

Chapter 2591 Murong Bing

The woman said nothing in response to Duan Ling Tian's suggestion, but it was obvious she had given her tacit agreement.

As they prepared to tackle the obstacles according to the instructions in the jade token, Duan Ling Tian asked, "I'm Duan Ling Tian, how may I address you?"

Seeing that the woman beside him was only following him silently without any intention to respond to his question, he could not help but frown and said rather unhappily, "I don't have any other intention, I can't keep referring to you as 'you' all the time, right?"

Finally, the woman replied in a melodious yet cold voice, "Murong Bing."

'Murong Bing? She's indeed cold*,' Duan Ling Tian thought to himself as he glanced at Murong Bing indifferently.

Soon after, they began to take on the obstacles in the Little World. These obstacles aimed to kill, but indirectly. The obstacles would try to separate both man and woman, which would result in their deaths. Once they were 1,000 meters apart, they would trigger the Yin and Yang Reversal Formation and a Killing Formation!

Although the two met various obstacles along the way, with the instructions from the jade token, they were able to overcome all of them. Although there were some obstacles that were difficult for Duan Ling Tian to handle, Murong Bing was able to handle it.

'This woman is truly strong!' Duan Ling Tian thought to himself as he witnessed her strength. He was far inferior to her at this moment. If she wished, she could kill Duan Ling Tian with just a single strike.

Whoosh!

At this moment, Duan Ling Tian discovered he and Murong Bing had been transported to another place again after successfully passing another obstacle.

'We should have arrived at our destination,' Duan Ling Tian thought to himself as he surveyed the place. They had arrived at a splendid golden hall of a temple with dazzlingly golden Buddha statues around the hall. Each golden statue of the Buddha had a statue of a graceful woman figure attached to it. These women statues were all in different postures, some of the postures were too embarrassing to describe. However, he had grown numb to it since he had since many statues like that during their journey.

On the other hand, Murong Bing did not even spare the statues a glance. Instead, her attention was focused on a stone platform that stood in the middle of the hall. A bald monk could be seen sitting cross-legged on the platform. He looked moderately good looking and was wearing a red and gold kasaya. Like a statue, he sat with his eyes closed.

Duan Ling Tian could clearly sense there was no life in the monk. It was clear he had died for a long time now. "It's lifeless." He was not surprised the body had not decay since the bodies of Celestials were different from an ordinary man. Provided the body was not destroyed, it could last for millions of years.

"Binayaga!" Murong Bing said in a cold voice.

"Binayaga? Is that his name? Do you know him?" Duan Ling Tian was surprised.

"He was the powerhouse from Blissful Sect who created this Little World. It looks like the rumor is true. At that time, he was severely injured, and he had chosen the Little World as his resting place," Murong Bing said as she flew towards the monk. She took his Spatial Ring from his finger and dripped her blood on it to claim ownership of the ring.

Whoosh!

A Horsetail Whisk appeared in her hand.

'A Celestial Weapon! Moreover, it doesn't seem like an ordinary Celestial Weapon!' Duan Ling Tian could sense the Celestial Weapon was not common. When he extended his Divine Consciousness to probe it, he discovered it was about the same level as the Jasper Celestial Sword and the Universe Ruler.

"World Cleansing Horsetail Whisk!" Murong Bing exclaimed as she studied the horsetail whisk in her hand. The permanently icy expression on her face seemed to have thawed at this moment. A smile could be seen blooming on her face.

Duan Ling Tian who was looking at her could not help but fall into a daze when he saw her smile that was vaguely hidden by the veil. Her smile seemed able to light up cities!

Murong Bing seemed to be aware of Duan Ling Tian's gaze and quickly assumed her usual indifferent expression. However, upon closer inspection, one could see the excitement in her eyes. After all, the World Cleansing Horsetail Whisk was one of the three Guarding Sect Celestial Weapons of the Compassion Celestial Traveller Sect!

Duan Ling Tian who was aware of the change in Murong Bing said as he looked at her, "This Celestial Weapon is not ordinary."

Usually, Murong Bing would have ignored him. However, due to her good mood, she replied, "This is the World Cleansing Horsetail Whisk. It's a Guarding Sect Celestial Weapon from my that was lost for over a million years. Of course, it's not ordinary."

Duan Ling Tian looked at Murong Bing as he said, "The Guarding Sect Celestial Weapon of your sect?" Then, he shifted his gaze to the lifeless monk and added, "So your Guarding Sect Celestial Weapon had been lost for over a million years because it was taken by this powerhouse from the Blissful Sect?" He recalled the two passersby he met in Blood Specter City had said the Little World had been around for a million years.

Murong Bing looked at Duan Ling Tian coldly, she did not deign to answer his question.

However, based on her expression, Duan Ling Tian knew the answer to the question. He knew his words were like pouring salt on her sect's wound.

“Wasn’t he a Supreme Celestial King? Why would he die here?” Duan Ling Tian asked curiously. Although he did not know any Celestial Kings, he knew they were extraordinarily strong and hard to kill.

Similar to earlier, Murong Bing did not answer Duan Ling Tian’s question. She surveyed the hall before a frown appeared on her face as though she had discovered a problem.

Meanwhile, Duan Ling Tian extended out his Divine Consciousness and discovered Murong Bing had extended her Divine Consciousness as well and was sweeping it across the hall. It seemed like she was getting annoyed.

“It seems like she can’t find an alternative way to leave.’ It was not difficult for Duan Ling Tian to figure this out. His expression darkened when he recalled the last message in the jade token. ‘We still have two and a half months left before the Yin and Yang Reversal Formation and Killing Formation activate!’ He continued to use his Divine Consciousness to look for a way out, but it was in vain.

Apart from the lifeless Binayaga, the powerhouse from the Blissful Sect, and bunch of Buddha and women statues, Duan Ling Tian and Murong Bing were the only living beings.

Duan Ling Tian who had become impatient walked to Binayaga’s corpse as he complained, “This guy has died, and yet, he’s still causing trouble!”

“Hum!” A cold snort suddenly rang in the air.

Whoosh!

A gust of wind blew toward Binayaga, the powerhouse from the Blissful Sect.

Bang!

A loud explosion sounded as Binayaga’s corpse suddenly exploded.

“Oh, no!” Duan Ling Tian cried out as he stood next to Binayaga’s body. He said to Murong Bing, “Quick, retreat!” However, he was too late.

The moment Binayaga exploded.

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

Streaks of strange green lights shot into Murong Bing’s body before she could even react.

Chapter 2592 The Responsibility of A Man

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!

Duan Ling Tian managed to dodge when Binayaga’s body exploded, however, the streaks of green light still managed to enter his body.

“What’s this?” After the streaks of green lights entered Duan Ling Tian’s body, he discovered he was unharmed. It seemed as though the streaks of green light had just melted away. ‘Is this some kind of soul attack?’ However, he quickly dismissed this thought. ‘No, it doesn’t seem like it. It would have

moved toward my soul as soon as it entered my body if it were a soul attack. It seemed like the green lights burst into a shower of starlight the moment it entered my body...'

Duan Ling Tian could acutely feel the green lights sending sparks in his body. Soon after, it began to spark all over his body before fusing with it. He exclaimed, "What's happening?"

Duan Ling Tian felt his entire body was smoldering hot after it fused with his body. A persistent feeling of passion began to grow in his lower abdomen. He felt as though a pressure had been building up for a long time and was rioting for release! Realization dawned on him immediately. 'This... This green light is... that thing, right?'

Duan Ling Tian knew what the green lights would make him do. He cursed, "That monk from the Blissful Sect! I can't believe a Superior Celestial King would leave something this vulgar behind. He's not worthy of being a Superior Celestial King!"

While Duan Ling Tian was dealing with the intense heat in his body, Murong Bing who was also affected by the green lights began to experience a change as well. Her snowy-white skin that her purple dress did not cover was flushed red. Her eyes that had been clear and innocent began to cloud with some sort of emotion. It was as though an immaculate lotus had been tainted by mud.

'If this keeps up, I'm going to explode and die!' Duan Ling Tian tried his best to endure. However, as time passed, he felt his control slipping. He felt as though he was in a furnace and that he was going to burst at any time! He gritted his teeth, determined to ride through the hot passion that coursed through his body when he felt a pair of soft and gentle clinging on his neck. He acutely felt the heat emanating from the pair of hands.

The arms were fair and as smooth as velvet. They hugged him from the back like vines that refused to let go. They clung to him so hard as though they wanted to fuse with him.

Duan Ling Tian felt a heated breath wafting into his ear, followed by the sounds of Murong Bing's panting.

She said, "D-don't! D-d-don't touch me..."

A delicate body, as languid as a viper, pressed against Duan Ling Tian's back, trapping him tightly against her like a stubborn octopus.

She was squeezing him so tightly that even breathing was starting to become a challenge. He murmured, "P-please, y-you're the one... who's touching me..."

The smell of her skin wafted into his nose as the smooth and soft body pressed tighter against him. To his horror, Duan Ling Tian found the heat in his body had turned even hotter. The flames of passion soared in his body. He could tell he was about to lose control. His last ounce of rationality was about to disappear.

"K-kill me... Kill me before..." Murong Bing whispered through gritted teeth even though she was holding onto Duan Ling Tian stubbornly. Her eyes were clouded with lust. It was clear she was about to lose control as well.

