

Ancient GM 281

Chapter 281: Swords And Daggers Drawn

Swords and daggers were drawn and being pressed to his throat; this was what Qin Wentian was feeling now.

Bailu You was also in the group, as he was the one that led all these Divine Inscriptionist Grandmasters over. However, the wine drinker's heart was not in the wine, his motives were different from the rest. He didn't really wish for Qin Wentian to hand the ancient scroll over, he only wanted Qin Wentian to feel the pressure.

And when Qin Wentian began caving in from the pressure, he would naturally do the 'good-guy act' and step out to offer him hope.

Hence, Bailu You currently stood to the side, watching the current scene unfold with a faint smile on his face.

But at this moment, the sounds of footsteps rang out. Bailu You turned his head only to see a newly arriving group rush over. It was the large-eyed elder, together with Bailu Yi, Bailu Jing and their father.

"Did that lass think that they would be able to stop this, just with the appearance of the Great Elder?"

Bailu You naturally could discern what Bailu Yi was thinking. As the newcomers arrived, Bailu You stood up and bowed slightly, "Great Elder."

"Mhm." The large-eyed elder casually nodded, yet he was feeling extremely confused in his heart. He only tagged along because he was feeling bored; Bailu Yi had only told him that there would soon be a good show to watch.

"Father."

Bailu You suddenly noticed the arrival of his father, Bailu Tong as well. Bailu Tong nodded in response, he knew that the large-eyed elder was on his way here, which was why he decided to join in as well.

His scheme must not be spoiled by Bailu Yi.

The fourth-ranked Grandmasters didn't show any signs of impatience. They merely remained silent, with no hint of their thoughts showing on their faces as they noted the arrival of Bailu Tong and the large-eyed elder.

They weren't impatient, and neither was Qin Wentian. He merely stood at one side, appearing extremely relaxed.

Eventually, one of the fourth-ranked Grandmasters, with sunken eyes and a high nose, couldn't hide his greed any longer. He narrowed his eyes, his gaze resembling a poisonous serpent and stared straight at Qin Wentian, causing the latter to feel extremely uncomfortable.

"Qin Wentian." Three bodyguards stood behind him, all of them at the ninth level of Yuanfu. The Inscriptionist himself was an old man that had a cultivation base at the seventh level of Yuanfu. "You wanted us to personally pay you a visit? This is the first time I've met a third-ranked piece of crap so arrogant that he would even dare request us fourth-ranked Grandmasters to personally pay him a visit."

"Senior must be joking." Qin Wentian pointed to the path behind the old man as he smiled.

"What do you mean I'm joking?" The old man's gaze bore into Qin Wentian's.

"I had no intention of asking Senior to pay me a visit, I think Senior must have been mistaken. Oh, the pathway is just over there, so please don't let me take up more of your time, Senior. Good day." Qin Wentian's smile grew even wider. His implied meaning was obvious—it was not I who wanted to meet with you, but you who wanted to meet with me. But if you don't wish to meet me, the path is right there, goodbye.

"You..." How could the old man fail to understand Qin Wentian's meaning, his caved-in eyes became more sunken, as glints of cold light erupted forth.

“What’s the use of a sharp tongue? Wanting us to leave right after we’ve just arrived, aren’t you overestimating yourself too much?” the old man sharply retorted.

An expression of pity appeared on Qin Wentian’s face. “Senior, are you a retard?”

As the sound of Qin Wentian’s voice faded, the countenance of the old man instantly sank. Qin Wentian was calling him an idiot in front of everyone?

Ever since he stepped into the ranks of the fourth-ranked Divine Inscriptionists, nobody had dared to humiliate him. A terrifying pressure emanated out from his three ninth-level-Yuanfu bodyguards, gushing towards Qin Wentian.

As long as the old man gave a command, they would immediately attack.

“I will give you a chance to apologize.” The old man’s countenance had already turned bone-chillingly cold. It was still too early to contend for the ancient scroll, but right now, for the matter of his humiliation, he first wanted Qin Wentian to apologise.

“Senility has no cure.” The expression of pity disappeared from Qin Wentian’s face, his gaze turning sharp as he stared at the old man in front of him.

These people were too much, wanting to use pressure to overwhelm him. How could he still remain even-tempered in his heart? In front of so many Grandmasters, out of respect for the rank they held, Qin Wentian initially still tried to be courteous.

But since that old man refused to reciprocate his kindness, why would he still fear to break the pretence of cordiality?

