

Refining 701

Chapter 701 – Like This Mister Sha Liuhe

The sun began to sink past the western horizon. The light of the setting sun penetrated through the windows, illuminating the great hall of the Internal Affairs Division. The sitting beast trainers had already finished their conversations and were now waiting impatiently.

Everyone's time was precious. They had put down their work temporarily so that they could come here and enjoy the fun, but they never imagined that it would delay them for an entire evening.

Even when Sha Liuhe handed in his mission yesterday, the appraisal board had only spent a quarter hour before they gave out the final evaluation result. Could the result of Ning Qin's mission be even more complex than Sha Liuhe's? What sort of joke was this!?

Many people looked over. Because at this time, it seemed that only he had the qualifications to speak up and inquire into what the situation was about.

Sha Liuhe opened his eyes. After letting out a light sigh, he stood up and walked towards the counter.

"Mister Sha, is there any way I can help you?"

Sha Liuhe smiled. "I am just curious about when the appraisal board will announce the evaluation result of Mister Ning Qin's mission. You should know that if Mister Ning Qin's performance is inferior to my own, it means I will obtain a reward from the pavilion...so, if possible, I hope you can inquire into the situation for me."

"Ah, so it's like this..." The Internal Affairs Division cultivator had an awkward expression. Sha Liuhe remained smiling as before. But, the aura he gave off was increasingly oppressive, making it harder and harder for the Internal Affairs Division cultivator to breathe.

"You sightless fool, how dare you disrespect Mister Sha like this? I will punish you with facing the wall for a month, so hurry and get out of the way!" Bian Changli was all smiles as he stepped forward.

"Although the appraisal board is a part of the Internal Affairs Division, they actually have an extremely high status and aren't within the domain of our jurisdiction. However, since this is Mister Sha's inquiry, I shall ask them. Please wait a moment; I will be back soon."

Sha Liuhe smiled. "I'll have to trouble Director Bian."

"No need, no need!" Bian Changli turned around and ordered, "Go and ask the appraisal board if there is a result for Mister Ning Qin's mission yet."

An Internal Affairs Division cultivator nodded and hurried away.

But before Bian Changli could offer any more flattering words, that Internal Affairs Division cultivator returned. Bian Changli frowned. Just as he was about to shout out a question, he suddenly saw the silver-haired old man walking in from the back. Bian Changli quickly spoke some words of apology to Sha Liuhe before hurrying over and bowing, "Lord Steward, why have you come here?"

He glanced over at Yun Die who was following by the side. Her expression was light and there was even a trace of pride on her face.

This expression didn't seem right. Could it be that Ning Qin's mission had a good evaluation?

Jiang Yiyun nodded. "There are some things I need to deal with." He side-stepped the question and continued, "Are you the one who sent someone to ask about the evaluation result?"

Bian Changli's heart tensed. He respectfully said, "Reporting to the steward, it was Mister Sha Liuhe who was impatient to see the result..." Before he finished speaking, the meaning behind his words was already clear. He had withdrawn and placed himself in a completely neutral position. All of his previous fawning had disappeared.

His intuition told him that something definitely wasn't right!

"Oh. So it was like that."

Jiang Yiyun looked deeply at Bian Changli and sighed inwardly at how keen his sense of smell was. This was a man who had managed to play his way into the position of Internal Affairs Director and stay there for over a dozen years. He indeed had some skills.

He glanced over at Yun Die. Looking at that expressionless face, Jiang Yiyun's eyes flashed. He had already grasped some of her thoughts.

Whether it stemmed from the behavior of youths wanting to show off, or whether it was because she wanted to defend her teacher's dignity, she clearly wanted to give a resounded slap to those present.

If it were anyone else, Jiang Yiyun wouldn't interfere so that he could avoid offending anyone. But, when this involved currying favor with a grand expert, then his choice became clear.

Jiang Yiyun lightly coughed. He used a bit of his cultivation in his cough, and the great hall suddenly fell silent. All eyes gathered upon him. "Miss Yun Die. Recently, there have been some dangerous rumors being spread around. Should I announce Mister Ning Qin's mission evaluation results in front of everyone here?"

Since you want to slap the faces of those present, then I will serve as your foil so that you can enjoy this moment even more.

The quiet great hall suddenly became even more silent. Several people furrowed their eyebrows. They were beginning to discover that today's play seemed to have deviated from the expected path.

Sha Liuhe's heart skipped a beat. Jiang Yiyun's attitude seemed to confirm a sinking suspicion of his, one that he didn't want to face.

His smile vanished and a gloomy look crossed his face. But he quickly took a deep breath and composed himself.

Even if this surname Ning could produce an outstanding answer, it was absolutely impossible for it to compare with his medium-grade heaven-step evaluation result.

It was just the difference between stepping into a swamp and being completely trampled upon. Even if Ning Qin emerged from this looking a little better than expected, as long as he didn't let him go, he could still cause Ning Qin's face to sweep the floor and eventually force him to roll out of Rising Lake!

At that time, Yun Die would still be his.

Sun Xiangzhang let out a light breath. He softly said, "It seems that Mister Ning Qin's mission evaluation is much better than we imagined."

Zhou Xinhong smiled. "Since Mister Ning Qin already has...such strength, it is within reason for him to complete the mission in an outstanding manner. Xiangzhang, it seems you worried too much."

"The treatment plan was flawed from the start and yet he was able to complete the mission splendidly. What if the treatment plan had been perfect from the start?" Xu Yuanbai shook his head. "I cannot believe that Mister Ning Qin's evaluation result will be higher than Mister Sha Liuhe's."

Zhou Xinhong furrowed his eyebrows together. He glanced at Sun Xiangzhang and said, "Perhaps this is Mister Ning Qin's style. He likes to challenge himself with difficult scenarios."

Xu Yuanbai was expressionless.

Sun Xiangzhang wryly smiled. "Mister Zhou, please rest assured. While I do worship Mister Ning Qin, it was indeed he who made a mistake here."

His expression was solemn and respectful. "No matter how strong or weak one is, they should always treat the mission with the utmost earnestness. As beast trainers, this is one of our most basic professional ethics."

His words were filled with a heavy weight.

Sun Xiangzhang was silent for a moment. Then, he continued to say, "Mister Xu, Mister Zhou, if anyone has criticisms after this, I hope you can help explain to them."

Zhou Xinhong and Xu Yuanbai nodded. "Of course."

In truth, the three of them were already aware of the situation. Since Ning Qin's mission evaluation was good, he wouldn't be thrust into the abyss. At most there would be some obstacles placed before him. But, he actually missed out on the greatest chance to gain attention after entering Sky Declaring Pavilion, as well as missing out on a reward that was highly likely to be very precious.

This was inevitably a serious loss.

Eyes began to gather on Yun Die's face. Her expression was calm and placid. She already understood Jiang Yiyun's thoughts. He wanted to help her create a larger spectacle and give these people a more painful slap? Then, she won't be impolite by refusing!

Her eyes were still and without waves. She glanced at the faces of the beast trainers present. Then, she said in a soft voice, "My teacher is low profile and doesn't like attention. However, since all of you gentlemen have gathered here, you clearly must be curious as to what the evaluation result is...in order not to disappoint everyone, I can only violate teacher's wishes a little and hope that I am not punished for doing so."

Jiang Yiyun smiled. "Mister Ning Qin is a generous and benevolent man. I'm sure he wouldn't make things hard for Miss Yun Die." He took out a jade slip in front of everyone. "Concerning Mister Ning Qin's mission, this is the final result from the appraisal board. I hope you can all observe it together!"

He poured magic power into the jade slip. The jade slip suddenly released a dazzling light. The light gathered in the air, forming characters – high-grade heaven-step.

Hu –

The great hall fell deathly silent. Even the sounds of breathing disappeared. The deep silence formed an intense suppression. When it fell on everyone’s chest, it caused their eyes to glaze over.

High-grade heaven-step...high-grade heaven-step...high-grade heaven-step...they repeated these four simple words in their heads over and over, and nothing changed.

“Impossible!” Sha Liuhe roared out loud. His face was twisted in anger and he looked even uglier than a person who had swallowed a fly. “I don’t believe that Ning Qin can obtain such a result!”

The silence was broken and numerous beast trainers regained their composure. They all furrowed their eyebrows together.

All of them recalled the treatment plan. There was an enormous flaw in the treatment plan to begin with, so it would have been hard to achieve even a standard result, much less a high-grade heaven-step result. That was an almost mythical evaluation result.

No wonder Sha Liuhe has been so rude and lost his temper...from his angry expression, from his shock and shaken eyes, his look of disbelief....suddenly, a different thought leapt into everyone’s minds. Was there another reason behind all of this? Or to be more direct, was the evaluation result a lie?

Ning Qin had joined Sky Declaring Pavilion at the same time as the others, yet he had obtained extra favorable treatment by being placed at Rising Lake Manor, one of the best possible locations.

And today in handing in his mission, the Lord Steward of the Midmorning City branch division had personally appeared to announce his results in front of everyone and restore his prestige.

What was even more important was that Ning Qin had used a flawed treatment plan to begin with. And not only did he complete the mission, he obtained a high-grade heaven-step evaluation result.

When all of these factors were combined together, how could one not suspect it?

Just who was Ning Qin?

What sort of formidable background did he have?

Questioning eyes fell on Jiang Yiyun’s face. He clearly knew what all of these beast trainers were thinking.

There was one thing they were right about. The final mission evaluation result was indeed a lie, but the truth was different from what they expected.

Jiang Yiyun confidently said, “Mister Ning Qin’s strength has obtained the unanimous approval of the entire appraisal board. I also personally participated in the evaluation process, and I can inform all of you that no falsehood took place.”

After a brief pause, his tone suddenly changed, becoming as hard as iron. "So, I will remind all of you here that any rumors are to stop immediately. Mister Ning Qin's reputation cannot be slandered! In the future, I ask that you all be cautious in what you say!"

The questioning eyes were filled with clear shock that slowly turned into dignity. Unless Jiang Yiyun had gone insane, he would never say such words in front of everyone. Otherwise, there would be no place left for them here.

In other words, the results were most likely true...to take a severely flawed treatment plan and obtain a high-grade heaven-step mission evaluation result...what kind of strength was needed to accomplish that?

When the beast trainers thought back to how they had come here hoping to see a good play, their faces all flushed red. They secretly rejoiced that none of them had questioned Mister Ning Qin ahead of time!

Sun Xiangzhang was stunned into a daze. After a long time, he finally let out a deep breath. Happiness was written across his face, as well as shame.

So it was he who misunderstood the grandmaster...it was his mediocre strength that had limited his imagination!

"It's amazing, simply incredible!" Zhou Xinhong had an excited look.

Xu Yuanbai's lips moved. He dejectedly said, "I feel nothing but shame for the disrespect I showed Mister Ning Qin before."

When the people in the hall began to speak, their voices mingled together into a hum that was like 10,000 flies swarming into Sha Liuhe's ears. It left his heart flustered and panicked and he hoped he could tear apart their yapping mouths. He managed to squeeze out a smile and ask, "Steward Jiang, did Mister Ning Qin really not change his treatment plan?"

Jiang Yiyun looked at Sha Liuhe, and there was nothing but pity in his eyes. He thoroughly extinguished his final hopes, "I can verify that he didn't."

Sha Liuhe's smile froze on his face and his lips twitched. His gloomy face gave off a distorted and macabre feeling.

At this moment, he thought back to the words he said here yesterday:

"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."

"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."

Sensing everyone's eyes on him, Sha Liuhe felt as if countless slaps were flying at him. Golden stars started to hover in his field of vision.

He wavered and almost crumpled to the floor. Everyone sighed inwardly. Such a formidable figure had actually fallen into such an embarrassing situation.

But Yun Die didn't plan on letting him go like this. She took a step forward, her eyes icy cold. She lightly said, "At this moment, my teacher is still in his laboratory. For him, whether it is a high-grade heaven-step evaluation or the attention of those here, none of it is worthy of mentioning. They are merely trivial things that cannot affect his cultivation."

"I say this not because I am looking down on everyone here, but simply because I wish to convey the attitude of my teacher. When a man walks their path through the world, the only thing they can rely on is their own strength. And in this world, there is no success without reason. Only effort, effort, and even more effort! But, there are some people who cannot realize this. Their eyes are red with envy and no matter how many small schemes they try, they never manage to accomplish anything. Rather than wasting time and effort on such pathetic things, it would be better to focus on cultivation."

She pointed a finger. Like an arrow piercing through the heavens, she said, "For instance, like this Mister Sha Liuhe in front of us!"

Sha Liuhe's eyes widened. He stubbornly glared at Yun Die, his face pale white. Then, he spat out a mouthful of blood and fell backwards, unconscious!

Chapter 702 – Zhou Li Brings a Gift

Mister Ning Qin hadn't even appeared and yet Sha Liuhe had vomited blood and been forced to retreat, his reputation left in complete and utter shambles!

In a reception pavilion, Feng Qing lowered her head and took a sip of tea. Zhou Li stood by her side, sighing with respect. "With Mister Ning Qin's strength, he has to be a grandmaster level character. It's a pity that I wasn't able to personally see the grandmaster's bearing with my own eyes."

As she spoke, there was a trace of yearning in her eyes.

Feng Qing smiled. "Even if I allowed you to join in yesterday's excitement, you still wouldn't have been able to see Mister Ning Qin. It was a disciple of his that handed in the mission for him."

Zhou Li nodded. "I know. It's that young lady Yun Die. Many people mocked her and despised her before, but now all of them have eyes red with envy when they look at her."

"To be the grandmaster's true disciple...anyone in that position with just a hint of talent will become a genuine beast trainer sooner or later. They are destined to have incredible accomplishments."

Feng Qing's eyes flashed. "Are you feeling jealous? My previous promise still stands. If you wish, I can recommend you to Mister Ning Qin. How about it?"

Zhou Li was tempted, but after a moment she shook her head, "Miss, allow me to think about it some more."

"You are still thinking about your fiancé..."

"Miss, if you keep bringing him up then I'll get angry! I have no relation with Qin Yu, I just owe him a favor!" Zhou Li's cheeks flushed red.

Feng Qing sighed inwardly. You silly maid, I can't tell you directly so I'm trying to give you some hints. Why don't you realise that you've grasped such a great lucky chance?

The more time they spent together, the better her impression of Zhou Li was. This was the reason why she wanted to help her.

This was a girl who was cold outside and burning inside. She knew how to draw the difference between grudges and gratitude, and knew how to repay what was given to her...unfortunately, her eyesight was lacking.

She couldn't say anything else, otherwise Zhou Li might sense something. If Qin Yu didn't want to expose himself, Feng Qing naturally wouldn't interfere either. "Alright, that's enough joking. Zhou Li, don't you want to bear witness to Mister Ning Qin's elegance? Then, I'll give you a chance."

She took out a pure white jade box that glistened with traces of cold light. "This is a congratulatory gift that I plan on giving to the grandmaster for his high-grade heaven-step mission evaluation result. Deliver it to Rising Lake for me."

