

Super Power

Chapter 1171: Dry Bone

The news about Han Sen going to the fifth floor had spread. As he approached to take the test, though, the guard asked that Han Sen wait a day.

King spirits and super creatures were unable to guard there every day, so the top-dogs upstairs would have to hold a discussion and see who would best supervise the test.

Unfortunately, there was nothing Han Sen could do about that. So, he had no choice but to wait an entire day.

The spirits, creatures, and humans on the fourth floor were curious about what was going on.

Going to the fifth floor was quite the event, as it was a challenge beyond comprehension. What made it so remarkable was that a human was attempting to ascend. Humans were small and not worthy of much recognition in that shelter or anywhere else in the sanctuary, so learning the species of the challenger sparked the interest of everyone and everything there.

“Old Zhao, is Han Sen human?”

“I asked Cheng Hu and yep; he most certainly is!”

“Wow. Do you think humans can actually reach the fifth floor?”

“I don’t know, but Qiu Ping said he was unable to kill him.”

“It would be great if he managed to succeed.”

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In the palace on the fifth floor, three spirits and seven creatures sat before a table in deep discussion.

“Dry Bone, it should be your turn this time.”

“Why me? Why don’t you go?”

“I am afraid I would kill the boy in one hit. It would be a shame to simply terminate someone who has managed to come this far,” Baby Ghost said.

“You are much weaker than me; you actually think I’d be unable to defeat him?”

“What are you talking about? We both know I am far stronger than you.”

“You? Stronger? I’m going to beat the sh*t out of you!”

“Sure. Bring it, you dry, crusty sack of bones!”

“Shut up; both of you!” a female king spirit commanded. Immediately, Dry Bone and Baby Ghost went quiet and remained in their seats.

The seven creatures that were watching the discussion now turned to look at the female spirit. Their expressions were full of serious concern for the matters they were supposed to discuss.

“This should be decided by Mister Immortal, but he’s practicing right now, so we can’t disturb him. Should I make the decision, then?” The king spirit looked into the eyes of each.

The super creatures were fine with her making the decision, and Dry Bone and Baby Ghost said, “Qing Jun? Yes, you should be the one to decide.”

Qing Jun panned the room until her eyes fell on Dry Bone. She told him, “Dry Bone, it is you who should go this time. Do your best and do not relent. Show us the true extent of your strength if you wish to share the Sky Fruit.”

Dry Bone King said, “Okay.”

“Everyone, prepare yourselves. We will go to another Sky Fruit in two days,” Qing Jun said.

The super creatures promptly left, leaving only Dry Bone and Baby Ghost behind.

“Dry Bone, you aren’t going to kill him, are you?” Baby Ghost asked.

Dry Bone answered, “Mister Immortal needs people. If that human is this strong, killing him means I am working against Mister Immortal. Of course I won’t kill him.”

“What about Qing Jun? It sounds like she wants you to kill him,” Ghost Baby said.

Dry Bone said, “It has been twenty years. She is still unable to get over that business with the humans. I won’t adhere to her command. And besides, if the human really is king-class in strength, I wouldn’t be against having him sit on this same table as us.”

“And if he is not as strong as we have been led to believe?” Baby Ghost asked.

Dry Bone laughed until his bones creaked, and then he said, “Then I don’t mind helping the mistress out.”

Han Sen waited in the shelter overnight. Eventually, a king spirit came to see him and bid that he go to the nearest Martial Hall.

Many creatures and spirits had gathered there already. They all looked on Han Sen with grand curiosity, eager to see whether or not a human might actually be able to reach the fifth floor.

A giant skeleton, clad in bone armor, stood inside the arena awaiting his combatant. He was four meters tall and looked frightening. His eyes were like red gemstones that were alive with an evil flame.

Han Sen entered the arena and observed his opponent. It was a skeleton, but not creamy and dusty like the average one. Its bones looked to be composed of jade, and they glowed.

The bones of the skeleton had no gaps in between the joints, and it looked like a fire-forged warrior, straight from the pits of hell.

“You are the human who wants to enter the fifth floor.” Dry Bone examined the human before him, wondering whether or not he had the king-class power he was expecting.

