

### Chapter 41: One Palm

The air suddenly distorted as a terrifying energy slash tore through it, heading straight for a dozen students. Shocked by its power, all of them quickly acted to counter the strike. Zhang Dingtian rose into the air in the distance, gaze cold and hands holding tightly onto his long blade. They had all received information about him, but these trainees felt a sense of numbness when actually facing the Bladesage for the first time. For the natives to have a realmbreaker like him was abnormal to say the least.

An arrow whizzed across the sky, drawing blood from one of the students who had just attacked the capital. It came from Wu Sheng, the Wolf Sage. Originally the overseer of the plains, he had received information about the attack on the capital from a gadget he had won over and came to help.

Despite such displays of power, the four Sages were still facing over twenty students; even Zhang Dingtian could not make up for that deficit. Not even a quarter-hour had passed before he was starting to spit out blood, his body riddled with cuts. Wu Sheng's flank had been pierced only a few minutes ago, and was now leaking blood onto the ground. Thousands of cultivators were fighting on the Chinese side, but they were mowed down like weeds and unable to even approach the students.

Sitting on one side, Jeraldine was horrified by the scene. As someone who wasn't from Earth, she had no plans to give up her life for it. With her power, she couldn't stop even one of the other students here anyway. A strong wind drew her attention to a patch of ice on the ground, where quite a few students were gazing at the ruins of the city walls. Two of them had actually been frozen there, and Hayden had a bewildered look on his face, "Innate gift, you actually have an innate gift!"

The two words shocked anyone, drawing many looks of incredulity towards Bai Xue. She was already beautiful beyond comparison, and the value of an innate gift made her even more memorable. However, her lips were a plump red as blood trickled down her chin to the floor. The air was fogging over with every heavy pant; she had already reached her limits.

The Water Sage's innate gift was a secret she held close to her chest; not even all seven Sages knew about it. Still, there was simply no choice but to reveal it against Hayden and the other top students, whose gazes were promptly filled with greed. Everyone here knew the importance of innate gifts; if they managed to procure such a person for their backers, their status would rise greatly.

The student who had been grappling with Wu Sheng threw him aside, laughing as he charged towards the Water Sage. The one that was about to kill Zhou Shan smiled and did the same. A dozen idle students acted simultaneously from the sky; at that moment, Bai Xue was even more important than the capital or even the criminal.

Jeraldine sighed, this was the tragedy of being weak. Having exposed her innate gift, Bai Xue could only be captured. No one would squander away cultivators with innate gifts, and she would be arranged to marry into some influential family to raise the odds of birthing future generations with such talent.

Eddy, who was facing off Zhang Dingtian, also watched Bai Xue greedily. He rushed over, but Zhang Dingtian was a step ahead and unleashed countless strikes in all directions, "Scram!"

The dozens of students were blown backwards by the strike, stunned by the Bladesage's power. However, their resolve to snatch Bai Xue could not be extinguished; her allure was just too great. Eddy landed a punch square in Zhang Dingtian's gut, throwing him ten meters away. He managed to slash in return, however, and despite a rapid retreat, blood arced through the air.

"Water Dragon Punch!" Hayden shouted as he crushed a water crystal, a tornado forming around his fist and shooting towards Zhang Dingtian. It was complemented by a barrage of other attacks as well, leaving the Bladesage wide-eyed as he clenched his teeth until his gums bled. Howling softly himself, he thrust his sword into the ground before swinging it up with force; stones blasted everywhere and a giant fissure spread all the way from outside the city to just past the wall, swallowing many people.

Zhang Dingtian had countered the wave of attacks, but it had taken everything to do it. Many of the students observing idly so far suddenly charged forward, two of them attacking him while a third moved to capture Bai Xue, "The one with the gift is ours!"

This time, there was no way to dodge. Zhang Dingtian's body was pushed into the ground with so much force that he nearly lost his grip on his sword. Meanwhile, Bai Xue glared at the student who had rushed towards her and raised her hand. A Frost Palm sent a shockwave through the sky, freezing the student and the ground around him solid. That was the price for belittling one of the three High Sages of China; she was truly comparable to a school leader in terms of power, and not even Hayden had any way to approach her right now.

Seeing that the Bladesage had been injured, Eddy himself charged towards Bai Xue to capture her; a cultivator with an innate gift was almost as valuable as the criminal himself. Two more students rushed out at the same time, each one as powerful as Hayden.

"Is this the end? Such a pity," Bai Xue's face paled. Three students were charging at her, and even the Sage of China was too wounded to help. However, a familiar figure suddenly appeared right in front.

BANG! BANG! BANG! Three tremendous explosions rang out, followed by an equal number of broken bodies shooting out from the rubble. The entire battlefield froze and stared at the man who had appeared out of nowhere and defeated three school leaders in one exchange. Who was that?

"He actually came back." Hiding in a corner, Jeraldine's eyes widened. Zhou Shan spat out a mouthful of blood and smiled bitterly from his own position within the city, while Bai Xue was utterly shocked. This wasn't a large back, but it had kept her safe. He'd actually returned as promised, and even seemed much stronger than before.

Of course, this was Lu Yin. He still had no gadget, so he had no way to know that the capital was already under attack, but fortunately he'd returned just in time to save Bai Xue. He looked back at her, "I said I'd be back."

"Be careful, there's too many of them," Bai Xue said weakly.

Lu Yin nodded and grew serious; there truly were too many opponents. Although he was now a peak Sentinel and his Cosmic Palm was at least as strong as Zhang Dingtian's attacks, even the Bladesage had been beaten up. The upcoming fight was certainly going to be difficult. However, a coughing Zhang

Dingtian climbed up from the ground, leaning against his sword as his focused gaze scanned through the area with resolution. Lu Yin tossed him some healing ointment, "Treat yourself."

Zhang Dingtian grabbed the ointment, but instead of applying it he just swallowed it like a boor. This left Lu Yin speechless; this was a topical ointment! Still, it was a product from Shamrock Enterprises, so it would likely be somewhat effective even when ingested.

From a distance, Eddy's trio rose up and stared at Lu Yin, "Who are you?"

Lu Yin didn't bother with small talk and simply donned Gerlaine's armor, the lightning sparking across his body. This shocked Hayden, "This is Gerlaine's armor, why do you have it?!"

"She gave it to me," he answered.

"Impossible!" Eddy, Hayden, and a few others responded simultaneously. Gerlaine was a famous youth in the Great Yu Empire, mostly due to her powerful and protective brother Gerbach who left other elites feeling helpless. Gerbach was a monster whose reputation prevented anyone from daring to bully his sister; if she really had given her armor to someone, it would end up troublesome. Did this youth have some sort of connection to them? Wait, it couldn't actually be her boyfriend, could it? Everyone looked at Lu Yin with bewilderment.

Lu Yin inhaled deeply, putting on an authoritative tone as he spoke to Eddy, "Get lost." One had to catch the leader to tame the herd, and he was planning to do just that as he shot forward.

Eddy was still occupied with unraveling Lu Yin's identity when he was forced to retreat once more. He had already witnessed Lu Yin's power in the previous attack, and didn't dare face it directly. Lu Yin used the Roving Step to appear in front of Hayden right after, but despite being startled this youth actually reacted with a Water Dragon Punch. The water flow wrapped around him and blocked the attack, but Lu Yin simply smiled and pointed his palm in the direction Eddy was fleeing.

"Spacerender Palm?!" Eddy recoiled in shock, using a palm of his own. Loud shockwaves blew everything away as Lu Yin whirled around for another attack, prompting him to grit his teeth, "Bastard, don't go overboard!"

Lu Yin smiled once again, raising his palm towards Eddy who grunted as he sensed the incoming danger. A vague bestial roar rang out as he clenched his right fist, the sign of the battle technique that had allowed him to defeat thirty other school leaders to enter the famed Yu Academy—the Beast King Punch. He had only used it once each against the criminal and Zhang Dingtian ever since arriving on Earth, but now he was forced to use every means at his disposal.

Three stars twinkled above Lu Yin's palm, exploding upon impact. Eddy was shocked to see his Beast King Punch being stopped completely with only the first of the three; the second sent excruciating pain through his fist while the third ruptured skin and sent him flying backwards. Blood spilled from his mouth and hand as he crashed into the earth, sending dust flying everywhere. Without holding back. Lu Yin had removed Eddy from battle with a single palm.

## **Chapter 42: Arrival**

Everyone was stunned by Eddy's defeat. This was the exceptional student who had been accepted into Yu Academy, the strongest of them all who could match up to Zhang Dingtian. Yet he was destroyed in a

single strike? The Bladesage himself was similarly shocked; Lu Yin was much stronger than before, to the point that he had no confidence that even he could take on that strike.

Lu Yin looked at his right palm; with the third star revolving around it, the Cosmic Palm was much stronger than expected. This wasn't simply an attack of individual explosions; each blast layered the damage, so the power of three stars far exceeded that of two. He had once guessed that he would be able to match Zhang Dingtian when he mastered the third star, but this attack was clearly more powerful than anything he had seen the man accomplish.

"3700!" a distant student stared at his gadget in shock, "He's a realmbreaker!"

The entire group felt their scalps go numb; all realmbreakers were freaks, and only those with strange innate gifts could accomplish the task. For a fringe planet to produce two such people was unfathomable, and there was even someone else with an innate gift. Was this really a normal planet?

Watching on, Jeraldine was also stunned by the new might of the scoundrel, who clenched his fist before glancing over all the students who had tried to attack the capital. He then grinned widely and charged towards another student. That student was also an elite in his school, but the student was so frightened by the mere sight of Lu Yin charging towards him that he didn't even think of resisting. However, his escape was cut short as Lu Yin grabbed his shoulder, crushing the ring armor with ease.