“Impudent!” the three bodyguards roared, as they dashed forwards. However, even before they could gather any momentum, the coldness of Qin Wentian’s voice penetrated their hearts. “If you take another step forward, die.”

As the sound of the word ‘die’ faded away, a glacial killing intent erupted forth from Qin Wentian, so frigid it caused people to tremble involuntarily.

In the face of such killing intent, the three bodyguards actually felt fear. Even with the advantage of their higher cultivation bases, their instincts were telling them that the young man in front of them was truly capable of carrying out his threat.

With just a single sentence from Qin Wentian, the entire mountain slope was filled with silence.

The gentle breeze gusted past as the lush green grass swayed in tandem.

Qin Wentian's eyes were like ice-cold blades drilling right into that of the fourth-ranked Grandmaster.

"I've already indulged you enough by addressing you as 'Senior', yet you overstepped your boundaries time and time again just because you don't understand your limitations. Since you are unable to understand the meaning of my words when I put it across nicely, let me reiterate once again," Qin Wentian icily stated, "I, Qin, am training my cultivation here in the White Deer Institute's back mountains. If you want to come, just come, if you want to leave, what does it have to do with me? Don't give me pretty words such as 'requesting you to pay me a visit', I don't give a damn about what you want to do. First, I'm not a junior of your sect. And second, I have no need to seek your help, so why would I need to request you to pay me a visit? If you have nothing here, then get out of my face."

Qin Wentian's overwhelming words caused everyone in the vicinity to freeze as unknown emotions flickered in their eyes.

Arrogant, this brat truly stank of arrogance.

Although Qin Wentian's words were logical, only those with the power to back up one's words would be taken seriously in this cultivation-oriented world. Who wouldn't show a modicum of respect to these esteemed fourth-ranked Grandmasters? Yet Qin Wentian's speech was like a harsh slap to their faces.

One could say that with a single sentence, Qin Wentian instantly offended that fourth-ranked Grandmaster. Even if he survived today, there were too many methods that fourth-ranked Grandmaster could employ to deal with someone at the Yuanfu Realm.

Even the large-eyed elder was wiping away the sweat from his forehead, where did this brat get his confidence from?

Glancing at Bailu Yi who was standing by his side, the large-eyed elder started in surprise. Bailu Yi's eyes flickered with a hint of assuredness, appearing extremely at ease. Her confidence in Qin Wentian wouldn't lose out to the confidence Qin Wentian had in himself.

Grandmaster Fenrir merely smiled and silently watched on.

He wanted to see how Qin Wentian would solve the situation today.

As for that old man with the sunken eyes, his countenance turned increasingly malevolent from Qin Wentian's words.

'If you have nothing here, get out of my face?'

A junior at the Yuanfu Realm dared to speak in this manner with him?

'If you take another step forward, die.'?

Where did he get his confidence from?

Unless, Qin Wentian's attainment had soared even higher after acquiring the ancient scroll inheritance from the Ascendant, allowing him to inscribe even more marvelous peak-tier third-ranked formations. Could it be that Qin Wentian assumed that by borrowing power from peak third-ranked formations, he would be able to deal with them?

"Brother Liang, the temper of juniors nowadays is truly fiery, indeed." A black-faced, middle-aged man laughed. The Brother Liang he was referring to, was naturally the fourth-ranked Inscriptionist with the sunken eyes.

"If we weren't within the grounds of the White Deer Institute, that Qin brat would have already died ten over times based on Brother Liang's temper," the black-faced, middle-aged man stated. The old man narrowed his sunken eyes, wondering why they were wasting so much time conversing with Qin Wentian. It didn't matter if they were in the White Deer Institute or not. They could just kill him and plunder the ancient scroll away.

However, since the White Deer Institute allowed them to enter, it meant that they too, hadn't yet obtained the ancient scroll and wanted to use the fourth-ranked Grandmasters as pressure to force Qin Wentian to give in. Both parties understood the intentions of each other clearly.

Hence, all of them were still spectating, waiting with bated breath. Because the old man with the sunken eyes had the most impatient nature, he was the one selected to start the ball rolling, making things difficult for Qin Wentian.

"Indeed, this young pup has no respect for his elders. He ought to be punished," added another person.

This man had a flowing white beard and looked akin to an immortal. He was already above 150 years of age and had stepped into the level of a fourth-ranked Inscriptionist for a very long time. This old man was extremely well known in the Moon Continent and had even instructed many Grandmasters of the current era before.

