was able to become one of his teacher's most outstanding disciples was because he put in more effort than others.

He carefully verified the data. Soon, Xiang Ziyue was immersed within and all feelings of exhaustion vanished. When the sun started to rise, he looked away from the data, his eyebrows slowly furrowing together.

Nothing was wrong. Everything seemed normal. But, it was this normality that caused Xiang Ziyue to feel as if something wasn't right.

Without outside interference, how could the dark star ice serpent suddenly rise to a higher level? Although there was a possibility that its bloodline had evolved, the chances of that happening were far too small. Moreover, within the sect, when this dark star ice serpent reached adulthood it had undergone a bloodline promotion ceremony. The chances of such a change occurring spontaneously after that were nearly zero.

"Just what is wrong here?"

Xiang Ziyue drew in a deep breath and started to sift through the data once more, trying to find the key from the vast and complex records.

After an unknown period of time, a not too formal and simple record fell into his eyes. It was a record from an apprentice level beast trainer who was taking care of the dark star ice serpent. Attached inside it were some records on the changes of the dark star ice serpent's blood energy.

This record itself wasn't valuable to begin with. Moreover, it had already been verified and annotated by another one of teacher's disciples and then tossed into an archive. Before, Xiang Ziyue had only glanced at it. If it weren't for the sudden promotion of the dark star ice serpent suddenly arousing his suspicions, he might have never glanced at this.

But this data point was like a star in the dark skies, guiding Xiang Ziyue's attention towards it.

Soon, he found other similar data records. After carefully patching them together, he finally came up with a diagram showing the blood energy fluctuations of the dark star ice serpent before it was promoted to the next level.

The slightly upward arc caused Xiang Ziyue's breathing to quicken. But this wasn't enough. He needed more evidence.

After tidying up the data he had extracted, Xiang Ziyue pushed open the doors and stepped out. Facing the hazy darkness of the early morning, he walked into the sect's storehouse division. This place held all of the detailed records of what the dark star ice serpent ate.

Xiang Ziyue knew that during this period of time, no other people had been allowed to approach the dark star ice serpent. If so, then it had to be related to something it ate.

He contrasted his data diagram with the calendar. Soon, he found the specific batch of goods that had been fed to the dark star ice serpent on that day. To avoid any accidents occurring and also for data recording purposes, all high level spirit beasts in the sect had highly detailed feeding records and all of them were preserved in their entirety.

Some of the extremely important goods would also be preserved and given out in small samples. Once it was confirmed that the spirit beast could eat it without issue, it would then be placed into the feed once more.

This was to prevent hostile forces from poisoning and murdering these spirit beasts that the sect had raised with such difficulty. Numerous instances of this had happened in the past.

Xiang Ziyue came just in time and the saved sample items still hadn't been used. After looking through the ordinary materials and discovering there wasn't a problem, he began to look here.

Two hours later, he held an ash gray leaf in his hands. Its surface was covered in silver white lines. Xiang Ziyue stared at it with wide eyes, his face full of disbelief.

After a stunned moment, he leapt up onto his feet, accidentally kicking the table. But, he didn't seem to notice this at all. He raced out of the storehouse division.

"Tsk tsk, look at him. These beast raisers act crazy all day long. Listen well to me and avoid them in the future." One of the senior cultivators guarding the gate commented, the look on his face saying that he was a veteran teaching a new recruit.

Several young cultivators beside him nodded repeatedly.

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Qin Yu asked around and soon found out where Sky Declaring Pavilion was. The Beast Trainer Invitational was an important event and there was a dedicated reception staff.

“This mister, may I ask if you have already registered? If you have completed the registration, please tell me your individual information.”

The female cultivator behind the desk sweetly smiled.

“Ning Qin.”

The female cultivator soon looked up his information. Her smile brightened and she stood up, respectfully saying, “So it was Grandmaster Ning Qin. You have already passed the core testing. You may directly enter the final trials.”

Everyone around him fell silent. Many of them had stunned looks that slowly turned to awe.

No one would dare to manipulate their own information. Sky Declaring Pavilion also had their own methods for making simple judgments, so it was impossible to conceal.

Without accident, this common-looking youth before them was a genuine beast trainer grandmaster!

Qin Yu also didn't think this would happen. But, with Feng Qing's status, doing this wasn't difficult at all. He calmly nodded as if he already expected this.

The female cultivator passed over a black jade card with both hands. “Grandmaster Ning Qin, this is the time, location, and requirements of your final trial. If you have any questions then feel free to ask us.”

Then, she passed over another card. “Due to your honored status, Sky Declaring Pavilion has reserved the top guest room in Moon Inviting Park for you. This is your room card; please accept it. During this period, any expenditure made there can be charged to this card.”

“Thank you.”

After taking the cards, Qin Yu left with everyone's attention focused on him.

Chapter 692 - The Hidden Fog Sect's Search

Grandmaster Rong looked down at the recorded data, his fingers shivering. After a long time he closed his eyes and let out a long breath.

“Ziyue, if this data isn't wrong then the storehouse should be where the key issue lies.”

Xiang Ziyue looked out at his teacher, grit his teeth, and took out a grass leaf. “Teacher, I have already gone to the storehouse and found this leaf of an ash line grass.”

“Ash line grass?” Grandmaster Rong received the leaf. With the sharp senses of a beast trainer, he soon realized something was off about this ordinary-looking ash line grass. There was an unusual strength contained within this leaf.

He stood up. Taking the leaf, he went to his study room. Moments later, after coming up with his own data, his face filled with shock.

In order to verify that the data was correct, he repeated the test two more times. The same experiment yielded identical data points every time.

“To think that ash line grass with such alarming potency actually exists in this world. The one who cultivated it must be a true grandmaster class existence!”

Grandmaster Rong looked up. His voice was firm and decisive. “Notify the sect. Tell them that no matter what the cost is, we must find this grandmaster!”

“Teacher...” Xiang Ziyue had a complex look.

Grandmaster Rong smiled. “What, do you think that teacher will conceal this matter and keep the rewards given to me by the sect?”

“No, that’s not it. This disciple doesn’t dare!”

“Since I am exalted by the sect, I should do my best in working for them. You should have already realized how important this ash line grass is to the dark star ice serpent.” Grandmaster Rong’s tone turned solemn, “You are the disciple I value the most. You must remember that in this world, there are certain things that you can do and certain things you cannot do. Even if you are faced with a greater temptation than this, you must always adhere to the bottom line and personal integrity that a beast trainer should possess.”

Xiang Ziyue had an excited look. He respectfully said, “Teacher, you will forever be my shining example of how to live. You will always be the light that guides my path!”

He took several steps back and hurried away.

The Hidden Fog Sect’s high level figures were shaken. Several beast trainer grandmasters were convened to verify the data provided by Xiang Ziyue. After they realized the function of the ash line grass, their eyes filled with excitement.

According to the conclusion that the several beast trainer grandmasters came up with, this ash line grass contained a strange strength that could stimulate the bloodline of the dark star ice serpent. Once it saved enough strength, it would be able to successfully complete its breakthrough.

This time, the reason the dark star ice serpent had such a listless appearance was because its accumulations were insufficient when it was promoted to the next level. As a result, it had to use up its flesh and blood essence energy to serve as a tool for its breakthrough.

In summary, theoretically speaking, if the dark star ice serpent was provided with enough of this ash line grass, then its future breakthroughs would continue unimpeded. Even if resistance developed to this sort of medicinal herb, it would be after two or three more advances.

The Hidden Fog Sect’s high level figures believed that they could see a path to surpass their ancestors and cultivate the sect’s strongest guardian spirit beast. If they could really accomplish this and obtain the protection of the dark star ice serpent, the foundation of their Hidden Fog Sect could be maintained for tens of thousands of years!

This was a matter of the utmost importance that involved the continued inheritance of the sect and the passing down of their orthodoxy. Even though numerous factions plotted against each other within the Hidden Fog Sect, on this occasion they achieved an unprecedented state of unification.

“Hurry! Hurry! Find the origin of that ash line grass!”

“This is related to the foundation of my sect for tens of thousands of years to come! This matter must be kept secret! No outsiders can know of it!”

“No matter the cost, we must invite that grandmaster to help us and provide a batch of that precious ash line grass to our Hidden Fog Sect!”

Thanks to the foresight of their ancestors, the sect had extremely detailed records related to the materials that were fed to the high level spirit beasts. Soon, they locked down its origin – First Moon Mountain Range, Kun City!

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Green Tree Hall was one of the True Wood Sect’s stores in Kun City. Their main business was in selling precious cultivating materials to various sects and their side business was in collecting intelligence. The shopkeeper was an initial Divine Soul realm cultivator. He had been sent here to run this place, suffering for almost a hundred years. Finally, after waiting for all this time his replacement had arrived. Overjoyed, he didn’t clean anything up as he happily left.

For cultivators of the True Wood Sect, there was no place more comfortable to cultivate in than their sect. With the sect’s great array formation gathering the world’s green wood aura, it allowed their cultivation to progress several times faster.

The new shopkeeper was a young cultivator. It was said that he had been a disciple that was highly regarded by the powerful and influential Elder Yu Qing. Unfortunately, some time ago there was a disturbance and Elder Yu Qing lost face, becoming a laughingstock of the entire sect. The Sect Master seized that chance to isolate and exclude him, depriving him of many of his rights.

This shopkeeper was clearly a sacrificial victim. Otherwise, why would an elder disciple with such potential be relegated to this forgotten place of exile?

Feeling the cold and gloomy atmosphere of the new shopkeeper, his subordinates tactfully kept their distance. They all waited to greet guests, afraid that the new shopkeeper would vent his anger on them if they made any mistakes.

But when would these kinds of days come to an end?

As everyone was quietly complaining in their hearts, light flashed at the entrance and three people stepped inside. The one in front was a thin old man, with a scholarly middle-aged man and a tall and burly large man with closed eyes behind him.

“Dear guests, what need do you have?” A True Wood Sect cultivator hurried over to greet them. This was a shop for immortals. There was a spell cast outside so that only cultivators could step in.

The thin old man spoke with a hoarse voice, "A little more than two months ago, this shop sold a variation ash line grass. The ones who acquired it were the trade association of Peng City, and I was the final consumer of this ash line grass. So, there are some matters I need to ask of you."

The True Wood Sect cultivator's complexion changed. He also remembered this event. After all, the reason Zhou Li was able to enter the True Wood Sect was all because of this ash line grass. Due to the disturbance created afterwards, he had a profound impression of this event. Now, someone had come up to their door? Was there a problem with the ash line grass? This was truly troublesome.

Cough cough. "Dear guests, please wait a moment. I cannot process this matter myself. Please allow me to ask the shopkeeper to come out."

The thin old man nodded.

The young servant raced into the hall. Several breaths of time later, with an angry cough, the new shopkeeper walked out, his face dark and uninviting. "The three of you, too much time has passed and no one knows the details of the shipping process or whether or not other accidents might have occurred along the line. Because of a trivial ash line grass, you come to my True Wood Sect to cause trouble?"

The other guests in the hall all looked over, puzzled expressions on their faces. A variation ash line grass might be incomparably precious to ordinary mortals, but it was only a relatively rare spirit grass to cultivators. Even if it had some value, it wasn't worth causing such a commotion.

Moreover, this shop was founded by the True Wood Sect. Causing enmity just because of a spirit grass wasn't reasonable at all.

Several True Wood Sect cultivators widened their eyes. They never expected that this new shopkeeper would be a piece of trash with such a foul mouth. How could he say such things? Did he never hear the logic that guilty people gave away their crime by consciously protesting their innocence? Speaking a little less wouldn't hurt you!

The thin old man furrowed his eyebrows and a cold chill appeared in his eyes. "I have no intention of stirring up trouble. All you need to do is tell me the origin of this ash line grass."

The new shopkeeper sneered, "Since the ash line grass we sold has no problems, I have no additional comment. If the three of you have no other business here, then please leave and don't return!"

"Insolent!" The thin old man grasped out a hand and a terrifying strength gushed out from the void. No one saw what he did, but the new shopkeeper had already been grabbed by the throat.

"Old Wei, calm down!" The pale middle-aged scholar hurriedly said.

A red light flashed in Old Wei's ice cold eyes. Every word he said dripped with a cruelty and viciousness that left one feeling desperate.

"Honestly answer my question. This is your final chance."

He loosened his hand. The new shopkeeper gasped for breath, his face deathly white.

This person dares to kill me...he actually dares to kill me!

When the young servant had reported this matter to him, the shopkeeper thought it was a good chance to take revenge.

The prime culprit for him ending up in such a situation was Zhou Li, and these people had come for her.

With a turn of his thoughts, the new shopkeeper had decided to intentionally enrage these people, otherwise they might show some caution towards Zhou Li's current status and wouldn't investigate it any further.

But, he never expected that he would almost lose his life because of this. The new shopkeeper didn't doubt that if the middle-aged man hadn't spoken up just now, he would already be dead.

Just where did these people come from? They actually conducted themselves with such an overbearing attitude and didn't even place the True Wood Sect in their eyes. But, there was one thing he could determine: these people had an uncommon background and wouldn't necessarily fear Sky Declaring Pavilion. Zhou Li, since you harmed me so much, this will be your retribution!

"Senior, please forgive me! I will immediately search the archives! Hurry, hurry, what are you all doing!"

Moments later, after obtaining all the information there was, Old Wei brought the other two with him and left.

"Sky Declaring Pavilion!" His eyebrows furrowed together, revealing a heavy look. "Grandmaster Rong, what do you think of this?"

This pale middle-aged scholar was the Hidden Fog Sect's beast trainer grandmaster – Rong Wei. He thought for a moment and said, "It should only be a coincidence. If Sky Declaring Pavilion really knew that this Zhou Li was acquainted with a grandmaster class existence of cultivating spiritual things, then she wouldn't have freely been allowed to become Feng Qing's maid."

Rong Wei's eyes flashed. He continued to say, "And, that True Wood Sect cultivator should have been trying to deliberately enrage Old Wei just now. He wanted to take advantage of your hand so that we would delve deeper into this ash line grass incident. Thinking about it, there must be some enmity between this person and Zhou Li. If Zhou Li's relation with that grandmaster was exposed, there is no way that person would be so reckless."

Old Wei smiled. "Grandmaster Rong holds the same views I do. But how do we confirm this?"

Because the recent incident at the True Wood Sect had happened at their sect meeting, it was impossible to conceal it. News of that event had already spread everywhere. Without taking too much time, the Hidden Fog Sect were able to determine that even until now, no one had been able to uncover the relation between Zhou Li and that mysterious grandmaster.

"Sky Declaring Pavilion possesses a tyrannical strength. Although my Hidden Fog Sect doesn't fear them, it still isn't good to offend them. The best way would be to figure out some way that they would give Zhou Li to us on their own initiative." Old Wei muttered beneath his breath. His eyes suddenly widened, "There is one!"

Rong Wei furrowed his eyebrows. "You want to use the ash line grass as an excuse?"

Old Wei knew that Rong Wei was a righteous man with an upright personality. He smiled and explained, "It's just a way to expedite things. As long as Zhou Li tells us what she knows of that grandmaster, not only will I not make things difficult for her, I will give her a rich reward."

Rong Wei thought for a moment and slowly nodded. "For the time being, that's all we can do."

Chapter 693A – Final Trials

Moon Inviting Park.

Qin Yu carefully sifted through detailed information related to beast trainers. He needed to reach a certain level of knowledge in order to not give himself away.

Cultivating monster beasts required spiritual things. To him, this wasn't too difficult. With the little blue lamp's help his path forward would be smooth. The only difficulty lay in getting the spirit beast to approve of his status as a beast trainer.

It had to be known that formal beast trainers had to possess a strong affinity with monster beasts that allowed them to gain the monster beast's approval. Otherwise, it would be impossible to collect the required data from it.

Qin Yu laid down the book and rubbed his forehead. "This is the best choice. Although it isn't perfect, I can only take things one step at a time."

In a worst case situation, even if he couldn't obtain the monster beast's approval then as long as he still managed to 'cultivate' sufficiently high quality spiritual things, Sky Declaring Pavilion would still allow him to stay.

...

Feng Qing's divine sense returned from the jade slip. Her eyebrows furrowed together and a serious look crossed her face.

Standing across from her was a surprised Zhou Li. During this time in which she had followed the lady, she had never seen her make such a face.

"Miss, is there some problem?"

Feng Qing took a deep breath, her complexion relaxing a little. "It's just a minor accident, nothing to worry about." She thought for a moment and stood up. "I will go and handle it. You can stay here and cultivate."

"Yes, miss."

She walked out. A cultivator from Sky Declaring Pavilion was already waiting outside. Seeing that no one was standing behind Feng Qing, the cultivator respectfully said, "Miss, are you planning on guaranteeing her?"

The Hidden Fog Sect was tyrannically strong and their experts were as common as raindrops in a storm. It wouldn't be good to provoke them.

Feng Qing said, "Don't disclose this matter for the time being. I will handle it."

“Yes.” The man turned and left, a puzzled look on his face. The miss had always been kind-hearted, but after tempering her mind for so many years, she had long since been able to control her mood. Why was she treating Zhou Li so differently?

Feng Qing naturally wouldn't tell him that a mysterious Divine Dao existence who she didn't even know about was standing behind Zhou Li. Even if she had to tear apart all pretense of face with the Hidden Fog Sect, she absolutely could not hand over Zhou Li.

Moreover, she faintly guessed that the ash line grass that changed Zhou Li's destiny had come from Qin Yu's hands.

If it really was a product produced by that man, how could there be problems? Or, could it be that the Hidden Fog Sect had discovered some difference with the ash line grass, and this was their excuse to approach Qin Yu somehow?

Feng Qing naturally didn't hope that others would discover Qin Yu's existence. But, since this matter involved Zhou Li, she didn't dare to decide it on her own.

Her thoughts raced and she soon called in another cultivator. She checked the list of cultivators that would soon be participating in the Beast Trainer Invitational and soon found the name 'Ning Qin'. He had already registered himself and was currently in Midmorning City.

She didn't want to contact him through Sky Declaring Pavilion's intelligence network, because she was afraid of drawing the attention of others. So, she quickly wrote a letter and placed it in a bamboo tube, tying the tube to the foot of a small black bird. She whispered some words into the bird's ears. Then, the black bird shot into the skies like an arrow, howling out and soon vanishing from sight.

This black bird seemed commonplace but it actually possessed the bloodline of ancient monster beasts. It excelled in concealing its location and its speed was even more astonishing. In a single day's time it would be able to cross mountains and rivers to arrive at Midmorning City.

“What the path forward is, will be decided by you.”

...

Sky Declaring Pavilion's reply was that they needed some time to consider, thus they asked the Hidden Fog Sect to wait.

Old Wei's face darkened. He coldly sneered, “These past years, Sky Declaring Pavilion has become increasingly powerful and daring. Now they actually dare to refute the face of my Hidden Fog Sect over such a minor matter. I want to see just what tricks they plan on playing!”