Zhou Li's eyes brightened. Forgetting about her anger, she nodded repeatedly and said, "Thank you miss, I will personally give this congratulatory gift to Mister Ning Qin!"

Feng Qing smiled. Looking after Zhou Li was one of the unspoken key points in their transaction.

"I just want him to personally see Zhou Li's growth with his own eyes. I'm sure he won't blame me for being nosy." Feng Qing silently thought to herself. When she looked at Zhou Li's back, there was a glimmer in her eyes.

...

Rising Lake laboratory.

Qin Yu sat down cross-legged. Small arcs of lightning raced across his body. They sparked, connecting together into a single stretch that illuminated the laboratory walls.

After some unknown period of time, the lightning on his body vanished from sight. Qin Yu's eyes flashed open as thunderous popping sounds exploded from his body.

The deep rumbling was like the strikes of a great drum. Tyrannical blood energy fluctuations erupted. The ground violently trembled as cracks appeared.

He lifted a hand and clenched a fist. A formidable strength flowed between his five fingers. Qin Yu smiled.

Peak Blue Sea realm!

Just a step more and the strength of his mortal body would break past its limits and he would have the strength to contend with a Calamity Immortal.

Feng Qing had managed to pass three thunder cleansed willows to him. After being shined on by the little blue lamp, they underwent earth-shaking changes. Besides their boundless vitality, they also gained the thunder attribute.

By borrowing the tempering of thunder and absorbing a massive amount of vitality, he was able to heal a great portion of his body's injuries.

Originally it shouldn't have been limited to this. But, the annihilating power of space in his body had limited the restorative abilities of the thunder cleansed willow. Qin Yu knew that this was a bottleneck in healing his injuries.

He needed to break past the shackles of the annihilating power of space so that his body could further recover.

Things were bound to be troublesome, but Qin Yu wasn't worried. This was because he seemed to have somehow perfectly camouflaged himself as a formidable beast trainer. With this status, in addition to Feng Qing's help, it wouldn't be difficult to obtain precious treasures.

After letting out a long breath, Qin Yu stood up. He stretched his waist and walked outside.

"Teacher, you've come out!" A pleasantly surprised voice rang out. Yun Die stepped forward and respectfully bowed.

Qin Yu nodded, "Why are you here?"

Yun Die said, "After I handed in the mission for teacher I returned in case you had a need for anything."

Right now, she had no worries about teacher. How could an existence that stood upon the peak covet her bloodline?

"How thoughtful." Qin Yu smiled. "How is the mission evaluation result? Has it finished?"

Looking at her teacher's carefree appearance, Yun Die couldn't help but sigh inwardly once more. This was the style of a true grand expert.

"Reporting to teacher, your mission was completed. The final evaluation was a high-grade heaven-step result. Among the newly recruited beast trainers, your mission evaluation result is the best."

After a brief hesitation, she continued to say, "Teacher, many people have sent over congratulatory gifts and hope that they can personally meet with you. Some of them have considerable statuses so I don't dare to casually deal with them. I ask for teacher to make the decision."

Qin Yu was startled. A high-grade heaven-step evaluation? This was a bit beyond his expectations. After all, he had only taken the leftover materials, illuminated them with the little blue lamp, and then crudely smashed them together. Was the effect really that powerful?

Was it easier for the spirit beasts of this world to evolve, or had the strength of the little blue lamp risen...mm, it was more likely the latter.

Qin Yu knew that the three rankings were mortal, earth, and heaven. It seems that without him noticing, he had grabbed a great spotlight for himself.

"The gifts can be accepted, but I have no need for visitors. Tell them that I do not like seeing outsiders."

Yun Die had a matter-of-fact expression. This was the type of attitude that her teacher should have. If he didn't even care about something as refreshing as 'publicly slapping others', then why would he bother wasting his time on developing superficial relationships?

"Yes, teacher, I will handle things for you."

At this time, an internal communication tool rang out. Yun Die hurried over and picked up the phone. After listening for a moment, she was about to obey her teacher's instructions and refuse entry to Rising Lake when she saw him wave his hand.

Yun Die immediately changed her tone, "...Teacher understands. Please ask Miss Feng Qing's maid to enter."

Qin Yu didn't explain his sudden change in attitude. He directly said, "Let's go."

He stepped out first.

...

"Miss Zhou Li, my teacher invites you in."

Yan Jiao smiled as she spoke, but she couldn't help but look over this visitor. These past two days she had refused countless people. While Zhou Li came here representing Miss Feng Qing, she was still only a maid and didn't have the qualifications to be received by her teacher.

While she was curious as to what the reason was, she didn't inquire too much. She only needed to follow teacher's instructions. She thought back to the message that her mother had sent her. Because she had become the disciple of the 'grandmaster', no one dared to bully her anymore.

Because of this, Yan Jiao felt nothing but awe and gratitude towards her teacher.

With so many surprised eyes looking at her, Zhou Li felt a little uncomfortable. She hurriedly nodded and entered Rising Lake Manor with Yan Jiao.

She never imagined that so many people would be waiting here to visit Mister Ning Qin. And out of all of them, only a little maid like her had been invited past the front doors. It was no wonder they were all surprised.

But Zhou Li knew her worth. If it wasn't for the miss, she wouldn't have any qualifications to come into contact with Grandmaster Ning Qin. He was a nearly mythical existence.

As she recalled the throngs of people waiting outside the manor doors, she finally realized the vast disparity in their status. The excitement in her heart gradually subsided, replaced by awe and nervousness instead.

Yan Jiao wasn't surprised by the anxiousness Zhou Li suddenly displayed. This should be a common reaction for someone who was about to meet teacher.

Yun Die smiled. "Teacher instructed me to wait here. Miss Zhou Li, please come with me."

When Yun Die was shrouded in gloom, she was already beautiful beyond compare. But now that her worry and restlessness had vanished and she found stability with powerful support behind her, she suddenly burst out with an even more dazzling light, endless elegance in every action and movement.

Zhou Li was stunned for a moment before she regained her composure. She didn't know that such beauty could exist in this world.

In particular, her lavender hair that had a faint natural curl to it. She was like a daughter of a heavenly god, visiting the mortal world.

No wonder all sorts of salacious rumors had popped up. With such peerless beauty, what man wouldn't be tempted by her?

It was one thing if she was merely beautiful. But, since she was accepted as Mister Ning Qin's true disciple, Yun Die would inevitably have a radiant future, one where both beauty and wisdom were gathered within one body.

Even the proud Zhou Li couldn't help but acknowledge that this woman far surpassed her. She wondered what sort of outstanding man would be a match for her.

The lake was vast and calm. A light breeze touched the green trees around the shore, leaving ripples on the surface of the water. A small wooden building stood quietly near the lake's edge. There was a small courtyard bordered with bamboo, and the fragrance that wafted through the air left one relaxed.

Yun Die pushed open the door and walked in, stepping on the clean blue stone slabs that lined the ground. She gestured, "Miss Zhou Li, please wait here. My teacher will soon arrive."

The first floor of the building was spacious and wide. The interior decoration seemed common, but everything was built with exquisite precision and attention to luxury. Because there was no maid, Yun Die took the initiative to make tea.

"Miss Zhou Li, please have some tea."

Zhou Li blushed. "Miss Yun Die, there is no need to be so polite. I am only a maid so you don't have to treat me like this."

Yun Die smiled. "I am only my teacher's disciple. Please take a seat."

Chapter 703 – Dark Parliament

Although Zhou Li wasn't a powerful figure, Yun Die was still curious about her. To be able to change teacher's mind and have him personally come to greet her, that in itself was an inconceivable thought.

Others might believe this was because of Miss Feng Qing's face, but Yun Die didn't believe it at all. With teacher's status, even if he had to face the mysterious Pavilion Master he could still remain calm.

The fundamental reason must be on Zhou Li's body. It was just that she didn't seem to know anything about it.

Yun Die's thoughts turned and she carefully looked over Zhou Li. Zhou Li was a clean and trim young girl. She was tall and slim and there was a bit of stubbornness in her eyes, but she still couldn't figure out why her teacher would treat her with such high regards.

There was the sound of footsteps. Yun Die quickly stood up and bowed, "Teacher, you've come."

Zhou Li had already stood up. The atmosphere seemed to become thick and viscous, making it hard for her to breathe. She lowered her head.

“Mm.” A calm voice sounded out. Then, the footsteps drew closer and took a seat on a sofa across from her. A black robe entered her line of sight.

“Teacher, this is Miss Feng Qing’s maid, Miss Zhou Li. She came here upon orders to congratulate teacher.” Yun Die said.

It was up to her to break the ice.

“Zhou...Zhou Li greets Mister Ning Qin!” As soon as her voice left her mouth she was given a fright. Her voice was hoarse and dry, as if she had been thirsty for a long time.

“There is no need to be so courteous. Rise.”

Qin Yu looked at Zhou Li. Her appearance hadn’t changed from before, but after becoming a cultivator, her demeanor was now completely different. When she wore a properly fitting dress, unless someone was familiar with her, it would be impossible to identify her as the young miss who had herded sheep on the mountain.

Yun Die kept her head lowered and stood to the side. When teacher paused momentarily just now, that hadn’t escaped her carefully observing eyes. This girl indeed had a certain history with her teacher, but for some reason Zhou Li knew nothing about it.

“Thank you Mister Ning Qin.”

Perhaps because Qin Yu’s warm attitude had melted away a bit of her nervousness, Zhou Li looked up. What she saw was a young yet ordinary face.

So the grandmaster looked like this. It was different from what she had imagined, and much more ordinary than expected.

She quickly restrained her thoughts. Zhou Li secretly warned herself that she was being far too insolent, to actually have such disrespectful thoughts toward Mister Ning Qin.

“Mister’s strength is unfathomably high. My family’s miss has nothing but the deepest admiration for you, especially since you obtained a high-grade heaven-step mission evaluation on your first try. She ordered me to come here and deliver this gift to you as congratulations.”

As she spoke, light flashed in her hands and she took out a jade box, opening it with both hands.

Yun Die stepped forward and received the jade box, placing it in front of Qin Yu. After a brief hesitation, he casually opened it. A pure and flawless white jade appeared in front of him. It quietly lay on a bed of soft silk, emitting a faint shimmer.

Within his soul space, the Chain of Stars that wrapped around his soul gently trembled. Motes of starlight flew out.

Qin Yu’s heart was shaken, even though he maintained a calm and unaffected appearance. He reached out and picked up the jade. It was cool to the touch.

The Chain of Stars trembled more and more and released an aura of longing. Qin Yu paused for a moment. Then, he released it a little. A cool energy immediately gushed out from the jade and was instantly absorbed by the Chain of Stars. Vast amounts of starlight gushed out and submerged his soul.

This is...

His fingers unconsciously clenched together. Qin Yu took a deep breath and looked up, "Miss Zhou Li, does Miss Feng Qing have any other message?"

Zhou Li shook her head, "There isn't. The miss only ordered me to give this jade box to Mister Ning Qin as a congratulatory gift."

Ning Qin's heart stirred. It seemed that Feng Qing didn't know the function of this jade piece. His thoughts raced and he smiled, saying, "Please pass on a message to Miss Feng Qing for her. Tell her that I very much like this gift of hers, and I wonder if she has any similar jade pieces. I am willing to purchase them at a high price."

"This..." Zhou Li's eyes widened. She had no idea what to say. This was originally only a simple handing over of a present, so how did it become a business transaction?

Qin Yu smiled. "Miss Zhou Li, there is no need to be so anxious. All you need to do is pass on my message and allow Miss Feng Qing to deal with the rest."

With Feng Qing's intelligence, she would clearly understand his meaning.

Zhou Li respectfully bowed. She said, "If it's like that, I will immediately return and pass on this message for Mister Ning Qin. Goodbye."

Qin Yu nodded, "Yun Die, help me send her back."

"Yes, teacher." Yun Die reached out a hand, "Miss Zhou Li, please!"

...

In an ancient great hall, the reliefs on the wall were covered with countless cracks. Every crack exuded the passing of the years.

Simple bronze torches were inserted diagonally into the stone walls. They blazed with flickering flames, but they weren't able to disperse the darkness. The hall was still cold and gloomy, and even the air seemed particularly heavy.

Suddenly, strong winds whipped up, sweeping away the flames on a long tract of bronze torches. The flames gathered together in the wind, condensing into a tall figure.

This figure was entirely covered in black robes. The only thing one could see was a pair of eyes formed from raging flames. These flames were clearly hot enough that they could burn down a forest, but they actually gave off a terrifyingly cold feeling, one so icy that it could freeze the soul.

He stretched out his hand and his five open fingers grasped at the void. "Summon the Parliament." A low and deep voice echoed out. It was hoarse and scratchy, like metal rubbing against stone.

Without any sound, a round table rose up from the ground, surrounded by seven stone chairs.

Hu –

Strong gales appeared one after another and more and more bronze torches had their flames whisked away and condensed into figures of varying size and form. All of them had long robes covering them.

“Sage, my important experiment has reached a critical moment and yet you suddenly initiated a summoning at this time. Without something unexpected, it has likely failed. Because of this, you had best give me a satisfactory answer.” A young girl’s voice sounded out. It was like the clear and sweet voice of a seven or eight year old girl. But, what was strange was that there were no emotions in it, only an intensity that penetrated into the heart.

Another figure spoke up, “Oriole is correct. There is an agreement between us. Unless there is an emergency, no one is to initiate a summons when the others aren’t prepared...Sage, you have broken your promise.”

The others didn’t speak, but their faint and ice cold looks already expressed their attitudes.

The Sage’s flaming eyes were without any fluctuation. He slowly looked around. Without answering the question first, he asked, “Jasmine, why hasn’t Morning Star arrived yet?”

He looked at a slender figure standing near the round table.

“I haven’t heard from him for a long time already. Perhaps Morning Star is carrying out some experiment. You should all be aware of his personality. He’s the type that appears and disappears randomly and without warning.” Jasmine’s voice sounded like that of a young lady. It was a little stiff though, indicating that this wasn’t her true voice.

Sage nodded, “If that’s the case, only the six of us Senators will attend the meeting this time.” He waved his hand, “Oriole, Limitless, you need not worry, I will naturally give an explanation for today’s matter.”

After a pause, Sage’s deep voice rose up once more. “Everyone, I believe I have discovered that thing’s whereabouts.”

The hall fell deathly silent. The only thing one could hear was the sound of beating flames from the torches. Although that thing’s name wasn’t mentioned, everyone knew what Sage was referring to.

Oriole’s tender voice spoke up first, “Sage, you must be responsible for your words!” Although she spoke harshly, her tone was filled with anticipation.

Sage’s expression was calm, “Of course.” He took out five jade slips. “This is a complete collection of evidence that I have processed after making a discovery and also carrying out an investigation. Look through it and you will understand whether it is true or fake yourself.”

No one spoke again. They each picked up a jade slip and probed it with their divine sense.

