

WAR SOVEREIGN 201

Chapter 201: Prior To Departure

Within the Crimson Sky Kingdom, the Divine Might Marquis, Grand Cavalry General Nie Yuan, was undoubtedly the representative of the generals, whereas on the side of the Masterminds, it was led by the Prime Minister, Gu You Ting.

Gu You Ting had an exalted status within the Crimson Sky Kingdom. To a certain degree, he could be considered the spokesman of the Emperor.

Ordinarily, all the routine affairs within the Crimson Sky Kingdom would pass through his hands. Moreover, he himself was a Half-step Void Stage powerhouse!

"He's the son of Prime Minister Gu You Ting?" Duan Ling Tian's frowned. He was slightly bewildered as he gazed upon Gu Xuan who walked over in full fury.

Duan Ling Tian could be certain that today was absolutely the first time he'd seen Gu Xuan!

However, it seemed that this Gu Xuan harbored extreme hostility towards him, and this caused him to be puzzled.

Presently, it had been four months since Duan Ling Tian arrived at the Imperial City...So he was quite well versed in some of the matters within the Imperial City, and thus had heard of Prime Minister Gu You Ting.

Although Gu You Ting didn't originate from a great clan, because of the trust of the Crimson Sky Kingdom's Emperor, his Prime Minister's Estate was well-renowned within the Imperial City.

Even members of the Imperial City's three great clans didn't dare lightly offend the Prime Minister's Estate, as everyone knew that the Supreme Emperor of the Crimson Sky Kingdom stood behind Prime Minister Gu!

In next to no time, Duan Ling Tian watched as Gu Xuan arrived before him.

"Duan Ling Tian's brows lightly knitted as he looked at Gu Xuan and indifferently asked, Something the matter?"

"Duan Ling Tian, I'm warning you, stay away from Bi Yao!" Gu Xuan's face was gloomy, and his eyes emitted a somber sheen as he stared at Duan Ling Tian.

At this moment, he seemed to have transformed into a highly toxic Colubridae Snake! [1]

Duan Ling Tian came to a sudden understanding when he heard what Gu Xuan said, and now he finally knew the reason why Gu Xuan had adopted a hostile attitude towards him...So it was because of Princess Bi Yao!

On the way over here, he'd heard many discussions about himself and Princess Bi Yao, and Duan Ling Tian paid no attention to those guesses that were widely off the mark and directly ignored them.

As far as he was concerned, an innocent man was still innocent even if he didn't proclaim it, and thus he didn't need to give any further explanation.

Duan Ling Tian looked at Gu Xuan calmly as he indifferently asked, "Bi Yao? You're talking about Princess Bi Yao, right?"

"Exactly!" Gu Xuan's gaze flickered and his voice was filled with a condescending tone. "Did you hear what I told you earlier?"

Duan Ling Tian's face sank. Not to mention there was nothing between him and Princess Bi Yao, but even if there was, it seemingly didn't have anything to do with this Gu Xuan, right?

Duan Ling Tian snickered at Gu Xuan's lofty appearance. There seemed to be a trace of rage that arose within his heart.

"So what if I heard, so what if I didn't?" Duan Ling Tian asked, in a calm voice.

"Duan Ling Tian, I know your natural talent in the Martial Dao is great, and you're even a direct descendant disciple that's well protected by the Duan Clan...But in my eyes, you're nothing, do you understand?" Gu Xuan's voice turned incomparably gloomy.

In Gu Xuan's eyes, only members of the Imperial Family and the Divine Might Marquis Estate were capable of being seen as equals by him within the entire Imperial City and even the entire Crimson Sky Kingdom.

As for those three great clans or whatever, they were not worth mentioning in his opinion!

His father was the Prime Minister, the spokesman of the Emperor of the Crimson Sky Kingdom, an existence that was below one and above all!

"Oh?" Duan Ling Tian abruptly burst out laughing. "I'm truly sorry, but in my eyes, you're nothing as well...." As soon as he finished speaking, Duan Ling Tian ignored Gu Xuan's gloomy expression and called Xiao Yu and Xiao Xun before walking out of Paladin Academy in large strides.

"This son of Prime Minister Gu is really too arrogant." Xiao Yu frowned. He obviously detested the way Gu Xuan treated Duan Ling Tian.

Xiao Xun shook his head as he slowly said, "It isn't strange. He has a father with power that is only below the Emperor after all...Moreover, this Gu Xuan's natural talent is pretty good, and he even has the chance to inherit the Prime Minister's position."

Duan Ling Tian didn't say anything, because to him, Gu Xuan was just a profligate son of a person with high status. And he was no different to Su Tong and Xue Lang, the people he'd crippled.

It was fine as long as Gu Xuan didn't go too far and didn't provoke him, but if he were to go too far, then Duan Ling Tian wouldn't mind giving him something to remember!

That night, Duan Ling Tian didn't cultivate, nor did he inscribe inscriptions.

He finally realized a dream he'd always had, and that was to sleep together with both of the two little girls in his house and enjoy the pleasures of their companionship....

The two girls seemed to have realized that Duan Ling Tian was leaving tomorrow and would be gone for a few months, thus they allowed Duan Ling Tian to perpetrate whatever evils he pleased.

For the entire night, Duan Ling Tian himself didn't know how many times he took them, and only when he was extremely exhausted did he finally hug the two little girls and fall into a deep slumber.

The next day, the two little girls walked in a slightly unusual manner after they got off the bed.

A trace of an apologetic appearance appeared on Duan Ling Tian's face, as last night was really too crazy!

When they were eating, besides Duan Ling Tian, who had a thick face and could ignore it, the two little girls both lowered their heads with faces full of embarrassment when faced with Li Rou's burning, dubious gaze.

Duan Ling Tian took the two little pythons from inside his sleeve, took them out, and lightly touched their small heads as he said, in all seriousness, "Little Black, Little White, stay at home obediently and protect Ke Er, Little Fei, and my mother. Do you understand?"

"Hiss hiss~" The two little pythons were able to almost roughly understand what Duan Ling Tian said, and they flicked their tongues as they nodded.

Duan Ling Tian could see a trace of unwillingness within the intelligent eyes of the two little pythons; they already started to have human feelings.

At the house's gate, Duan Ling Tian looked at his mother, who was helping him straighten out his clothes, and said, with a light smile, "Mom, I'm leaving."

"Be safe." Li Rou said lightly, and a trace of worry could be seen mixed within her brows. Like the old saying, a mother will always worry when her child goes on a journey, a mother has deep and sincere love for her children.

"Don't worry." Duan Ling Tian nodded before smiling at the two little girls beside Li Rou. "Take good care of my mom while I'm away, I'll be back soon."

Ke Er and Li Fei both nodded, and shimmers flashed within their beautiful eyes. Their eyes were filled with tears that were about to drop.

Duan Ling Tian looked at Xiong Quan and Jing Ru, who were standing at the side, as he said, "Xiong Quan, Jing Ru, I'll be relying on you two to take care of my home while I'm away."

"Don't worry, Young Master." They both hurriedly nodded, and a trace of unwillingness was mixed within Jing Ru's eyes.

She'd always been grateful towards this Young Master who had unreserved trust towards her in these past few months, and it was precisely because of this Young Master's care that her family could have a life that lacked neither food nor clothing.

"Alright, all of you go home." Duan Ling Tian took a deep breath before turning and leaving, as he was truly worried that he would be unwilling to leave if he were to look at them for a second longer.

"Zhang Qian, Zhao Gang." After leaving his house, Duan Ling Tian suddenly spoke.

Whoosh! Whoosh!

Zhang Qian and Zhao Gang instantly appeared beside Duan Ling Tian.

"Are you two following me there, or returning to the Divine Might Marquis Estate?" Duan Ling Tian asked.

"Young Master, we're following you." Zhang Qian and Zhao Gang spoke at the exact same time.

"Then you two continue concealing yourselves...When we've arrived at the battlefield, I'll go a step further in teaching you two techniques of tracking, concealment, and assassination." Duan Ling Tian's brows knitted as he slowly said, "If I don't give the order, you two are not allowed to appear, understand?"

"Yes." Zhang Qian and Zhao Gang hurriedly replied, and their eyes revealed fiery gazes, as they were filled with infinite yearning towards the many techniques that Duan Ling Tian planned to teach them.

Before long, Duan Ling Tian walked into Paladin Academy. There were already many people that had gathered on the Martial Arts Practice Grounds. Of course, most of them were members of the Star General Department.

"Duan Ling Tian!" Duan Ling Tian had only just taken two steps when he noticed Xiao Xun waving his hand at Duan Ling Tian from afar, and Duan Ling Tian lightly smiled before walking over.

"Eh, you two didn't bring a change of clothes?" Duan Ling Tian had a bewildered expression when he saw both Xiao Yu and Xiao Xun empty-handed.

He'd noticed that practically all of the students were carrying bags of different sizes...Xiao Xun and Xiao Yu, however, seemed to stand out like giants amongst dwarves.

"Look." Xiao Xun raised his hand and revealed the simple ring that he was wearing. "I got a Spatial Ring from my grandfather yesterday."

"All of my things are in Xiao Xun's Spatial Ring," Xiao Yu said, with a smile.

"Duan Ling Tian, that's a Spatial Ring on your hand, right?" Xiao Xun glanced deeply at Duan Ling Tian, and his gaze subsequently descended onto Duan Ling Tian's hand.

Duan Ling Tian nodded.

"Duan Ling Tian, looks like the Duan Clan really holds you in high regard; they even gave such a valuable thing like a Spatial Ring to you." Xiao Yu naturally thought that Duan Ling Tian's Spatial Ring was given to him by the Duan Clan, and he had a face full of envy.

Even he, the grandson of Aurora City's Xiao Clan's Supreme Elder, didn't have a Spatial Ring on hand. Even within the entire Aurora City Xiao Clan, only the Patriarch and Supreme Elder possessed Spatial Rings.

Duan Ling Tian lightly smiled but didn't give any explanation.

"Duan Ling Tian!" Right at this moment, a loud voice sounded from afar, and a slightly robust young man around the age of 25 was slowly walking over to Duan Ling Tian with a smile on his face.

"You are?" Duan Ling Tian had a questioning expression as he looked at the person, as he could feel that the young man carried no hostility when he approached.

"I'm Duan Zhu, a branch disciple of the Duan Clan, and a grade 6 Star General Department student...Duan Ling Tian, this is something the Patriarch asked me to pass to you." The robust young man, who was holding his luggage on his shoulders, extended his hand to pass a simple ring to Duan Ling Tian.

It was a Spatial Ring!

Under Xiao Yu and Xiao Xun's astonished gazes, Duan Ling Tian extended his hand to receive it before nodding with a smile to Duan Zhu. "Thanks."

"Don't mention it." After passing the Spatial Ring to Duan Ling Tian, Duan Zhu laughed before turning and leaving.

After Duan Ling Tian established ownership of the Spatial Ring, he noticed that besides a few million silver, there was nothing else within the Spatial Ring.

This Spatial Ring only contained a cubic meter worth of space, and it was a lowest grade Spatial Ring. It probably was something Patriarch Duan Ru Huo had passed to him to keep his luggage in.

"Duan Ling Tian, could it be that the Spatial Ring on your hand isn't from the Duan Clan?" Xiao Yu looked at Duan Ling Tian with an astounded expression.

"It was given to me by the Grand Elder. I never expected the Patriarch to send me another...I've taken the money inside, so you can use this Spatial Ring." Duan Ling Tian casually found an excuse, and at the same time withdrew the money within the Spatial Ring before removing the ownership of the Spatial Ring and passing it to Xiao Yu.

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However, Xiao Yu didn't move to receive the Spatial Ring Duan Ling Tian passed to him. He shook his head and said, "Duan Ling Tian, this is too valuable, I can't take it. Keep it yourself, or keep it for Li Fei."

Duan Ling Tian shook his head and stretched out his hand to directly shove the Spatial Ring into Xiao Yu's hand as he angrily said, "If I give it to you, then take it. When did you become so fussy?"

Xiao Yu's eyes flickered and a trace of gratitude flashed within. He didn't refuse it because if he were to refuse it now, then it would seem slightly fake.

"Thank you." Xiao Yu smiled at Duan Ling Tian, and a trace of warmth arose within his heart.

A Spatial Ring was something only a grade seven weapons craftsmen could refine.

Although it wasn't a spirit weapon, it was an extremely rare item, and merely one Spatial Ring was worth at least a few million silver. Moreover, there was a market for it but no stock.

"The Vice Dean is here!" Suddenly, someone's voice sounded out. The entire Martial Arts Practice Grounds instantly went silent, as the gazes of everyone present descended on the grey figure that was walking slowly over.

It was a grey-clothed old man who revealed a trace of awe from between his brows. He walked over in large strides with an imposing manner that pierced through the sky. It was precisely the Vice Dean of Paladin Academy, Zhan Xiong.

After Zhan Xiong arrived, he said, in a loud voice, "Star General Department students, stand to the right. Star Mastermind Department students, stand to the left."

As soon as Zhan Xiong finished speaking, the stream of people on the Martial Arts Practice Grounds parted into two.

There were exactly 300 people from the Star General Department, and they were gathered together into a dense crowd.

The Star Mastermind Department, on the other hand, only had a scarce 12 people.

Duan Ling Tian, Xiao Yu, and Xiao Xun's group of 3 grade 1 students occupied a quarter of the total.

Duan Ling Tian noticed that the Prime Minister's son, Gu Xuan, was amongst the group of Star Mastermind Department students as well, and there were two more people gathered beside him.

Duan Ling Tian vaguely remembered these 2 people, as they were beside Gu Xuan yesterday.

Meanwhile, Gu Xuan noticed Duan Ling Tian's group of three as well, and his face sank.

"Vice Dean!" Gu Xuan abruptly spoke with a high voice and suppressed most of the scattered voices within the Martial Arts Practice Grounds.

"Hmm?" Zhan Xiong looked at Gu Xuan when he heard his voice. He naturally knew Gu Xuan, the son of the Prime Minister. "Gu Xuan, do you have something to say?"