This was a critical time that would decide whether or not the dark star ice serpent would advance ranks in the future. The sect considered this matter to be of the highest importance and wouldn't allow any mistake to occur. As long as they could achieve their final goal, they didn't even mind having a falling out with Sky Declaring Pavilion.

“Old Wei, are you suspecting that Sky Declaring Pavilion has detected something?” Rong Wei furrowed his eyebrows together. “But I don't think that's the case, otherwise Sky Declaring Pavilion's reply would be safer.”

Old Wei's eyes relaxed. "Grandmaster Rong's meaning is...?"

Rong Wei said, "On the contrary, I actually think this is a good thing. It is impossible for Sky Declaring Pavilion to make us wait for a maid, unless the rights for how to handle that maid don't lie in their hands."

"Old Wei, we might as well show some patience. Perhaps there will soon be some unexpected harvests."

...

Qin Yu looked at the black bird paused outside his window. The bamboo tube tied to its leg looked especially eye-catching. Right now, the only one with the ability to correspond with him like this should be Feng Qing.

Had some accident occurred?

He took off the bamboo tube tied on the bird's leg. Rapidly reading through its contents, he subconsciously frowned.

The ash line grass he gave to Zhou Li? This was indeed beyond his expectations. Such a long time had passed and yet someone had still managed to notice this.

Was it because the ash line grass had developed some abnormalities due to it being shined upon by the little blue lamp? This was the only possibility that could explain the current situation.

This put Qin Yu on guard. This world's beast trainers seemed to possess some sharp and keen sensory ability, and they were even able to detect this...if the secret of the little blue lamp was discovered like this, that would really mean trouble was coming!

He warned himself that he needed to be extra cautious in the future. Then, Qin Yu had no choice but to consider what to do next. The Hidden Fog Sect had requested for Zhou Li to be handed over to them. This was clearly as a means to find out who he was, or even force him out.

If he didn't take action, he feared the Hidden Fog Sect wouldn't give up. But, if they sent an overly excessive request, what should he do then?

After a long time, Qin Yu let out a long sigh. Resolve filled his face.

Since this matter had occurred because of him, he naturally couldn't stay out of it. Right now, he had partially restored his strength, and with the ant swarm helping him, he might be able to protect himself even if some problems were to occur. He would take a look himself and see just what the Hidden Fog Sect wanted!

...

Putting down Qin Yu's reply, Feng Qing thought to herself that the ash line grass really was produced by him, just as she expected.

If so, then it was clear that the Hidden Fog Sect's accusation that there was a problem with the ash line grass was all an excuse.

Her eyes flashed and a trace of envy colored her complexion. It seemed that Zhou Li's status in Qin Yu's heart was higher than she expected.

In such a condition, he didn't dare to risk the danger of being discovered to meet with the Hidden Fog Sect.

Or, could it be that while Qin Yu couldn't use his divine sense, he still had a way of preserving himself and wasn't truly entering a dangerous situation?

Feng Qing didn't dare to underestimate the great power and mysteriousness of a Divine Dao being.

She shook her head and suppressed these thoughts. Since Qin Yu had come to a decision, all she had to do was carry it out. She picked up a jade slip and put down an official reply, telling a subordinate cultivator to send it out.

...

"Midmorning City!" Old Wei stood up. "Let's go there now!"

That mysterious grandmaster had unexpectedly appeared.

Rong Wei was filled with excitement. This was because the strange energy contained within the ash line grass had allowed him to see a whole new world, one far wider and greater than before.

The large red-skinned fellow who had been silently following behind the two of them suddenly fell to his hands and feet and let loose a tremendous roar. Monstrous light sparkled and a 70-80 foot tiger appeared. A pair of wings launched out from behind its back, over several hundred feet in length.

Old Wei and Rong Wei flew atop the tiger's back and sat down. The tiger flapped its wings and hurtled through the skies. Half a day later, the two people arrived outside of Midmorning City. The tiger fell to the ground and transformed into the large fellow once more. Without pausing, the three of them raced into the city.

Today just happened to be the day of Sky Declaring Pavilion's Beast Trainer Invitational. When they learned from Feng Qing that this mysterious grandmaster was currently at the scene of the final trials, Old Wei's complexion darkened.

This was completely different from their original plans. A grandmaster that was able to cultivate such precious ash line grass had to be brought back to their Hidden Fog Sect, otherwise how could they be resigned to this?

"Miss Feng Qing, why didn't you inform us of this matter ahead of time?"

Feng Qing batted her eyes innocently. "Mister Wei, Grandmaster Ning Qin signed up to participate in this invitational a long time ago. It just happened to be a coincidence today."

Her eyes flashed. "May I inquire as to why you wish to see Grandmaster Ning Qin so urgently?"

Old Wei's face stiffened.

Rong Wei smiled. "The ash line grass that Grandmaster Ning Qin cultivated is truly splendid and he must be a genuine grandmaster class existence. The Hidden Fog Sect is always eager to find such talented

individuals. After discovering him, we naturally want to contact him. We just never imagined that Miss Feng Qing would be a step ahead of us. It really is a pity.”

“After the final trials are over, is it possible for Miss Feng Qing to arrange a meeting for us with Grandmaster Ning Qin? I fervently hope to carry out an exchange as fellow beast trainers.”

Feng Qing smiled. “Of course. Grandmaster Ning Qin has already agreed to meet you two after the final trials are over.”

...

Chapter 693B – Final Trials

Midmorning City, Sky Declaring Pavilion Branch Division.

The finals for the Beast Trainer Invitational had already begun. A crowd of young people had gathered in front of a tightly shut silver-white great door and were staring tightly at it, their faces filled with envy. Those that could enter the final trials were all outstanding beast trainers. While these youths had some talent in this aspect, if they wanted to reach this step it was unknown how much time they would need to use. There was even a chance they would never reach such heights in the rest of their lives.

So, finding a good teacher was extremely important. This was also the reason they had used up all means at their disposal to come here. It was the greatest hope in their hearts.

“I heard that a higher order Silver Moon grandmaster level character was welcomed in our Midmorning City branch division. If we can be chosen by that person, the day that we become official beast trainers would be just around the corner!” In a small group, a young man spoke up. His hair was a rare gray color and it lay softly against his forehead. He had a look of longing on his face.

Higher order Silver Moon. He had never seen such a legendary existence like that before.

A young female cultivator beside him haughtily sneered. “Stop daydreaming. The final trials have started and I heard that the grandmaster still hasn’t arrived yet. Since he has already passed the identification process, I fear he won’t be going through ordinary procedures.”

Although her words were full of ridicule, her eyes actually flashed with disappointment. If she could really become a grandmaster’s secret disciple, that would be a turning point to change her destiny. However, this really was unfortunate.

A slightly hoarse voice spoke up. The speaker’s tone was calm and steadfast. “A higher order Silver Moon grandmaster has an honored status. It’s normal for them to arrive late...at the very least, even if we made an error and lost our chance, as long as we try hard enough we will still have achievements.”

Beneath lavender bangs, long eyelashes fluttered. It added a certain feminine charm to her petite face.

The haughty female cultivator from before changed her tone. She respectfully bowed and said, “Big sister Yun Die is right.” Several other young cultivators nodded their heads in approval. It was clear that this Yun Die had a considerable status amongst the group.

At this time, there was a light creaking sound. As everyone was trying their best to speak quietly, this sound was especially clear.

Another end of the passage was opened. Besides a pair of deep eyes, an ordinary youth wearing common clothes stepped in. Seeing the sight before him, he furrowed his eyes as if surprised.

And at this time, there were also many other people furrowing their eyes too as they looked at him.

Everyone knew what day it was today. It might be a chance for them to change their futures. If an extra person came, that meant there was an extra variable, and their share of any beneficial outcome would be further diluted.

And most importantly, everyone had received the notice and had been waiting here since earlier. Yet, this person had come midway? One couldn't help but wonder if this boy had gone through a back door or had used some relations to enter...

For this reason, the eyes that looked at him were somewhat cold and disdainful.

Qin Yu frowned. He thought that if Sky Declaring Pavilion's final trial was held by these young people, they were simply taking it too lightly.

After a moment's thought, he stepped forward, "May I ask if this is the area for the beast trainer final trials?"

There was a loud laugh. "Of course. Otherwise why would we be waiting here so early?" The one who spoke was a fat cultivator. He glared at Qin Yu with ill intent.

But then, the young fat man became aware of many of the beautiful ladies present looking at him and he suddenly became energized.

Hell yes, had the peak of his life finally arrived? He had never attracted so much attention from so many beautiful sisters before!

Qin Yu said, "Did you all come to participate in the final trials?" There was hesitation in his voice. When everyone heard his words, it felt like an openly mocking taunt.

You bastard! Even if you have background or connections, how dare you be so rampant! Those that could arrive here today all have their own ability! Be careful you don't end up in a pile of your own blood later!

Let alone participating in the current final trials of the Beast Trainer Invitational, if they could make it through the preliminaries 30 years from now, that would be an accomplishment that they would be left grinning ear to ear about.

Thinking about this, they all felt that Qin Yu was even more unpleasant to the eyes!

With your tone of voice, it sounds as if you are participating in the final trials too, and not waiting here with the rest of us for the final trials to end and praying to be chosen by some beast trainer!

After an awkward silence, the fat youth smiled, feeling it too embarrassing to say anything!

"This isn't the scene of the final trials; it is behind those doors." Yun Die didn't know why she would speak up to explain. She welcomed Qin Yu's confused look and continued to say, "This isn't the entrance. The great beast trainers would enter from the main gates."

So it turns out he had gone the wrong way.

Qin Yu looked at her and smiled. "Thank you for the reminder."

He turned around, pulled open the doors, and vanished.

This was beyond everyone's expectations. Many people stared with wide eyes. The fat youth's lips twitched. "This fellow...is he a mentally disabled?"

With a light laugh, the minor interlude that just occurred was tossed away in the recesses of everyone's minds. In this sort of tense time, no one wanted to be distracted by this completely inexplicable youth.

Yun Die sensed the puzzlement of those around her. She kept her head down and her eyes lowered. This was because she really didn't have a way to explain what had happened.

...

When Qin Yu pushed open the doors and left, he just happened to see two Sky Declaring Pavilion cultivators running towards him, sweat dripping down their faces. When they saw him their eyes brightened and they repeatedly apologized. "Grandmaster Ning Qin, we really do apologize. It was us who didn't make the appropriate preparations and we wasted your time. We beg your forgiveness."

One of them, a middle-aged man, fell to his knees. His face was deathly pale and streaming with sweat.

The final trials had already begun. This person had arrived late and now there was an additional delay. If an accident were to occur, would he still be able to live afterwards?

"It's fine. I got lost. Guide the way."

"Thank you grandmaster, thank you grandmaster!"

Passing through an arch, a spacious courtyard appeared before them. This was the location of the final trials.

Three beast trainers were already waiting here, all of them hopping with impatience. To be able to preside over the final trials, all of them had some degree of status. To be hung out to dry for such a long time, their mood could be imagined.

If it weren't for the title of 'higher order Silver Moon', they would have already left in a huff of anger. Right now they were just barely suppressing their agitation.

Hearing the sound of footsteps, the three beast trainers drew in a deep breath and squeezed out smiles. Before determining the true depths of this 'Grandmaster Ning Qin', it was best not to offend him.

But when they saw Qin Yu walking in behind those two Sky Declaring Pavilion cultivators, those forced smiles froze on their faces.

Yes, there were talented geniuses in this world that could accomplish what the average person could not, but if they were told to believe that this boy in front of them was a higher order Silver Moon grandmaster level existence, that was simply making a joke of them!

What happened with the early verification process? A junior had managed to take advantage of a loophole somewhere and appear here? It wasn't a problem if he was tired of living and wanted to court death, but the major issue was that he was now wasting their time.

In particular, the youngest of the three beast trainers had an especially pale face.

When he learned that a higher order Silver Moon grandmaster had arrived for the invitational, he had expended a great deal of energy and called in many favors to seize the qualifications to preside over the final trials today. The reason for this was because he wanted to form good relations with the grandmaster ahead of time, so he could consult him in the future if needed...if looks could kill, Qin Yu would have been torn to shreds by a thousand cuts already.

"Mister Xu, Mister Zhou, Mister Sun, Grandmaster Ning Qin has arrived."

Sensing something wrong with the atmosphere, the two cultivators hurried to the side after they finished speaking.

Sun Xiangzhang sucked in a deep breath. "You are Ning Qin? Good! Very good!" He thought about the price he had paid for today's position and how he would inevitably be ridiculed in the future, and his complexion paled even further. "This is the topic of today's final trial. Using the materials prepared by Sky Declaring Pavilion, have a sick skylark recover its health within two hours."

With a flick of his sleeves, the ground rumbled and split open. Stone steps appeared, leading underground. "The skylark is inside. But because the final trial started an hour ago, that means you only have an hour left. You may begin!"

Mister Zhou and Mister Xu sat down. They shook their heads and closed their eyes. Today's topic wasn't an easy one to begin with. Unless one truly possessed the strength of a higher order Silver Moon beast trainer, it would be impossible to heal the skylark within two hours.

Now, an hour had even been subtracted from the time and the one who arrived was an unusual young man...today, they would have to report this incident to the pavilion so that they would receive their due compensation.

It had to be known that a beast trainer's time was expensive.

Qin Yu didn't care about the attitudes of these three trial presiders. Since he came here, he already had certain expectations of how things would go.

He nodded in understanding. Then, he walked down the stone stairs. There was a loud rumbling above him as the opening closed up. But before his surroundings darkened, round beads embedded into the walls began to light up, emitting a warm and gentle radiance.

Soon, Qin Yu saw the skylark he was supposed to treat. It seemed to sense a foreign aura arriving. Its blood red eyes flashed open, a dreadful anger raging in them like waves of lava!

Chapter 694A – The Title of Grandmaster is Without a Doubt

Mister Zhou suddenly opened his eyes. "The continued survival of the fetus within the skylark egg cannot be guaranteed, so the cruel and bloodthirsty nature of the beast has erupted. Will this boy suffer some accident?"

Before clarifying Qin Yu's status, if there were any problems it would likely draw in unnecessary troubles.

Mister Xu lightly said, "Don't worry. Before the inspection began I examined the skylark's condition. Its inner core has been injured so it won't awaken for some time."

"That is good then. It will be difficult for this junior to escape harsh punishment. It's fine as long as it doesn't happen by our hands." Mister Zhou faintly smiled.

Sun Xiangzhang suddenly opened his mouth. "Two sirs, besides the incident with the skylark's egg, it isn't sick, but its inner core has been injured?"

His face paled.

Mister Xu paused for a moment, a bit of chagrin in his eyes. "Xiangzhang, I know that you looked after this skylark before it was born, but none of this has anything to do with you. The problem happened when the skylark laid an egg. A mutation occurred to its bloodline, leading to the fetus within the egg suffering an injury."

If this was purely a sickness, how could this become an examination topic for a higher order Silver Moon grandmaster?

Mister Zhou stared at his old friend. He consolingly said, "This is the truth. We concealed it from you because we didn't want you to worry about it and overthink things."

Sun Xiangzhang had a dazed expression as if he had lost his soul for a moment. After a long time he squeezed out a bitter smile and said, "I understand. Thank you for caring."

The reason he passed the preliminary Silver Moon examination was because he had stimulated the thin bloodline within a low level stonelark, allowing it to smoothly evolve into a skylark.

So to him, this skylark possessed an extraordinary significance. Now that its egg couldn't be guaranteed and its inner core was injured, did this really have nothing to do with him?

If he had been more considerate when caring about it in the past, if he had been more careful and attentive, he might have discovered that the skylark possessed a bloodline that was about to mutate.

Looking at Sun Xiangzhang whose face had lost its luster, Mister Zhou and Mister Sun glanced at each other. They sighed in unison. The scene of the final trial fell into a deep silence.

...

When the skylark opened its eyes that seemed to be flowing with lava, it suddenly cried out loud. Its wings unfurled and every feather shimmered with flames. A terrifying aura erupted and the temperature in the air began to wildly rise at an astonishing speed.

On the floor of the basement as well as the four walls around, runes started to shine as the array formation lit up. It released a formidable sealing aura that isolated the outside from the inside.

This was a condition necessary for any place that housed a high level spirit beast. Otherwise, if an accident were to occur...such as this variation skylark releasing its annihilating strength, it would be enough to turn the majority of Sky Declaring Pavilion into a pool of magma!

Its blood red eyes locked onto Qin Yu. Due to its rage and fierce anger, the skylark didn't hesitate at all. It flapped its wings and flames exploded. Its crystalline and slender beak soared straight towards Qin Yu's head.

Qin Yu narrowed his eyes, thinking that it might have been a bad idea to pretend to be a higher order Silver Moon grandmaster. If he was even a little bit weaker than he was now, he feared that his head would be blown into a mass of red and white goo and he would be swallowed up into the skylark's belly. Luckily, he had restored a bit of his body's strength, enough that he could deal with this skylark.

He took a deep breath and stepped forward. Qin Yu shouted and raised a fist. His heart beat vigorously in his chest as billowing blood energy erupted from his body.

Piki –

Paka –

His bones crackled and his eyes turned increasingly dark and profound. They were pitch black and filled with the passing of the years, giving off the feeling of endless vicissitudes.

With this burst of strength, the ground began to groan in pain. Cracks started to appear among the runes in the array formation. Just as he was about to attack with his all-out strike, he saw the frenzied skylark suddenly wail out loud. Its aura rapidly faded away and it softly slumped to the ground, constantly shivering.

Qin Yu furrowed his eyebrows. Was this skylark really so intelligent that it knew how to play such tricks on him? But he soon pushed this idea to the side. The skylark was lying on the ground, trembling. It was clearly expressing its fear and dread toward him and bowing in submission.

Was this because of the Ancient race's bloodline? Besides that, there was no other explanation.

But now was not the time to dwell on this. If the skylark surrendered, that would be for the best. He could avoid wasting further time and energy attempting to subdue it.

"I came here to treat and cure you. If you can understand, nod for me."

The flames around the skylark disappeared and clarity returned to its eyes. When it heard Qin Yu it bowed its head again and again, expressing that it understood.

"Very good." Qin Yu's thoughts stirred. He looked at the testing platform not too far away. Fortunately, the light of the array formation had protected it, otherwise the explosion of heat just now might have ruined the materials placed atop of it.

He lifted a finger. "You should be the one most aware of your own condition. Look over at the testing platform and see if there is anything you need."

Seeing the skylark try to stand up several times and fail, Qin Yu hesitated for a moment before withdrawing his blood energy fluctuations. The skylark finally managed to get on its feet, but when it looked at Qin Yu its eyes were still full of awe.

It walked over to the testing platform and its eyes brightened. Separated by the array formation's barrier of light, it pointed at several different materials.

Qin Yu groped around and soon found the switch to open up the array formation. He picked out the items that the skylark chose. They were a white fruit, seven or eight purple flower petals, and a common-looking green grass.

"This is enough to cure you?"

This test shouldn't be so simple.

The skylark shook its head. It flapped its wings, trying to express something. Qin Yu rubbed his chin for some time before saying, "You're saying that while these things are useful to you, it isn't enough to cure you."