"Shut up and stay still!" Lu Yin knocked the youth unconscious with a fist to the forehead, leaving him behind as he chased the other students. It was like a wolf had charged into a herd of sheep; his Cosmic Palm was unrivalled, while his armor protected him completely and left the students helpless. He had knocked eight of them out before the group even started to disperse amidst the chaos, giving up on their participation entirely. Their attacks were meaningless and they couldn't hope to defend; what was the point in trying?

Hayden was the first to run, but was held back by Bai Xue who was watching him from the start. "Scram, woman!" he shouted, not wanting to be rendered unconscious. He had the feeling that the scoundrel definitely had a reason for knocking them unconscious, and recalling the fate of Parlie and Veron, he drew a breath of cold air. That idiot couldn't possibly be trying to kidnap all the trainees!

Still, by the time he broke through the ice and tried to escape, a terrifying energy slash stopped him in his tracks. Blade in hand, Zhang Dingtian was staring coldly at him, "Did we say you could leave?"

Hayden was stunned, but a sharp pain in the back of his skull was all he felt before he fell to the ground. Bai Xue's eyes sparkled as she withdrew her hand, feeling like she was the coolest person in that moment, but Zhang Dingtian just stared blankly at her. This was the first time he'd seen her knock someone unconscious like that, and suddenly felt tempted to try the same.

In the distance, Gerlaine felt numb as she stared at the capital, "I have to be blind. Is that bastard catching students?"

Balaror smiled bitterly, "No, he's indeed kidnapping them. The elites of various academies across the universe are being caught like rabbits; this should be the first time something like this has ever happened in history."

In every trial, students were like almighty deities that could look down upon all other life on the planet. They would only compete among themselves, but now these elite trainees were being captured one after the other. They were even running away, but only five evaded capture. When silence returned to the capital, the vicinity was ruined and nineteen unconscious students lay miserably on the ground.

Lu Yin wiped the sweat off his brow; it had been exhausting, but it was finally over. Those that managed to escape had done so quickly to avoid capture, and unfortunately all had footwork techniques that helped them slip away. Moving quickly to loot them all, he started counting, "Nineteen here, plus Parlie and Veron makes 21. Eh, Zhou Shan brought those two from Blue Mountain Academy, right. So that's 23, not too bad."

These actions were just too practiced, leaving Zhang Dingtian and Bai Xue speechless. The near-unconscious Eddy's eyes went wide, "You're the planetary thief!"

"Don't be ridiculous, these are just the spoils of war. I can't fight for free," Lu Yin dismissed the accusation, leaving the youth indignant.

It was only at this point that Jeraldine came over, helping to organize the loot, but Lu Yin didn't blame her for the lack of participation. After all, she was a student herself; it was good enough that she hadn't sided with the attackers. In fact, she was now very useful. While the "borrowed" armor had blocked quite a few attacks for him, the exhausting battle had left all his internals shaken up and he needed some rest to recover. Zhang Dingtian and Bai Xue were obviously tired to the point that they could barely move, while Zhou Shan and Wu Sheng were badly injured. She tended to all the wounded while he returned to the city's military camp to recover, allowing the cultivators of Earth to clean up after the battle.

Two hours later, the last of the captive students woke up to find that they had been kidnapped. Furious glares were leveled at Lu Yin, and someone even shouted, "You're the bandit that robbed Ian!"

"Hey, don't use me as your example; it's embarrassing!"

"Yeah, you're definitely the one that robbed Ian, and you even want to rob us now? You damned native thief!"

Sitting right next to all of them, Ian was left speechless. However, Lu Yin just sneered and walked over, frightening all the students into silence by just raising his palm. He then turned to Zhang Dingtian, about to say something, but before he could open his mouth his gaze focused and he looked to the sky. Countless people all over the globe did the same, as another batch of meteors streaked down from the heavens. One such meteor shot across Beijing's horizon.

"Why are they so early?" he turned to Jeraldine in confusion.

"I don't know, it's already rare for there to be a second batch of students in a trial."

"They must have calculated the time from when the second batch set off, not from when the students received the message." Bai Xue walked over, her expression solemn. Zhang Dingtian also studied the sky, focusing his gaze as he saw three spaceships zooming in their direction.

“Quickly, bring everyone into the capital!” Lu Yin shouted immediately.

Soon after, a distant rumble terrified many of the survivors in the capital, bringing them to more despair than the day of the Apocalypse itself. Dozens of experts in the Realm of Sky were battling over the city, and now even more meteors were landing. Was this the end for the Earth?

As the city walls were destroyed completely, Lu Yin and the rest stood atop some ruins and watched another spacecraft plummet from the sky. This one landed only a few kilometers away from Beijing, and they could actually see the spacecraft within the blaze. BOOM! The ground trembled as a massive fissure shot towards the capital, but Zhang Dingtian split the earth tangentially with a wave of his hand to redirect the damage.

A blistering shockwave sent a dust storm across the city as everyone felt the pressure descending on them. When it cleared out, those atop the walls saw a pod that was only about three meters across, the same size as Vesta’s landing craft. A steep crater was formed in the ground as a deafening rumble rang out in the distance, and Lu Yin’s eyes narrowed as he watched three more ships land. They were here. The second batch of students, those who aimed to enter Astral-10 using their exceptional results in the trial, had arrived.

The captive Eddy eagerly stared at the spaceships, ‘Come on, show these savages what a real freak is. Show them true power!’

The ship’s door clicked open, shooting out hot air and white smoke. A hand reached out to grab the door frame for support, followed by a handsome figure that walked out into the sun and lifted its head with a smile. The man slowly floated out of the crater, observing his surroundings like an explorer, but he completely ignored all the people present.

Lu Yin’s gaze sharpened when he saw this man; he felt extreme danger from the newcomer. He looked down at his gadget and saw that the man had a battle power of 3000, a peak Sentinel like himself, but that didn’t explain it. He wasn’t alone in this feeling either; Zhang Dingtian, Bai Xue, Jeraldine, and even Eddy could feel the danger he was radiating. His gentle appearance hid formidable strength.

“Who is he?” Lu Yin tapped Eddy on the head and asked.

Eddy stared blankly at the man and shook his head, “I don’t know.”

Lu Yin’s eyes narrowed; even now, the man had not once looked at any of them. It showed the arrogance deep in his bones. Was no one worthy of his attention?

### **Chapter 43: The Perfect Cosmic Art**

Two black dots flew over from the distance at this moment, both males. As they descended quickly, Eddy grew excited, “Senior Raas, I’m here! Senior Raas!”

“What are you shouting for? Who is it?” Lu Yin smacked him in the back of the head.

The youth glared back, “Your death! Senior Raas is an expert from Yu Academy, you aren’t his match. Release me now, and I’ll ask him to be lenient.”

Yu Academy? Lu Yin’s gaze turned heavier as he looked back at the two new arrivals. That was home to the Empire’s true elites, an institution that groomed the best of the best.

Outside the capital, the man who had descended first was still measuring his surroundings from his original spot. Floating in the sky as they observed Lu Yin and the rest, one of the newcomers stepped forward, "Actually getting captured by natives, Eddy. You're a stain on Yu Academy's reputation. So useless!"

Eddy's expression immediately turned ugly, but he gritted his teeth and lowered his head. The other man waved his hand and looked down calmly, "Who captured him? Let everyone go, and I'll spare your life."

"He's your senior?" Lu Yin asked in the city.

Eddy grew excited, "Yes, Senior Raas is no average expert either. His father is the Vice Treasurer of the Great Yu Empire! Lord Sicar has gathered many battle techniques for him; across all of Yu Academy, he's second only to the Melders."

Lu Yin's eyes gleamed, "Vice Treasurer? His family must be loaded."

Eddy stared blankly. That wasn't the point! However, Lu Yin continued to stare longingly at Raas; he still had a huge deficit of star crystals, only earning eight cubes in total off all the students. Could this Raas give him a surprise? As for the power that Eddy had mentioned, Lu Yin was not too concerned. While his senses screamed danger at the first guy, this Raas gave off a much milder impression.

"That guy feels different..." Zhang Dingtian suddenly said, prompting Lu Yin to look back at the first arrival whose aura had completely faded into the average Joe. There wasn't even the slightest feeling of danger anymore; that had evaporated the moment Raas and the others had approached.

Raas frowned up above, "What, are you not going to release them? Or do you think you're actually capable of protecting this place?"

"Senior Raas, the criminal seems to have left something in this city. As long as we control this place, he'll definitely return!" Eddy shouted. His defeat and the arrival of the second batch of trainees had completely crushed any dreams he had held of completing the mission; he stood to gain more if he could make Raas owe him a favor, and it could even give him some backing for the future.

Raas's eyes gleamed and he smiled, "Is that so? Looks like my luck isn't bad; I happened to land somewhere good."

At this point, the man behind Raas looked around and saw the spacecraft on the ground nearby. He whispered something that prompted Raas to look over, "Hello, Friend, why don't we introduce ourselves? I'm Raas."

Down below, the man picked up some mud and sniffed it, "Blood."

Raas's face sank, "Friend, let's get to know each other, I'm the son of the Great Yu Empire's Vice Treasurer Sicar."

The man stood up and looked at Raas in the sky above, smiling faintly, "I'm Xia Luo, parentage unknown. I don't dare to interact with those above my station."

Raas frowned, Xia Luo? He hadn't heard of such a name before.

Lu Yin turned to Zhang Dingtian, "Don't let them keep talking. If they establish a common goal, we'll be in trouble. I'll go after Raas, you keep an eye on Xia Luo."