"Vice Dean, according to my knowledge and according to the rules of our Paladin Academy, the lowest threshold for entering the battlefield for our Paladin Academy students is grade 2 for the Star General Department and grade 4 for the Star Mastermind Department...These three people are only grade 1 students of the Star Mastermind Department, and I suspect they want to take advantage of the opportunity to sneak into our midst to head to the northwest border's battlefield." Gu Xuan pointed at Duan Ling Tian's group of three as he spoke with a high voice, and his eyes revealed a trace of disdain.

For a moment, the gazes of all the students present descended onto Duan Ling Tian's group of three.

"Isn't that Duan Ling Tian?"

"And the two people beside him seem to be grade 1 Star Mastermind Department students as well."

"Could it be that they're really planning to take advantage of the opportunity to sneak into our midst to head to the northwest border's battlefield?"

"Humph! As long as they aren't people on the roster, then it's practically impossible to take advantage of the opportunity to sneak into our midst!"

...

Many students pointed at Duan Ling Tian's group of three as they discussed amongst each other.

Gu Xuan glanced at Duan Ling Tian with a complacent expression, and the corners of his mouth curled into a cold smile. It was as if he'd already seen the scene of the Vice Dean driving Duan Ling Tian's group of three out.

"This Gu Xuan is really disgusting like a fly." Xiao Xun's face sank, and his eyes flashed with a trace of fierceness.

"Humph!" Duan Ling Tian's gaze went cold. He took a step forward and looked at Gu Xuan.

Duan Ling Tian spoke out before Zhan Xiong could speak, with a high voice that shot into the sky, "Gu Xuan, you repeatedly speak of some rules, but why have I never heard of a rule that states Paladin Academy's grade 1 Star Mastermind Department students can't enter the battlefield?"

"Humph!" Gu Xuan met gazes with Duan Ling Tian when he heard what Duan Ling Tian said, and he had a mocking expression. "Although there aren't any explicit rules, according to the Paladin Academy's customary practices in the past, it's always been like this...I'm certain that the three of you are surely trying to take advantage of the opportunity to slip by."

"Customary practices?" Traces of coldness appeared within Duan Ling Tian's eyes as he sneered. "Even you said they are customary practices. Could it be that customary practices can't be broken? You've repeatedly said that we're trying to take advantage of the opportunity. I'm really curious, what are you basing that assumption on? Just because we're grade 1 students and you think we're inferior to you? And you feel we don't have to qualifications to appear here?"

"But of course, grade 1 students, especially Star Mastermind Department students, how much could you know about the Dao of a mastermind? Even if people like you all were to enter the battlefield, you'd only be a burden." Gu Xuan sneered, and his speech was filled with disdain towards Duan Ling Tian's group of three.

"Enough!" Right at this moment, Zhan Xiong interrupted them. "Gu Xuan, Duan Ling Tian's group of three are indeed on the roster. You don't have to question this...Duan Ling Tian was highly recommended by teacher Sima, and as for Xiao Yu and Xiao Xun, they were personally named and added into the roster by the Junior Marquis of the Divine Might Marquis Estate, who is also the Commander of the reinforcement army, General Nie Fen."

"Humph! So they're just three people who pulled some strings to get in." Gu Xuan looked at Duan Ling Tian's group of three with a face full of a mocking and disdainful expression when he heard Zhan Xiong's explanation.

Xiao Xun's and Xiao Yu's faces sank as they stared angrily at Gu Xuan.

Duan Ling Tian looked at Gu Xuan with a cold smile on the corners of his mouth, and his mouth slowly spat out a word. "Idiot!"

"What did you say?!" Gu Xuan's face went grim. This Duan Ling Tian actually called him an idiot?

As the son of the Crimson Sky Kingdom's Prime Minister, it was still the first time he was ever humiliated by someone like this within his entire life!

Instantly, his chest was completely filled with rage!

Duan Ling Tian turned his head and paid no further attention to Gu Xuan, who was fuming with rage, and left him to burn with fury by himself over there.

"Duan Ling Tian!" Gu Xuan's face sank, and his eyes stared at Duan Ling Tian while flickering with a venomous sheen as he swore in his heart, "Just you wait, I'll make you die sooner or later!"

Although he wished for nothing more than to attack and kill Duan Ling Tian now, he still had some worries...

Firstly, the Vice Dean was present, and if he were to attack, he'd surely end up in a passive position.

Secondly, if Duan Ling Tian were to use that strange inscription on him, he would be utterly defenseless.

After all, even Xue Lang, the son of City Guard Army Commander Xue Lu, an existence at the second level of the Origin Core Stage, had his entire cultivation destroyed by this Duan Ling Tian's inscription.

He had fear within his heart towards Duan Ling Tian's inscription since the beginning, so if he didn't have complete certainty, he wouldn't make a move lightly.

As the son of the Prime Minister, he naturally wasn't a simple-minded and brawny idiot, so although he truly hated Duan Ling Tian in his heart, he wouldn't rashly make a move.

"This Gu Xuan really can endure." Duan Ling Tian's gaze focused. He was slightly surprised that Gu Xuan didn't make a move after so long.

As far as he was concerned, this Gu Xuan was much more dangerous than Su Ton and Xue Lang...As this was a person that knew how to bear patiently.

These sort of people were extremely terrifying, as they were ordinarily skilled in concealing themselves within the shadows and waiting for the right moment to take action.

"Alright, all of you head to the gates. General Nie Fen has already ordered people to prepare good horses for you all, and they're waiting for you all there." Before long, the vast formation of 312 Paladin Academy Students walked out of Paladin Academy under the lead of Vice Dean Zhan Xiong.

Outside the gate, 300 over soldiers in armor sat on their horses, and within each of their hands, they led on another horse....

These extra horses were obviously prepared for the group of students from the Paladin Academy.

"Vice Dean Zhan." A burly man with a curly beard who was wearing armor spurred his horse forward to arrive before Zhan Xiong, and he nodded to him.

Duan Ling Tian looked at the curly bearded man and his brows slightly jerked, as he noticed that this curly bearded man was an existence at the Nascent Soul Stage and had great strength.

"Vice General Jiao, these are the students on the roster," Zhan Xiong slowly said in reply.

"Sorry for troubling you Vice Dean Zhan." The curly bearded man nodded, then he opened his mouth and howled, "Students of Paladin Academy, get on your horses!"

Instantly, all the 312 Paladin Academy students, including Duan Ling Tian, jumped onto their horses.

Precisely 312 horses.

"Vice Dean Zhan, farewell!" The curly bearded man waved his hand at Zhan Xiong before spurring the steed under him to dash off first. "Let's go!"

For a while, Duan Ling Tian and the others were mixed within the armored soldiers midst as they followed behind the curly bearded man to leave the Imperial City in a formidable array.

On the way, they created a great stir within the city, and the people on the streets moved aside and saluted the group of reinforcement troops with their gazes.

"These are the reinforcement troops that Paladin Academy is sending to the northwest border's battlefield?"

"As expected of Paladin Academy students, they all are in high spirits with extraordinary bearings."

"Eh, there's actually a youth... wearing violet clothes. Could he be the genius martial artist Duan Ling Tian whose name's been spread and discussed animatedly lately?"

"He probably is! Besides him, the Paladin Academy probably doesn't have such a young student."

...

Before long, many gazes descended onto Duan Ling Tian and they exclaimed in surprise.

Duan Ling Tian became the center of attention amongst their group of people.

"Humph!" Gu Xuan's expression was extremely unsightly when he noticed that Duan Ling Tian was so well received, and his gaze went even gloomier.

Fifth Prince's estate.

Within a pergola, a young man with extraordinary bearings was sitting face to face with a middle-aged general who wore light armor.

The young man's gaze focused as he slowly said, "That Duan Ling Tian should have already departed at this time."

"Humph! This time I'll make him not return!" The middle-aged general's gaze focused and flickered with a bloody-thirsty killing intent.

"Commander Xue, don't speak too early...Don't forget that Duan Ling Tian might have an offensive inscription that can deal with Origin Core martial artists in his possession. According to my knowledge, even Su Tong, the son of the Su Clan's Grand Elder, had his Dantian crippled by Duan Ling Tian's offensive inscription." Slight fear appeared on the young man's face.

"Don't worry, Fifth Prince, a Nascent Soul martial artist will be making a move this time, and he'll surely be able to succeed!" The middle-aged general was precisely City Guard Army Commander, Xue Lu.

Since he found out that Duan Ling Tian would be joining the reinforcement troops to head to the northwest border's battlefield, a mad plan had arisen within his heart, and that was to ask someone to kill Duan Ling Tian on the way!

Chapter 203: Crisis

Outside the Imperial City outer city, on a vast, empty space, the group of armored soldiers were like a dark cloud that enveloped the city as they gathered together with an imposing manner that pierced through the sky.

"These are the reinforcement troops? Looks to be only around 10,000 people...Seems a bit little, right?" Xiao Yu gazed at the neatly aligned group of soldiers that stood in the distance as he frowned.

Duan Ling Tian spurred his horse to arrive beside Xiao Yu as he said, with a light smile, "Soldiers are valued for their quality rather than their numbers."

He was able to discern that these soldiers were completely different from ordinary soldiers, as every one of them emitted a valiant aura. Moreover, their cultivation levels were obviously not low.

Xiao Xun's gaze focused as he slowly said, "Xiao Yu, you better not look down on this 10,000 man army, because even if they were surrounded and attacked by an army of a few hundred thousand ordinary soldiers, they would still easily charge out of the encirclement!"

"Could it that this is the Crimson Wyrms Army under the command of the Divine Might Marquis, Grand General Nie Yuan?" Xiao Yu looked at the group of soldiers beside him that brought them out of the city, and only now did he notice that a crimson wyrm pattern was inscribed on the armors of all these soldiers.

This type of armor was precisely the symbol of the Crimson Wyrms Army!

"You only just noticed?" Duan Ling Tian shook his head and smiled, as he'd noticed this long ago.

The Crimson Wyrms Army, one of the three elite armies under the command of the Divine Might Marquis, Cavalry Grand General Nie Yuan. And every one of these three elite armies only had 10,000 soldiers.

Among these 10,000 soldiers, they were normally all martial artists above the seventh level of the Core Formation Stage. Some of the Decurions and Centurions amongst them were even existences at the Origin Core Stage...As for the Captains, they were all existences at the Nascent Soul Stage!

In next to no time, the group of Paladin Academy students, including Duan Ling Tian, gathered with the other soldiers of the Crimson Wyrms Army.

Right at this moment, a tall, young man wearing silver light armor spurred his horse forward.

His cold gaze swept past the group of Paladin Academy students as he spoke with a tranquil voice. "Greetings. I'm the commander of the reinforcement army that will be heading to the northwest border's battlefield this time. I'm Nie Fen!"

Nie Fen!

The son of the Divine Might Marquis!

An existence that was like one who was favored by the god.

The gazes of most of the Paladin Academy students shone when they heard Nie Fen introduce himself.

"He's Nie Fen?"

"As expected of the Divine Might Marquis' son, such extraordinary bearing. Allegedly, this Nie Fen only recently graduated from our Paladin Academy a few months ago, and he was already a fifth level Origin Core martial artist when he graduated."

"A 26-year-old fifth level Origin Core martial artist... Such natural talent. I'm afraid that within the younger generation of the Crimson Sky Kingdom, only Duan Ling Tian and Xu Qing can surpass him."

"This time both Duan Ling Tian and Xu Qing have joined the reinforcement troops, and thus the three great geniuses of the Crimson Sky Kingdom's younger generation are gathered together here!"

...

Some of the Paladin Academy students whispered in discussion.

Duan Ling Tian's brows knitted. Xu Qing came as well?

After glancing at the surrounding people, he found Xu Qing within the crowd of people. Currently, Xu Qing didn't have his former edge, but instead had a trace of being reserved. He seemed to have changed quite a bit.

"Let me warn you all beforehand! Although you're all Paladin Academy students, from this moment onwards, you're considered to have joined my Crimson Wyrms Army, so you must obey military orders. If anyone disobeys military orders, then they will be dealt with by military discipline! Now, someone will give each of you Crimson Wyrms Army armor. Put it on quickly." Nie Fen's high voice continued to echo out, and he spurred his horse to leave once he finished speaking.

Beside Nie Fen was an old man with a pair of narrow eyes. He wore casual clothing and sat atop a horse as well. He followed Nie Fen wherever he went as if he was Nie Fen's shadow.

No one noticed that at the exact instant the Nie Fen turned around, Nie Fen's gaze seemed to pierce through the layers of obstructions and descend upon a violet-clothed figure within the group of Paladin Academy students.

Noticing Nie Fen's gaze, Duan Ling Tian lightly nodded to him.

In next to no time, Duan Ling Tian, Xiao Yu, and Xiao Xun had changed into the Crimson Wyrms Army's armor.

The armor looked cumbersome, but in actuality it was light and handy, and once worn it didn't affect the wearer's movements in any way. Moreover, it could still act as a defense to a certain degree.

"You two look just like real soldiers after putting the armor." Duan Ling Tian looked at Xiao Yu and Xiao Xun and lightly smiled, as after the two of them put on the Crimson Wyrms Army's armor, they really looked exactly like soldiers of the army.

"Aren't you the same?" Xiao Xun and Xiao Yu looked over at Duan Ling Tian.

The current Duan Ling Tian had sword-shaped eyebrows that slanted upwards, a handsome face that revealed a trace of coolness, and after putting a fitting suit of armor, his entire person seemed majestic and had an extraordinary bearing.

Duan Ling Tian's gaze focused, and a heartfelt smile appeared on the corners of his mouth.

Even though he'd experienced two lifetimes and had seen many grand scenes in his previous lifetime, he couldn't help but feel excited in his heart right now.

A gale has risen and is sweeping the clouds across the sky, and the soldier sets out on his journey of no return!

"Set out!" Right at this moment, Nie Fen, who was the Crimson Wyrms Army's commander, abruptly ordered, and his loud voice was like a clap of thunder that entered everyone's ears.

Subsequently, the army that was formed from the gathering of over 10,000 people rode their steeds as they dashed out in a thunderous charge! Everywhere they passed, the earth quaked and the hills swayed.

They set out early in the morning and stopped for some time to rest at noon before continuing on their journey. Only when the sun set in the west did the Crimson Wyrms Army stop under the orders of the commander Nie Fen and made camp within the desolate wilderness to pass the night.

