

Chapter 651: Billowing Star

“Your Highness, are you certain that it’s a poison?” the bespectacled Mistchild asked.

Lu Yin shook his head, as even Ming Zhaoshu himself wasn’t sure of that detail. However, only a poison could deplete one’s life force without causing any sort of injury.

“If it’s a poison, there’s no cure aside from using rare treasures that are able to directly replenish one’s life force,” the bespectacled female Mistchild answered with confidence.

Lu Yin frowned. “So there’s no cure?”

The bespectacled female Mistchild nodded. “Some people fall unconscious after being poisoned, as the poison has attacked their brain. This means that they’d need a medicine that can heal their brain. Some people’s bodies rot after being poisoned, and they would need a medicine that heals their body. Similarly, in the case of a poison that depletes life force, one can only replenish the person’s life force.

“There must be something that’s stealing that life force,” Lu Yin insisted.

The Mistchild adjusted her glasses. “If you can find that, then we would be able to target the root cause. However, Your Highness already said that there were no signs.”

Lu Yin fell silent.

“Your Highness, this poison is very aggressive, and it must be very valuable as well. Even Enlighters wouldn’t be able to remove this kind of poison. Who is it that’s been poisoned?” the female Mistchild asked.

Lu Yin turned off his screen; why had Ming Zhaoshu been poisoned? According to the Limiteer Mistchild, such a valuable poison should not exist on Shenwu Continent. Could it have come from the universe? The Daynight clan? No, the Daynight clan would rather use such a poison on him than on Ming Zhaoshu. To them, Ming Zhaoshu was nothing more than an ant.

But in that case, who else could have done it?

The Neohuman Alliance? Lu Yin suddenly thought of them and realized that such a thing was highly probable. The Shenwu Continent obviously wasn’t as simple as it had first appeared to be, and Lu Yin, Ming Zhaoshu and the Neohuman Alliance were all aware of that fact. Thus, the only realistic possibility was that the Neohuman Alliance had poisoned Ming Zhaoshu in order to incite chaos within Shenwu Continent.

There must have been some people from the Neohuman Alliance who had escaped during the battle that had taken place in Mingdu.

Lu Yin rapped his fingers against the table. Since there were still people from the Neohuman Alliance in Shenwu Continent, that meant that Shenwu Continent wasn’t actually safe. As soon as Ming Zhaoshu died, their next target would be Ming Yan. Thus, Lu Yin couldn’t let Ming Zhaoshu die.

Lu Yin clenched his fists. “Come.”

“Your Highness.” Kayze quickly appeared.

“Spread the news that King Zishan is looking for certain rare ingredients and is willing to offer huge rewards for them.”

“Yes, Your Highness.”

Kayze was quite efficient. He had joined the First Squadron through Lu Yin’s recommendation, and he used the First Squadron’s resources to spread this news throughout the entire Great Yu Empire in just a few hours. The news even ended up reaching the Grandtop and Lars Weaves.

For the Great Yu Empire, any action of King Zishan’s was a monumental event that everyone had to pay attention to.

That same night, Lu Yin received dozens of rare ingredients, and there was even a purple star amongst them.

Undying Yushan had previously relied on a purple star to preserve his life, and Lu Yin knew that it was a valuable herb that came from the Starfall Sea. The purple star had been provided by Shamrock Enterprises’ Frostwave Weave headquarters.

Lu Yin had almost forgotten about Shamrock Enterprises as he had been focusing on the nearby weaves’ major powers. Actually, the power and influence of a major corporation that conducted business in both the Inniverse and Outerverse such as Shamrock Enterprises was far more powerful than any of the Outerverse’s key forces. The most frightening thing about such powers was that they remained hidden and wouldn’t be noticed unless one specifically focused on them.

Everyone in the universe had heard of Shamrock Enterprises, and even normal people knew about this company. Meanwhile, the Great Yu Empire—no, Frostwave Weave wasn’t even known to most of the people in the Inniverse, and even some of the Outerverse’s western weaves hadn’t heard of them. There was a huge gap between the two organizations.

It would be fine if Frostwave Weave only lost in terms of reputation, but the most important aspect was that Shamrock Enterprises was always looking for “seeds” throughout the entire universe. The seeds that they found were talents who could easily join the Astral Combat Academy, and Darkvoid was one such seed of Shamrock Enterprises. Nobody knew how many seeds there were, and after countless years of grooming, the seeds’ combined strength could move the skies.

Lu Yin fell deep into thought as he looked at the purple star in his hand. Shamrock Enterprises needed purple stars as they were a precursor for various medicines, so why would they give one to him? This stalk of purple star might not be very important to the company, but it demonstrated their friendly attitude towards Lu Yin.

Lu Yin paid for the purple star and entered a private room. He quickly screened the monkey off and then raised a hand. His die appeared; it had been twenty days, and it was now time for him to use it.

As the die rotated slowly, it finally settled on four pips: Timestop.

Once he entered the Timestop Space, Lu Yin felt certain that he would roll Enhance.

He extended his time in the space to a hundred days, but he only managed to roll Enhance on his third try.

He placed the purple star on the top screen and recalled that he had used 150,000 star crystals to enhance the purple star halfway when he had been trying to heal Undying Yushan. The previous stalk of purple star had been smaller than the one that Lu Yin currently possessed, and so, he promptly tossed out ten star essence onto the screen, which was equivalent to a million star crystals. The purple star easily dropped through to the next layer, after which its color completely changed. It now was a purplish blue, which indicated that it had become a billowing star, which was the enhanced version of a purple star.

Half of the ten star essence had been used up, which meant that the first upgrade had consumed five star essence. Lu Yin grabbed the billowing star and threw it on the top light screen once again, causing the remaining star essence to be immediately depleted. However, this time, the billowing star did not even manage to descend halfway through. He pulled out another ten star essence, which was enough to allow the billowing star to fall through to the next layer in an instant. This time, the billowing star had turned completely blue.

This still wasn't enough for Lu Yin, as he was determined to enhance the plant to the level where it could avoid danger, which was the level that the fruit he had once used to heal Zhuo Daynight had reached. Only a rare ingredient with that level of potency would be able to replenish Ming Zhaoshu's life force.

The glowing billowing star suddenly started flying about, moving as if it wanted to escape from the isolated space. Lu Yin smiled and grabbed it. He had spent almost one hundred star essence to enhance the plant to this level. He remembered that he had spent almost a hundred star essence when he had enhanced the white fruit as well.

Should he enhance it again? Lu Yin considered it briefly before deciding to continue enhancing it. Since it had already reached such a level, he chose to continue enhancing it to the maximum level possible, as that would guarantee it being able to replenish Ming Zhaoshu's life force.

However, Lu Yin was too naive. If he wanted to enhance something, the item had to still have some room for improvement. The maximum level of a billowing star was only at the level where it could avoid danger. It was like trying to enhance a normal weapon, which could only be upgraded a few times, as its maximum quality level was restrained by its original materials.

Enhance could merely upgrade a material as it couldn't create more material out of nothing.

Lu Yin stored the billowing star and took out a few more rare ingredients that were also able to replenish life force. He used some more of his star essence to enhance all of them to the point where they could also instinctively avoid danger. This was the only thing that he could do at this point in time unless he found even more valuable resources.

He thought about Bushtree Planet, which was filled with rare plants. However, he couldn't take them away from that planet, which meant that he could only use them as long as he remained on the surface of that particular planet.

After upgrading all these rare ingredients, Lu Yin still had seventy days left in the Timestop Space. He then took out a huge amount of star essence and started absorbing the star energy while using the Cosmic Art.

When he left the Timestop Space, he had actually cultivated up to thirty six stars. Thus, compared to when he had merely had nine stars, his star energy absorption speed had increased to fourfold.

When he had first broken through to the Explorer realm, he had needed a hundred years to complete a cycle, but now, he only needed twenty five years.

However, he still hadn't reached his ultimate goal. The level of his current Cosmic Art could reach up to ninety nine stars, which would make his cultivation speed eleven times faster than his initial cultivation speed as an Explorer. If he reached that stage, he wouldn't even need ten years to complete a cycle, which would be slightly faster than an average Explorer; only this speed could temporarily satisfy him.

He summoned En Ya and asked her to take the cosmic ring containing the rare ingredients to Shenwu Continent and pass it over to Ming Zhaoshu. He also asked her to check on Ming Zhaoshu's condition.

After En Ya left, Lu Yin took out the hoe that he had brought back with him from the Daosource Sect. Although the item was very ugly, it was still very useful, and he wanted to see if he could manage to control it.

Two days later, in the study of the Reverent King's Residence on Shenwu Continent, Ming Yan was distractedly looking over a document in her hand.

Ming Zhaoshu glanced at her sharply, which caused Ming Yan to become flustered, and she dropped the document.

"I'm sorry, father," Ming Yan apologized quietly as she quickly picked it back up.

Ming Zhaoshu gave her a warm look and sighed apologetically. "Yan'er, do you hate handling political matters?"

Ming Yan remained quiet. Although there had been female leaders in the past, it was a rare occurrence. Moreover, girls were typically not interested in dealing with such matters, and Ming Yan didn't like them either. She had a very gentle temperament, which meant that she wouldn't be a good ruler even in peaceful times, let alone this period when Shenwu Continent was extremely chaotic.

Ming Zhaoshu passed her the document that he had been holding. "Take a look at this."

Ming Yan read the document aloud. "The riot in Kangzhou has been suppressed. All the family members of the rebel leader have been detained. Please punish the 320 people in the tribe."

"This is a document that was submitted by the general of Kangzhou. How should we handle it?" Ming Zhaoshu observed Ming Yan as he gently asked his question.

Ming Yan bit her lip. "The riot stems from the distrust that the civilians hold for the government. Killing them will only lead to more conflicts and will not solve the problem."

"Tell me your decision," Ming Zhaoshu prodded in a quiet voice.

Ming Yan thought for a moment. "Punish the rebel leader and detain the others to be released at a later date."

Ming Zhaoshu slammed his palm on the table with a loud bang. "Detain? Only punish the leader? Do you know the current situation of the empire and what this rebel leader has done? He found someone to impersonate Ming Hao and then tried to have them replace me! He is extremely ambitious and has gathered many resources from his tribe. He is using the entire force of his tribe to rebel against the empire, but you want to punish just one person and release the rest?"

Ming Yan stared at the ground as her eyes turned red. "I don't know."

"You have to ask or investigate further whenever you don't know. Some things cannot be found in a document, and you won't be able to properly handle things if you are unclear about a given situation," Ming Zhaoshu said strictly. He then took the document and signed it. This signature had a simple meaning: approval. This simple brush stroke had just decided the fate of the 320 people in the rebel leader's tribe.

"Take a look at this." Ming Zhaoshu tossed another document to Ming Yan.

Ming Yan nervously picked it up. "The minister of Liuzhou has colluded with Wuyun Bank to steal funds from the military. The total amount is one thousand martial crystals."

"What do you think?" Ming Zhaoshu asked.

Ming Yan answered softly, "This minister is stealing from the military. He should be executed."

Ming Zhaoshu shook his head. "Did you notice the amount?"

Ming Yan nodded. "One thousand martial crystals."

"Is that a lot?" Ming Zhaoshu asked.

"It's not much, but stealing from the military is a terrible crime," Ming Yan answered softly.

Chapter 652: The Future

As he watched Ming Yan lower her head, Ming Zhaoshu solemnly said, "Liuzhou was actually the first island that tried to rebel against me. This minister is someone who also used to advise the late emperor, and he had a very good relationship with the previous crown prince, Ming Hao. Now that I have succeeded the throne, he is afraid that I will deal with him for his past transgressions against me. As such, he has pled guilty to embezzling military funds. His guilty plea is not a sincere one, as he merely wants to shift the dirty evidence that we have on him out into the open, thereby allowing me to execute him at any given moment. When it comes to someone who we have the liberty of executing at any time, there is nothing to worry about. He is doing this to draw closer to me. In other words, he is demonstrating his loyalty, and for this reason, he is unafraid of me punishing him for this transgression.

“That is also why the embezzled sum is not a huge sum. If too much had been embezzled, then not even I would be able to protect him. Do you understand?”

Ming Yan suddenly raised her head to look at Ming Zhaoshu, her eyes a deep red. “Father, I do not understand why you want me to learn all of these things. I have no wish to participate in political affairs, and I want nothing to do with such matters. Why do you insist on forcing me down this path?”

Ming Zhaoshu clenched his fist, and an unresigned look appeared in his eyes.

“You are still young, and you still have the opportunity to have another son who can ascend the throne. I do not wish to take part in politics, so please let me off. I want to go to the Great Yu Empire,” Ming Yan quietly begged her father as her tears fell to the ground.

She had been through a lot over the past few days, and she had also been placed under a level of stress that was previously unknown to her. Every day, her father would place similar questions and scenarios before her, but she was completely unprepared to handle them, and neither did she wish to learn how to. She was a rather simple girl, and all she wanted to do at this time was go to the Great Yu Empire and meet up with her special someone. The stress that she had been placed under over the past couple of days had made her miss him even more. She missed his hugs and the comforting sense of reassurance that he always gave her.

Ming Zhaoshu did not speak, and no one could understand how uncomfortable he was feeling about what he was currently doing. If he still had any sort of choice in the matter, he would have also chosen for his daughter to live a carefree life. On top of that, he himself wanted to enjoy the fruits of his labors after suffering for so many years, during which he could not even consider having a son. But now, it seemed like everything was going wrong.

“Get out.” Ming Zhaoshu said, looking rather depressed.

Ming Yan stood up, bowed to Ming Zhaoshu, and left his study.

Before long, Tang Si’s voice came through the door. “Your Majesty, an envoy from the Great Yu Empire, Miss En Ya, would like to meet with you.”

Ming Zhaoshu’s eyes lit up. “Send her in, hurry!”

In a sitting room of the Reverent King’s Residence, En Ya looked up as Ming Zhaoshu entered, and she bowed unhurriedly. “En Ya is humbled by your presence, Your Majesty.”

Ming Zhaoshu laughed. “Miss En Ya, there is no need for such formalities. Please sit.”

En Ya took out Lu Yin’s letter and passed it over to Ming Zhaoshu, along with a cosmic ring. “His Highness has written everything that he wishes to convey in this letter. Please read it, Your Majesty.”

Ming Zhaoshu could barely wait to open the letter.

En Ya carefully observed Ming Zhaoshu throughout their exchange. She felt slightly confused as this man gave off the aura of a weak cultivator, which puzzled En Ya. Ming Zhaoshu was known for being amazingly talented; after all, he had comprehended a forcefield. While still in the Cruiser realm, he had fought against a Hunter like Ming Zhaotian. He had also patiently bided his time for many years. With all

that said, he should have given off the vibe of someone in high spirits, not the current aura that she felt was reminiscent of an old man's.

His Highness had repeatedly asked her to observe Ming Zhaoshu, so could it be that Ming Zhaoshu was suffering from poor health?

Ming Zhaoshu placed the letter down as he stared longingly at the cosmic ring. He then turned to En Ya and said, "The Royal Regent has said all that he wishes to in this letter. Miss En Ya, I will have someone escort you to your quarters to rest for the night. Whatever you may wish to discuss, can we address it tomorrow?"