Zhang Dingtian nodded and gripped his blade, while Eddy looked at Lu Yin like he was the devil. Forget power, Raas's background alone was enough to terrify all the other students. This guy was insane!

However, Lu Yin looked upwards and knew that this was merely the beginning that he had been awaiting for so long. Still in thought, he blasted into the skies towards his target, the air distorting like the horrified onlookers' faces as he struck out with a palm. Puzzled over Xia Luo's identity, Raas had never expected Lu Yin to make a move against him.

"The audacity to attack Master Raas!" the man behind Raas stepped forward in a rage, a bestial roar shaking the sky as his hand formed a claw. Lu Yin felt for a moment that the claw covered the entire sky; it was similar to Eddy's Beast King Punch, but much more formidable.

A cautious Lu Yin activated the Cosmic Palm with two stars, a powerful explosion rocking the skies as the two attacks met. Invisible force buffeted the ground as the man was sent flying a hundred meters away, coughing up blood upon landing and staring at Lu Yin in shock. He was at the same level as Eddy; while a full-powered Cosmic Palm could ruin him, two stars would still be enough to cause injury.

"No wonder you captured Eddy, you actually have some power!" Raas said in delight, his hand forming a similar attack. However, this time the actual image of a giant claw appeared in the sky, like something was reaching down from the heavens to strike. Lu Yin's gaze changed as he considered that this attack had grown stronger and stronger from Eddy to that man to Raas. All the while, it still retained the same origin.

Below, Xia Luo's eyes brightened, "Yu Academy's top technique, the Skybeast Claw. Although he's only grasped five of the 108 forms, that is enough to crush most Sentinels. Really not bad."

Behind Lu Yin, Zhang Dingtian, Bai Xue, Jeraldine, and the rest went wide-eyed in shock. This was privileged information even within the Great Yu Empire. However, those gazes changed when a third star joined Lu Yin's palm to meet the attack, the simultaneous explosions keeping it at bay. Raas was stunned by the force as the phantom claw was shattered, his gaze narrowing as he disappeared from the spot. Lu Yin used the Roving Step to follow.

The crowd watched as both combatants flickered out and back in a moment later, Lu Yin striking out with another palm attack that scared Raas. His Skybeast Claw had already been shattered and left him unable to defend himself, so he dodged to the side and crushed a wind crystal. The index finger of his left hand twisted as a gray tornado was sent towards Lu Yin; the Darkwind Finger was his strongest battle technique, and his father had paid a heavy price to acquire it.

Lu Yin's body froze up and he felt a strong sense of danger. This was an icy gloom that chilled him to the bone, feeling like it could freeze even star energy itself, but his expression turned cold and he used the Cosmic Art to manifest the three stars around his body. The tornado weakened as it drew closer to his body, leaving Raas shocked when he dodged.



Lu Yin used the movement to appear right in front of Raas and place his palm at the abdomen, activating the Spacerender Palm. Raas didn't even have the time to don his ring armor before enormous force slammed him into the ground. Raas's companion yelled and charged over with a sneaky claw, but another activation of the Cosmic Art slowed it down until Lu Yin could see every tiny movement of the battle technique in detail. Dodging with the Roving Step, his right hand formed the same claw and he raised it to attack, much to the bewilderment of the onlookers as the man crashed down with a mangled shoulder.

Eddy stared blankly at the scene. What had he just witnessed? This man had somehow used Yu Academy's top battle technique, limited to only a handful even within the academy. Just how?

It wasn't just Eddy; everyone present was shocked including Lu Yin himself! He had defeated Eddy earlier in the day and also captured numerous students. Though he had the protection provided by Gerlaine's armor, he had still received multiple injuries from the countless attacks he had endured. It was only after he had activated his Cosmic Art in order to regain some star energy that he had accidentally discovered another use for it; not only could it increase his rate of absorption, but it could also form a defensive forcefield around his body that weakened incoming attacks. Up to this point, Lu Yin had thought that this was the strongest aspect of his Cosmic Art, but he now realized that he still didn't understand it in its entirety. The Cosmic Art didn't just protect him from enemy attacks; it also exposed them to him in their entirety so he could learn them if he so wished. This was something he had never even dreamed was possible!

He clenched his fists in delight. He had known from the very start that Cosmic Art was something unique and special, but he had truly underestimated it all along. Not only was it a unique technique, it was truly something that shouldn't even exist! This was a skill that could mimic the ways of the universe itself, and was extraordinarily powerful.

Xia Luo looked on from the ground in astonishment as well, "Interesting."

#### **Chapter 44: Lu Yin and Xia Luo**

Not far away, a bloody-mouthed and bewildered Raas stood up with a lot of difficulty. Having taken the full impact of the Spacerender Palm at close range, he had suffered heavy injuries. However, the impact of those bodily wounds was nothing compared to the mental blow that Lu Yin had given him; how did this person know the Skybeast Claw?

"Who the hell are you?" Raas yelled.

"Your captor," Lu Yin landed and took a step forward, grabbing Raas by his shoulders and crunching down hard with a palm. The man screamed in pain as his shoulders were crushed, but Lu Yin threw him towards the capital, "I'm sorry, that's the only way to make you comply."

"YOU'RE DEAD!" the other person yelled out, "That's the honorable Raas, son of Lord Sicar! Lord Sicar won't let you go, the Twelfth Imperial Squadron won't let you go! You'll become a target of the Great Yu Empire!"

"You're too noisy!" Lu Yin said with a frown, breaking the other one's shoulders as well before throwing him to the capital. He then turned to look at Xia Luo, who returned the gaze.

“Don’t worry, I’m not interested in your group.” Xia Luo smiled gently, looking peacefully at Lu Yin.

Lu Yin nodded, “Thanks.”

Xia Luo smiled faintly, “My name is Xia Luo, pleased to meet you.”

“Lu Yin.”

“Lu Yin? Lu?” Xia Luo asked, astonished, “That’s an uncommon last name.”

Lu Yin squinted in response; Xia Luo was right. Lu was a very common last name on Earth, but it represented a distinct group of people across the universe. It was known as a primeval surname, and would be investigated strictly anywhere else. One of the reasons Lu Yin had arrived on Earth was to legitimize his name and identity; the Great Yu Empire had monitored this planet for a long while and knew that these sorts of surnames were common here.

“Your last name is quite the same,” Lu Yin commented as he leapt up and flew back to the capital. The smile remained on Xia Luo’s face.

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A huge spacecraft was floating in space not far from Earth, like a brightly lit beast watching over the planet. The people within had gotten riled up the minute Raas was captured, a dozen people gathered in the surveillance room where the screen was replaying the moment of defeat. Someone raged as Lu Yin broke the youth’s shoulders, “Far too brazen! He actually hurt Lord Raas, he deserves a death sentence! That is the only way!”

“That native is a dead man. He is the same one who killed Vesta three months ago, the first student death. He also looted many students, including Gerlaine, and then kidnapped more than twenty trainees. Now he dares to hurt Lord Raas? He must be put to death, that is the only way to appease Lord Sicar!”

“Damn it, what did he say? I couldn’t hear.” Many in the crowd were riled up.

Despite the commotion, there were also some present who approved of Lu Yin’s behavior. After all, trials were not intended solely to test the students, they were an opportunity for the natives as well. There were many elites in the Empire that had come from primal planets, and the trials were a way to discover these hidden gems. This man was definitely talented, but his actions against Raas would also draw Sicar’s ire. The Vice Treasurer wielded great power and influence in the Great Yu Empire, so this was a dead man regardless of talent.

Gentle footsteps rang through the surveillance room, echoing in the ears of those present and bringing it to silence. Everyone quickly made way for a trio of men that approached, led by a middle-aged man in armor with a stern face and piercing gaze. This was Generald Sigmund Mathers of the Great Yu Empire, the official in charge of Earth’s trial.

To Sigmund’s right was a pale young man whose footsteps rang hollow, his entire body emitting a chilly aura. Although he looked weak, he was the vice captain of the Ninth Imperial Squadron; his name was Torry Auna. To his left was a gloomy man with an ice-cold gaze, face marred with strange vein-like patterns. He stood at least two meters tall, and his arms were even longer than one would expect for

someone of that size. This was Shalosh, vice captain of the Twelfth Imperial Squadron and Raas's guardian at this trial. These three men were the officiators of the trial, all powerful Explorers who drew respect simply from their presence. No one marred their way to a screen that was showing a replay of recent events.

"Stop!" Sigmund suddenly growled, prompting someone to pause the video at the moment Lu Yin used the Skybeast Claw. The General stared at that image in shock, "He managed to use the Skybeast Claw without ever studying the wall that holds that skill. This isn't even an imitation but a perfect reproduction of the technique. This kid has talent."

"Continue the playback," Shalosh's eyes narrowed into a cold glare. The video resumed and quickly finished with the scene of Lu Yin shattering Raas's shoulders, prompting a disturbing grin as the man licked his lips, "Vicious and brave."

"Has anyone investigated this man's background?" Sigmund asked.

A soldier stepped forward and saluted, "General, this person is not among the list of students attending the trial."

"Of course he isn't!" Sigmund grunted, "He killed Vesta far too easily. Look ten years into the past, see if anyone snuck onto Earth through our blockade."

"We already checked, General; no one entered in the past thirty years."

He frowned, "The monitoring station needs to be investigated. This man used both the Shockwave and Spacerender Palms, he's clearly not a native. He doesn't seem very old, but there still aren't any results."

Sigmund's words brought about a nervous silence in the room; many of the people standing there were from the monitoring station.

"Make a record of everything about this person. We will arrest him once the trial is finished," Shalosh suddenly said in an overcast tone.