"If there's any strength in me left... to kill you... I would have pushed you away first," Duan Ling Tian said wryly. His eyes landed on Murong Bing who was now writhing in his lap. He could feel his mind falling into a daze.

"What a powerful aphrodisiac... Not even my Celestial Origin Energy nor the power of my soul could fight it..." Duan Ling Tian muttered. He had tried to resist the spreading light with his Celestial Origin Energy and his Soul Energy, and yet, it was futile. "With power like this, no wonder she's in worse condition than I am..."

Duan Ling Tian watched as the last light of clarity gradually disappeared from Murong Bing's eyes as his smile turned bitter and helpless. She had fallen victim to the green light first, therefore, she was in a worse state.

It did not take long before the last shred of rationality left Murong Bing. A few seconds later, Duan Ling Tian followed suit.

After the loss of control, the two became puppets of the aphrodisiac. Their figures blurred and intertwined and moved in a frenzy.

The environment around them kept shifting. One moment they were in the gilded hall of the temple, the next, they were outside in the wild, laying on grass as green as emerald. After that, the copulating pair reappeared among the valleys. However, they did not show any signs of stopping their actions. It seemed as though they would never tire of it.

The valley the pair had appeared in was the entrance to the Little World. Usually, there would be spatial turbulence, but at this moment, the void was calm. The difference was too stark. It even seemed as though the entrance to the Little World had disappeared at this moment. Indeed, the Little World had disappeared the moment Duan Ling Tian and Murong Bing gave in to their lust.

Time trickled by quietly.

Three hours later, a scream pierced through the stillness, followed by a loud crash.

Within the valley, two figures who were intertwined so tightly before abruptly separated. The taller and stronger figure was sent flying, hitting the wall of a mountain.

Duan Ling Tian let out a pained cry as he felt his internal organs shook. He spat out a mouthful of blood. Fortunately, this brought clarity back to his mind. He opened his eyes and was greeted by the sight of a beautiful naked figure. However, his eyes were glued to the almost-negligible crimson stain between the woman's thigh. He could not help but laugh bitterly. He knew what this meant.

"How dare you defile me! I'll kill you!" An icy voice rang in the air. Murong Bing clothed herself in a flash before she appeared before Duan Ling Tian.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!

Streaks of lights shot out of her finger that was merely inches away from Duan Ling Tian's forehead. If it was any closer, Duan Ling Tian would have died!

Murong Bing's eyes examined every inch of the handsome face before her, her eyes burned with icy anger. However, hidden beneath that was an emotion that was too complicated to describe.

The first thought that appeared in Murong Bing's mind when she regained her senses was to kill the man for deflowering her. However, she suddenly remembered Duan Ling Tian was also under the influence of the aphrodisiac. It was not entirely his fault. Moreover, if she did not try and destroy Biyanaga's body, none of this would have happened. In fact, if one were to think about it carefully, she was the one at fault. With these thoughts in mind, she no longer felt the urge to kill Duan Ling Tian.

Meanwhile, Duan Ling Tian did not even manage to react when Murong Bing made a move. He thought he would die when she suddenly stopped her movements. He could not help but heave a sigh of relief.

"The things that happened earlier were out of my control," Duan Ling Tian said as he looked into Murong Bing's eyes that were burning with rage. He sighed before his expression turned solemn and he swore, "But as a man, I'll take responsibility for what happened." Although he harbored no intention toward her, he had deflowered her against her wish after all. It was a fact he could not ignore. He was a proud and dignified man who would not shirk his responsibility!

As soon as Duan Ling Tian finished speaking, Murong Bing and her terrifying aura vanished without a trace.

"She left?" Duan Ling Tian was stunned. Since Murong Bing was many times stronger than him, he could not catch her movements when she left.

Suddenly, Murong Bing's steely voice that was as cold as an iceberg rang in the air. "Don't ever let me see your face again because I'll kill you if I see you," she warned.

It seemed that she had left as soon as she finished speaking.

Duan Ling Tian took a moment to register the fact that she had truly left. "I'll find you one day," he murmured under his breath before saying in a domineering tone, "Any woman whom I've slept with will forever be bound to me."

The only two clues Murong Bing left for Duan Ling Tian were her name and she hailed from a sect that used to possess the World Cleansing Horsetail Whisk. He would use these two clues to track Murong Bing down.

Chapter 2593 Duan Ling Tian, the Blue Moon Heavenly Celestial!

'Did the Little World disappear?' After Duan Ling Tian regained his senses, he wandered around the alley. Although he was not sure if the Little World had disappeared, he had no doubt the entrance was gone.

"Ke'er, Little Fei'er, Tian Wu..." He murmured under his breath. Regret could be seen on his face as he thought about his two wives and Feng Tian Wu whom he already regarded as a wife as well. His women were all waiting for his rescue in the Divine Offering Land, and yet, he just had relations with another woman. He truly felt remorseful.

After wallowing in his remorse, Duan Ling Tian finally decided to leave the valley and return to the Bloody Specter City. He had barely mobilized his Celestial Origin Energy when something caught his

attention. “Hmm?” It seemed like there had been a change in his Celestial Origin. Most importantly, it seemed to have risen a few levels!

“My cultivation base has risen four levels! What happened?” Duan Ling Tian inspected himself and discovered he was now a Blue Moon Heavenly Celestial. It was four ranks higher than a Crimson Moon Heavenly Celestial!

“I’m damn sure I was merely a Crimson Moon Heavenly Celestial before I blacked out. Since I used my Divine Consciousness at that time, I can confirm I was a Crimson Moon Heavenly Celestial,” Duan Ling Tian reasoned, “Is it possible the sudden and strange improvement is due to the result of my.... Well, my encounter with her after losing control? Did the process help improve my cultivation?” This was the most logical explanation he could come up with. The strange improvement in his strength was likely related to that mysterious woman.

Upon thinking about that, the image of Murong Bing’s voluptuous figure appeared in his mind. That woman was mysterious and tremendously strong. Duan Ling Tian muttered to himself, “Who is she? Someone with that strength couldn’t have come from Bloody Specter City or the Nine Specters County!”

Bloody Specter City was a city under the governorship of the Nine Specters County. There were many cities like Bloody Specter City. There were nine major settlements, including Bloody Specter City, that encircled the county like fiefs guarding their kings. These cities were mandated to send an annual tribute of large numbers of Celestial Stones for protection and support from the county.

Duan Ling Tian had learned all these from the waiter in the restaurant in Bloody Specter City. For all these reasons, he concluded Murong Bing might not be from Nine Specters County.

‘If only I was conscious back then. It would have helped me understand what happened during the process that allowed me to improve this much,’ Duan Ling Tian mused to himself.

Naturally, this was just a fleeting thought. If he had managed to retain his consciousness and control back then, he would not have involved himself with another woman in the first place. However, now that he was entangled with that woman, he was determined to take responsibility like a real man. It was just as he had said; every woman whom he had slept with would belong to him and no one else.

“There’s no point speculating. Regardless of how it happened, it’s still a good thing,” Duan Ling Tian muttered to himself.

“I should go to the Black Dragon Army’s camp. With the captain’s identity token, it shouldn’t be difficult for me to join their ranks and take up the position of captain. At that time, I’ll be able to enjoy one of the best cultivation environments here. It’s only second to the cultivation environment in the City Governor’s estate! After my cultivation base improves, I’ll leave Bloody Specter City and check out the Nine Specters County. Step by step, I’ll look for even better places in the Spirit Overarching Heaven to cultivate.” His eyes shone with determination and a sense of purpose.

Success would not come to those who did not plan. Duan Ling Tian who had gone through many trials and tribulations knew this very well. What he needed to do now was to find the best place to cultivate and resources for cultivation. He had to grow stronger as quickly as possible.

After all, Duan Ling Tian only had 1,000 years left to grow stronger. It seemed like a long time, but he knew many powerful beings in this realm could easily spend a few centuries to a few millennia in closed-door cultivation. 1,000 years were not long to the inhabitants of the Devata Realms.

A sharp screech ripped through the sky as Duan Ling Tian flew at top speed toward the Black Dragon Army's camp that was located northwest of Bloody Specter City. He was so eager that he had unleashed all his Divine Abilities and Celestial Methods so he could arrive faster. He even circulated his Celestial Origin Energy through his 99 Heavenly Veins and his most potent technique from the Sovereign Heart Sword. Moreover, he had also used the Devata Artifact, the Seven Orifices Exquisite Sword, that was hidden in his body and merged it with the Sword Formation he was riding on.

Duan Ling Tian was so fast that his speed eclipsed most Golden Celestials even if they used their Celestial Methods, Divine Abilities, and Celestial Weapons. Frankly, without these techniques, even the strongest Purple Moon Golden Celestial could not compare to his current speed.

"The Black Dragon Army's camp!" Duan Ling Tian cried out when he arrived at a long, undulating mountain range northwest of Bloody Specter City. The base was located in one of the two Celestial Stones mining reserves the city had owned.

The Black Dragon Army's camp was also located here to guard the reserve. Similarly, the Silverwyrms Army's camp was also located near a reserve to better guard them.

"This place is filled with Celestial Stones. I can feel how rich the Heaven and Earth Spirit Energy is," Duan Ling Tian exclaimed as he sensed the energy in the air around him. "If the energy is already rich here, how much richer would it be at the heart of the reserve where the Commander of the Black Dragon Army had set up his quarters?"

Upon thinking about this, Duan Ling Tian's eyes shone like the stars in the night sky.