En Ya nodded her head and stood up. "Very well. I will see you tomorrow, Your Majesty."

Ming Zhaoshu quickly got Tang Si to lead En Ya away, after which he promptly returned to his study. He took out the billowing star from the cosmic ring and held it tightly in his hands. "Ah, it has developed a spiritual nature and is trying to escape." Even as he thought about this, he swallowed the billowing star whole.

An ordinary billowing star had been enough to heal Undying Yushan's injuries in the past, and thus, as far as Lu Yin was concerned, a billowing star that had reached the level where it instinctively avoided danger should certainly be able to neutralize Ming Zhaoshu's poison. Alas, the result turned out to be a failure.

Ming Zhaoshu studied himself in the mirror. He had not dared to look at his old wrinkled face ever since he had used his cultivation to put on his original appearance. At the moment, even though he looked a bit younger after ingesting the billowing star, he still looked like an old man. Besides his obvious appearance, he still felt his life force continuing to drain away. While the billowing star had helped him regain some of his life force, it had been unable to neutralize the poison.

Just who was it that had poisoned him? Why had that person used such a potent poison? Ming Zhaoshu grieved for a moment as he took out the rare ingredients that Lu Yin had sent him and consumed them all at once. He managed to somewhat regain his youthful looks, but there was still no way to stop his life force from continuously dwindling away.

With a loud boom, Ming Zhaoshu angrily stomped on the floor, which caused all of Shanghai City to tremble. This startled Tang Si and the others so badly that they rushed into the emperor's quarters.

"I am fine. I was just cultivating," Ming Zhaoshu replied to their concerned looks with a low growl. Upon hearing this, Tang Si and the others had their worries squashed, and they all left the room.

Ming Zhaoshu was a very intelligent man, and it was this intelligence that allowed him to be so perceptive towards the many situations around him. For example, he knew that Lu Yin truly wanted to heal him. As long as Ming Zhaoshu was around, Ming Yan would be able to travel to the Great Yu Empire without any worries. The Shenwu Empire was a cornerstone of the Great Eastern Alliance, and if Lu Yin was unable to neutralize the poison plaguing the continent's emperor in such circumstances, then it could be said that there was no one who could do so.

Given Lu Yin's status and capabilities in the Outerverse, Lu Yin not having a cure for Ming Zhaoshu meant that the older man was doomed unless the person who had poisoned him happened to appear.

However, Ming Zhaoshu did not have the faintest hint as to who had poisoned him. His best guess was that it was someone from the Neohuman Alliance, and in fact, it had even crossed his mind to promise the Neohuman Alliance whatever they wanted as long as they gave him the antidote. But despite that flicker of desire, to date, no one from the Neohuman Alliance had ever appeared before him.

From what he had gathered from the outsiders, he knew how vicious this organization was. He was also well aware of how the outside universe viewed the Neohuman Alliance, which meant that he knew that whichever road he ended up taking, his ending would not be pretty.

Ming Zhaoshu cooped himself up within his residence for two entire days, and he even skipped the appointment that he had set with En Ya. It was only on the third day that he called out for Ming Yan from his study.

“You’ve been asking me why I keep forcing you, and today, I will tell you the reason why.” As he spoke, Ming Zhaoshu returned to his true appearance and revealed his pale, aged face. The person who had appeared in front of Ming Yan now was not the brilliant father from her memory, but rather an old, dying man.

Ming Yan’s pupils shrank, and she covered her mouth, stunned by the unbelievable sight before her.

Ming Zhaoshu agonizingly opened his mouth to explain. “I have been poisoned by something that no one has an antidote for, and I do not have long to live. Do you now understand why I wish for you to learn how to handle political matters? It is because you will inherit the Shenwu Empire.”

Ming Yan shook her head, tears streaming down her cheeks. She inched closer to Ming Zhaoshu as she sobbed. “Father, why did things turn out like this? Who was it that poisoned you?”

Ming Zhaoshu closed his eyes. “Success and failure is decided by the heavens, and our lives are not our own to lead. Yan’er, I do not have much time left. The great Shenwu Empire cannot fall into others’ hands. You are the one who will inherit the Shenwu Empire.”

“I don’t want to inherit the empire! I just want Father to live.” Ming Yan yelled.

Ming Zhaoshu sighed. “Silly girl, everyone would want to live forever if possible.”

En Ya again visited the Reverent King’s Residence to meet with Ming Zhaoshu. However, Tang Si had disappointing news for her. “His Majesty is attending to certain political matters, Miss En Ya. Please go back and rest and we will contact you shortly.”

En Ya frowned and replied in a somewhat cold voice, “It seems that His Majesty is not taking the Great Yu Empire very seriously. Could it be that he is going back on his word?”

Tang Si quickly responded, “Miss En Ya, please do not overthink matters. It is just that His Majesty has been feeling a bit under the weather recently. That, coupled with the fact that he has to handle so many political affairs, has resulted in him not having much time for anything else. Even the princess is in the study, helping His Majesty with his administrative duties.”

“Even Princess Ming Yan is there?” En Ya asked in astonishment. Her expression changed to one of contemplation.

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In a courtyard of the Reverent King's Residence, Ming Yan held onto Ming Zhaoshu as they walked around. Ming Zhaoshu shook his head. "Yan'er, I am fine. You can release me."

Ming Yan was heartbroken. "I'm sorry, Father. I have been nothing but a disappointment to you all this time."

Ming Zhaoshu looked up at the five sealing planets in the sky as he replied to her, "The Universe is vast and boundless. Yan'er, would you like to explore it?"

Ming Yan shook her head. "I don't want to go anywhere. I just want to be with you."

Ming Zhaoshu muttered to himself. "Even if you do not want to go out, others will still want to come in."

Ming Yan twitched, and she raised her head to look up at the five sealing planets, a complex look in her eyes.

"The people outside have always coveted Shenwu Continent, despite the presence of the five sealing planets. Our safety is not guaranteed. The Shenwu Continent must join forces with others in order to deal with our enemies. The Shenwu Empire must be internally stable, and it also needs the backing of an outside power. The force that I am referring to is the Great Yu Empire. In other words, Lu Yin," Ming Zhaoshu explained as he looked at Ming Yan.

"Lu Yin and you both like each other, and I will not stop the two of you from being together. However, I must remind you that you cannot always rely on others. While I am still alive, I am able to support you, but when I am no longer here, you will need to learn to stand on your own. Even if you do marry Lu Yin in the future, it cannot be with your current status as a princess; it must be with the status of the Empress of the Shenwu Empire."

Ming Yan stared at Ming Zhaoshu with eyes that were full of confusion about her future. "Empress?"

Ming Zhaoshu caressed Ming Yan's head as he continued to explain in spite of his emotional agony. "You must inherit the empire. Lu Yin may like you at present, but do not think that you can lord over him, as that is not a practical goal. The universe is just too large, and it is impossible to know what his future holds. There might be scores of women surrounding him as well, women who have various powerful backings and capabilities. If you are nothing more than a pretty face at his side, then you will quickly become expendable. Whether it is for yourself or for the empire, you must inherit the position of empress. You must govern our empire well!"

Ming Yan looked like a deer caught in headlights, and her thoughts were all over the place.

"I cannot give you too much time, but during this period, I will do my best to help you eliminate the empire's hidden dangers. However, the road ahead is yours to walk alone, and I will not be able to be there for you," Ming Zhaoshu said gloomily.

Ming Yan's fingers curled up as she tightly clenched her father's sleeve. She hung her head, and her entire body started to tremble.

In the Great Yu Empire, Liuying Zishan was the only one who had remained behind after a cabinet meeting.

“Your Highness, Duke Jadestone from Darkstar Gorge wishes to speak with you,” Liuying Zishan respectfully informed Lu Yin.

“Duke Jadestone? The one who betrayed Darkstar Gorge and incited widescale deaths, including even that of Puyu’s parents?” Lu Yin asked.

Liuying Zishan nodded in response. “Yes, that is the person. The empire wishes for Adonis Weave to join the Great Eastern Alliance. The strongest power in Adonis Weave is Darkstar Gorge, and this man is the one who we need to meet with to initiate negotiations with Darkstar Gorge.”

“What does he want to discuss with me?” Lu Yin asked, curious.

Liuying Zishan replied, “He said that he has some information that he would like to offer to you in exchange for freedom.”

“Freedom? He doesn’t want to help us convince Darkstar Gorge?” Lu Yin asked grumpily.

Liuying Zishan remained silent.

En Ya was the person who had drawn up the contract for the Great Eastern Alliance. Moreover, she had been assisted by some people from Mafioso Planet who had secretly threatened the powerhouses of other weaves. In the end, she was merely the architect of the alliance whereas the actual builders were the Thirteen Imperial Squadrons. For example, the ones who had taken care of the Six-Fingered Tribe from Lars Weave was the Fifth Imperial Squadron, and Adonis Weave was being handled by the Thirteenth Squadron, which was led by Liuying Zishan.

“Alright then, let’s meet with him,” Lu Yin replied casually.

Chapter 653: Reality

Liuying Zishan switched her gadget on, and an elderly man appeared on her screen. A flicker of fear flashed through his eyes when he saw Lu Yin. He bowed as he greeted Lu Yin. “I’m Duke Jadestone from Darkstar Gorge. It’s an honor to meet you, Your Highness.”

Lu Yin laughed. “You’re not from the Great Yu Empire, so there’s no reason for you to bow to me.”

“Your Highness is widely recognized throughout the Outerverse, so of course I should bow to you,” Duke Jadestone flattered Lu Yin, though Lu Yin only felt disgust when he looked at the old man’s face.

Lu Yin’s lips curled up. “You should? But I’ve heard that you don’t want to ally with me.”

Duke Jadestone turned pale, and he anxiously said, “Your Highness, that’s just a misunderstanding. It’s not that I don’t want to work with you, but rather that I honestly can’t work with you. Please forgive me, Your Highness.”

Lu Yin stared at the older man without speaking, which caused Duke Jadestone to become very nervous. He quickly continued, saying, “Elder Wu died at your hands, and Darkstar Gorge has suffered

tremendous losses because of you. Moreover, Puyu has been vehemently objecting to your plan, all of which makes it impossible for Darkstar Gorge to agree to join the Great Eastern Alliance. Nothing would change even if I do agree with Your Highness, so...”

“So, you want me to stop pressuring you,” Lu Yin finished the man’s sentence.

Duke Jadestone bowed and respectfully said, “It would be my honor to work for Your Highness, but I really cannot help you in this matter. Please forgive me, Your Highness.”

“Tell me about this news of yours,” Lu Yin casually ordered the man as he sat down.

Duke Jadestone gulped and carefully responded. “Your Highness, do you remember when someone tried to assassinate you on Shuta Planet? That assassin was someone from Darkstar Gorge.”

Lu Ying glanced at Duke Jadestone and narrowed his eyes.

“At that time, the Darkstar Gorge had already received the information about how you had killed an Enlighter, and thus, the assassin was well prepared for your methods. Your Highness probably doesn’t know who revealed that information.” Duke Jadestone paused as he peeked at Lu Yin before fearfully continuing, “The person who revealed the information was from the Tri-Banner Federation.”

Lu Yin’s eyes flickered. “Tri-Banner Federation?”

“Yes, the Tri-Banner Federation. Darkstar Gorge conducted an investigation and found that, although the person was from the Tri-Banner Federation, the true mastermind behind the incident was actually an expert from Northline Flowzone.”

Lu Yin narrowed his eyes as rage surged through his heart. It had indeed been Granny Chan. Apart from her, nobody else had known of his tricks at that time.

“Why should I believe you?” Lu Yin asked coldly.

Duke Jadestone replied, “The person from the Tri-Banner Federation who shared that information with us has been detained. Your Highness can send someone to interrogate him yourself, and I can guarantee that I am telling you the truth, Your Highness.”

Lu Yin waved a hand, and Liuying Zishan switched off the screen and stood to the side.

Lu Yin sat back down and thought for a moment. He then asked, “Who’s handling the Tri-Banner Federation?”

“Peach, from the Sixth Squadron,” Liuying Zishan answered.

“Has she been in contact with anyone?”

“Not yet. Flaxen Weave has been invaded by forces from Northline Flowzone, and since Northline Flowzone has Granny Chan, who’s an Enlighter, En Ya has asked Peach not to do anything for the moment. We have only sent some undercover people to that weave.”

Lu Yin nodded. “Tell Peach not to do anything rash. I will handle Flaxen Weave myself.”

“Yes, Your Highness. What about Duke Jadestone?” Liuying Zishan asked.

“Ignore him. Don’t interact with him in the future either,” Lu Yin ordered.

“Understood.”

After Liuying Zishan left, Lu Yin walked out of the palace and looked up at the sky. There were truly no true friends in this universe. Everything was tied to personal benefits, corrupt systems, and the so-called “dignity” of the major powers.

Lu Yin hadn’t had any conflicts with the people of Northline Flowzone, and they had even helped each other in the past. Despite that, he had still been betrayed by them. Lu Yin believed that Granny Chan hadn’t betrayed him because of the Great Yu Empire. Rather, her betrayal should have been primarily motivated by her pride as an Enlightener. People like her couldn’t allow a Limiteer to challenge an Enlightener’s dignity or to even have the ability to threaten them. Thus, she had tried to get rid of Lu Yin without any hesitation.

It was no wonder why she had been so cold when she rejected his request to go to Shuta Planet together.

However, this could also be a good thing. He no longer needed to be wary.

Vastdearth Weave lay to the east of Darkmist and Grandtop Weaves. Vastdearth Weave was considered to be one of the strongest weaves in the eastern region of the Outerverse as it had managed to produce two Enlighteners.

One of the two was named Elder Zhuo, and he had originally come from a normal planet. He had never been taught by anyone and had simply been abnormally successful with his cultivation, which had eventually led to him becoming an Enlightener. He had been summoned to Ironblood Weave before, and he was actually still involved in rebuilding the defenses of the Ironblood Weave alongside the other powerhouses, such as Nightqueen Qiuyu.

The other Enlightener was actually from the ruling power of Vastdearth Weave. He was an elder of the Vastdearth Sect: Meng Qing.

Vastdearth Weave had once been very powerful amongst the eastern weaves due to its two Enlighteners, and even Adonis Weave and Darkmist Weave had deferred to them in the past.

However, ever since Meng Qing had gone into retreat, refusing to appear in public, Vastdearth Weave had assumed a lower profile.

Moreover, since Elder Zhuo has been summoned to the Ironblood Weave, Vastdearth Weave essentially no longer had any Enlighteners.

This was the key issue faced by Meng Tianlong, the sect leader of the Vastdearth Sect. The sect was facing pressure from the Great Yu Empire, or to be more exact, from Lu Yin.

The Great Yu Empire has informed the sect of their plans to form the Great Eastern Alliance, and although the elders of the Vastdearth Sect had been discussing it for several days, they still hadn’t come to a conclusion, and Meng Tianlong was growing increasingly worried.