Under the illumination of the campfires, tents rose up one after the other and formed a dense mass of tents.

Duan Ling Tian, Xiao Yu, and Xiao Xun had currently joined forces to construct a small tent, and this would be the place they stayed in tonight.

"Hmm?" Suddenly, Duan Ling Tian frowned, as his sensitive Spiritual Force told him that there was a gaze that was occasionally descending onto his figure.

When he glanced over, what entered his eyes was a group of Crimson Wyrms Army soldiers, and he was utterly incapable of knowing who exactly was looking at him.

"This gaze seemed to have once descended on me at the moment I changed into the Crimson Wyrms Army armor...Who the heck is it?" Duan Ling Tian was puzzled in her heart.

He could be sure that the owner of this gaze wasn't Nie Fen, and it wasn't a Paladin Academy student either.

Meanwhile, the tent's construction was completed, and Duan Ling Tian didn't think about it any longer, as he sat around the campfire before their tent with Xiao Yu and Xiao Xun.

Presently, the group of Crimson Wyrms Army soldiers and some of the Paladin Academy students had already withdrawn some dried rations and were chewing on them.

Xiao Xun took out some dry rations as well and shared some with Xiao Yu before passing some over to Duan Ling Tian.

"Eating this is so not nourishing." Duan Ling Tian didn't receive the dry rations. He had a face full of dislike before raising his hand and withdrawing a large, square block of ice....

Under Xiao Xun and Xiao Yu's bewildered gazes, Duan Ling Tian placed the ice beside the campfire. The ice quickly melted, and the suckling pig within revealed its true appearance.

"F**k! Duan Ling Tian, the space within your Spatial Ring is only so big, but you actually still brought this?" Xiao Xun couldn't help but swear and was stupefied.

Xiao Yu was stunned as well.

As far as they knew, a common Spatial Ring would only have a cubic meter worth of space, and one basically couldn't place many frozen suckling pigs like this within it.

"Hurry up and help me cut it up! Do you two not want to eat it?" Duan Ling Tian tossed the suckling pig in his hand to Xiao Xun and glared at him as he spoke.

Xiao Xun received the heavy sucking pig and grinned. "Of course I want to eat it! If there's meat to eat, who would still eat those damned dried rations!"

Meanwhile, Duan Ling Tian withdrew a few long, iron skewers and a pile of condiments and salt.

Om!

Duan Ling Tian's hand flashed past his waist and his Violet Myrtle Flexible Sword whistled out. With the assistance of Xiao Xun, he quickly cut up the suckling pig that had been cleaned before freezing.

"Duan Ling Tian, you don't seem like you're going to battle; it seems like you're going on vacation instead." Xiao Yu shook his head and smiled as he used the iron skewer to pierce through a large piece of suckling pig meat. After placing it to roast on the campfire, he sprinkled some salt and condiments on it.

"We only managed to get a chance to come out here with great difficulty, so we can't inconvenience ourselves. If we eat those few pieces of dried rations, where would we get our strength from?" Duan Ling Tian revolved the iron skewer in his hand and had a smile on his face as he roasted the meat.

In next to no time, the smell of the suckling pig in the hands of Duan Ling Tian's group of three suffused into the air....

"F**k! Where's this fragrant smell coming from?"

"Isn't this the smell of roasted suckling pig? Who's eating roasted suckling pig?"

"It's Duan Ling Tian's group! They really know how to enjoy, actually bringing along some suckling pig to roast."

"As expected of the genius disciple that the Duan Clan keeps in high regard. It's so convenient to have a Spatial Ring."

...

The group of Paladin Academy students all glanced at Duan Ling Tian's direction with envy, and their saliva poured onto the ground.

Compared to the group of Paladin Academy students, the group of Crimson Wurm Army soldiers were much more composed. They continued to maintain their campfires as they ate their dried rations, then they entered their tents to rest once they finished eating.

"Satisfying!" Xiao Xun bit the roasted suckling pig and a satisfied smile appeared on his face.

Duan Ling Tian and Xiao Yu both ate the meat with large bites and had faces full of delight.

"If only there was some wine to drink now." Xiao Xun's gaze shone.

The nearby Paladin Academy students were completely speechless when they heard what Xiao Xun said.

It really was like how the saying goes, a man whose heart is not content is like a snake which tries to swallow an elephant. [1]

We don't even have roast suckling pig to eat, but you're still not satisfied when you're biting roasted suckling pig, and you still want to drink wine?

Don't irritate people like this!

However, all these Paladin Academy students were stunned in the next moment, as they saw Duan Ling Tian extend out his hand, and three wine jugs appeared in his hand out of thin air....

"There naturally can't be a lack of wine while eating meat. Come, drink!" Duan Ling Tian said, with a smile.

"Duan Ling Tian, you really brought wine!" Xiao Xun fiercely gulped down a mouthful of saliva with a pleasantly surprised expression, then he took the wine jug with Xiao Xu and starting to drink in large mouthfuls....

Under the gazes of what seemed like a group of hungry wolves, the three of them ate meat and drank wine as they ate voraciously, only stopping after a long time.

"So full!" In next to no time, the entire roast suckling pig was completely eaten by the three of them, and three empty wine jugs were thrown to the side as well.

"I'm going to ease myself," Xiao Xun said, before running into the nearby bushes to ease himself.

After Xiao Xun and Xiao Yu went to ease themselves in succession, Duan Ling Tian walked out as well....

However, Duan Ling Tian had only just stepped into the bushes when his Spiritual Force became vigilant. He could feel a burst of danger slowly approaching, as if it would descend upon him at any moment.

After taking in a deep breath, Duan Ling Tian's body jerked and he directly flashed forward.

Spirit Serpent Movement Technique!

And right at this moment, sparse sounds sounded from behind as an able-bodied figure flashed out and passed Duan Ling Tian in the blink of an eye before blocking Duan Ling Tian's path.

This was a middle-aged man wearing a Crimson Wyrms Army soldier's armor, and his eyes flickered with a ghostly stream of light under the night sky.

Chapter 204: Suicide

"Third level of the Nascent Soul Stage?" Duan Ling Tian's gaze focused as he looked at the 400 ancient mammoth silhouettes above the middle-aged man in front of him, and the corners of his mouth slowly curled at an angle.

The middle-aged man had an icy cold gaze, and the way he looked at Duan Ling Tian didn't hold a trace of emotion.

"You're the one who's been secretly watching me since this morning?" Duan Ling Tian's voice was calm, as if he was speaking about something that was completely unrelated to him.

"As expected of the Paladin Academy's number one genius to actually be able to notice me watching you secretly. I feel that I've already been extremely careful." The middle-aged soldier was slightly surprised for a brief moment, as he never imagined that Duan Ling Tian had long since noticed him.

"You're probably not a member of the Crimson Wyrms Army, right?" Duan Ling Tian glanced deeply at the person before him. The middle-aged man was a third level Nascent Soul martial artist, but what he wore was only an ordinary soldier's armor, and he wasn't even a Decurion....

He didn't believe that a person with such a cultivation would be willing to be an ordinary soldier within the Crimson Wyrms Army.

"You're extremely intelligent." The middle-aged soldier nodded. "Exactly, I'm not a member of the Crimson Wyrms Army."

"Being able to noiselessly sneak into the Crimson Wyrms Army and not be noticed by anyone, it would seem that the person behind you isn't simple...I'm extremely curious, who actually sent you here?" Duan Ling Tian's gaze that seemed to be able to see through everything stared fixedly at the middle-aged soldier.

"A dead man doesn't need to know so much." The middle-aged man paid no attention to Duan Ling Tian. He took a step forward with an imposing manner that pierced through the sky above him, and the 400 ancient mammoth silhouettes that had only just vanished not long ago once again condensed into form....

"Are you so sure I'll die?" Duan Ling Tian's gaze went slightly cold, and a disdainful smile appeared on the corners of his mouth.

"Hmm?" The middle-aged man slightly frowned when he noticed that Duan Ling Tian was so composed. He observed the surroundings for a moment, and upon noticing that there was nothing off about it, he sneered. "Do you think that acting mysteriously will allow you to escape? Don't waste your time! There's somethings that once done, you have to suffer the consequences...No one can save you today!" The middle-aged soldier took a large stride forward, and his Origin Energy pervaded into his body. He intended to attack Duan Ling Tian.

"Is that so?" Duan Ling Tian still stood on the spot with a calm and unfazed expression, and he didn't move an inch.

"As I see it, no one can save you!" Right at this moment, a low voice that contained fury mixed within sounded from behind the middle-aged soldier.

Subsequently, two figures appeared behind the middle-aged soldier in an instant. One of them slapped out his palm to directly knock down the middle-aged soldier before stomping out his feet to stomp the middle-aged soldier's entire body onto the ground, causing him to be unable to move.

The middle-aged soldier's body crashed onto the ground, and he subconsciously turned around, but the scene he saw behind him caused his eyeballs to seem as if they were about to split!

Oh my god!

What did he see?!

1,000 ancient mammoth silhouettes!

The person that attacked him now was actually a seventh level Nascent Soul martial artist!

"How could this be possible? Didn't the Duan Clan not send anyone to protect him?" A trace of coldness arose within the middle-aged soldier's heart, and infinite despair flickered within his eyes.

"Young Master." Among the two people that appeared now, the one that stomped the middle-aged soldier to the ground was precisely Zhang Qian.

The other person was Zhao Gang.

Hearing the seemingly familiar voices, the face of the middle-aged man who was stomped on the ground's face went grim, and he struggled to turn his head around. Through the darkness of the night, he was eventually able to clearly see the appearances of Zhang Qian and Zhao Gang.

"General Zhang, General Zhao!" The middle-aged soldier's pupils constricted, as he obviously recognized Zhang Qian and Zhao Gang.

Zhang Qian and Zhao Gang were generals under the command of the Divine Might Marquis, Grand Cavalry General Nie Yuan, and they had extremely high statuses within the Crimson Sky Kingdom's army. Thus, many officers within the Crimson Sky Kingdom's army recognized them.

"You know me?" Zhang Qian frowned, and he stomped his leg harder on the middle-aged soldier.

The middle-aged soldier's face went deathly pale, and his eyes emitted an astonished expression. Who can tell me what the f**k is going on?

Why are these two malefic existences here?

Moreover, they seem to be protecting this Duan Ling Tian in secret!

Isn't Duan Ling Tian just a direct descendant of the Duan Clan? How could it be possible that these two malefic existences would lower themselves to protect him....

The middle-aged soldier abruptly realized that this assignment was virtually a suicide assignment!

"Speak! Who sent you to kill the Young Master?" Zhao Gang's face sank, and his eyes flickered with dense killing intent.

"General Zhang, General Zhao...He...Isn't he a member of the Duan Clan? Why...Why are you two...." The middle-aged soldier took a deep breath. He wanted to figure out what actually was happening before him right now.

When Zhang Qian and Zhao Gang heard what the middle-aged soldier said, they both looked at Duan Ling Tian at the same time, seeming to be asking Duan Ling Tian if they could reveal it.

Duan Ling Tian nodded, as he'd perceived that this middle-aged soldier was an unyielding person, and if he couldn't completely destroy the line of defense within his heart, he'd probably rather die than reveal the person who put him up to this.

"Exactly, the Young Master is a member of the Duan Clan. However, the Young Master is also the nephew of the Marquis...As for the two of us, we were sent by the Marquis to protect the Young Master." Zhang Qian's tone was cold as he slowly spoke.

However, when what he said entered the ears of the middle-aged soldier, they were like pins pricking him!

Marquis?

He naturally knew who the Marquis that Zhang Qian spoke of was, it would surely be the Marquis who had an aloof status and respected identity within the Crimson Sky Kingdom!

This Duan Ling Tian is his nephew?

"Young Master, spare me...This lowly one didn't know of your identity, spare me...." The middle-aged man's face was deathly pale and devoid of blood as he struggled to plead to Duan Ling Tian.

He suddenly realized that his actions were virtually suicide!

"Speak! Who sent you?" Duan Ling Tian asked once more.

"Young Master, if this lowly one speaks, would you be willing to spare this lowly one's life?" The middle-aged man's eyes flickered with a lustre of hope for survival.

"You don't have the qualifications to discuss terms with me." Duan Ling Tian's became even colder.

"Since you know Zhang Qian and Zhao Gang and have a cultivation at the Nascent Soul Stage, your status within the Crimson Sky Kingdom's army ought to not be low...Could it be that you think I can't investigate your background by relying on the ability of my Uncle Nie?"

The middle-aged soldier had a bitter smile on the corners of his mouth.

If the Divine Might marquis were to investigate him, it would naturally be easy to accomplish...

"Young Master, I'm a Centurion within the Imperial City's City Guard Army." The middle-aged man lowered his head as he proclaimed his identity.

He was confident that he didn't have to say anything else for this Young Master before him to guess it.

"City Guard Army?" Duan Ling Tian's gaze focused. "It's really him...Xue Lu!"

"That Xue Lu, actually daring to let a member of his City Guard Army sneak into the Crimson Wurm Army. Doesn't he know that this is committing a taboo within the army?" Zhang Qian's face went grim and flames of rage jumped about within his eyes.

Zhao Gang's face was extremely unsightly as well.

"Generals, spare me...." The middle-aged soldier had a deathly pale expression, and he had no other wish but to survive.

Zhang Qian and Zhao Gang looked towards Duan Ling Tian.

"Make it clean." Duan Ling Tian said indifferently, with a voice that didn't have a trace of feeling. Then he turned around and opened his belt to ease himself. And he directly returned to his tent after finishing.

And at the moment Duan Ling Tian's voice sounded, the middle-aged soldier didn't even react when he was killed by Zhang Qian.

When Duan Ling Tian left, Zhang Qian and Zhao Gang took care of the middle-aged soldier's corpse before once again concealing themselves.

"Duan Ling Tian, why'd you go so long?" Xiao Xun asked after Duan Ling Tian returned to the tent.

Duan Ling Tian rolled his eyes at Xiao Xun, and he angrily said, "Can't I go for a big one?"

Duan Ling Tian's eyes narrowed as he lie in the tent, and a sense of rage arose within his heart.