All of a sudden, a bellow sounded from below. "Who are you? How dare you infiltrate our army base!"

This, naturally, attracted Duan Ling Tian's attention. He watched as eleven men clad in black armor ascended into the air from the distance. In a flash, they surrounded him, leaving him with no way to escape.

A middle-aged man with a fierce expression seemed to be their leader. After scanning the badge pinned to his chest plate, Duan Ling Tian narrowed his eyes. 'A decurion of the Black Dragon Army?' It was not difficult for him to guess since the badge was somewhat similar to the badge that belonged to the Decurions of the Silverwyrms Army. In addition, he had also gained information from the waiter in Bloody Specter City.

"Bring me to your commander," Duan Ling Tian said calmly despite being surrounded by 11 soldiers. He looked relaxed and unbothered as he met the eyes of the stern-looking man.

"The commander? Who are you? Do you know him personally?" The middle-aged man asked, his eyes widening slightly. Although he had spoken authoritatively earlier, his tone had softened considerably now. He was only a decurion, he did not want to risk offending a friend of the commander. After all, it

was not only him, but even the centurions and captains would not risk offending a friend of the commander.

Duan Ling Tian did not deign to answer his question. Instead, he brought the identity token he found in the Little World out. He revealed it with a flair for dramatic purposes.

“That’s the captain’s identity token!”

Not only did the decurion’s eyes widen, but the other ten men wore the same expression as well.

At this moment, the way the soldiers looked at Duan Ling Tian had changed as well.

“Sir, please follow me,” the middle-aged decurion bowed and led him to the camp as the other trailed behind.

They began to whisper among themselves.

“Do you think the identity token belongs to the captain who died in the Little World north of Bloody Specter City?”

“It must be! All the other nine Captains still have their identity tokens. Who else do you think this identity token belonged to?”

Chapter 2594 Better Than You

“Didn’t the commander mention that anyone who manages to retrieve the felled captain’s identity token would officially take over the position of a Captain of the Black Dragon Army?”

“This means this purple-clad young man will be our new captain, right?”

“However, all our captains are Golden Celestials. Do you think this purple-clad young man is that strong?”

“Well, it doesn’t matter if he’s a powerful Golden Celestial or not. We have to honor our commander’s words. Since he brought back the identity token of a fallen Captain of the Black Dragon Army, he’ll be given the position of a captain!”

“I guess you’re right. Our commander is not someone who goes back on his words!”

During the journey to the army camp, the soldiers trailing behind Duan Ling Tian and the decurion discussed this among themselves through Voice Transmission. Their discussion, naturally, revolved around Duan Ling Tian.

“However, this isn’t just about what the commander thinks, right? Even if he’s recognized as the new Captain of the Black Dragon Army, the other nine captains aren’t likely to acknowledge him.”

“Well, I don’t know about the other six captains, but at least three of them aren’t going to be happy about a stranger taking up the position so easily. After all, they had each trained a centurion who’s a Scarlet Sun Golden Celestial after all!”

“That’s right. It’s only natural that they want their own subordinates who are Golden Celestials to succeed the previous captain who died.”

“In other words, our commander will probably give him the position of captain, but it’s not certain if he’ll be able to hold onto the position for long. It’ll all depend on his skills.”

“That’s right. After all, there’s an unspoken rule among us that centurions who have become Golden Celestials have the right to challenge any of the ten captains to a duel. If the centurion won, he would take over the position of captain while the loser will be demoted to a centurion...”

The ten soldiers of the Black Dragon Army watched Duan Ling Tian’s back with shining eyes, wondering if this man would be able to hold onto his position as a Captain of the Black Dragon Army.

The decurion did not bring Duan Ling Tian to meet the Commander of the Black Dragon Army directly due to his low rank. For this reason, he had brought Duan Ling Tian to his superior, a centurion.

“Centurion, sir!”

The centurion looked old but was filled with vigor. He said to Duan Ling Tian, “Please wait for a moment while I report to my captain. He’ll be bringing you to our commander.” Similarly, the centurion’s rank was too low for him to bring Duan Ling Tian directly to meet the commander. After he finished speaking, he left Duan Ling Tian with the decurion who escorted him here and rushed off.

“Excuse me, sir...” The decurion’s eyes twinkled before he spoke about his soldiers’ discussion to Duan Ling Tian. The reason he was so forthcoming was due to his intention of befriending a captain. Even if this information amounted to nothing, the only thing he would lose was his time. It was a small price to pay. If his gamble paid off, he would be able to befriend a captain. Even if this man was not suited to be a captain, he would still be a centurion. Worst case scenario, this man would be given the position of a decurion like him. All in all, he had nothing to lose.

“So the commander will definitely make me a captain after he sees the identity token since he’s a man of his word. However, based on your words, among the ten captains, three of them will definitely feel dissatisfied since they want their respective subordinates, who are Scarlet Sun Golden Celestials, to take over the position instead. They will probably order their subordinates to challenge me for the position so they can take over the position? If I lose, I’ll be demoted to a centurion. However, decurions can also challenge centurions. And if I lose again, I’ll be further demoted? Interesting, even foot soldiers can challenge a decurion.” After a pause, he said, “Honestly, I’m not terribly in need of this information. However, I supposed I’m grateful that you took the time to fill me in.” He nodded to the decurion as a sign of thanks.

The decurion replied with a smile, “You’re welcome, sir.”

At this moment, a voice that was filled with arrogance and contempt rang in the distance. “Oh, so you’re the one who picked up Captain Huang Ji Bing’s identity token, huh?” The tone was akin to a master speaking to his servants.

A few moments later, two figures appeared before Duan Ling Tian. The man who was standing slightly farther away was the centurion from earlier. The other figure belonged to a middle-aged man clad in black armor.

The middle-aged man possessed a rather average build and even less interesting physical features. And yet, he managed to carry himself with such arrogance as though he was looking down on everyone.

'He must be one of the Captains of the Black Dragon Army,' Duan Ling Tian thought to himself when he saw the badge on the middle-aged man's chest. He, naturally, knew Huang Ji Bing was the captain who had died in the Little World and the former owner of the identity token that he currently possessed.

"This is my superior, Captain Jian Qiu Ping," the decurion explained through Voice Transmission, "He's also one of the three captains who's likely to be dissatisfied with you being made captain. In fact, among the ten, now nine, captains, he's the weakest. It's likely that he'll soon be replaced by a Scarlet Sun Golden Celestial centurion. I heard that one of his subordinates has recently become a Scarlet Sun Golden Celestial after going into closed-door cultivation. That man is planning to challenge a captain soon, and he'll probably win the duel. For this reason, I believe he would hate to see you being made captain."

"Wait a minute. Isn't this man your direct superior? Isn't it unfitting for a subordinate to expose him so thoroughly to me?" Duan Ling Tian asked via Voice Transmission as he looked at the decurion. He completely ignored Jian Qiu Ping and his patronizing gaze.

"Sir...?" Seeing the accusatory look in Duan Ling Tian's eyes instead of replying to Jian Qiu Ping's question, the decurion broke into cold sweat. Upon listening to Duan Ling Tian's words, he felt a gnawing in his conscience. He lowered his head, avoiding Duan Ling Tian's gaze. He was only trying to ingratiate himself to Duan Ling Tian, but it seemed like Duan Ling Tian did not appreciate it.

Little did the decurion know that the moment he exposed his superior to Duan Ling Tian, it had caused Duan Ling Tian to despise him. He would never trust someone like that. After all, this person might do the same thing to him in the future.

"Oy, didn't you hear me?!" Jian Qiu Ping bellowed as he looked at the purple-clad young man in front of him with a steely gaze. He managed to look calm, but he was seething inwardly! He was a Captain of the Black Dragon Army! How dare a youngster ignore him? He said tauntingly, "What? Do you really think you'll be made captain just because you found the identity token?" His expression turned unsightly as though Duan Ling Tian was his enemy.

"Correct me if I'm wrong," Duan Ling Tian said as he sized Jian Qiu Ping up slowly, "A mere captain doesn't have a say in whether I'll be made captain or not, right? Or are you implying your authority is as high as the commander?" He looked at Jian Qiu Ping dismissively.

Upon seeing this, Jian Qiu Ping's expression darkened immediately. He was thoroughly angered by Duan Ling Tian's words.

"You're seeking death!" Jian Qiu Ping roared in anger as Celestial Origin Energy surged out of his body and shrouded him. It seemed as though he had lost control after being provoked and planned to fight Duan Ling Tian now.

The centurion standing behind Jian Qiu Ping cried out in an attempt to stop him, "Captain Jian!" He quickly added, "The Commander will be furious if you attack the person who returns Captain Huang's identity token!"

Jian Qiu Ping withdrew his Celestial Origin Energy and glared at Duan Ling Tian pointedly. He sneered. "Listen up, punk. Even if the commander honors his words and makes you a captain, you better worry about holding on to your position."

"I don't know about the other captains," Duan Ling Tian replied flatly. "However, using you as a comparison, I don't think there's much I have to worry about. Even if I get replaced, it'll definitely happen after you're replaced."

Chapter 2595 The Commander of the Black Dragon Army

"You!" Jian Qiu Ping's blood was boiling when he heard Duan Ling Tian's words. His Celestial Origin Energy surged out again, a precursor to a violent fight. However, at the last moment, he recalled the centurion's words. He suppressed his rage with great difficulty and tried to calm down. Wounding or killing the brat before him would bring him instant gratification, but the consequences he would bear when the commander found out about it would be bad.