The skylark nodded.

Qin Yu smiled. If things were like this, it shouldn't be too difficult.

His smile disappeared and he looked at the skylark without expression. When he spoke, his voice was filled with a deep dignity. "You will turn around and face the wall with your eyes closed. Before I tell you to turn back, you will maintain that posture. Do you understand?"

The skylark quickly nodded. It hopped over, unbelievably obedient.

Qin Yu glanced at it several times. When he confirmed that the skylark wouldn't defy his orders, he expressed admiration in his heart even as he opened his fingers.

A small sun phantom appeared between his fingers. It emitted a deep blue light that shrouded the fruit, flower petals, and grass.

...

The peaceful scene of the final trials was interrupted by loud footsteps. Several cultivators with solemn expressions walked in.

Mister Xu furrowed his eyebrows. "What is it?"

The person at the front cupped his hands together. "Mister Xu, central command discovered that the underground array formation was activated just now. The fluctuations of energy were fierce, so we fear there might have been some accident."

Mister Xu's complexion changed. "Impossible. If there really is an accident, even if there is an array formation that can isolate out all auras, we would still be able to detect something here."

Mister Zhou said, "That's right. Everything has been normal so far."

Sun Xiangzhang was the first to regain his composure. He took a deep breath and said, "Brother Zhai, it really is the case that nothing wrong has occurred."

Zhai Shan and Sun Xiangzhang were extremely close so he naturally believed the words of his good friend. His cold eyes relaxed and he said, "If there isn't a disturbance, then it should be wrong information coming from central command. It seems that similar situations have occurred during this period, it's just that a reason hasn't been found yet."

"Hold on!" Mister Zhou's expression was dignified. "Fellow daoist Zhai, can you check and see whether or not the underground array formation has been activated?"

Mister Xu and Sun Xiangzhang's complexions changed. They immediately understood the meaning behind Mister Zhou's words. With the age of the boy who just went in, his cultivation could be imagined. If there really was a problem with the skylark, a single unexpected event would be enough to destroy him. Since they were on the outside, they naturally wouldn't be able to feel anything.

Damn it. If that person truly died inside, while they wouldn't need to bear any responsibility for it, it would still lead to some inevitable troubles.

Zhai Shan furrowed his eyebrows. Without bothering to ask for the reason behind their sudden change in attitude, he took out a ring and placed it on the floor.

Hum –

The ring shivered slightly and a faint white light gushed out. Zhai Shan let out a breath of relief. "That's good. The array formation hasn't been activated."

But the sensory light of the ring seemed to be a bit brighter than usual. Could it be that the underground array formation has truly opened for a brief moment before turning back off? That shouldn't be the case. With that skylark's personality, if it had awoken then things would be much noisier than they were now. It wouldn't be so calm and uneventful.

Moreover, since this was the final trials, if they wanted to open up the examination they still needed to take into consideration the stance of the participating beast trainer.

Whatever. Since the ring proved that everything was fine, there wasn't a need to meddle so much.

Zhai Shan's thoughts raced. He cupped his hands together and said, "Since there is no problem here, I won't disturb you three in presiding over the final trials. Then, goodbye."

He turned and left.

Mister Zhou smiled. "Zhai Shan has outstanding talent and was able to stand out amongst the others. His cultivation increases by leaps and bounds every day. Not too long ago he broke through his bottleneck and smoothly entered the Calamity Immortal realm. The Great Dao inevitably awaits him in the future!" He glanced at Sun Xiangzhang. "Zhai Shan and Xiangzhang have a wonderful friendship. If the two of you can advance together in the future, it will surely be the creation of a fascinating legend."

Mister Xu nodded in approval. They were both middle order Silver Moon beast trainers, and unless they encountered some amazing opportunity, it was likely that they wouldn't be able to advance any further for the rest of their lives. They held the promising young beast trainer Sun Xiangzhang in high regard.

If it weren't for the two of them both acting as guarantors for him, how could someone who just became a lower order Silver Moon beast trainer obtain such a valuable position and preside over today's final trials?

"Zhai Shan is indeed splendid." Sun Xiangzhang didn't say anything else. He nervously looked towards the sealed off entrance of the underground basement.

Now that he knew the skylark's true condition, he became increasingly worried. That junior Ning Qin had best not randomly mess around and cause its condition to worsen!

Mister Xu said, "Xiangzhang. No matter what today's result is, I hope that you won't interfere in the skylark's treatment."

"That's right." Mister Zhou added in. "We understand your feelings toward this skylark, but a damaged inner core isn't a trifling matter. Only a grandmaster class existence would be able to treat and cure it. If you recklessly act, a single mistake will lead to your reputation being harmed. That would be disadvantageous to your future development."

Sun Xiangzhang's lips moved but he didn't say anything. In the end, he nodded with difficulty and said, "I will listen to you two and will not interfere with the treatment!"

Beneath the sleeves of his robe, he clenched his fists together. He was deeply disappointed in himself and his entire being was flooded with helplessness. This bitter feeling of wanting to save the skylark but being unable to do so constantly bit at his pride and heart.

Chapter 694B – The Title of Grandmaster is Without a Doubt

An hour had almost passed. Qin Yu quietly calculated the time. Then, with a thought, the great sun phantom vanished from his palm. The light faded away to reveal the white fruit, petals, and grass placed within.

Compared to before there didn't seem to be much of a change. But, a flow of light shimmered across their surface.

He hoped this would work!

Qin Yu said, "Alright, you may come over now."

The skylark obediently turned around. When Qin Yu saw it, it carefully opened its eyes. Its feet silently glided over. While it possessed a massive figure, in front of Qin Yu it appeared low and humble.

"These are the things you've chosen. Eat them now and see whether they can cure you."

The skylark's eyes brightened. Its long beak poked out a few times and directly swallowed up the fruit, flower petals, and grass. In the next moment it released a cry that seemed to verge on pain and joy. Its feathers began to blaze out of control, red flames dancing across their surface.

The array formation in the basement started to shine once more. But, the heat in the room soon surpassed the previous time and continued to climb upwards. Even with the support of the array formation, the walls and floor began to melt.

...

Zhai Shan returned to central command. When he determined that the alarm had disappeared, he angrily ordered his subordinates to find out the cause of the false alarm. Then, he flicked his sleeves and returned to his resting chambers.

Today was his turn on the rotation to appear for duty. Since an accident could occur at any moment, he wasn't able to cultivate. Still, someone like him who valued every moment of this time wouldn't wait here doing nothing. He took out a body cultivation method manual and started to perceive the obscure mysteries behind it.

This body cultivation method was a reward given to him by the Pavilion Master for his outstanding performance so far. The more Zhai Shan perused it, the more he discovered how valuable a treasure it was. The only problem was that this body cultivation method was incredibly difficult to understand. Besides having the will to persevere, one needed sufficient talent for cultivation.

Soon, he immersed himself within. As some parts of the complex mysteries began to come to light, loud ringing sounds suddenly broke out in the resting chamber.

Shua –

Zhai Shan's eyes flew open, anger burning within them. It was hard to find such inspiration and yet he had been broken out of his meditation like this.

Bang –

The door slammed open and he roared with constraint, "I had best receive a satisfactory explanation!" A cultivator scurrying in a panic outside the door suddenly shivered and said, "My lord, central command released a first-level warning...first-level warning...first-level warning..."

He repeated this three times.

But before the man finished speaking, Zhai Shan's complexion changed and he flew outside. All thoughts of meditating or perceiving anything were tossed to the side.

A first-level warning from central command. This meant that an array formation somewhere had encountered a bombardment of strength that surpassed its bearing limits and it was now bordering on the edge of collapse.

Something similar had occurred in the past. At that time, a bit less than half of Sky Declaring Pavilion had been torn to pieces by the wild strength. Although the situation was promptly handled and the following disturbance wasn't too great, the one that was in charge that day had lost all favor and was deserted by his allies. Over the years, he was eventually forgotten.

Zhai Shan didn't hope to follow in the steps of his predecessor. His eyes locked onto the location that was emitting the warning and he rushed over.

Please let there be no accident, please let there be no accident!

...

“Time is up!” Sun Xiangzhang had a dour face. He didn’t delay things for even a single second longer. But, before he could open the array formation, a thunderous rumbling sound rose up from below. The ground started to shake restlessly, so much that the doors and windows crashed into each other, causing dust to rush into the skies.

Mister Zhou almost lost his voice, “This is bad! It’s the underground skylark!”

His complexion was deathly white.

The skylark’s inner core was injured. It was impossible for it to erupt with such potent strength.

Unless it had gone completely berserk without any care for its life.

Just what had that bastard boy done!?

Sun Xiangzhang clenched his teeth. “If the skylark suffered an accident, I will never forgive him!” He was about to open the array formation but was stopped by Mister Xu. “You cannot open the array formation. If you do, none of us will escape. All of us might perish here!”

Whoosh –

There was the sound of breaking air. Zhai Shan appeared in the air. He thrust out his hands and shot out four rings that landed in four different directions. He shouted, “Suppress!”

Each ring erupted with a radiant light. Then, they condensed into beams of light that thrust into the earth. They were like four pillars that supported the skies, possessing a strength that could not be opposed, capable of imprisoning everything!

After completing this, Zhai Shan relaxed. It was only then that he discovered a cold sweat dripping down his back.

This was good. He was fortunate to have arrived a step earlier, because if he was any later the consequences would have been unimaginable.

His eyes flashed like lightning. He looked at Sun Xiangzhang and the others and asked in a low voice, “Just what happened here?”

Hey, even we can’t answer this question...

After a brief silence, Sun Xiangzhang roared in anger. “It’s Ning Qin! He must have done something that caused the skylark to lose control of its strength!”

Damn it! If I knew of this earlier, if I knew that its inner core had been damaged, I would not have allowed that bastard to go in!

“It lost control of its strength?” Zhai Shan was shocked. He looked at them Mister Xu and Mister Zhou with surprise.

The two misters both had bitter expressions. “This should be the case. Hurry up and evacuate those nearby. If the skylark’s inner core implodes, the destructive power that will result isn’t something that an array formation can block!”

Zhai Shan's face turned paper white. It's all over. Even if I came one step quicker, I still wouldn't be able to prevent a horrible result from occurring.

But then, the fiercely shaking earth rapidly calmed down and returned to normal in just several breaths of time. It was like everything that occurred just now was nothing but an illusion.

This...didn't they decide that the skylark had lost control over its strength...that its inner core was going to implode...

Things ended just like this?

Just as this thought appeared in Zhai Shan's mind, he almost slapped himself. Just what sort of nonsense are you thinking? Will you die if you don't feel uncomfortable!?

An uncertain expression crossed his face. He clenched his teeth and flicked his sleeves. The four suppressing beams of light on the ground vanished and the entrance to the underground basement opened up.

A clear and melodious cry echoed through the world. Sun Xiangzhang's eyes flew open. In the next moment, a blazing mass of flaming light flew out. The skylark spread its wings as it appeared, its massive body covering the entire courtyard.

Even though it had restrained its strength, the air still became dry and hot. The lush green bamboo in the courtyard began to turn yellow and wither away, their leaves falling off.

"Fire phoenix!" Mister Zhou cried out in alarm, his face full of disbelief.

To his side, Mister Xu and Sun Xiangzhang were also dumbfounded. Their jaws nearly reached the floor.

A stonelark was a kind of ordinary low level monster beast. But, it possessed a thin strand of skylark bloodline. Theoretically, it was able to evolve into a skylark and this was why they were loved and cherished by so many beast trainers.

And in the fables, it was said that skylarks were the descendants of a True Phoenix, an ancient God Beast. That was an incomparably formidable and peerless beast that could stand on equal footing with a Divine Dao being.

In the ancient records, it was stated that tens of thousands of years ago, there was indeed a skylark that was able to activate its faint True Phoenix bloodline, allowing it to control the myriad thunder of the heavens. When it appeared in society, it became one of the most powerful spirit beasts.

And this skylark in front of them had a dignified aura and its feathers shined with a majestic glow. It was bathed in blood red flames, clearly an indication that it had been promoted to a higher rank. Although its aura didn't rise by much, the transformation of his bloodline implied infinite possibilities.

In the future, this skylark...no, perhaps they should call it a fire phoenix...might become a peerless spirit beast that wielded all the flames in the world, possessing a part of a True Phoenix's potential!

Why would this skylark suddenly advance? Had it already freed itself from the binding spell cast by Sky Declaring Pavilion? What should they do if it wanted to escape?

No. It couldn't be allowed to leave. This fire phoenix possessed the most valuable experimental body. From it, they might be able to discover the key for how to stimulate a monster beast's bloodline!

Mister Zhou drew in a deep breath. Just as he was about to order Zhai Shan to keep it there no matter the cost, he saw the fire phoenix suddenly lie down respectfully on the floor in submission. It was at this time that he saw the black-robed youth being shielded by its burning wings.

His eyes widened and his mind turned blank.

"Everyone, I believe I have passed the final trials."

Chapter 695A – Sun Xiangzhang's Envy

His voice seemed to echo through the horizon, entering everyone's ears and awakening them from their shocked silence.

Was he the one who cured the skylark and allowed it to smoothly advance?

How was this possible!?

Suddenly, the kneeling skylark cried out loud. A mass of phantom flames flew out and fell onto the back of Qin Yu's hand, turning into a lifelike shadow of a fire phoenix.

"Spirit beast master recognition!"

Zhai Shan cried out in alarm, his eyes shaking as if he had seen something inconceivable.

A moment later, a woman's voice echoed out in Qin Yu's mind. "Master, I beg you to save my child. It has not yet been born; it doesn't deserve to die like this!"

When a spirit beast recognized a master, that meant it was giving everything to its master. With just a thought, its life and death could be decided.

Qin Yu realized that the reason the fire phoenix recognized him as master was not because he had saved it, but because it hoped to use this as the price and convince him to save its child.

After a brief moment, he asked, "Where is the fire phoenix egg? I can give it a try."

The fire phoenix reared back its head and released a keening cry. It flapped its wings and shot into the skies, arriving in front of a great temple in an instant. Then, it soared into the temple doors. No ensuing collision occurred. Space twisted and a vast land appeared. There was a long mountain range with flowing rivers running perpetually through it. Up above, there was even a great sun shining down upon the land.

Qin Yu narrowed his eyes. The feeling this sun gave off was completely the same as that of a true sun. Could it be some sort of supernatural art?

The fire phoenix landed on a steep mountain peak. There, the crowns of several ancient trees had woven together to form a massive bird nest. An egg with cloud-shaped patterns on it that was over a meter wide was lying down peacefully on it.

But at this time, half of the cloud-shaped patterns on the surface of the egg were burning red, as if the clouds were on fire. The fluctuations of life were extremely frail, like they could vanish at any time.

The fire phoenix wailed. Looking at its child, tears fell from its eyes. But before the tears fell they were evaporated by the heat.

As if sensing its mother's aura, the egg shell suddenly trembled. The little fellow inside wanted to come out, but no matter how much it tried it still couldn't summon the strength to break open the shell.

Chirp chirp –

Chirp chirp –

The small voice seemed to be sobbing.

"Master, please save it. As long as it survives, I am willing to do anything!" The fire phoenix's voice rose up in his mind once more.

Whoosh –

Whoosh –

Sounds of breaking air were heard one after another. Besides Zhai Shan, Sun Xiangzhang, and the others, there were also several other cultivators with impressive appearances and auras. One of them cupped his hands together and said, "Grandmaster Ning Qin, my name is Jiang Yiyun and I am the manager in charge of Midmorning City's branch division. If grandmaster can rescue the fire phoenix's egg, Sky Declaring Pavilion will give you sufficient repayment for your work!"

Qin Yu spoke in a low voice. "There isn't much time left. Tell me the specifics of what has happened." In truth, he had no idea where or how to begin the inspection.

Jiang Yiyun turned around. "Mister Zhou, I'll have to trouble you to summarize the situation for the grandmaster."

Zhou Xinhong looked at the youth in front of him and flushed red when he thought about his previous actions. His expression became even more respectful as he said, "Grandmaster Ning Qin, when the fire phoenix was laying an egg, there was a sudden change to its bloodline and the strength infiltrated into the fetus within the egg, causing the unborn skylark to suffer disaster. To rescue it, its two conflicting bloodlines must be combined together, allowing them to merge into one whole."

He forced a smile. "This sort of event is far too rare. Although Sky Declaring Pavilion managed to obtain a Blood Fusing Pill, the rank of the pill is too low. It is not sufficient for it to reconcile these two powerful bloodlines."

Qin Yu's eyes flashed. "If the medicinal efficacy is enough, then a Blood Fusing Pill could save it?"

Zhou Xinhong nodded. "That is true. But, the refinement process of the Blood Fusing Pill is incredibly difficult. Only a single pill can only be produced under certain conditions. Sky Declaring Pavilion had to gather its entire strength in order to find this single pill."

If it weren't for that, how could they give up on this egg? It had to be known that while it was suffering corrosive dangers right now, it actually had two prebirth bloodlines within its body. If these two bloodlines were able to fuse together and the child was hatched, its potential would inevitably be astonishing.

In particular, with the skylark having evolved into a fire phoenix, the value of the egg had become that much higher. But wanting to save it wasn't a simple task.

Qin Yu cured the fire phoenix and helped it activate its bloodline so that it could advance into the next step. This alone indicated that he undoubtedly deserved the title of grandmaster. But even so, those present didn't have much hope regarding this matter.

"Master, please save it!" The fire phoenix cried more, its tears rapidly evaporating.

Qin Yu, "..."

Was it really this simple?

In his mind, this conundrum that even the entire Sky Declaring Pavilion couldn't solve was actually far simpler than it seemed. If the potency of the Blood Fusing Pill wasn't enough, then he could purify and strengthen it.

Of course, he would never say this out loud. With a dignified and hesitant face, just as the fire phoenix was about to fall into despair, he suddenly nodded and said, "Bring me the Blood Fusing Pill. I might have a way to strengthen its effects."

Everyone fell silent.

Jiang Yiyun had an uncertain expression. The Blood Fusing Pill was extremely precious. Even with his status, he didn't dare to casually handle it. He looked at Qin Yu, wanting to see something from his expression. But all he saw was indifference.

Sun Xiangzhang was even more anxious. "Manager Jiang, you cannot give up on this fire phoenix egg. Even if there is the smallest chance, we cannot give up!" He took a step forward. "If some people investigate this afterwards, you can charge me with everything. I am willing to bear any consequence!"

Jiang Yiyuan's relaxed. "Mister Sun speaks too seriously. Treating and saving the fire phoenix egg is my duty. Men! Hurry and bring out the Blood Fusing Pill!"

With these words from Sun Xiangzhang, even if an accident occurred he could escape a majority of the responsibility.

Zhou Xinhong and Xu Yuanbai glanced at Sun Xiangzhang, a worried look in their eyes. Since he had spoken these words, there was no more turning back.

Qin Yu didn't care for their worries. He said, "Strengthening the Blood Fusing Pill will require time. How long can you maintain the fetus within the egg for?"