After a long time, the five people laid down the jade slips. Although they remained silent, their shivering bodies of flame proved how excited they were.

“I never thought that thing would be at Sky Declaring Pavilion. That remnant knows how to find an umbrella to protect herself.” Limitless slowly said.

“I have a question. Sage, are you determining this from a mere treatment plan? Perhaps that Mister Ning Qin is an incomparable beast trainer we have never come into contact with before.”

One of the other members of the Parliament, Moon Shadow, spoke in a soft voice. Even though his figure was formed from flames, he still gave off an ethereal feeling. Even if his body was nearby, he still felt as if he was separated by a long distance.

Sage nodded, “I’ve already considered Senator Moon Shadow’s worries and have explained my thoughts in the jade slip. Perhaps it wasn’t specific enough, so I will say it again.”

He raised a finger. “First, is this treatment plan. It has distinctive characteristics: that is to strengthen the body and revitalize the soul. Although there are many similar treatment plans, everyone shouldn’t forget that only the recorded plans have an extraordinary effect of turning decay into a miracle.

“Next is the final outcome of the Wonder beast. Everyone has already seen it. Unless one is a Great Sun step grand expert boundary beast trainer, it is impossible to achieve species creation. Do you believe that an incomparably honored grand expert exists that we do not know about? Thus, the only possibility is that girl made up the flaws in the treatment plan, leading to this final result.”

Sage knocked the table. “This Mister Ning Qin suddenly received Yun Die as a disciple. It is likely because he discovered some marvelous abilities from her body. So, after confirming this, I impatiently summoned all of you...there isn’t much time left here.”

Moon Shadow nodded, “I have no problem.”

Sage lightly said, “Then let’s begin a vote. Should we try and take Yun Die?”

“I agree!”

“I agree!”

The vote passed unanimously.

Sage stood up. He placed both hands on the table, “Then, I ask my fellow Senators to mobilize your strength to achieve our goal. But, I hope that you can restrain your innermost excitement and desire. Sky Declaring Pavilion possesses a formidable strength and I have no desire to hear news of one of my fellow Senators being exposed. This would be an enormous loss to the Dark Parliament.”

Hu –

A gust of wind blew past. The six figures dispersed, changing back into flames that returned to the torches.

The round table and stone chairs sank back down into the ground. The great hall’s gloomy and silent atmosphere returned.

Chapter 704 – Rich Reward Mission

Feng Qing had a cautious expression. Her slender white fingers lightly tapped against the armrest. She asked, “Are you sure that Mister Ning Qin said he needed more of these jades?”

Looking at the miss' appearance, Zhou Li knew that her mood was serious. She lowered her head and said, "Yes, miss. Mister Ning Qin also said that if miss has any, he is willing to purchase them at a high price."

Feng Qing slowly nodded and bitterly smiled. She already understood Qin Yu's thoughts.

Without a doubt, this was the best chance to curry favor with Qin Yu. If she had any more of those jade pieces in her hands, she would have offered them to him without hesitation.

But this was the only piece she had and it was one she obtained accidentally. Even if she wanted to look for more, she had no idea where to begin.

Feng Qing let out a light breath and rubbed her forehead. "I understand. Zhou Li, go to Rising Lake once more and tell Mister Ning Qin that I will do everything in my power to search for these jade pieces for him."

Zhou Li nodded and turned to leave.

Feng Qing closed her eyes and leaned back on her sofa, deep in thought. After some time, she stood up and started walking forward. Although she had no idea of the jade's true function or origin, she had come into contact with it before and knew it possessed some special characteristics.

If she used the strength of Sky Declaring Pavilion to find more information, there would definitely be some harvests. She couldn't miss out on this chance to develop a closer relationship with Qin Yu!

Of course, she had to be discreet when she did this and couldn't attract any extra attention.

...

When Qin Yu had Yun Die guide Zhou Li away again, he couldn't help but rub his temples. He forced out a smile. It had been with great difficulty that he had found something that could repair his soul injuries, and in the end it was only this tiny piece.

He didn't think that Feng Qing was playing tricks with him. Judging from her response, not only did she not have any more, but she couldn't even give him a timeline for when she would be able to find more. It could be seen that this kind of jade was extremely rare.

He shook his head, suppressing the disappointment in his heart. Since Feng Qing knew what he wanted, she should have already begun to make her move.

He hoped there would be a pleasant surprise!

It was better to focus on the present right now. According to what he knew, Sky Declaring Pavilion would soon give him a precious reward thanks to the 'outstanding performance' of his mission completion. Perhaps Feng Qing could alter this reward a little and change it into something he needed.

...

In the distant Hidden Fog Sect.

Rong Wei kept his head lowered as he carefully reviewed the data chart in his hands. After a long time he stood up and under the expectant gazes of his numerous disciples, a beaming smile spread across his weary face.

“It’s too great!”

The disciples immediately cheered. All of their hard work recently hadn’t been for nothing in the end.

They looked at their teacher, their eyes filled with admiration. In today’s accomplishment, they had only done some superficial work. The one who contributed the most was their teacher.

Even in the Hidden Fog Sect where there were numerous beast trainer powerhouses, their teacher was still a peak existence. To follow at their teacher’s side and study beneath him was their life’s greatest lucky chance!

Rong Wei accepted the congratulations of his disciples and ordered them to go back and rest. Everyone watched with envy as he asked Xiang Ziyue to stay behind.

“Through our recent efforts, the dark star ice serpent has finished accumulating its necessary foundation. You are to immediately set off to Midmorning City and seek an audience with Grandmaster Ning Qin. Ask him about the payment date for the ash line grass. If we can obtain it just one day earlier, that means there will be more time available to us. Do you understand?”

Xiang Ziyue respectfully said, “Teacher, do not worry, I will do everything in my power to obtain the ash line grass as soon as possible.”

Rong Wei nodded. “Good. You may go...just remember, if nothing can be done, things need to be finished before the deadline. No matter what you do, do not offend Grandmaster Ning Qin.”

For the time being, while it seemed that the Hidden Fog Sect only cared about the ash line grass, to become friends with a grandmaster level existence was always the best choice.

“Yes, teacher.”

...

The External Affairs Division was responsible for networking with the outside world. Today, they received an extremely heavy order.

The other party was an attached family of a large sect and they possessed considerable strength. This time, they were asking for help in cultivating some type of rare guardian spirit object. Their only condition was that Mister Ning Qin personally help them.

After the high-grade heaven-step mission evaluation result was announced, it had become common for similar requests to come in. Mister Ning Qin’s reputation had already spread far and wide. Even so, the reward for this order was still shockingly high. Even if a person were to request the help of a grandmaster, the price might not be so high.

It was clear that this other party was sufficiently sincere!

After the External Affairs Division confirmed this order, they immediately sent over the contents of the request to Risking Lake. If Mister Ning Qin agreed to it, then they would accept the order.

This was the privilege that a grandmaster level existence enjoyed. They could decide whether or not they wanted to take on a mission.

Of course, in the eyes of the Foreign Affairs Division, Grandmaster Ning Qin wouldn't refuse a mission with such a rich reward.

And without accident, Rising Lake soon responded. Mister Ning Qin would receive this requested mission.

...

Rising Lake.

Yun Die passed the mission information to her teacher and left. When she exited the lakeside building, she saw Yan Jiao waiting outside.

"Senior-apprentice sister Yun Die, the petitioner of the mission that teacher just received has some specific requirements and he would like to request a meeting with teacher."

"Mm?" Yun Die furrowed her eyebrows together. "Their plan isn't too bad."

Yan Jiao coldly humphed, "Who couldn't see that? To offer such a high reward, it's obvious they would have such thoughts."

Right now, there were countless people trying to get close to their teacher and be friends with him. To put in an order at Sky Declaring Pavilion and request for his help specifically, although this was an extremely costly method, it was still worth it.

Noticing Yun Die's silence, Yan Jiao hesitated for a moment. She said, "According to the rules, the mission petitioner does have the right to request certain requirements. So, it isn't too excessive for them to ask to meet with teacher."

"I understand. But with teacher's personality, how could he waste his time on meeting these random people?" Yun Die looked up, "Where is this person?"

"He's in the guest hall."

"Bring me to see him. If they really have some kind of requirement, telling me is the same as telling teacher."

Yan Jiao smiled. "Senior-apprentice sister is smart. You are teacher's only true disciple so you can naturally deal with such trivial matters in his place. They shouldn't have any way to argue with this!"

Yun Die rolled her eyes. "Stop flattering me. You're the sneakiest one here. You were waiting all this time for me to say this."

Yan Jiao stuck out her tongue and didn't say anything else.

Sky Declaring Pavilion accepted business from all over. Naturally, there was a reception area where they received guests. Although it was a separately divided manor, the scenery was still beautiful.

In a small courtyard covered in shade, Yun Die saw the representative of their client. Even with her personality, when she saw this other party she couldn't help but widen her eyes in surprise.

"Young ladies, may I ask the meaning of this?"

The young man across from them smiled as he spoke. He wore loose white robes and his temperament was like warm white jade. His demeanor was calm and relaxing and a regal aura lingered around him.

Yan Jiao's eyes brightened. She was stunned for a moment before lowering her eyes. A flush started to creep up her face.

This was also the first time she had seen this person. Without expecting it, she felt as if she had been dazzled by this person's 'beauty'.

But...this was truly a mind-bogglingly handsome young man...

Yun Die lightly coughed, reminding Yan Jiao not to be rude. She smiled and said, "Sir, we are Mister Ning Qin's disciples..."

"Ah! Miss Yun Die, right?" The young man suddenly interrupted. Then, an apologetic look immediately crossed his face. "My apologies, I was disrespectful."

Yun Die nodded, "That's right. I am Yun Die and this is my junior-apprentice sister Yan Jiao."

The youth cupped his hands together. "I am Lu Yuhong. I greet Miss Yun Die and Miss Yan Jiao." His eyes paused on Yun Die and he continued to say, "I've long since heard that Mister Ning Qin's only disciple is a woman as beautiful as a fairy. I see today that you live up to your reputation."

His brazen and forward words didn't cause one to feel disgusted. On the contrary, one could feel the sincerity in them.

Yan Jiao couldn't help but reveal a disappointed look. Lu Yuhong's attention was clearly focused on Yun Die.

"Fellow daoist Lu praises me too much." Yun Die's voice was calm, "Today, I came to reply to you about teacher's matters.

"I apologize, but my teacher doesn't like to be disturbed. If you have need of anything, you may tell me. I will convey your message to teacher at an appropriate time."

Lu Yuhong didn't hide his disappointment. "Ah...I was hoping that I could see Mister Ning Qin, but since things are like this, I will do my best to respect the grandmaster's wishes."

Yun Die was surprised that this person gave up their original request so easily. She felt some appreciation towards his open-mindedness. "Thank you, fellow daoist Lu."

She stood up, "Then, me and my junior-apprentice sister will not disturb you any longer. Rising Lake will be sure to complete your request before the required deadline."

Lu Yuhong hurriedly said, "Miss Yun Die, please wait a moment. I might not need to see Mister Ning Qin, but there are some requirements for cultivating the spiritual object. I wonder if I may visit you during this time period."

Yun Die hesitated for a moment before nodding her head, "You may."

Lu Yuhong brightly smiled, "Then allow me to send you out."

After leaving the reception area, Yan Jiao said, "Senior-apprentice sister, I think that this fellow daoist Lu has a very favorable impression of you."

Yun Die frowned. "Stop speaking nonsense. For you and I to follow at teacher's side is a good fortune that others cannot even beg for. I don't think there is even enough time for cultivation, so stop wasting your thoughts on such unnecessary things!"

After being scolded a little, Yan Jiao lowered her head and honestly hummed in agreement. She didn't know why, but she felt a little relieved.

After Lu Yuhong returned, a servant who had been silently standing beside him suddenly looked up. The servant indifferently said, "How could you let them go so easily? Remember that we don't have much time!"

"Haste will only ruin things. This type of thing cannot be rushed no matter how anxious you are." Lu Yuhong leisurely said, a happy and thoughtful expression on his face.

The servant sneered. "I am just reminding you what sort of fate you will suffer if you fail this mission!"

Lu Yuhong's smile stiffened. He clenched his teeth and said, "Don't worry, I will definitely not fail!"

"Humph! You had better not!" The servant lowered his head and the hall felt silence once more.

Chapter 705 - Ash Line Grass Transaction

After almost a month, Xiang Ziyue returned to Midmorning City. The Hidden Fog Sect naturally had their own businesses in such a large regional city. Once he arrived, he didn't rest for long before he gave an order, "Immediately contact Sky Declaring Pavilion and request a meeting with Mister Ning Qin. Remember to be careful and do not show any disrespect!"

This matter was related to the evolution of the dark star ice serpent, the highest level secret of the Hidden Fog Sect. Besides the high level figures of the sect, only a few other people knew about it. The manager in charge of their Midmorning City industries was surprised, but he didn't dare to reveal anything. He said, "Yes, I shall immediately handle this."

Watching the person leave, Xiang Ziyue's frown still didn't relax. There was still a period of time before the deadline of a month was reached. He feared that the grandmaster would be unhappy.

If his audience today was refused, he could only start preparing other plans. Before he came, he had already been granted permission by the sect to offer more in order to obtain the ash line grass ahead of time.

He hoped things would be completed smoothly. He didn't want to disappoint the expectations of his teacher and the sect.

...

Yun Die quietly waited outside the laboratory doors for a long time. Her head was lowered in a respectful manner.

After some time, array formation runes on the door began to extinguish themselves. Qin Yu pushed open the door and walked out. "What is it?"

He looked up and rubbed his forehead, a weary look on his face.

He had been busy healing his injuries these past days and there were also several missions he needed to 'look after', so he was feeling a little exhausted.

Yun Die revealed a look of admiration. Teacher was teacher; he never stopped studying and learning in his lifetime!

"Teacher, the Foreign Affairs Division relayed a message saying that someone from the Hidden Fog Sect has come and would like to request an audience."

If it were anyone else, Yun Die wouldn't have come to disturb teacher. But, the Hidden Fog Sect's status was inevitably different.

As one of the top sects of this region, no matter what the goal of their trip here was, they needed to be given due respect.

Qin Yu stopped rubbing his forehead as he revealed an awkward expression. Luckily, Yun Die's head was still bowed in respect, otherwise if she saw her teacher's expression then the perfect image she had of him in her mind would have collapsed.

It seemed he really had forgotten...

He had been busy with restoring his injuries and also busy with completing the various missions so that he could exchange the rewards for things he needed, but, the most basic reason he forgot was that he never placed the Hidden Fog Sect's request in his heart to begin with...cough cough, the main reason was because it was just far too simple.

Luckily, there was still some time before the deadline. Qin Yu suppressed these thoughts and said, "Tell the person from the Hidden Fog Sect that I am conducting an experiment and cannot leave for now. Tell them to return in three days."

Yun Die bowed, "Yes, teacher."

...