Huang Ji Bing, who had died in the Little World, had been the commander's most trusted and most relied upon subordinate when he was alive. Due to this sentiment, the commander had made the unusual announcement of making the person who managed to find Huang Ji Bing's identity token a captain. From this, one could see Huang Ji Bing was special. After all, many captains had died, but the commander had never made such announcements.

Although he managed to stay his hands, Jian Qiu Ping did not hide his hostility. "You punk, just because you have a glib tongue, it doesn't mean sh*t in the Black Dragon Army. I hope your strength is as good as your glib tongue!"

"I don't recall asking for your opinion," Duan Ling Tian said indifferently, "Enough with wasting time. Bring me to your commander. As he has promised, I'm still waiting to be made a captain."

Jian Qiu Ping scoffed loudly and rushed out, ignoring the fact that he had not formally greeted Duan Ling Tian.

Duan Lin Tian followed after him.

Whoosh!

As though he was trying to test Duan Ling Tian, Jian Qiu Ping hurtled forward at top speed. In a flash, he had become a tiny black dot in the distance in Duan Ling Tian's eyes.

Nevertheless, Duan Ling Tian paid no mind to this and continued moving at an even pace to his destination. He knew there was no need to speed up since Jian Qiu Ming would not dare to leave him in the dust for real. After all, Jian Qiu Ping had no choice but to wait for him.

Duan Ling Tian's conjecture turned out to be true. By the time Duan Ling Tian caught up to Jian Qiu Ping who had been waiting for a long time, Jian Qiu Ping's expression was sour and his eyes were burning

with rage. He had intended to test the purple-clad young man who was about to be made a Captain of the Black Dragon Army, however, the purple-clad young man did not bother with him at all.

Throughout the remaining journey, Jian Qiu Ping seethed silently. Every time he looked at Duan Ling Tian, his eyes were brimming with animosity. Things changed, however, when the two arrived at an expansive plain nestled between valleys. The sour expression on Jian Qiu Ping's face was immediately replaced by one of abject respect.

"Commander!" Captain Jian greeted loudly as he stood in front of an army tent in the middle of the valley. He respectfully performed a military salute as well.

As Duan Ling Tian surveyed his surroundings, he discovered there were ten other tents erected around the tent in the center. 'Since the center tent belongs to the commander, the ten tents must belong to the ten captains,' he thought to himself, 'This place is the closest to the core of the Celestial Stone vein. The air here is rich with spiritual energy. The places outside truly pale in comparison!'

As Duan Ling Tian basked in the spiritual energy around him, an expression of bliss appeared on his face.

After Jian Qiu Ping finished his greeting, a confident and powerful voice rang from the tent. "What's the matter?"

"Commander, I brought the man who found Captain Huang Ji Bing's identity token," Jian Qiu Ping reported.

As soon as Jian Qiu Ping finished speaking, a gust of wind appeared in the still air and a figure suddenly appeared out of thin air.

The figure belonged to a middle-aged man with a large, burly frame clad in a long black robe with gilded edges. The man with a bushy beard had a commanding air about him.

'This must be Chen Xuan Ba, the Commander of the Black Dragon Army...' Duan Ling Tian thought to himself as he raised an eyebrow.

When Duan Ling Tian was in the restaurant in Bloody Specter City, he had learned the names of the two commanders of the Black Dragon Army and Silverwurm Army from the waiter.

Chen Xuan Ba ignored Jian Qiu Ping and asked Duan Ling Tian in a low and commanding voice, "You're the one who found Captain Huang Ji Bing's identity token?"

Duan Ling Tian remained calm when faced with Chen Xuan Ba's attention and his incoming Divine Consciousness. He quietly produced the identity token he found in the Little World that was opened by a Superior Celestial King from the Blissful Sect and handed it to Chen Xuan Ba.

Whoosh!

The commander raised his hand, and Duan Ling Tian felt the token being lifted away by an unseen force before reappearing in Chen Xuan Ba's hand.

After inspecting the identity token, Chen Xuan Ba nodded and said, "Indeed, this is Captain Huang Ji Bing's identity token."

To the naked eye, all ten captains' identity tokens looked the same. However, each of the tokens had been left with a subtle mark by Chen Xuan Ba himself. Therefore, he could easily identify its authenticity and its master.

After confirming the authenticity of the identity token, Chen Xuan Ba's eyes shifted back to Duan Ling Tian, sizing Duan Ling Tian up. "Where did you find this?"

"Within the mountainous range south of Bloody Specter City, inside the Little World," Duan Ling Tian replied honestly.

Jian Qiu Ping's expression changed.

In fact, Chen Xuan Ba's expression changed as well. "Are you saying... Are you telling me that you entered the Little World and came out alive?"

Chen Xuan Ba's eyes, zeroing on Duan Ling Tian, was piercing. His commanding aura intensified and pressured Duan Ling Tian. He did this to intimidate Duan Ling Tian into telling the truth.

Before Duan Ling Tian could say anything, Jian Qiu Ping interjected, "This person here is obviously lying, commander! The Little World is so dangerous that not even the City Governor of Bloody Specter City, who is an incredibly powerful fighter, dare to guarantee he would be able to return after entering the Little World..."

However, Chen Xuan Ba shot Jian Qiu Ping a cutting gaze before Jian Qiu Ping could finish speaking. "Do you take me for a fool? Do you think I'll be fooled by just anyone? Do you think I need someone like you to remind me of this?"

Chen Xuan Ba's terrifying eyes stared at Jian Qiu Ping pointedly until Jian Qiu Ping's face turned pale and he fell silent.

"Yes," Duan Ling Tian answered calmly, seemingly unflustered by Chen Xuan Ba's scrutinizing eyes.

"The Little World you speak of is not an ordinary place. Even the powerful City Governor of Bloody Specter City wouldn't simply go there. At the same time, even the County Chief, who's likely the strongest individual in the Nine Specters County, can't promise that he would be able to come out of that place alive," Chen Xuan Ba said pointedly. "Tell me, why should I believe that you managed to come out of that place unharmed?"

Chen Xuan Ba was inwardly curious about this purple-clad young man's cultivation base and strength. He could not determine the young man's cultivation base. This could only mean that he was either very strong or he had mastered a technique to conceal his cultivation base. Regardless, he was certain this young man could not possibly be stronger than the County Chief of the Nine Specters County or the City Governor of Bloody Specter City. If the young man was stronger than them, he would have no reason to bring Huang Ji Bing's identity token here. After all, someone that strong would have no interest in becoming the commander of an army, let alone the petty position of a captain.

“A powerful warrior helped me out of that Little World,” Duan Ling Tian replied with a white lie he had prepared beforehand. Although it was more lies than truth, it sounded quite convincing. He was sure no one would be able to find fault with it. He continued with his lies, “That warrior is really amazing. Based on his strength, I think he’s several times stronger than a Great Overarching Golden Celestial. He even told me the Little World was created by a Superior Celestial King from the Blissful Sect, whatever that is. The warrior went into the Little World to retrieve his sect’s Sect Guarding Celestial Weapon. It was a horsetail whisk that’s called World Cleansing Horsetail Whisk.”

As Duan Ling Tian talked, he looked at Chen Xuan Ba with an anticipatory gaze. He had intentionally mentioned so many details in hopes that Chen Xuan Ba might know the sect that Murong Bing belonged to.

“The Blissful Sect? A Superior Celestial King?!” Chen Xuan Ba’s expression changed as his eyes widened in shock when he heard Duan Ling Tian’s words. When he regained his senses, he muttered to himself, seemingly lost in thoughts, “No wonder so many powerhouses lost their lives in the Little World in these 10,000 years. As it turns out, that place was created by a Superior Celestial King from the Blissful Sect! The last time the Superior Celestial King was active was 10,000 years ago. That was also when the Little World had appeared!”

Chapter 2596 Celestial Kingdoms

Meanwhile, Jian Qiu Ping who was standing nearby and listening was stunned by the mention of the Superior Celestial King who opened the Little World 10,000 years ago in the mountains south of the Bloody Specter City. To him, Superior Celestial Kings were what legends were made of.

“A Superior Celestial King?”

The Bloody Specter City was located in a mere intermediate-rank Celestial Kingdom. For this reason, there were not many powerhouses of that level in this place. Moreover, even high-rank Celestial Kingdom had never produced a Superior Celestial King. Jian Qiu Ping inhaled sharply as he thought to himself, ‘Since this Blissful Sect managed to produce a Superior Celestial King, the sect must be even stronger than a high-rank Celestial Kingdom!’

High-rank Celestial Kingdoms stood above all low and intermediate-rank Celestial Kingdoms. They command awe from those beneath them. How frightening would a sect that was stronger than high-rank Celestial Kingdoms be?

Duan Ling Tian’s eyes lit up. He tried to extract information from Chen Xuan Ba as he asked, “You seem to know a great deal about the Blissful Sect, Commander Chen. Then, do you know which sect the World Cleansing Horsetail Whisk belongs to?”

If it were not for Murong Bing, Duan Ling Tian would not have told the truth about where he found the identity token. After all, he knew he would only be inviting trouble by mentioning the Little World. It would have been better if he had skirted around mentioning the Little World. After all, since 10,000 years ago, nobody had managed to come out alive. How could people not feel curious if they found out he had managed to come out unharmed? However, despite the trouble it might bring him, he was determined to find the sect that possessed the World Cleansing Horsetail Whisk. After all, that was the only way for him to find out where Murong Bing came from. His motive was to track her down.