Sun Xiangzhang respectfully said, "Grandmaster Ning Qin, I can guarantee you that everything will be fine for the next two hours!"

Zhou Xinhong and Xu Yuanbai sighed inwardly. They stepped forward and said, "With us two helping, we should be able to ensure its safety for another hour."

Three hours, that was more than before. Qin Yu also wasn't sure if he could save it. He said, "Then let's not delay. Arrange a quiet space for me!"

Jiang Yiyun said, "Grandmaster Ning Qin, please follow me."

Sun Xiangzhang walked in front of the egg. He said to the fire phoenix, "It was my negligence that created today's problem. You can rest assured that I will do my best!"

Zhou Xinhong and Xu Yuanbai had helpless expressions. At this point, it didn't matter how hard they tried. Everything would depend on Grandmaster Ning Qin.

To reinforce a completed pill, while there was such a thing, to do so was far more difficult than refining an entirely new one. The chances of success were minimal!

"Teacher, if the Blood Fusing Pill is damaged, you will definitely be punished. Why take such a risk?" A Sky Declaring Pavilion cultivator bitterly said.

This fire phoenix egg was destined for death. There was simply no need to intervene and cause extra complications.

Jiang Yiyun shook his head. "Although I like to play some minor tricks and I also have deducted certain expenses when they were unnecessary, you must never forget the truth of what position you are standing in. I am the highest wielder of authority in Midmorning City's branch division and I have a responsibility, a duty, to retrieve losses for the Pavilion Master. If I cannot achieve even this, then I would have been ousted long ago by those with ambition."

He looked toward the directions of the quiet chamber. Another reason was that he wanted to make a bet here. Success meant an eye-opening merit for him. And even if he failed, he could also develop closer relations within a beast trainer grandmaster.

There was no way to lose here!

...

Two hours later, beneath a shower of golden light, the blood red color on the surface of the egg started to rapidly spread outwards, thoroughly dyeing all the clouds.

"The bloodlines have fused..." Sun Xiangzhang muttered with disbelief. Although he was happy to see this, he still had an absent-minded expression on his face. To strengthen the Blood Fusing Pill...if he didn't see this with his own eyes, he simply wouldn't have dared to believe it.

Zhou Xinhong and Xu Yuanbai widened their eyes. They stared at Qin Yu. If it weren't for that single strand of reasoning that still existed in their minds, they really would have jumped forward and latched onto Qin Yu's thigh.

Higher order Silver Moon...this was impossible. Grandmaster Ning Qin was highly likely to be a Great Sun level beast trainer, a peak existence amongst all beast trainers. Only a character like this, someone who existed in fairytales, had a chance of accomplishing something so unbelievable.

Kacha –

Cracks appeared on the surface of the egg. A small and wet head drilled out. It looked at Qin Yu and a weak voice cried out.

It seemed to know who had saved it.

...

Jiang Yiyun beamed with joy and an auspicious wind seemed to follow in his wake. In front of his trusted disciple, he had no need to hide his feelings.

“Congratulations teacher, congratulations teacher!” Feng Jun smiled. He knew that his teacher hadn’t been in a good mood recently. But with today’s merit, all of the previous criticisms against him would vanish into thin air.

Jiang Yiyun laughed. “I also never thought that I would have such an accidental harvest today. Grandmaster Ning Qin is my life’s lucky star!”

This was a revered beast trainer that might be at the Great Sun level. Just how venerated was this status? If he could obtain this grandmaster’s approval, then his future would be worry-free.

Feng Jun shared both honor and disgrace with his teacher, so he was naturally excited by this too. But, what left him puzzled was that this Grandmaster Ning Qin was far too low profile.

“Teacher, why would Grandmaster Ning Qin request that we keep information related to him a secret? Are there other facts behind this?”

Jiang Yiyun waved his hand. “Grandmaster Ning Qin’s status is enough for our Sky Declaring Pavilion to assist him with all our strength. Even if there is trouble in the future, we won’t be blamed. Since this is the grandmaster’s request, we can only try to comply as much as we can. But, you must know that from now on, you must give Grandmaster Ning Qin sufficient respect. No accidents can be allowed to occur.”

Feng Jun bowed. “Teacher, rest assured. I will certainly complete this task without arousing suspicion from anyone.”

Jiang Yiyun waved his hand, dismissing his disciple. Then, he began to carefully record everything he knew about ‘Ning Qin’ in a jade slip. When he was finished, he used a little bit of strength and crushed the jade slip to dust.

Even if he promised the grandmaster that he would keep his existence a secret, this absolutely did not apply to the master of Sky Declaring Pavilion...as for everyone else...hum hum, it wouldn’t be long before the Eastern Region’s Beast Trainer Competition was set to begin. The Midmorning City branch division was sure to shock all parties!

Chapter 695B – Sun Xiangzhang’s Envy

Complying with the will of Grandmaster Ning Qin, everyone chose to conceal his existence. Zhou Xinhong and Xu Yuanbai could only watch on with envy as Sun Xiangzhang and Zhai Shan led Qin Yu away.

“Grandmaster, I did not previously know of your status and I offended your dignity with my pride and arrogance. I ask that grandmaster be merciful and not haggle over such things with me.” Sun Xiangzhang respectfully bowed.

Zhai Shan had a worried expression. When Grandmaster Ning Qin had chosen him and Sun Xiangzhang to lead the way for him, he had felt a bit disturbed. This was a genuine grandmaster level existence, someone who would be a pivotal figure in Sky Declaring Pavilion. If this person intentionally wanted to make things difficult for Sun Xiangzhang, then it would be difficult for him to resist even if he were a Silver Moon level beast trainer.

Qin Yu had a calm expression. “There is no need to mention what has already passed.” He only wanted to use the status of a grandmaster to heal his injuries as soon as possible. Naturally he wouldn’t waste his time on such minor matters.

But in the eyes of Sun Xiangzhang and Zhai Shan, this was the grace and bearing of a grandmaster. His heart was as vast and all-encompassing as the sea. It was simply impossible for average people to compare with him.

Their attitudes became even more respectful.

“Grandmaster Ning Qin, since you have passed the final trials, you may set up your own laboratory. You will need some assistants to help you deal with miscellaneous issues. According to convention, we have prepared some outstanding youths for you ahead of time. You may choose whoever you like from amongst them.”

Sun Xiangzhang had an apologetic look. “Due to the matter with the fire phoenix egg, we have taken up your precious time. Because of that, the other beast trainers who have passed the final trials have likely already made their choices. If you are dissatisfied with the remaining people, Sky Declaring Pavilion can prepare some new choices for you.”

Qin Yu waved his hand. “There is no need to go through such trouble. Let us finish dealing with all these trivial matters today.”

...

Outside the silver-white doors, the crowd of young cultivators had thinned down a little. The ones left behind were somewhat dejected.

Many of them were arrogant individuals who believed that they had superior skills but lacked the good fortune of being chosen. These people clenched their fists beneath their robes and gnashed their teeth in anger. They clearly weren’t worse than anyone else here, so why hadn’t they been chosen?

Bang –

The silver-white doors opened and a cultivator from Sky Declaring Pavilion appeared. From the badge on his chest, he was the apprentice of an official beast trainer. His faint gaze swept over those present and he loudly said, “Everyone, the beast trainer selection has ended. You may all leave now.”

Everyone froze as the scene fell deathly silent. Then, there were sounds of restrained weeping. Several female cultivators with weaker mindsets already had tears streaming down their faces. If they missed

out on today's opportunity, then it was likely they were doomed to be mediocre for the rest of their lives.

"Big Sister Yun Die!" Yan Jiao paled. Although she had told herself not to have any hopes or expectations, when things finally ended her chest still ached and she still found it hard to breathe.

Yan Jiao thought back to when she left home today. She could recall the hope and eagerness in her mother's eyes...she had no idea how she could go home and face her mother's dispirited eyes.

"Don't be sad. Even if you missed out on today's opportunity, that doesn't mean you cannot become a true beast trainer. Although a good teacher can help us shorten our path and make it easier, what we rely on in the end is still ourselves." Beneath her lavender hair, her expression was light. She pretended not to see the confused and mocking eyes of those around her.

Yes, before this she had turned down being chosen by a beast trainer, and in the eyes of some people it might have been a stupid decision. But, Yun Die had seen the look in that person's eyes before. If she agreed to become his secret disciple, she knew what sort of fate awaited her.

Yun Die didn't want to betray her morals. This was why she had refused that beast trainer. This was why over the years she had turned down opportunity after opportunity.

But in the end, there was still some disappointment in her heart...

Yun Die pursed her lips. "Let's go." She bowed towards the Sky Declaring Pavilion cultivator and turned to leave.

As several people were about to push open the doors and leave, the sound of rapid footsteps rose up from behind, followed by several loud whispers. Then, the Sky Declaring Pavilion cultivator who had announced the ending of the selection shouted out, "Everyone, come back! There is still a beast trainer who has not yet chosen!"

Yun Die spun around. She didn't know if it was an illusion or not, but she seemed to sense envy in that person's eyes.

Envy? How was that possible? An official apprentice who had the guidance of a teacher was in a far, far better position than them.

It should just be an illusion.

She took a deep breath and suppressed her thoughts. She turned and said, "There is still one more chance. Perhaps it's time for our good luck to arrive?"

"Even if there is good luck, there are far too many people here. It might not fall on our heads..." The gray-haired youth mumbled beneath his breath.

Yan Jiao glared at him. "Shut up! No one's going to treat you like a mute if you don't speak!" She looked at the silver-white doors, her bright eyes filled with a stoic hope. She was like a drowning person who had grabbed onto a final thread of hope.

Everyone arranged themselves into a neat group according to their number plates. They waited in front of the silver-white doors, their heads slightly lowered as they tried to suppress their excitement.

This was a spacious corridor with a great hall at the end. Two figures calmly stepped out from the hall.

“Zhai Shan!” Someone suddenly cried out loud.

But more gazes were transfixed on the other figure. Many female cultivators suddenly had stars twinkling in their smitten eyes.

“That...that is Mister Sun Xiangzhang?” A trembling voice asked out loud.

No one replied to her question. Even the ever calm Yun Die felt her face flush red.

Sun Xiangzhang was an extremely famous figure in Midmorning City. He was a promising young beast trainer who had great hopes of attacking the grandmaster boundary in the future.

Moreover, he was less than a hundred years old. His talent was so outstanding it left others sighing with awe.

But, the most important point was that Sun Xiangzhang came from an ordinary background. The reason he was able to have his current achievements was all thanks to his own efforts. He didn't use any shortcuts to arrive at where he was now.

Because of this, he was the idol for countless low level beast trainers. He was regarded as their beacon, their guiding light for how to live.

Could it be that Mister Sun Xiangzhang was choosing his apprentices?

“Greetings, Mister Sun!” All of the youths bowed respectfully.

Sun Xiangzhang was silent for a brief moment. Then he slowly said, “I really do envy all of you here today, that you are unexpectedly able to obtain such a lucky chance. I hope that you can grasp this opportunity well and that you do not disappoint this turning point for your destinies.”

Without saying anything, he fell to the side.

Yun Die was stunned. This time she was sure that she hadn't misread the situation. Mister Sun really was expressing his envy toward them.

Could it be that even with Mister Sun's status, he still believed that being chosen to enter this hall was a lucky chance worth envying?

Just who was in that hall?

Yun Die's heartbeat quickened and she subconsciously clenched her fists. Looking around, she discovered that everyone had similarly excited expressions.

To be able to come here, no one was an idiot. They naturally grasped the key point.

The group fell increasingly quiet. Even the sound of breathing was restrained. Countless people bowed their heads even further. They put forth all their awe and respect in the hope that they would be chosen by that person in the hall.

Zhai Shan asked in a low voice, “Xiangzhang, who do you think the grandmaster will choose?”

He knew most of the youths here. All of them had considerable origins and decent talents.

Sun Xiangzhang shook his head. "How can I understand the grandmaster's thoughts...but if he were to choose, he really might be free-minded and arbitrary about it."

With the grandmaster's strength, even rotten wood could be carved into a treasure. He really did envy this group of juniors. He wondered if he might have a chance to be accepted as the grandmaster's disciple in the future...as for the status of a Silver Moon level beast trainer? In his opinion, it wasn't worth anything at all!

Zhai Shan could see the disappointed and lost look on his good friend's face. It wasn't hard to guess his thoughts. His lips twitched and he thought that he needed to try harder, otherwise this fellow would soon cast him a thousand miles behind.

But the body cultivation method that the Pavilion Master gave him was really far too difficult. It had been several years already and he still hadn't been able to peek through the threshold. Just thinking about it made him depressed.

The hall was silent. But everyone could feel the substantive gaze coming from within. It was light and yet filled with suppression.

Choose me! Choose me!

Quickly choose me!

Even though only a short several breaths of time had passed, this seemed like a lifetime to those present. Their muscles tightened and beads of sweat began to drip down their foreheads.

Yun Die's breathing suddenly paused. This was because her intuition told her that the pair of eyes had fallen on her body. Was it for the same reason?

From Mister Sun's description, this was an incomparably powerful beast trainer. If he really chose her, did she have to refuse?

Chapter 696A – Blue Orchid Wondrous Flower

From the moment he was born, Si Yuwen had a voracious appetite. He was someone who loved to eat. But as a result, his round and chubby body shape didn't match up with the standard aesthetic sense that most female cultivators desired. Thus, for his life so far and even now, he was a single unmarried man. His family had used up a considerable amount of strength to gain this opportunity for him to make something of himself.

As long as I can become an official beast trainer, what does it matter if I am fat? Countless beauties would willingly throw themselves at me!

For this reason, Si Yuwen was filled with anticipation as he came to Sky Declaring Pavilion. However, reality was a harsh and cruel mistress. Even though six beast trainers had made their choices, he had not been included in the list.

What caused Si Yuwen to feel particularly sad was that a woman he had liked for many years had been chosen. And, that was because her luck had been good. A woman called Yun Die had decided to refuse the offer, thus his crush's name had been substituted in the chosen list instead.

But none of this mattered. What mattered was that without accident, his crush would become a true beast trainer several years in the future and the distance between them would grow increasingly large.

This was his final chance...reasoning told Si Yuwen that he needed to display sufficient respect to be chosen. Yet, even though he displayed the utmost respect each time, he had continually failed six times!

I cannot just sit here and wait for death. I need to find some way to obtain attention. Only like that will I have a chance. I have to struggle for it!

Slowly, a bit at a time, Si Yuwen looked up. A figure appeared at the edge of his vision; just a little bit more and he would clearly see them.

Beads of sweat dripped down his forehead and into his eyes. The bitter feeling caused his eyes to blur. Blinking several times, the figure suddenly became clear.

In the next moment, Si Yuwen's eyes flew open. Then, his huge and rolling figure flopped to the ground. The thunderous crash was especially clear in the quiet atmosphere.

The nervously waiting people were given a fright and they subconsciously looked up. What followed was a collective gasp. With so many people present, the sound actually possessed considerable momentum.

It was him! It was him!

How could it possibly be him?

Everyone was left dumbfounded. The one sitting high in the hall and looking down at them from above was exactly that black-robed youth from before who they thought had been 'acting'.

It was still that common and ordinary face, one that had nothing special about it. But right now, this person's eyes were filled with a deep dignity.

Everyone stared with a dazed expression, and it took some time before they regained their composure. Looking at the fat body that was slumped over and twitching on the ground, their eyes filled with pity.

If it were any of them in his place, they feared they would be so frightened that they wouldn't be able to stand straight either. It didn't matter if he had a cheap mouth. The key point was that he was far too unlucky!

Qin Yu pointed a finger, "Are you willing to follow by my side and learn?"

Shua –

All eyes turned to Yun Die, envy filling their gazes.

Some time ago, she was the one who had spoken up and answered this man's question...as expected, it was easier for the kindhearted to be blessed!

Yun Die welcomed Qin Yu's gaze. From his eyes, she didn't feel anything else. However, the bitter experiences she had encountered over the years left her finding this hard to believe.

Why choose me? Is it just because I answered his question? This explanation doesn't make sense at all.

Inexplicably, Yun Die said, "My lord, I hope that you can receive my companions so that we can become your secret disciples together."

The envious people all widened their eyes. Hey boss, are you insane?

This was a massive good fortune. Others couldn't even beg for it, and yet you dare to put forth conditions? My lord, please look and see that she is not qualified! Choose me! I will be obedient!

Qin Yu was silent for some time. Then, beyond everyone's expectations he nodded and said, "Very well." He lifted his hand and pointed several times. "You, you, and the three of you. After this, go and report to Sun Xiangzhang."

"Ah! Thank you my lord...thank you!" The people who were chosen went wild with joy.

Qin Yu didn't delay any further. He nodded and walked away. Outside the hall, Sun Xiangzhang had a strange complexion. Most beast trainers would only choose one or two secret disciples, but this one had chosen ten in a breath of time. Would he be able to direct all of them?

"Grandmaster." He was perplexed, but he didn't dare to show any of this.

Qin Yu nodded. "In the next two days, I have another secret disciple who will be arriving. Prepare for him ahead of time."

Sun Xiangzhang respectfully bowed.

...

Curing the skylark and helping it evolve into a fire phoenix, even saving the egg that was on the verge of death...Feng Qing looked at the strange face in front of her and sighed with acclaim in her heart. As expected, a great figure that could reach the Divine Dao realm wasn't someone who could be understood with common sense!

"Grandmaster, the Hidden Fog Sect's Grandmaster Rong has been waiting for some time already."

The private room opened from within. Wei Lao and Rong Wei stepped out. They cupped their hands together and bowed, "We took the liberty to visit. We hope that grandmaster is willing to forgive us."

They had no idea what the result of the final trial was. But, the ash line grass alone was enough to prove how strong Grandmaster Ning Qin was.

And powerhouses, regardless of what era it was or what place it was, earned their due respect.

Qin Yu nodded. "I already know your intentions. Let's speak about it in further detail."

"Grandmaster, please!"

Food and wine had been prepared for the private room. After closing the door, everything was peaceful.

Old Wei brightly smiled. "Grandmaster, this wine is from the collection of my Hidden Fog Sect. A drink will clear your mind and revitalize your spirit. How about giving it a try first?"

Qin Yu said, "I have already joined Sky Declaring Pavilion and there are many minor matters I must still deal with. Let's not speak in circles any longer. Get to the point."

Rong Wei said, "Grandmaster is an honest and straightforward person. Then, we shall comply." He took a deep breath and asked, "Grandmaster Ning Qin, may I ask whether the ash line grass that Miss Zhou Li turned in was your work?"

Qin Yu said, "That's right."

Although he already knew this, Rong Wei's eyes still brightened when he heard Qin Yu acknowledge this. When he looked at Qin Yu, there was even more veneration within his gaze.

"I have never seen anything like the technique that grandmaster used to cultivate the ash line grass. It was startling to say the least. I originally came here with Old Wei because I hoped that grandmaster could join my Hidden Fog Sect. For this reason, my sect was willing to express sufficient sincerity."