Upon hearing that Mister Ning Qin refused to meet him, Xiang Ziyue's heart tightened. Luckily, the manager's following words allowed him to let out a long breath of relief. Looking at this fellow, no matter how good his temper was he still couldn't help but become angry. He thought of holding the manager down and giving him a good beating.

“I understand. You may leave now!”

The manager shrunk back his head. Although he had no idea what mistake he had made, from Xiang Ziyue’s sharp glare just now, it was clear there had been a problem.

He quickly rolled away.

Xiang Ziyue took a deep breath and rapidly composed his thoughts. He stood up and started pacing back and forth. He couldn’t be sure as to what Mister Ning Qin’s thoughts were.

He was likely feeling some dissatisfaction, otherwise he wouldn’t have asked him to come back in three days. Still, there shouldn’t be much anger, otherwise he could have completely refused to see him before the deadline arrived.

Thinking about this, Xiang Ziyue relaxed. From this, he believed that as long as he displayed sufficient sincerity in three days and offered a generous enough gift to Mister Ning Qin as an apology, then there wouldn’t be any issues.

...

On the first floor of the testing building, Yun Die was earnestly reading through the daily diary of a beast trainer. The records inside were somewhat random, but it contained all of the experiences and experimental thoughts of a beast trainer. To her, this was simply a rare ‘holy scripture’.

Teacher didn’t have enough time or energy in a day, so how could he truly teach her? Luckily, as teacher’s disciple, she now possessed an extraordinary status within the Midmorning City branch division. At the very least, it was easy for her to borrow all sorts of rare and precious ancient texts.

Yun Die had a solid beast trainer foundation to begin with. After obtaining these ancient texts, she was like a sponge, wildly absorbing nutrients. As long as no one disturbed her, she could study for hours on end.

Teacher originally said he would see the person from the Hidden Fog Sect in three days, but for some unknown reason he pushed it back by another day. Yun Die thought things over for some time before taking this diary with her to the first floor and reading it over there. She didn’t want teacher to not be able to find someone if he needed assistance.

The internal communication tool rang out loud, awakening Yun Die from her reverie. She furrowed her eyebrows. After a pause, she raised the phone and heard Yan Jiao’s voice, “Senior-apprentice sister, fellow daoist Lu would like to see you about something.”

Yan Jiao’s tone was calm, but Yun Die could hear the slight bitterness in her words. Regarding this, she could only feel helpless.

But she had already agreed to see him earlier, and Yun Die wasn’t the type of person who went back on her word. She said, “I understand. Ask fellow daoist Lu to wait a moment.”

These past days, Lu Yuhong often searched for excuses to see her. Although there was always something to discuss, his true intentions were made clear.

Yun Die originally thought that once this mission was completed, Lu Yuhong would leave and the two of them would have no connection. This was the best case outcome for her. But with Yan Jiao's actions lately...perhaps she needed to express her stance ahead of time. She didn't want any cracks to appear between her and this little sister who had followed beside her all this time.

Glancing at the laboratory doors and seeing that they were still closed tight, Yun Die stood up and walked out. Since she was only going to speak for a moment, she should be back soon.

But not long after Yun Die left, the array formation runes on the door dimmed down and Qin Yu walked out. He glanced around and furrowed his eyebrows. Then, he walked out.

He had become accustomed to Yun Die's thoroughness. Since she wasn't here, she must have some other matters to attend to.

"Teacher!" When he left the first floor, he encountered one of his secret disciples. This was a youth with soft gray hair. His expression was respectful and also excited.

It took Qin Yu some time to recall this disciple's name. He ridiculed himself a little. Although he only accepted these disciples in order to hide his identity, he might have been a little too irresponsible in the way he treated them.

"Yun Chuan, have you seen Yun Die?"

The one responsible for liaising with the Foreign Affairs Division was always Yun Die.

Yun Chuan's face flushed red. "Te...teacher, senior-apprentice sister Yun Die is receiving a guest in the front reception hall right now." He clearly never expected that someone as small and unnoticeable as himself would be treated so gently and warmly by his teacher.

Qin Yu nodded. "Continue with your work."

He walked away. In his heart, he thought that perhaps he needed to take on some of the responsibilities of a teacher. Although he only had some minor knowledge about this beast trainer occupation, helping these secret disciples should still be simple.

In the reception hall.

Yun Die sat on a sofa. She responded to Lu Yuhong's questions and remembered the minor details he proposed.

"I've really troubled Miss Yun Die. It's just that this matter is an important test that my family has given to me. I cannot allow any accidents at all." Lu Yuhong had an apologetic look. "After this mission is over, I hope that Miss Yun Die gives me a chance to express my regards."

Yan Jiao's eyes darkened.

Lu Yuhong turned around. "Of course, there is also Miss Yan Jiao. You are welcome to join too."

"Ah..." Yan Jiao was surprised and overjoyed. If it weren't for the fact that Yun Die hadn't nodded, she was afraid she would have immediately agreed.

On the opposite sofa, Yun Die indifferently said, "Fellow daoist Lu, I am only standing here in place of teacher to do the duty I was entrusted with. You don't have to take it to heart."

Lu Yuhong's expression was sincere. "Miss Yun Die, after this mission I will inherit my family. I have no idea whether I will be able to come back to Midmorning City..."

He wavered as he spoke, his star-like eyes filled with hopeful expectation.

One couldn't help but admit that with Lu Yuhong's background and status, his incomparably handsome appearance, and also his kind and amiable manner, all of this combined together was enough for most women to drown in him.

But Yun Die was an exception. She didn't frown, but annoyance flashed in her eyes. This person's stubbornness had already started to disgust her.

Lu Yuhong was surprised. He believed that although there wasn't much time, he had laid down sufficient preparations in these past days. Even if Yun Die wasn't truly moved by him, she should still have a favorable impression.

But now, it seemed that reality was differing from his expectations. He absolutely could not allow Yun Die to speak words of rejection, otherwise it would be far more difficult to romance her in the future.

"Miss Yun Die..." Lu Yuhong spoke first. But before he could finish speaking, Yun Die's frosty complexion completely melted away. She stood up and moved towards the entrance, bowing as she said, "Teacher, you've come."

Lu Yuhong let out a long breath. He thought that this Mister Ning Qin had come at just the right time.

He hurriedly stood up. Following behind Yan Jiao, he bowed and said, "Lu Yuhong greets Grandmaster Ning Qin!"

His expression was one of perfectly interwoven excitement and happiness.

This was the expression one should have after a joyful surprise. Lu Yuhong naturally didn't forget such minor details.

Qin Yu nodded, "This is?"

Yun Die respectfully said, "Teacher, some time ago you took on a mission to cultivate some spiritual objects. This fellow daoist Lu is the representative of the petitioner."

Her words were cold and distant.

"I took the liberty to visit, but I never thought I would see Mister Ning Qin today. It is truly my good fortune!" Lu Yuhong excitedly said.

Qin Yu glanced at him. "My apologies, but there are other matters I must attend to today. I won't be bothering fellow daoist Lu."

Lu Yuhong never imagined that this Mister Ning Qin who had been given such great advantages would actually be so indifferent towards him. He hurriedly said, "If that's the case, I will bid my goodbyes first."

Yun Die stood motionlessly. “Yan Jiao, bring fellow daoist Lu away.”

When the two left, she glanced at Qin Yu, a hesitant look on her face.

A moment ago, did teacher realize anything? Would he be unhappy?

After all, in Yun Die’s eyes, to be able to follow by teacher’s side was already the greatest possible fortune.

To waste time and energy on anything else was simply unforgivable.

“Yun Die, inform the person from the Hidden Fog Sect to come if they have free time today.”

Fortunately, it seemed her teacher didn’t care at all. Yun Die relaxed a little. “Yes, teacher, I will go immediately.”

Chapter 706A – First Attempt Failed

The anxious and disturbed Xiang Ziyue finally received a message from Sky Declaring Pavilion. Without delay, he headed straight to Rising Lake Manor.

“Miss Yun Die...” There was an expectant look in his eyes.

Yun Die bowed, “Fellow daoist Xiang, my teacher is inside, please follow me.”

Xiang Ziyue was pleasantly surprised. “Miss, please lead the way!”

He straightened his clothes. After determining nothing was out of place, he followed right behind.

Yun Die walked into the lobby of the lakeside building first. “Teacher, the Hidden Fog Sect’s Xiang Ziyue has arrived.”

Xiang Ziyue took a deep breath. Without bothering to look ahead, he bowed and said, “The Hidden Fog Sect’s Xiang Ziyue greets Mister Ning Qing. This was a presumptuous visit and I apologize if I showed any disrespect. I ask Mister Ning Qin to be broad-minded and forgive me!”

Qin Yu waved his hand. “I understand your purpose for coming. The three ash line grasses have been completed. If you find nothing wrong upon inspection, then take them away.”

Xiang Ziyue was stunned. Where was the anger? Where were the attempts to embarrass him and make things difficult for him? Without any reaction at all, he was let off so lightly?

No, this isn’t right, something definitely isn’t right! Is this a test that the grandmaster is giving me? Is he trying to see whether or not my Hidden Fog Sect is being sincere to him?

This was the most likely scenario!

Looking at Qin Yu’s calm and indifferent expression, Xiang Ziyue took a deep breath and his attitude became even more respectful. “Grandmaster, the entire Hidden Fog Sect knows that we are indebted to you and thank you for the favor you’ve done for us. Before coming to Midmorning City, my sect prepared a gift for you and I hope that you will accept it.”

A light flashed and a silver-white suitcase appeared. A faint halo circulated on its surface, periodically condensing into runes that dispersed moments later. The suitcase itself was a mystery on its own.

Xiang Ziyue placed the suitcase on the table with both hands and kept his head lowered motionlessly.

His heart beat violently in his chest. Beads of sweat formed on his forehead.

The situation was far too different from what he expected. Although Grandmaster Ning Qin seemed warm and amiable right now, he feared that if he did anything wrong, he would thoroughly offend him.

If things really reached that step, Xiang Ziyue could imagine that even if he was his teacher's disciple, he would still be struck into the dust, with no hopes of ever recovering.

This suitcase in front of him was the greatest sincerity that he could put forth. But when the grandmaster looked at him, it seemed as if he had no intention of opening it.

More and more sweat appeared, so much that it flowed down the corners of his eyes, leaving behind a stinging pain. Xiang Ziyue blinked his eyes furiously and bowed even lower. "Grandmaster, my sect feels nothing but the greatest gratitude and good intentions toward you. I ask that grandmaster accept this gift!"

Qin Yu was a bit surprised. He looked at the anxious Xiang Ziyue and felt a bit confused. This was simply giving a gift; was there a need to be so nervous?

Moreover, he had already completed his transaction with the Hidden Fog Sect. They had stated that they would trade ten ash line grasses for seven blue marvel orchids, so there wasn't any need for them to further prepare gifts for him.

But, this young man was acting incredibly nervously, as if he would be punished by the heavens if Qin Yu didn't accept this gift. Qin Yu lightly coughed and said, "If it's like this, then I would like to thank the Hidden Fog Sect for their good intentions."

Xiang Ziyue let out a long breath of relief. It was like he had just been pulled away from the precipice of death. Only now did he discover that his robes were drenched in a cold sweat.

"Thank you, grandmaster!"

He cupped his hands together and bowed deeply.

At the side, Yun Die's eyes brightened and flashed like stars as she looked at Qin Yu. This was her teacher's posture when facing outsiders? Even the Hidden Fog Sect was awed by him, so much that they felt such incredulous joy at him accepting their gift.

...This could only be called a coincidence, a wonderful misunderstanding.

Qin Yu didn't notice the look of worship in his disciple's eyes. He picked up a jade box and placed it next to the suitcase.

"I originally planned to see you in three days, but an accident occurred during that time period. The result shouldn't be bad, so take a look yourself."

After receiving a gift from the other party, Qin Yu felt that he should give an explanation. Of course, given how highly the Hidden Fog Sect valued these ash line grasses, even if they gave him a gift they wouldn't be suffering a loss.

Xiang Ziyue respectfully said, "Grandmaster, your status in itself is the best insurance. I shouldn't have been disrespectful, but this matter is just too important to the Hidden Fog Sect. So, if grandmaster was offended in any way, I ask for your forgiveness."

Yun Die revealed a curious expression. She also wanted to know what the Hidden Fog Sect requested from her teacher that caused them to treat this situation so seriously.

The jade box opened. Three ash line grasses wrapped in transparent bubbles appeared. Their leaves were covered in silver textures. Besides that, there was nothing exceptional about them.

Ash line grass?

Yue Die was puzzled. After growing past a certain number of years, ash line grass would evolve and its leaves would develop a sort of silver-white textures on them.

But for this kind of ash line grass, while there weren't too many of them, they were far from being considered precious. With the Hidden Fog Sect's strength, they could obtain as much ash line grass as they wanted. Why would they lower themselves because of this and respectfully ask teacher to help them?

Across the table, Xiang Ziyue had a solemn look. He used both hands to pick up an ash line grass with reverence and gently inspected it. Using the method his teacher taught him, he felt the mysterious and formidable strength contained within it.

That's right!

But when Xiang Ziyue inspected the third ash line grass, he suddenly froze in place. This was because the thick silver lines on the leaves actually had golden dots embellishing them.

After a long time, he looked up at Qin Yu with vivid excitement. "This...this is..."

Qin Yu nodded, "There were some changes in this ash line grass during the cultivation process. This is the reason I asked to delay for another day."

Xiang Ziyue flushed red. He bowed deeply and said, "Grandmaster, rest assured that the Hidden Fog Sect will surely give you your due reward for this ash line grass...I thank you from the bottom of my heart!"

The mysterious strength contained in this silver-white ash line grass with golden dots was over ten times richer.

If there was only a 50% chance of the dark star ice serpent making a breakthrough, then the chances were at least 90% this time. Without accident, it would be able to take another step forward, reaching the highest level recorded in the history of the Hidden Fog Sect.

Based on this alone, the value of this ash line grass was incalculable!

Qin Yu waved his hand. "Enough. If there are no other problems, take it and leave."

"Grandmaster, this junior bids his farewells!"

Xiang Ziyue was even more respectful. He sighed inwardly. This was truly a grandmaster level existence. His character and demeanor crushed the heart. But the more the grandmaster was like this, the greater the rewards that they needed to give him. They had to make the grandmaster understand that the Hidden Fog Sect would never neglect him.

Yun Die brought him away. After leaving Rising Lake Manor, Xiang Ziyue turned and bowed. "Miss Yun Die, there is no need to send me out. I will say my goodbyes to you here!"

He quickly rushed away. He needed to return to his sect as soon as possible. He didn't want to delay at all!

Looking at his back, Yun Die furrowed her eyebrows together, baffled by what just happened. When she returned to the lakeside building and saw her teacher sitting on the sofa, she tried to hold in her curiosity but in the end cautiously said, "Teacher, I am a little confused."

Qin Yu knew what she was referring to. In truth, he wanted to say that he didn't know what was happening either.