Chen Xuan Ba shook his head and said, "I only heard about the Blissful Sect by chance. All I know is the sect is far stronger than high-rank Celestial Kingdoms. As for the World Cleansing Horsetail Whisk, I've never heard of it, let alone the sect it belongs to."

Duan Ling Tian could not help feeling disappointed upon hearing this. To find Murong Bing, he had taken a huge gamble by revealing potentially dangerous information. However, it ended in failure. Well, at least, he managed to learn from Chen Xuan Ba that the Blissful Sect was a force that was far stronger than high-rank Celestial Kingdoms.

'High-rank Celestial Kingdoms are leagues above intermediate-rank Celestial Kingdoms like the one the Nine Specter County is in. Even then, the Blissful Sect is much stronger than those high-rank Celestial Kingdoms. It's very likely that Murong Bing's sect is on equal footing with the Blissful Sect and is far stronger than those high-rank Celestial Kingdoms,' Duan Ling Tian mused to himself.

Speaking of, Duan Ling Tian had learned from the waiter that he was currently in an intermediate-rank Celestial Kingdom. Celestial Kingdoms were divided into high, intermediate, and low-rank. Most of them were independent of one another. The differences between these Celestial Kingdoms were that high-rank Celestial Kingdoms had better cultivation environments and resources. Their general strength was also stronger.

Chen Xuan Ba looked at Duan Ling Tian thoughtfully as he said, "It says something about your destiny to be able to meet someone so powerful in the Little World to rescue you."

"Honestly, I didn't have much interaction with my savior. Shortly after I entered the Little World, I found the identity token next to a half-cleaved body before meeting my savior. However, soon after, I lost consciousness. When I woke up, I found myself outside again. More importantly, the entrance to the Little World in the valley seemed to have disappeared. However, I don't know if this means the Little World has disappeared as well," Duan Ling Tian explained as he glanced at the identity token in Chen Xuan Ba's hand.

"The Little World's entrance has disappeared?" Chen Xuan Ba echoed. He had been quite skeptical of Duan Ling Tian's words. However, when he heard this, he no longer doubted Duan Ling Tian. The Little World's entrance had been around for 10,000 years. For it to vanish so suddenly, something incredible must have happened. There was no way this purple-clad young man could have caused the disappearance. Moreover, he did not think the young man was lying. After all, he could always send some men there to verify his words.

Chen Xuan Ba studied the identity token in his hand again as he asked, "So does this mean you found the identity token by sheer luck?"

"I guess so," Duan Ling Tian answered candidly, nodding.

Whoosh!

Suddenly, a gust of wind that sounded like the void was being torn open rang in the air and shot toward Duan Ling Tian.

Chen Xuan Ba had tossed the identity token to Duan Ling Tian without any warning. It seemed as though he was just returning the identity token to Duan Ling Tian, but it was clear that he was testing Duan Ling Tian's strength.

The Celestial Origin Energy in Duan Ling Tian's body reacted instantly and coursed through his 99 Heavenly Veins before surging out, raising his Celestial Origin Energy by two levels! The effects were similar to his assist-type Divine Ability, the Elementary Devouring Tactic. Naturally, one could only achieve this feat if all 99 Heavenly Veins had been tempered and refined.

At this moment, Duan Ling Tian's Celestial Origin Energy was equivalent to a Violet Moon Heavenly Celestial. If he were to cast the Elementary Devouring Tactic as well, his Celestial Origin Energy would rise another two levels. He eschewed doing it because he did not see a need for it.

Smack!

Using his right hand that had been imbued with Celestial Origin Energy, Duan Ling Tian caught the identity token. He felt a surge of force slamming into his palm. The shock was so great that it numbed his hand, and the momentum caused him to stumble a few steps back.

"A Violet Moon Heavenly Celestial, huh?" Chen Xuan Ba raised an eyebrow. Based on Duan Ling Tian's response and the Celestial Origin Energy surging out of his body, he concluded that the purple-clad young man was a Violet Moon Heavenly Celestial.

'Violet Moon Heavenly Celestial?' Jian Qiu Ping thought to himself. He had caught Chen Xuan Ba's worlds even though Chen Xuan Ba did not speak loudly. 'So he's only a Violet Moon Heavenly Celestial!'

Jian Qiu Ping's disdain for Duan Ling Tian intensified, and his anxiety had subsided as well. Ever since the three Centurions of the Black Dragon Army had become Scarlet Sun Golden Celestials, he, naturally, felt threatened since he was the weakest captain.

Two of the Centurions were not his biggest concern because their overall prowess was still inferior to him. The biggest contender that Jian Qiu Ping was most afraid of was the centurion under his command. He was almost as strong as Jian Qiu Ping himself, and Jian Qiu Ping was not confident he would win if they had a duel.

The worst part was this subordinate of his was already so strong before entering closed-door cultivation. One could imagine he would only be stronger after coming out of closed-door cultivation!

Jian Qiu Ping had been feeling anxious over the years because he was afraid his subordinate would usurp his position. However, now there was a new captain who was only a Violet Moon Heavenly Celestial. With someone this weak around, he would not have to worry about being challenged. He scoffed softly as he muttered under his breath, 'Just a mere Violet Moon Heavenly Celestial, but he thinks he's capable of becoming a Captain of the Black Dragon Army. How laughable!'

"I'll see through my promise," Chen Xuan Ba announced. "I'll announce to the troop that you've been made captain. However, I can't promise you that you'll be able to hold on to the position. That will have to depend on your skills. To be frank, based on your cultivation base, I don't think you'll be able to hold on to the position for long. However, if you find yourself being demoted to a centurion, you can always

work hard to cultivate to become a Golden Celestial and reclaim your position.” It was obvious he was attempting to reassure Duan Ling Tian. Finally, he asked, “So, what is your name?”

Duan Ling Tian was, naturally, not frightened by Chen Xuan Ba’s warning. His voice was even and confident as he replied, “Duan Ling Tian.”

Chapter 2597 A New Captain

“A man by the name of Duan Ling Tian has recovered the identity token of our fallen captain, Huang Ji Bing. Henceforth, I, Chen Xuan Ba, exercise my authority as the Commander of the Black Dragon Army, and appoint him as one of our captains as I have promised. He will now command the platoon that previously answered to Captain Huang Ji Bing!” Chen Xuan Ba, the Commander of the Black Dragon Army, announced in a deep booming voice that was imbued with Celestial Origin Energy.

It took only a second for the announcement to spread throughout the camp. Everyone who was in the army base heard his announcement clearly.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!

As soon as Chen Xuan Ba finished his announcement, three blurry figures charged out of the three nearest captain’s tents and came to a halt before Chen Xuan Ba and Jian Qiu Ping.

“Commander, sir!” The three immediately greeted Chen Xuan Ba as they sized Duan Ling Tian up.

An old man with a kindly face was the first to greet Duan Ling Tian. “Captain Duan Ling Tian, I’m Hu Ji, a captain like yourself. I look forward to working with you from now onward.”

A young man with an emotionless face chimed in with a quick nod and curt introduction. “Zhao Dong Xing.”

A middle-aged man with a perpetual grin on his face explained, “Don’t mind him, Captain Duan Ling Tian. Captain Zhao is known for being taciturn. You’ll get used to him after a while.” Then, he said, “By the way, I am Chai Wen Yu, also a captain of the army. I look forward to learning from you.”

“I’m Duan Ling Tian. I look forward to working and learning from the three of you,” Duan Ling Tian answered with a smile.

“Hey, you three. Duan Ling Tian is just a Violet Moon Heavenly Celestial so don’t bet on him being able to hold on to this position for long. There’s no need for all of you to be so courteous to him. With his cultivation base, he’s just at the level of a centurion,” Jian Qiu Ping said from a distance to his three colleagues.

“Violet Moon Heavenly Celestial?” Hu Ji, the old man, frowned at Jian Qiu Ping’s words. A fleeting indifferent expression flashed across his kindly face.

At the same time, Chai Yu Min’s smile froze on his lips as a glint of contempt flitted through his eyes.

Only Zhao Dong Xin looked at Duan Ling Tian with mild surprise. He showed no other response.

After that, Hu Ji and Chai Yu Min bade Chen Xuan Ba farewell and strode back to their tents without sparing another moment for Duan Ling Tian. It was clear they thought it was a waste of time to continue talking to him.

Zhao Dong Xin nodded at Chen Xuan Ba and Duan Ling Tian as a sign of him taking his leave before returning to his tent.

Duan Ling Tian was not at all surprised by the 180-degree change in Hu Ji and Chai Yu Min's attitude. He had expected this response as soon as Jian Qiu Ping revealed his cultivation base. However, he was surprised by Zhao Dong Xin's reaction. The young man did not seem to disdain him and bade him farewell before he left. Although it was just a small act, it won him quite some points with Duan Ling Tian.

"Captain Duan," Chen Xuan Ba said as he pointed at a tent at the north, "That tent used to belong to Captain Huang. From now on, it'll belong to you."

Duan Ling Tian's eyes followed Chen Xuan Ba's finger, and what he saw made his eyes brighten in delight. After all, the only reason he had shown up at the Black Dragon Army's camp was due to his need for a good cultivation environment. How could he not feel delighted seeing his tent located in the middle of the best cultivation place in the army camp?