Even though he knew that City Guard Army Commander Xue Lu wouldn't let it go, he never imagined that Xue Lu would be so unscrupulous as to actually want to kill him on the way to the northwest border's battlefield.

"Xue Lu...." Killing intent arose within Duan Ling Tian's heart.

Early in the morning the next day, as the morning sun rose in the east.

"Everyone, pack up your tents. We're leaving in 10 minutes!" The loud and clear voice of Commander Nie Fen broke the silence of dawn and caused all the Paladin Academy students that were still dreaming within their tents to be jolted awake. They then left their tents and started to pack up.

After Duan Ling Tian walked out of the tent, he noticed that the 10,000 officers of the Crimson Wyrms Army had long since been fully equipped and ready. Now all that remained was their group of Paladin Academy students' tents which were scattered all around.

"This Crimson Wyrms Army is worthy of being called an elite army within the Crimson Sky Kingdom!" Duan Ling Tian praised within his heart.

Before long, the group of Paladin Academy students finished packing up their tents and were fully equipped and ready.

Followed by Commander Nie Fei issuing the order, over 10,000 large steeds carried over 10,000 officers as they dashed out, and a wave of earthquakes and mountains swaying occurred wherever they passed.

When they passed by some travelling merchants or fleets of wagons, they would all move to the side in avoidance, as they didn't dare directly face the Crimson Wyrms Army's sharp imposing manner.

After spending an entire two months' time, Duan Ling Tian and the others followed behind the Crimson Wyrms Army to finally arrive at their destination.

The northwest border's Relentless Thriving City.

Relentless Thriving City was a city that was situated in a remote and awkward position.

30 miles in front of Relentless Thriving City was the Southern Champion Kingdom's border city, Southern Barbaric City....And it was precisely because of this place's special meaning that conflict between the two kingdoms frequently occurred here.

As long as one of the two kingdoms finished recuperating and building up strength, it would take the initiative to send troops, desiring to take over the other kingdom's border city, before plundering it.

Over the course of a 100,000 years, it's always been like this.

Since half a year ago, the Southern Champion Kingdom's army provoked the Crimson Sky Kingdom's Relentless Thriving City time and time again, causing the pressure of the army within the Relentless Thriving City to increase, and only then did they request for reinforcement troops from the Imperial City.

"This Relentless Thriving City can't be considered to be huge; it is comparable to Aurora City." Duan Ling Tian looked far off into the distance to gaze upon Relentless Thriving City, which was far away, and his brows rose.

"It isn't a County City after all. Besides the Imperial City and the County Cities, there's not much difference between the other cities." Xiao Yu nodded.

Before long, the over 10,000 officers of the Crimson Wyrms Army galloped their horses into the Relentless Thriving City and slowed down at the same time.

Although the size of the Relentless Thriving City was no different from the other cities, like the Aurora City and Iron Blood City, the city was divided into two halves. The southern half of the city was filled with great numbers of stores and streams of people in groups. Whereas the northern half of the city was the border army's campsite, and the northern city wall had even gone through special reinforcement that was aimed towards war, transforming it into a stronghold.

"It's the Crimson Wyrms Army!"

"The Crimson Wyrms Army's arrived. This time we will surely be able to make that Southern Champion Kingdom's army suffer a crushing defeat!"

"Long live the Divine Might Marquis!"

...

Everywhere the Crimson Wyrms Army went, all the residents of Relentless Thriving City that stood on either side of them would exclaim loudly.

Chapter 205: Super Abnormal

Throughout the way, Duan Ling Tian could see hope and anticipation from the faces of Relentless Thriving City's residents.

This was their faith towards the Crimson Wyrms Army!

Their faith towards the Divine Might Marquis!

"Uncle Nie is really worthy of being the Crimson Sky Kingdom's God of War...In this border that's frequented with war, his prestige probably even surpasses the Crimson Sky Kingdom's Emperor!" Duan Ling Tian silently thought in his heart.

Before long, Duan Ling Tian and the group of Paladin Academy students followed the Crimson Wyrms Army's 10,000 officers and entered the vast campsite on the northern side of Relentless Thriving City.

Including Duan Ling Tian and the others, everyone was placed within various tents throughout the campsite.

Duan Ling Tian's group of three were placed in the same small tent. Although it was a small tent, it was still 100 times better than the tent they casually constructed on the way here.

Xiao Xun's face flushed as he excitedly said, "I'll soon be able to see that brutal battlefield with my very own eyes. Just thinking about it makes me slightly excited...."

Even though Xiao Yu didn't say anything, his eyes that contained flowing lights revolving within already explained everything.

Duan Ling Tian shook his head with a smile, and a thought passed his mind before a cauldron abruptly appeared in his hand.

Two days ago, he had smoothly broken through to the eighth level of the Core Formation Stage. What he needed to do now was refine a Dragon Blood Pill and consume it to complete the tempering of his fleshly body for the eighth level of the Core Formation Stage.

In this way, he would be able to continue charging towards the ninth level of the Core Formation Stage!

The Blood Dragon Pill was different from an ordinary pill, as once it was refined, it must be consumed within 10 hours. Otherwise, the medicinal strength of the pill would be lost. Thus, Duan Ling Tian didn't have any reserves.

Duan Ling Tian casually withdrawing a cauldron wasn't anything worth noting; however, when Xiao Yu and Xiao Xun saw Duan Ling Tian withdraw a cauldron, they were dumbstruck.

"This...Duan Ling Tian, don't tell me that you've become an alchemist...." Xiao Xun couldn't help but stare wide-eyed, and even his breathing became hurried. This Duan Ling Tian couldn't be thinking of trying to shock him, right?

Xiao Yu looked at Duan Ling Tian with a suspicious expression as well.

Duan Ling Tian shook his head with a smile before raising his hand and turning his palm upwards.

Chi!

Instantly, a wisp of white flames were lit ablaze at the center of Duan Ling Tian's palm.

"Grade 9 pill fire!" Xiao Xun's pupils constricted, and he couldn't help but exclaim in shock.

His brother, Xiao He, was a grade 9 alchemist, so a grade 9 pill fire wasn't unfamiliar to him.

The corners of Xiao Yu's mouth twitched.

When did this Duan Ling Tian become an alchemist?

Ordinarily speaking, a genius in the Martial Dao like Duan Ling Tian would normally use all their mental and physical effort on the advancement of their cultivation, and it would be impossible for them to study the Dao of alchemy, the Dao of weapons crafting, and the Dao of inscription intensively....As once one were to start studying them intensively, it would waste a great deal of one's mental and physical strength, ultimately causing one to end up being mediocre in all aspects.

In the past, in his opinion, Duan Ling Tian having such a heaven-defying cultivation was surely because he focused on his cultivation and didn't study the Daos of alchemy, weapons crafting, and inscription. But now, the grade 9 pill fire within Duan Ling Tian's hand gave him a tremendous shock!

This Duan Ling Tian who had such a heaven-defying cultivation actually spent time to study alchemy and become a grade 9 alchemist?

For a moment, Xiao Yu only felt his scalp go numb.

Abnormal!

Too abnormal!

"If Duan Ling Tian didn't spend time studying alchemy, wouldn't it mean that his current strength would be even more formidable? Even to the extent that it is very likely for him to have broken through to the Origin Core Stage at the age of 17?" Xiao Yu noticed that the more he thought about it, the more shocked he would be.

Xiao Xun currently was stupefied, as he had the same thoughts as Xiao Yu.

After all, one who studied alchemy would experience a much slower advancement in their cultivation in the Martial Dao as compared to an ordinary person. This is because once one places half of one's mental and physical effort on alchemy, one wouldn't be able to fully focus on one's cultivation!

Just like his brother, Xiao He. Even though their natural talent in the Martial Dao were comparable, even though he was older than him by a year, Xiao He's cultivation was still inferior to his. All this was because his brother focused on the Dao of alchemy and put his cultivation aside, thus causing his cultivation to advance slowly.

"What're you two doing? It that really necessary?" Duan Ling Tian shook his head and laughed before taking out the medicinal materials required for the Dragon Blood Pill and placing them into the cauldron one by one.

"Is this really necessary?" The corners of Xiao Yu and Xiao Xun's mouths twitched, as they both felt that this Duan Ling Tian was doing it on purpose.

"Abnormal!" The two of them spoke at the exact same moment, having extreme tacit understanding.

Duan Ling Tian was speechless.

Of course, it was also because Duan Ling Tian didn't know Xiao Yu and Xiao Xun's current thoughts; otherwise, he would surely shake his head with a laugh....

Since the moment he'd merged with the memories of Rebirth Martial Emperor, he'd inherited everything that belonged to the Rebirth Martial Emperor.

At the peak of his life, Rebirth Martial Emperor was a Royal Grade Alchemist and a Royal Grade Weapons Craftsmen! Even in the Dao of inscriptions, he'd studied inscriptions to the peak and was inferior to no one within that age where the art of inscription was prevalent.

Inheriting everything that belonged to the Rebirth Martial Emperor also meant that Duan Ling Tian possessed the entire ability of the Rebirth Martial Emperor.

Of course, if he wanted to utilize more of the Rebirth Martial Emperor's ability, then he would need to advance his cultivation and Spiritual Force to a certain stage...

For example, pill fire and weapon flame.

A grade 8 flame would require stepping into the first level of the Origin Core Stage to be condensed into form.

A grade 7 flame would require stepping into the seventh level of the Origin Core Stage to be condensed into form.

A grade 6 flame would require stepping into the first level of the Nascent Soul Stage to be condensed into form.

A grade 5 flame would require stepping into the seventh level of the Nascent Soul Stage to be condensed into form.

...

The later stages could be deduced from this.

As long as his cultivation reached the requirement, Duan Ling Tian, who'd inherited Rebirth Martial Emperor's lifetimes worth of alchemy and weapon crafting skills and experiences, would be able to condense the pill fire and weapon flame of a grade relevant to his cultivation.

And it would utterly not require him to study it himself!

It was the same for his Spiritual Force. As long as his Spiritual Force was sufficiently strong, he would be able to inscribe even higher level inscriptions.

Just like now, Duan Ling Tian's Spiritual Force was comparable to a Nascent Soul martial artist's, so he was able to inscribe inscriptions like the Bone Corrosion Inscription, which was sufficient to annihilate a Nascent Soul martial artist.

If he was able to obtain those valuable core materials, he would even be capable of inscribing an inscription that could annihilate a Half-step Void Stage powerhouse!

So as long as Duan Ling Tian's cultivation was sufficient and his Spiritual Force was sufficient, he would not need to waste his own time to study the Dao of alchemy, weapons crafting, and inscriptions. As within his mind was the memories of the Dao of alchemy, weapons crafting, and inscriptions that had been studied to the peak!

By way of an analogy, if it was said that the Dao of alchemy, weapons crafting, and inscriptions were software, then Duan Ling Tian's cultivation and Spiritual Force were the hardware.

The software was at the highest standard; however, the hardware was only at the development stage, so as long as the hardware continued to advance, it would be able to better utilize the functions of the software.

Swash!

Duan Ling Tian's hands dropped down, and the pill fire that was condensed from his Origin Energy was pressed into the cauldron by him before he started refining.

Xiao Yu and Xiao Xun took deep breaths as they suppressed the shock within their hearts, and they watched him with utmost concentration.

After an hour, Duan Ling Tian placed the gold blood of the little black python into the cauldron, completing the final step in the refinement.

Whoosh!

A medicinal pill with golden lights flowing on it shot out from the cauldron and dropped into Duan Ling Tian's hand.

It was precisely the Dragon Blood Pill!

Duan Ling Tian consumed it.

Instantly, a tremendous change occurred within his fleshly body, and the tempering of his fleshly body for the eighth level of the Core Formation Stage was instantly completed!

The current Duan Ling Tian was capable of directly charging forward to the ninth level of the Core Formation Stage...Once he stepped into the ninth level of the Core Formation Stage and consumed another Dragon Blood Pill, he would be able to complete the final tempering of his fleshly body for the Nine Dragons War Sovereign Technique's Raging Python Form.

At that time, he could continue to charge towards the Origin Core Stage and become a true Origin Core martial artist! And not the current fake Origin Core martial artist he was now.

In the moment that Duan Ling Tian put away his cauldron, Xiao Yu and Xiao Xun finally returned to their senses, and Xiao Xun said in surprise, "Duan Ling Tian, what medicinal pill did you refine earlier? That medicinal pill seemed to flicker with a golden light and seemed to be remarkable."

"That isn't any ordinary medicinal pill, but a medicinal pill that's matched to the cultivation method I'm cultivating. An ordinary martial artist would directly explode from the pent up energy!" Duan Ling Tian glanced deeply at Xiao Xun. "How about it? Xiao Xun, are you interested in trying one?"

"Forget it, I don't want to die yet!" Xiao Xun naturally believed what Duan Ling Tian said to be true, and he hurriedly wave his hand in refusal.

"Duan Ling Tian, when did you become a grade 9 alchemist?" Meanwhile, Xiao Yu looked at Duan Ling Tian with a burning gaze.

Xiao Xun looked at Duan Ling Tian as well.

"It's been quite some time." Duan Ling Tian lightly smiled but didn't speak of the exact time.

Could it be that he could say he'd already become a grade 9 alchemist two years ago?

"Duan Ling Tian, you're absolutely the most abnormal among the abnormal people I've seen!" Xiao Xun stared wide-eyed. "That time when my brother became a grade 9 alchemist at the age of 20, I felt he was abnormal enough...But I never imagined that you would become a grade 9 alchemist at the age of 18! Not only that, your cultivation has even stepped into the Origin Core Stage! You're practically a super abnormal person!"

Super abnormal? The corners of Duan Ling Tian's mouth twitched.

Xiao Yu nodded as well, as he obviously agreed with what Xiao Xun said.

Suddenly, Xiao Xun seemed to have thought of something, because his gaze abruptly shone. "A few months ago, the 18-year-old genius alchemist that appeared within the Alchemist Guild's Main Guild for a brief while and took the edge of my brother's spirit..."

Duan Ling Tian's heart jerked when he noticed Xiao Xun looking over.

Could it be that Xiao Xun's guessed it?

"...I wonder, between the two of you, who is more abnormal in the Dao of alchemy." Xiao Xun finished within single breath.