Feng Qing charmingly said, "Grandmaster Rong, do you plan on digging in my Sky Declaring Pavilion's corner right in front of me? Grandmaster Ning is already a part of my Sky Declaring Pavilion. I ask Grandmaster Rong to rest assured. Even in the future, I won't give you any chance to take him away."

Rong Wei forced a smile. "Miss Feng Qing speaks my thoughts. If my Hidden Fog Sect had the luck to recruit Grandmaster Ning Qin, he would be our most honored guest and we wouldn't give anyone even the smallest opportunity." He took a breath and continued to say, "Thus, my sect can only take a step back and ask Grandmaster Ning Qin to cultivate ten ash line grasses of the same standard for us."

Feng Qing's heart relaxed. She smiled and said, "As for this matter, that will depend on Grandmaster Ning Qin's intent."

Old Wei cupped his hands together. "Grandmaster Ning Qin, I ask you to please help us. The Hidden Fog Sect will definitely give you a reward worthy of your work."

Qin Yu tapped his fingers against the table. "So to obtain ash line grass, you wanted Sky Declaring Pavilion to hand over Zhou Li. Were you preparing to use her as a bargaining chip to threaten me?"

The room suddenly fell deathly silent!

Feng Qing's expression didn't change. She had already expected this to occur. How could a Divine Dao being allow his dignity to be provoked?

Although the Hidden Fog Sect was strong, in the eyes of Qin Yu, they weren't enough for him to swallow such an insult.

Old Wei's face stiffened.

Rong Wei hurriedly said, "Allow me to be honest with Grandmaster Ning Qin. The ash line grass you cultivated is of the utmost importance to my sect. I felt distressed for some time because of this, and that is the only reason why I even thought of such a plan. But, I ask Grandmaster Ning Qing to please

believe me when I say that no one in my sect had any thoughts of harming Miss Zhou Li. And we never thought of using Miss Zhou Li to threaten you. I promise you this!”

Qin Yu coldly sneered. “Remember, this is the last time. Otherwise the Hidden Fog Sect can give up on obtaining anything from my hand.”

Although his attitude wasn’t good, Qin Yu’s actions still caused Old Wei’s complexion to lighten up. This meant that their former conflict had been resolved.

Of course, they also received Qin Yu’s warning. From now on they would never try to use Zhou Li again.

“The cultivation of the ash line grass is extremely complex, especially if you want ten. I will require some time and the expenditures will be considerable.”

Qin Yu lied with his eyes wide open.

But, the Hidden Fog Sect was willing to believe this. What nonsense. How could such an incredible transformation be accomplished so easily?

Old Wei said, “Grandmaster, please ask your price!”

With his appearance, he was clearly ready to have a piece of flesh chopped off. His mouth was open, as if he were apologizing to his sect.

Qin Yu’s thoughts turned. “Miss Feng Qing, what do you think I should ask?”

Feng Qing covered her mouth, “Does grandmaster really want my suggestion?”

Her thoughts raced.

Qin Yu nodded.

Feng Qing came to a decision. “Then I won’t decline. If there is anything you find dissatisfactory, I ask you to please point it out.”

Chapter 696B – Blue Orchid Wondrous Flower

She looked at Old Wei and Rong Wei. “You two should know that whether it is raising spirit beasts or cultivating spiritual objects, it will cause great losses to the soul. I heard that the Hidden Fog Sect has a mystic realm, and that a wondrous flower called the blue marvel orchid grows within. I also heard that this flower is extremely helpful to the soul. One ash line grass in exchange for a blue marvel orchid; how is this deal?”

“That’s impossible!” Old Wei stood up. “Miss Feng Qing, do you not think you are too insincere?”

This wasn’t even a lion opening its mouth. This was even larger than a dragon’s head!

Feng Qing smiled. “I am only naming a price in place of the grandmaster. If you have any suggestions or disagree, please bring it up with the grandmaster.”

Qin Yu lightly said, “To exchange one for one, this is a fair price.”

Old Wei’s complexion changed.

Rong Wei forced a smile. "Grandmaster Ning Qin, it isn't that we aren't willing to agree, but the blue marvel orchid grows far too slowly. It takes a thousand years for a single flower to mature, and because there are many uses for them there has been a considerable lack of supply. Even if all the reserves in the sect are added up, we only have seven flowers."

Feng Qing's eyes brightened. "Grandmaster. The Hidden Fog Sect is truly sincere. If so, you might as well make a concession."

She had no idea what was so special about that ash line grass, but she knew the value of seven blue marvel orchids. This was an amount that could make anyone's heart race with excitement.

In the past, Sky Declaring Pavilion had auctioned one off. The final price was so high that it shocked everyone present.

Qin Yu furrowed his eyebrows. After a long time, he slowly said, "Then let it be seven."

Rong Wei shouted, "Deal!"

Old Wei opened his mouth. He wanted to say something but in the end he fell silent.

The blue marvel orchids were precious, and they could even be called the Hidden Fog Sect's bottom line treasure. But, the mystic realm could continuously produce them.

Compared to them, the ash line grass that could help transform the dark star ice serpent's bloodline was far more important.

"I wonder how much time Grandmaster Ning Qin will be handing over the ash line grass in?"

Qin Yu said, "Three months."

Rong Wei had an awkward expression. "Is it possible to receive two in the first month? The rest can be delivered in the remaining time."

"Yes."

Feng Qing said, "According to customs, the Hidden Fog Sect will need to pay a third of the reward ahead of time."

Old Wei said, "In three days the Hidden Fog Sect will hand over two blue marvel orchids to Grandmaster Ning Qin. But, concerning this transaction, I ask Miss Feng Qing and the grandmaster keep it a secret and don't leak any news of it!"

Qin Yu smiled. "Naturally."

Even if the Hidden Fog Sect didn't mention this, he still would have raised this point. Otherwise, Zhou Li would inevitably receive attention and this would trigger a series of unpredictable consequences.

After official business was done, Rong Wei let out a breath of relief. Even though they had paid an enormous price, they had completed the task handed down to them by the sect.

"Cough! Grandmaster Ning Qin, I also have a private request to make of you. I wonder if grandmaster would be willing to visit my Hidden Fog Sect and give a lecture on cultivating spiritual things. Of course,

this doesn't have to involve grandmaster's own personal techniques or specific approaches. A simple general direction is all that is needed."

Feng Qing's eyes brightened. To be invited by the Hidden Fog Sect to give a lecture, there was no beast trainer in Sky Declaring Pavilion who had such a great honor. This was a glorious achievement.

"If there is time in the future, I will consider it."

...

The part of Sky Declaring Pavilion that received guests and carried out trades was only an extremely small section of the overall layout. The vast majority of buildings were assigned to various cultivators based on their rankings.

Although they had concealed Grandmaster Ning Qin's true strength according to his request, the Midmorning City branch division naturally couldn't treat him like an ordinary beast trainer just because of that.

Three separate buildings and a surrounding courtyard that was 25-30 acres large; this would be his future housing and workplace. There was a lake nearby, and on the edge of it there was a small building covered in vines. Opening the door, one could see the enchanting scenery of the lake. This was where Qin Yu's dwelling was.

Right now, he sat on a soft sofa on the first floor of a building. Ten youths respectfully stood in front of him. These were the disciples he had chosen before.

"Teacher!"

They fell to their knees and bowed.

A so-called secret disciple was only a title that was a little more pleasant to the ears. In reality, their status was a bit higher than that of a student. They helped beast trainers complete experiences, recorded various data points in spirit beasts, and were also responsible for their daily care.

Only by obtaining the approval of the beast trainer did one have a chance of becoming a true disciple and receiving the legitimate teachings of the beast trainer.

Even so, these young disciples were still shaking with excitement as they knelt on the ground. Although they had guessed that their teacher was formidable, it was only after coming here that they obtained direct proof of it.

The stronger one was, the greater their housing area was – this was the simplest and most direct identification of strength within Sky Declaring Pavilion. As for their teacher's manor, even when looking at the entire Sky Declaring Pavilion it was one of the peak locations. One could imagine how excited they were!

The only negative point was that their teacher had chosen too many secret disciples. If they wanted to bloom amongst all the others and become true disciples, this absolutely wouldn't be easy.

In particular, there was a difficult foe to deal with in this group...several eyes fell on Yun Die, worry and anxiousness hidden on their faces.

Qin Yu glanced over everyone. He smiled and said, "Rise. Starting from today, you will study by my side. The only thing you need to remember is to speak less and work more. Do you understand?"

"Yes, teacher!" The disciples respectfully replied.

Suddenly, a loud cry rang out and the atmosphere began to heat up. Waves started to surge on the surface of the peaceful lake.

What followed that was the sound of howling wind. A massive flaming bird flew past, beating its wings gracefully as it soared in the skies. It had a crown of feathers on its head and its eyes were like crystalline flames. It emanated an aura of dignity. Every one of its actions released a formidable suppression. This was the skylark that had evolved into a fire phoenix.

Behind it was a tiny mass of flaming light. This little figure diligently beat its wings as it tried to follow behind. Then, after a cry of surprise, it suddenly changed directions and flew down, landing on Qin Yu's shoulder. It released a cheerful chirp as it nuzzled Qin Yu's neck.

As the disciples saw this, they revealed looks of deep envy. This was the fire phoenix that had recognized their teacher as its master? It was far stronger than the rumors suggested.

At what time would they be able to reach teacher's level and cause such a powerful spirit beast to acknowledge them as its master of its own volition?

Qin Yu didn't care about his disciples' expressions. He smiled and stroked the little bird's feathers. His eyes fell onto the surging surface of the lake.

The blue marvel orchids would soon be sent over by the Hidden Fog Sect. He hoped they could improve the current situation of his soul.

...

Sun Xiangzhang stepped into the External Affairs Division. He smiled at the approaching External Affairs Director and gently nodded, "I am here to collect the reward for treating the moon praying beast."

The External Affairs Director was a thin man. He flatteringly said, "Mister Sun has completed the mission in such a short time. It won't be long before you are promoted to a middle order Silver Moon." He handed over a sealed box with both hands. "This is your reward. Please inspect it."

He was extremely measured and discreet in his words. Even though he was clearly flattering, his words didn't leave behind a sickening aftertaste.

Sun Xiangzhang opened the box. He looked over it and said, "There are no problems."

He closed the box and turned to leave.

But at this time, the doors opened again and a man walked in. Looking at his clothes, he was the secret disciple of a beast trainer.

"I am Mister Ning Qin's secret disciple. This is his token."

Sun Xiangzhang paused. He immediately knew that this token was real. But in his memory, this person hadn't been among the disciples Grandmaster Ning Qin chose.

“You are Mister Ning Qin’s secret disciple?”

Welcoming Sun Xiangzhang’s suspicious gaze, Qin Yu smiled and said, “Yes. I was following beside teacher before, and I arrived at Sky Declaring Pavilion afterwards.”

Sun Xiangzhang immediately remembered that the grandmaster said he still had another secret disciple who would arrive later.

It seemed it was this youth.

To be chosen by Grandmaster Ning Qin to accompany him all this time, this youth was definitely talented. He might even have a chance of being the grandmaster’s true disciple in the future.

Sun Xiangzhang’s gaze became gentle. “Since you are following by the grandmaster’s side and studying, as long as you try hard in the future you will surely have great achievements. My name is Sun Xiangzhang. If you have any problems or questions in the future, feel free to look for me.”

Qin Yu cupped his hands together. “I thank Mister Sun for the advice.”

This status of a secret disciple was one he prepared for himself. With an additional identity, things would be easier in the future.

Sun Xiangzhang smiled. “What are you here for?”

Qin Yu said, “Teacher asked me to pick up a package for him.”

Although the External Affairs Director had no idea why Mister Sun would hold a young disciple in such high regard, with his years of experience on the job he naturally knew that there was something unusual with this situation.

He turned and passed out some orders. Soon, a package was brought forward. Seeing the information on the sender, his eyes widened, “Hidden Fog Sect!”

His smile became increasingly bright. “This little brother, Mister Ning’s things are here. Would you like to examine it?”

Qin Yu shook his head, “I do not have the right to examine teacher’s things.” He reached for the box and expressed his thanks. Then, he bowed toward Sun Xiangzhang. “Mister Sun, if there is nothing else then I shall bid my farewells.”

After leaving the External Affairs Division, Qin Yu didn’t stop. He went straight to Rising Lake.

Rising Lake was the name of this manor. It was unknown who came up with this name, but Qin Yu couldn’t be bothered to change it, so he kept it.

Chapter 697 - The Reason Is That Simple

When he went through the gates, he passed by several young cultivators who just happened to be coming out. When they saw the box in Qin Yu’s hands, their eyes sharpened.

But they soon composed themselves. They cupped their hands together and said. “Elder senior-apprentice brother!”

Qin Yu nodded. Without saying anything to them, he continued walking forward until he vanished from their line of sight.

“Humph!” A youth coldly snorted, darkness covering his face. “I have no idea where that boy came from, but just because he had the luck to be chosen by the grandmaster first he thinks he can pull rank with us!”

This youth’s name was Li Hao. He was one of the secret disciples.

A female disciple quietly said. “He’s not just lucky. Qin Yu was sent by teacher to go to the External Affairs Division and pick up a package. Moreover, he’s the only one that can freely go in and out of teacher’s dwelling.”

It was clear that this ‘elder senior-apprentice brother’ was much more beloved by teacher than the rest of them together.

Li Hao clenched his teeth. “Sooner or later I will find out why he was able to obtain teacher’s trust!”

Only by unraveling this mystery would he have the chance to replace him.

...

Qin Yu lifted his token and entered the little building on the edge of the lake. With a thought, he directly activated the array formation, isolating the inside from the outside. Walking into the training room, he placed the box on a stone table and opened it. Two flowers wrapped in translucent bubbles appeared in his sight.

This was a type of sealing method that could preserve spiritual things without allowing their potency to be diminished. With just a gentle touch, the bubble would pop. Without hesitation, there was a light ‘pa’ sound as a blue marvel orchid appeared in his hand.

A rich fragrance entered his nose and mouse. A deep trembling appeared from the depths of his soul, eventually turning into a desire to devour that could not be constrained. The target was the blue marvel orchid in his hand.

He subconsciously took a deep breath. Flower petals fell off. As they fluttered down, they dispersed into energy that travelled up and entered his body through his nose and mouth.

In the blink of an eye, the entire blue marvel orchid disappeared. Soon after, a warm, watery-like feeling wrapped around Qin Yu’s soul. Faint traces of a gentle strength seeped inside, patching the parts of his soul that had been severely damaged and then forced to undergo the Ashes and Embers secret art.

An hour later, the strength that restored his soul vanished. Qin Yu picked up the second flower and took a deep breath, absorbing it.

After a long time, he opened the training room from within. He walked out, a smile on his face. The Hidden Fog Sect’s blue marvel orchid was indeed worthy of being a wondrous treasure. It actually had such an astonishing effect of healing the soul.

The power of the Chain of Stars could slow the speed at which his soul was collapsing. After absorbing these two blue marvel orchids, Qin Yu could extend his life by at least two years.

Unfortunately, such a heaven-defying treasure had a high resistance attached to it. After absorbing the second blue marvel flower, the effects were about a third less than the first.

Even if Qin Yu didn't care about the waste, he could use at most five blue marvel orchid flowers before this type of treasure wouldn't be useful to him any longer.

Otherwise, if he absorbed several dozen of them he might be able to fully heal himself.

But good things were never wasted. Qin Yu could trade them with others for different soul-repairing treasures.

After determining the function of the blue marvel orchids, Qin Yu was even more careful with the Hidden Fog Sect's request. But, that special ash line grass wasn't much at all. Producing them was easy and he had an entire month to do so. There was no need for him to worry about it.

...

Zhou Li furrowed her eyebrows. She didn't know these people from the Hidden Fog Sect, and due to what she experienced at the True Wood Sect, she now had an instinctual feeling of loathing towards these cultivation sects.

But since Miss Feng Qing had asked her to come and see them, Zhou Li had no reason to refuse. Moreover, she was a little curious why there was such an inexplicable request for her to meet them.

"May I ask if you are Miss Zhou Li?" The cultivator across from her had a warm smile.

Zhou Li wasn't someone who was affected by appearances. But, when she looked at this smiling and handsome young cultivator in front of her, her complexion relaxed a little. "I am. It might be rude to say this, but I have no connection with the Hidden Fog Sect. For what reason do you wish to see me?"

The young cultivator cupped his hands together. "Miss Zhou Li, rest assured. My name is Xiang Ziyue. I am here on the orders of my sect to express our sincere thanks to you."

Seeing Zhou Li's confused expression, he continued to explain, "Two months ago, Miss Zhou Li sold us an ash line grass. While I can't explain the exact story behind it, in the end it rendered my Hidden Fog Sect a great assistance."

Zhou Li's mouth fell open. She never thought that would be the reason why this cultivator came here today.

Xiang Ziyue placed a storage bracelet on the table. "I heard that Miss Zhou Li started to cultivate not too long ago. My Hidden Fog Sect has prepared some suitable pills for Miss Zhou Li as a thank you gift. They should be able to help Miss Zhou Li make a breakthrough in the future."

After completing the task given to him by the sect, Xiang Ziyue cupped his hands together and stood up. Without giving her a chance to refuse, he turned and walked away.

When he left Sky Declaring Pavilion, he turned and looked back, his eyes bright.

Xiang Ziyue certainly knew why the solemn Hidden Fog Sect would place a young girl who had just started cultivating in such high regard.

What a pity, he didn't have a chance to see the mysterious Grandmaster Ning Qin this time.

But fortunately for him, in a month the other party would hand over two ash line grasses. At that time he hoped he would be able to see the grandmaster's elegant demeanor and grandeur.

After taking her divine sense away from the storage bracelet in the reception room, Zhou Li was left shaken. Her excited eyes revealed a complex look.

At the True Wood Sect, she believed she had paid back what she owed for Qin Yu's favor. But in the end, today's harvest originated from him.

Unconsciously, it seemed she owed him one more time.

Zhou Li bit her lips and suppressed these thoughts. She wouldn't be so stupid as to give up on these pills. With their help, she was confident that she could make several breakthroughs in her cultivator in a short period of time. At the very worst she would just repay Qin Yu in the future.

...

Sky Declaring Pavilion's Midmorning City branch division issued out its missions for newly hired beast trainers. When Qin Yu received his mission, he found that it was to treat a severely injured variation beast – its name was 'Wonder'.

"...This Wonder's true name is Greedy Moon. It is a type of spirit beast that prays to the moon and survives by absorbing the moon's essence. Its personality is kind and gentle and it doesn't harm others. But in extremely rare situations, a sudden mutation can occur in the Greedy Moon bloodline. Its forehead will grow several times over and its pupils will turn silver white, turning it into a Wonder.

"Due to changes occurring with the Wonder beast's brain, its soul force will experience a drastic rise. It will then gain an extremely powerful divine sense that can break through all sorts of soul blocking methods. Its use in various aspects is extremely high. But after changing, due to the formidable influence of its soul, the evolved Wonder beast's personality will change. Its disposition will become incomparably bloodthirsty and vicious. When approaching it, one needs to be especially careful."