They had tried to contact Elder Zhuo, who was in Ironblood Weave, but they hadn't received any reply from him yet.

Currently, the elders of Vastdearth Sect were divided due to this issue.

"Cheng Yan, are you colluding with the Great Yu Empire? Why else would you be defending them?" one elder shouted.

Cheng Yan angrily retorted. "Elder Angio, I just don't want to be bullied by the Innerverse any longer! Who hasn't been pushed around by the people of the Astral River Ark before? Even a common cultivator on the Astral River Ark is allowed to bully us! I don't want to suffer that sort of humiliation anymore."

"The Innerverse has been cut off from the Outerverse."

"They'll soon be connected again."

"You must have been bribed by the Great Yu Empire!"

"What proof do you have? If I have been bribed by the Great Yu Empire, then may god strike me down!"

...

"Enough! Stop bickering." Meng Tianlong frowned as he looked at the various elders in front of him. He then continued, saying, "The Six-Fingered Tribe of Lars Weave and Shenwu Continent of Darkmist Weave have both joined the Great Eastern Alliance. Have all of you read the alliance contract yet?"

Cheng Yan loudly answered, "I have seen it, and the contract is beneficial to everyone who joins the alliance. The Royal Regent of the Great Yu Empire, Lu Yin, hopes for the Outerverse to be united, and this isn't merely his personal goal, but also something that the Hall of Honor desires."

Everyone fell silent as soon as the Hall of Honor was mentioned. They were able to reject Lu Yin, but not a single one of them dared to reject the Hall of Honor. The hall was the master of the Human Domain, and although its influence was typically unseen, it was extremely powerful.

When the Hall of Honor had conscripted people to defend Ironblood Weave, even Elder Zhuo, an Enlighter, had been forced to go to Ironblood Weave. This showed how powerful the Hall of Honor was.

"Haha! Lu Yin is Lu Yin, and the Hall of Honor is the Hall of Honor. When did Lu Yin start representing the Hall of Honor?" a voice rang out. Everyone turned around and looked at the person who was standing behind Elder Angio.

Cheng Yan slammed a hand on the table with a bang. "How dare you? Who said that you could speak? Elder Angio, control your subordinate."

Elder Angio didn't turn around, and the person standing behind him merely smirked. He raised his head and changed his appearance. His hair changed as well, and his black hair changed until it was divided into both white and black hair.

As soon as they saw the black-and-white hair, everyone present was shocked. "The Daynight clan?"

That person looked at them with a smile. "Everyone, at what point has the Innaverse bullied you? I am Yang Daynight of the Daynight clan."

Cheng Yan and the others stared at Yang Daynight in shock. They hadn't expected anyone from the Daynight clan to be present, but his presence gave them a foreboding feeling.

Meng Tianlong's expression turned grim, and he looked at Elder Angio. "Explain yourself."

Elder Angio didn't answer. Instead Yang Daynight spoke up. "You don't have to blame Elder Angio. Someone is trying to endanger your Vastdearth Sect, and he merely tried to help. The Daynight clan is willing to help as well." He opened a hand. "Everyone, please look at your gadgets. There's something there that might interest you."

Everyone looked at their gadget in confusion.

Cheng Yan also took a look, and his expression immediately changed. He suddenly tried to escape, but Yang Daynight had been expecting him to do such a thing, and he attacked. His punch caused black and white colors to alternate as the shockwaves from his attack caused the Vastdearth Sect to tremble. A strange wave swept across the room, and Cheng Yan collapsed onto the floor.

Yang Daynight walked over and placed a foot on Cheng Yan. He then looked over at Meng Tianlong. "Chief Meng, you can punish him yourself."

Meng Tianlong's face was grim. Yang Daynight had sent them a video of Cheng Yan killing the sect leader's eldest son, Meng Guang. The video was the exact same one that Lu Yin had received from Mafioso Planet.

Cheng Yan's back had been injured, and he had also been dazed since Yang Daynight's attack had affected his spiritual force.

Everyone stared in shock as the events unfolded.

Meng Tianlong walked over towards Cheng Yan. He squatted down and looked at the sect elder with cold eyes. "It's no wonder why we weren't able to find anything related to Xiaoguang's death. So you were the one who was hiding the truth."

Cheng Yan's lip was bleeding, but he begged Meng Tianlong. "I didn't do it! I was framed!"

Yang Daynight laughed. "If you were framed, then why were you so anxious to leave? And why did you promise to help the Great Yu Empire?"

Cheng Yan grew enraged, and he glared at Yang Daynight with hatred. "I have never interacted with the Great Yu Empire before."

"The truth of this matter is easy to uncover. Elder Cheng, you are a Hunter. Don't throw away your last shred of dignity before you die," Yang Daynight sneered.

Meng Tianlong pressed a hand onto Cheng Yan's back. There was a bang, and Cheng Yan screamed in pain as the nerves in his body were completely shattered. "Take him away."

Elder Angio sighed, but not because he had attacked Cheng Yan. Instead, it was because of Yang Daynight's previous attack. Cheng Yan was an elder of the Vastdearth Sect, and he had a power level of 150,000. Yang Daynight's power level was similar to Cheng Yan's, but he had defeated the Vastdearth elder with just a single punch. The difference between them was extreme, and this also showed the difference between the Inniverse and the Outerverse, which saddened the sect leader.

Elder Angio suddenly felt that having a united Outerverse might not actually be a bad thing as he stared at Yang Daynight's arrogant face. However, it was impossible for them to ally themselves with the Great Yu Empire as the empire was too ambitious, or rather, Lu Yin was too ambitious. Even Enlighters weren't able to control him, and their sect would definitely hold the lower position if they allied themselves with him.

Meng Tianlong turned to Yang Daynight and said, "Thank you for the Daynight clan's help. However, there are some things that we must settle now, and we cannot entertain you. We hope that you won't take offense."

Yang Daynight didn't care about the Vastdearth Sect's attitude. He had already achieved his goal, and so, he quickly left. As an expert from the Daynight clan, he felt that these Outerverse sects were beneath him.

Chapter 654: The Xun Family

"I'm sorry Chief, for bringing an outsider into the sect. I will accept your punishment," Elder Angio said.

Meng Tianlong waved his hand. "Let's not talk about this for now. Now that Cheng Yan is dead, the Great Yu Empire will definitely continue to pressure us. How should we handle this?"

Elder Angio frowned. "The Great Yu Empire doesn't care about Cheng Yan, and he was never more than a messenger for them. Since Cheng Yan is dead, they will definitely send a representative here to personally negotiate with us, and that person will at least be at the Hunter realm."

"Will Lu Yin come himself?" Meng Tianlong asked worriedly.

This was the key issue currently concerning everyone. Lu Yin was too aggressive, and if he visited the Vastdearth Sect, then he definitely wouldn't leave until he achieved a satisfactory outcome. However, the Vastdearth Sect was unable to give him the result that he desired, and that could potentially lead to a bloodbath.

"I didn't expect that a young man who joined the Astral Combat Academy at the same time as my son would be able to cause so much trouble for the Vastdearth Sect," Meng Tianlong said with a sigh.

A while later, Meng Tianlong arrived at the base of a mountain that lay within the grounds of the Vastdearth Sect. He bowed and respectfully said, "Meng Tianlong requests to meet with the elder."

There was no response.

Meng Tianlong shouted the same line again, but he still received no response. He sighed reluctantly. "Our sect is facing a major threat. Elder, please help us survive this problem."

Despite his pleas, there was still no response, and in the end, Meng Tianlong helplessly left the mountain.

This was the place where Meng Qing, the Enlighter realm elder of the Vastdearth Sect, had retreated into isolation. Meng Qing had never appeared since going into isolation a thousand years before, and Meng Tianlong had merely stopped by the mountain to try his luck. As expected, he ended up leaving in disappointment.

Lu Yin soon heard the news of Cheng Yan's death as well as the details leading up to it. The Great Yu Empire had other spies inside of the Vastdearth Sect who had either been bribed or threatened into helping the empire.

Lu Yin immediately tried to contact the Limiteer Mistchild, but she didn't answer. A few hours later, she contacted Lu Yin herself.

"Your Highness, were you looking for me?" The Limiteer Mistchild appeared on his screen. She looked exhausted, and there was still a slight bit of remnant killing intent in her eyes. Clearly, she had just completed a mission.

"Who else knows about those secrets that you shared with me?" Lu Yin asked right away.

The Mistchild looked confused. "Why do you ask, Your Highness?"

"Haven't you received the news? Cheng Yan is dead, and his secret was exposed," Lu Yin told her while carefully observing the Mistchild's reaction.

She was clearly shocked, and she immediately started checking something. Her expression kept changing, but then, she finally gave a hesitant answer. "I'm sorry, Your Highness. Someone has betrayed the Mafioso Planet and taken away a copy of those records."

"Who did they deliver those records to?" Lu Yin's voice turned ice cold.

The Mistchild shook her head. "I'm not sure. The person who betrayed us was a Hunter assassin who was second only to the Hunter Mistchild. I'm not too familiar with them. I'm sorry, Your Highness."

"Has Mafioso Planet had any dealings with the Daynight clan recently?" Lu Yin asked.

The Mistchild quickly replied, "No, but the mission that I just received was released by someone connected to the Daynight clan."

Lu Yin thought about it for a moment. She had probably been transferred away on purpose so that the Hunter realm assassin could steal the records and flee. There was also another possibility that this woman was dealing with two parties simultaneously and that she had sold those secrets to both Lu Yin and the Daynight clan.

"Your Highness, are you doubting my loyalty?" The female Mistchild looked at Lu Yin with a pitiful expression.

Lu Yin didn't answer her and instead ended their call right there. He then contacted another person, Phantom Sting, who was the Hunter Mistchild of Mafioso Planet.

"Who can access the most important records of Mafioso Planet?" Lu Yin asked Phantom Sting.

Phantom Sting answered, "A Mistchild is a status symbol on Mafioso Planet. Even the Sentinel Mistchild would be able to access more information than the average Explorer realm assassin. No matter how powerful an assassin may be, they are still mere assassins with us Mistchildren being the only exceptions."

"I know that the Mafioso Planet uses metal plates to record secrets related to your clients. Who can access those?" Lu Yin asked.

Phantom Sting fell silent for a moment. "The Mistchildren."

"Could a Hunter realm assassin access them?" Lu Yin asked.

"They wouldn't be able to access those records unless they avoided all of the Mistchildren," Phantom Sting answered.

Lu Yin paused and pondered over this matter for a while. The female Mistchild was the only Mistchild who was currently on Mafioso Planet. The others had either been killed or transferred away. For example, Topmist, the Enlighter Mistchild and the strongest powerhouse from Mafioso Planet, was currently in Ironblood Weave.

Since the Mistchildren weren't on Mafioso Planet, a Hunter realm assassin would become the most powerful person present, and it was possible that they would be able to steal those records.

After ending his conversation with Phantom Sting, the Limiteer Mistchild contacted Lu Yin once again. Lu Yin didn't answer her call to show his clear distrust for her.

He wasn't angry, as the Limiteer Mistchild wasn't actually his subordinate, and she wouldn't have technically betrayed him even if she had sold those records to two separate parties. Lu Yin was just demonstrating his attitude in order to pressure her a bit. That way, he would be able to ensure that their future collaborations would go more smoothly.

He instead planned to reach out to Madam Meilan right now so that he could find out what the Daynight clan was planning.

"Student Lu, I have been waiting for your call." Madam Meilan looked at Lu Yin with a smile.

Lu Yin smirked. "In that case, madam, you should already know why I am contacting you."

Madam Meilan nodded. "You are most likely looking for the Xun family."

"The Xun family?" Lu Yin was caught completely off guard; how had the Xun family suddenly come into this conversation?

"The Xun family contacted Elder Qiuyu, who asked us to cooperate with the Xun family and deal with you," Madam Meilan explained.

"Why would the Xun family want to deal with me?" Lu Yin was confused.

Madam Meilan shook her head. "That, I am uncertain of, and the person who is in charge of the Xun family in the Outerverse is an elder named Xun Qianye. He was left behind in the Outerverse during the

contest for pyrolyte ore. Oh, by the way, Xun Qianye had a granddaughter called Xun Meiren, and I believe that you should have met her before.”

Lu Yin narrowed his eyes. “Xun Meiren was killed by a Corpse King in Mingdu. It had nothing to do with me.”

“However, you were the one who initiated the invasion of Mingdu. You are also the one who gathered Xun Meiren, Nightking Changfeng, and the others to participate in that battle. To the Daynight clan, the death of anyone from the Nightking clan is a major incident. Nightking Changfeng and Xun Meiren’s deaths are directly related to you, which is why Elder Qiuyu tasked us with cooperating with the Xun family and dealing with you.”

Lu Yin was curious. “Madam, aren’t you worried that Elder Qiuyu will find out that you told me all that?”

Madam Meilan smiled. “The Daynight clan wishes for the entire universe to know how overbearing we are. So what if I tell you? We want you to die while knowing that we killed you, and this is how most of the Daynight clan’s members feel. Student Lu, what are you going to do?”

“Madam, you don’t seem to have much hostility towards me,” Lu Yin commented.

Madam Meilan answered, “You should know about the internal relations within the Daynight clan. However, I still can’t help you.”

“Does the Xun family really want to deal with me just because of Xun Meiren?” Lu Yin asked. He didn’t believe that one bit. Since the Xun family had been able to take control of a minor Flowzone in the Innaverse, they were definitely very ambitious. Moreover, they were quite secretive, so why would they deal with him just for a Xun Meiren? After seeing Lu Yin’s record, even an Enlighter powerhouse would think twice before trying to deal with him.

“Student Lu, you can contact the Xun family yourself if you don’t believe me, though I’m not sure if your call will connect,” Madam Meilan said. She then passed a contact number to Lu Yin.

Lu Yin thanked Madam Meilan and ended the call. He then contacted the Xun family immediately.

The call went through successfully, and an elder appeared on Lu Yin’s screen. However, he hung up the instant he saw Lu Yin.

Lu Yin’s eyes flashed. It seemed like the Xun family was dead set on becoming enemies with him. Was it really worth it for them to do such a thing for Xun Meiren? Furthermore, Xun Meiren had been killed by a Corpse King, so this line of reasoning felt slightly forced.

However, if the family wasn’t taking action because of Xun Meiren, then why were they opposing him? Even the Daynight clan had chosen to tolerate Lu Yin, so why would the Xun family attack him so boldly? There must be someone supporting them, so who could it be?

Lu Yin considered all of the people who were able to threaten him: there was Nightqueen Qiuyu, Huo Houye, and also Granny Chan. All three of them were Enlighters. The Xun family had already contacted Nightqueen Qiuyu to gain the Daynight clan’s support, and they had probably contacted Huo Houye and Granny Chan as well. Generally, such a secretive family would only take action once they were

sufficiently confident. This could be seen by how the elder had ended the call immediately without even saying a single word.

How had Lu Yin offended the Xun family to the point of them being this eager to deal with him?

Lu Yin suddenly thought of his conflict with Xun Jiong when he had been in the Starfall Sea. However, Lu Yin didn't think that such a minor incident could be the cause of the Xun family's animosity towards him either as it had been a minor disagreement.