Duan Ling Tian came to a sudden understanding. It looked like Xiao Xun didn't connect the genius alchemist from that day to him.

"That genius alchemist couldn't be Duan Ling Tian, right?" Xiao Yu looked at Duan Ling Tian, and a single sentence from him caused Duan Ling Tian's heart to rise to his throat.

Xiao Yu was born with a type of keen intuition, and his intuition told him that the other 18-year-old genius alchemist Xiao Xun mentioned was highly likely to be Duan Ling Tian.

"I'm sure it isn't." Xiao Xun shook his head.

"So sure? You haven't even seen him before," Xiao Yu asked, as he wasn't convinced.

"I haven't seen him before, but don't forget that my brother has...I've asked my brother, and he said that youth's appearance was ordinary, without any extraordinary points. Do you think that the person my brother described would be Duan Ling Tian?" As Xiao Xun spoke, he looked over at Duan Ling Tian.

Duan Ling Tian was soon going to transform from a youth to a young man...

In terms of appearance, he could absolutely be considered as handsome and extraordinary, and he wasn't even close to the word 'ordinary'.

Chapter 206: Let's Go!

"Could it really not be him?" Xiao Yu was hesitant in his heart when he heard what Xiao Xun said, as he was still quite confident of his own intuition.

However, he couldn't wrap his head around why the genius alchemist Xiao Xun's brother spoke of would be a youth with an ordinary appearance.

How could he know that Duan Ling Tian's methods of disguising may be said to have attained the acme of perfection!

In the following days, Duan Ling Tian's group of three cultivated within the tent.

Five days later, all the Star Mastermind Department students, including Duan Ling Tian's group of three, were gathered in a spacious tent.

Things similar to architectural models were placed within the tent, and Duan Ling Tian noticed with a glance that it was a model of a city's outer area.

Presently, Nie Fen stood with a middle-aged general beside the model, and that old man that followed behind Nie Fen earlier still followed behind him like a shadow.

Duan Ling Tian hadn't seen this old man within the Divine Might Marquis Estate prior to this; however, thanks to the perception of his Spiritual Force and the experiences of Rebirth Martial Emperor, he could almost be sure that this old man was a Half-step Void Stage powerhouse!

"Looks like the Divine Might Marquis Estate doesn't only have a single Half-step Void Stage powerhouse." Duan Ling Tian secretly thought in his heart.

With a quick thought, Duan Ling Tian came to an understanding. The Divine Might Marquis Estate's status within the Crimson Sky Kingdom was only second to the Imperial Family after all. Adding on to that was the fact that there was a Void Stage powerhouse garrisoned within. Thus, the Half-Step Void Stage powerhouses within ought to not be in small number.

Even though that Void Stage powerhouse wasn't at his former glory presently, a powerful person on hard times was still better off than an ordinary person. Thus, no one dared look down upon the Divine Might Marquis Estate's concealed might.

The old man seemed to have noticed Duan Ling Tian's gaze on him, and his murky eyes focused as he nodded to Duan Ling Tian.

Duan Ling Tian replied with a smile, as he held great respect towards members of the Divine Might Marquis Estate.

Before long, the 12 students of Paladin Academy's Star Mastermind Department arrived in succession before two other middle-aged men that were dressed as scholars slowly walked in.

They ought to be existences at the same rank as a strategist. Duan Ling Tian guessed to himself.

"Humph!" Suddenly, Duan Ling Tian heard a cold grunt, and at the same time he noticed a cold and indifferent gaze staring at him. Duan Ling Tian didn't have to turn around to guess whose gaze this was.

"Commander Nie, these two people are my army's strategists." The middle-aged general that stood with Nie Fen introduced the two middle-aged scholars that had just entered.

Nie Fen lightly nodded to the two middle-aged scholars. "Greetings, strategists."

The two middle-aged scholars were instantly overwhelmed by the unexpected favor. "Greetings Commander Nie!"

Although Nie Fen was young, they didn't dare look down upon him. This was Nie Fen, the only son of the Divine Might Marquis, Cavalry Grand General Nie Yuan, whose might shook the entire Crimson Sky Kingdom and had an extraordinary status that was far from what they could compare to.

"General He, these 12 are the elite students from the Star Mastermind Department that Paladin Academy sent." Nie Fen looked at Duan Ling Tian, Gu Xuan, and the others as he introduced them with a light smile.

"Oh?" The middle-aged general that was called General He, or in other words, the general that commanded that entire border army of Relentless Thriving City, directed his gaze to flash past Duan Ling Tian and other 11 people one by one.

When his gaze descended onto Xiao Xun and Xiao Yu, it slightly focused.

In his impression, a Paladin Academy Star Mastermind Department student at this age would seem to be only grade 1 or grade 2 students, right?

Even if students at such a young age were to come to the battlefield, it would seem that they wouldn't be able to provide any help.

After all, according to the past convention, only grade 4 or above students of Paladin Academy's Star Mastermind Department would start to deeply study and comprehend the stratagem of land warfare.

In next to no time, his appearance froze...because he noticed Duan Ling Tian!

General He frowned as he looked at the youth before him and asked, "This student ought to be 18 years old at most, right?"

Is the Paladin Academy taking the matter this time too lightly?

"Yes." Duan Ling Tian noticed General He's expression and naturally knew that he was looking down on him due to his young age.

But Duan Ling Tian didn't mind, as time would prove everything.

Nie Fen looked at Duan Ling Tian and signaled with his brows before saying, "General He, you better not look down on him...He's the peerless genius who has the greatest reputation within our Crimson Sky Kingdom as of late!"

"Oh?" General He pondered for a moment after hearing what Nie Fen said, then his gaze abruptly shone. "Could he be the Duan Clan's Duan Ling Tian? The 18-year-old Origin Core martial artist?"

"Exactly." Nie Fen nodded.

"My apologies." After finding out about Duan Ling Tian's background, the gaze with which General He looked upon Duan Ling Tian was completely different.

Even if Duan Ling Tian didn't study much in the Dao of the Mastermind, his natural talent in the Martial Dao was something he thought highly of.

The Cloud Continent was originally a world where the strong were respected!

As far as he was concerned, an 18-year-old Origin Core martial artist would surely be a great figure in the lands in the future!

"Greetings, General He." Duan Ling Tian nodded with a smile to the middle-aged general before him. Since the middle-aged general was polite, he naturally wouldn't be impolite.

"You're General He? General He Wei An?" Right at this moment, a voice suddenly sounded, and it was Gu Xuan who stood at the side that spoke.

"This student is?" He Wei An was slightly surprised that the young man with extraordinary bearing before him was able to call his name.

Gu Xuan lightly smiled as he slowly said, "General He, I've long since heard my father say that you're a pillar of our Crimson Sky Kingdom...These past few years, it's all because of the meritorious service of General He that the northwest border was able to defend against the multiple raids of the Southern Champion Kingdom."

"He really knows how to kiss ass," Xiao Xun grunted in a low voice. He said it with a voice that was comparable to a mosquito in loudness.

"This little brother is too kind, but I really don't deserve this. The northwest border being able to be defended all these years is mostly because of the meritorious service of the Divine Might Marquis, Cavalry Grand General Nie Yuan. Yet I still don't know who your father is." Although He Wei An was being modest, he was praised to the point that his face was full of smiles.

"Gu You Ting is my father." Gu Xuan had a refined and courteous appearance as he spoke.

The corners of Duan Ling Tian's mouth held a smile, as he'd been able to discern that this Gu Xuan was intentionally flattering this General He, and it was all undoubtedly for the sake of this moment.

"Prime Minister Gu?" He Wei An was instantly struck with a great fright when he heard what Gu Xuan said. "So it's the Young Master of the Prime Minister's Estate, I apologize for the disrespect."

"Greetings, Young Master Gu." The two middle-aged scholars that stood at the side couldn't help but be moved as they saluted Gu Xuan together.

For a moment, Gu Xuan became the center of attention within the tent.

Although Gu Xuan spoke humbly, the arrogance and complacency on his face was something that anyone was able to notice.

"I've long since heard that Young Master Gu's inherited the Lord Prime Minister's wisdom. This time, with Young Master Gu coming to assist my army, it would look like my army breaching that Southern Barbaric City is just around the corner!" He Wei An laughed heartily.

As for the two middle-aged scholars, they flattered Gu Xuan as well.

"General He and the two strategists are too kind, but how could I compare to my Father?" Gu Xuan laughed modestly with a pair of eyes that were filled with complacency, and he would occasionally sweep Duan Ling Tian with his gaze, as he wanted to flaunt his prowess before Duan Ling Tian.

But he noticed in shame and annoyance that Duan Ling Tian hadn't looked at him once since beginning till the end...As if all this was not worthy of his consideration!

"Duan Ling Tian!" Gu Xuan secretly gnashed his teeth from hatred, as his eyes flashed with a cold light.

Duan Ling Tian's brows rose when he heard what He Wei An said.

Breach the Southern Barbaric City?

It looked like the arrival of the reinforcement troops this time greatly boosted the morale of the Crimson Sky Kingdom's army, and they were prepared to turn the tables on the enemy.

"Young Master Gu, everyone, please come forward to view the layout of the Southern Barbaric City. See if there's a method to smoothly breach the city and spread the might of the Crimson Sky Kingdom!" Meanwhile, He Wei An returned to the side of the Southern Barbaric City's layout, and at the same time invited all the Star Mastermind Department students to come forward.

Instantly, all the Star Mastermind Department students, including Duan Ling Tian, stood up and moved forward.

"Humph!" Gu Xuan snorted coldly when he saw Duan Ling Tian's group of three coming to the model, and said, in disdain, "Grade 1 students, don't come over here and grab place. You're only pretending to know what you don't know, right? Don't you see that there are still three grade 5 students that have been squeezed to the back?"

"You!" Xiao Yu and Xiao Xun's face went grim when they heard Gu Xuan's mocking, and they both stared furiously at Gu Xuan.

Duan Ling Tian had only just glanced at the layout of the Southern Barbaric City when he heard what Gu Xuan said. He slowly raised his head to look at Gu Xuan with a cold and indifferent gaze. "So to speak, Young Master Gu thinks that we can't help in any way. Whereas you all instead are able to mastermind a scheme that is able to assist the army to breach the Southern Barbaric City in one go?"

"Of course! There's no difference whether you three are here or not." Gu Xuan had a face full of arrogance as he said this.

"Young Master Gu, this isn't the Prime Minister's Estate, right? Aren't your actions slightly usurping the host's role for yourself?" Duan Ling Tian asked indifferently.

"Humph! I'm thinking about the overall situation...General He, what do you think? Should the three of them give away their places to the other three grade 5 students of our Paladin Academy's Star Mastermind Department?" Gu Xuan glanced at Duan Ling Tian with disdain before looking at He Wei An.

"This...." He Wei An looked at Duan Ling Tian and hesitated for a moment before an apologetic expression appeared on his face. "Little brother Ling Tian, why don't you all...."

Duan Ling Tian's natural talent in the Martial Dao was indeed something he thought extremely highly of, but masterminding a scheme for an army to fight a battle was something that had not a sliver of relevance to one's natural talent in the Martial Dao.

At the same time, he also didn't think that these three Star Mastermind Department grade 1 students would have any good schemes.

"I understand." Duan Ling Tian spoke to interrupt He Wei An, then he used his gaze to stop Nie Fen, who desired to speak, before saying to Xiao Yu and Xiao Xun. "Xiao Yu, Xiao Xun, since we aren't needed here, there's no reason for us to stay...What do you two think?"

"Let's go!" Xiao Yu and Xiao Xun snorted coldly before leaving the tent with Duan Ling Tian.

Nie Fen swept Gu Xuan with his gaze, and a trace of coldness appeared on the corners of his mouth.

This Gu Xuan said Duan Ling Tian was useless?

Could it be that he was capable contemplating such a brilliant scheme like the strategy of crossing the river while deceiving the heavens?

Even Nie Fen admired Duan Ling Tian for being able to come up with such a brilliant scheme like the strategy of crossing the river while deceiving the heavens.

Chapter 207: Incurring Public Wrath!

After leaving the tent, Xiao Xun had a face full of fury. "Duan Ling Tian, that Gu Xuan went too far!"

Duan Ling Tian's eyes flashed with a trace of a bright light as he smiled and said, "Xiao Xun, some people want to bring disgrace on themselves, so there's no need for you to get angry at him."

Xiao Xun and Xiao Yu were both stunned when they heard what Duan Ling Tian said, and they didn't understand what Duan Ling Tian meant.

"Do you two think that taking Southern Barbaric City will be so simple? Just wait for that Gu Xuan to make a fool of himself...Humph!" A trace of disdain appeared on the corners of Duan Ling Tian's mouth.

Earlier, although he had only glanced at the layout of the Southern Barbaric City, he'd already comprehended it within his heart...And he understood in his heart that even if with the Crimson Wyrms Army as reinforcements, it was still going to be extremely difficult to breach the Southern Barbaric City.

Not only that, but the Southern Barbaric City was located within a natural barrier of defense, and if the army was unable to breach it at the first try, they would suffer enormous losses.

Xiao Yu and Xiao Xun didn't quite understand what Duan Ling Tian said.

Half a month later.

The Crimson Sky Kingdom's forces prepared to dispatch their soldiers to attack the Southern Barbaric City, and Gu Xuan became the strategist of this battle, as expected.

"Duan Ling Tian, that Gu Xuan is about to go out to battle with the army and direct the battle...How can you still sleep?" Xiao Xun looked at Duan Ling Tian, who was lying on his bed during the day, with an anxious expression.

"What are you anxious about?" Duan Ling Tian shook his head and laughed.

Xiao Xun and Xiao Yu were slightly speechless towards Duan Ling Tian's reaction.

Only after three days did the army that went out 30 miles to attack Southern Barbaric City return, and only then did they understand the meaning of what Duan Ling Tian had said that day.

The Crimson Sky Kingdom attacked the Southern Champion Kingdom...

Southern Barbaric Kingdom was steady like Mt. Tai, whereas the Crimson Sky Kingdom's army suffered tremendous losses.

Luckily, the 10,000 Crimson Wyrms Army soldiers retreated in time under the command of Nie Fen, and only a portion of them suffered light injuries. There were no casualties among them.