One could search through every inch of the area surrounding Bloody Specter City and still would not find any site as good as the Tranquil Alcove, which was where the City Governor of Bloody Specter City cultivated. This place was very close to Tranquil Alcove and would be conducive to one's cultivation. At the very least, Duan Ling Tian was satisfied with what he had for now.

"Captain Jian," Chen Xuan Ba turned to look at Jian Qiu Ping and said flatly, "You're in charge of helping Captain Duan adjust and acquaint himself with the soldiers under his care. Treat it as a house-warming rite."

"Yes, sir!" Regardless of how unwilling Jian Qiu Ping was, he could not answer with anything but a short obsequious yes.

However, as soon as Chen Xuan Ba returned to his tent, Jian Qiu Ping dropped his facade and looked at Duan Ling Tian contemptuously. "I really don't understand what goes through the commander's mind. You won't even be able to hold on to your position for long with your cultivation base. Honestly, what's the point of getting acquainted with Captain Huang's subordinates." These were his honest thoughts.

"What do you mean, Captain Jian? Are you saying you intend to disobey Chen Xuan Ba's orders?" Duan Ling Tian asked as he looked at Jian Qiu Ping indifferently.

Jia Qiu Ping's expression darkened as he glared at Duan Ling Tian. Then, he begrudgingly showed Duan Ling Tian the way. After all, he could only run his mouth at most. He would not dare to disobey Chen Xuan Ba's orders.

"Listen up, Duan Ling Tian. You're part of the Black Dragon Army now. This means you must always refer to our commander as Commander Chen. Addressing him using his name is a major show of disrespect!" Jian Qiu Ping admonished Duan Ling Tian haughtily as the latter trailed after him.

Jian Qiu Ping was angered again when he noticed Duan Ling Tian ignoring him. His expression turned stormier as he stopped talking so he would not make a fool of himself. He led Duan Ling Tian to the barracks where Captain Huang's soldiers were located in silence.

There were eleven divisions in the Black Dragon Army. One of them was where the commander and captains' tents were located. Unless they had left the camp, they would usually be found cultivating in their tents.

Apart from that, each of the ten divisions housed 1,000 tents. The soldiers were segregated into groups of thousands, each commanded by a different captain.

Currently, Jian Qiu Ping was leading Duan Ling Tian to the division where soldiers formerly under Huang Ji Bing's command stayed.

...

Meanwhile, the camp was in an uproar after Chen Xuan Ba made his announcement.

"Duan Ling Tian? Captain?"

"That Duan Ling Tian is sure lucky for coming across Captain Huang's identity token. Just because of that, he's instantly made a captain."

"Well, we don't know how strong he is. If he's weak, he won't stay captain for long."

"That's true!"

"I don't think he's weak. After all, he managed to locate Captain Huang's identity token. He must be somewhat skilled."

"I agree. After all, when Captain Huang had first gone missing, many of our captains went out to search for the identity token around the area where he was last seen, but none of them could find it!"

"I have a feeling Duan Ling Tian is not a simple person."

At this moment, all the conversations in the army base revolved around Duan Ling Tian. Some wondered if Duan Ling Tian had the strength to hold on to his position. Some believed he had to be skilled to be able to locate Huang Ji Bing's identity token.

"In any case, if he turns out to be weak, he's going to be replaced very soon!"

"That's true. Among our centurions, three have already become Golden Celestials. Moreover, one of them is very likely to replace his superior after he comes out of closed-door cultivation. It seems like Captain Jian won't be able to stay captain for long!"

"If the other two centurions didn't go into closed-door training, I'm sure they would be gearing up to challenge this new guy."

"I can't wait to see this!"

Many of the soldiers of the Black Dragon Army were eagerly anticipating the centurions who were Golden Celestials to challenge the newly-instated captain, Duan Ling Tian.

"I wonder how strong the new captain is?"

"If he's weaker than our former captain, we, as his subordinates, can kiss our heyday goodbye."

"I really hope he doesn't disappoint us..."

Many of the soldiers who were formerly under Huang Ji Bing's command had gathered as well, expressing their concerns.

Chapter 2598 Calm Down, Captain!

The Black Dragon Army presented itself as a united front; a monolithic entity where its members shared the same conviction and goal. Outsiders would be hard-pressed to topple them altogether.

However, there were cracks beneath the surface. Soldiers sometimes clashed among themselves, resulting in violent skirmishes. Under these circumstances, the weaker captain's battalion would, naturally, be much more cautious and non-confrontational when faced with battalions led by more superior captains. After all, any skirmish that escalated to full-blown conflicts always harmed the groups with weaker backings.

For this reason, when news broke about the death of Huang Ji Bing, not only did his men grieve his death, but they were also worried about the possible hardship they might have to endure. After all, it was not certain if the captain who would be replacing Huang Ji Bing would be a good captain like Huang Ji Bing! This was why they were particularly anxious about the prospect of their new captain. They had no clue about their new captain's strength. Should he prove to be too weak, then, they would have to discard their previous superior attitudes. Moreover, many soldiers from the other battalions might even seize this opportunity to bully them. Previously, when Huang Ji Bing was still alive, no one in the army dared to look for trouble with them. Now that Huang Ji Bing was gone, if their new captain was weak, those with an ax to grind would definitely seize this chance to seek revenge.

"Soldiers formerly under the command of Captain Huang, please present yourself to his successor, Duan Ling Tian!"

The soldiers were still worrying about this matter when a booming voice blared in the air.

"The new captain is here?"

"That sounds like Captain Jian Qiu Ping. The new captain must be with him."

"Well, since the new guy is replacing Captain Huang, it's only natural for him to acquaint himself with us. I wonder if he's easy-going and even-tempered..."

"I don't care about his temper or how easygoing he is. I just want him to be as good as Captain Huang. At the very least, he can't be too inferior compared to Captain Huang."

The battalion once under the command of Huang Ji Bing rose to the air immediately, murmuring among themselves, as they made their way toward the source of the voice. Many of them fervently wished

their new captain would not be too weak. As long as he was not weak, they were even willing to overlook his other traits.

High up in the air, Duan Ling Tian in his purple robes walked behind Jian Qiu Ping at a leisurely pace with his hands clasped on his back. He observed the scenery as he flew past several beautiful valleys. It was situated a distance away from the hundred-odd tents that were located conspicuously further from the other groups.

‘These tents must belong to the centurions and decurions under my command,’ Duan Ling Tian deduced.

Whoosh!

A gust of wind began to blow in the air as a group of black dots, akin to a swarm of migrating locusts, appeared in Duan Ling Tian’s line of sight. They seemed to be heading toward him and Jian Qiu Ping.

With his superior eyesight, Duan Ling Tian quickly counted the number of heads and discovered they were about 800-odd soldiers coming toward them. He was not surprised by the low turnouts. After all, some of the soldiers, now under his command, likely had their duties to attend to.

“Since you’ve fulfilled Commander Chen’s order, you can take your leave now, Captain Jian,” Duan Ling Tian said flatly to Jian Qiu Ping who seemed like he had no intention of leaving. It was clear that Duan Ling Tian could not wait to see Jian Qiu Ping leave.

“Not so fast, Captain Duan. There’s still a message I would like to convey to them,” Jian Qiu Ping replied with a smirk as his eyes shone slyly.

“What? You’re going to tell them their new captain is just a Violet Moon Heavenly Celestial?” Duan Ling Tian retorted, fixing Jian Qiu Ping with a cold stare. It was as though he was aware of the thoughts running through Jian Qiu Ping’s mind.

Jian Qiu Ping responded to Duan Ling Tian’s words with a sneer. He stayed rooted to his spot, waiting for Duan Ling Tian’s battalion to arrive.

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

The wind picked up speed as roughly 800 soldiers from the Black Dragon Army arrived before Duan Ling Tian. They moved into neat formations of three. Eight individuals made up the first line, seventy formed the second, and finally, seven hundred-odd people gathered at the end.

All of the soldiers donned the same black armors, giving them a uniformed appearance. However, the badges pinned on their chests set them apart. Duan Ling Tian scanned their badges. ‘Centurions, decurions, foot soldiers...’ Based on this, he knew the first group consisted of centurions, the second consisted of decurions, and the last were regular soldiers.

“It’s an honor to meet you, captains!” The gathered soldiers greeted in unison, following the lead of the centurions in greeting the two captains.

“Commander Chen had asked me to accompany your new captain to meet his battalion for the first time. Now that my job is done, I’ll excuse myself,” Jian Qiu Ping said. Then, he scanned the soldiers before laughing heartily. “I suggest you cherish every moment you have left with your new captain!”

The soldiers were naturally confused.

Jian Qiu Ping continued to say, “You see, he’s only a Violet Moon Heavenly Celestial! There’s a high chance he won’t be able to hold on to this position as long as you expect him to.” With another burst of laughter, his figure blurred before he left like the wind.

At this moment, the entire place was deathly silent. Everyone’s eyes were trained on Duan Ling Tian. The respect in their eyes when they looked at Duan Ling Tian earlier was replaced with a hint of disappointment. Most importantly, the eight centurions had frowns etched deeply on their faces.

“So... the person who found Captain Huang’s identity token is just a Violet Moon Heavenly Celestial?”

“How can fate play such a cruel joke on us?!”