But regardless of why the Xun family was opposing him, the only thing that he could do at the moment was cut his losses.

Lu Yin put a stop to all activities related to the alliance, as the Xun family would not expose the secrets in his hands if he didn't actually use them. Lu Yin wanted to minimize his losses as much as possible.

That same night, he received a report regarding the Six-Fingered Tribe of Lars Weave. Luke Shamus's secret had been exposed. Now, everyone knew that the current chief of the Six-Fingered Tribe, Bach Shamus, was actually Luke Shamus's son and that Luke Shamus had assassinated the previous chief.

This secret shocked all of Lars Weave, and the entire Six-Fingered Tribe became infuriated. Everyone wanted Luke Shamus to take responsibility for his actions, and Bach Shamus's position as tribal chief also became contested.

A few hours after the news was leaked, Luke Shamus committed suicide. Before dying, he admitted that he had assassinated the former chief of the tribe, but he denied his relationship with Bach Shamus. His death only momentarily halted the intense debate.

At the same time, Luke Shamus's collaborations with the Great Yu Empire were also exposed. This caused the Six-Fingered Tribe to be furious and wary of the Great Yu Empire, and many of the tribe members thought that Luke Shamus had given the Great Yu Empire monetary benefits. Some even thought that Luke Shamus had delivered the ancestral grounds over to Lu Yin, which infuriated them.

Fortunately, Bach Shamus had already been the chief for several years, and thus, he wielded a certain amount of authority. He managed to suppress the rumors, as otherwise, the alliance would absolutely fall apart, and in the worst case, war might break out.

It was too late for Lu Yin to do anything by the time he received this news. Although he was furious, he didn't reveal his anger.

He would definitely remember this huge gift that the Xun family had prepared for him.

However, this wasn't even the biggest present that the Xun family had readied for Lu Yin. The following day, Lu Yin saw Elder Lohar appear on the screen of his gadget screen, and he knew that he was in deep trouble. He had used the Hall of Honor's influence to initiate the Great Eastern Alliance. That would be fine so long as nobody brought it up as Elder Lohar would not care since such an alliance would benefit the Outerverse. However, it wasn't good that someone had exposed Lu Yin. He was not allowed to use the Hall of Honor's name without prior approval.

This was the greatest weapon that the Xun family had prepared to deal with Lu Yin.

Chapter 655: Candid Words

“Elder Lohar, good day,” Lu Yin respectfully greeted the Hall of Honor’s elder.

Elder Lohar looked at Lu Yin and then sighed with sorrow. “I have met so many youths, and out of all of them, your courage is the greatest. You have made enemies with the Daynight clan, killed Enlighters, contributed to the defense of Ironblood Weave, and crossed into another Domain. Any of these matters on their own would be enough to shake the Outerverse, and you have my admiration.”

“Thank you, Elder,” Lu Yin promptly replied.

“Because of your contributions, I have warned you and also sympathized with you. However, appreciating you is one thing, and you’ve gone overboard in some matters.” Elder Lohar’s expression sank.

Lu Yin remained silent and did not reply.

“The Hall of Honor is the supreme master of the Human Domain. Even if you haven’t been to the Neoverse, you should still understand the meaning of this. With the privileges that six Honor Points gives you, you won’t be harshly criticized if you occasionally borrow our reputation, but selfishly using the Hall of Honor’s name to form this Great Eastern Alliance is too impudent. A certain degree of rashness from a youth is understandable, but some restraint is still needed,” Elder Lohar scolded Lu Yin strictly as he stared at the youth.

After he listened to Elder Lohar’s reprimand, not only was Lu Yin unafraid, he also relaxed a bit, because being berated indicated that he still had some room to maneuver.

“Junior won’t dare to do such things any longer after elder’s lesson,” Lu Yin replied respectfully.

Elder Lohar grunted. “Someone sought me out to complain about you. Actually, it’s nothing big, but since someone brought it up, we have to mete out an appropriate punishment. The Hall of Honor, as the master of the Human Domain, does not only rely on mere power, but also on fairness. Do you understand?”

“Junior understands,” Lu Yin replied.

“Using the Hall of Honor’s name without permission to establish the Great Eastern Alliance is a huge crime. But, after considering your incredible contributions in Ironblood Weave, as well as your intention behind establishing the Great Eastern Alliance, which is to help the Outerverse better withstand the Astral Beast Domain, your punishment will be made more lenient. Two Honor Points will be deducted from your record as a warning. Do you accept it?” Elder Lohar said sternly.

Lu Yin bowed from the waist. “Junior understands. Thank you, elder, for the lenient punishment.”

Lu Yin could accept this deduction of two Honor Points, as he knew that it was truly a lenient punishment. Anyone could see that although the Great Eastern Alliance had been promoted as an organization to help the Outerverse to resist its external enemies, it was actually made for Lu Yin’s personal gains. Nobody would be foolish to believe the propaganda, but Elder Lohar had avoided mentioning this point and had instead emphasized Lu Yin’s intention to use the Great Eastern Alliance to help the Outerverse resist the Astral Beast Domain. This could be seen as him dwelling on trivial matters and glossing over the more important ones, and it was rather considerate towards Lu Yin’s situation.

“This matter will end here, but there’s another matter that you have handled too sloppily,” Elder Lohar said, and Lu Yin’s eyelids jumped. No good, it seemed that the Xun family had not just complained about a single matter.

Suddenly, Lu Yin thought of something, and his face paled.

“In Darkmist Weave, there’s a place called Shenwu Continent, and the ones in power there collaborated with the Neohuman Alliance. This matter should have been handled by you,” Elder Lohar reprimanded Lu Yin in a frosty voice that sounded entirely different from how he had spoken with the youth mere seconds before, as this matter involved the Neohuman Alliance.

The Hall of Honor had a greater understanding than most when it came to the Three Dark Hands. Because they understood these hidden organizations, as soon as anything involved the Three Dark Hands came to light, the problem would always be treated more severely.

The Xun family’s greatest plot against Lu Yin was here.

Lu Yin immediately replied, “Elder, the one who collaborated with the Neohuman Alliance was the Shenwu Empire’s previous emperor, Ming Zhaotian. Junior has already taken care of Ming Zhaotian and also eliminated the Neohuman Alliance from Shenwu Continent.”

“Eliminated? Such confidence!” Elder Lohar raised his voice in anger. “Any place that has a Neohuman Alliance Corpse King with the strength at the Explorer realm or above must be erased, without an exception for planets or mainlands. What do you think the purpose of the Neohuman Alliance is? They represent the darkness! An eternal darkness. Even I wouldn’t dare to say that I could eliminate all of the Neohuman Alliance’s survivors from a certain area, so what allows someone like you to say so?”

“Elder, there were many experts from quite a few powers who acted with Junior at that time, including the Daynight clan. Those people can testify that the Neohuman Alliance has already disappeared from Shenwu Continent.” Lu Yin started to grow anxious.

Elder Lohar snorted coldly. “Lu Yin, on account of your absolute top-notch talent, as well as your contributions to the defense of the Ironblood Weave, I won’t bicker about your selfish motives regarding Shenwu Continent. You have been negligent in handling this matter, and Shenwu Continent must be completely wiped out. I will act personally, and not a single living thing there will survive. This is the safest method.

“As for you, remember this lesson. In the future, if you ever encounter any Neohuman Alliance Corpse Kings that are at the Explorer realm or above, the area where you see them must be completely purged. If this ever occurs again in the future, I will deduct all your Honor Points away, just like that!” Elder Lohar was just about to disconnect as soon as he finished speaking.

Lu Yin’s face paled. Wipe out Shenwu Continent? That’s an entire continent! There are hundreds of millions of humans there. If they all die and not a single creature is spared, then Ming Yan will die as well! No, absolutely not!

Lu Yin suddenly spoke up. “Wait a moment, Elder.”

Lohar stared at Lu Yin, exuding a supreme sense of dignity. “Do you want to defy the Hall of Honor’s orders?”

Lu Yin exhaled slowly and then smiled bitterly. Getting him to defy the Hall of Honor was the entire goal of the Xun family, as they were well aware of both his relationship with Ming Yan and that he would most likely try to stop Elder Lohar from wiping out Shenwu Continent. This was why they had exposed the matter, as one issue had cascaded into the next. The person from the Xun family who had acted was highly intelligent.

But no matter how smart they were, did that person really think that Lu Yin would not dare to object to the Hall of Honor? Was going against the hall absolutely going to invite punishment? Not necessarily.

“Has Elder heard of the Daosource Sect?” Lu Yin asked slowly as he carefully observed Elder Lohar’s reaction.

Upon the mention of the Daosource Sect, Elder Lohar’s expression changed tremendously. “Where did you hear about this?”

“Not heard.” Lu Yin retrieved his yellow futon. “My master sent me this.”

The elder could not hide the astonishment in his eyes when he saw the futon. “A futon... You actually have a futon. Who is your master?”

Lu Yin put the futon away. “My master doesn’t wish for me to share his name.”

Elder Lohar stared at Lu Yin, completely bewildered. He appeared to have fallen deep into thought as his brows were tightly furrowed.

Lu Yin did not speak, and he waited patiently in silence.

“Little brat, do you remember what I mentioned to you back in Ironblood Weave?” Elder Lohar said.

Lu Yin nodded. “Elder warned me not to use external items as a source of strength.”

“Not that. I once mentioned to you if the Innerverse and Outerverse were not separated that I could fight for a certain position for you.”

Lu Yin’s eyes flashed. “Was Elder referring to the a position that would allow me to enter the Daosource Sect?”

Elder Lohar nodded.

“Right now, the Ten Arbiters are the only ones able to enter the Daosource Sect's ruins from the Fifth Mainland. The conditions for someone to be able to enter is that they must be a youth with a skeletal age under forty. Among the Ten Arbiters, there are a few who are about to surpass that age limit, and Elder must have wished to fight for this Junior to take their position,” Lu Yin said.

Elder Lohar was stunned. “You know quite a lot—what else are you aware of? Have you already been to the Daosource Sect? Have you contacted anyone there?”

Lu Yin looked at Elder Lohar as he responded. “Junior has visited the ruins twice, and I was also in contact with some people from the Sixth Mainland. I know about the imprints, bloodlines, and their three Progenitors as well.”

Elder Lohar exhaled. "It looks like you're already aware of everything."

"Elder, the Ten Arbiters have the greatest authority among the younger generation. Could that be related to their ability to visit the Daosource Sect's ruins?" Lu Yin asked.

Elder Lohar looked at Lu Yin with a deep meaningful expression. "What are you trying to say?"

Lu Yin immediately bowed. "Junior is just curious."

Elder Lohar continued silently contemplating for a long time, but then he nodded. "Little brat, you are very smart, truly very smart. However, there are still some matters that have gone past the bottom line of the Hall of Honor. Even if you have a means of entering the Daosource Sect, you cannot touch this bottom line. The Neohuman Alliance is that bottom line."

"Junior can promise Senior that there will definitely be no further issues concerning Shenwu Continent."

"You are simply unaware of the disastrous extent that the Neohuman Alliance can cause for the Human Domain."

"Junior is clear on this matter. I ask that Elder give this Junior another opportunity to resolve the matter of Shenwu Continent. If I still can't resolve things, then it won't be too late for Elder to act at that time. Shenwu Continent is sealed off by five planets, and Senior also knows that this junior has the ability to see through the formless danger of sourceboxes. The five sealing planets are sealing off Shenwu Continent through the formless dangers emitted by sourceboxes. This seal is so durable that even multiple Enlighteners cannot destroy it. Even if there are still individuals from the Neohuman Alliance on Shenwu Continent, they will not be able to break through the five sealing planets. Senior can rest assured of this," Lu Yin pleaded in a respectful tone.

Elder Lohar frowned. "Why have you set your heart on saving Shenwu Continent?"

Lu Yin did not reply and merely bowed low.

Elder Lohar sighed. "Alright, I can give you one chance, and I won't touch Shenwu Continent at the moment. However, I will send some people to closely monitor the situation there. As soon as matters get out of hand, I will personally take action, and you can't blame me for being merciless at that time."

Lu Yin was delighted. "Thank you, Elder."

Elder Lohar grunted. Then, he sized Lu Yin up and down and marvelled at him. "Little brat, what do you think of the Sixth Mainland's cultivators?"

Lu Yin was just about to reply that their average strength seemed to be very strong, but then he suddenly thought of what White Knight had said to Blood Looney while they were fighting in the cauldron. He quickly changed his words and said, "Junior has met at least a hundred of the Sixth Mainland's cultivators in my visits to the Daosource Sect's ruins, and when even the weakest of them erupted with the full power of their imprint, their power was able to rival that of an expert on the Top 100 Rankings. Their average strength of their cultivators far surpasses those of our Fifth Mainland.

"However, their cultivation system is too rigid—it's as though they are merely getting stronger for the sake of becoming stronger, and the process is wholly unrelated to cultivation. The path of cultivation is filled with unknown variables, and it involves a cultivator striving against the universe itself. However,

the cultivators of the Sixth Mainland walk along a path created by their predecessors, and they even borrow the strength of those predecessors. They may achieve great strength now, but their paths are only more limited the further they progress, and they will lose out on certain possibilities.”

“Well spoken.” Elder Lohar was elated, and there was an unprecedented admiration in his eyes as he looked at Lu Yin. “I never thought that you would be able to perceive such things at such a young age. Good, very good! I was still worried that you would have been attracted by the Sixth Mainland’s system of cultivation and therefore become struck. Since you are able to see it so clearly, then there’s no need for any further words from me, haha!”

Lu Yin’s lips curled upwards. “Thank you for the compliment, Elder.”

“Little brat, work hard at cultivating. Your talent is top tier, you are farsighted with a brilliant mindset, and you have also encountered numerous opportunities. Your future accomplishments will definitely not be any less than those of the Ten Arbiters. I am optimistic about your future.” Elder Lohar praised the youth in front of him, and Lu Yin immediately acknowledged the elder’s expectations.

“Right, if you meet any of the Ten Arbiters while in the Daosource Sect’s ruins, make some inquiries concerning the situation in the Innderverse.” Elder Lohar suddenly changed topics, and then he muttered to himself again. “Although, you may not necessarily be able to meet them. And that’s not even mentioning the fact that each of them have already interacted with an inheritance, so they may not have the opportunity to enter the Daosource Sect.”

Lu Yin did not mention how the Daosource Sect’s ruins had already been reduced to a battlefield, as he was worried that Elder Lohar would force him to participate. If that happened, then he would become nothing more than cannon fodder for the Ten Arbiters’ fights.

Chapter 656: Lu Yin’s Privileges

“Little brat, does your master truly not wish to reveal their name?” Elder Lohar asked.

Lu Yin was instantly put into a difficult position. “Master didn’t even tell Junior his name, so I couldn’t tell you even if I wanted to.”