Moreover, the 300 Star General Department students from Paladin Academy followed the Crimson Wyrms Army, and thus returned alive.

The border army, however, suffered over 10,000 casualties!

After Xiao Xun heard of the news, he was extremely shocked as well, and he looked at Duan Ling Tian as he asked, "Duan Ling Tian, you were so confident half a month ago. Could it be that you knew that it would be impossible for that Gu Xuan to direct that battle to breach the Southern Barbaric City?"

"Humph! It isn't that easy to breach Southern Barbaric City," Duan Ling Tian said indifferently.

That day when he saw the layout of Southern Barbaric City, he knew that unless the strategy of 'removing the firewood from under the pot, sneaking along an unknown path' of the 36 stratagems was used in combination with the strategy of 'to borrow arrows with thatched boats' from the romance of the three kingdoms, it would be impossible to breach Southern Barbaric City. [1] [2]

Moreover, these were strategies that Gu Xuan would probably never even dream of.

"If it was you instead, do you have a way?" Xiao Xun's gaze shone as he asked.

"What do you think?" The corners of Duan Ling Tian's mouth held a smile as he answered with a question.

At this moment, Xiao Xun could clearly feel the strong confidence that Duan Ling Tian revealed, and he knew that Duan Ling Tian surely had a way.

"Duan Ling Tian, isn't it slightly inappropriate for you to do this? Since you have a way, why didn't you say so at that day?" Xiao Yu, who hadn't opened his mouth all this time, frowned as he spoke.

After all, the border army had lost more than 10,000 people this time!

These were all very real lives!

Duan Ling Tian shrugged. "Xiao Yu, you were there during the incident the other day, so you saw it clearly. Leaving Gu Xian disparaging us aside, in the end, General He actually believed what he said and asked us to leave...Do you think that at that time, General He would believe me if I said I had a way to breach Southern Barbaric City? Would those two strategists believe me?"

"So the death of those 10,000 plus officers...If it were to be blamed on someone, then it could only be blamed on that General He and Gu Xuan!" As Duan Ling Tian finished speaking, he had a face full of a cold smile.

Of course, there was some things that Duan Ling Tian didn't say.

Before the Crimson Sky Kingdom's army went out to battle this time, Nie Fen had come to see him and told him about the stratagem Gu Xuan devised.

At that time, Duan Ling Tian noticed two obvious flaws within the stratagem.

However, an average person was completely incapable of noticing those two flaws, and even if he were to warn them, others wouldn't believe him...But as long a critical juncture arrived, those two flaws would surely be exposed.

So he warned Nie Fen.

As long Nie Fen noticed that things weren't going well, he was to immediately command the Crimson Wyrms Army to retreat from the battlefield without a shred of hesitance!

If it wasn't for him warning Nie Fen, it would impossible for the 10,000 officers of the Crimson Wyrms Army to return intact.

Xiao Yu pondered for a moment when he heard what Duan Ling Tian said, and he knew that what Duan Ling Tian said made sense. He smiled apologetically to Duan Ling Tian. "Duan Ling Tian, I shouldn't have blamed you, I was too rash."

"No harm's done. It's over 10,000 lives after all." Duan Ling Tian shook his head and made nothing of it.

"Humph! That Gu Xuan, how arrogant and conceited he was that day. Let's see if he dares to be that complacent now...Allegedly, after they returned today, they'd all remained within the tent at the center, and that Gu Xuan's expression probably is as unsightly as unsightly can be right now." Xiao Xun grunted coldly, and the corners of his mouth curled into a mocking smile,. "The defeat in battle this time can be said to be all his responsibility, as it was entirely his strategy that went wrong!"

Xiao Yu's eyes flashed with a trace of coldness as well. "That Gu Xuan has completely lost face for the Prime Minister's Estate this time...If Prince Minister Gu were to find out, he'd probably be angered to the point of spitting blood! In a few words and a lousy strategy, he led over 10,000 officers to their deaths... I'm afraid it's a feat only that Gu Xuan is capable of."

"I still remember the flattering appearance of that General He and those two strategists before Gu Xuan that day...And they even said that Gu Xuan inherited Prime Minister Gu's wisdom. I'm really curious, what will their expressions look like when they face Gu Xuan once again." As he finished speaking,

although Xiao Xun had no intention of being disrespectful to those 10,000 plus dead soldiers, he was still slightly delighted in the misfortunes of Gu Xuan.

Presently, He Wei An and the two strategists under his command had unsightly appearances.

"11,352 brothers have died...." Within the spacious tent, He Wei An's expression was extremely unsightly as he gazed at Gu Xuan, who had an equally unsightly expression and a face full of shame and resentment. As if he'd forgotten Gu Xuan's distinguished identity, he said, "Gu Xuan, don't you owe me an explanation? Our border army fully cooperated with your strategy, but over 10,000 people were entrapped and killed by the Southern Champion Kingdom!"

"Didn't you say that your strategy was foolproof?" He Wei An's face was crimson as he burst into rage.

The status He Wei An had today and the ability to make an army of 10,000 follow him, he earned all of this by going through tremendous hardships and slowly working his way up step by step. Normally, he was even famous for valuing his subordinate troops.

Once, a Centurion under his command was assassinated by people of the Southern Champion Kingdom that had snuck into Relentless Thriving City. He headed to the Southern Champion Kingdom alone, snuck into Southern Barbaric City, and killed two Captains of the enemy!

After that time, he was called Madman He by the people of the Southern Champion Kingdom! And since then, the Southern Champion Kingdom didn't dare conduct an assassination anymore.

"He Wei An, this Young Master has already told you that those Southern Champion Kingdom people are too crafty." Gu Xuan's face sank as he once again repeated himself.

The Southern Champion Kingdom people are too crafty?

What excuse is this?

Pu!

He Wei An was angered to the point that his face flushed and he actually spat out a mouthful of blood. He extended his hand to point at Gu Xuan and howled, in lament and resentment, "Gu Xuan, if it wasn't for you being the son of the Lord Prime Minister...Just for the crime of leading over 10,000 of my brothers to death, you would undoubtedly die today!"

This time, if it was a strategist under his command that had led over 10,000 officers to death, he would have long since directly blasted him to death!

But he was utterly helpless, as this Gu Xuan's background was too prominent; otherwise, he would absolutely not allow Gu Xuan to live for even a second longer.

"What? You want to kill me for that?" Gu Xuan's face sank as he sneered. "It's only 10,000 or so lowly lives. Do you think they can compare to this Young Master's distinguished life?"

Being pressured from various sources caused Gu Xuan to be on the verge of collapse, and he almost lost all reason.

If it was him in normal times, he would definitely not say such a thing in this sort of situation.

"What did you say?!" He Wei An's face went gloomy. He was once again angered to the point that he spat out a mouthful of blood, and the killing intent within his body was difficult to suppress any longer, so it gushed out.

Nie Fen, who hadn't spoken all this time, kicked out and his eyes went cold. He kicked Gu Xuan flying as he coldly shouted, "Gu Xuan, after leading so many brothers to death, not only did you not apologize, you actually said such words that were utterly devoid of conscience...Today, I'll properly teach you a lesson in Prime Minister Gu's stead!"

"Nie Fen, you dare to touch me?!" Gu Xuan stood up, and his eyes went cold with towering hatred.

"Brother Gu Xuan." The two Paladin Academy Star Mastermind Department students that had always followed beside Gu Xuan hurriedly stopped Gu Xuan with faces full of bitter smiles.

"What? You two think I'm wrong as well?" Gu Xuan's face sank.

"Brother Gu Xuan, what you said earlier was indeed going too far."

"Yeah, those were 10,000 actual lives."

Both of them smiled bitterly.

Meanwhile, Gu Xuan took a deep breath and calmed down as well, and he realized that he was indeed too rash earlier.

However, asking him to apologize and admit his mistakes was impossible!

He was the extremely lofty son of the Prime Minister; how could he easily apologize to another?

"Kill Gu Xuan!"

"Make him pay with his life for the lives of over 10,000 brothers!"

"Kill Gu Xuan!"

"A life for a life!"

...

Right at this moment, deafening roars sounded throughout the entire campsite with immense force.

Gu Xuan's face went deathly pale.

Nie Fen frowned and walked out with large strides.

With a glance, Nie Fen noticed that besides the 10,000 plus officers of the Crimson Wyrms Army under his command, the nearly 90,000 remaining officers of the border army had all gathered around this tent, and all of their faces were filled with fury....

They were here to take revenge for their 10,000 plus dead brothers!

What son of the Prime Minister? They didn't care!

They only wanted to use Gu Xuan's fresh blood to comfort the souls of their 10,000 plus brothers in heaven!

"If you don't want to die, then you better not go out." He Wei An's icy cold gaze swept Gu Xuan, who'd long since been terrified to the point that his face went deathly pale and his legs trembled, as he took a deep breath and walked out of the tent with a pair of crimson eyes.

"General!" At the moment that He Wei An walked out of the tent, the nearly 90,000 officers outside the tent directly knelt down on the ground.

Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang!

...

It was as if the ground quaked and the hills swayed, the mountains fell and the earth split!

"It's I who have wronged our dead brothers!" The tears within He Wei An's eyes couldn't be held back any longer when he saw this scene....

A man does not shed tears if he hasn't been deeply hurt!

"General, it has nothing to do with you, it's all that Gu Xuan's fault!"

"Exactly, if it wasn't for him asking our brothers to go deep into the enemy forces, those brothers of ours wouldn't have died!"

"He sent our brothers to their deaths!"

"We suspect he's a spy from the Southern Champion Kingdom!"

"Kill him!"

"Kill him!"

...

Public sentiment was roused within the crowd of officers from the border army.

Gu Xuan had incurred public wrath!

Chapter 208: Possessing Both Courage and Wisdom

Duan Ling Tian, Xiao Yu, and Xiao Xun were startled when they walked out of their tent.

The dense mass of nearly 90,000 officers kneeling before the center tent emitted waves of sounds filled with lament and resentment. This sound spread over the entirety of Relentless Thrive City, causing the entire city to seem as if it was enveloped in dark clouds.

The residents of Relentless Thrive City were now gathered within the streets and alleys, and they all had dreary expressions.

"I originally thought that since the Crimson Wyrms had arrived, it would surely be able to cooperate with the border army to take the edge of that Southern Champion Kingdom's spirit...But I never imagined that they would actually return after suffering a crushing defeat!"

"Humph! This has nothing to do with the Crimson Wyrms. It's all because of that piece of sh*t strategists that directed the battle blindly. He's the one that caused the border army to suffer a loss of over 10,000 officers!"

"How do you know?"

"I have a cousin who's in the border army, and he's presently with his brother, pleading to the General to sentence that piece of sh*t strategist to death!"

"A single strategist led over 10,000 officers to their death? He deserves death of course! Why do they still need to plead?"

"The identity of that strategist isn't simple. He's the son of our Crimson Sky Kingdom's Prime Minister, and his name is Gu Xuan!"

...

Everywhere within Relentless Thriving City, similar discussions spread.

For a time, the public sentiment was aroused in the outside as well.

Hu Wei An stood before the center tent. His manly eyes were filled with tears as he looked at the nearly 90,000 officers, and he had a face full of sadness. However, he was at a loss for words for a moment.

"General! If you're worried that Gu Xuan is the son of the Prime Minister, we can do it ourselves, we aren't afraid!"

"Yes! We aren't afraid!"

"General, injury and death is unavoidable when armies go to battle...If we had killed over 10,000 people from that Southern Champion Kingdom, we'd accept it as unavoidable! But this time, over 10,000 of our brothers died, whereas the casualties of that Southern Champion Kingdom didn't even amount to 1,000!"

"Our brothers can't die for nothing!"

...

The crowd of officers had crimson eyes as their imposing manner shot into the sky.

"Over 10,000 officers from our own side died, but not even 1,000 of the enemy officers died?" Duan Ling Tian frowned.

Although he'd expected that Gu Xuan's strategy wouldn't work, he never imagined it would fail so miserably....

He understood in his heart that even if this Gu Xuan was able to live past today, he'd probably be condemned to everlasting shame, let alone inherit the position of Prime Minister!

Xiao Yu and Xiao Xun were stunned as well.

They only knew that over 10,000 officers of the Crimson Sky Kingdom had died, but they didn't know the specific losses of the enemy.

Now that they heard of the enemy's losses, they were speechless for a moment.

"Over 10,000 officers died for not even 1,000 enemy officers' lives?" Xiao Xun and Xiao Yu glanced at each other. They could see the rage within each other's eyes.

"This Gu Xuan deserves to die!" Xiao Xun's face sank.

More than 10,000 firm and unyielding men were led to their deaths by Gu Xuan just like that!

This was virtually a deed that greatly angered both men and God!

Within the center tent, Gu Xuan's face was ghostly pale as he dropped down to sit on the floor. His legs went soft, and he was unable to stand up for a long time.

He could perceive the rage of the crowd of border army officers outside. He didn't doubt it in the slightest that if he were to run out at this time, he would surely be torn into pieces!

"I want to leave this place, I want to leave this place...." Suddenly, Gu Xuan's gaze shone as if he'd grasped onto the last life-saving straw.

The two people who had always followed by Gu Xuan's side hesitated for a moment before slowly speaking. "Brother Gu Xuan...You should go out and make an apology."

"Apologize?" Gu Xuan's face sank, and his gaze went slightly cold. "Are you asking me to apologize? Impossible!"

Outside the tent.

No matter how He Wei An persuaded, the crowd of officers was still unwilling to retreat.

"We'll kneel and not rise until Gu Xuan dies!"

"Yes! We'll kneel and not rise until Gu Xuan dies!"

...

The crowd of officers said, in resolute tones.

In the end, even He Wei An truly didn't know how to persuade them anymore. He could only look at Nie Fen in seek of help, wanting to see if Nie Fen had a way.

Nie Fen nodded to He Wei An before standing out.

"Fellow brothers, I'm the Crimson Wyrms Army's Commander, Nie Fen!" Nie Fen gazed at the nearly 90,000 officers from the border army that had faces full of grief. "I and General He equally grieve the death of the over 10,000 brothers that have died in the battle! But the dead can never return, so why make things difficult for General He?"