But generally speaking, he could correctly guess that this ash line grass was extremely important to the Hidden Fog Sect.

At this time, facing his only true disciple and having just awakened his heart of a teacher, Qin Yu thought that he should give a small explanation.

After thinking for a moment, he said, "What you see before you might not be the truth. For instance, that ordinary ash line grass might have another universe within it."

Seeing Yun Die's eyes light up with curiosity, Qin Yu decided that he couldn't say anything anymore. Otherwise, he was afraid he would give away the secret. He sighed and said, "If you have any questions, think about it yourself first. That will be far better than me telling you directly."

"I must return to my laboratory. As usual, if there isn't anything important, don't allow anyone to disturb me." He picked up the suitcase and left.

Yun Die bowed. When her teacher left, she stood in place and pondered what just happened. The more she mulled over her teacher's words, the more she felt that countless mysterious truths were contained within.

"I wonder when I can catch up to teacher...no, perhaps reaching even half of teacher's strength will be enough for me to struggle for the rest of my life..."

Although Qin Yu guessed that the gift the Hidden Fog Sect had given to him must be valuable, he was still left shaken by what he found inside.

Thousandheart grass. This was a formidable spiritual object used to treat soul injuries. It took a thousand years to mature and was rumored to keep the soul from dying, preventing the final trace of one's true spirit from dissipating.

Solid origin wood. It formed within 10,000 year old trees that were raised in lands rich with heaven and earth spiritual energy. After an incredibly long period of time, a piece as thick as a finger appeared in the heart of the tree. It had the ability to consolidate a cultivator's origin energy and enhance their blood energy.

River beast egg. This was a kind of special spirit beast that was cultivated by beast trainers and didn't exist naturally qto begin with. Every year this spirit beast laid an egg, but this egg wasn't used to produce descendants. After a cultivator ate this egg, they could borrow the boundless vitality inside to permanently increase their lifespan by 500 years.

There were only these three treasures within the suitcase, but each one was priceless. Besides the river beast egg that was useless to Qin Yu, the Thousandheart grass and solid origin wood were exactly what he needed.

In particular, the former. Once it was strengthened by the little blue lamp, its potency would surely rise. It might be able to preserve his life in a critical moment...this was because Qin Yu wasn't able to determine whether or not he could find a means to truly cure himself before his soul reached its limits.

If he failed, this thousandheart grass might save his life!

Because of Zhou Li, he thought he had accidentally drawn out trouble from the Hidden Fog Sect. But now, it seemed that the benefits outweighed the disadvantages.

Chapter 706B – First Attempt Failed

For the next several days, Yun Die was deep in concentration studying. She refused Lu Yuhong's requests to meet several times. Even when Yan Jiao helped him out, Yun Die still didn't change her mind.

In the manor where guests were received, the handsome and delicate Lu Yuhong was sprawled back against a sofa, his face deathly pale and streaming with sweat.

There was struggle in his eyes. They flashed with decisiveness several times before rapidly fading away.

Lu Yuhong took a deep breath and sat up with difficulty. His shivering fingers picked up a phone and he dialed the same number that he had dialed repeatedly before this.

A connection was soon made. A sweet yet melancholic voice sounded out, "Brother Lu, are you looking for senior-apprentice sister again? Today she went into the laboratory with teacher."

Lu Yuhong stiffened and the phone crashed to the ground. The heavy crash caused the connection to cut off.

In that moment, Lu Yuhong was a drowning man whose last hope had slipped through his fingers. He gasped for breath.

After an unknown period of time, the sound of footsteps rang out. Lu Yuhong's body shook and he looked towards the servant who was walking toward him with fear.

"This mission has failed." The servant said without expression. His eyes glared at Lu Yuhong, as if he were looking at a dead man walking.

It was unknown where the strength came from, but Lu Yuhong leapt onto his feet. He fervently implored, "I beg you...please ask master to forgive me...ask master to give me some more time...as long as I have three days, just three days...I can definitely complete the mission...please!"

The servant sneered. "Yun Die simply doesn't like you. Even if I gave you another month, the result wouldn't change...and plead for you? I never had any thoughts of dying with you!"

Lu Yuhong was about to say something when endless fear gushed out from his eyes. But right after, he calmed down. He slowly sat down on the sofa and lightly said, "Send a message to Sky Declaring Pavilion. We're leaving."

The servant respectfully bowed, "Yes, master."

Moments later, Lu Yuhong and the servant exchanged greetings with the Foreign Affairs Division cultivators and bid their farewells.

After leaving Midmorning City, the two people landed in a dense forest. The calm Lu Yuhong looked as if he had his soul and all of his vitality sucked out of him. He slumped to the ground like a pool of rotten flesh.

To the side, the servant had a tranquil expression as if he already expected this. He coldly watched as Lu Yuhong's flesh and blood rotted away. Soon, all that was left were bones.

But at this time, a massive amount of blood gushed out from the servant's mouth and nose. It was like a dam that had been broken, simply impossible to stop.

The servant fell to the ground. Before horror came over his face, he had already frozen. His flesh and blood rotted away until nothing was left but bones. Then, two black masses of gas flew out from the two sets of bones. Following that, gray flames appeared from midair and the bones of the servant and Lu Yuhong were reduced to ashes.

What the flames destroyed were not just their bones, but their remnant auras too. Everything was erased, as if these two people never existed in this world.

With this, even if some mighty figure came to ask about them, they wouldn't discover anything...from the start, regardless of whether this mission was a success, these two were abandoned servants that were destined to die!

The two masses of black gas wove together in midair, condensing into a blurry figure. She looked towards Midmorning City, a serene expression in her eyes.

Her first attempt had failed, but this didn't matter. What the Dark Parliament wanted, the Dark Parliament would obtain...sooner or later. It was just that through the senses of this puppet, she felt a faint trace of restlessness...

"Ning Qin..."

Leaving behind that last whisper, she looked at Midmorning City once more. Then, she turned and vanished from sight.

...

It was a broad and magnificent hall that was hundreds of thousands of feet high. It stretched forward for an unknown distance. It was buried deep beneath the earth, unknown to the outside world.

Suddenly, the faint sound of footsteps resounded in the hall. Because it was too spacious and too empty, the sounds echoed and overlapped with each other, sounding like a surging wave as they moved forward.

The bright and dust-free ground was like a massive mirror, clearly reflecting the figure walking above it.

His body was tall and slender, and each movement he made exuded a disdainful and lonely feeling. It was as if he stood upon the peak of this world, and there was no foe that could contest his power.

But, an invisible strength wrapped around his face. What was reflected from the ground was also nothing but a blurry shadow. Only his calm eyes could be seen. They were calm and still, as if they had never changed since ancient times.

After an unknown length of time, the man came to a stop. What stood in front of him was a giant stone door, as if it were a gate that led to the gods. It was over a hundred thousand feet tall, and anyone who stood before it seemed smaller than an ant.

Without hesitation, he placed a hand on the stone door and slowly pushed it open.

Quietly, the stone door opened to reveal a small slit.

Although it was a slit, it was still several thousand feet wide. It was enough for hundreds of people to walk through together. Behind the door, there was nothing but eternal darkness.

Cold, dry, lonely, an absolute silence!

The man didn't walk in. He drew back his hand and remained outside the door, as if he were waiting for something.

After several breaths of time, a blood red light lit up from the eternal darkness. It was like a tumbling sea of blood, capable of swallowing everything. It was so large that even the slit through the stone door couldn't show the full picture. All one could see was a blood red color that horrified the mind.

"What have you come for?" A deep voice rang out. It carried with it a torrential flow of killing intent and hate. The voice tumbled through the hall, causing everything to shake and tremble.

The man waiting outside had his hair sent flying against the wind, dancing around him. His robes were like liquid metal as they clung tight to his body.

But his eyes remained calm.

"We've found a Great Sun realm Grand Expert outside."

The terrifying aura behind the stone door stagnated for a moment. Then, there was a cold sneer. "A Great Sun realm cannot be called a Grand Expert!"

The man's voice was tranquil. "This man created a new species. I have personally inspected it. This newly created species is stable and it contains an incredible potential for growth."

To create a new species, have that new species survive in a stable manner, and also be able to grow and further evolve, this was the standard criteria of judgment for the Grand Expert boundary.

Behind the stone door, there was another brief silence. The hall fell deathly silent.

“Why do you help me? Are you not scared that I will rush out there and swallow you!?”

The man’s eyes were without fluctuation. “If you can do that, I would be gratified.”

“Humph!” There was a cold cough from behind the stone door. “I will believe you this one time!”

The man nodded. He turned around and walked backwards. It was only when he was a long distance away that he came to a stop.

“Coward!” With a laugh, terrifying rumbling sounds came from behind the stone door. It was like stars were exploding.

The darkness behind the stone door surged like a tsunami. A vortex rapidly appeared. Then, a terrifyingly sharp claw, one glowing with a metallic sheen, stretched out from that vortex with difficulty and hooked against the stone door.

Buzz –

A violent trembling sound erupted. Runes began to shine all around the stone door. What appeared next was blinding purple lightning. The lightning appeared from every single rune, flooding out in one direction. Finally, they gathered together and blasted the claws that had hooked against the stone door.

The violent power of thunder raced along the claws after plunging into the stone door. The darkness behind dissipated a little. Faintly, one could sense that what lay behind the claws was an incalculably large arm that was covered in scales. It was unknown how long this arm was, but eventually it disappeared into the infinite darkness behind it!

Roar –

Behind the stone door, there was a howl of pain and anger. The sharp claws that pulled against the stone door were slowly pulled back, a little at a time.

Although things were still quiet as before, the air remained oppressive and disturbing. Listening carefully, one could hear harsh grating sounds from behind the door.

The runes on the stone door grew even brighter and more purple thunder appeared. It linked together, forming a terrifying pool of thunder.

A horrifying annihilating aura erupted outwards. It was like a great sun of thunder was rising from deep below the earth!

Thunder leapt across every inch of that giant arm in the darkness. The scales started to crackle and shatter. Faint traces of dark red blood seeped out.

Under the ravaging destruction of thunder, the blood constantly evaporated. But, it never completely disappeared, only became increasingly pure, like threads of red spider silk.

Driven by an invisible strength, the tiny strands of blood constantly flowed forward. They converged in front of the raging thunder, condensing into a blood bead the size of a palm.

“Give this blood to him. If he cannot even discover the problem, then this is his life-taking curse!”

The arm shook and the blood bead flew out from the lightning. When it fell onto the bright and clean floor, it created the sound of colliding metal and stone.

It had already coagulated into a blood red jade the shape of a water drop. It was pure and flawless throughout.

The claws loosened. The purple lightning on the stone door rapidly diffused and it soon closed shut.

The man reached out a hand, taking the blood jade on the ground. He glanced at the stone door once more. Then, without pausing, he turned and left.

The sound of footsteps gradually faded away. The hall deep underground returned to tranquility once more.

Chapter 707 – Soul Injuries Worsening

Rising Lake.

Qin Yu didn't stay in the laboratory. He sat on a balcony of the lakeside building, leaning back against a sofa as the crisp wind brought over the faintly sweet fragrance of the grass and trees.

But even this satisfying environment couldn't alleviate the heaviness in his heart. His eyebrows were slowly furrowed together, like a mountain range pressing against itself.

He hadn't found a way to heal his soul injuries yet. Everything before this he had only been able to extend the period of time he could last.

Some time ago, Feng Qing had sent over a strange jade that was highly useful to his soul injuries. But because of this treatment, it seemed that the precarious balance he had been maintaining had been broken.

To put it simply, yesterday, Qin Yu's soul injuries had suddenly worsened!

If someone could look into his soul space right now, they would discover that the soul there which was wrapped by the Chain of Stars was rapidly fading away.

If he couldn't recover, then at this speed, at worst he would have half a year and at best he would have one year before his soul weakened to the point where he fell unconscious.

At that time, what awaited him was nothing but death!

He originally thought he still had a lot of time, but this sudden accident had disrupted his plans. This was destiny. It wasn't something he could choose, only something that he had to withstand.

Right now, Qin Yu's most urgent need was to find a way to treat his soul injuries.

The jade piece that Feng Qing gifted him before was certainly the best choice. But since no further news reached him these past days, he knew that the chances of finding any more were decreasing with each day.

“Hah!” Qin Yu sighed and took a deep breath. After suppressing the tumbling thoughts in his heart, a look of resolve filled his eyes.

Everyone had times of weakness, but this sort of feeling could be relieved by venting a little. After all, people needed to look forward into the future and not wallow in the past.

There was the sound of footsteps. Qin Yu didn’t need to turn his head to know who it was.

Yun Die respectfully bowed, “Teacher, someone from the Hidden Fog Sect has come. They hope to see you as soon as possible.”

As a disciple, it was essential to her daily duties to be able to observe the moods and attitudes of others. Although teacher never spoke much, she knew he had a good impression of the Hidden Fog Sect.

If it weren’t for that, she wouldn’t have disturbed her teacher who was clearly in a bad mood.

As expected, though he frowned, he nodded and said, “Bring them in.”

Yun Die nodded and left.

Qin Yu stood up and returned to the first floor. Not long afterwards, Yun Die returned with two people following behind her.

These were two people he had met before. One was Xiang Ziyue and the other was Old Wei.

The two of them were travel-worn. Their eyes were reddened and their faces were flushed with anxiousness.

Before they came to a stop, Old Wei already asked out loud, “Mister Ning Qin, the Hidden Fog Sect has encountered a great difficulty. We ask grandmaster to please help us!”

Qin Yu furrowed his eyebrows. “Mister Wei, just what has happened? I have no idea how to answer if I don’t know the exact situation.”

Old Wei glanced at Yun Die.

Qin Yu lightly said, “She is my disciple so she naturally has my trust. If Mister Wei doesn’t wish to speak here, then please return.”

Yun Die lowered her head and didn’t speak, but in truth her heart was moved. As she thought, her teacher was cold on the outside and warm on the inside. Although he seemed to think little of his disciples most of the time, the truth was that he cared much for them.

However, the Hidden Fog Sect was not an ordinary influence and Yun Die didn’t hope to provoke any trouble. She bowed and said, “Teacher, I will go to prepare some tea.”

Qin Yu said, “You stay here.”

If this were any other day, he might understand the privacy of the Hidden Fog Sect.

But now, since he could clearly feel the aura of death shrouding him, he was in a very poor mood...if they wanted to speak then they could speak. If they didn't want to then they could leave!

Yun Die respectfully said, "Yes, teacher."

She stood to the side. Since her teacher had expressed his stance, she could only comply.

Old Wei's complexion was ugly. He took a deep breath and squeezed out a smile. "It was I who didn't consider things. If I was disrespectful in any way, I ask for you not to blame me."

Qin Yu said without expression, "Mister Wei, let's not waste anyone's time. Please tell me what you want."

Old Wei's face stiffened.