As the red eyes peered at Han Sen, their brightness faded to indicate disappointment. His eyes were able to read Han Sen’s fitness level.

Han Sen had the strongest fitness he had ever seen a human possess, and he was leagues ahead of every other human.

But it still wasn’t in the realm of strength a king-class spirit possessed.

“With a fitness level like that, I doubt he’s of the strength Mister Immortal is looking for. I suppose I’ll just have to do Qing Jun a favor,” Dry Bone King thought to himself.

“Yes,” Han Sen answered.

Dry Bone King wasn’t going to waste any more time on Han Sen than he had to. He clicked his fingers and said, “If you can last half an hour, you pass the test.”

After that, Dry Bone threw a punch towards Han Sen. The shockwaves it unleashed gave the punch the feeling it could sunder a mountain.

Chapter 1172: First Person Who Dies for You

Han Sen used his Blood-Pulse Sutra to open nine gene locks. He lowered his red body and avoided Dry Bone’s incoming punch.

Dry Bone was a strong king spirit, and Han Sen’s fitness wasn’t quite up to the level necessary to reliably defeat the spirit. At the very least, he knew he couldn’t fight him head-on.

Using his phoenix techniques, Han Sen took off airborne. As he evaded Dry Bone’s subsequent attacks, Han Sen threw in a few hits of his own.

Dry Bone was powerful, yes, but his speed and agility weren’t enough to compete with Han Sen and his phoenix techniques. He didn’t relent in his attacks, but each one missed, and that didn’t look likely to change anytime soon.

“I can’t believe humans have come so far and can be that strong.” The surpassers who watched the fight were incredibly excited.

Qiu Ping observed Han Sen intently, and he acknowledged no other human had yet to reach a skill level such as that.

The spirits and creatures were all in shock. Han Sen was a nobody who had come from nowhere. Dry Bone King looked sour, and the flames of his rage were only being fanned with each missed attack. Suddenly, he threw off the chestplate of his armor.

He placed his left hand inside his ribcage, as if to rummage through a pocket. Then, he pulled out a bone.

It looked like crystal, but it was clearly bone.

Han Sen saw it, and it made him hesitate to attack.

Dry Bone King smiled menacingly as he held the heart-shaped bone in his hand. Then, with his other hand, he knocked it with his fist.

Dong!

It was like he was drumming it, and the acoustics it carried were infused with a strange power. Han Sen tried his best to resist it.

But the power quickly accelerated and blasted into his heart as if it had locked on like a sentinel beam. He started to feel as if his heart was going to explode due to the sudden influx of that terrifying and malevolent force.

Han Sen was shocked by the quick turn of events. Dry Bone King was huge, and he had initially looked like a lumbering lug that was purely focused on strength. Han Sen never expected him to be so proficient with sonic powers.

Dong! Dong! Dong!

Dry Bone King was like a Buddha on the battlefield now. He held his wooden fish tight and continued to strike it without pause.

The strange powers violated Han Sen's heart and cascaded into it without reprieve. If Han Sen was an ordinary human, his heart would have been incinerated by now.

If it was an ordinary super creature that was fighting Dry Bone King, their hearts would most likely have been torn in two.

There was only one thing keeping Han Sen resistant to death, in the face of that vile attack. Dry Bone King's sonic powers were up against Han Sen's Heresy Mantra, and Curse of Immortality made Han Sen's heart stronger than all others.

Han Sen was no stranger to having his heart suffer aberrant rhythms and be put under strain. This may have been worse than it ever had been, but Han Sen had the smidgen of extra resistance necessary to withstand the pain.

His heart continued to beat, but each thump was like thunder. Blood began to ooze from his mouth.

“Dry Bone King is going all the way. He’s quite the menace, and opponents with weak hearts really don’t stand a chance against him.” Baby Ghost thought Han Sen was a dead man, and it’d only be a matter of time before he fell.

The audience was in disarray. Dry Bone King’s drumming had affected those in the seats, and sacred-blood creatures and royal spirits began to spill blood of their own. They piled out of the arena in droves to avoid dying.