Yun Die's voice was calm as she read the recorded information of the Wonder beast from a jade slip. "This Wonder beast went crazy after a battle. Although it was subdued, its soul experienced a backlash and its strength is less than half of what it is in its peak state. What teacher needs to do is to help the Wonder beast restore its original degree of strength in half a month. That will be considered as having accomplished the mission, and a due reward will be given."

She laid down the jade slip and said, "Teacher, the approximate content of the mission is here. There is also an initial examination report of the Wonder beast's injuries."

The test building had five floors. Three were above ground and two were below ground.

The first level was for the public, the second floor was for secret disciples, and the third was Qin Yu's laboratory.

The two underground levels were for temporarily holding spirit beasts that needed to be dealt with. For instance, this Wonder beast was on the first underground level.

As Yun Die's voice fell, the secret disciples subconsciously furrowed their eyebrows, a dignified look on their faces.

Although they were far from becoming true beast trainers, they had still accumulated a rich foundation of basic knowledge. Repairing soul injuries was one of the most difficult aspects of treating spirit beasts.

Moreover, this Wonder beast had experienced a backlash so its consciousness was blurred and it was even more cruel and vicious. Treating it would be far more difficult than normal.

Qin Yu nodded. "All of you already understand the contents of the mission. Each of you will devise a treatment plan according to your current knowledge of the situation. You have one day to finish it. The most outstanding of you will be able to join me and participate in treating the Wonder beast."

The secret disciples widened their eyes. After a brief shock, they all lit up with excitement.

"Yes, teacher!"

As secret disciples, they never imagined that they would be able to come into contact with the work of a beast trainer from the very start.

Teacher is giving us a chance! We cannot miss out on this!

As secret disciples, they also had the qualifications to read through the ancient foundational beast trainer texts.

So, a gaggle of secret disciples that crazily sifted through reading materials soon aroused the interest of others.

When the secret disciples of other beast trainers learned that they were preparing a treatment plan on their own and they even had a chance to participate in the treatment, all of them revealed looks of shock and envy.

Sun Xiangzhang had a look of praise and acclaim. "Grandmaster Ning Qin is truly extraordinary. He even thought of such a unique method to train his disciples."

After some thought, he took a piece of paper and began to write. "Take three blue nether lotuses. Using their lotus seeds as the prime ingredient, add a fierce yang flower, ice hyacinth, and cold sever grass. Extract the essence and form it into a pill..."

Sun Xiangzhang set down his pen a long time afterwards. After carefully double checking and modifying this treatment plan, a look of anticipation filled his eyes.

Taking out a jade slip, he recorded the treatment plan within. Then, Sun Xiangzhang called over a disciple and said, "Send this jade slip to Rising Lake and have Mister Ning Qin look through it."

This was a compromise he came up with. Since he couldn't obtain Grandmaster Ning Qin's guidance directly, then he could come up with his own treatment plan according to the mission and hand it over. It wouldn't be too much to ask and see if there were any improvements that could be made, right?

Yun Die didn't go sifting through the ancient texts with Yan Jiao and the others. She sat in her room and grasped a jade slip, an uncertain expression on her face.

After a long time, she clenched her teeth and pressed the jade slip against her forehead. She began to pour information inside.

She soon finished. After some hesitation, she made several revisions. Only then did she let out a long breath.

In this short period of time, her face had gone pale and beads of sweat covered her forehead. It was like she had used up a tremendous amount of her energy.

“In order to obtain teacher’s approval, I can only take some risks. Otherwise there won’t be a day where I can raise my head...I hope no one finds out...”

She muttered to herself. It was unknown what she was thinking of, but after her eyes relaxed, a look of pain crossed her face.

Chapter 698 - Give This Chance

Qin Yu walked out from the ancient text pavilion. As an ‘official beast trainer’, he had the qualifications to go through most of the ancient texts.

It would be impossible to become a truly experienced beast trainer in a short period of time. But memorizing some rote information was simple enough.

For instance, Qin Yu was currently deepening his understanding of the Rare Marvel Encyclopedia.

The author of this encyclopedia was unknown. Details of all sorts of rare treasures and other miscellaneous subjects were recorded within. Two chapters were specifically dedicated to most of the known treasures related to the body and soul.

There was much more information in the encyclopedia, but right now these two things were what Qin Yu needed the most.

After recalling the chapters several times and deciding that he hadn’t forgotten anything, his eyes brightened.

Without a question, the mission for treating a Wonder beast must have been arranged by Feng Qing. This woman was truly intelligent. She had likely already sensed something. Luckily, he had left a deep impression on her at Parasol Tree Mountain, so she shouldn’t be doing anything rash anytime soon.

He hoped he could obtain some harvests from this treatment.

...

11 treatment plans were placed in front of him. After Yun Die finished reading them out, Qin Yu pointed to one without hesitation and said, “This one is the best.”

Out of the treatment plans, this was the only one that used thunder cleansed willow. After being destroyed by thunder, the rejuvenated willow branches would contain a boundless vitality. It was a treasure that could repair bodily injuries.

The reason was this simple!

Qin Yu's seemingly simple decision caused an enormous conundrum for Yun Die. She had put forth this treatment plan in order to obtain approval so that she could become a true beast trainer sooner. Still, Qin Yu's decision was too direct. Without any explanation, it was impossible for one to develop certain dark associations with his choice.

Since becoming a secret disciple, Yun Die had been very cautious and Qin Yu hadn't revealed any strange behavior. Still, she didn't relax. Could it be that these days of tranquility were nothing but an act? After figuring out her background, he finally couldn't help but make a move?

But if she were to give up on this opportunity just because of a guess...Yun Die took a deep breath and suppressed the restlessness in her heart. But, she decided that she would leave as soon as she discovered anything inappropriate!

After the treatment plan was decided upon, it was sent back to be confirmed and approved. Because this was a mission that was distributed out to the beast trainers, Sky Declaring Pavilion was responsible for everything required during the process.

Of course, the final cost of the treatment would be covered by the owner of the Wonder beast...and the premise behind this was that the effects of the treatment would be as expected!

Yun Die carried a metal box that contained the materials to treat the Wonder beast. She followed behind Qin Yu. Then, beneath the envious gazes of the other secret disciples, they walked into the underground entrance.

As the one who came up with the winning treatment plan, this was the reward she deserved. But right now, in front of the entrance that looked like the mouth of a giant beast, Yun Die revealed a struggling expression. In the end she couldn't help but ask, "Teacher, why did you choose me?"

She fixed her eyes onto Qin Yu, trying to find a useful clue from his face. But what a pity, there was no fluctuation of mood on his calm face. He glanced over her and faintly said, "Because your plan was the most appropriate."

There was no difference between this explanation and not saying anything at all...looking at Qin Yu's back, Yun Die bit her lips. After waiting for a breath of time, she lowered her head and continued following behind.

...

Sun Xiangzhang took back his divine sense from the jade slip. He furrowed his eyebrows together, a thoughtful expression on his face.

"This treatment plan is interesting and even shocking. To use the thunder cleansed willow that contains boundless vitality and then combining it with the soul gathering wood...it is creative, but, there are obvious flaws here. The entire treatment plan cannot compare with the treatment plan involving blue nether lotuses that I drew up.

"And fusing the thunder cleansed willow with the soul gathering wood won't be easy. This will increase the overall difficulty of the treatment plan by at least 40%. Even if he wanted to train this disciple named Yun Die, he should fix the defects and shouldn't be accepting such a flawed and incomplete treatment."

The more he thought about it the less he understood. Sun Xiangzhang rubbed his forehead. Why did Grandmaster Ning Qin choose such a treatment plan? Was there something here that he didn't understand?

After deliberating over it, he still didn't come up with anything. Thinking about it, he decided to contact Zhou Xinhong.

"Hello, is that Xiangzhang?" A weary voice responded from the receiver.

Sun Xiangzhang apologetically said, "Did I disturb your rest, Mister Zhou? I really am sorry."

Zhou Xinhong laughed. "It's nothing, I just finished an experiment and haven't rested yet. Tell me if there's anything you need to ask."

Sun Xiangzhang explained his confusion. "Mister Zhou, you are an authority when it comes to treating the souls of spirit beasts. I wonder if you can notice anything peculiar about this treatment plan?"

Zhou Xinhong was silent for some time. "Xiangzhang, I have already seen the treatment plan sent up by Grandmaster Ning Qin. But like you, I am also left puzzled by it.

"Although I believe that if this is the grandmaster's choice, he must have his own reasoning. Rather than arguing about it, we might as well wait for the result."

No matter what the treatment plan was, it was all in order to achieve a final expected outcome. Thus, the final result was the best way to verify the treatment plan.

Hanging up the phone, Sun Xiangzhang looked up towards the direction of Rising Lake. If things went as expected, the treatment of the Wonder beast should have started by now.

...

Feng Qing stood up and accompanied Jiang Yiyun out. As the steward of the Midmorning City branch division, he had a considerable status in Sky Declaring Pavilion, thus she needed to give him the respect he deserved.

Of course, the sly and insightful Jiang Yiyun was even more respectful. After firmly declining her assistance, he turned around and left.

Feng Qing turned around and took a seat. She drank a cup of tea, recalling her conversation with Jiang Yiyun. There shouldn't have been any flaws in her performance.

Others might not know why Grandmaster Ning Qin chose Yun Die's treatment plan, but she had already correctly guessed the reason. When she looked through the list of spiritual items needed, it wasn't difficult to screen out what he truly wanted.

So when the time came to ration out materials, she took the responsibility to delete some items and added two thunder cleansed willows. Although the cost was higher than before, it shouldn't draw any attention.

This should satisfy Grandmaster Ning Qin's needs.

Feng Qing wanted Qin Yu's help, so she needed his approval. Putting herself in his place and making considerations for him was the best method to do so.

"Miss, I heard from Steward Jiang that the treatment plan Grandmaster Ning Qin chose isn't the most appropriate." Zhou Li said after some hesitation. As her close maid who had also obtained the miss's trust, she knew more than others.

This Grandmaster Ning Qin seemed to have a close relationship with her miss. If a problem occurred, then the miss might be implicated.

Feng Qing smiled. "Don't worry. Since Grandmaster Ning Qin chose this treatment plan, he certainly has the confidence to succeed."

Zhou Li had followed Feng Qing these past days and understood her character a little. Since she said this, she had to have full confidence.

"It seems that Grandmaster Ning Qin is fiercer than I thought." She said with envy.

In the past, her father had tried his best to become a beast trainer. But he didn't succeed even by the time he died.

Feng Qing's eyes flashed. "Zhou Li, you seem to have some interest. After you break through to the Golden Core realm, I can recommend you to Grandmaster Ning Qin. He might take you in as a disciple and help you become a beast trainer."

Zhou Li had a surprised look, "Miss, really?"

Feng Qing nodded, "Since I said it, I wouldn't lie to you."

With how much Qin Yu regarded the Zhou Family, if Zhou Li really wanted to become a beast trainer then he shouldn't refuse her.

But unexpectedly, after a brief silence, Zhou Li slowly said, "Miss, if possible, can I pass this chance to another person?"

Feng Qing revealed a strange look. "This person you speak of. Is it your fiancé?"

"Miss, I have already explained to you that it is impossible for me to like him. It is my grandfather who forced me!" Zhou Li pouted. "You know about the matter of the Hidden Fog Sect giving me pills. I don't want to owe him a favor, so if it's possible, I ask miss to help me!"

Feng Qing coughed. "I see...I need some time to consider this. Let's speak about it again in the future." Seeing Zhou Li's disappointed expression, she felt a bit awkward. This really was a coincidence.

If Zhou Li ever met Qin Yu who had changed his face, would there be some misunderstandings about this?

Chapter 699A – Receiving Attention

On the first underground level of Rising Lake's experimental building, Yun Die sat behind a testing platform, recording the data that the equipment was outputting.

Although the process was simple and boring, Yun Die didn't dare to take anything for granted. This was because all of the data would eventually become the basis for future treatments.

As she waited for the measurements and calculations, she subconsciously looked at the tightly closed stone door. The runes shining on its surface blocked outside perceptions.

After entering the underground floor, Yun Die's greatest worries didn't occur. In fact, her teacher hadn't even glanced at her before telling her to record the data and then entering the room. Since he entered, he had yet to come out.

She let out a light breath and flushed red. Then, she couldn't help but curl her lips. This was the so-called assisting in the treatment plan that her teacher spoke of? It was obviously only helping with the odd miscellaneous job.

But, this treatment plan clearly had flaws. Since her teacher didn't have any other ideas, why did he choose her?

Could it be that teacher's strength had reached a level where he could disregard flaws?

...

This time, Sky Declaring Pavilion's Midmorning branch division had invited a total of seven new beast trainers. As new members, before they made sufficient contributions and demonstrated a certain degree of strength, they should basically all receive the same level of treatment. But an exception had occurred.

Rising Lake Manor was one of the top ranked locations of the Midmorning City branch division. And, in terms of the environment and quality of its laboratory, it was all excellent.

After learning that Ning Qin had moved there, the other beast trainers all had the same thought – what qualifications did he have?

Thus the newly arrived beast trainers met privately twice. But, no one chose to inform Qin Yu of this. They unanimously decided to exclude him from this small circle.

Today was the third meeting of the six beast trainers. This was a time for them to exchange information on the missions handed out by the pavilion, and also to assist each other in creating the best possible solutions.

After speaking for half a day, the six participating beast trainers had some harvests more or less. They all had smiles on their faces and the atmosphere was cheerful and harmonious.

Suddenly, one of them said, "I heard that person started treatment today." The one speaking didn't mention this person's name, but everyone knew who he was speaking about.

"Humph! The treatment plan for the Wonder beast was drafted by one of his secret disciples. I've already taken a good look at it. While there are some innovative parts, there are actually tremendous flaws!" A beast trainer with a round face and small eyes sneered as he spoke.

"That is true. The treatment plan has a severe flaw. I am curious as to why Ning Qin chose it." Liu Yishan slowly said.

A third beast trainer smiled. "I've heard some rumors. It is said that Ning Qin's secret disciple is an extremely beautiful young woman."

The beast trainer laughed, but his laugh was full of mocking ridicule. The first mission given by Sky Declaring Pavilion was the key to establishing a good impression. To abandon everything for a young woman, that was simply stupid to the extreme.

"Once the mission is finished, if he cannot put forth a qualified result, I want to know if he still has the face to stay at Rising Lake!" The first beast trainer mockingly said.

"That's right. When the mission is finished, we should request the pavilion to announce the final result in full public view."

"Rising Lake...even if that place is handed over to someone, it should be given to the most formidable and talented among us!"

But there was one person who didn't speak. He swept his eyes over the surrounding beast trainers, his gaze icy cold.

Stupid?

You are all a crowd of people that have eyes but cannot see! You are all the true idiots!

If one could obtain that woman, what did it matter if one failed the mission? That Ning Qin must have sensed something!

Damn it! If he hadn't been refused, that woman would already be his!

Fortunately, Yun Die's bloodline hadn't completely awakened yet. If Ning Qin knew of this, he would have to wait if he wished to obtain the desired effect.

That meant he still had a chance!

"Brother Sha, what are you thinking so deeply about?" a beast trainer asked.

Sha Liuhe looked up and smiled. "It's nothing. I was just deliberating on how to better complete my mission."

A sharp light flashed in his eyes. In order to avoid attention, he hadn't wanted to expose his strength too early. But, he couldn't care about that right now. He needed to complete this mission with such excellence that he startled the world with a single leap. Only like this would he have the chance to openly and honestly take Yun Die away.

That woman was his!

...

Four days passed. At an underground testing table, Yun Die stared at the data in her hands, her eyebrows furrowed together.

The data on the Wonder beast wasn't right. Several critical values were fluctuating within a great range. She couldn't determine exactly what this meant, but it had to mean there was some problem.

But teacher had yet to come out. If it weren't for the fact that the array formations within the laboratory were fine, she would have already knocked on his door.

Suddenly, a sharp alarm sound rang out. Yun Die stood up. She fiercely looked towards the Wonder Beast that was imprisoned within the array formation.

On the white paper that recorded the data, the lines fluctuated up and down like turbulent waves. The Wonder beast's body twitched and its vitality values started to drop down at a speed visible to the naked eye.

Yun Die's face paled. The Wonder beast's condition had clearly been stable, so why did it suddenly worsen? If it died then teacher would naturally fail the mission. And as the secret disciple responsible for recording the data, she would have to shoulder an immense responsibility!

Looking at the laboratory doors that were still tightly shut, Yun Die couldn't mull over the situation any longer. She pushed down hard on a button on the testing platform.

Ring –

Ring –

She waited as the connection tone began to ring out. But, Yun Die never heard any sounds of it being picked up.

She couldn't wait any longer!

She put the receiver down to the side. After pressing the button once more, she stood up and walked over to the Wonder beast's cage. She needed to try something to revive the Wonder beast. This was also the only way to salvage her destiny!

Suddenly, the Wonder beast's twitching body returned to normal. It opened its eyes to reveal two silvery pupils that were as cold and indifferent as the winter moon.

Yun Die froze and even her breathing seemed to come to a stop. Her heart seemed to be gripped by an invisible hand as it was ruthlessly tightened.

This is bad...

She tried to step backwards, but in the next moment the world around her suddenly lost all light. Everything darkened and turned gloomy. The only thing left were those silver moon-like eyes. They continuously grew larger until they occupied her entire field of vision.

“Open the cage.”

There was a faint mental fluctuation. It was like an order coming from heaven, carrying with it an undeniable dignity. It constantly rang out in Yun Die's mind.

“No! No!”

Yun Die violently struggled, but she had already lost control of her body. She could only watch as her body moved forward on its own volition. Gradually, she walked to the side of the cage and then cut off the energy supply to the array formation.

The glowing lines of the array formation started to dim down, before fully extinguishing.

Yun Die fell into despair.

The Wonder beast in the cage obtained freedom. Its appearance was funny and even cute. Beneath its massive head were four thin and small limbs. Each step it took was slow and careful, as if it was afraid it would fall over due to the weight of its head.

But even though it walked slowly, it crossed the several meter long distance in a short period of time. The Wonder beast looked down at Yun Die. It opened its mouth and a bamboo-like object thrust out from between its jaws. It shined with a metallic gleam as it stabbed at her head.

Death was approaching. Yun Die could even smell the rotten scent it emitted. But, she couldn't move at all. She could only stare on helplessly as it approached.

The bamboo-like object touched her hair and she could sense its icy coldness. In the next moment it would pierce through her skull and suck out her brain.

But the death she expected didn't arrive. The bamboo-like object shivered a little. Then, Yun Die was pulled away. The two massive silver moons that flooded her line of sight completely vanished.

Her consciousness returned to her body. Yun Die gasped for breath. She found that she couldn't summon any strength at all. She could only grasp onto the hand that was supporting her.

"Don't be afraid. You're alright."

A calm voice echoed out. Yun Die could see her teacher's face. He was looking down, and when their eyes met, Yun Die seemed to sense an apologetic look from him.