Torry raised his brows from the other side, "Arrest him? For what?"

Shalosh looked at him coldly, "Entering a trial planet without permission. Isn't that an arrestable offence?"

Torry sneered, "Even though Earth was being monitored by the Empire, it is still a free planet and anyone can enter as they please. Not discovering his existence is the fault of the monitoring station. Do you blame the floor if you slip and fall?"

Shalosh turned towards the man, "What do you mean by that? Are you trying to stop the Twelfth Squadron from discharging our duties?"

"I didn't know that the Twelfth Squadron was allowed to interfere with the trial," Torry said without a hint of respect. Everyone else nervously watched the exchange between the two vice captains, their status and power leaving the onlookers scared to even breathe aloud.

Sigmund waved his hand, "Alright, enough. Shalosh, I know you have your orders to protect Raas, but the only thing that matters in a trial is the result."

"Fine, you're the Chief Examiner and have the authority to decide. I can only report what happens to my captain," Shalosh said with a sneer, freezing Sigmund's gaze.

It was at this point that footsteps rang out once more; they were much more gentle, but they seemed deafening to everyone present as they all turned towards the female figure that had appeared at the entrance. The first thing one noticed about her was the white hair that flowed all the way to her ankles, complementing her snowy feet. This was a girl with an appearance of purity, but her eyes glowed a faint red. Her revealing summer clothes showed off her exquisite skin, and a small bit of hair was tied adorably over her forehead.

However, none of these things were the most noticeable thing about her. That glory was reserved for a ring on her finger, its white and silver head engraved with a pair of flying wings and a sword. Around that engraving was a black border surrounded by ten silhouettes; this ring was the symbol of the Universe Youth Council. This was Mira, a representative of the Universe Youth Council's evolutionary trial division.

Mira's arrival left Sigmund and the rest solemn, especially Shalosh who was the focus of her crimson gaze. The rising pressure almost sent him to his knees, but she suddenly turned to Sigmund and smiled, "I heard rumors that some people wanted to interfere with the trial. Is this true, General Sigmund?"

Shalosh felt a shiver travel down his spine and he dropped his head. He was a vice captain of the Great Yu Empire, a powerful Explorer, but couldn't help but bow his head before this young girl. This showed Mira's strength, and the power of the Universe Youth Council.

"Thank you for your constant attention, Lady Mira," General Sigmund replied, "There is no such interference planned."

#### **Chapter 45: Red Lotus Witchbow**

Mira smiled, "I'm glad to hear that. I wasn't supposed to appear in the trials here, but the Empire's Youth Council was dissolved and I'm the one who has to bear this unfortunate news. The trials cannot continue without the presence of someone from the Youth Council; is that not right, General Sigmund?"

Sigmund nodded, "Thank you, Lady Mira."

"This guy is something else, I hope he does well," she stated with her eyes on the screen, turning around to exit the surveillance room and leaving a delicate fragrance behind. Everyone heaved a huge sigh of relief as she left; they'd felt an intense pressure by her very presence, making it clear that she was more powerful than anyone else here. Even though she was from the Inniverse, she was still a student at the end of the day. How was she so powerful?

Torry Auna said gravely, "She's just one of the underlings of the Universe Youth Council. Sure, she's a student of Astral-6, Sure she's the Red Lotus Witchbow, but I'd never have imagined her to be this powerful."

Sigmund sighed loudly, choosing not to discuss this any further as he returned his attention to the screen. The young man there had Mira's favor; if he continued to overperform, her help could grant him a meteoric rise to the top. He was truly a lucky youth.

Having been shut down by a woman, Shalosh was still in a daze. Torry noticed the rage bubbling up within him, but only laughed in disdain. So what if he was angry, would he actually dare to do anything to Mira? Even if she weren't the more powerful of the two, she was backed by the Universe Youth Council and its ten monsters. He himself was no match.

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Outside Beijing, Xia Luo had left without much conversation. The youth didn't even fly, instead choosing to walk in the direction of the roaming zombie horde. Lu Yin was too focused on robbing Raas and the other man to care; it had to be said that this child of a Vice Treasurer truly was rich. There were close to 12 cubes of star crystals within his cosmic ring, and a number of other natural crystals that shocked Jeraldine and the rest.

"You're dead!" the youth himself was glaring angrily from the ground, "Everything I own is monitored by the Empire. Father already knows about this, and you'll be hauled off to court right after the trial. I'll make you beg for mercy!"

Clearly unintimidated, Lu Yin laughed, "I'll look forward to it."

There was a twinkle in Raas' eye; natives were clueless about many things, and Lu Yin would only truly know despair after his sentencing.

"Right, what was that technique you showed earlier?" Lu Yin suddenly switched topics.

Raas sneered, "A mere native dares to dream of the Skybeast Claw? Well, telling you won't change anything. Yu Academy of the Great Yu Empire has an inheritance of 108 forms of the Skybeast Claw; I have only managed to master five. Feel welcome to somehow come and try to learn all 108; you will shock the universe."

"You only managed to master five forms out of 108? That's such low aptitude!"

"I am the son of Lord Sicar, you pleb! Even Gerbach and the others only have half-mastery over a single form, a native like you cannot even understand such powerful techniques!"

"Techniques like this?" Lu Yin raised a hand, curling it into a claw. A faint bestial cry rang out from nowhere, sending out a pressure wave that ruptured the rocks nearby. Zhang Dingtian and the rest suddenly felt a wave of fear washing over them.

Raas gritted his teeth; this asshole really had managed to learn three forms of the Skybeast Claw. If he'd displayed all five earlier on, would he not have learnt those too? Such people had to be strangled!

With Lu Yin's help, the capital had captured twenty five students, one of whom was the son of a noble. This caused quite a stir in the network. Watching over the movements, Jeraldine quickly counted things up, "There are a total of 26 people in the second batch of trainees, and fifteen of them landed in China."

Even though 26 was a far lower number than in the first batch, the individuals were on a completely different level. Any given individual in the second batch possessed peak Sentinel strength; only the three

High Sages could match the weakest ones, and even then victory wasn't guaranteed. Even Zhang Dingtian wouldn't be confident against someone like Raas; battle techniques could often make up for many disparities, and their power couldn't be expressed with mere combat level.

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Northern Europe. Heavy winds and relentless snow had lasted for days, and the once-picturesque area had been reduced to a snow-covered wasteland. Countless zombies shuffled across the frozen plains, the entire northern half of the continent covered in bloodless white. One of several shooting stars landed on the island of Hailuoto in the now-frozen Gulf of Bothnia. There wasn't a single soul within a hundred kilometers, so the spacecraft did no damage despite the huge crater it formed. The doors opened and a young man walked out, hot breath turning into icicles in mid-air that tinkled against the ground.

"Damned random landings, sending me to this god-forsaken place. So damn cold, I wouldn't be surprised if it was the coldest place on this planet!" the man cursed, walking out further and looking around. His expression changed abruptly as he tapped his gadget, finding a reading only a few kilometers away and shooting off in that direction. It wasn't long before he saw a lone figure sitting atop a mountain, absentmindedly staring into the sky.

"Hey, where are we?" the new arrival asked from up above.

The man on the mountain looked up, "I don't know."

The youth's gaze turned icy, "What? You don't know? Then why are you here?"

"I'm hiding from people," the figure said indifferently.

The student landed on the mountain and walked towards the figure, "2300 combat level, that's quite impressive. But you don't have a gadget, are you a native?"

The person turned around to look at the man, "Can you do me a favor? I need you to help me post something on the network."

"Post what?" the student grew suspicious.

"Just that you spotted the criminal," the figure smirked.

"Why?" the student was startled and immediately went into a defensive stance, but the next moment, he felt all strength leaving his body. This man was only showing 2,300 combat level before, but now he was releasing insurmountable energy that completely overwhelmed him. His gadget rang out endlessly to inform him that this was a Melder-level battle technique.

"Thank you," the figure said faintly before turning around and walking away.

A few minutes later, the network on Earth exploded with activity. Everyone received an alert that the escaped criminal had Melder-level strength and was hiding in northern Europe, and that message ended with a request for assistance. Many didn't believe it at first—it made no sense to publicize the location of this trial's mission—but Eddy and the others who'd fought the criminal before looked through the

details about the criminal's appearance and certified its authenticity. Many students raced towards Europe immediately.

Within Beijing, Lu Yin and the others were caught off guard, "The target's position was leaked? Something doesn't seem right."

Jeraldine explained, "Not all students care about the trial's mission; everything that happens over the course of their stay can affect the result. Win/loss records count, and publicizing the information might be worth some points as well."

Lu Yin looked at Eddy, "You fought the criminal before, how strong is he?"

Raas's capture had turned Eddy into a well-behaved captive. He replied obediently, "He's very powerful. Even with little star energy, any Explorer's control and understanding of their battle techniques is difficult to match with numbers. A dozen of us attacked him together, but he instantly killed five and escaped."

"The poster mentioned that the criminal has Melder-level strength; is that true?" Jeraldine asked.

"Not when we confronted him, or we would've run away."

Lu Yin muttered something under his breath. The whole situation seemed suspicious; someone who could escape to the Outerverse from the Innerverse would not be careless enough to let a passing student notice him and post information.

"Quick, look at this. Some students are nearing northern Europe." Jeraldine cried out and everyone gathered to watch the local network.

Three students flew over to the location of the message, two from the first batch and one from the second. While they arrived at the same time, the former were afraid to even approach the latter.