Elder Lohar fell deep into thought. The current Fifth Mainland only had ten futons, so where had the additional one appeared from? The Sixth Mainland had many, but there was no way for their Fifth Mainland to seize them from the Sixth Mainland. Was Lu Yin’s master someone who had come from the Sixth Mainland? That was also impossible, as those from the Sixth Mainland would not accept anyone from the Fifth Mainland as their disciple. Or, was it that Lu Yin was actually from the Sixth Mainland?

Elder Lohar immediately shook his head to reject such a thought. There was no need for the Sixth Mainland to send such an innately gifted youth to this place, and if Lu Yin was truly from the Sixth Mainland, then he would not have revealed that he had a futon.

Were there still other futons hidden within the Fifth Mainland?

After a long period of silence, Elder Lohar spoke to Lu Yin again. “Little brat, you used the Hall of Honor’s name of your own initiative to establish the Great Eastern Alliance, and I have represented the Hall of Honor in deducting two of your Honor Points. However, you have used a futon to enter the Daosource Sect’s ruins, and this is a great contribution. There’s also the possibility that you might obtain an

inheritance from the ancient Daosource Sect. I now represent the Hall of Honor in bestowing upon you seven Honor Points. From now on, your total Honor Points will be raised to eleven.”

Lu Yin’s heart trembled, as him being able to enter the Daosource Sect had turned out to be even more important than what he had previously imagined. It had caused his Honor Points to instantly shoot up to eleven in one go, which was a different level. Eleven Honor Points meant that his death would be investigated by the Hall of Honor, and if it turned out that he had died from someone’s animosity, the Hall of Honor would take revenge for him. Eleven Honor Points was the equivalent of being exempted from death.

In the regions of the Human Domain where the Hall of Honor held control, as soon as it was revealed that Lu Yin had eleven Honor Points, even those Inniverse powers such as the Daynight clan would not dare to kill him. This was an absolute privilege.

Lu Yin’s breath quickened. “Thank you, Elder.”

Elder Lohar acknowledged him with a grunt, and then continued, saying, “Little brat, you must be careful in everything you do inside the Daosource Sect’s ruins, and you must also be certain to not expose your identity. Before you reach the Ten Arbiters’ level of power, do not confront too many cultivators from the Sixth Mainland. Although their system of cultivation is rigid, the increase in power that they receive from their imprints is considerable. For now, you should place the greatest importance on preserving your life.”

“Yes, Elder,” Lu Yin replied.

Elder Lohar’s figure soon disappeared, but Lu Yin could not contain the excitement within his heart, and he had quite a cheerful expression.

The Xun family had wanted to use the matter of Shenwu Continent to force Lu Yin into offending the Hall of Honor and then use that disagreement to deal with him. However, the Xun family could never have imagined that he would be able to turn the tables on them. The Ten Arbiters had been able to shift so much authority to the younger generation precisely because they were able to enter the Daosource Sect’s ruins and seize some ancient inheritances from the Daosource Sect for the Fifth Mainland. Their positions had been bestowed upon them by the Hall of Honor, and Lu Yin had just been given a status that was no worse than the Ten Arbiters’. It could even be said that Lu Yin was currently the only one of the Ten Arbiters in the Outerverse.

Exposing the fact that he had a futon had both pros and cons. His status would completely change from this point forward, but similarly, he would be burdened with responsibilities that others could not imagine.

The Hall of Honor was not a charity organization. They might award him with special privileges today, but in the future, they would absolutely have Lu Yin repay them.

But fortunately, with the Inniverse and Outerverse separated, the Hall of Honor’s influence had dropped, which also decreased the pressure that it could place on him. At the moment, Lu Yin could enjoy the privileges that the Hall of Honor had given him without suffering from too many constraints. And now, the matter of using the Hall of Honor’s name to establish the Great Eastern Alliance could be done completely openly.

“Come!” Lu Yin barked.

Kayze quickly entered the room. “Your Highness.”

“Send word down for a court meeting tomorrow.”

“Yes, Your Highness.”

At the same time, in another part of the Outerverse, Elder Lohar immediately tore through the void after ending his call with Lu Yin, heading for Ironblood Fort, which was currently being rebuilt.

Ironblood Fort was the closest stronghold to the Primal Zone, and it was also the most important stronghold within the Ironblood Weave. Elder Lohar had made various powerhouses stay behind even after the invasion from the Astral Beast Domain ended, such as Nightqueen Qiuyu and Huo Houye. This had been done to guarantee that Ironblood Fort would be safely rebuilt and that there would not be any interruptions from the Primal Zone during this process.

At the moment, Nightqueen Qiuyu was helping them to rebuild the stronghold.

Elder Lohar’s sudden appearance caused Wang Wen to jump up. “Why is this old man here? The Primal Zone can’t be attacking, right?”

Huo Houye, Granny Chan, and a few other Enlighters all bowed in unison towards Elder Lohar, and among them was Nightqueen Qiuyu.

“Nightqueen Qiuyu, come with me,” Elder Lohar said softly before he stepped through the void and vanished.

Nightqueen Qiuyu immediately followed after him.

In the distant quiet vastness of space, Ironblood Fort was being rebuilt as countless spacecraft ferried resources about. Planets were dragged over one after another by powerhouses, and the entire scene was quite impressive.

Nightqueen Qiuyu looked at Elder Lohar and respectfully asked, “Elder, what’s the matter?”

He looked at her and sternly said, “Do not mess with Lu Yin any longer.”

She was taken aback. “What does Elder mean?”

“Literally what I said. You are no longer allowed to cause any problems for Lu Yin,” Elder Lohar said strictly.

Nightqueen Qiuyu frowned. Although she respected the Hall of Honor, that did not mean that she was afraid of it, as the Daynight clan feared no one. “Elder, Lu Yin is an enemy of my Daynight clan. Does Elder intend to side with him?”

Elder Lohar serenely answered, “It is not me alone, but rather that the entire Hall of Honor won’t allow you guys to eliminate Lu Yin anymore. He currently possesses eleven Honor Points, and you should know what that entails.”

Nightqueen Qiuyu was stunned, and asked in disbelief, "Eleven? Impossible! It requires the recognition of a certain Judicial Commissioner from the Interstellar Supreme Court for someone to receive eleven points! Now that the Innerverse and Outerverse have been separated, how can he possibly have obtained eleven points?"

"There are certain special circumstances that do not require the recognition of the Judicial Commissioner where one can be directly given eleven points. All you need to know is that Lu Yin currently has eleven Honor Points, so don't ask any further questions." Elder Lohar's tone then turned dark. "Also, warn the Xun family to stop their dirty tricks. If they dare act against Lu Yin, they can't blame the Hall of Honor for not showing any mercy." And with those words, he left.

Even a long while after Elder Lohar had completely vanished, Nightqueen Qiuyu still could not believe what she had just been told. She knew very clearly what it meant for an individual to have eleven Honor Points, and even Enlighters like herself probably could not easily obtain eleven Honor Points. How had that brat done it? What exactly had he done?

Inheritances were the most important thing for their civilization. The Daosource Sect had existed since the most ancient times, and it also held the Fifth Mainland's greatest inheritances. To the Fifth Mainland, the Daosource Sect was more important than anything else. Whoever was able to enter the Daosource Sect would become the Fifth Mainland's favored child. The Ten Arbiters enjoyed such a position, and that was how they had shifted so much authority over to the younger generation and had obtained a supreme authority over all others of the younger generation. Lu Yin had now become someone with that same status, which meant that his position in the eyes of the Hall of Honor had already surpassed that of Enlighters, and it was even greater than that of Elder Lohar himself.

"What? Eleven Honor Points?" In a beautiful courtyard, Xun Qianye stared at the screen before him in shock as he spoke with Nightqueen Qiuyu.

"That's right. Elder Lohar has increased his Honor Points to eleven," Nightqueen Qiuyu said coldly.

"Based on what?" Xun Qianye could not wrap his mind around such a change.

Nightqueen Qiuyu frowned. "I want to know that as well. Enough, terminate all of the matters that we arranged before. That is all." She then very decisively ended the call.

Xun Qianye slammed a fist on the ground and shattered the courtyard. His expression explicitly displayed his profound incomprehension and confusion. What had Lu Yin relied on to obtain eleven Honor Points? Xun Qianye had calculated everything to perfection so that they would disrupt the formation of the Great Eastern Alliance and then use Shenwu Continent to lure Lu Yin into clashing with Elder Lohar. After that, it would be the optimum time for them to act. He had planned everything out, only for this matter to suddenly occur.

How did Lu Yin do it? Xun Qianye racked his brain, but he could not come to any sort of answer. Who could jump past the Judicial Commissioner's approval and directly obtain eleven Honor Points? Not even Elder Lohar himself was qualified for such a thing, so how had Lu Yin done it? Could he be the son of the Judicial Commissioner?

“Uncle, what’s the matter?” A group of people rushed into the ruined courtyard and nervously inquired as to what had happened.

Xun Qianye was downcast. “Publish those worthless secrets that we’ve gathered.”

“Uncle, didn’t we already contact Elder Lohar to have him punish Lu Yin? Why do we have to release those secrets?”

“Go and do as instructed! Who taught you to spout off so much?”

“Yes, Uncle.”

To most, the Great Yu Empire’s court meetings were something that would only be done in the participants’ spare time. The Imperial Cabinet discussed official matters every day, but having a court meeting just once a month was already considered too frequent.

As he faced the expectant gazes of the ministers who were crowded together, Lu Yin felt a little embarrassed. That was because during this court meeting, Garope had been the first to suggest that Lu Yin hold the court audience on a daily basis.

“A daily audience is impossible, but I will do my best to participate in these court meetings more often.” Lu Yin felt embarrassed.

Garope sighed. “Your Highness, various external powers have already made numerous denouncements against our Great Yu Empire, and those concerning the court meetings are the worst. It’s completely illogical for the leader of the empire to not participate in the court meetings.”

Lu Yin shook his head. “Enough, we’ll talk about this matter another time. The topic of today’s discussion is the Great Eastern Alliance.” He scanned across the crowd of ministers before sternly continuing on, saying, “The Great Eastern Alliance will be a beneficial alliance formed and led by our Great Yu Empire that allows all of its members to share and enjoy collective resources while also presenting a common front against external enemies. Be it regarding the economy, administration, welfare, technology, or resources, the Great Eastern Alliance will produce results that will greatly surpass the free development of any single weave.

“Today, I formally announce that under the call of the Hall of Honor, the Great Eastern Alliance is formally established.”

Within the court meeting, many ministers were stunned, and Hill Auna was the first to speak up. “Your Highness, are you saying that the Hall of Honor supports the Great Eastern Alliance?”

Lu Yin’s lips curled upwards. “Of course. I have spoken with the Hall of Honor’s elder, and the Great Eastern Alliance’s purpose is to resist enemies from the outside. Why wouldn’t they support it?”

Garope and the others exchanged doubtfully glances. Although they had not been involved in any of the matters regarding the Great Eastern Alliance’s establishment, they had access to some insider information as well. From the very start, the Great Eastern Alliance had only occasionally borrowed the name of the Hall of Honor, and even that was just along the lines of using their powerful connection to intimidate others. But now, Lu Yin was announcing it outright.

“Hill Auna, formally inform all of the empires and powers in the surrounding weaves that under the Hall of Honor’s guidance, the Great Yu Empire will establish the Great Eastern Alliance with the intention of resisting the Astral Beast Domain and assisting the Human Domain. Get them all to join as soon as possible, and we can share our resources then,” Lu Yin ordered loudly.

Hill Auna hurriedly acknowledged his orders.

Many ministers attending the court meeting appeared dazed.

Garope, Gavin, and Hill Auna remained behind to learn about the news concerning the Hall of Honor, but Lu Yin sent them off with no more than a single sentence. “From today onwards, I can represent the Hall of Honor.”

If the Innaverse and Outerverse had not become separated, then Lu Yin would not have had the nerve to do this, but things were different now. Elder Lohar’s attitude towards Lu Yin had expanded Lu Yin’s understanding of his own value. Eleven Honor Points was proof of that, and the establishment of the Great Eastern Alliance was infinitely far from even approaching the Hall of Honor’s bottom line. As long as Lu Yin did not collaborate with foreign powers or the Three Dark Hands, he could confidently represent the Hall of Honor.

Chapter 657: The Cause

After the court meeting, Phantom Sting appeared at King Zishan’s palace to present his first achievement ever since he had started training the Second Squadron.

“The Xun family has released a total of twenty one of the secrets in our possession,” Phantom Sting informed Lu Yin.

Lu Yin studied his screen calmly. “Go and find out where the Xun family is located.”

“Ok.” Phantom Sting immediately left.

Twenty one secrets sounded like a lot, but most of the exposed information was unimportant and wouldn’t affect the formation of the Great Eastern Alliance. Not a single one of them was as explosive as Cheng Yan’s, which showed that the Xun family didn’t dare to act aggressively. Despite that, they had still exposed numerous secrets, and the only reason why they would do so was that they were still trying to threaten Lu Yin in order to achieve a certain goal.

Lu Yin didn’t hesitate, and he quickly tried to contact the number that Madam Meilan had given him again.

When he had first called that number, an old man from the Xun family had immediately hung up. However, this time, once the old man appeared on the screen, he merely stared at Lu Yin calmly.

“You are Xun Qianye,” Lu Yin stated unceremoniously.

Xun Qianye nodded and slowly answered, “You’re right, I’m Xun Qianye. Nice to meet you, Lu Yin.”

“You’ve seen me before?” Lu Yin narrowed his eyes.

Xun Qianye smiled. “I was there during the fight for pyrolyte ore, but I wasn’t very remarkable.”

“I don’t like small talk. What’s your goal?” Lu Yin asked coldly.

Xun Qianye’s eyes flashed. “Your Highness, you’re very straightforward, so I’ll tell you the truth. Back at the Sea King’s Dome, one of the juniors from my family tried to buy a gun, but it was bought by you instead. Do you remember this incident?”

Lu Yin’s eyes flickered. He had originally believed that the Xun family was trying to make things difficult for him because of Xun Meiren. However, why would this old guy suddenly bring up that gun? Could it be because Lu Yin had used it to kill Enlighters? He suddenly remembered that a piece of paper with some unrecognizable words on it had fallen out of the gun after it had shattered from usage. The Ghost Monkey had translated the writing and said that it was two names.

“I do remember that. It was just a common gun, so why would the Xun family do all this for just a gun?” Lu Yin retorted.

“As long as Prince Lu is willing to give us the gun, the Xun family guarantees that we will not reveal any of the remaining information and that we will stop bothering Your Highness,” Xun Qianye said.

Lu Yin smirked. “Xun Qianye, I think that there’s been some misunderstanding. Everyone knows that I use a gun to kill Enlighters, you wouldn’t happen to believe that it’s the same gun, right?”

“Of course not. The gun that I’m talking about is at most capable of killing a Cruiser, so how could it be used to kill Enlighter realm powerhouses? The Xun family is not that dumb. Moreover, a lot of people saw when your gun shattered in Ironblood Weave,” Xun Qianye replied.

“The allure of a Cruiser-level gun is enough to cause your Xun family to resort to such unscrupulous methods and to involve Elder Lohar?” Lu Yin asked coldly as killing intent emanated from his eyes.