"I assure all of you, as long as you stand up and return, we will drive Gu Xuan out of Relentless Thriving City and make him scam back to the Imperial City! Besides that, in at most three days, we will once again dispatch our soldiers and take revenge for our 10,000 dead brothers!" Nie Fen's voice was firm and resounding.

Seeing that the crowd of border army officers seemed to be completely indifferent to what he said, Nie Fen continued, "I know that all of you doubt my promise...But what happened yesterday was something all of you saw with your own two eyes. Do all of you know why I was able to notice the change in situation promptly yesterday and was able to lead my 10,000 brothers from the Crimson Wurm Army to cover everyone's retreat?"

What Nie Fen said caused the gazes of all the border army officers that were present to abruptly shine.

Nie Fen continued, "Actually, this wasn't because I was able to predict ahead. It was because a Paladin Academy Star Mastermind Department student had warned me before I went out to battle...He told me that if I notice certain situations, then I must resolutely retreat!"

"General Nie, didn't all the Paladin Academy Star Mastermind Department students participate in the scheming for the warfare tactics this time? Since he knew of the presence of the flaws beforehand, why didn't he speak out promptly and avoid this disaster?" One of the strategists that stood behind He Wei An frowned and was slightly furious.

"He wasn't within the tent at that time, nor did he participate in the scheming." Nie Fen looked at the strategist with a calm gaze as he spoke.

"Could it be?" He Wei An seemed to recall something, and his pupils constricted.

He still wasn't quite able to believe it.

If it really was so, then he couldn't absolve himself from the blame!

Duan Ling Tian was standing in the distance when he heard what Nie Fen said and noticed Nie Fen looking at him...He knew that Nie Fen was surely planning on selling him out!

Duan Ling Tian shook his head and brought along Xiao Yu and Xiao Xun, who had bewildered expressions, as he walked out in large strides to stand beside Nie Fen.

"It's you all!" The faces of the two strategists behind He Wei An went pale, and their eyes emitted disbelief.

Could it be that the Star Mastermind Department students that warned Commander Nie were these three grade 1 students? The grade 1 students that were given the cold shoulder and driven out by them?

Their faces become slightly unsightly.

"The one beside me is the peerless genius whose name has been spread and gave rise to much discussion within the Crimson Sky Kingdom, Duan Ling Tian! Others only know that brother Ling Tian's natural talent in the Martial Dao is supreme; however, they don't know that he has an extremely deep

understanding of warfare tactics! Before I went out to battle, it was he who told me to be wary of two types of situations. He said that if one of the two situations were to appear, then I must retreat at the first possible moment...."

"At the beginning, even I felt that those two situations were an exaggeration. It wasn't until one of them really appeared that I realized that his judgement that day wasn't wrong! Thus, I decided at that exact moment to bring along the Crimson Wyrms Army to cover all of you in retreat...Otherwise, your losses wouldn't have been only 10,000 brothers, it might have even been 30,000, 40,000, or even 50,000!" Nie Fen's loud voice was extremely influential.

"General Nie, we're all grateful to you for saving us! However, I don't quite understand what you said. Since this little brother is a Star Mastermind Department student as well, and since he noticed the flaws within the tactics Gu Xuan formulated, why did we all still conduct our attack in accordance with Gu Xuan's tactics?" A Colonel of the border army that was kneeling at the front asked the question that was in hearts of nearly everyone present.

Duan Ling Tian's brows knitted and he stood up. "This is something I can tell you!"

For a moment, everyone's gazes descended onto Duan Ling Tian.

Duan Ling Tian's tone was calm; it was as if he was recounting a matter completely unrelated to him. "That day, I and the two others behind me originally participated in the scheming of tactics against the Southern Barbaric City...However, later on, Gu Xuan said that we would only get in the way and would be of no use! And he was confident he could breach Southern Barbaric City without us."

"At that time, your General He's mind was deluded by what Gu Xuan said, and he felt that we were young, we were only grade 1 students of the Paladin Academy's Star Mastermind Department, so he drove us out! Later, even though I'd noticed the flaws within Gu Xuan's tactics, that flaw was something that was difficult to convince someone of if it didn't go through an actual battle...Moreover, with our status at the time, even if we had said something, no one would've believed us," Duan Ling Tian slowly said.

"I can bear witness to this!" Nie Fen added, "At that time, even I didn't quite believe the so-called flaws that brother Ling Tian spoke of; otherwise, I would absolutely not have allowed the 10,000 brothers of my Crimson Wyrms Army take the risk!"

What Duan Ling Tian said caused the crowd of soldiers to accumulate flames of fury within their hearts that could flood the sky, and what Nie Fen said seemed like a fuse that lit their fury ablaze, causing them to completely explode out!

"It's that Gu Xuan again!"

"He lacks ability but is jealous of talent. He pushed aside this brother Ling Tian that possesses both courage and wisdom!"

...

For a moment, the crowd of border army officers all spoke out in grief and resentment.

Putong!

Suddenly, the scene went deathly silent, and all that remained was the abrupt sound of kneeling.

It was He Wei An who'd knelt before the crowd of officers with a flushed face. "Brother, this incident happened because of my lack of careful consideration...It's all the fault of I, He Wei An!"

"General He, there's no need to be like this. You were influenced by another...After all, my age and experience are things that a normal person wouldn't be convinced of." Duan Ling Tian lightly smiled as his voice echoed out.

"Exactly. What Brother Ling Tian said is right. This incident has nothing to do with General He!"

"It has nothing to do with General He!"

...

The crowd of officers all spoke out in loud voices.

Hu Wei An's eyes emitted a trace of gratitude and guilt when he noticed Duan Ling Tian speaking out for him.

"Duan Ling Tian!" Within the tent, Gu Xuan gnashed his teeth with a face full of hatred.

Wouldn't Duan Ling Tian speaking like this push all the responsibility onto him?

Although, he had to admit that it was indeed his responsibility.

In next to no time, Duan Ling Tian's voice once again entered the tent, and it caused Gu Xuan's eyes to shine.

"Everyone, I understand your thoughts of wishing for nothing more than to kill Gu Xuan. But I still hope that all of you can calm down and think for the sake of General He. That Gu Xuan is the son of the Lord Prime Minister after all, and his status is distinguished...If he were to die in Relentless Thriving City, all of you might be fine, but General He would surely be affected!"

Chapter 209: The Despaired Gu Xuan

"I trust that none of you want anything to happen to your general, right?" Duan Ling Tian's gaze descended onto the crowd of officers before him.

Instantly, the scene went deathly silent, as the nearly 90,000 officers had all fallen silent.

"Alright! Everyone, today, I, Duan Ling Tian, will establish a military writ here...Three days from now, we will surely breach Southern Barbaric City and storm the enemy's city to take revenge for the 10,000 plus dead brothers!" In next to no time, Duan Ling Tian's voice became slightly louder, and his imposing manner pierced into the sky.

What Duan Ling Tian said caused the nearly 90,000 officers' eyes to shine.

Now they didn't dare look down upon this violet-clothed youth. This youth was a figure that had once noticed the flaws within the warfare tactics that Gu Xuan formulated...With Nie Fen bearing witness to the matter, they firmly believed it.

"All of you, get up! Properly recuperate and build up your strength, because three days from now, we attack Southern Barbaric City and wash away our shame!" Duan Ling Tian's voice abruptly became loud and was extremely influential.

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

...

Instantly, the near 90,000 border army officers that knelt on the ground stood up one by one, and they all had excited expressions.

"Wash away our shame!"

"Wash away our shame!"

...

Under the exceedingly large amounts of excited shouts, the nearly 90,000 officers all retreated.

At this moment, among everyone present, not one of them dared look down upon the violet-clothed youth that stood there....

"If he's able to stay within the Crimson Sky Kingdom, then he will surely be a figure like the Divine Might Marquis in the future...Not, it's even possible for him to surpass the Divine Might Marquis!" After seeing all of his subordinates being persuaded to retreat by Duan Ling Tian, He Wei An was slightly moved, and his eyes revealed a sense of reverence.

This youth had obtained his respect!

Nie Fen's brows rose as he shook his head and smiled. He muttered to himself, "This kid...He's even snatched away my limelight."

"General He, send off some irrelevant people...Otherwise, I won't have the mood to discuss tactics with all of you." Duan Ling Tian's gaze descended onto He Wei An's figure as he spoke in a manner than indicated something.

"Don't worry, Brother Ling Tian." He Wei An nodded and returned inside the tent before looking at Gu Xuan. "Young Master Gu, I'll arrange for a horse for you right away. Please leave."

"Then why don't you hurry up and arrange it?" Gu Xuan glared. He didn't want to stay in this place for even a moment longer.

He only wanted to return to the Imperial City and live his life of a Young Master.

"Duan Ling Tian, you're really something." Xiao Xun looked at Duan Ling Tian as he laughed and said, "You didn't see the expressions of General He and the two strategists...It was as splendid as splendid could be; however, you never told us that you had warned Commander Nie about the flaws in the plan Gu Xuan formulated."

"Don't you know about it now?" Duan Ling Tian shook his head and laughed.

Xiao Yu looked at Duan Ling Tian. He was at a loss for words for a long time, but he was finally able to only the word, "Abnormal!"

Before long, Gu Xuan's figure appeared before Duan Ling Tian.

Duan Ling Tian's eyes narrowed.

"Humph!" Gu Xuan coldly swept Duan Ling Tian with his gaze before laughing coldly. "Duan Ling Tian, don't think that I'll thank you...Also, don't be complacent! Take a look in the mirror. A mere grade 1 Star Mastermind Department student like you wants to think of a way to breach the Southern Barbaric City?"

Duan Ling Tian hadn't even spoken when Xiao Xun couldn't bear to watch any longer. He mocked Gu Xuan. "At least it's better than someone's trash tactic that led 10,000 plus soldiers to their deaths! I'm really curious, what would happen if his majesty the Emperor were to know of this incident...At that time, even if the Prime Minister can protect your life, the punishment won't be light, right?"

"You!" Gu Xuan was angered by Xiao Xun to the point that his face went grim.

"Young Master Gu, you can leave now...." Right at this moment, He Wei An's cold and indifferent voice sounded.

Gu Xuan glanced angrily at Xiao Xun, and after his icy cold gaze swept past Duan Ling Tian once again, he left.

"He really got off lightly!" Xiao Xun's face sank as he watched Gu Xuan leave.

"That isn't necessarily true." Duan Ling Tian smiled lightly with a mysterious and unfathomable expression.

Before Long, Duan Ling Tian and Nie Fen walked shoulder to shoulder into the tent.

He Wei An and the other two strategists walked in as well.

Presently, Duan Ling Tian was surrounded by everyone in the center. He was like a bright moon surrounded by the stars.

"Brother Ling Tian, I apologize for the incident the other time." He Wei An looked at Duan Ling Tian with a sincere expression.

"General He, there's no need for this. I've already said that you became prejudiced because of the interference of someone...Combined with my age, it's extremely difficult to convince someone." Duan Ling Tian shook his head with a face full of disregard.

"Brother Ling Tian has such a bearing at this age. You will surely be a figure with unrivalled talent in the future," He Wei An said, in admiration.

"General He, you don't have to be courteous with me...Let's get down to business." Duan Ling Tian's gaze quickly descended onto Southern Barbaric City's outer layout model before him.

In an instant, Duan Ling Tian's eyes flickered with a sheen of wisdom, and he pointed to various points on the model as he slowly spoke with an imposing manner that seemed as if he could guide the kingdom to victory!

The strategies of 'removing the firewood from under the pot', 'sneaking along an unknown path' of the 36 stratagems and the strategy of 'to borrow arrows with thatched boats' from the romance of the three kingdoms that were passed down since ancient times in his previous life within the Earth's nation of Hua, were recounted in detail by Duan Ling Tian, and they were used ingeniously by him.

Before long, everyone present was immersed with the tactic that Duan Ling Tian formulate.

After a long time.

"Extraordinary! Truly extraordinary! Especially this strategy of 'to borrow arrows with thatched boats.' It will fully utilize that wide moat outside the Southern Barbaric City...Our bows and arrows weren't many to begin with, so if we were to use bows and arrows to forcefully attack, we would only be able to sustain it for a little while. But now it's different; we can completely forcibly take possession of their arrows and use them against them." He Wei An had been in the army for many years and had rich experience. His keen sense of smell told him that with these two strategies combined, as long as they were to grasp the right timing, they'd surely be able to breach Southern Barbaric City!

The other two strategists reacted as well, and they looked at Duan Ling Tian as they bowed in respect. "Brother Ling Tian is a genius!"

Nie Fei glanced deeply at Duan Ling Tian, as the shock within his heart wasn't any lesser than He Wei An and the two strategists.

Although he'd seen Duan Ling Tian's strategy of 'crossing the river while deceiving the heavens,' never had he imagined that Duan Ling Tian would still be able to produce so many extraordinary strategies.

Moreover, the three extraordinary strategies that Duan Ling Tian spoke of now were even closely linked together!

Including Xiao Yu and Xiao Xun, all the Star Mastermind Students looked at the violet-clothed youth before them in disbelief....

Now they even wished for nothing more than to break open the youth's brain and see what actually was kept within!

Even the two students who originally followed Gu Xuan and were hostile towards Duan Ling Tian glanced at each other and were able to see the admiration within each other's eyes.

"The tactics that were formulated today are only a broad outline...And once we're at the battlefield, everything must be adjusted according to the changing circumstances!" Duan Ling Tian wasn't surprised when he looked at the shock on the faces of everyone.

The 36 stratagems was a treasure that the ancestors of the nation of Hua had passed down, and if it were to be used properly, one would never lose a battle!

"I believe that with Brother Ling Tian directing the battle, we'll surely be able to achieve a complete victory!" A smile appeared on He Wei An's face, and his gaze seemed to be slightly excited, because he could finally take revenge for the 10,000 plus subordinate brothers that had passed.

"Then we'll depart three days from now. Our Crimson Wurm Army will be responsible for the sneak attack, your border army will be responsible for the frontal assault." Nie Fen nodded as he put down the final decision.

In next to no time, everyone left in succession.

Three days later, they would attack the Southern Barbaric City and wash away their shame!