After Jian Qiu Ping dropped the bomb about Duan Ling Tian being a mere Violet Moon Heavenly Celestial dropped, the eight centurions began murmuring among themselves, their dissatisfaction was palpable.

Meanwhile, the decurions were also discussing among themselves when they recovered from the shock.

Upon hearing the commotion, Duan Ling Tian bellowed with a stormy expression on his face, “Quiet!” His voice was so loud that it drowned out the voices of the soldiers immediately.

The soldiers quieted down instantly.

“Are you going to treat your captain like air?” Duan Ling Tian’s fury was evident in his glare. Even if he was only to be their captain for a few days, he was still their superior at this moment. However, none of his subordinates showed him respect. It was clear they thought he was undeserving of their respect.

One of the centurions broke the silence with a scoff. A sneer could be seen on his face as he said, “You’re just a Violet Moon Heavenly Celestial who obtained your position from sheer luck. You won’t even be our captain for long. You’re pretty bold to put on airs with your low cultivation base.”

Bang!

The centurion’s smirk froze on his lips suddenly as a loud explosion rang in the air.

A loud and miserable scream rang in the air followed by a crash. The centurion who was mocking Duan Ling Tian was sent flying back. He spat out a fountain of blood in the air. The blood drew an arc in the air, looking gruesome.

The other centurions who were about to chime in earlier were stunned into silence. They now understood their new captain was more than just a Violet Moon Heavenly Celestial. They were Violet Moon Heavenly Celestials themselves, and yet, they could not even capture Duan Ling Tian’s movements when he injured their comrade.

“Please calm down, captain!” An elderly centurion implored with a trembling voice. He was the first to regain his senses. He fell to his knees immediately.

There was a rule among the Black Dragon Army soldiers; the punishment for insubordination to one’s superior was death.

When he witnessed his new captain’s true strength, he was reminded of how he had been dismissive of this new captain earlier. The realization of his transgression caused him to break out in cold sweat.

Chapter 2599 Qin Yu

“Please calm down, captain!”

“Please calm down, captain!”

The remaining centurions, including the centurion who was injured by Duan Ling Tian, were now lying prostrate on the ground. All of their heads were lowered, they were afraid to meet Duan Ling Tian’s eyes. At the same time, they inwardly cursed at Jian Qiu Ping, one of the Captains of the Black Dragon Army.

If Jian Qiu Ping did not say their new captain was merely a Violet Moon Heavenly Celestial, they would never have committed such a faux pas and angered their captain.

Meanwhile, the group of decurions had just regained their senses. When they saw the centurions lying prostrate on the ground, all of them instantly fell to their knees and followed the centurions’ example.

Needless to say, the foot soldiers followed suit as well. After all, even the centurions and decurions had yielded to the man before them. This could only mean that the man was someone strong. They could only prostrate themselves before him, hoping they would not incur his anger.

For a moment, Duan Ling Tian was the only one left standing, looking like an emperor surrounded by his kneeling courtiers.

Duan Ling Tian harrumphed as he coldly swept his eyes across the troop under his command in the Black Dragon Army. He said domineeringly, “I hope nothing like this happens again. Adjourn!” Before his voice had even faded away, he disappeared in just a blink of an eye before everyone’s sight. He wanted to return to his tent to cultivate and did not want to waste his time on trivial matters such as this.

Duan Ling Tian’s troops in the Black Dragon Army slowly rose to their feet one after another after he had left. Fear was written all over their faces.

The centurion who had been injured by Duan Ling Tian said through gritted teeth, “All of us have been fooled by Captain Jian Qiu Ping. Our new captain is not weak at all!” Although Duan Ling Tian was the cause of his injury, he did not blame Duan Ling Tian at all. He felt grateful that Duan Ling Tian did not kill him for his insubordination. If anyone were to be blamed for this, it would be Jian Qiu Ping. If it were not for Jian Qiu Ping’s words, he would not have dared to act insolently toward his superior.

...

Meanwhile, Duan Ling Tian made his way to his tent in the Black Dragon Army. As soon as he arrived in his tent, he sat cross-legged before he took out a Mediocre Celestial Stone and began to cultivate.

The process of cultivating in Devata Realms was almost similar to how it was in the mundane realms. Apart from absorbing Heaven and Earth Spirit Energy, he could also use Celestial Stones, instead of Saint Stones, to aid him with his cultivation.

“No wonder this place is one of the best cultivation locations in the Bloody Specter City. With the help of the Mediocre Celestial Stone and my 99 Heavenly veins, I’m confident I’ll become an Indigo Moon Heavenly Celestial in no time!”

After that, Duan Ling Tian calmed himself down and began to focus on cultivating.

The members of the Black Dragon Army would be shocked if they could read Duan Ling Tian’s thoughts. After all, one had to be a Blue Moon Heavenly Celestial at least, in order to become a decurion. The requirements to become a captain was, naturally, higher. Who would have thought their new captain was only a Blue Moon Heavenly Celestial?

....

At this moment, Jian Qiu Ping did not spare any efforts to spread the word about Duan Ling Tian being a mere Violet Moon Heavenly Celestial in the army camp. Ironically, he was unaware that Duan Ling Tian was only a Blue Moon Heavenly Celestial, he was not even a Violet Moon Heavenly Celestial. Regardless, his hard work paid off. It did not take long before discussions about Duan Ling Tian could be heard everywhere in the army camp.

The 800 soldiers under Duan Ling Tian’s command were unaware of this. They only heard the rumors about their captain’s cultivation base after it had spread for a long time. Naturally, they were enraged and began to defend their new captain when they heard the rumors.

“Who the hell said that our captain is a Violet Moon Heavenly Celestial? Is it Jian Qiu Ping again?”

“Why is Jian Qiu Ping doing this? What could he possibly gain from this?”

“Well, everyone knows he’s going to be replaced by Qin Yu, one of the centurions under his command, once Qin Yu comes out of closed-door cultivation. Perhaps, he’s trying to divert the attention to our new captain.”

“What a jerk!”

The more they thought about it, the angrier they felt. After all, they were already dissatisfied with Jian Qiu Ping for lying to them once. Now, Jian Qiu Ping was even spreading the same lies to everyone in the Black Dragon Army! For this reason, they began to retaliate and dispel the rumor. One of the centurions who was injured by Duan Ling Tian even went the extra mile and recounted his experience with his captain without caring about being embarrassed.

“I’m Tong Zheng, a centurion who serves under Captain Duan. I’m a Violet Moon Heavenly Celestial, but there was nothing I could do to defend myself when Captain Duan attacked me. Before I regained my senses, I was already on the floor. If Captain Duan is really just a Violet Moon Heavenly Celestial, do all of you think he would be able to defeat me so easily?”

With the efforts of the troops under Duan Ling Tian's command, many people began to believe that Duan Ling Tian was not just a mere Violet Moon Heavenly Celestial. Some of them even speculated that Duan Ling Tian was stronger than Jian Qiu Ping who was the weakest amongst the ten Captains of the Black Dragon Army.

...

When word of this finally reached Jian Qiu Ping's ears, his expression turned grim.

"Do they think they'll be able to help Duan Ling Tian by spreading fake news? Naive! Too naive! So what if Qin Yu is able to defeat me and replace me as a Captain of the Black Dragon Army? I'll just look for Duan Ling Tian and challenge him for the position of captain. I'll show those people who's boss once I become their new captain!" Flames of fury surged in his heart the more he thought about this. He could not wait to replace Duan Ling Tian so he could seek revenge from those people who defended Duan Ling Tian. After all, as a superior, it would be easy for him to make life difficult for his subordinates.

While Jian Qiu Ping indulged in the fantasy of making life difficult for the troops under Duan Ling Tian's command, another piece of shocking news began to spread in the army camp. The centurion, Qin Yu, had come out of his closed-door cultivation and planned to challenge his captain, Jian Qiu Ping!

It took a while before Jian Qiu Ping was finally made aware of the matter. His expression darkened as his eyes burned with anger as he stared at Qin Yu. He said through gritted teeth, "Qin Yu! Do you think I'm weaker than Duan Ling Tian? Is that why you came to challenge me instead?" His voice grew louder and louder as he spoke.

On the contrary, Qin Yu remained calm as he said emotionlessly, "Captain, I was in closed-door cultivation this entire time. As soon as I came out, I instantly sent a challenge to you. I don't know who's Duan Ling Tian."

Qin Yu was a young man with a muscular body and handsome appearance. The Black Dragon Army's armor further accentuated his fine bearing as a soldier.

Currently, Qin Yu stood across Jian Qiu Ping. They were surrounded by many people. Not only were Jian Qiu Ping's subordinates present on the scene, but even the soldiers under the other captains' commands had come to watch the show. It was human nature to take part in merriment, even Celestials were not immune to it.

The anger on Jian Qiu Ping's face gradually disappeared as he said in a stern voice, "Now that you know about it, are you still planning to challenge me or are you going to challenge Duan Ling Tian?" He had assumed Qin Yu would challenge Duan Ling Tian if he gave Qin Yu a way out.

"I don't think that's necessary," Qin Yu said calmly as he held Jian Qiu Ping's gaze, "I'm not someone who adapts easily. I think it's better for me to become a captain to my brothers. For this reason, I, Qin Yu, am determined to challenge you, Captain Jian!"

The soldiers in the Black Dragon Army were anticipating the fight between Qin Yu and Jian Qiu Ping at this moment when something unexpected happened.