“The value of some items cannot be measured by their price. One of my ancestors died in the Astral Wilderness, and that gun was the only thing that he left behind. To the Xun family, it’s a sacred item, and we hope that you can understand that. I guarantee that as long as Your Highness returns the gun to us, the Xun family will definitely stop causing trouble for you, and we can even offer the Great Yu Empire some resources as compensation,” Xun Qianye suggested.

Lu Yin thought about the offer for a moment. “Fine, it’s just a gun. I was planning to give it to a junior, but since the Xun family wants it so badly, I don’t mind giving it to you. Remember what you said about giving some resources to the Great Yu Empire.”

Xun Qianye was elated at this turn of events. “We will, don’t worry, Your Highness!”

“Time and location?”

“Your Highness, you only have to send someone to bring the gun to the space station at Shenwu Continent, and someone from the Xun family will be there to receive it. I have to remind you that the Xun family is well versed in machinery, so please do not send anyone to follow us. Otherwise, it wouldn’t be good for either of us if something ends up happening.”

Lu Yin ended the call and immediately delivered an order. “Use polarium essence to make a gun as quickly as possible.”

The gun that the Xun family wanted had already been shattered into pieces, and it was impossible to repair, so Lu Yin could only make a replica. This was mostly because the Xun family didn't actually want the gun—they wanted the paper that had been inside the gun.

He took out the slip of paper and looked at the words again. "Hey monkey, take a look and translate a few more of these words."

"Seventh Bro, I only recognize two bits from that paper, and I already told you that one is 'Wen Zhaocheng' and the other is 'Cang Yi.' I don't understand any of the other words," the Ghost Monkey reluctantly answered. He had come to realize that not only had it been a long time since he had seen any sort of battle action, but that he had also been reduced to nothing more than a translator.

Lu Yin copied the writing down and sent the paper to the Technology Department where Ban Jiu was making a replica of his shattered gun.

The gun wasn't very special, and the polarium essence used was actually more valuable than what the gun itself would end up being.

Ban Jiu was curious as to why Lu Yin had chosen to use polarium essence to replicate the gun, but he didn't ask anything.

"Stuff this paper inside the gun," Lu Yin said.

"Alright."

"How much time do you need?"

"It's just a gun, so I only need half an hour. If I weren't making it out of polarium essence, I could make ten thousand guns in just a few minutes," Ban Jiu said.

Half an hour later, Lu Yin tested out the new gun. Although both the gun and its bullets had been made from polarium essence, the power of the gun couldn't even match the attack of an Explorer, let alone a Cruiser's.

However, Lu Yin hadn't been hoping for the gun to reach the level of matching up to a Cruiser's attack. Since it had been made with polarium essence, he could simply use Enhance to upgrade it to the level where it could match a Cruiser's attack.

Normally, a gun wouldn't be this powerful, and thus, the Xun family probably wouldn't be able to tell that the gun was just a replica. Even if they could, it wouldn't even matter since they only wanted that slip of paper. Moreover, Lu Yin wasn't even planning on letting the Xun family off to begin with. He was going to personally find Xun Qianye and then destroy the entire Xun family.

No matter how advanced the Xun family's machinery might be, they still wouldn't be able to hide their rune lines.

Although he could see rune lines within the realm of the Fifth Mainland, he couldn't see them in the ruins of the Daosource Sect, which had led Lu Yin to start wondering what those runes actually were.

A few days later, Lu Yin used his die and managed to roll Enhance on his third attempt. He spent some star crystals to upgrade the gun to the level where it could match a Cruiser's attack and then asked Huo Qingshan to take it to Shenwu Continent while he followed behind the Hunter.

In Shenwu Continent's space station, a junior from the Xun family was amicably chatting with Madam Meilan. The Daynight clan and the Xun family got along well, and so, the atmosphere within the space station was very friendly.

"Madam, someone from the Great Yu Empire has arrived," a Daynight clan member announced as they entered the room.

Madam Meilan turned around, and the face of the person from the Xun family grew fearful. Anyone who had heard of Lu Yin's reputation would be afraid of him since he had killed several Enlighters. Besides, the Xun family had already become Lu Yin's enemy, so this person would definitely be very wary of Lu Yin.

"Who is it?" the Xun family member asked nervously.

The person from the Daynight clan answered, "Huo Qingshan, the captain of the Fifth Squadron."

As soon as he heard that it wasn't Lu Yin, the person from the Xun family became relieved. "Take me to him."

He then turned to Madam Meilan. "Thank you for your hospitality over these past two days. I will be departing shortly."

"Of course." Madam Meilan watched him leave with a smile.

The person from the Xun family met Huo Qingshan within the space station.

Huo Qingshan didn't talk to the man at all and merely tossed the gun over as quickly as possible. The person from the Xun family caught it and said, "My uncle asked me to thank Royal Regent Lu."

"His Highness said that you should remember your promise," Huo Qingshan replied.

The person from the Xun family smiled and tossed a cosmic ring over to Huo Qingshan. "The resources inside are from the Xun family to assist the Great Yu Empire, as well as to express our apologies."

Huo Qingshan put the ring away.

The person from the Xun family also left as soon as he finished speaking.

Huo Qingshan calmly watched the man leave, and Madam Meilan walked out from behind him and asked, "Aren't you going to follow him?"

"Why should I?" Huo Qingshan asked coldly. He glanced at Madam Meilan, but he didn't leave yet.

Madam Meilan smirked. According to her understanding of Lu Yin, the Xun family would definitely be facing dire consequences for their actions.

In contrast to Huo Qingshan's casual behavior, the person from the Xun family immediately left the space station while constantly glancing behind themselves. According to Xun Qianye's predictions, Lu Yin definitely would not let them off, but for some reason, there wasn't anyone following after the man. Still, he planned to continue with his charade.

The man leaped out of his spacecraft and allowed it to continue flying towards its programmed destination while he hid himself on an asteroid before slowly traveling in another direction.

After going through multiple disguises over the course of two days, the man from the Xun family finally arrived at a planet in Darkmist Weave.

"Uncle, I'm back." The man approached an estate that was next to a sea and soon met with Xun Qianye.

Xun Qianye anxiously asked the man, "Did you follow my instructions?"

"Don't worry, Uncle. I did everything as you said, and I'm certain that nobody followed me," the man said.

Xun Qianye nodded. He then took the gun from the man and studied it carefully. His expression quickly changed. "No, this is a fake!"

The man was shocked. "It's fake? How can that be? This gun fires shots that are comparable to a Cruiser's attacks."

Xun Qianye's gaze turned cold. "Although I don't know where Lu Yin got this from, it's not what we want." He then shattered the gun, and a piece of paper fell out. Xun Qianye was shocked, but he quickly opened the piece of paper and fell deep into thought.

The man looked at the paper that fell out from the gun curiously.

Suddenly, Xun Qianye's gadget rang, and he was surprised by what he saw when he opened his gadget. "Lu Yin's here."

The man who had delivered the gun was stunned. Suddenly, there was a loud sound, and Lu Yin appeared in his universal armor.

No matter what disguise the person from the Xun family had used, he couldn't hide his rune lines unless he was able to completely disappear.

Lu Yin glanced at the furious Xun Qianye beneath him and saw the paper in his hand. He commented icily, "I didn't expect you to be this close to me."

"Lu Yin, you didn't keep your promise!" the man from the Xun family shouted in terror.

Xun Qianye walked forward and glared at Lu Yin. "Lu Yin, you used a fake gun to try to scam me! Give me the real gun. Otherwise, you will end up in much greater trouble than you ever expected. The Great Yu Empire might collapse because of this!"

"How dare you threaten me? I'm not scared of you even if you do team up with the Daynight clan as long as the Innerverse is cut off from the Outerverse. Just imagine how you'll be able to survive." Lu Yin raised a hand, and an attack descended from the sky; it was from the blind monk.

Xun Qianye looked up, and his face went pale. “Lu Yin, I’m telling you this for the last time: give me the real gun! Otherwise, everyone connected to you will die, and you won’t be able to stop it even if you do have the power to kill Enlighteners.”

Chapter 658: Destroying The Xun Family

There was a boom, and the estate by the sea suddenly vanished. With a steel rod in his hand, the blind monk viciously charged towards Xun Qianye, who raised a palm. He was a top level Hunter whereas the blind monk had just barely become a Hunter based on his power level. Due to this difference in strength, the monk was suppressed by Xun Qianye’s star energy, which caused him to retreat back about a thousand meters.

All of a sudden, a dazzling white light beam was reflected by the tip of a sharp weapon that scattered bits of blood as it flashed about. Xun Qianye hurriedly took a step back as he gritted his teeth and stared in front of him, where Phantom Sting had just appeared.

Two Hunters moved together while the Xun family only had one Hunter: Xun Qianye. The next strongest individual in the family was merely a Cruiser.

“Lu Yin, are you really not going to hand it over?” Xun Qianye snarled angrily.

Lu Yin’s brows furrowed together. He could sense that something was off, and it seemed that the little piece of paper was more important than he had initially imagined. Even at this crucial juncture, Xue Qianye had no thought of fleeing; instead, he was delivering a threat. Lu Yin felt that there was more to this matter and that Xun Qianye was not lying. “That gun is fake, but the item inside of it is real.”

Xun Qianye continued to dodge the torrent of attacks launched at him by the blind monk and Phantom Sting, but he suffered numerous injuries from the two attackers. As soon as he heard Lu Yin’s words, he clenched the paper tightly as his expression turned cold. “Give me the real gun!”

Lu Yin’s eyes narrowed. “Don’t think that I can’t kill you!”

As he shouted, he rushed forward with reckless abandon while Xun Qianye yelled back at him, “Lu Yin, you have chosen death! Don’t blame me for delivering it to you!” As he spoke, Xun Qianye pulled out some unknown item out from his cosmic ring, and the star energy around him suddenly froze. It then formed into chains that caused the blind monk, Phantom Sting, and even Lu Yin to retreat. The next moment, Xun Qianye vanished.

Li Yin immediately started to scan all about him, and his heart sank. He could no longer see Xun Qianye’s rune lines anywhere. The man had escaped.

“Capture all the members of the Xun family!” Lu Yin cried.

Very quickly, all of the Xun family members that were on the planet were captured. There were more than seventy of them. Among them there were three Cruisers and fifteen Explorers with the rest being Limiteers.

Lu Yin interrogated them about Xun Qianye’s whereabouts, but all of them were completely clueless. Desperate, Lu Yin sent all of them back to the Great Yu Empire to undergo further interrogation.

This entire matter felt extremely fishy, and it was possible that this incident would cause trouble in the future, but Lu Yin did not care. The Xun family could not hold a candle to the Daynight clan. Besides, now that the Outerverse had been cut off from the rest of the Human Domain, the worst that Xun Qianye could do was find some Enlighters to assist him. Such a thing did not worry Lu Yin, as even if Xun Qianye was able to enlist the help of powerhouses who had a power level of 300,000 or above, Lu Yin had Elder Lohar and Mister Mu to protect him. As long as the Outerverse remained isolated, he had nothing to fear.

However, it was still imperative that Xun Qianye be found.

Lu Yin contacted the Limiteer Mistchild and ordered her to get Mafioso Planet to use all of its resources to track Xun Qianye down.

After resolving the matter with the Xun family, Lu Yin did not immediately return to the Great Yu Empire. Instead, he went to visit Shenwu Continent's space station.

After En Ya had delivered the enhanced natural treasures to Ming Zhaoshu, she had not contacted Lu Yin again. Thus, he had decided that it would be best for him to personally go to the continent and take a look at the current situation.

When he arrived at Shenwu Continent's space station, Madam Meilan met with him. "I was not wrong. The Xun family is indeed finished."

Lu Yin let out a short laugh. "Thank you so much for offering me information on the Xun family."

"There is no need to thank me, Student Lu. Elder Qiuyu has instructed us members of the Daynight clan to no longer view you as our enemy. In fact, we are hoping that you will not make trouble for us in return," Madam Meilan said with a laugh.

Lu Yin broke out into laughter. "No one in the universe dares to mess with the Daynight clan. On the other hand, I do have a matter that I need your help with."

"Please tell me what it is," Madam Meilan said.

"Xuan Qianye has escaped, and I would like to ask for your help to find out where he went," Lu Yin said.

Madam Meilan smiled and nodded. "That is no problem. I will reach out to the contacts that our Daynight clansmen have established throughout the Outerverse to get this information for you. I must ask though, what will I get in return?"

"What do you want, madam?" Lu Yin asked.

Madam Meilan pondered for a moment. "I cannot think of anything for the moment. I will have to give this matter serious consideration after I have assisted you in discovering Xun Qianye's whereabouts."

Lu Yin smiled and nodded. Soon after that, with the help of Huo Qingshan, he returned to Shenwu Continent.

Within the Shenwu Empire, in Shanhai City, Ming Zhaoshu was in his study in the Reverent King's Residence and looking into a mirror. He caressed his forehead and thereafter threw the mirror to the floor. His body had aged once again. He had initially expected that consuming all those rare ingredients would restore his life force to the point of allowing him to persevere on for another year, but now, it seemed that he had no more than half a year left to live. In other words, he would die in half a year.

Ming Zhaoshu clenched both fists tightly before slowly releasing them. He had finally resigned himself to his inevitable fate.

"Father, I am here." Ming Yan's voice traveled to him from outside the study.

Ming Zhaoshu gloomily responded, "Come in."

After a considerable amount of time passed, Ming Yan stepped out of the study with an utterly exhausted expression. Ever since she had learned that Ming Zhaoshu did not have long left to live, she had worked hard to learn and handle all of the administrative affairs in order to not disappoint her father. As for the agony and pain that she felt in her heart, she could only bottle it up and keep it to herself. The only thing she could do to relieve the pain inside of her was to occasionally retreat to her room and sob.

In those moments, she missed Lu Yin all the more. She wanted to do nothing more than to rely on his support.

"Princess, please enjoy your meal." A maid placed a tray of food down on the desk.

Ming Yan waved the maid off with a flick of her wrist. She was in no mood to eat as she hazily looked through the window and at the sky before grabbing some documents that were lying on her dressing table. She hated bureaucratic work, but she had no choice except to take care of it.

As she picked up a document to open it, a hand suddenly appeared in front of her to snatch the paper away from her hand. "You need to eat before you work."

Ming Yan's body trembled, and she looked to the side, where a familiar figure had appeared.

Lu Yin set the document aside as he cupped Ming Yan's face with his hand. Then, he gently said, "You've lost so much weight over such a short amount of time."

Ming Yan's eyes turned red as she stared at Lu Yin with a blank face. A stream of tears suddenly fell from her face, and she collapsed into his embrace, sobbing softly. She felt all of the anguish, helplessness, and despair that had recently been plaguing her melt away.

Lu Yin hugged Ming Yan's soft body and did not utter a single word in response. He merely continued to hold her silently.

It didn't take Ming Yan long to fall asleep, and Lu Yin could tell that she had fallen into a deep slumber.

Lu Yin put her in bed, gave her a kiss on the forehead, and walked out of the room. He then made his way straight to Ming Zhaoshu's study.