"Where's the criminal?!" the stronger student shouted, while the other two started looking around. However, a dull thud suddenly rang out as the duo fell to the ground; it wasn't long before the student from the second batch join them. Only when they had all fallen did a man slowly walk over, his steps seemingly gentle yet releasing an indescribable pressure that caused them all to tremble. The trio raised their heads to look up at the figure, but all they could see was a silhouette in ring armor towering over them with an expression of content. Although the streak of white amidst his thick black hair made him look rather odd, he gave off a sinister vibe.

"Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Qingyu, the one you refer to as the criminal on the loose," the man said with a faint chuckle. The three students trembled as they watched an explosion of star energy that caused them all to pass out immediately. Qingyu looked to the vast horizon with eyes filled with longing as he muttered to himself, "Four is nowhere near enough."

Over the next two days, the local network erupted into chaos as no fewer than twenty students were captured. His name was finally released for the first time as well: Qingyu.

## **Chapter 46: Huo Xiaoling**

Most of the students in the trial only learnt about the criminal once they accepted the mission, but they knew nothing else. Part of the mission was gathering the information, but even now they only knew his name.

The third day after their arrival, the students of the second batch were shocked by a girl flying through the skies of northern Europe. All of them recognized her waist-length flame-red hair and the delicate features that made her look like a pixie; she was Huo Xiaoling, the heir to one of the most powerful families in the Great Yu Empire. Her appearance brought dozens of scared students out of hiding; while they had been scared of Qingyu's power, Xiaoling was a Melder herself. Although some of her power had been sealed, Sentinels couldn't compare.

The girl looked down at the scene below her, watching Qingyu with a dozen students tied up behind him. His eyes gleamed at the sight, "Such a beautiful girl, I didn't expect such an elegant beauty in the border weaves. Haha!"

"You might still be a Melder, but your injuries won't allow you to demonstrate your full ability. Your star energy isn't that great a threat, just surrender now," she said coldly.

"How arrogant, I like women like this," Qingyu said with a smirk, stepping forward and smashing his metal rod towards her. She'd barely dodged the first attack before he'd appeared behind her, weapon crashing down. Although the trajectory was clear, Xiaoling felt like there was no way to dodge. Flames soared from her body in response to the threat, burning everything they touched. Everyone watched the battle in shock as the snow melted instantly, the very skies turning red.

Qingyu withdrew his attack and retreated, looking at the girl with first surprise and then excitement, "Innate Gift of Fire. You're worthy of following me, woman."

Huo Xiaoling leveled a cold glare in Qingyu's direction, "Phoenix Pierce!"

Beep! Beep! Beep! A few students in the distance looked at their gadgets, their expressions changing, "4100."

"Quite powerful, it would be enough to defeat a normal Melder. But your opponent is Qingyu Daynight." Qingyu grinned, a loud explosion shaking the earth. The melted snow formed a river that crashed into Xiaoling and covered her; before it even faded, his gaze was sweeping across the surroundings.

The students who were watching the battle ran away immediately; Huo Xiaoling was one of the few Melders that were participating in this trial. Now that she had been defeated, they were even more frightened of the criminal. Said Melder soon climbed up from a pit, dripping wet and pale as she stared at the approaching Qingyu, "That surname..."

Qingyu bent down and stretched a finger out to her chin, flashing a smile, "You actually know about my family, seems like you're not ignorant. Since you do understand what it represents, you're fit to be my woman. Think about it, I can bring you out of this weave."

She slapped his hand away and covered her shoulder, gasping in pain, "The order to capture you came from the Innerverses. If you really are from that family, who would dare to capture you?"

He grabbed Huo Xiaoling's hair and pulled her up, matching her angry gaze with a cold one, "Don't get too agitated, if you break your seal you'll be eliminated. Don't you want to join Astral-10 anymore?"



Her heart sank, and the star energy flickering around her dissipated. Qingyu simply laughed and flung her towards the group of tied-up students, "Just watch, everything will be over soon. Thirteen seems like enough"

He wasn't wrong; Huo Xiaoling alone was more than enough. Sigmund almost rushed straight to earth from the surveillance station the moment she was captured, only being stopped by Mira.

"No one can interrupt the trial when it is still ongoing, this is a decision made by the Universe Youth Council. General Sigmund, are you planning to defy the decision of the Youth Council?" she asked calmly.

"Forgive me, Miss Mira, but Huo Xiaoling is Captain Huo Qingshan's daughter; she cannot be injured," Sigmund answered seriously.

Mira narrowed her eyes, "I know. So what? She can break her seal as well; she chose to be in her current situation."

Sigmund took a deep breath and matched the glare, but in the end he was the one to step down. The entire Great Yu Empire was nothing in the eyes of the Universe Youth Council, forget Huo Qingshan. The Council had erased many strong powers before, and the Great Yu Empire had no desire to be the next one.

Mira moved her eyes past Sigmund to look at the screen showing Qingyu; the battle technique he'd just used seemed very familiar for some reason.

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News of Huo Xiaoling's capture quickly spread across the network, and many of the students rushing towards Europe stopped and gathered together instead. Within Beijing, Eddy was stunned, "Even Xiaoling was caught; how are we supposed to complete this mission?"

"Huo Xiaoling? Is she very powerful?"

"She should have the highest combat level of all the students in the second batch; she's a Melder." Watching Lu Yin's gaze changing at the mention of the word, Eddy continued, "Not just any melder either. She has the innate gift of Flame, and her father, Huo Qingshan, is the captain of the Fifth Imperial Squadron. He's an powerhouse whose battle level will shatter an average gadget; with his guidance, there was no way for her to not be one of the most powerful elites in the Empire. I can't believe even she lost."

Only the trainees like Eddy and Jeraldine were stunned by the news of Huo Xiaoling's capture. Although Lu Yin was surprised, it was something too distant for him and he retained focus on the few students who were approaching. It didn't take too long for another trio to appear outside the city; although they weren't from Yu Academy, they were still elites with powerful backgrounds that matched or even exceeded Eddy. Still, they couldn't escape from him in the end and were captured, adding to his growing group of hostages that now tallied to 28.

Once the battle ended, Lu Yin stopped Zhang Dingtian from attacking a pair who had been hiding at the sidelines and called out, "Why are you here? I'll give you the armor back once the trial is over."

Gerlaine stepped out and showed a hesitant smile, "I want to join you."

"Join us? What does that mean?" Lu Yin was confused.

"I want to join you, that's what it means," she said, staring down her nose like they should be honored by the offer.

Lu Yin considered it and asked, "Why should we take you in?"

Gerlaine was outraged, "What do you mean by take us in?! We said that we want to work with you!"

"Why would I accept you?"

Gerlaine gritted her teeth, "Qingyu is a Melder and one or two students won't be able to handle him. He left his belongings in this city so he'll definitely come back; we can join forces to defeat him."

Lu Yin thought it over and realized she wasn't wrong; Qingyu was a truly difficult opponent and there were bound to be massive problems when he returned to the capital. Having more bodies around would never hurt, "Fine, come in. But I'll warn you, try to pull one over on me and I'll tie you up."

Gerlaine huffed and entered the city with Balaror. She was actually being honest; Qingyu was too powerful and could only be defeated through a group effort; this was the only way for her to try to complete the mission. Many students had formed an alliance in northern Europe, so she clearly knew she couldn't work alone anymore. Instead of working with other students participating in the trial and sharing the credit, it would be better for her final results to work with a native.

Outside the capital's border, Xia Luo was walking amidst a crowd of zombies that were completely docile, as though they didn't even notice his existence. For three days he'd been observing them with the same expression, but now he released a sigh, "Their auras are truly everywhere. This is going to be troublesome."

Down south, a pretty girl was flying towards Beijing. Everything about her was colored a fresh green, from her hair and her dress down to her boots that had a delicate floral print on them. It made her give off a sense of life.

#### **Chapter 47: Battle With A Broken Blade**

Eddy was thrown into prison that night, substituting for Raas who was a noble's son. Many students had already contacted him regarding the latter, indicating their willingness to pay for his freedom. Lu Yin had rejected them all; the youth's value in negotiations would be worth far more than resources or crystals.

Raas was thrown violently on the floor, not far from where the Chinese cultivators were rebuilding the walls. Seeing a familiar face walking around nearby, he called out to her, "Gerlaine? What are you doing here?"

The girl beamed, "I'm sorry, Senior Raas. I was captured too."

“Hold on, are you backing this bastard?” he grew furious; this stupid girl was obviously lying through her teeth. How did she seem captured in any way? “No wonder he dared to kidnap me, the nerve. Don’t think you’ll be fine just because of your brother’s protection; my father will deal with you.”

Gerlaine blinked innocently with her large eyes, “Please don’t accuse me of things like that, Senior Raas, I don’t control these natives. You can ask the others if you don’t believe me, I was robbed by him as well.”

Raas simply couldn’t believe that a mere native dared to act against him. Although the youth was surprisingly powerful, even innate gifts weren’t worth that much without a certain amount of backing.

“Another is approaching!” Jeraldine suddenly called out, drawing Lu Yin’s attention to a shadow flitting across the sky. The newcomer came to a halt right above Beijing, staring down at him.

Raas was delighted by the sight, “Senior Munoor, here! Senior Munoor!”

Gerlaine’s expression changed, “How has he come too?”

“You know him?” Lu Yin was curious.

“Munoor, an elite even in Yu Academy. He was once my brother’s rival; even though he’s been surpassed long ago, he’s still one of the few Melders in the school.”

Everyone’s mood sank upon the mention of the word Melder. They knew that there were bound to be Melder-level powerhouses among the second batch of trainees; Huo Xiaoling was one. However, such experts were rare and nobody had expected one to appear here so quickly.