Before she could discover anything else, Qin Yu helped Yun Die stand on her feet. "I'll send it back first." He stepped towards the Wonder beast. Yun Die's eyes widened; she had already felt how fierce it was just a moment ago.

"Teacher..."

Before she could finish her sentence, her mouth fell open and her face filled with shock.

This Wonder beast had a big head and a small body. Its eyes were like silver moons and it could control the minds of others. It was a spirit beast overflowing with dangerous traits. But right now, such a beast was lying on the ground and sobbing.

It...it feared teacher!

Chapter 699B – Receiving Attention

Greedy Moons had gentle and kind dispositions. After evolving into a Wonder beast, the sudden rise in this one's soul force distorted its mind and personality, turning it into a cruel and bloodthirsty creature. Only by thrusting a spell into its soul could one forcefully control it; it simply didn't know what fear or dread was.

Moreover, this Wonder beast had suffered a backlash so its natural viciousness had risen several times over...but what did she see now? Facing her teacher, this Wonder beast was so scared that it fell to the ground and sobbed...

In particular, from beginning to end, Yun Die never saw her teacher do anything. He simply walked toward it!

How was this possible?

Qin Yu looked at the Wonder beast lying flat on the ground. With a thought, he sent out a thread of blood energy fluctuations. The beast miserably cried out, as if it were being burnt by flames.

As he thought, it really was because of the Ancient race's bloodline!

The skylark that had become the fire phoenix was like this, and even this cruel and bloodthirsty Wonder beast was like this. Qin Yu was really curious – just what was going on?

He suppressed these thoughts for now. This wasn't the time to be contemplating such things. He said, "Go back to where you belong."

The Wonder beast rolled and crawled back to the center of the array formation. Qin Yu casually activated the array formation, and it lit up once more.

He turned and looked at Yun Die. "Are you alright?"

Yun Die: ...

If she didn't witness this for herself, she would never have believed it. Frightening a bloodthirsty Wonder beast was one thing, but her teacher was even able to order it around!

"I'm...fine..."

Yun Die's head filled with dizziness. Then, like a bolt of lightning tearing through the fog, she recalled something she had inadvertently read before.

"...At the pinnacle of beast trainers, because they have tamed a trillion spirit beasts, they are contaminated with their aura and blend together with them, forming an invisible power of dominance that can deter all spirit beasts in the world. None beneath their gaze dare disobey them..."

Could it be that teacher was an unsurpassed existence who had stepped onto the peak of all beast trainers? Yun Die thought back to Mister Sun Xiangzhang's actions. Perhaps he knew this, and it was the reason why he was so respectful to teacher.

That's right. This had to be the reason. With Mister Sun's status, how else could he put forth his own treatment plan to be reviewed by teacher?

Moreover, this also explained why teacher chose her treatment plan. It was because with his strength, he didn't need to care about it at all.

There were many other points that she couldn't figure out. For instance, with teacher's strength, why would he hide his status and join Sky Declaring Pavilion in such a low profile manner? But, the truth she saw with her own eyes was more effective than any guess she could come up with!

Looking at Yun Die's shining eyes and her face that was flushed red with excitement, it wasn't hard for Qin Yu to guess the reason why. But, since he couldn't even figure things out himself, it was impossible for him to give an explanation for it.

"I have already prepared the medication. Divide each portion into three and feed it three times each day for three days. Do not disturb me in the meantime." He put down three sealed jars. Then, he turned and walked back through the laboratory doors. The doors slowly closed and the isolating array formation reactivated.

"Yes, teacher!" Yun Die respectfully bowed. She looked at the three jars, her eyes solemn and earnest, as if she were prepared to go on a holy pilgrimage.

With teacher's strength, if he used four days to mix this medication, then it had to be a top class existence.

Being able to look upon this legendary medication was already a stroke of good fortune for a beast trainer apprentice. Moreover, she could even feed it to the spirit beast herself...perhaps she could obtain a huge harvest from this.

She took a deep breath and stabilized her shivering hands. Then, she carefully picked up a jar and opened the seal.

"Ah!"

With a loud shout, her eyes widened. What she saw inside was a thick and strangely-colored sticky mass. No matter how she looked at it, it seemed like gruel that had been roughly crushed together.

But as soon as this thought appeared, she suppressed it. How could she dare have such disrespectful thoughts of teacher?

Perhaps this was a kind of special mixing method she had never come into contact with before.

In the cage, the incomparably frightened and now honest Wonder beast suddenly sniffed with its nose. Then, it rose up on its legs. It stared tightly at Yun Die, its silver eyes full of yearning.

Roar –

The low roar frightened Yun Die so badly she almost dropped the jar. "You...you want this medication..." Looking at the restlessly pacing Wonder beast, Yun Die had a sudden feeling that she might be able to witness a miracle.

Holding the jar in both hands, she started moving towards the cage.

...

Depending on the difficulty level of the mission that Sky Declaring Pavilion passed out, one would be given either ten days, half a month, or one month to complete it. For newly joined beast trainers, the first mission they received would be generally of the same difficulty and limited to half a month.

Unless one could put forth shocking results that surpassed all expectations, no one would truly drag things out to the last moment. After all, if the standards were the same but one were to complete the mission earlier, this was also a way to show how strong they were.

Joining Sky Declaring Pavilion didn't mean that one could rest easy. On the contrary, the more splendid one's display was, the more resources they would obtain and the more chances they would have to attack a higher level.

So five days after the mission was handed out, of the seven newly joined beast trainers, one of them had already smoothly completed their task and had received a mission grading of medium-grade earth-step.

Heaven, earth, mortal – these were the three different steps one could achieve with their results. To obtain a medium-grade earth-step result was a very high appraisal. It meant that not only did they complete the most basic premise of the mission, but their performance was excellent beyond that.

On the sixth day, two people finished, and on the seventh day two more finished. The lowest appraisal result was a high-grade mortal-step. The outstanding strength of these newcomers left the older beast trainers sighing inwardly.

The eighth day began. Only two people had yet to turn in their missions – Ning Qin and Sha Liuhe.

Because of the amazing results of the five beast trainers who had arrived together, there was even more attention placed on the upcoming results of Ning Qin and Sha Liuhe. To be able to complete the mission first was indeed impressive, but everyone knew that if these two were willing to give up the advantage of time, that meant they were confident in their final result.

Not many people paid attention to the relatively unknown Sha Liuhe. Rather, many eyes were focused on Rising Lake and the peaceful testing building...the reason was simple. It wasn't just the six other newly arrived beast trainers who were dissatisfied with Qin Yu having entered Rising Lake Manor. Everyone else wanted to know just how much ability he had!

...

Besides the 'elder senior-apprentice brother' who had been sent out by teacher to deal with other matters, and Yun Die who had entered the underground level of the testing building, the other secret disciples had gathered together.

After becoming secret disciples, when there were no missions active, they could sift through the foundational classics and also complete some experiments within their scope. The materials used would be reimbursed by the laboratory.

This was why many people were eager to become secret disciples of beast trainers. Otherwise, no matter how many texts one purchased, without a massive amount of experimental experience, it would be impossible to become a true beast trainer.

Right now the second floor of the testing building was silent. The secret disciples were all busy with their own work. Although the atmosphere was tranquil, it was actually flooded with a constrained feeling.

Pa –

A crystal tube crashed to the ground and shattered into pieces. Yao Jiao took a deep breath and looked up, "You don't think anything will happen to teacher, right?"

As their teacher's disciples, they could all sense the violent undercurrents flowing beneath the surface.

There were advantages to becoming a secret disciple. Correspondingly, they also had to pay a certain price. They shared both honor and disgrace with their teacher.

If something happened to their teacher, their future road would be equally as rough.

"Yan Jiao, what are you saying?" Li Hao was without expression. "No matter what rumors you hear outside, I have absolute confidence in teacher!"

"That's right, teacher will definitely complete the treatment!"

"He might not have come out yet, but perhaps that is so he can obtain an even better result."

"Yes, that must be the reason why."

Everyone spoke out in unison. But, in contrast to their firm expressions, their hearts were far more complicated and unsure. There was a flaw in Yun Die's treatment plan – this was an undeniable fact. Could it really be as outsiders said? That teacher was seduced and fooled by her beauty?

...

Sun Xiangzhang completed an extremely difficult experiment and the results were within his estimated range. His face was covered in exhaustion but he actually felt free and relaxed. He walked out of the laboratory and sat on a sofa, leaning back with his eyes closed. "Tell me what has happened these past days."

"Yes, teacher." His disciple was well aware of his habits. Without hesitation, he explained everything that happened recently.

As expected, when the disciple mentioned the missions of the seven newly received beast trainers, his teacher faintly rapped his fingers against the sofa. This was a sign that he was paying attention.

"Liu Yishan, Ye Feihua, and three other beast trainers have smoothly completed their missions. The highest ranking so far among them is a medium-grade earth-step, and the lowest is a high-grade mortal-step. The only ones that have yet to turn in their missions are Ning Qin and Sha Liuhe."

Shua –

Sun Xiangzhang's eyes flashed open, his face filling with surprise. "Mister Ning Qin hasn't finished?" With grandmaster's strength, while treating the Wonder beast might be a little complicated, he should be able to complete the mission in three days.

He feared the most likely possibility was that a flaw existed in the original treatment plan. If he wanted to achieve the desired result, it might be difficult.

"Yes, teacher." The disciple wasn't sure why Sun Xiangzhang would place Ning Qin in such high regards. He said, "Many people are waiting for the final result."

He was deliberately vague.

But Sun Xiangzhang understood. “They spend all their time plotting and scheming. Rather than wasting their time and energy like that, they might as well experiment more to increase their strength!”

He thought for a moment and said, “Send some people to keep track of this matter. Once Mister Ning Qin hands in his mission, inform me immediately.” With grandmaster’s strength, completing the mission was possible. But since there was a flaw in the treatment plan, the final effect shouldn’t be too good.

At that time, he feared some people would leap out and use this incident to stir up a fuss. Thinking about this, Sun Xiangzhang’s frown deepened.

Chapter 700A – Species Creation, Realm of a Grand Expert

Deep in the forest, there was a lonely testing building. Because of how remote and desolate it was, there hadn’t been a beast trainer willing to be stationed there for a long time. However, this just happened to meet Sha Liuhe’s requirements. So, when cultivators from Internal Affairs asked him about it, he looked at a map of the area and readily agreed.

On the third level of the testing building, the array formation was fully activated, isolating it from the outside world. Sha Liuhe sat down cross-legged. His hands were in front of his chest, his palms facing each other.

Black and red light overflowed from his palms, interweaving together. The phantom of a small furnace appeared there. Although it was blurry and only the size of a palm, this small furnace phantom gave off a terrifying feeling.

Looking at it, one could hear shrill screams fill the air. These sounds echoed directly in a person’s mind, as if a trillion souls were suppressed within!

Suddenly, Sha Liuhe’s body shivered. His face twisted from pain. Blood vessels bulged out from all over his body. They were blue in color, and beneath this blue color there were faint traces of red. The traces of red rapidly gathered within his hands as they submerged into the furnace phantom.

At the same time, Sha Liuhe’s face paled. There was no blood in his complexion, as if he were a corpse that had been buried underground for a long time.

After several breaths of time there was a loud explosion. The furnace phantom blew apart, immediately dissipating. A deep green pill appeared in the air and was caught by Sha Liuhe.

He took great heaving gasps. It was a long time before he managed to compose himself. “My soul has become even weaker. I can only use blood energy to supplement it. But, this mortal body won’t be able to last for much longer. I need to obtain Yun Die as soon as possible.”

Sha Liuhe lifted a hand and closed the array formation. He summoned over a female secret disciple. Before she could say anything, he lifted a hand and pointed a finger. This young woman slumped to the ground.

He casually took off his clothes. Then, without expression, he walked over to the unconscious secret disciple. Following this, his expression remained the exact same throughout the entire process.

But as he moved, blood returned to his face and his weakened aura gradually stabilized.

When Sha Liuhe left the laboratory, he had returned to his normal appearance. However, the female secret disciple was still unconscious and her young and slender figure began to darken as wrinkles climbed up her face.

Today was the 14th day. It was the second to last day that the newly recruited beast trainers had to turn in their missions. When Sha Liuhe entered the Internal Affairs Division, news of his results soon spread throughout the entire Sky Declaring Pavilion at a shocking speed.

Sha Liuhe had finished his mission – his result, middle-grade heaven-step!

The three different rankings were mortal, earth, and heaven. A mortal-step result was standard, an earth-step result was outstanding, and a heaven-step result completely surpassed the scope of the mission itself and helped the spirit beast achieve a fundamental breakthrough.

With the difficulty of this mission, the middle-grade heaven-step outcome contained a deep weight to it. It instantly placed an aura of success around Sha Liuhe.

This originally common beast trainer had become the most shining star of all. It was said that this matter was even reported to headquarters. Perhaps it wouldn't be too long before they all had to politely refer to Sha Liuhe as grandmaster.

The director of the Internal Affairs Division, Bian Changli, smiled widely. His wrinkles stacked up like a daisy as he said, "Sha Liuhe has kept his depths truly hidden and our eyes have all been widened. Although there are no explicit rules in place, convention is that the highest scorer for the first mission will receive additional rewards that are considerably precious.

"With a middle-grade heaven-step result, Mister Sha's victory is inevitable. So, allow me to congratulate you ahead of time. I wish you a bright future and splendid prospects, and I hope that you will soon be named grandmaster in the future."

Sky Declaring Pavilion's mission gradings had extremely strict standards attached to them. Bian Changli was very sure that the strength Sha Liuhe displayed in this mission had reached the higher order Silver Moon realm.

This was a true grandmaster class character. Looking at the entire Sky Declaring Pavilion, there were no more than five of them and they were true peak characters. It was natural for him to want to flatter this person.

Sha Liuhe was surrounded by a crowd of people. His smile was warm and humble and he said, "I understand Director Bian's good intentions, but the current mission timeline hasn't ended yet. There is still an unknown variable, so it isn't too appropriate to say this right now."

There didn't seem to be any problem in his words, but those present weren't idiots and they naturally knew who he was referring to. Although the mission timeline hadn't come to an end, there was only one person who had yet to hand in their mission – it was Mister Ning Qin of Rising Lake!

It seemed that Mister Sha wasn't happy with the Rising Lake Manor incident.

Bian Changli wiped a cold sweat from his forehead. "Ah...when we were allocating stations to the various grandmasters, it was all due to instructions from above. But, our Sky Declaring Pavilion has always considered strength above all. I believe that after this mission has ended, the higher ups in the pavilion will surely reconsider things and arrange a new station for Mister Sha."

Regarding Ning Qin's placement at Rising Lake, that was indeed an order from above. He had fully abdicated responsibility from this because he didn't want to be 'remembered' by a grandmaster.

As for his other words, he wasn't speaking randomly. This was originally Sky Declaring Pavilion's customs; powerhouses enjoyed the best treatment.

If Ning Qin didn't display sufficient skill in this mission, then he didn't have the qualifications to stay at Rising Lake Manor.

Sha Liuhe smiled. "It's fine. There is still another day until the mission comes to an end. Perhaps tomorrow Mister Ning Qin will turn in an even better reply. We should wait for everything to settle down before discussing these things again." He cupped his hands together and said, "I have expended a great deal of energy to complete this mission. I will be heading back to rest, so I will bid my farewells here first."

"Mister Sha, please be careful!"

Everyone said with flattering smiles on their faces.

Leaving the Internal Affairs Division, Sha Liuhe looked up at the skies. His lips curled up in a smile. He had already indicated his position. After tomorrow, Sky Declaring Pavilion would have to give him an answer.

As for Ning Qin's performance...was there any need to care about it?

When Ning Qin's face swept the floor and he was chased out of Rising Lake, he would only need to use some small methods to have Yun Die obediently follow him.

...

Rising Lake testing building.

Yun Die stared at the tightly shut doors, a look of hesitation on her face. She didn't know what her teacher was doing inside so she didn't dare to rashly disturb him.

If it wasn't for today being the final deadline for the mission, Yun Die didn't think it would be a problem even if she had to wait another month...after all, with her teacher's status, she had no idea how much good fortune she had used up to be able to follow by his side!

She looked at a clock and saw that it had just reached noon. Yun Die took a deep breath and pressed down on the communicator button.

She couldn't watch on helplessly as her teacher failed his first mission by exceeding the time limit. Still, even if that were to happen, she believed that as long as others looked at the result of her teacher's work, no one would care about something so minor as exceeding the time limit.

Ring –

Ring –

There was a busy signal for several moments. Then, the other end of the receiver was picked up and her teacher's calm voice sounded out, "What is it?"

In Yun Die's ears, this voice was filled with a great dignity. She subconsciously stood up and respectfully said, "Teacher, I apologize. I shouldn't be disturbing you, but today is the final day to hand in the mission."

On the other end, there was a brief silence. Then, Qin Yu responded, "It's already been half a month? Time passes by fast...mm, I understand."

The other end hung up.

Yun Die put the receiver down, a look of admiration on her face as she sighed with emotion. Even an existence as powerful as her teacher was still working so hard. No wonder he had been able to reach his current achievements today.

She suddenly realized that even if this mission was none of her business from beginning to end, just discovering this point alone was enough for her to rejoice for the rest of her life. No one's success came easily!

Thus, Yun Die felt even more respect for her teacher in her heart.

Soon the array formation lights of the laboratory were extinguished and Qin Yu stepped out. He said, "Yun Die, according to the rules of Sky Declaring Pavilion, can you hand in the mission for me?"

Yun Die was stunned for a moment before she regained her senses. That's right, with teacher's status, how could he care about something as trivial as reputation?

Even though this seemed like an incomparable glory for her, in her teacher's eyes it wasn't anything at all.

Yun Die respectfully bowed. "Teacher, according to the rules of Sky Declaring Pavilion, I am only your secret disciple so I do not have the qualifications to stand in for you."

Qin Yu furrowed his eyebrows. This was a critical moment of restoring his body and he didn't want to waste any time at all. "And if you were my official disciple?"

Yun Die's heart began to race. Her face flushed red and her mind became dizzy. "...If...if I was...your...official disciple...then...it is possible..."

Did teacher mean that he was going to take her in as an official disciple? Was that possible? She didn't have the qualifications!

After she finished stammering out an answer, Yun Die felt as if she were being hung out in midair, unable to summon any strength.

Qin Yu nodded. "Good. Then starting from right now, you are my official disciple." He turned and looked at the Wonder beast whose appearance had changed a great deal. He furrowed his eyebrows, but according to its aura, this should be something good. "She is my disciple. Don't stir up trouble with her!"

After he finished he turned and left.

Bang –

When the laboratory doors closed shut and the array formation runes shined once again, it was only then that Yun Die regained her composure. Her legs weakened and she had to lean back against the testing platform so she wouldn't fall over. Then, she started to laugh out loud like a fool for a long while.

This time, she really felt as if a giant meat pie had crashed down from space and landed on her head...it was very large and very delicious!

I am teacher's disciple, his true disciple...