Upon seeing Lu Yin, Tang Si hastily bowed to him.

After opening the study door, Lu Yin walked right in without any hesitation.

Ming Zhaoshu stared intently at him. "I had guessed that you would be here soon."

Lu Yin closed the door and sat down in a chair beside the desk. "It looks like the things I sent you didn't do what they were supposed to."

Ming Zhaoshu laughed bitterly, in a semi-mocking manner. Then, he said, "I spent so many years biding my time without a son just so that I could fight for power and force my brother and the prince to their deaths, but this is my end. The Shenwu Empire has no heir! Little Seven, do you not think that this is a cruel joke? Hahahaha!"

Lu Yin calmly observed Ming Zhaoshu. "Are all of Ming Zhaotian's heirs dead?"

Ming Zhaoshu shut his eyes and fell silent.

Lu Yin narrowed his eyes. Ming Zhaoshu was such a vicious man that he had made sure to kill all the Shenwu Empire's potential heirs. He had initially wanted a son, but he had not been able to have one to stay inconspicuous. This could be considered as his retribution!

"Yan'er does not have what it takes to inherit the Shenwu Empire," Lu Yin commented.

Ming Zhaoshu's eyes snapped wide open. "So what? She is the only heir to the Shenwu Empire. There is no one else aside from her! She must carry on the Shenwu Emperor's family line."

"I don't care about some small place like the Shenwu Empire. I want her to lead a life that she desires and not end up being ruined by some so-called family obligation. Wendy Yushan is about to hand over the Great Yu Empire to me, so what reason do you have not to hand over the Shenwu Empire to an outsider?" Lu Yin spoke angrily, as Ming Yan's current plight had saddened him.

Ming Zhaoshu stood up. "This is Shenwu Continent, not the outside universe! Even though the universe has introduced its culture to us during these recent years, our ideology remains the same: the Shenwu Empire must be inherited by someone from the Ming family. If this does not occur, then chaos will reign, and the people will suffer.

"That is just a selfish excuse on your part," Lu Yin snorted.

"Whatever it may be, Yan'er is still my daughter, as well as the only heir to the Shenwu Empire. She has to shoulder this responsibility." Ming Zhaoshu said firmly.

Lu Yin's eyes flashed, and he stared straight into Ming Zhaoshu's eyes.

"Handing the Shenwu Empire to me would be the same," Lu Yin said indifferently.

Ming Zhaoshu shook a finger. "Do you intend to take the Shenwu Empire by force?"

"So what if I do?" Lu Yin responded coldly.

Ming Zhaoshu laughed heartily. "Before the establishment of the Great Eastern Alliance, you might have possibly been able to do this. It's true that the destruction of Shenwu Continent would have no impact

on you. However, the Shenwu Empire has already joined the Great Eastern Alliance, so if you try to take control of the Shenwu Empire by force, then who else would dare to join your alliance? Little Seven, you are in way over your head!”

“For the sake of Yan'er, I am willing to adjust my strategy,” Lu Yin replied unsympathetically.

Ming Zhaoshu shook his head. He had not been angered by Lu Yin's words, and if anything, he felt a tinge of gratefulness. “I understand how you feel about Yan'er, and I am very happy that you are willing to give up the Great Eastern Alliance for her sake. However, inheriting the Shenwu Empire is her destiny. If you take the Shenwu Empire by force and cause unrest to shake this land, it will result in thousands of casualties. When that happens, do you think that she will be able to forgive herself? Being the kind-hearted woman that she is, would she agree to such a thing?”

Lu Yin felt helpless, and he could not respond.

“Little Seven, man proposes, but ultimately, heaven disposes. Many people say that human wisdom can overcome what the heavens have in store, but why not look at it in reverse? The heavens provide an alternative option. They often make fools of us, but this is not something that you nor I can control. I have accomplished everything that I can, but I am a dying man. You can conquer and pillage everything, but you will never be able to truly capture another's heart. The more that you do, the greater the possibility that Yan'er will become disappointed in you or in herself. Do you understand what I am saying?” Ming Zhaoshu slowly explained.

Lu Yin looked at Ming Zhaoshu and asked, “How much longer do you have to live?”

A flicker of pain darted across Ming Zhaoshu's eyes. “Half a year at most.”

Lu Yin did not know how to feel, as he really did not wish for Ming Yan to take on so many responsibilities. All he wanted was for Ming Yan to be able to lead a carefree life; that would be enough for him. However, everyone had their own manner of thought.

Ming Zhaoshu had lived a long life and always been planning for the long run. Ming Yan having a status as the Shenwu Empress when she married Lu Yin would be the best option, as a mere pretty face was destined to be cast aside. Human love was always sweet at the beginning, but it needed commitment and effort from both parties for it to last, and romantic love had a very short shelf-life if there was nothing else supporting it.

This was what was known as a well-suited match. Ming Zhaoshu would rather have Ming Yan handle the stress of inheriting the empire than allow her to suffer from heartbreak.

However, he could not tell Lu Yin all this. Whether it was Lu Yin or Ming Yan, neither of them had enough experience in love or life, and they would not be able to understand his intentions.

Lu Yin left the room, not knowing how to dissuade Ming Zhaoshu. The emperor's resolve was unshakeable, and Lu Yin wanted to talk to Ming Yan to see how she felt about things. If Ming Yan did not want to inherit the Shenwu Empire, then Lu Yin would act as he wished regardless of Ming Zhaoshu's intentions. He would take control of everything.

Ming Yan slept for an entire day as Lu Yin sat beside her.

When Ming Yan opened her eyes and saw Lu Yin, she felt her heart melt. The unfamiliar feelings that she once held towards him in the past had completely disappeared. She once again felt that sense of closeness to him that she had in the beginning.

When he saw Ming Yan wake up, Lu Yin hurriedly brought her a bowl of porridge. He helped her up into a position where she was half sitting and half held by him. He then told her, "Open your mouth."

Ming Yan's beautiful face flushed red, and she meekly answered, "Big brother Lu, I'll eat on my own."

"No, after sleeping for so long and not eating anything, you don't have the energy. Be a good girl and let me feed you. Open wide."

"Alright."

Chapter 659: Search

It took half an hour for Lu Yin to feed Ming Yan the bowl of porridge, but after that, Ming Yan's complexion had become much rosier. Her appearance was so charming that Lu Yin could not resist leaning over and kissing her.

Ming Yan stared at Lu Yin with a chastising expression, but she was not actually angry. Lu Yin could see her eyes darting about, and they shone with a light that made her even more alluring than the stunning Madam Nalan, catching Lu Yin off guard. "Yan'er, you're beautiful."

Ming Yan's heart trembled, and she was secretly delighted. She lowered her head. "Brother Lu, why are you here?"

Lu Yin hugged her tightly. "Of course it's because I couldn't bear to suffer from missing you. So, I came here to see you."

Ming Yan struggled for a moment, but once she saw that Lu Yin only embraced her even more tightly, she could only allow him to do as he wished. "Brother Lu, do you know about Father's situation?"

Lu Yin grunted in acknowledgement, and then he looked at Ming Yan in a serious manner. "Yan'er, tell me the truth: do you want to take over the Shenwu Empire? If you don't, then I'll help you take care of things here, and you'll be able to go home with me and lead a worry-free life, just like before. Is that what you want?"

Ming Yan studied Lu Yin's eyes and saw that the most gentle spot in her heart was warmly being held by him. He was offering her a lifetime's promise, and realizing this caused her to blush. Just as she was about to agree without hesitation, a cough rang from outside the room. Ming Yan came to her senses, and she quickly pushed Lu Yin aside before quietly saying, "Father's here."

Lu Yin checked outside and saw that Ming Zhaoshu was staring at the sky with his hands clasped behind his back.

"How indiscreet." Lu Yin was rather unhappy.

Ming Yan looked at him, her eyes pure and wide. "Brother Lu, he's my father! You can't say that."

Lu Yin smiled apologetically. "That's right, he'll soon be my father-in-law. Sorry Yan'er, Brother Lu misspoke."

Ming Yan pursed her lips. "Brother Lu, Father is very tired, and things must be very difficult for him."

"Mm, I got it," Lu Yin replied.

Ming Yan lowered her head. "Father wishes for me to inherit the throne of the Shenwu Empire."

"What about you? What is it that you truly wish for?" Lu Yin asked earnestly.

Ming Yan's head was still hung down as she recalled a few words that Ming Zhaoshu had said to her. She bit her lip before quietly answering, "I- I want to inherit the Shenwu Empire."

Lu Yin moved his hand and raised her head as he looked at her with serious eyes. "Yan'er, Brother Lu promises that as long as you wish for it, nobody will be able to force you to carry these burdens."

Ming Yan and Lu Yin stared at each other, and as they did, her gaze became more determined. "I wish to carry this burden."

Lu Yin sighed. "You obviously don't like to look at memos or handle administrative duties."

"I'm sorry, Brother Lu." Ming Yan was in agony.

Lu Yin touched her cheek. "Don't apologize—you didn't let anyone down, Yan'er. No matter what you decide to do, I will support you."

Ming Yan clenched his hand tightly as she nervously asked, "Then, does Brother Lu not want Yan'er anymore?"

Lu Yin laughed and hugged her again, and this time, he refused to let go no matter how she struggled. "No! Yan'er is mine, and mine forever. No matter if you're that carefree princess from the Reverent King's Residence or the future empress, you'll always belong to me, Lu Yin. You can't run away."

Ming Yan happily acknowledged his words. With this promise, she would be able to work hard and assume her responsibilities.

Suddenly, Lu Yin lowered his head and opened his mouth to nibble at her two tender lips. A sweet feeling seeped into his heart, and although Ming Yan was shocked by his behavior, she did not push him away. She closed her eyes and gave Lu Yin free reign.

After some time, Ming Zhaoshu coughed again, startling Ming Yan. She shoved Lu Yin away, her face flushed beet red. She then buried her entire body beneath a blanket and wouldn't come out.

"Really indiscreet," Lu Yin mumbled unhappily once more.

Lu Yin had originally planned to take Ming Yan away after this trip to Shenwu Continent, or at least help out as she took over her responsibilities. However, Ming Yan had made the decision to inherit the Shenwu Empire of her own accord.

Left without any other choice, Lu Yin kept Ming Yan company at the Reverent King's Residence for two days before taking En Ya away due to Ming Zhaoshu's relentless urging.

Ming Zhaoshu's time was quite limited, and he wished to train Ming Yan on how to handle political affairs in his remaining time, as well as teach her details such as how to direct the councilors and oversee their matters.

"Your Highness, are you not happy?" En Ya asked Lu Yin.

Lu Yin shook his head. "Send some more people to be stationed in the Shenwu Empire."

It was practically impossible for Ming Yan to take control of the Shenwu Empire in just half a year, but since she was determined to succeed, Lu Yin would not stop her. After half a year's time passed and Ming Zhaoshu died, various problems would definitely start breaking out in the Shenwu Empire. At that time, he would make another visit, and stationing his own people there would allow him to receive news much earlier.

He was more worried about the poison that had been administered to Ming Zhaoshu. "En Ya, you can return first."

"Your Highness, you aren't going to leave with me?" En Ya asked.

Lu Yin's gaze trembled, as he did not plan to leave quite yet. Since the person who had poisoned Ming Zhaoshu had not been discovered yet, it was impossible to know if they would also poison Ming Yan. Lu Yin was determined to find this person, and this was actually his primary objective during this trip to Shenwu Continent. He could not relax while such a dangerous person was roaming freely near Ming Yan.

First, he would check Qiong Island. Lu Yin ascended high into the sky until he towered above all, and when he looked down at Shanghai City, he could see rune lines all about the city. However, everything seemed normal, despite the fact that there were even a few whose rune lines equaled a Cruiser's. One of these people was Ming Zhaoshu, and there were also a few people outside of the city. Next, he visited Liuguang City, which was north of Shanghai City.

With Lu Yin's speed and scope of vision, it took just a day to cover the entirety of Qiong Island, and next was Ming Island.

After that, starting from Qiong Island, Lu Yin combed through Shenwu Continent island by island. He discovered that there were quite a few hidden experts scattered across the continent, which was something that he would not have discovered if he had not carefully searched through the continent. These people had mostly been left behind by the universe's various powers, from both the Inverse and Outerverse, to facilitate coordination between the natives and the trial takers. This was how people like Grandini Mavis and the Mavis family as a whole was able to control the Bank of Wuyun. Yue Xianzi, An Shaohua, and other powers like the Daynight clan all had experts hidden on Shenwu Continent.

Lu Yin conveniently marked down the locations of all of these hidden powerhouses. If Ming Yan truly wanted to inherit the Shenwu Empire, then this sort of information might be of use to her.

Ten days later, Lu Yin arrived at some unknown location that was quite far from Qiong Island. It seemed to be due north of the Shenwu Empire.

Beneath Lu Yin was a battlefield, which he had already been aware of before arriving. When Ming Zhaoshu had succeeded the throne and cooperated with the outsiders, many of the continent's natives

were dissatisfied, and there had been more than a hundred assassination attempts thus far. Many rebel armies had pretended to follow Ming Hao so that they could find an opportune moment to revolt.

As for these rebels, Lu Yin held no interest in them. However, this battlefield had an inexplicably large number of rune lines that had almost reached the level of a Hunter.

If there truly existed a Hunter on this battlefield, then such a battle would not have happened as even a Cruiser would be more than powerful enough to determine the outcome of this conflict. And yet, a Hunter's rune lines had indeed appeared at this place, which was rather suspicious.

Lu Yin glanced across the battlefield, and his gaze eventually fixated on the bottom of a canyon that lay close to the battlefield. The air was filled with the stench of blood that also strangely emanated from underneath from that area.

Lu Yin vanished, and when he reappeared, he was already above the canyon. He saw the location of the rune lines, and then, he suddenly heard a roar in his ears.

He was very familiar with this particular roar, as it was the howl of zombies. He had found them.

Suddenly, a red arm reached out from inside of the canyon's walls to grab at Lu Yin. The arm was at least ten meters long, and scarlet muscles rippled along it. It's appearance was completely nauseating, and Lu Yin deftly evaded it before slashing his hand down to chop it apart. With his strength, he could even chop off a Hunter's arm, but this red arm did not break after receiving his attack; only a tiny bit of the red flesh had been shaved off.

A great howl burst forth from inside the canyon, and it caused the soldiers on the battlefield to wail in anguish. Many soldiers even spat out blood and died on the spot.

Lu Yin rose into the sky as the canyon shattered beneath him. A hundred meter tall Corpse King with red flesh emerged, and its icy eyes stared at Lu Yin. It then leapt up and punched out with a fist.

The ground shattered, and the battlefield broke apart as the crowds of soldiers stared up at the hundred-meter tall monster in terror.

Lu Yin's eyes flashed, and he raised his own fist to retaliate.

Boom!

A visible shockwave rippled out that warped the void, and a terrifying gale swept across the battlefield that rose into the sky.

The massive, hundred meter tall Corpse King was sent flying by Lu Yin's fist, and even the monster's fist was crushed.