When they'd just returned to the tent, Xiao Xun looked at Duan Ling Tian as he asked, "Duan Ling Tian, what the heck is inside your head? 'Removing the firewood from under the pot,' 'sneaking along an unknown path,' and 'to borrow arrows with thatched boats.' All of these strategies are things I've never even heard of before! How did you think of them? Besides that, when Gu Xuan left, what did you mean when you said it's not necessarily true?"

Duan Ling Tian shrugged. "Xiao Xun, how do you expect me to answer when you ask so much? I'm too lazy to deal with you! You'll naturally know when the time comes."

Xiao Xun smiled bitterly.

Xiao Yu, however, seemed to have known that this would be the result, thus he didn't speak a word.

Nevertheless, the gaze that he looked at Duan Ling Tian with was extremely complicated.

Maybe becoming friends with Duan Ling Tian in this life could be considered as his greatest gain and honor....

Outside Relentless Thriving City, a steed darted on.

A young man in a slightly sorry state unceasingly clamped onto the horse's girth with his legs, and the horse-whip in his hand never stopped as he unceasingly urged the horse below him.

Ceaselessly increasing his speed.

After he dashed out a few miles, the young man noticed that the speed of the horse beneath him had slowed down. And before long, the horse directly fell onto the ground and started foaming at the mouth before losing all signs of life.

Obviously, it had been poisoned to death!

The young man's face went pale, as he vaguely perceived that there was something strange about this matter.

Right at this moment.

"Go!"

"Go!"

...

Ten large horses darted over and surrounded the young man in the middle within the blink of an eye.

Atop the 10 horses were 10 middle-aged men in casual clothes, and they were currently staring at the young man with cold and indifferent gazes as their eyes flickered with blood thirsty killing intent.

"You all...I know you, you're a Captain from the border army! You're a Captain as well!" The young man felt like these people to looked familiar at the beginning, and before long, he'd recalled who they were.

These people had respectfully listened to his commands on the battlefield yesterday when he commanded the army to charge at Southern Barbaric City....

"Young Master Gu, when you go to hell, remember to apologize to those 10,000 plus brothers of mine that have died." One of the Captains that was identified directed his icy cold gaze onto the youth as if he was looking at a dead man.

"You all...How dare you all! I'm the son of the Prime Minister, and all of you dare to touch me?" The young man was precisely Gu Xuan. Never had he imagined that after fleeing Relentless Thriving City, he would actually encounter a border army officer with the intention to kill him. His expression was extremely unsightly.

"The son of the Prime Minister?" The other Captain sneered. "If you weren't the Prime Minister's son, do you think that you could have walked out of our campsite? If it wasn't for us being worried about implicating the General, do you think we would be so kind as to let you leave? Those were the lives of 10,000 people!" As he finished speaking, the Captain was slightly hysterical.

"You...You can't kill me...Can't kill me...If you don't kill me, I'll give you anything you want...Wealth and rank, groups of beauties, I can give all of you anything that you want!" Gu Xuan was afraid, he was truly afraid.

In his entire life, it was the first time that dread and despair arose within his heart.

Chapter 210: Duan Ling Tian's Discovery

"Do you think that anything you can give us is able to make up for the lives of the 10,000 plus brothers of mine?" Another Captain spoke out with a cold and indifferent voice, and a dense killing intent was even emitted from him....

"If anything were to happen to me, aren't all of you afraid that my father will look for trouble with your border army?" Seeing that the 10 Captains were completely unmoved, Gu Xuan's face sank. Since his soft methods of persuasion didn't work, he tried the direct method of threats.

Instantly, all the Captains looked at each other before being unable to hold back their laughter.

"Young Master Gu, everyone knows that our general has allowed you to leave, and you've left Relentless Thriving City...Do you think that if you were to die outside, this incident would implicate our general?"

"Everyone would only think that you encountered bandits on your journey and lost both your life and money."

"So Young Master Gu doesn't have to be worried about our general."

...

The Captains mocked him one after the other in succession, causing Gu Xuan's expression to become even more unsightly as time passed.

He naturally knew that what these people said were true, and now he regretted it!

He shouldn't have left the border army's campsite. Even if he were to be utterly shameless, he still should have dragged out his stay at the border army's campsite and waited for the Crimson Wurm Army to return together with them.

At the very least, he would be able to keep his life!

"No! Don't kill me!" Gu Xuan's face went deathly pale, and his eyes revealed deep dread.

But unfortunately, no matter how he begged for mercy, he still couldn't escape his fate of death under the hands of the 10 extremely enraged Captains in the end....

Even though he was a third level Origin Core martial artist, before 10 border army Captains that were fierce as tigers and wolves, he was still too weak to fight them.

Unsurprisingly, Gu Xuan was killed and his corpse buried in the wilderness, and it might not ever be found.

Deep into the night, at an inconspicuous corner of Relentless Thriving City's border army campsite, Duan Ling Tian smiled lightly as he said, "That was really quick of them."

Presently, there were two people standing before Duan Ling Tian, Zhang Qian and Zhao Gang.

Duan Ling Tian had only just heard of the matter of Gu Xuan being killed from Zhang Qian and Zhao Gang.

Maybe even those 10 border army Captains never imagined that everything they'd done was seen by Zhang Qian and Zhao Gang.

"Humph! That Gu Xuan's death isn't worth any pity." When Zhang Qian and Zhao Gang mentioned Gu Xian, they were extremely furious, as they were both Generals within the army and thus were extremely furious towards the matter of Gu Xuan leading over 10,000 border army officers to their deaths.

"Enough, the matter's already passed...You two can wait to watch the show three days from now." A sense of confidence appeared on Duan Ling Tian's face.

Three days later, Relentless Thriving City once again sent out their army to head towards the Southern Champion Kingdom to attack Southern Barbaric City!

Within the border army, more than half their numbers were occupied by foot soldiers. Thus, the combined army of the Crimson Wurm Army and the border army, which formed a huge army of 100,000, required spending an entire day's worth of time to head to the Southern Barbaric City.

Duan Ling Tian galloped his horse forward with Nie Fen and He Wei An as they galloped at the front of the army.

They left early in the morning, and as the sun set west, the huge army of 100,000 arrived outside the Crosscut Mountain Range.

"Hmm?" The faraway Crosscut Mountain Range attracted Duan Ling Tian's attention.

This Crosscut Mountain Range seemed like it was forcefully split open by an almighty figure who exerted peerless strength.

"Brother Ling Tian, across this Crosscut Mountain Range is Southern Barbaric City. Tonight, we'll rest at the other side of the Crosscut Mountain Range," He Wei An reminded.

Duan Ling Tian nodded, and his gaze never left the Crosscut Mountain Range....

"What? Brother Ling Tian is interested in this Crosscut Mountain Range?" He Wei An asked, with a smile.

"I feel that the ravine in the middle of the mountain range doesn't seem to have been formed naturally." Duan Ling Tian lightly smiled.

"Brother Ling Tian, there's a legend within our northwest border...In the legend, a long, long time ago, there were once two experts that descended here, and they carried out a great battle that shook the heavens and earth! In the end, one of the experts struck out with merely one swing of his sabre to cleave this mountain range into two!"

"And the ravine at the center of the Crosscut Mountain Range, or in other words, this path, was precisely opened up by that expert with a swing of his sabre," He Wei An slowly said.

Duan Ling Tian nodded.

This legend in all likelihood was real,;moreover, the strength of that expert wasn't low!

"It's been an unknown amount of years since that expert did this...That expert's probably already turned into a pile of dirt by now," Duan Ling Tian said inwardly.

On the Cloud Continent, even an existence as formidable as a Martial Emperor, although possessing a very long lifespan, still had an end.

After walking past the ravine in the center of the mountain range, the huge army of 100,000 arrived at the other side of the Crosscut Mountain Range, and now the sky slowly dimmed down.

The huge army of 100,000 started constructing tents one by one on the spot.

Night descended onto the lands.

"Duan Ling Tian, sleep early; we still have to attack Southern Barbaric City tomorrow morning," Xiao Xun said to Duan Ling Tian, before returning to the tent and lying down to rest.

Xiao Yu followed him into the tent as well.

They were both slightly anticipating tomorrow's battle....

Duan Ling Tian, however, didn't feel sleepy.

Their tent was near the side of the Crosscut Mountain Range, and currently, Duan Ling Tian's gaze was directed at a nearby boulder.

Atop the boulder was a puddle of liquid. The liquid was vermilion red in color, and this was its pure color.

"This...." Duan Ling Tian walked over before touching a strand of the liquid and putting it close to his nose to smell it. "It's wine!"

Instantly, Duan Ling Tian noticed that the smell of the wine entered his nose and actually caused the Origin Energy within his body to roil....

"This isn't any ordinary wine!" Duan Ling Tian's pupils constricted, and he started searching through the lifetime's worth of memories of the Rebirth Martial Emperor for related records....

Within the Cloud Continent, wines that could affect Origin Enemy weren't too many, especially this type of wine that appeared in a remote forest on the mountains.

In the end, Duan Ling Tian set his sights on a type of wine...

Monkey Wine!

Monkey Wine is ordinarily produced by the fierce beast Stone Monkey, and it's brewed by the Stone Monkeys from precious materials they'd gathered. It was extremely beneficial to the cultivation of any martial artist below the Void Stage!

Even within the two lifetimes that the Rebirth Martial Emperor experienced, he'd only encountered Stone Monkeys in five places, and he seized some Monkey Wine from them all five times.

Moreover, at that time his cultivation was already above the Void Stage, and he'd only seized the Monkey Wine from the Stone Monkeys to savor it.

"Looks like it's very likely there are Stone Monkeys within this Crosscut Mountain Range." Duan Ling Tian's eyes shone as he silently flashed out and searched forward. He noticed some sparse traces of Monkey Wine....

He guessed that there were Stone Monkeys that came here to drink Monkey Wine.

After a short while, Duan Ling Tian arrived at the foot of the mountain at a side of the Crosscut Mountain Range.

Presently, Duan Ling Tian was extremely far from the place the huge army of 100,000 was garrisoned.

"Young Master!" Two figures silently appeared beside Duan Ling Tian, and they were slightly curious. What was the Young Master doing here so late in the night?

Could it be that he wanted to enter the Crosscut Mountain Range?

"Zhang Qian, Zhao Gang, how much do you know of this place?" Duan Ling Tian asked them.

Zhang Qian pondered for a moment before saying, "Young Master, according to my knowledge, within this Crosscut Mountain Range, there are groups of wild animals and the number of fierce beasts is not low... There might be Nascent Soul Stage fierce beasts here!"

"As expected." Duan Ling Tian nodded, and his gaze shone.

Looked like his guess wasn't wrong, and there surely was quite an amount of Stone Monkeys within this Crosscut Mountain Range, even to the extent there might be a troop of monkeys.

"My luck isn't bad." A smile appeared on the corners of Duan Ling Tian's mouth, as Monkey Wine was extremely beneficial to him at the moment.

If he was able to obtain some Monkey Wine, he would be confident in directly breaking through to the ninth level of the Core Formation Stage!

Even breaking through to the Origin Core Stage wouldn't require much time!

"Zhang Qian, Zhao Gang, come with me." Duan Ling Tian's entire body flashed out as if transforming into an incomparably swift spirit serpent as soon as he finished speaking. He directly flashed up the Crosscut Mountain Range.

Even though Zhang Qian and Zhao Gang didn't know why Duan Ling Tian would be interested in the Crosscut Mountain Range, they still followed him.

Their duty was to protect Duan Ling Tian.

They naturally encountered many wild animals and fierce beasts upon entering the Crosscut Mountain Range, but they were easily killed by Duan Ling Tian's group of three.

After they continued going in deeper, they couldn't see wild animals anymore. Everything that pounced at them were fierce beasts, and even with Duan Ling Tian's current strength, he still felt pressured.

However, with the presence of Zhang Qian and Zhao Gang, their forward speed never slowed down.

Eventually, Duan Ling Tian noticed traces of the Stone Monkeys within a spacious gorge.

The Stone Monkey was different from an ordinary monkey, as its build was extremely small and its speed was swift as a bolt of lightning.

An adult Stone Monkey at least had a strength at the Origin Core Stage...And some stronger Stone Monkeys were even comparable to Nascent Soul martial artists!

That year, Rebirth Martial Emperor encountered a few troops of Stone Monkeys, and the Monkey King within two of those troops were existences that had stepped into the Void Prying Stage and had already transformed into Demon Beasts.

"I will not be so misfortunate, right?" Duan Ling Tian said inwardly.

Presently, Duan Ling Tian was concealed atop a large tree at the entrance of the gorge.

Zhang Qian and Zhao Gang followed beside Duan Ling Tian as well.

Meanwhile, the two of them noticed the whereabouts of the Stone Monkeys and had bewildered expressions. "Young Master, what monkeys are these? Why do I feel their sizes are much small than ordinary monkeys?"

"Stone Monkeys!" Duan Ling Tian said.

"What? Stone Monkeys?" Zhang Qian and Zhao Gang's pupils constricted when they heard what Duan Ling Tian said.

Although they'd never seen a Stone Monkey before, they'd heard many rumors related to the Stone Monkeys.

The Stone Monkeys were formidable fierce beasts, and most importantly, they knew how to brew a type of spirit wine called Monkey Wine.

If this type of spirit wine was consumed by a martial artist below the Void Prying Stage, it would be extremely beneficial to his cultivation, and the lower the cultivation, the larger the benefit.

Such as martial artist at the Core Formation Stage, he would very likely directly break through one or two levels after consuming the Monkey Wine!

"Never had I imagined that there were actually Stone Monkeys existing within the Crosscut Mountain Range."

"Moreover, they're so well concealed." Zhang Qian and Zhao Gang's gazes shone as thoughts regarding the Monkey Wine arose within their minds.

"Don't be careless. Based on my current observation, there's a troop of Stone Monkeys within this gorge...And there might even be a Monkey King amongst them!" Duan Ling Tian's face was serious, as he wasn't so optimistic like Zhang Qian and Zhao Gang.

"Monkey King?" Obviously, Zhang Qian and Zhao Gang didn't know much about the Stone Monkeys.

"A Monkey King might be a fierce beast, but it also might be a Demon Beast! Even if it's a fierce beast, it would absolutely be an existence at the same level as a Half-step Void Stage martial artist," Duan Ling Tian slowly said.