Yun Die's eyes brightened. She suddenly felt as if her dark and dreary existence was now filled with life. All of her tribulations had faded away!

She looked at the Wonder beast within the array formation. Her eyes were light and without any awe at all.

Because right now, she was teacher's disciple!

The array formation shut down. Yun Die reached out a hand, "Wonder beast, follow me."

Chapter 700B – Species Creation, Realm of a Grand Expert

Today was the last day to turn in the mission. Because of Sha Liuhe's vague words, almost all eyes at the Midmorning City branch division were focused on Rising Lake.

The previously calm and quiet secret disciples had lost all of their previous confidence. They couldn't stay in the laboratory any longer. They gathered outside the entrance, waiting in nervous anticipation.

When the sun rose up in the morning, it slowly climbed higher and higher. Following a fixed path, it began to fall down towards the west.

The doors were still tightly shut without any movement at all. The complexions of the secret disciples grew increasingly pale.

Could it really be as others outside said, that teacher had failed in the mission? And the reason he still hadn't made an appearance was because he didn't want to face the mocking expressions of others...

Although they didn't want to believe this, the facts were laid out before them. The secret disciples started to shiver, their eyes filling with despair and resentment.

At this point, it was no longer just failing a mission. Once teacher was pushed down to the ground, he likely wouldn't have a chance to stand back up.

And they would be buried along with him. They would never have any achievements for the rest of their lives!

Because he was tempted by a woman's beauty, he had thrust himself into a hopeless situation, and as a result they would all be implicated by him...how could they have such a teacher!?

Li Hao's face paled. He lowered his head, not allowing others to see the uncertain look in his eyes.

Suddenly, he clenched his teeth and came to a decision.

Teacher had already offended too many people. After he was stepped upon this time, no one would give him a chance to stand back up. Li Hao believed he had splendid talent to become a beast trainer and was destined for great things in the future. How could he allow himself to fall into the abyss with Ning Qin?

He looked up. Staring at the tightly shut doors, Li Hao shouted, "Are you still confused? Teacher has given up on the mission and given up on us!"

Everyone was startled. They looked at Li Hao with wide and shaken eyes.

Li Hao pointed a finger, "Look closely! Below the testing building, the teacher we have so much confidence in, the teacher we have placed all of our hopes in, is wallowing and indulging himself in the beauty of others! Have none of you thought about what sort of destiny awaits us!?"

"He is a true beast trainer. Even if he loses everything in Sky Declaring Pavilion, he can still leave this place and make a fresh start. But what about us? We will be stuck here for the rest of our lives with nowhere else to go and no prospects to dream of!

"Such an irresponsible person is not worthy of being our teacher! I have already asked a true beast trainer and have come to an agreement with the pavilion. As long as we give up our current statuses on our own initiative, we can break off all relations with Rising Lake and become that sir's disciple. All of us can make a fresh start!

"Now, I want to ask all of you. Who is willing to leave with me?"

Yan Jiao trembled. She screamed, "Li Hao, what nonsense are you babbling. You actually dare...you dare to slander teacher..."

Li Hao was without expression. He said, "I am only speaking the truth. It is teacher who gave up on us first!" He swept his gaze over everyone. "Is no one willing to leave with me? You must consider things clearly. Do you want to stay here and die, or obtain a new life with me?"

In the silence, some people began to waver. The first to walk toward Li Hao was a young female secret disciple. Her name was Rao Xiaoling.

She kept her head lowered, avoiding everyone's disbelieving looks as she stood behind Li Hao. "I wasn't wrong. It was teacher who was wrong...so, don't blame me!"

Then, a second and third followed. There was shame and guilt on their faces. But when they stood behind Li Hao, there was more relief and disdain in their eyes.

"What are you all doing?" An ice cold voice suddenly spoke up. At some unknown time, the entrance to the first underground level had opened. Yun Die walked out, her ice cold eyes staring at everyone in front of her.

Yan Jiao was overjoyed. "Big Sister Yun Die, Li Hao is slandering teacher...he is accusing you and teacher of having a relationship and he said that teacher already failed the mission. Because he doesn't want to be implicated by teacher, he wants to sever relations with Rising Lake!"

Yun Die's eyes turned even colder. "Li Hao, is this true?"

For some unknown reason, when she looked at him, Li Hao felt immense pressure. But once the arrow was shot, it could not be retrieved. Now that things had reached this point, there was no room to turn back.

With a cold sneer, Li Hao said, "That's right, it's all true. I'll ask one more time. Who else is willing to leave with me? Otherwise, don't regret the decision you made!"

Yun Die nodded. "Indeed. You all need to think things over so that you don't regret it." She swept her eyes over Yan Jiao and the other secret disciples. "So tell me, do you want to stay, or will you leave?"

Yan Jiao said without hesitation, "Big Sister Yun Die, I will stay behind!"

It was hard to trust this teacher she hadn't come into contact with much. But, she trusted Yun Die.

The youth with the soft gray hair smiled. "I will stay."

These two people's statements affected everyone else. After a brief hesitation, no one else chose to leave.

Li Hao sneered. "I've already given you a chance. Since you don't want to take it, don't blame me for not reminding you when you are crying your hearts out in the future!"

He turned around, "Let's go. We're going to the pavilion to explain that we're severing our connection with Rising Lake!"

Yun Die said, "Hold on."

Li Hao's lips curled upwards. "What, do you think you can convince me to stay? Keep on dreaming!"

Yun Die's eyes were deep and profound. "Today, I will stand in place of teacher to officially announce that Li Hao, Rao Xiaoling, and the rest of you four are hereby expelled. From this moment forth, none of you have any connection to Rising Lake!" She lifted a finger and pointed, "You may leave now. If we see each other in the future, we will be enemies!"

"How insolent!" Li Hao was enraged. "Yun Die, who do you think you are to have the right to expel us!"

Yun Die's expression was faint. "I am already teacher's true disciple, so I naturally have the qualifications to deal with the lot of you in teacher's place. None of you are people of Rising Lake any longer. If you don't leave now, don't blame me for being impolite."

"You..." Li Hao paled and he clenched his jaws. "Good! Good! Yun Die, just wait for me!"

He left in a huff of anger.

Rai Xiaoling and the other two paled. Being expelled and leaving on their own initiative were two entirely different situations. Once they shouldered this evil reputation, it would be impossible to cleanse

themselves for the rest of their lives. But, since they had already made their choice they could only follow behind in an absent-minded daze.

Yan Jiao's eyes widened. "Big Sister Yun Die, you...are you really an official disciple now?"

Her eyes sparkled but her complexion was a little stiff. Could the rumors from outside be true? Did Yun Die have some ambiguous relationship with teacher? Otherwise, how could she suddenly become an official disciple?

Yun Die raised a hand and knocked her forehead. "Shut up. What random thoughts are you thinking about now? Don't disrespect teacher...I am just a little lucky so teacher accepted me as a disciple." She glanced over everyone that remained and said, "As for the rest of you, in the future you will rejoice for the choice you made today."

After speaking with the others and learning of the current situation, Yun Die's expression turned ice cold. She sneered. You all want to make my teacher into a joke? You lowly villains aren't worthy!

She ordered the others to stay at Rising Lake, and then turned and left.

Yan Jiao shouted out loud, "Big Sister Yun Die, what are you doing?"

Yun Die said without turning her head, "Turning in the mission for teacher."

She suddenly thought about her teacher who didn't care about this at all, and a look of deep respect rose in her eyes. Compared to her teacher, these people were only a gaggle of clowns...the swallows cannot understand the ambitions of the swan!

Although her teacher didn't care about such minor glories or even the slandering of others, as her teacher's disciple she needed to protect his dignity. She didn't mind ruthlessly slapping these people in the face. She wanted these people to firmly remember that when journeying through the world, they needed to maintain a humble mindset.

Thus, as Yun Die walked over to the Internal Affairs Division, welcoming strange looks the entire way, her heart was already blazing with a righteous fury.

While her clothes were those of a secret disciple, the momentum she carried with her was far too strong. The Internal Affairs Division cultivators didn't dare to underestimate her. Someone tentatively walked forward and asked her, "Miss, how can I help you?"

Yun Die said without expression, "I am turning in a mission for my teacher."

There were numerous beast trainers at Sky Declaring Pavilion and missions were handed out and handed in every day. So, turning in missions was an extremely common matter. The Internal Affairs cultivator didn't think much about it. It was just that his attitude toward Yun Die was even more temperate than before.

He never thought that this beautiful young miss was a disciple who had been truly approved.

"May I ask who your teacher is?"

"Rising Lake, Mister Ning Qin."

The surroundings immediately fell silent.

Everyone at the Internal Affairs Division looked over. Seeing the supremely beautiful Yun Die, their complexions became strange. Could she be the rumored female secret disciple? She was a startling beauty. No wonder she had managed to mesmerize a true beast trainer.

But that wasn't right...she was already a genuine disciple who had received recognition. Tsk tsk, if someone were to say that there wasn't something strange with this, no one would believe it!

The Internal Affairs cultivator was stunned. His eyes turned cold and desolate, and there was even some pity there. "Yun Die?"

"I am."

The person nodded, "Please follow me."

The two walked past the front hall of the Internal Affairs Division and walked into the mission evaluation hall.

This was the last day of the half month deadline. Yun Die had come from Rising Lake in place of Ning Qin to hand in the mission. The evaluation was about to begin!

News of this spread throughout Sky Declaring Pavilion at a speed no slower than Sha Liuhe's commotion yesterday.

In fact, even numerous great influences throughout Midmorning City were paying attention to this due to Sha Liuhe's amazing performance.

Chapter 700C – Species Creation, Realm of a Grand Expert

At the remote testing building in the lonely forest, Sha Liuhe put down the jade slip in his hands, a mocking smile on his face. He originally thought that Ning Qin was planning on hiding like a turtle, but he never expected him to turn in his mission at the last possible moment.

Did he send Yun Die to hand in his mission because he was afraid he would be ridiculed by others and would lose any face he had left?

Thinking about this, Sha Liuhe stood up. With his current status, he shouldn't pay too much attention to this matter; to do so would be below his station.

But he had to confirm whether or not Yun Die's purity was still intact. This was an important matter and he couldn't allow any accidents to occur.

"Ning Qin, you had better not have touched her, otherwise I vow I will make sure you suffer so much you will beg to die!"

...

"Mister Ning Qin is handing in his mission?" Sun Xiangzhang had a grateful expression. He knew that with grandmaster's strength, he wouldn't disappoint everyone. Even if the result wasn't good, he would definitely be able to complete the mission.

The disciple shook his head, "Teacher, the one who went to the Internal Affairs Division to turn in the mission was Mister Ning Qin's disciple, the one called Yun Die."

He hesitated as he spoke, his complexion strange.

Rumors had already begun to spread. A new secret disciple had spent half a month in an underground room with her teacher, and when she came out she was already a true disciple; there was clearly a problem with this.

Sun Xiangzhang furrowed his eyebrows. He had already grasped the key point to this matter. Could it be that the rumors were true? If they were, then this event would lessen the impression that Grandmaster Ning Qin left in his heart.

Sun Xiangzhang let out a deep breath. He stood up and said, "Come, follow me to the Internal Affairs Division."

The disciple was perplexed. "Teacher, could it be that you still want to try and explain things for Mister Ning Qin?"

Sun Xiangzhang replied, "I just don't believe in mere rumors...I need to confirm the truth myself."

...

"Ning Qin is turning in his mission!"

"The one who went to the Internal Affairs Division is a female disciple of his, the one who was said to have seduced him. She really is as beautiful as a fairy!"

"She's already become a true disciple? Even disregarding all else, this Ning Qin is a true rake when it concerns his work. He puts everyone out in the open and isn't afraid of others talking about him behind his back."

"Humph! After today, let's see if he still has the face to keep on staying at Rising Lake!"

"Let's go to the Internal Affairs Division together and take a look at the fun!"

The newly recruited beast trainers all hung up on each other as they rushed toward the Internal Affairs Division.

...

Scenes similar to this were replayed everywhere. For a time, Sky Declaring Pavilion's Internal Affairs Division became incomparably lively.

"Mister Zhang, you also came?"

"Since everyone is gathering here today, I also wanted to participate in the fun."

"Haha, Brother Xu, you came too!"

"I naturally cannot miss such a splendid drama."

Numerous beast trainers greeted each other. On normal days they were often caught up in their own work, so they rarely met up like this. The atmosphere was happy and festive.

How could the Internal Affairs people allow so many cultivators to stand around and tire themselves out? After slapping themselves awake, they busily moved about. Chairs and tables were brought in and snacks were offered, in fear that they would accidentally offend anyone.

Here, the area where Sha Liuhe stood was the most active. Almost all the beast trainers came forward to greet him. They laughed together and complimented his skills.

Sha Liuhe dealt with everyone who greeted him, but he couldn't help but occasionally glance over at the door leading to the inner chambers of the Internal Affairs Division. Calculating the time, the assessment should almost be completed.

He didn't care about the result. He just wanted to determine whether Yun Die's purity was still intact.

...

Jiang Yiyun had an excited expression as he looked at the mission grading score in his hand. The several other veteran appraisers who had participated were all flushed red, their fingers shivering.

After a long time, Jiang Yiyun let out a long breath and carefully put down the jade slip on a table, as if he had been holding onto some rare treasure.

"For my Midmorning City branch division to receive Mister Ning Qin's favor must be a blessing from the heavens!"

The chief appraiser's voice shivered as he said, "Mister Ning Qin's strength is transcendent; it's not something that someone mediocre like me would be able to understand. I fear he has already broken through the barrier and stepped into the Great Sun boundary...grand expert, this is the grand expert realm!"

The other members of the appraisal board all nodded. They had worked for Sky Declaring Pavilion for a long time, and during this time they had seen many outstanding characters. But, today was the first time they had witnessed someone with a result so dazzling like this.

Not only had the Wonder beast's injuries been healed, but it experienced another evolution. Its cruel and bloodthirsty disposition had completely vanished and its soul force had suddenly increased three times over. Moreover, it now possessed uncanny dexterity and decent physical strength.

Strictly speaking, it was no longer a Wonder beast but a completely brand new species! And to create a new species was the highest honor of a beast trainer. Only a peak existence, someone that stood at the pinnacle of beast trainers, had this kind of strength.

Yun Die's hands were folded across her legs. She leaned back slightly against the large and comfortable chair. When she looked at the excited expressions of Jiang Yiyun and the appraisers, her eyes were full of pride.

Jiang Yiyun suddenly coughed out loud. He faced the chief appraiser and the others, slowly saying, "In truth, when Mister Ning Qin joined Sky Declaring Pavilion, he had already revealed his outstanding

strength during the final trials. It was just that I passed an order to block all information related to this matter so it wasn't known to the outside world.

"You should all know that the beast trainer competition is about to begin soon and all influences in the Eastern Region are invited to participate and compete for a chance to enter the heaven bestowed land. Without a doubt, Mister Ning Qin will be the greatest chance for our Midmorning City branch division. He might even be able to represent our Sky Declaring Pavilion and fight for us. In order to avoid any accidents occurring before then, I earnestly ask that you all temporarily conceal this matter."

The chief appraiser furrowed his eyebrows. "How can this be? A grand expert level existence deserves the respect befitting their status. Their name cannot be tainted in any way! Right now, all sorts of rumors are spreading outside and this is already causing considerable damage to Grand Expert Ning Qin's prestige. We must quell it as soon as possible!"

Jiang Yiyun tried to persuade them, but the panel of appraisers were completely independent and only listened to the direct orders of the Pavilion Master. He simply had no right to control them. If they insisted on making an announcement, Jiang Yiyun could only compromise.

Yun Die's eyes sparkled. She suddenly said, "Mister Jiang Yiyun and fellow respected appraisers, might you listen to me for a moment?"

The chief appraiser gently smiled, "Miss Yun Die, please speak."

The status of being a grand expert's disciple was enough for him to change his attitude.

Yun Die realized this and her attitude became even calmer and more relaxed. "Thank you. Then, I shall be bold and speak some words that I believe take into consideration everyone's worries." After a brief hesitation she said, "Teacher is a person dedicated to his work. He likes to keep a low profile and doesn't like attention. For instance, when teacher tasked me with handing in the mission for him today, he stayed in his laboratory and is still working. So, although teacher didn't state it clearly, I think he isn't willing to be exposed to everyone's attention. I hope that the panel of appraisers can consider my teacher's wishes."

The appraisers all had a dignified expression. They could ignore Jiang Yiyun's request, but a grand expert's wishes should be respected.

After discussing the situation for some time, the chief appraiser said, "Since this is the case, we won't announce any information related to Grand Expert Ning Qin for now. But, this matter must still be reported to the Pavilion Master...with Grand Expert Ning Qin's strength, he should obtain a reward from the Pavilion Master."

Yun Die bowed and didn't say much else.

Jiang Yiyun smiled and nodded, "Of course. Concerning Grand Expert Ning Qin's existence, I already reported it to the Pavilion Master after the final trials were finished."

"Then, we should consider how we need to conceal this matter." Since the true evaluation results couldn't be announced, they needed the panel of appraisers to make up a new one.

Yun Die's lips curled up in a smile. Even if they wanted to conceal teacher's status, the panel of appraisers still wouldn't allow his result to be lower than anyone else's.

She suddenly wanted to see the expressions of those people outside. It was sure to be interesting!

...

The room was deathly silent. Li Hao, Rao Xiaoling, and the other two all had pale faces. A barely restrained fear flooded their eyes.

Yun Die had gone to the Internal Affairs Division to submit the mission results on behalf of her teacher...news of this had already spread out. Why was it like this? Wasn't it said that he had already failed the mission? If Ning Qin had managed to smoothly complete the mission then they would be mocked and ridiculed by others. They would never be able to wash themselves of the reputation of being people who had betrayed their teacher!

"Li Hao, you lied to us! Teacher has clearly completed the mission already!" A youth on the left clenched his jaws, hate in his eyes.

"I originally didn't have the courage to betray teacher. It was you, you were the one who misled me! What do I do now? It's over! It's all over!" Another youth roared out loud.

Rao Xiaoling didn't speak. She simply stood there in a stunned haze, as if her soul had left her body.

Li Hao was flustered and his thoughts were a mess. "Shut up! We've already left Rising Lake and Ning Qin is no longer our teacher!" He took a deep breath and slammed his hands atop the table. "So what if he completed the mission in time? His treatment plan was flawed. It is inevitable that his results will be greatly affected. Do any of you believe that Ning Qin can put forth a result that can compare with Mister Sha's?"

Seeing the complexions of the three others relax a little, Li Hao said, "Whether or not Ning Qin can complete the mission is irrelevant. He is doomed to be crushed and rolled over by Mister Sha. He will be pressed into the ground and he will never have a chance to rise back up! Yun Die and the others will be suppressed along with him. As for us, we will become Mister Sha's secret disciples.

"I don't need to elaborate on Mister Sha's strength. He is a true grandmaster level existence. Even if we are only his secret disciples, that is still an incomparably honored status! Trust me, none of you chose wrongly. None of us were wrong!"