Lu Yin was stunned. This Corpse King only had the strength of a Cruiser, but it had a rather terrifying physical body that could compare to one of the Daosource Sect's mountain gate's Shenjia Guardians and even slightly exceed the automatons.

Roar!

The giant Corpse King snarled and charged back at Lu Yin once again as it lashed out.

Lu Yin vanished and streaked through the void to suddenly appear atop the Corpse King's head. He then pressed down with a palm. "Thirty Stacks Hundredfold Shockwave Palm." With a horrible boom, the giant Corpse King stopped moving as Lu Yin's palm had shoved the creature's head down into its body cavity when the Overlaying Stacks exploded. Not only did his attack cause the Corpse King's head to crack open, but fissures also appeared all over the monster's chest as fresh blood fell from the sky in torrents, staining the battlefield.

Lu Yin glanced over at where the Hunter's rune lines had previously been hidden. He had seen that those rune lines were a powerhouse's, but that person had escaped the moment the giant Corpse King had charged out of the canyon. Lu Yin had pretended not to notice, as he wanted to see where this person would run to.

The canyon had completely collapsed, and Lu Yin's domain quickly swept through it. The interior of the mountain had been hollowed out, and there was a giant lab in there, though it held nothing more than a dozen zombies.

His domain crushed down and reduced all of the zombies to puddles of blood. After that, Lu Yin concealed his aura and dashed after the powerhouse to give chase, using only his physical strength.

The Hunter's rune lines shone like a bright light in the darkness, and Lu Yin could clearly see them. He did not need to approach this person, as just following them would be enough.

The Neohuman Alliance expert who had escaped could not have expected that Lu Yin would be able to keep up, and they eventually released their aura after covering some distance to increase their speed. Fortunately, Lu Yin's physical strength was very powerful, and he had also unsealed his three grains of Fatesand, which allowed him to keep up with the fleeing powerhouse's speed with just his physical strength.

Before long, Lu Yin entered a forested region where the Hunter's rune lines had stopped.

Beneath the forest, there was a giant space that had been carved out in a similar manner to the dozen labs earlier. Quite a few zombies were held here, though they were not Corpse Kings that could swallow energy crystals to create innate gifts. These were only normal zombies.

One of the lab's doors was open, and inside, Lu Yin saw a scene straight from hell.

The floor was covered with blood, and there was a giant zombie squatting in a corner, snarling.

"Another one again. This giant Corpse King can absorb blood to grow larger and stronger, but it cannot become intelligent. That's fine. As long as I have intelligence, it's fine! Hahaha!" A berserk laughter was heard that made the place's ambience feel even more creepy. The laugh had come from a short old man with a waxy, yellow complexion, strange facial features, and hair that stood straight up.

Suddenly, a massive shadow covered the room, causing the short old man's pupils to shrink. When he looked up, Lu Yin's figure entered his sight.

"Ho- how did you chase me down?" The short old man was overwhelmed with shock.

Lu Yin did not bother replying, and he simply took out his pike to stab at the old man. The spiritual force attack enveloped the entire area, and even though the man had the power level of a Hunter, he was still dazed by this intense spiritual force and forced to faint for a moment. In that split second, the pike pierced through him, but it ended up being stopped by something, and it felt like it could not stab any further into the man's body.

Lu Yin was astonished.

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The short old man came out of his daze, and his face turned sinister. "You're looking to die!"

He suddenly backed away as the large doors of the lab abruptly closed, cutting him off from Lu Yin. The next moment, the entire lab trembled, and a black gust of wind roared in from all directions, filling the entire underground in the blink of an eye and sealing off all exits.

Lu Yin frowned, and he quickly used the pike to strike the laboratory doors with a moderate amount of force. With a crack, the doors split open, and then, there was another rumbling sound as the doors completely shattered apart. He heard a snarl, and the zombie that had been inside the lab suddenly charged out through the doorway at Lu Yin.

Lu Yin avoided it with Secret Sidestep, and when the zombie charged into the black gas, its snarl instantly stopped as its entire body started convulsing. After that, it completely vanished.

Lu Yin's scalp went numb, and he quickly leaped into the lab, only to be greeted by the short man's berserk. The man had donned a suit of metal armor, but Lu Yin was able to evade his surprise attack by using Secret Sidestep again. The void tore the place where Lu Yin had just been standing apart, and the entire forest outside of the hidden lab was knocked down.

Lu Yin's eyes narrowed, as this old man was just a mere Cruiser, but he had the rune lines of a Hunter. These rune lines were from the metal outfit that he was currently wearing, as it could be used to defend against a Hunter's attack.

"Haha! I never thought that such an interesting specimen would suddenly approach me. Stay here and join my treasures!" the old man cackled as he barreled towards Lu Yin in a ferocious manner.

Lu Yin's eyes went wide, and the tree that was his forcefield suddenly appeared as the branches almost instantly bound the short old man in place. "Thirty Stacks, Hundredfold Shockwave Palm." Dozens of explosions rang out through the lab that caused the void to shatter. The overwhelming force from the palm sent the old man straight into the black gas that was still just outside the lab.

The metal outfit started to split apart, and the black gas entered through the cracks in the metal, seeping inside of the outfit and causing the old man to release mournful howls.

He had not thought that an Explorer like Lu Yin could unleash attacks that could harm a Hunter. His metal armor was quite impressive since it could withstand a Hunter's attacks, but there were different tiers to such items, and Lu Yin's attack had surpassed the degree that the armor could withstand.

The wails soon disappeared.

Lu Yin stared closely at the area outside the lab; what exactly was this black gas? It could not be released, as otherwise, Shenwu Continent would be doomed.

Just as Lu Yin was thinking of a way to get rid of the black gas, it suddenly seemed to deliberately rush into the old man's metal outfit through the cracks. It didn't look like the gas was spreading, but rather like it was being absorbed.

A moment later, the metal outfit shattered, and the remnant fragments were blasted away in all directions. A monster was revealed in front of Lu Yin that constantly emitted the black gas from before. As Lu Yin looked at the figure, he saw that its rune lines had increased several fold.

"Kakaka! Since I dared to produce death energy, why should I be scared of it? Stay here!" The short old man's entire body emitted black gas, and even his facial features could no longer be seen. It was as if he had become just a lump of black fog. He heavily charged at Lu Yin, but it felt as if he did not even know any battle techniques as he only used the most primitive attacks.

Lu Yin dodged the attack and stared at the old man. "What did you say? Death energy?"

"Kakaka, little brat, have you heard of death energy too?" The short old man sniggered and rumbled towards Lu Yin once again.

Lu Yin dodged again. "The Specter clan's death energy?"

"Your knowledge isn't bad—even many within the Neohuman Alliance itself don't know what the Specter clan is, but an outsider like you knows about it. I'm becoming even more interested in you. Right, after thinking about it, you're the one who brought all those people to destroy Mingdu and destroyed our Neohuman Alliance's largest lab on Shenwu Continent. You're pretty famous." The figure who had been the short old man rushed towards Lu Yin yet again.

Lu Yin continued to evade by using the Secret Sidestep Technique, and the two continued their little dance underground: one chasing as the other dodged. The whole scene was rather comical.

"Don't think of escaping! You can't run away! Stay here, or else I'll go to Shanghai City and capture that little brat." The short old man laughed strangely.

Lu Yin's gaze turned sharp. "You're the one who poisoned Ming Zhaoshu?"

"Kaka, that's right!"

"Why? With your strength, it wouldn't be that hard to kill him, so why use poison?"

"It's just an experiment. I'm not interested in anything else, only in my treasures. The information that I can glean from Ming Zhaoshu's poisoning is precious experimental data. Relax. As soon as he dies, that brat will be next. Nobody can dream of escaping, because they are all my experiments! My darlings! Kaka!"

Lu Yin's expression frosted over, and he stared at the short old man as the Cosmic Art activated, causing stars to revolve around his body. The short old man charged at him again, and this time, Lu Yin could see every detail of his movement very clearly. Still, Lu Yin did not take action just yet. Instead, he shifted to the side with the Secret Sidestep Technique and then raised a hand before moving to press his palm

against the man. Right as Lu Yin's palm was about to connect with the black gas, Lu Yin suddenly pulled his hand back and retreated a hundred meters away.

"What you're producing isn't even death energy," Lu Yin said sullenly.

The man sneered, "What do you know? This is death energy!"

Lu Yin lifted his head. If this gas was actually death energy, it would be impossible for him to not recognize it. Back when he had fought against Faceless in front of the Sea King's Trident, he had felt death energy from the youth from the Specter clan. He had been able to sense a distinct aura, and he had even been able to suppress it.

Faceless was from the Specter clan, and it was precisely because Lu Yin had been able to suppress Faceless's death energy that had caused the youth to think that Lu Yin was also from the Specter clan. That misunderstanding had caused Faceless to be extremely respectful towards Lu Yin, and he had even obeyed Lu Yin's orders.

No matter if Faceless had guessed right or wrong, it was a fact that Lu Yin could sense death energy. However, the black gas in front of him gave him no such sense of familiarity. It did seem a bit like death energy, and yet, it wasn't. It could only be a kind of poisonous gas.

"This is not death energy," Lu Yin repeated.

The short old man grew angry. "It is death energy. I am able to make it, and this is death energy!" He suddenly became even more berserk and rushed straight towards Lu Yin again.

Regardless of whether the black gas was death energy or not, Lu Yin would know once he tried something. Back when he had possessed someone from the Specter clan, he had learned of the terror of death energy, which was why he had not put on his universal armor for this fight. He was not confident that his universal armor could withstand death energy, and he had been intimidated by this black gas because of that. However, now, there was nothing to be scared of since he had already determined that this was not death energy.

He raised his pike and reinforced his body with seven lined battle force as the man rushed towards him once again. He thrust the pike forward before letting go of it as it flew forward and pinned the short man's body against the wall. All of the defensive measures that had blocked the pike the last time Lu Yin had attacked were completely shattered.

The short old man howled in grief, and this time, it was a true wailing; his fresh blood flowed down the wall.

The black gas actually rushed into the man's body through his bleeding wound, which caused an even more mournful cry to ring throughout the room. The man lasted for less than ten seconds before he dissolved into nothingness, just like the zombie from before.

In the place where he had died, the black, false death energy and the man's blood merged together to form a black blood that corroded the floor.

As he looked at the puddle of black blood, Lu Yin created a fierce blaze with his star energy that burned the puddle into nothingness.

It had not actually been death energy, as death energy would not be eradicated so easily.

Lu Yin retrieved his pike. The short old man's body had already vanished, and only a pile of clothes had been left behind in a pile on the floor.

This strange black gas had not caused any harm to the man's clothes, which meant that it was very sensitive.

Aside from the pile of clothes on the ground, there was also a stone slab and a bottle. Lu Yin picked them up and saw that the stone slab was very thin. It was actually a stone book with pages that could be flipped through. Each page of the stone slab had data recorded on it that looked like information from various experiments.

'Most number of zombies killed by the giant zombie: 2,395.'

'The composition of death energy is...'

...

There were many pages to the stone slab, and each was very thin. Although Lu Yin did not understand most of the writing, there was one page that caught his attention, as it had Ming Zhaoshu's name written on it.

'Experiment specimen Ming Zhaoshu: Cruiser's power level, comprehended a forcefield, can rival a Hunter. Poison: Regression No. 91. Estimated to last at most a month...'

This page recorded the changes that Ming Zhaoshu had experienced every day, from his diet to his emotions, and even the speed at which he handled and processed his various administrative duties. Below every variable was an analysis conducted by the short old man.

Lu Yin finished the entire page, and he inexplicably trembled.

Ming Zhaoshu had been treated like a lab specimen that was being studied, though he himself had not known about it.

What sort of means had the short old man used to observe the emperor? Something like distance did not hold much meaning to such a powerhouse, as the man had been capable of traversing the entire length of Shenwu Continent without taking much time. However, Ming Zhaoshu had comprehended a forcefield, but he had still been observed in such a manner. If the old man had been able to do that to Ming Zhaoshu, then what about Ming Yan?

And what kind of poison was this Regression No. 91? Lu Yin picked up the bottle from the floor and looked at it. Could this be the poison? There was a drop of colorless liquid inside of the vial, and it was very possibly the poison that had been mentioned.

He swept through the underground area with his domain and took care of all of the remaining zombies that were in the other labs. With that done, he caused the entire space to collapse and left.

As he left, Lu Yin saw some rune lines that represented an Explorer rushing towards him.

It was a middle-aged woman, and Lu Yin felt like she looked familiar. He then suddenly recalled that she was one of Ming Zhaoshu's maids.

He suddenly understood. It was no wonder how the short old man had been able to monitor Ming Zhaoshu's every action; the reason was right in front of Lu Yin.

The middle-aged woman arrived above the underground laboratory and entered the passageway that led underground with very practiced motions. However, the moment she entered, she started to back away with a pale face. She then quickly leaped away, clearly wanting to leave.

"Since you're already here, you should just stay." She heard a soft voice call out from behind her. Lu Yin had moved, and he lightly flicked a finger. A gale struck the woman's knees and knocked her to the ground.

The woman was overwhelmed as she turned to see Lu Yin sitting in a tree, who was looking at her with indifferent eyes. "It's you?"

Lu Yin jumped off of the tree and walked over beside the woman. "So you're the one who poisoned Ming Zhaoshu, and you're also the one who shared all the information concerning his condition to this place."

The woman was terrified, and her face turned a deathly shade of white. "I- I didn't want to do it, but that monster poisoned me, and I was going to be devoured by other monsters if I didn't do as he said. Please spare me! Please don't kill me! Don't tell His Majesty, please!"

"Aside from poisoning Ming Zhaoshu and reporting the news there on a regular basis, what other orders were you given?" Lu Yin asked.

The middle-aged female replied in terror, "Nothing else! He had me observe His Majesty, but he didn't want me to do anything else."

Lu Yin held out the bottle that he had just found. "Is this the poison that he had you give the emperor?"

She looked at the bottle, and a deep fear could be seen in her eyes. "Yes, that's the one!"

Lu Yin nodded, and swatted at her and caused her to fall down dead.

The cause behind the poisoning had been found and resolved, but Ming Zhaoshu's poison was still unexplainable. That last page in the stone book had intentionally called it Regression No. 91, and the short old man had noted that he had no method of resolving the poison either, which was why he had given the poison to Ming Zhaoshu. He had wanted to use the information that he gathered from Ming Zhaoshu's poisoning symptoms to create an antidote. At the same time, once Ming Zhaoshu died, Shenzhou Continent would descend into chaos, and battles would break out everywhere, which would have given the old man even more test subjects and blood to experiment with and feed his giant Corpse King with.

The short old man had planned things out well, and he would have been able to kill two birds with one stone. Lu Yin was pleased with himself for finding this person, as otherwise, as soon as Ming Yan inherited the throne, her fate would have been the same as Ming Zhaoshu's.

Now, Lu Yin deeply understood why the entire universe viewed the Neohuman Alliance as their greatest enemy and also why the organization had to be taken care of as soon as anyone from the Neohuman Alliance was discovered. This organization possessed the deepest darkness, and it basically destroyed human nature.