Munoor’s eyes gleamed as he saw the wounded Raas down below. So long as he could save this junior of his, Lord Sicar would be grateful to him and make his future in the Empire less worrisome. His energy waves suddenly dispersed the clouds and pressed downwards, striking fear into the survivors below, “Let go of him, native!”

Raas was elated, but Lu Yin frowned and moved forward to initiate. While the opponent was a Melder when at full power, he was confident in victory against one whose star energy was sealed. However, Zhang Dingtian walked out with a solemn gaze, “Let me handle this.”

A glint flashed across Lu Yin’s eyes. Zhang Dingtian had hardly stepped out since the battle a few days ago, leaving him to defeat and capture all the incoming students. Jeraldine, Gerlaine, and the rest had all been focused on him, and even Eddy and the rest had quickly forgotten about the Bladesage, but this was the Head of the Seven Sages, a realmbreaker. Beijing’s original guardian had endured leaving the city in another’s hands for a long time, but now that he had recovered from his injuries, he wanted to battle for the capital himself.

Worry filled Bai Xue’s gaze as she stared at Zhang Dingtian; these aliens had powerful battle techniques, and were much more adept at using their energy. Zhang Dingtian could likely deal with average students of Yu Academy, but this was an elite.

Raas shrugged it off, feeling like it wasn’t even worth his time watching the battle. At least Lu Yin would be a show, but this other native now wanted to challenge a Melder’s strength. Even sealed to a peak Sentinel, that would be impossible.

“Be careful,” Lu Yin eventually nodded, and Zhang Dingtian’s eyes gleamed as he picked up his sword and rose into the sky. Gerlaine watched intently; Raas and group didn’t know that Lu Yin wasn’t actually the largest threat the first batch of trainees had faced. This was the realmbreaker who had initially defended the capital with his lone blade; even she had to escape.

“Get lost,” Munoor said after a single glance, sending a surge of star energy with a wave of his hand. Unlike the energy that would come from a normal Sentinel, this was condensed into a single point, showcasing a subconscious mastery that was the true indication of a Melder’s control.

Zhang Dingtian narrowed his eyes and his blade swept out, the strike tearing apart the energy surge and continuing towards Munoor. Although he had initially disregarded Zhang Dingtian, Munoor’s expression changed and he raised his hand to crush the strike with a claw, “Interesting... A mere native has strength comparable to a member of Yu Academy. No, this is even better than an average student. Are you a realmbreaker?”

Zhang Dingtian responded to Munoor’s surprise by lifting his blade and attacking again, but this attack, too, was shattered. The Bladesage was a realmbreaker more powerful than Eddy, someone even equal to Raas, but his attacks were nothing to a sealed Melder. Although his power had been sealed, Munoor still retained his battle techniques and energy control; they simply weren’t in the same league.

BANG! Munoor’s probing palm turned into a claw once more, pummeling the edge of the blade with a loud explosion. The weapon cracked even as the remnant force traveled up Zhang Dingtian’s arm, shredding his sleeve. Still, even this was a miracle of sorts; the blow would have shattered the blade and seriously injured him if he hadn’t diverted some of the force.

The Bladesage spat out some blood and retreated, but lifted his sword once more and howled. His body suddenly vanished into a phantom, astonishing Lu Yin, “Roving Step?”

There were two Zhang Dingtians? Everyone stared blankly at the sky, while Raas looked on with his jaw hanging down. A mere native was fighting Munoor head-on, even despite the use of the SkybeastClaw? How was it possible for him to be this powerful? How did this backward planet have an actual realmbreaker?

Up in the sky, Munoor’s expression froze before he erased the phantom with a wave of his hand. He whirled around and swept his leg out, releasing a violent tornado that warped the air and sent out shockwaves that fractured the ground.

Zhang Dingtian appeared by his side and struck down with his blade in full view of everyone, filling the hearts of countless onlookers with hope. Gerlaine and the rest finally witnessed the true power of a realmbreaker—it seemed like the Bladesage could even defeat Munoor—but the man himself narrowed his eyes as he felt no resistance to the slash. His sword moved behind his back out of sheer reflex, but it shattered loudly as a horrifying force sent him crashing down to the ground below.

Everyone fell silent as Munoor reappeared in the skies, now with a gloomy face. A lowly native had forced him to use both the Skybeast Claw and his movement techniques! It was unthinkable.

People looked out from the city to where the dust billowed into the sky, and Gerlaine released a deep breath. This was the natural way of things; if a native could actually defeat someone like Munoor, her view of the world would turn upside down. A native could not defy the natural order no matter what! She turned to Lu Yin, "It's your turn."

"It's not over," Lu Yin pointed out of the city.

"Do you want him to die? There's no way that native can defeat Munoor, he can't even injure him!"

Lu Yin squinted, "I really don't like the term 'native'."

"Hmph," she turned away.

Zhou Shan and Wu Sheng rushed over, looking out of the city with worry written all over their faces. Bai Xue clenched both fists tightly as a threatening chill radiated from her body, drawing Raas's attention. He had already been smitten by her face and planned to take her back to serve him, but realized she was far beyond what he'd first expected. Frost? An innate gift? What was this planet? Realmbreakers, innate gifts, freaks of power, it had everything!

As the dust cleared, everyone could see Zhang Dingtian gripping his broken blade. He was covered in wounds from top to bottom, but was still standing and his gaze was focused as he looked at the skies and slowly rose up.

"Unyielding," Munoor raised an eyebrow, "What's your name?"

"Zhang Dingtian."

"Follow me, Zhang Dingtian. You're qualified to join Yu Academy, I'll bring you there."

"Not interested," Zhang Dingtian answered coldly, clenching his broken blade.

Munoor laughed, "You want to fight me with this broken blade? Listen to me, the wall between us cannot be breached. Nothing awaits you but failure."

"That might not be the case. Dingtian, here's a gift," Lu Yin shouted, throwing Gerlaine's ring armor over. Zhang Dingtian caught it instinctively, but then looked back with a puzzled expression. Lu Yin explained, "Your battle wasn't fair to begin with; he's a Melder, you're just a Sentinel. Don't be that rigid."

The Bladesage's eyes flashed and he equipped the ring armor, covering his body with flickering lightning in an instant.

#### **Chapter 48: Genius**

Gerlaine blew her top when she saw the lightning around Zhang Dingtian, and glared at Lu Yin fiercely, "You scoundrel, you actually gave my armor to a random person. Bastard!"

Lu Yin waved his hand, "Don't be offended, I'll return it to you later."

Gerlaine was infuriated, "No need, it's too disgusting with all that sweat in it. You can use it as your coffin!"

Lu Yin ignored her and turned to the sky, where Zhang Dingtian felt his strength surging within that lightning armor. He recalled how Lu Yin had used this armor to ignore the attacks of so many students.

“Gerbach’s toy,” Munoor’s expression darkened, eyes squinting as a cold gaze swept towards Gerlaine, “His sister is here too, perfect. I can teach you a lesson.”

He then charged downwards, but Zhang Dingtian snorted and slashed out with his broken blade to block the path.

“You’re courting death!” Munoor barked as he saw the unhesitating slash, swatting Zhang Dingtian away with a claw. A bestial roar rang through the void, inspiring fear in the onlookers; this was the seventh form of the Skybeast Claw, far exceeding Raas’s strength. The attack should have killed Zhang Dingtian instantly, but the Bladesage growled softly in the face of the terrifying attack. Blood flowed down his lips as his blade trembled rapidly, distorting the air around it. A strange force converged around the weapon, radiating oppressive pressure. A loud explosion rang out as the broken sword clashed with the claw, powerful aftershocks dispersing the clouds in the sky and tearing the ground apart. One slash followed the city walls and cut the earth open, the depth of the gash unknown.

Scarlet blood sprinkled from the skies onto the ruins below as Zhang Dingtian’s armor broke, body crashing down to the ground where Lu Yin caught him at the last moment. He was left unable to even move, and his sword was shattered further, but no one dared underestimate him anymore. His attack had actually injured Munoor!

Up in the sky, Munoor stared at the native in shock. Fresh blood was dripping down his right shoulder, and his fingers were trembling from the impact. An elite of Yu Academy, a Melder who had once strived against a legendary existence like Gerbach, had actually been injured by a native and blasted a hundred meters away. Even if his power was restricted, this was supposed to be impossible! No one would even believe that the seventh form of the Skybeast Claw couldn’t kill a native.

On the ground, Lu Yin was suffering from similar shock; Zhang Dingtian had managed to survive the claw attack and had managed to somehow incorporate Shockwave Palm into his blade! The man was simply a genius, that blade attack was comparable to his own Cosmic Palm. The two-star Cosmic Palm had only been slightly weaker than the Bladesage’s full-power blows when they first met, and the third star allowed him to match Raas’s fifth form of the Skybeast Claw. Munoor’s was clearly much stronger than that, meaning Zhang Dingtian’s life was owed to the lightning armor, but that luck didn’t offset the achievement in the slightest.

Raas was stunned, ‘Where did such a pervertedly strong native come from?’

Bai Xue and the others quickly took Zhang Dingtian away to be treated. It was truly amazing that he had held out for so long; after all, his opponent was one of the strongest youths of the Great Yu Empire who had spent much more time cultivating than he had. Meanwhile, Lu Yin rose into the sky, “I’ll be your opponent now.”

Munoor stared at Lu Yin with an icy glare, fully intent on erasing his previous humiliation on this other native.

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In the giant spaceship floating over Earth, everyone in the control room was similarly shocked at what they had just watched on the display. They were all aware of who Munoor was, as only a few Melders had come to participate in this planetary trial. This made Munoor one of the strongest participants, and yet a native had just injured him!