“King spirits really are in a league of their own. There is no hope for humans to compete against them.”

The humans who had fled the arena were all in shock, and they could barely comprehend what they had just witnessed.

“It’s a shame. Han Sen most certainly has the power to compete, and perhaps even slay a super creature, but Dry Bone King has an unfair and wretched power.” Everyone believed Han Sen was extremely unlucky, having to face Dry Bone King of all foes.

Qiu Ping had left the hall as well. He could no longer see what was going on, but he could still hear the solemn, heart-killing rhythm in the distance.

The hearts of the audience that had fled continued to twitch and beat erratically, even as they stood outside the Martial Hall with the doors shut.

“I hope he doesn’t die for me and Yuchen.” Qiu Ping was worried.

“You don’t want him to die?” A female voice sounded behind him.

Qiu Ping’s face changed as a female spirit suddenly approached.

“I just think it is a shame for him to die this way. He could do a lot in the service of Mister Immortal,” Qiu Ping said, with a chilling voice.

The spirit smiled, telling him, “My patience has its limits. If you don’t kill Zhang Yuchen, he will be the first person who dies on your behalf. His blood will be on your hands. And when I’m through with the brat in there, I’ll move on and kill another human. On the account you are unwilling to kill Zhang Yuchen, I will mercilessly slay each and every human in this shelter. One life is all it takes, Qiu Ping. One life can stop the coming slaughter. Do it for the greater good.”

Qiu Ping was mortified, but it pained him to know she would do what she had just told him. Her logic was bizarre, but it was not something he could contend with.

He had delayed this for twenty years, but even he could tell her patience was running far too thin.

Men like Qiu Ping could not make a decision where lives hung in the balance, and at least one had to be sacrificed. If he was unable to kill his best friend, he’d be doing so at the cost of countless more.

“Why me?” Twenty years of contempt had built up inside Qiu Ping’s heart.

“I don’t know. You fit the bill? It doesn’t really matter. Having reasons to do anything is so petty, don’t you think?” The woman looked at him, almost uncaring.

Qiu Ping was so angry, he drew his sword and attempted to attack her.

The skill that had frightened Han Sen had no effect against that callous spirit. She simply deflected it with the greatest of ease.

Qiu Ping then pulled out a dagger and tried to stab himself.

If he did not have what it took to kill another, then the only other solution was to end himself.

The woman did not try to prevent him, but when the dagger touched his skin, it stopped.

She then grabbed him and teleported him back to the battleground. She threw him into the audience seats and forced him to watch Han Sen fail and fall. She told him, “This is the first person who will die, all because you are weak.”

Chapter 1173: The Heart Beaten Ten Times

Dry Bone King continued to drum the heartbone incessantly. Each sonic-boom made Han Sen cough more blood.

Each beat was stronger than the last, increasing the amount of pain and strain Han Sen’s heart had to withstand. Dry Bone was going to do this ten times.

After the wooden fish’s tenth strike, the damage each subsequent strike made would not increase, but Dry Bone King could still go on and on. And so far, it had been enough to suppress anything Han Sen thought to do.

By now, he had only struck the wooden fish seven times. There was more pain yet to come for Han Sen, and on the seventh strike, he fell to the ground in a puddle of his own blood. His heart did not yield yet, though.

Dry Bone King could read the fitness level of a person and evaluate what would be required to kill them. He had believed the sixth strike would be enough to kill Han Sen, yet there he was, unbent, unbowed, unbroken.

Much to his surprise, Han Sen had survived the seventh beat.

This was not to say Dry Bone King was very concerned over the matter. He knew he’d kill Han Sen sooner or later, and that was that. After the seventh boom, the eighth followed swiftly after. It cracked a thunderbolt directly upon Han Sen’s heart, or so it felt.

Dong!

Han Sen's heart was thumping, and it felt like it was ready to leap through his ribcage and jump out of his chest. A pain like electricity surged through his body, dealing immense pain to every limb and every organ within him.

Han Sen's skin began to crack. The veins were inflamed, making him look red like some monstrosity that had been stitched together.

"Watch his face. Not that you'll have to remember it for too long; I am sure it is to be replaced by even sorer sights in the near future," the woman said to Qiu Ping.