“Very well!” Jian Qiu Ping looked at Qin Yu coldly and said in a displeased tone, “Since you want my position so much, I’ll give it to you. Consider this my present to you for working so hard during your time under my command.”

Not only was the crowd present on the scene shocked, but even Qin Yu was shocked upon hearing these words. Based on his knowledge, Jian Qiu Ping would not admit defeat so easily even if his opponent was much stronger than him. After coming to terms with Jian Qiu Ping conceding the position to him, he nodded. “Well, thank you, cap... No, starting from now on, I should call you Centurion Jian Qiu Ping.”

Since Jian Qiu Ping had conceded his position, he would, naturally, be demoted to a centurion now that Qin Yu had become a captain. The crowd was still in shock over his decision when his booming voice resounded in the vicinity, “I, Jian Qiu Ping, hereby declare that I will challenge Duan Ling Tian to a duel!”

Chapter 2600 The Valley Of Ares

Although Jian Qiu Ping was the weakest among the ten captains, he still held the title of captain and was a Scarlet Sun Golden Celestial. In other words, he was not someone to be taken lightly as well.

Truth be told, most of the soldiers who were present on the scene, including his subordinates, did not have much contact with Jian Qiu Ping. However, they had heard some rumors about him and more or less knew about the kind of person he was.

“I can’t believe he’s giving up so easily. Considering his attitude, I thought he would accept the challenge even if he knows Qin Yu is stronger than him.”

“He doesn’t sound like the Jian Qiu Ping we’ve heard about.”

“What happened to him? Why do I feel like he has changed into another person?”

Many of the soldiers from the Black Dragon Army were stunned when they saw Jian Qiu Ping admitting defeat before he even fought Qin Yu. Some of them even thought they had heard wrongly. However, the soldiers who were most surprised were the soldiers formerly under Jian Qiu Ping’s command. They all felt as though he had turned into a stranger. Since they were under his command, they, naturally, knew him better compared to the others.

“Hold on a second... He challenged Duan Ling Tian, a new Captain of the Black Dragon Army, as soon as he conceded his position. Doesn’t something smell fishy? There must be a reason for his actions...”

“It’s possible that he’s trying to conserve his strength so he can face Captain Duan Ling Tian in peak condition. After all, if he loses to Qin Yu, he would need some time to recuperate.”

“Well, you might be right...”

“If that’s the case, he’s really smart. Not only did his decision help him to conserve strength, but it’ll also help him with regaining his position as a captain. It’s like hitting two birds with one stone!”

“Regaining his position as a captain? What makes you so certain? According to rumors, Captain Duan isn’t any weaker than Jian Qiu Ping. Even if he challenges Captain Duan, the odds might not be in his favor.”

“Well, I heard that Captain Duan is just a Violet Moon Heavenly Celestial. There’s no way a Violet Moon Heavenly Celestial will be able to defeat Jian Qiu Ping.”

“This is different from what I heard...”

The crowd was of two opinions. One camp believed Jian Qiu Ping would be able to easily defeat Duan Ling Tian since Duan Ling Tian was only a Violet Moon Heavenly Celestial. On the other hand, the other camp believed that the rumor about Duan Ling Tian being a Violet Moon Heavenly Celestial was fake. They believed Duan Ling Tian was not any weaker than Jian Qiu Ping, and Jian Qiu Ping’s dream of easily defeating Duan Ling Tian was only a fool’s dreams.

This was only to be expected since people would, naturally, have different opinions.

The atmosphere in the Black Dragon Army’s camp was extremely lively today. There was Qin Yu who replaced Jian Qiu Ping and became the new captain, and there was Jian Qiu Ping surrendering without a fight and challenging Duan Ling Tian. Moreover, there was the impending fight between Duan Ling Tian and Jian Qiu Ping as well. These three pieces of news dropped like a bomb in the Black Dragon Army’ camp and caused an uproar in the camp.

“How dare Jian Qiu Ping challenge our captain to a duel as soon as he conceded his position? Does he really think that our captain is just a Violet Moon Heavenly Celestial?”

“I’m very certain Captain Duan isn’t weak at all. I’d even stake my life on it. Even if Captain Duan can’t defeat Jian Qiu Ping, it won’t be a problem for him to come to a draw with Jian Qiu Ping!”

“According to the rules, one has to defeat the other in the fight to claim the position. If Jian Qiu Ping can’t defeat Captain Duan, he won’t be able to claim the position of a captain!”

The group of Black Dragon Army’s soldiers serving under Duan Ling Tian had full confidence in him after they had witnessed his strength. In any case, they did not believe he would be defeated by Jian Qiu Ping. The men were about to return to their tents when they heard a thunderous scoff booming across the valley, piercing their eardrums.

“Jian Qiu Ping?!”

“What’s he doing here?”

It was not difficult for them to recognize Jian Qiu Ping’s voice. Before they regained their senses, Jian Qiu Ping’s voice boomed again in the air.

“How dare you impudent little sh*t sling mud at me and spread fake news about Duan Ling Tian is not a Violet Moon Heavenly Celestial and is as strong as I am? After I replace Duan Ling Tian as your captain, I’m going to show all of you what hell is like!” Jian Qiu Ping paused for a moment before he said, “I, Jian Qiu Ping, a Centurion of the Black Dragon Army, hereby challenge Captain Duan Ling Tian to a duel in the Valley of Ares!” His voice that was infused with Celestial Origin Energy sounded even louder when he spoke again. His voice echoed through the entire Black Dragon Army’s camp.

“Jian Qiu Ping? A centurion?”

“When did he become a centurion? I just met him earlier.”

In the valley where the commander and captains of the Black Dragon Army resided, Hu Ji and Chai Wen Yu, Captains of the Black Dragon Army, emerged from their tents, stunned.

“Half an hour ago, Centurion Qin Yu came out of his closed-door cultivation. He challenged Jian Qiu Ping to a duel, but Jian Qiu Ping gave up without a fight. As a result, Qin Yu replaced him as captain, and Jian Qiu Ping has been demoted to a centurion.” A voice rang out from the tent of Chen Xuan Ba, the Commander of the Black Dragon Army.

“Commander Chen!”

“Commander Chen!”

As soon as the two captains saw Chen Xuan Ba, they hastily bowed after they exchanged a look of confusion with each other. They had been Jian Qiu Ping’s colleagues so they knew him quite well. Based on his attitude, he would not have given up without a fight.

As if he could read their minds, Chen Xuan Ba explained, “I heard that he surrendered without a fight so he would be able to conserve his strength for his fight with Captain Duan. Didn’t you just hear him challenging Captain Duan to a duel in the Valley of Ares?”

“Conserving his strength? Well, that makes sense...” Hu Ji nodded.

Chai Wen Yu glanced at Duan Ling Tian’s tent disdainfully. “Is that even necessary? After all, Duan Ling Tian isn’t that powerful. He’s just a Violet Moon Heavenly Celestial.”

“Commander Chen,” Zhao Dong Xing, another Captain of the Black Dragon Army, greeted Chen Xuan Ba as soon as he exited his tent. Then, he stood aside and glanced at Duan Ling Tian’s tent.

At the same time, the flap of the tent opened up, and a purple figure emerged from inside. The purple figure was none other than Duan Ling Tian. He had been cultivating earlier and was startled by Jian Qiu Ping’s voice. Although he did not think much of Jian Qiu Ping, he would never back down from a challenge. Moreover, it was a good chance for him to display his strength to those who looked down on him and prove that he was more than qualified to become a Captain of the Black Dragon Army.

“Commander. Captain Zhao,” Duan Ling Tian greeted Chen Xuan Ba and Zhao Dong Xing. He only nodded in greeting to the other two captains.

As soon as Duan Ling Tian finished speaking, Chai Wen Yu bellowed, “Duan Ling Tian!” His expression was dark as he continued saying, “How dare you act so arrogantly in front of the commander? Do you think you’re superior to Commander Chen? Can’t you show more respect to our commander?” He grew more and more hostile as he spoke. It was clear that he was making a mountain out of a molehill.

However, Duan Ling Tian remained unfazed by Chai Wen Yu’s hostility. He glanced at Chai Wen Yu from the corners of his eyes and said, “So you show your respect by tacking on the word ‘Chen’ behind the title Commander? It’s said that those unassuming and seemingly-loyal individuals are the ones who usually harbor wild ambitions. Who knows if beneath your loyal facade, you’re harboring thoughts of usurping the commander’s position?”

Chai Wen Yu did not expect Duan Ling Tian would counter his words. His expression changed as he cried out in anger, "Nonsense! That's pure nonsense! How dare you make such baseless accusations?"

"I'm just speaking theoretically. There's no need for you to get angry, Captain Chai. Unless... My words have hit its mark?" Duan Ling Tian said with a sneer.

"You... You..." Chai Wen Yu was speechless.

At this moment, Chen Xuan Ba interjected, "That's enough. It's just a salutation. It's just as Captain Duan said, loyalty can't be determined by how I am addressed. I'm certain Captain Duan means no disrespect to me."

Since the commander had spoken, Chai Wen Yu, naturally, could no longer make a fuss. He looked at Duan Ling Tian pointedly as though he was trying to cut Duan Ling Tian into a million pieces with his gaze.

Duan Ling Tian ignored Chai Wen Yu and looked at Chen Xuan Ba as he asked, "Do you know where the Valley of Ares is located, commander?"