Xiang Ziyue never thought that the atmosphere would take a rapid turn and deteriorate so quickly after just meeting. This was completely contrary to their intentions in coming here. But since his back was against the wall, he couldn't care about their difference in status anymore. He hurriedly said, "Grandmaster, we have no intention of provoking you. We came here in hopes that you would help us and take a trip with us to the Hidden Fog Sect."

He clenched his teeth and continued to say, "One of my sect's spirit beasts has experienced an accident while in the process of rising to the next level. It is currently in a very dangerous situation...if grandmaster is willing to help, then my Hidden Fog Sect will be truly grateful and will surely give you the most sincere repayment for your efforts."

The meaning behind these words was basically: as long as you help, you can set the conditions.

Qin Yu's complexion stagnated. After a brief pause he shook his head and said, "I apologize, but I have an extremely important matter to attend to right now and cannot leave."

Xiang Ziyue fell to his knees. "Grandmaster, no matter what, I ask you to help!" The Hidden Fog Sect had already tried every possible method. Qin Yu could be called their last hope.

If he refused to help, then...just thinking about the consequences left him shivering.

Qin Yu frowned. "There could be said to be a happy cooperation between me and the Hidden Fog Sect. Normally, if I could help then I wouldn't stand by. But right now, I cannot waste my time. I ask you to understand."

Old Wei paled. "Mister Ning Qin, my Hidden Fog Sect's spirit beast only suffered an incident after taking the ash line grass you provided. You cannot just stand by and do nothing!"

Qin Yu looked up. "Are you sure that the reason is the ash line grass I provided?"

Old Wei froze.

Beside him, Xiang Ziyue revealed an angry look.

If it weren't for the high level figures of the sect ignoring his teacher's advice because of their own wild ambitions, then things wouldn't have come to this point!

Although the two didn't reply, the answer was already made clear.

Qin Yu closed his eyes, his expression faint, "Yun Die, see our guests out!"

Old Wei still wanted to say something, but he was pulled back by Xiang Ziyue. Xiang Ziyue forced a smile and said, "Grandmaster, it was we who were impolite today. If you change your mind, then my Hidden Fog Sect will respectfully await your honorable self at any moment."

Yun Die gestured a hand, "Please follow me."

After sending the two people of Rising Lake out, she returned to the lakeside building. Looking at her teacher who was leaning back against the sofa with his eyes closed, she revealed a worried expression.

Although she didn't know what the reason was, she could feel that her teacher was in a bad mood. Just what had happened?

Qin Yu opened his eyes and saw her worried look. His heart warmed a little and he said, "I'm fine, you don't need to worry about me."

Yun Die earnestly said, "Teacher, while I am weak and cannot compare with you, if there is anything I can do, please allow me to help. As your disciple, this is one of my duties."

Qin Yu nodded. "Alright. There is something you can help me with right now. Prepare some invitations; I will be inviting guests tomorrow." As he spoke to her, he slapped his forehead. "You can prepare the name list of guests yourself. Choose them from people who sent gifts recently."

Feng Qing was stunned. Without even a name list, he wanted to welcome guests? This was the complete opposite of teacher's normal temperament, and seemed far too superficial.

This banquet...did teacher have some other arrangement?

But being smart, she didn't inquire further. She respectfully bowed and said, "Yes, teacher, this disciple will immediately begin arrangements." Although everything was rushed, with the current status of Rising Lake Manor, unless the people invited had their heads stuck in a wall, there was no way they wouldn't come.

However, she was afraid that there wasn't enough manpower to help set up the venue...well, she would let the Internal Affairs Department sort this out...

They had initially offended teacher and were looking for a chance to atone. If so, they would surely do their best.

Chapter 708 – The Beast King War of the Seven Sects

Rising Lake issued invitations to entertain guests at a banquet tomorrow evening.

Not only did Sky Declaring Pavilion become restless upon learning of this, but so did the entirety of Midmorning City.

Although Sky Declaring Pavilion didn't issue a conclusive announcement, Mister Ning Qin's grandmaster level strength was without doubt. To be invited by such a character was a great honor!

As invitations were being sent out from Rising Lake, Yun Die held one and arrived outside another manor. After being stopped by the guards, she calmly said, "I am the disciple of Rising Lake's Mister Ning Qin. I am following orders to send an invitation and invite Miss Feng Qing to attend the banquet tomorrow evening."

The guard quickly bowed. "So it was Miss Yun Die. I apologize if I offended you just now! I will immediately pass on a message to the lady. Please wait here for a moment."

He turned around and walked into the guard post, picking up a phone and dialing a number. After several respectful words, he hung up and stepped back out, saying, "Miss Yun Die, please follow me!"

Yun Die nodded and expressed her gratitude before following the guard.

Miss Feng Qing's manor wasn't large, but it was constructed in a delicate and elegant manner. Green trees and red flowers contrasted against each other, making one feel as if they were walking through a painting.

"Miss Yun Die." Zhou Li walked around a corner.

The guard fell to the side. After respectfully bowing, he withdrew.

"Miss Zhou Li." Yun Die smiled, a bit of surprise in her eyes. Compared to when she first saw Zhou Li, her cultivation had risen tremendously.

She was indeed worthy of being the personal maid of Miss Feng Qing. Her talent was outstanding.

However, as she thought about the possible connection between Zhou Li and teacher, she didn't find this unusual.

With her teacher's status, how could anyone mediocre enter his eyes?

Zhou Li smiled and said, "The miss has asked me to come here and bring Miss Yun Die inside."

She gestured a hand, "Please follow me."

Yun Die smiled and nodded.

"Miss, Miss Yun Die has arrived." Zhou Li said as she stood at the entrance of the reception pavilion.

Feng Qing said, "Enter."

Yun Die took a step in. She bowed, "I greet Miss Feng Qing. This is an invitation from my teacher for tomorrow's banquet. If Miss Feng Qing is free, please grace us with your presence."

A light flashed in Feng Qing's eyes. "Has Mister Ning Qin said why he is holding a banquet tomorrow?"

Yun Die shook her head, "Teacher has not given an explanation."

Feng Qing received the invitation. "I will certainly be there tomorrow."

Of course she would go!

The most likely explanation was that this banquet was nothing but a cover.

Qin Yu wanted to meet with her...

She just didn't know what was happening that he would go through so much trouble to see her.

But as it happened to be, she also had some information she wanted to report to him.

Yun Die stood up and bid her farewells. Feng Qing said, "If the banquet is tomorrow, you may be a bit pressed for time. Since Rising Lake doesn't have much experience in handling such matters, do I need to send some people to help?"

"Then I will thank Miss Feng Qing. I was originally planning on going to the Internal Affairs Division after leaving here." Yun Die said, expressing her thanks.

Feng Qing nodded. "Zhou Li, go with her to Rising Lake and assist in the preparations for the banquet tomorrow. Make sure to do your best."

"Yes, miss." Zhou Li's eyes sparkled. Although she was in awe of Mister Ning Qin, being able to enter Rising Lake and help organize the banquet was an honor in itself.

Perhaps she would be able to see the grandmaster one more time.

The next day, the banquet proceeded smoothly. At the same time, the inexperienced Zhou Li completed her tasks. Even though she had help from others, she still felt honored by the opportunity.

What left Zhou Li even more overjoyed was that the miss had ordered her to stay at the banquet to assist Yun Die in dealing with any situations that might pop up.

Most of the guests had already entered the venue without any mistakes. Zhou Li let out a long breath of relief, and at the same time she heard the same exhaling sound from beside her.

Yun Die turned around and their eyes met. They simultaneously smiled, suddenly feeling much friendlier with each other.

"Miss Yun Die, you have no idea how many people envy you for being able to become Mister Ning Qin's disciple." Zhou Li smiled as she spoke.

Yun Die said, "This is indeed my life's greatest fortune. But Zhou Li, for you to follow by the side of Miss Feng Qing is also a great lucky chance."

Zhou Li nodded. Her eyes swept across the audience, pausing for a moment on the Rising Lake disciples that were busily greeting the guests. As she thought about the miss' promise from before, she suddenly asked, "Miss Yun Die, are all of Mister Ning Qin's disciples here?"

Yun Die shook her head. "No, there is still one person who isn't here. Strictly speaking, he is the first disciple that teacher received. He was following by teacher's side before he joined Sky Declaring Pavilion. His name is Qin Yu and he has the trust of teacher. Right now he should be helping teacher collect some experimental materials."

"Qin Yu?" Zhou Li suddenly gasped out loud, disbelief all over her face.

Yun Die was surprised, "What, does Miss Zhou Li know him?"

Zhou Li's thoughts were a mess. "It should...just be the same name...the Qin Yu I know is only an average person..."

Although she said this, for some unknown reason she felt that these two names represented the same person. If so, and he was currently residing at the Midmorning City branch division, why was he hiding from her?

...

Not long after the banquet began, Qin Yu greeted some guests before finding a reason to excuse himself. Moments later, he sat across from Feng Qing. The room was quiet, completely isolated from the noisy atmosphere outside.

"Miss Feng Qing, the reason I caused such a commotion today was because there are some matters that I hope you can help me with."

Seeing Qin Yu's dignified expression, Feng Qing's heart tightened. She said, "If you have any requests, I will do my best as long as it is within my power."

Qin Yu nodded, "I need treasures that can repair the soul. The higher the quality the better, the higher the quantity the better. Do you understand?"

Feng Qing's complexion changed, "You..."

Qin Yu had a helpless expression, "Not too long ago, the jade piece you sent me was very helpful. But it was exactly because of it that the balance within my body was touched and my soul injuries started to worsen. But I can assure you that I will be fine for the time being."

"Ah!" Feng Qing cried out loud. She didn't expect that this matter would be related to her. She paused and then anxiously said, "So, if you can obtain more of those jade pieces, you can restore your injuries?"

Qin Yu's eyes brightened. "You've found it!"

Feng Qing took out a jade slip. "I just obtained this news yesterday and was planning on informing you today. Take a look at this jade first and tell me if it's the same as what you need."

She poured her magic power inside and a light projection appeared. Although it was only a phantom, because of how skillful the recorder's techniques were, one could even sense a faintly cold aura coming from the image.

Qin Yu leaned forward and his breathing deepened. From one glance, he could determine that this was the same as the jade piece he had obtained before. The difference was that it was much larger and shaped like a diamond. If it was cut apart, it could make at least a dozen of the previous jade piece.

"That's right, it's the same jade." He didn't say much more. Since Feng Qing asked him to take a look, she must have verified it already.

Feng Qing was elated. But then, she helplessly smiled, "If this was in the hands of others, I would have purchased it no matter the price and given it to you. But, it has already been announced that this will be one of the final rewards for the winner of the Beast King War of the Seven Sects."

“It is rumored that this jade has an extremely vital function for spirit beasts and as a result it has attracted a massive amount of attention. Even if the competition were to end, it would still be difficult to obtain it.”

Qin Yu’s heart sank. “There really isn’t a plan?”

Feng Qing forced a smile, “I dare not lie to you.”

Qin Yu didn’t doubt this. He fell silent as his thoughts raced. Soon, he grasped a key point.

Beast King War of the Seven Sects. It was almost impossible that the victor would sell this jade. If so, then the only method was to personally participate, become the champion, and obtain the jade himself!

“Tell me more about the Beast King War of the Seven Sects.”

Feng Qing thought for a moment and said, “Sky Declaring Pavilion’s main sphere of influence is the First Moon Mountain Range. To the east, beyond the mountains, there is an incomparably vast and fertile plain that is occupied by seven great sects.

“These seven sects have been fighting each other for many years and have tried to annex each other, but none of them have ever been successful. After great turmoil, in order to prevent all sides from losing too much strength and allowing other factions to take advantage of them, they decided to set up the Beast King competition to settle disputes between the sects.

“The so-called seven sects are Radiance Temple, Moonkeep Tower, the Limitless Sword Sect, Witchcraft Sect, Typhoon Mountain, Blue Origin Sect, and Hidden Fog Sect. There is less than half a month before the Beast King War begins.”

Qin Yu’s eyes brightened. Hidden Fog Sect!

He suddenly thought about Old Wei and Xiang Ziyue who had come requesting help. Without accident, this should be related to the Beast King War that was about to begin.

“Feng Qing, please make the arrangements for me. I need to make a trip to the Hidden Fog Sect!”

...

Old Wei and Xiang Ziyue returned to Hidden Fog Mountain with news that Qin Yu had refused to help. The high level figures of the sect who had been holding onto this last strand of hope suddenly turned deathly white.

The Hidden Fog Sect Master looked at the high level figures in the hall. His eyes were cold, as if he wanted to tear all of these people apart.

Originally, he didn’t approve of the radical plans that these people had of pushing everything forward without a care for safety. But, due to their insistence, he could only choose to agree.

It would be a lie to say he didn’t feel regret. If he were tougher, if he were more resistant to their complaints, then things wouldn’t have come to this point.

This was supposed to be a dark star ice serpent capable of protecting the sect's foundation for tens of thousands of years, but like this it had been ruined. What the Hidden Fog Sect lost was not just this – it was also the Beast King War that was about to begin!

“The ash line grass was provided by Ning Qin. Now that problems have occurred, he has absconded of any responsibility!” An Elder said with resentment thick in his voice. “Does he think that he won't have any more worries with Sky Declaring Pavilion backing him? I propose that we utilize every method at our disposal to force him to lower his head!”

The Hidden Fog Sect Master shouted, “Enough! Do you think that my Hidden Fog Sect doesn't have enough problems as is? This is a grandmaster level beast trainer. So what if we move against him? It will only thoroughly enrage him and create a massive danger for us in the future! Moreover, this accident has nothing to do with the ash line grass!”

The Elder paled with shame. He wanted to come up with a rebuttal but couldn't, and his face became even uglier to look at.

Another Elder said, “The Sect Master is correct. But, this matter involves such significant matters that we need to give the sect an explanation.”

“The dark star ice serpent failed to advance. Rong Wei was in charge of this, so he cannot escape responsibility.”

“We are simply voicing our opinions. Rong Wei is a permanent staff member and yet he couldn't discover any hidden dangers. As a result, he needs to bear the greatest responsibility for this accident.”

“Agreed.”

“Agreed.”

The Hidden Fog Sect Master looked at these high level figures in the hall. Even now they were trying to shift blame onto others. A sorrowful look entered his eyes.

Tens of thousands of years ago, their ancestors had fought until their bodies were bathed in blood. It was with great perseverance and skill that they managed to establish the orthodoxy of the Hidden Fog Sect and rule over a vast stretch of land.

But in this era, the will and vigor inherited from their ancestors had already faded away, leaving behind a group of plotters only interested in intrigue and manipulation.

This was a sign of the sect's decline and demise!

Thinking of this, the Hidden Fog Sect Master's vision flashed black. He clenched his fists, suppressing himself from cursing out loud.

Although he was the Hidden Fog Sect Master, his authority was limited. He had no means to overturn the agreement reached by all these high level figures.

The dark star ice serpent had failed to evolve and would die. This was a serious consequence and it would require an equally formidable scapegoat.