A loud bang brought everyone's gazes to an excited Sigmund, "A realmbreaker! Who could have thought this planet had such talent! If he wasn't missing battle techniques, he could have had a brilliant fight. This is the type of soldier we want."

Shalosh licked his lips at the side, "Apologies, General Sigmund, the Twelfth Imperial Squadron wants him."

Sigmund snapped, "The main responsibility of the Twelfth Squadron isn't battle. This man is clearly extremely talented at combat, he could even copy the Roving Step so quickly and integrate the Shockwave Palm into his blade. He's a genius!"

Torry spoke up from the other side, "General Sigmund is right, this person is truly a genius. The Auna Family is willing to pay for his formcast remodeling, leave him to the Ninth Squadron."

The debate quickly and loudly escalated, while the others in the room cast envious glances at the badly injured man on the screen whose eyes were still resolute. They all knew that so long as he didn't die during this trial, his future would be bright. Then there was the woman with the innate gift of Frost; if one threw in the mysterious youth who had captured Raas, the people of this planet weren't simple at all!

As the trio's argument continued, Mira looked at the display as Lu Yin and Munoor began their fight. Rage-addled from the injury, the sealed Melder wanted to vent all of his frustrations on the natives, starting with Lu Yin. He didn't hold back from using the seventh form of the Skybeast Claw right away, assuming that victory would be easy, but Lu Yin proved even more impressive and dodged the wide-area attack with calm ease. It was only then that a stunned Munoor realized that this opponent would be even more difficult than the last.

Lu Yin grew serious, activating the Cosmic Art as Munoor attacked once more. He disappeared with the Roving Step, but the phantom claw flashed and brought him back only a moment later when the attack was no more than twenty centimeters away. He could feel the incoming power, but carefully observed the usage of the technique as he dodged to the side and evaded again. A Spacerender Palm was shot towards Munoor, but the Melder didn't even bother avoiding the technique and just tore through it with his claw before sending out another attack.

It was at this point that Lu Yin's gaze narrowed; he had seen enough. He thrust out another attack that Munoor assumed to be a Spacerender Palm; while a Sentinel being able to use that skill was rare, it couldn't harm him in the slightest. However, Munoor's skin crawled as he felt an immense sense of danger, watching as Lu Yin's palm turned into a claw; this was the seventh form of the Skybeast Claw!

**BANG!** He fell down like a meteor, spitting out blood before he even hit the ground. The earth around his impact was dyed red, shocking every onlooker in one moment. Raas's heart sank; he'd forgotten that this native could mimic the Skybeast Claw!

Bai Xue and the rest stared at Lu Yin in amazement; this person continued to grow stronger and more terrifying with every encounter.

Munoor was bleeding on the ground with a stunned look on his pale face. The blood from his abdomen stained his clothes, but his attention was on the person who had copied his own battle technique rather than on his injury. There was no way he had seen wrong, that was the seventh form of the Skybeast Claw. He glared at Lu Yin, "How do you know the Skybeast Claw?"

Lu Yin landed, "Learnt it from you."

"Impossible, no one could learn the Skybeast Claw so quickly. I took nine months at Yu Academy to get to the seventh form, how could you learn it so quickly? Who the hell are you? Where did you learn this in secret?"

"Well, I can't make you believe me if you don't want to," Lu Yin replied before leaping at Munoor once more. A phantom roar shook the sky as Munoor clenched his teeth in frustration, knowing that the seventh form was his strongest attack while he was sealed. It should have overpowered anything he encountered, but he was now facing an opponent who had the same skill and could dodge his uses of it. There was no chance to win this battle.

BANG! A giant claw mark dug into the earth as Munoor flew away in defeat. The only way to beat such a person was to break his seal. This group of natives was just too absurd; there was a second realmbreaker among them! No, this person definitely wasn't even a native; he used the Spacerender Palm. Just who the hell was he?

Lu Yin allowed Munoor to fly away, only heaving a sigh of relief once he was gone. Facing a Melder had put him under a lot of pressure; if the opponent broke his seal, he would be badly injured at best and killed at worst. Munoor would be expelled from the trial for doing such a thing, but that was of no consolation to a dead man. Lu Yin preferred not driving him into such desperate straits, especially since he'd already gotten so much. His biggest harvest from the day was definitely the seventh form of Skybeast Claw. This was a battle technique that was a heritage of the Yu academy and lived up to the reputation of the Empire's best academy. A total of 108 forms? He was looking forward to discovering the full power of the technique after all of the forms were learned.

#### **Chapter 49: Strange Stone**

Back in the capital, Raas had pretty much given up all hope. If even Munoor had been defeated, no one could save him now. He was fated to join the bottom end in this trial. Jeraldine looked at Lu Yin in disbelief, recalling the first time she had seen him where he was just a Seeker. Now he was an unparalleled Sentinel, just what was his background? Yatar from the Pagoda Planet, grandson of the headmaster, a top-notch powerhouse? Was that really the truth?

Munoor was famous amongst the trainees, and news of his defeat stunned all of them. Their first reaction was disbelief, but the network never lied. Gerlaine verified the news quickly, ensuring that everyone took this powerhouse guarding the capital more seriously. At the same time, the trial itself grew much more complicated. The two Melders who had shown themselves so far had already been defeated.



Not long later, a few more students were captured by Qingyu. Lu Yin updated his count, "Seventeen, he's caught seventeen students."

Bai Xue was puzzled, "What are you counting this for?"

"He's fighting for numbers," Lu Yin pouted, but seeing everyone speechless, he took a deep breath and explained, "This fellow isn't stupid and thought of the same thing we did. He wants to use these students to reach some compromise. Pity, the natures of our sides are different; he's a criminal on the loose, while we're just natives. He's fated for judgment no matter how many students he captures."

"Then doesn't that settle things? It's unrelated to you," Gerlaine batted her eyes.

Lu Yin turned to her, "Every student he captures is one fewer for us. They're our only bargaining chips."

Gerlaine widened her eyes, "You really want to negotiate with the Empire using students? That's impossible."

"Nothing is impossible. Everyone who dared to enter this trial is an elite; they're very important to the Empire."

She sneered, "Do you know how many students participate in these trials every year? Let me tell you; this planet is one of many running right now, and even if all of them were wiped out, there wouldn't be any impact. You're dreaming!"

Bai Xue, Zhou Shan, and the rest felt depressed upon hearing her words. The Great Yu Empire was simply too large, and there were too many students and academies within. The trial on Earth only involved a small portion of its students.

"That's not for sure," Lu Yin consoled them, pulling Raas over, "This guy's status should be enough for us to get something."

"Let go of me!" Raas was furious.

Lu Yin tossed him aside and smiled, "The Vice Treasurer holds a very high position in the Empire; I've even heard he has some influence within the Thirteen Imperial Squadrons, which is perfect for me. The greater his influence, the better our chances of a successful negotiation, no?"

Gerlaine sighed and looked at Raas. What Lu Yin had said was true, and this guy was Sicar's only son. For his sake, the man might even be willing to give up his own life. Raas leveled a furious glare at Lu Yin; this bastard actually dared to use him to threaten the Empire! Whether the negotiation was successful or not, he would become a laughing stock to the Empire's younger generation.

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In northern Europe, a group of students were similarly angry. Over twenty students had banded together from all over to hunt for Qingyu, led by Yan Gang who actually wasn't from the Great Yu Empire but another power within the Frostwave Weave called the Fireforge Planet. They were just as well-known as the Empire despite their limited scope; the planet was enormous and filled with seas of fire. It was said that all creatures from there had extremely high resistance to fire, and could use powerful flame-based battle techniques.

“Qingyu, release Huo Xiaoling,” Yan Gang stared down from his towering position in the sky. He himself was a sealed Melder like Huo Xiaoling, but many believed that he was even stronger than her. His body that had a hint of dark red was radiating scorching heat even in the freezing north, melting the snow below.

“You’ve got guts, kid. Do you think you can snatch someone from my grasp?” Qingyu teased the youth, his eyes full of contempt. In fact, he was still lounging on the ground with the seventeen captured students behind him, Huo Xiaoling among them. He had once been an Explorer; he couldn’t be bothered with mere students.

“Let me warn you, Huo Xiaoling is engaged to Yan Feng, the strongest youth of the Fireforge Planet. Touch so much as a hair on her head and you’ll face my entire planet’s wrath!” Yan Gang stated coldly.

“A little planet in a savage borderland really thinks highly of itself. Whatever, I’ll give you a chance to take her away, but it will depend on your ability.”

“Speak!” Yan Gang growled.

A slight smile grew on Qingyu’s face, “Go to China’s capital and fetch my stuff in exchange for this woman.”

Yan Gang’s eyes flashed, “Release Huo Xiaoling first, and then I’ll go and get it for you.”

Qingyu burst out in laughter, “Are you an imbecile, or do you think I’m an idiot? Release the hostage first? I do hope your brain hasn’t burnt to a complete crisp.”

Yan Gang was furious and clenched both fists, the air around him further distorted by the heat, “Fine, I’ll go, but you must promise not to harm her.”

Qingyu shrugged, “That depends on how long it takes you to get it. I wouldn’t give you a guarantee if you take too long; this girl is quite pretty.”

Yan Gang was furious, “Xiaoling is a Melder; if you dare touch her, we’ll slaughter you even if it means we must break our seals.”

“Wouldn’t that mean you forfeit your chance to join Astral-10? Do you think the Astral Combat Academy accepts trash that can’t even handle Sentinel trials? How will you answer your leader?” Qingyu continued to mock him.

Yan Gang snorted, then told the student behind him, “Watch him, I’m going to China.”

“Munoor just fled after being defeated, are you sure you’ll be alright alone?” The student came from the Huo Family and Huo Xiaoling was his only concern.