If Qiu Ping had the necessary power, he'd have killed the devil in his ear. But she wouldn't even allow him to close his eyes, and so he was forced to watch Han Sen writhe in torture and torment.

Gritting his teeth might have once been an outlet for anger, but it didn't help this time. He felt hopeless; he was to blame for Han Sen lying on the ground in a pool of his own blood.

"Let him go and I will kill Zhang Yuchen!" Qiu Ping trembled as he muttered those ghastly words he never thought he'd hear himself speak.

He knew he had no choice in the matter. The woman was practically demanding it, and it'd be folly of him to resist much longer. It'd only cause more pain, particularly to those who were not deserving of an ill fate. He couldn't bear the thought of others dying in such cruel ways on his account.

But the woman then said, "You need to know who is in command here, you witless worm! That's me; you don't strike deals with ME! He could have lived, but that ship has sailed. He will die because you are weak. He will die because you have always been weak. You are pathetic. You are the one who has gotten him killed! How could you allow this?!"

The woman was colder than the devil, and her mind was more twisted than the flames of hell itself.

Han Sen sat up on the battleground. The pain had yet to ease, but despite the frantic torment his heart was enduring, his mind was as crystal clear as ever.

The first few attacks from Dry Bone King had not been all that effective, but he noticed something interesting as the power ramped up. Han Sen hadn't fought back because he had been mulling this discovery.

Heresy Mantra came from the Evil Sutra. The Evil Sutra was not too different from the Dongxuan Sutra and the Frost Sutra. Because the Evil Sutra was missing, the techniques themselves had been lost.

Heresy Mantra was another recreation that was simply more complete.

Han Sen had maxed out all he could with the Heresy Mantra, as Curse of Immortality was supposed to be the final tier of the skill.

But when witnessing the attacks dealt through the heartbone, Han Sen knew he could continue his practice of it.

The heartbone attacks attempted to destroy one's heart. For Han Sen, it made his heart squirm and thump faster than when he was in the midst of learning Curse of Immortality, and this told Han Sen there had to be a way to take Heresy Mantra farther.

As Han Sen's heart pounded like a thousand drums, he focused his mind, trying to learn what Dry Bone King was doing. He wanted to be able to replicate it for himself, the next time he was given the free time to practice.

It was impossible to get the Evil Sutra back, but Han Sen could at least keep going with Heresy Mantra. He was going to unlock the fifth curse and make it stronger, no matter the cost.

Dong!

When the ninth drum beat sounded, Han Sen felt as if his heart was on the precipice of being torn asunder.

But his heart was like a balloon. The fierce powers emitted by the heartbone inflated it, but it was all quickly released in the break between each beat. Cracks and seams began to form with each beat, but they did not matter; his Heresy Mantra ensured that his heart healed immediately and was ready for what came next.

The agony made Han Sen want to scream in joy, learning his heart was becoming better than what was required for Curse of Immortality. And so, he continued trying to record what Dry Bone King was doing to him. It might very well be the key to opening the fifth curse.

Han Sen's enjoyment of the heartbone was starting to become apparent, and it made Dry Bone King frown.

Han Sen had withstood nine attacks so far, and Dry Bone King was starting to have second thoughts. His judgment of the human's power might have been incorrect, he thought.

His red eyes stared at Han Sen once more. The young man's fitness really was not up there with king-class spirits, though. But it was not as if he could turn back now. Dry Bone King had to finish what he had started and push on with the tenth heartbone drum.

"I don't believe you have what it takes to withstand the tenth attack." Then, Dry Bone King amassed a frightening power in his left hand. He unleashed it on the wooden fish.

Dong!

It wasn't only Han Sen's heart that had to suffer, then. The entire battleground quaked and was thrown into disarray. The entire stadium was wrecked, as a plume of haze and dust began to clog the atmosphere and stifle vision.

Qiu Ping's eyes possessed a fury like no other as he stared across the battleground. Beside him, the woman just laughed callously.

But when the dust settled, Han Sen was sitting still. He looked undamaged.

He wiped the blood he had oozed and stood up without trouble.