They would never let Rong Wei go.

Chapter 709A – I Will Leave

“Teacher, you must hurry and escape! The sect’s high level figures have given up on treating the dark star ice serpent; they want to push all blame onto you and make you a scapegoat!” A disciple entered the room and fell to his knees, tears streaming down his face.

“What!?”

“They were the ones forcing us!”

“Those scumbags!”

The disciples were enraged. But, terror was reflected in their eyes.

Xiang Ziyue paled, “Junior-apprentice brother Xu, are you speaking the truth?”

“It is absolutely the truth! This is something I accidentally heard from the Elder in my family. I didn’t even hesitate for a moment before coming here to warn teacher!” Junior-apprentice brother Xu remained on his knees. “Teacher, it is the sect that failed you, it is not you who failed them. Please don’t wait anymore and immediately leave Hidden Fog Mountain. If you don’t go now you won’t have any time left!”

Xiang Ziyue turned and fell to his knees. “Teacher, please leave!”

In the blink of an eye, numerous people fell to their knees across the room.

Behind his desk, an exhausted Rong Wei turned deathly pale.

He was still pouring his heart into curing the dark star ice serpent, but the high level figures of the sect were already impatient to cast him out as a sacrifice?

After several breaths of silence, Rong Wei gently sighed. “Stand up.”

Xiang Ziyue’s eyes widened. “Teacher...”

Rong Wei shook his head. “If I leave, what will happen to the rest of you?” He looked up through the window. “Moreover, I do have to bear some responsibility. If I was just a bit more cautious, the result wouldn’t have been like this...if the dark star ice serpent dies, what does it matter if I accompany it?”

...

As Rong Wei realized that catastrophe was inevitable, a flying shuttle stopped outside of Hidden Fog Mountain. There was a flash of light and the flying shuttle vanished, leaving three figures in its stead.

The first person wore black robes that covered his body. A female cultivator with lavender hair stood behind him; her beauty was unparalleled.

The last one was a middle-aged man of average build and with an expressionless face. The feeling he gave off was as if he were a moving block of human-shaped ice. He emitted a chilling feeling.

The lavender hair woman looked at the map in her hands. She respectfully said, "Teacher, we have arrived. This place is Hidden Fog Mountain."

Beneath the black robes, a calm voice sounded out, "Send the greeting card."

The lavender hair woman nodded. She took out a jade card and poured magic power into it. With a flash of light, it sank into the void.

Faint ripples appeared in the space before them, proliferating in all directions. It was like a calm lake surface being blown by a spring breeze.

The greeting card had already passed through the barrier and entered the Hidden Fog Sect. The lavender hair woman turned back around. She believed that with her teacher's status, the Hidden Fog Sect would soon open their doors and welcome them inside. But in practice, the situation was different from what she expected. Time slowly passed and the Hidden Fog Sect didn't respond.

The purple hair woman flushed red. She spoke in a low tone, suppressing the anger in her voice, "Teacher, the Hidden Fog Sect is too presumptuous!"

With her teacher's status, he had the qualifications to enjoy the highest level of reception no matter where he went. To send a greeting card and still receive no response after such a long time, this was simply unimaginable.

The black-robed figure paused for several moments. Then, a gentle voice responded, "We will continue waiting." He didn't believe that the Hidden Fog Sect would keep them out.

Moreover, the Beast King War of the Seven Sects was going to begin in less than half a month.

Although there were other options, borrowing the Hidden Fog Sect to accomplish his goal was the path with the highest chances of success.

...

The dark star ice serpent had failed to evolve and was dying. The one in charge of this matter, Mister Rong Wei, had arbitrarily changed the advancement plan on his own initiative and had committed a grave sin. As a result, he was to be severely punished by the sect and tossed into the dungeon where he would be held in custody until further notice. Once this matter was thoroughly investigated, a final verdict would be handed down.

When this news spread out, the entire Hidden Fog Sect was shaken. With the Beast King War beginning soon, the strongest beast of the Hidden Fog Sect, the dark star ice serpent, had encountered such an accident. No one wanted to think about what would happen next.

Could it be that the always prestigious Mister Rong Wei was actually a spy planted in their midst by outside influences?

For a time, rumors rose in all directions, guided by those with dark intentions. Soon these rumors became almost established fact, and the calls for the spy to be executed grew increasingly loud!

When Yu Yujin was born, he was given a name that meant honesty and righteousness. As his name suggested, he lived a careful and prudent way of life, never engaging in strife with others and always

living in peace. But when facing this incident where the sect had been betrayed and the sect's spirit beast had been harmed, he found himself fuming with anger. As a Protector who firmly confessed to all that he loved his own sect, he would never have allowed this sort of thing to happen.

The spy needed to die!

So today, he called numerous friends to join him on a protest march. They petitioned for the Sect Master and Elders to kill the traitor and defend the dignity of the Hidden Fog Sect.

The massive protest march finally aroused the interest of the sect's high level figures. Elder Xu made a personal appearance and made a solemn vow that the collection of evidence had reached a critical point and no one involved would escape.

Although he didn't speak directly, his attention was made clear. The numerous demonstrators cheered and shouted out loud, as if it was their efforts that caused these evildoers to receive the punishment they deserved.

Yu Yujin and his spirited friends drank and shouted for a long time. After a long period of celebration, it was only then that they discovered they had missed their work shift.

Although they didn't want to leave like this, the punishment for missing their work shift was far too severe. So after a quick apology, Yu Yujin rushed over to the Foreign Affairs Division and to a small office of his.

A wooden sign was hung outside his door. It read – Hidden Fog Sect External Communication, Room One. In truth, it was just a name that sounded a bit better than the actual job was. He was responsible for accepting greeting cards from outside. Then, they were judged according to a weighted system. Those unworthy of mention were tossed to the side and those that were more important were reported to the higher ups.

But those with strength would have already established communications before they came to visit the Hidden Fog Sect. Those that arrived and tried to enter with greeting cards were mostly common 'grassroots' cultivators who were trying to take advantage of the Hidden Fog Sect.

In short, nothing serious happened in his office. While Yu Yujin came in late, he wasn't too panicked.

After entering his office, he chatted with his colleagues. When he learned that the manager hadn't come, he finally relaxed.

He steeped a cup of tea for himself. After taking a deep drink, he walked to his desk.

A jade card had fallen quietly into the center of a miniature array formation. This was connected to the sect entrance's array formation and it would collect greeting cards and bring them here for further review.

Yu Yujin's cautious nature finally proved useful. When he saw the greeting card he suddenly felt a little anxious. He picked it up and took a closer look.

"Sky Declaring Pavilion, Ning Qin..." This name seemed somewhat familiar.

Not daring to be careless, he turned on the automatic identification system and placed the jade card within. It could automatically read information from the card.

Soon, a loud bell rang out. The people in the office who were happily chatting and laughing suddenly froze in place.

This...this was the greeting card of a top level character...it had been many years since they had heard this sound..

Everyone looked over and saw a deathly pale Yu Yujin. He was staring at the shining screen of information, sweat streaming down his body.

His first thought was, old heavens, why are you playing me like this? I have been careful for my entire life, and just when I let loose a little today, you gave me such a great surprise.

His vision flashed black and he collapsed back into his chair!

...

The quiet array formation of the Hidden Fog Sect finally started to stir. Like a parting sea, the array formation barrier opened up to reveal lofty mountains and numerous palaces and temples. A large number of cultivators were rapidly flying over.

“Mister Ning Qin, it is truly disrespectful of my Hidden Fog Sect to not have welcomed you!” The Hidden Fog Sect Master was all smiles but in his heart he was clenching his jaws and wishing he could tear those idiots in Room One to shreds.

Numerous Elders smiled in agreement.

Originally, they needed help from this person and he had even come to them on his own initiative, yet they had actually kept the door closed on him. This sort of cold reception was intolerable!

Looking at the tense expression of the lavender hair woman standing next to the black-robed figure’s side, everyone felt increasingly worried.

As if this was the calm before the storm!

“Hidden Fog Sect Master, could you not invite me in for a cup of tea?”

The Hidden Fog Sect Master’s smile brightened. “Hahaha, this is the honor of my Hidden Fog Sect. Mister, please!”

Yun Die was without expression. She was a little confused about why her teacher would lower his status and forgive the Hidden Fog Sect so easily. But, since her teacher had made his stance clear, she could only forcefully suppress the anger in her chest and follow close behind.

In the Hidden Fog Sect’s great hall, the Sect Master and numerous Elders lined up. Old Wei was there. He didn’t doubt the identities of Qin Yu or Yun Die, but he was curious about why the previously cold Ning Qin would suddenly decide to come to the Hidden Fog Sect on his own initiative.

Could it be that someone here had secretly made a move so that Ning Qin felt the pressure of the Hidden Fog Sect?

The Hidden Fog Sect Master smiled and said, "Although the spirit tea of my sect isn't too well known, we do have some treasured collections. For instance, we have several tea trees that grow near the blue marvel orchids, and their flavor isn't too disgraceful. I must ask Mister Ning Qin to give it a try."

A voice rose up from beneath the black robes. "I am not proficient in tea ceremonies nor am I particularly picky about the quality of tea leaves. So before I drink tea, I have something I would like to ask about, and I hope that the Hidden Fog Sect can consider it with an open mind."

After a pause, he continued to say, "Yesterday, Mister Wei personally came to Midmorning City and asked me to treat his sect's spirit beast. I would like to know if this spirit beast will be the one representing the sect and participating in the Beast King War half a month from now."

The Hidden Fog Sect Master replied, "Yes." He sighed. "At this time, there isn't a need to conceal things any longer. My sect has a spirit beast named the dark star ice serpent. It was supposed to be my sect's trump card in the upcoming Beast King War, but an accident occurred while it was evolving."

He cupped his hands together, "If Mister Ning Qin can save the dark star ice serpent, my Hidden Fog Sect will be truly grateful. You will be our eternal friend!"

So it really was true!

Although he had made a guess, it was only after obtaining confirmation that Qin Yu was able to relax. Since he personally came here, the Hidden Fog Sect must have had certain expectations already. Qin Yu didn't try to mislead or play games. He directly said, "I am willing to give it a try, but I have a condition."

The Hidden Fog Sect Master reached out a hand, "Mister Ning Qin, please feel free to speak!"

Qin Yu said, "If the dark star ice serpent is healed and is the final victor of the Beast King War, I want to take one thing away from the final rewards."

The hall fell silent.

The warm eyes of the numerous Elders suddenly turned sharp. A faint chill circulated in the air.

Old Wei bitterly smiled. He had really been overthinking things.

Qin Yu lifted the spirit tea and took a sip. His expression was calm as he said, "This is my only condition. If you cannot agree to it, then that's the end of it."

He didn't hide his reason for helping. But it was because of this that everyone understood his condition wouldn't change.

If they didn't agree, then he would simply leave.

Chapter 709B – I Will Leave

"Cough!" A Hidden Fog Sect Elder revealed a fake smile. "May I ask which item Mister Ning Qin has settled on?"

Qin Yu said, "I cannot comment at this time."

The Elder's smile froze.

The Hidden Fog Sect Master took a deep breath. "Alright, let's not have Mister Ning Qin see all of us as a joke. If the dark star ice serpent isn't healed, does anyone here think that my sect can win?"

His cold eyes swept across the hall, "Then, I will take responsibility for agreeing to Mister Ning Qin's request. Is there anyone here who has an objection?"

Silence.

The Hidden Fog Sect Master's heart untensed. Luckily, the stupidity of these people hadn't reached an unsalvageable level yet.

"Mister, the dark star ice serpent's situation is worrying. I ask you to help treat it as soon as possible!"

Qin Yu nodded, "Of course...but, your sect needs to find someone to assist me, someone who is familiar with the dark star ice serpent's condition. This will help me to understand its condition as soon as possible and avoid unnecessary examination time."

The Hidden Fog Sect Master's face froze.

Qin Yu furrowed his eyebrows. "What, is there a problem?"

"Haha, Mister Ning Qin's request is reasonable so my sect will certainly do its best. " Another Elder laughed as he spoke. "Si Jia has a clear understanding of the dark star ice serpent's condition. She can serve as mister's assistant."

The Hidden Fog Sect Master frowned.

"No, Elder Si, you are lying! The one most familiar with the dark star ice serpent's condition is my teacher!" A loud voice suddenly rang out. Xiang Ziyue rushed into the hall and fell to his knees. "Mister Ning Qin, please rescue my teacher!"

Elder Si's face darkened. "How dissolute! Where are the guards? Hurry and take him away!"

"Hold on." Qin Yu suddenly said. Following that, the guards that rushed into the hall were caught in a dilemma.

Elder Si's eyes were gloomy as he said, "Mister Ning Qin, this is an internal affair of my sect. Do you plan on interfering?"

Qin Yu lightly responded, "I have no interest in your sect's affairs, but I recognize this young man. His name is Xiang Ziyue and his teacher is Mister Rong Wei, right?"

He glanced at the Hidden Fog Sect Master and said, "According to what I know, the dark star ice serpent was being personally managed by Mister Rong Wei from the start. I just want to remind you that the more familiar the person is with the dark star ice serpent, the more time can be saved. And, the chances of success may also be higher."

A female cultivator in the hall suddenly walked forward. "That's right, Rong Wei is indeed the person most suited to assist Mister Ning Qin."

She bowed, "My name is Si Jia. If possible, I hope I can follow beside Mister Ning Qin and help with the dark star ice serpent's treatment process."

She had a cold and hard-to-approach temperament.

Elder Si's eyes widened. His complexion was ugly, as if he had eaten a fly.

The Hidden Fog Sect Master said, "Since this is the case, we shall allow Rong Wei to redeem himself with service and assist Mister Ning Qin in the treatment process."

He looked over. Qin Yu hesitated for a moment and nodded, "Miss Si Jia may also join us."

A smile appeared on Si Jia's cold face. She bowed and drew back.

Xiang Ziyue bowed his head to the floor repeatedly. "Thank you Mister Ning Qin, thank you!"

Tears flowed from his eyes. His teacher could be saved!

...

Walking out from the dungeon, the first thing Rong Wei saw was Xiang Ziyue standing in front of his numerous disciples. He had already learned the reason for this and he had an excited expression.

"Disciple welcomes back teacher!"

Although they hadn't been separated for more than one or two days, to them this had been like a life and death parting.

"Good, good!" Rong Wei's trembling hand landed on Xiang Ziyue's shoulder. He looked at his other disciples, "It was I who implicated you all."

"Teacher, please don't say that. This isn't your fault to begin with!"

"To follow teacher in cultivating is our good fortune!"

"Teacher is a righteous and virtuous man favored by the heavens. I knew you would be able to turn misfortune into a blessing!"

Rong Wei lifted his disciples up. At this time, he saw the Hidden Fog Sect Master standing to the side. After a brief silence he bowed and said, "I greet the Sect Master."