“Don’t compare me to such trash!” Yan Gang snapped before flying away, a white trail of smoke behind him. Assuming no mutant beasts barred the way, it would take about two days to get from where he was to Beijing.

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Said city was mostly dark, with only a small part of the city lit up so it could avoid attracting mutant beasts. Lu Yin arrived at the basement of the Research and Development Center under President Lian's guidance to see what Qingyu had left behind—a stone about the size of a human skull. It seemed round at first glance, but it actually had sixteen faces, each smooth and flat with an indecipherable mark in the center. The entire stone emitted an aura that felt like it had weathered countless changes since the start of time.

Beside Lu Yin was Bai Xue; it was her recommendation that had finally allowed him to see this thing. She had been strongly opposed to him even laying eyes on Qingyu's belongings before, even claiming that such permission required the Seven Sages to agree, but now the entire capital was under his sole protection; there was simply no reason not to let him take a look.

He looked at the stone that was placed in a glass box with curiosity, "It looks like carved stone, but it feels... different."

"Do you know how old it is?" President Lian asked, answering when he shook his head, "We don't either. It's impossible to estimate."

"Impossible to estimate?" Lu Yin was shocked. It was rather inconceivable that Earth's current technology couldn't even measure a stone's age.

President Lian continued, "It's just too old for our knowledge, we can't track some of the changes it has lasted through. The traces of its age are everywhere, and we simply can't come to a conclusion. We've tried many approaches but were unable to glimpse anything."

Bai Xue followed up, "We did manage to put together some information. This Qingyu came here from the depths of the universe, and no news was spread despite the incredible distance of his escape. The best explanation is that he'd stolen something far too valuable, this stone."

"When you guys brought him back from Neptune, what else did he have besides this stone?" Lu Yin asked

She looked at President Lian, who said, "A sword, several crystals that turned out to be star crystals, and a chip that contained cultivation methods. It was rather damaged, so we couldn't read much, but we did what we could."

She elaborated, "The blade is with Zhang Dingtian, and we absorbed the star crystals long ago to help with cultivation. We were already close to the Realm of Sky before the Apocalypse started, or what the aliens call the Sentinel realm."

Lu Yin looked at the stone, "So this stone and that sword are the only things Qingyu left behind?"

President Lian answered, "We have examined the war blade. The material is very sturdy and far surpasses any metal or alloy that can be found on Earth, but that's it. As for this stone, we can't make heads or tails of it at all."

"Can I examine it?"

"Of course."

**Chapter 50: Corridor**

Bai Xue nodded after some hesitation; if not for Lu Yin, they wouldn't have been able to protect even the entire capital, forget this single stone. Since they couldn't understand it anyway, it didn't matter. She left with President Lian in tow, leaving him alone.

Lu Yin picked up the stone and started examining it, feeling nothing outside of a heavy chill at first. Unable to glean anything after some time, he put it down and was about to leave when his gaze suddenly went cold and he used Roving Step to appear at a corner. A black shadow looked at him in shock, the air turning cold as they lifted their hand, but his gaze narrowed and he attacked with the Skybeast Claw. The shadow exclaimed and dodged urgently.

Lu Yin had only used the first form of the Skybeast Claw, so the shadow dodged with ease. However, this also exposed her frosty glare.

"Who are you? Why are you here?" Lu Yin asked. This girl was definitely a student, and while not comparable to Munoor, she could still match Raas.

"Jenny Auna of the Auna Family, you should have heard of me before," she said proudly.

"Nope, never heard of you," Lu Yin frowned, "Why are you here?"

Jenny sent an icy glare his way, "How dare you speak to me like that?!"

Lu Yin was annoyed; this girl had the same sense of superiority as Raas. The Auna Family was likely a good background, but he didn't care, "I don't care who you are. Since you're here, you don't need to leave."

"Stop! I'm the daughter of Snow Mountain Auna, niece of the captain of the Ninth Imperial Squadron! You're making a mistake!" Jenny was shocked as Lu Yin rushed towards her; she knew that she simply couldn't match him, and when he grabbed her hand, she didn't even resist much. She just glared at him, "I'll warn you again, I'm not the same as Raas. The Auna Family can affect the decisions of the entire Empire, don't make a mistake!"

Lu Yin's face suddenly changed and he released the girl, dashing back to the stone at the same time that another figure tried to snatch it away. It was only when he grabbed a silky arm that he realized this was another girl, this one looking like an elf in her all-green attire. She turned around and kicked at him the moment he caught her, and when Lu Yin tried to pull her arm to break the attack, he was shocked to find that she was so shockingly powerful that he couldn't even budge it. He reluctantly let go of her arm and dodged the kick, using the third form of the Skybeast Claw that could defeat those like Eddy, but even that proved completely useless as she shattered the attack with a direct punch. Her fist barreled right towards him with shocking strength, forcing him to activate the Cosmic Art, but when he saw the details he realized that she was making ten attacks in a row! Barely dodging the attack, he sent her a wary glance.

"You dodged it?!" the girl seemed shocked as well.

Lu Yin frowned, this new opponent was truly powerful. She was just as strong as Munoor, if not stronger, and a bunch of normal punches had been no weaker than the seventh form of the Skybeast Claw. Just where did such a scary powerhouse come from? Was she aiming for the stone?

Right as he was about to speak up, another shadow moved out of a dark corner. All three of these people could hide their star energy to avoid gadget detection, proving just how strong they were, and the third person's face dropped Lu Yin's heart; this was Xia Luo, the same youth who'd given him such a strong sense of danger when he first landed outside the capital. Lu Yin clearly remembered that sensation, the same one he'd felt when he first met Silver.

Four people faced each other in the cramped basement, two boys and two girls. Jenny was the most astonished of them all, not having realized there were two other people in hiding, while the girl in green had a similar feeling towards Xia Luo.

"Your aim is this stone?" Lu Yin asked.

Jenny Auna and the girl in green kept quiet, but Xia Luo smiled warmly, "That's right. Lu Yin, do you know where this stone is from?"

Lu Yin answered, "No."

Xia Luo continued to smile, "Then we can talk about it. This stone is the inheritance of a powerful clan in the Inniverse. It is rumored that one can learn the battle techniques of that clan from this stone, which is the reason why Qingyu is wanted. Since you didn't know the function of this stone, I'll tell you the method of using it and let's try it out together. What do you think?"

The girl in green looked at Xia Luo in surprise, "You know how to use it?"

Xia Luo smiled, "I know a bit. This stone isn't useful to anyone other than the people of that powerful clan because no one else can use it. This is also why the clan didn't bother to retrieve it themselves—in which case the entire Frostwave Weave would have been done for—so there's no reason to fight over this thing."

The girl in green looked at Lu Yin as well, "What do you think?"

Lu Yin looked at the three people before him. He was only confident in a battle against Jenny, which also meant that no one in the entire capital could stop them. "Fine, we can study it together, but you can't take the stone away."

Xia Luo nodded, "No problem. And if you have friends who want to study as well, they can join us. The method is very easy; blood can activate the stone. It's up to each person individually whether they can get the inheritance, but I'll tell you now that it's almost impossible for us to succeed."

Lu Yin glanced at Xia Luo and immediately contacted Bai Xue and Zhang Dingtian, who soon arrived along with Zhou Shan and Wu Sheng. Jenny frowned arrogantly while the Sages looked at the outsiders warily; these three people were very powerful and two were at least equal to Munoor; it would be a disaster for Beijing if a fight broke out.

"Don't worry, we mean no trouble and only wish to study the stone together. I'll go first," Xia Luo gestured. Lu Yin tossed him the stone, and he pricked a finger and allowed a drop of blood to drip down. The stone absorbed it and started floating, exerting pressure on everyone in the room as they saw hints

of many battle techniques flashing past their eyes. Accompanying those techniques was something terrifyingly vile, but Xia Luo sat down and gazed up at the stone in contemplation.

The girl in green was the second to start, dripping her own blood and sitting down as well. Soon, all of them were sitting in a circle around the sixteen-faced stone. Lu Yin snuck a peek at Xia Luo before starting, although everyone looked defenseless right now, he was certain that they all had their ways to protect themselves and that it wouldn't be a good idea to attack. He finally dripped some of his own blood onto the stone and watched as it was absorbed, suddenly seeing a primordial fist punching towards his face.

Puff! Wu Sheng suddenly spat out a mouthful of blood, color draining from his face. A while later, Zhou Shan joined him in failure. Like a chain reaction, Bai Xue, Jenny Auna, and Zhang Dingtian all failed one after the other, staring at the stone with awe on their pale faces. Meanwhile, Lu Yin saw the fist drawing closer and closer, surrounded by a boundless darkness and the river of time. Countless people had died to this punch that could change day to night.

He subconsciously gritted his teeth, biting his lip as he used the Cosmic Art. The approaching fist started to slow down and he could now see it more clearly; although it covered the entire sky and turned day to night, there was still a way to avoid it.

'Wait, why avoid it?' He opened his eyes and three stars revolved around his body, a fourth suddenly appearing as well. The stars exploded into the fist, dissipating it just as it was about to strike it.

In an instant, Lu Yin felt like he had travelled through infinite distance to arrive at an unknown corridor. He was surrounded by boundless darkness on all sides, the only visible thing being this one ancient passage filled with a bloody aura. He couldn't find words to describe this place; while there was no light source, he could clearly see the corridor in its entirety. And while he could see it all, it changed when he glanced away for a moment. The entire place was dark red, with murals all over the walls that he didn't understand. There was no sound, but it felt like the figures upon them were screaming and howling, like the wall would drip blood any moment. That blood was the only thing he could smell.