The Hidden Fog Sect Master had a guilty expression. "Rong Wei, it is the sect that has wronged you this time. But you can rest assured that the sect will give you sufficient compensation."

Rong Wei shook his head. "No need." After a brief pause he said, "If the treatment of the dark star ice serpent proceeds smoothly this time and I have earned sufficient merits, I will then leave."

The Hidden Fog Sect Master's face stiffened. After several breaths of time, he answered in a quiet voice, "Very well. I promise you this!"

Rong Wei cupped his hands together. "Thank you, Sect Master."

Thank you for letting me go. Thank you for letting me leave this place where I once wished to work for the rest of my life and also where I once wished to spend the rest of my life, yet in the end I had no choice but to leave.

....

In the dark and constrained hall, the flaming torches on the stone walls didn't seem to emit any heat. There was a round table in the center with six figures composed of flames sitting around it.

"The first attempt has failed. Next, I invite the leader of the attempt, Senator Jasmine, to announce the process and findings for everyone so that we may learn necessary information from it." Sage's coarse voice reverberated through the hall.

When he took a seat, Jasmine stood up and bowed towards everyone present. "Senators, in compliance with the rules of the Dark Parliament, I adopted a plan that directly acted against the target. I attempted to use the love between men and women to quietly control her. So, I dispatched..."

Following that was a summary of the mission. Because a trace of divine sense followed it, everyone clearly knew what had happened.

"As everyone heard just now, the chess piece I sent out failed. Yun Die's heart wasn't moved in the slightest, so other similar plans may be cancelled. Moreover, I have another point to remind everyone of. It is best if you give Sky Declaring Pavilion's Mister Ning Qin sufficient respect. If possible, I hope that the Dark Parliament doesn't become enemies with him."

Jasmine sat down.

Oriole's young voice sounded out, "Jasmine, that last reminder of yours...did you discover something?"

Jasmine shook her head. "No."

"So it's just a guess of yours?"

"I am only warning everyone. Whether you believe me or not, that depends on yourself."

Oriole sneered but didn't say anything else. "A long time has passed already. If we delay any further, I fear that more accidents will occur. I propose that we directly exert pressure upon Ning Qin and force him to hand over Yun Die!"

"I approve." Limitless drearily said.

Moon Shadow leaned back against his chair. Although he appeared to be close by, he seemed incomparably distant. He softly said, "The Parliament's existence has aroused interest recently. So, I believe it would be best if we complete this mission in secret and leave behind as few clues as possible."

Sage nodded. "I agree with Senator Moon Shadow's viewpoint." He swept his eyes around the table, "According to our most recent information, Ning Qin has brought Yun Die to the Hidden Fog Sect. It is likely that he went there to treat the dark star ice serpent that just failed its advancement. Perhaps this might be our chance."

Oriole impatiently said, "Let's vote. Senators that are in favor of taking direct action, raise your hands with me!"

Limitless, Lone Mountain.

Three votes!

Sage lightly said, "I was the one who initiated this parliamentary action, so according to the rules, I am acting as temporary speaker and I have two votes. Thus, your proposition is suspended and we will begin implementing the second set of plans. The goal is still Yun Die. As we carry out the second plan, I hope that all Senators present can suppress yourselves and not act out for the time being."

His eyes fell on Oriole and Limitless. As for Lone Mountain, he had no prior bad record.

"Two Senators, this parliamentary action involves significant actions. I hope you can abide by your pledge, otherwise I will use the rights of the speaker to punish you."

"Humph! You had best achieve your goal!" Oriole roared. Her figure immediately dispersed.

Limitless said, "This time, I won't do anything."

He was the second to leave.

Sage nodded. "The meeting has come to a conclusion. Senator Jasmine, if you aren't in a hurry, please stay for a moment."

Soon, only the two of them were left.

"Senator Jasmine, I thank you for staying behind." Sage nodded and went straight to the point, "I know that you possess some formidable perception ability. Just what feeling has Ning Qin given you...I've always felt that if you didn't think it was too important, you wouldn't have mentioned it in the meeting. Because sometimes, watching people suffer a little isn't a bad choice."

Jasmine was silent for a moment. Then she said, "Sage, you truly do have the ability to move the hearts of others. You are a terrifying person. That's right, the reason I warned them is because I had an intuition that if the Senators were allowed to freely provoke Ning Qin, it would create tremendous trouble, and this trouble might even spread to me."

Sage's flaming eyes revealed a dignified expression, "If something can give you such an oppressive feeling, then this must be taken seriously. I will do my best to prevent the Parliament from standing opposed to him. But if things cannot be avoided, the Parliament will focus its efforts to ensure that these hidden dangers are erased as swiftly as possible."

Jasmine bowed, "That is the right decision. Then, I will say my goodbyes first." As her voice fell, she dispersed into flames that flew back to the torches.

Chapter 710 – Treating the Dark Star Ice Serpent

Outside the housing area of the dark star ice serpent, Rong Wei saw Qin Yu. He immediately stepped up and cupped his hands together, deeply bowing, "I thank you for your help, Mister Ning Qin."

Not too far away, the coldly indifferent Si Jia's eyes vibrated. She had a good understanding of Rong Wei's disposition. Although he appeared warm and friendly on the surface, the truth was that he was a proud individual.

But now that he faced Qin Yu, what he felt was not just gratitude, but also a respect that came from the depths of his heart.

She glanced at Qin Yu's back. Though her complexion didn't change, there was more anticipation in her heart. If this person could make Rong Wei act in such a manner, he must have his area of expertise!

Beneath his black robes, Qin Yu calmly said, "The reason I helped you is because I need an assistant who is familiar with the dark star ice serpent. You do not need to act like this."

Facing this indifferent attitude, Rong Wei was even more respectful. "Yes, I will do my best to assist you in completing the treatment."

Since this person didn't want to speak any further, Rong Wei could only obey his will. But, a certain thought took form in his heart and became even clearer when Qin Yu seemed that he didn't want to 'take credit'.

"Mister Ning Qin, the dark star ice serpent is in the pool deep within this cave. But because it failed to evolve, it has lost control of its strength. If we enter we must be extra careful and carry some protection with us."

Rong Wei lifted his hand. Behind him, Xiang Ziyue took out five sets of gowns from a side closet.

"These are protective gowns prepared by the sect. They can resist the majority of the onslaught of strength so that our bodies aren't harmed. After we put them on we can enter."

Qin Yu nodded. Yun Die helped him put on the gown, and then a warm feeling immediately surrounded him.

Rong Wei held up a token and opened the spell leading to the cave. An ice cold aura flooded out. White fog appeared on the ground and the surrounding temperature rapidly fell.

"I am more familiar with the area so I will go in first."

Seeing Qin Yu nod, Rong Wei walked into the cave first. Qin Yu followed close behind.

The inside of the cave was covered in a solid sheet of ice. This entire place had turned into a world of frost. The layers of ice were translucent and blue in color. An illuminating array formation reflected across the surface of the ice, causing a dazzling light to refract everywhere.

But no one was in the mood to look at this beautiful light show. The temperature inside the cave was far lower than expected. It was like little needles, poking through every opening of the gowns' protections and piercing into the body before becoming an extreme cold that spread outwards.

This was an agonizing and numbing pain!

The deeper into the cave they went, the more terrifying the chill in the air became. At the front, Rong Wei came to a halt. Xiang Ziyue, who was walking behind him, still stiffly continued forward and nearly struck his teacher. He looked up to reveal a pale face.

"Te...teacher..."

Rong Wei revealed a heartbroken expression. "If you cannot bear it then say it sooner. If the strength of the dark star ice serpent invades your body, you will suffer!" He took off his gown and passed it to him, "Put this on. With my cultivation, I can last much longer."

Hesitating a little, he looked behind and said, "Mister Ning Qin, the rampaging strength of the dark star ice serpent is far more serious than I imagined. It was I who didn't consider the situation well enough. Perhaps it would be better if we left now and made more preparations before returning."

He had no idea what level of cultivation Qin Yu had. And for a beast trainer, relatively speaking their cultivation was often their weakness. Rong Wei didn't wish for Qin Yu to drop down before he even began the treatment.

Qin Yu shook his head, "It's fine." He also took off his gown. "Yun Die, put this on first. If you still feel ill, go outside and wait."

Yun Die hesitated for a moment. When she took her teacher's robes that were still warm with his body heat, her face flushed red and she quickly lowered her head, "Teacher, I can do it."

Qin Yu nodded, "Let's continue."

Seeing that Qin Yu didn't intend to leave, Rong Wei felt relieved. "Alright..."

"Hold on." Si Jia's cold complexion revealed a helpless look. In the eyes of these two people they only cared about their own disciples. Neither of them cared about her situation.

To Si Jia who had always been attentively thought of and cared for by those of the opposite sex, this felt a little uncomfortable. She said, "Everyone, I'm afraid I need to leave first."

Rong Wei had an apologetic look. When Si Jia had spoken out for him before, she had done a favor for him. Now, it seemed as if he had neglected her too much. "Very well. Si Jia, you leave first; we will wait for you at the pool."

Si Jia nodded and turned to leave.

Qin Yu revealed a surprised look. In his opinion, with Si Jia's cultivation she should definitely be able to withstand the cold temperature here. But, she did give off an unwell feeling.

Not thinking about it anymore, he continued to follow behind Rong Wei. Soon they reached the deepest part of the cave. The temperature here was even more terrifying. The ice was a foot thick and pure blue in color. As for the pool Rong Wei spoke of, it was completely frozen over.

Luckily, the water in the pool was clear. Peering through the layer of ice on top, one could vaguely see a dark shadow lying curled up in the depths of this frozen pool – that should be the dark star ice serpent.

There was a testing platform nearby. Even though it was protected by an array formation it was still covered with a light layer of frost. It was clear that no one had come here for some time already. After Rong Wei was tossed into the dungeon, the Hidden Fog Sect had basically given up on treatment.

Rong Wei took a deep breath and suppressed the anger in his chest. He quickly walked over to the testing platform and inspected the various tools himself. Fortunately, the continual revolution of the array formation had prevented the tools from being damaged. The thin layer of ice hadn't ruined anything.

Rong Wei adeptly controlled the tools to measure various data on the dark star ice serpent's condition. His complexion grew increasingly ugly as he did. Originally, he had used all of his strength to slow down

the backlash and prevent the situation from deteriorating. In the time he had been absent, the dark star ice serpent had taken a turn for the worse.

“Mister Ning Qin, this is the recorded data. Please take a look.”

Looking at Rong Wei’s complexion, Qin Yu could guess that the situation wasn’t good. He glanced over at Yun Die. She bowed and stepped forward, “Mister Rong Wei, please pass me the data.”

Her teacher never personally reviewed data. This was something she had long since become accustomed to.

She quickly swept over the figures and her heart tightened. She said, “Teacher, this dark star ice serpent’s vitality numbers have fallen extremely low and it has already fallen unconscious. Right now, its out of control strength is constantly harming it. Things don’t appear to be too optimistic.”

This was already a tactful summary. Without accident, the dark star ice serpent would reach the end of its life! And when its life was snuffed out, the rampaging strength within its body would be released, causing a tremendous show of fireworks!

Rong Wei bowed deeply, “Mister Ning Qin, please save it!”

Qin Yu’s complexion was difficult to look at. He didn’t care whether or not this dark star ice serpent died, but it was the key for his participation in the Beast King War. If it really died, he would have almost no chance of obtaining that jade.

He took a deep breath and suppressed his tumbling thoughts. “There will inevitably be deviations in the data obtained by tools. I will need to personally inspect it to determine whether it can be treated.”

Rong Wei hurriedly said, “I will immediately break open the layer of ice. I ask Mister Ning Qin to wait a moment!”

He activated the array formation. Runes lit up, their light condensing into beams that shot down. When it touched the layer of ice, the ice quietly disintegrated. However, not only did this light have no temperature, but when it appeared the surrounding temperature wildly dropped once more.

A pale blue light appeared around Rong Wei. He had no choice but to mobilize his cultivation to resist the invasion of cold air.

As for Yun Die and Xiang Ziyue, even though they each wore a gown, their complexions turned pale. It was obvious they were being attacked by the cold air.

Only Qin Yu stood still where he was. His eyebrows were furrowed together as if he were deep in contemplation about a treatment plan. He didn’t seem to notice the drop in temperature at all.

There was the sound of footsteps coming from the outside. Si Jia, who turned back halfway, had finally made her way back. When she arrived and saw the scene in front of her, she was left shaken.

Looking at Qin Yu once more, there was awe in her eyes. He didn’t even need to transfer strength to resist the chill in the air. Just how tyrannical was his mortal body? Even if he wasn’t a beast trainer, just this level of cultivation alone would still be astonishing!

At this time, the array formation runes started to dim down and the light beams that broke through the ice began to vanish. Rong Wei's complexion changed. He could no longer suppress the anger in his voice as he shouted, "They didn't supply enough energy to this laboratory!"

Because of the exceedingly lower temperature in the air, the vanished layer of ice began to reform.

Qin Yu frowned. He suddenly stepped forward, the ice breaking beneath his feet. Like a great bird, he leapt into the air and landed on the pool.

He could no longer wait!

"Teacher!" Yun Die cried out in alarm.

Following that, there were bangs from deep inside the pool. The layer of ice that had just reformed started to break apart as cracks rapidly spread through it like a web.

Qin Yu squatted down in place, his ankles submerged into the ice. Without any hesitation, he smashed at the ice.

Bang –

Bang –

The sound was like the galloping beat of a giant beast. The entire cave shook and the layer of ice began to break away beneath his fists.

Rong Wei's eyes flew open. He clearly never thought that such a scene would occur. He quickly regained his composure and horror crossed his face. "Mister Ning Qin, please stop! This will likely awaken the dark star ice serpent! With its strength having gone out of control, it has become extremely aggressive! This is dangerous!"

Yun Die paled, "Teacher, danger!"

Bang –

Qin Yu punched down again and again. The cracks in the ice spread downwards, reaching into the very depths of the pool.

The deeply slumbering dark star ice serpent suddenly opened its eyes. A cruel and terrifying aura erupted from its body like a volcano.

Roar –

With a loud howl, the layer of shattered ice was directly blown away. Visible shockwaves appeared, sending Rong Wei, Yun Die, and the others at the edge of the pool flying away.

A sour smell blasted against his face and a terrifying aura caused his robes to swirl around him. Qin Yu narrowed his eyes. Facing the massive open jaws in front of him, he lifted a hand and pressed forward.

The dark star ice serpent's eyes were filled with pain, viciousness, and destruction. But at this time, its body suddenly trembled as it felt the greatest level of suppression come from its very bloodline.

This suppression instantly subdued it. Even though its mind had fallen into illusion, it instinctively didn't dare to show even the smallest hint of insolence.

With a cry, the dark star ice serpent slowed down. It rushed to Qin Yu's side and curled up around his feet. And at this time, Qin Yu's outreached hand just happened to fall down on the top of the dark star ice serpent's head, gently stroking its silver-white horn.