"Eccentric Song feels this way as well?" The black-faced, middle-aged man laughed. After which, the old man with the sunken eyes glanced at Eccentric Song as he asked, "How does Eccentric Song feel that this young pup should be punished?"

"Fenrir, do you have any thoughts on this?" Eccentric Song stroked his beard, shifting his gaze onto Grandmaster Fenrir.

"Don't ask me. I'm already acquainted with this little brother from back then. I'm only here today as a spectator. I won't participate in whatever you guys have planned." Fenrir smiled as he shrugged. Seeing how confident Qin Wentian was, Fenrir believed that Qin Wentian had already made his preparations. In that case, he would merely wait to watch the good show.

"In that case, the scroll of the Ascendant?" Eccentric Song's eyes narrowed as they flashed with sharpness.

"None of my concern as well. If you guys have the capabilities to obtain it, take it away then." Fenrir nonchalantly waved his hands.

"Excellent, excellent." Eccentric Song laughed, there was one less competitor for the inheritance.

“For his rudeness, he should be slaughtered.” At this moment, a voice drifted from the back of the crowd. As the black-faced, middle-aged man shifted his glance over, he broke out into a smile, “Ghaus, to think you are here as well.”

“I, Ghaus, knew this brat since a long time ago. He has no respect for his elders, and has the ambition and heart of a wild wolf. The inheritance would only be wasted in his hands. We must slaughter him, and I’m sure the White Deer Institute wouldn’t be so stupid as to go against all of us.” Ghaus’s voice was filled with coldness.

“Ghaus, you are shameless.” Bailu Yi cursed. Just because of his grudge with Qin Wentian back then, Ghaus wanted to use it as an excuse to kill him today. How ruthless.

“Miss Bailu, does your White Deer Institute really wish to go against us?” Ghaus wasn’t angry, he smiled indifferently instead. The crowd then shifted their gaze onto the large-eyed elder and Bailu Tong. It seemed that the fourth-ranked Grandmasters had already made their stance clear, the next step would be to see how the White Deer Institute would react.

Bailu Tong sneered as he said in an extremely audible whisper, “We will see how he chooses then.”

Evidently, Bailu Tong wanted to shift the pressure back onto Qin Wentian, forcing him to make his decision.

These fourth-ranked Grandmasters were all out for his blood. Did he want the ancient scroll, or his life?

These Grandmasters were all highly revered and extremely famous in the Moon Continent and had determined his death with but a question and a few cold smiles. It was as though his life wasn’t worth crap.

And Ghaus actually revealed himself just to hit him when he was down?

Qin Wentian showed no fear at all. He calmly turned his gaze onto them as he slowly spoke, “Cut the crap. Why do you all need to waste so much time beating around the bush when your objectives are as clear as day? The ancient scroll is not in my possession, even if I did have it on me, it’ll be a cold day in hell before I give it up to losers like you.”

what does this ;w; means? ive seen cloud typing it ;w;

Chapter 282: A bunch of trash

As the sound of Qin Wentian's voice faded, Bailu Tong's laugh resounded out in the air. "Qin Wentian, a hot-blooded young man that doesn't fear death. This undoubtedly shows his steely character. This trait is naturally a good thing, but sometimes, there are better choices. Why choose death for the sake of useless pride? Since you are a guest of our White Deer Institute, I'm sure these esteemed Grandmasters wouldn't make things difficult for you if you hand over the ancient scroll into our possession. We could guard it for you."

Bailu Tong's countenance appeared full of concern, as though he was worried for Qin Wentian. However, the unspoken meaning of his words was naturally understood by all, causing the various fourth-ranked Grandmasters to silently curse that Bailu Tong was a wily old fox.

"Senior worries too much, Junior is still young, how could I wish to die?" Qin Wentian calmly replied. Guarding it for him? More like daylight robbery.

"Oh?" Bailu Tong's countenance flickered as he laughed. "Since that's the case, I won't try to persuade you any longer."

After speaking, Bailu Tong shut his eyes, as though he was giving his silent approval for the other fourth-ranked Grandmasters to take action.

The sunken-eyed old man, Old Liang, Eccentric Song and the black-faced middle-aged man exchanged glances as hints of laughter could be seen in their eyes. Old Liang, turned his gaze onto Qin Wentian as he narrowed his eyes, adding in a sinister tone, "The Ascendant scroll naturally belongs to those powerful enough to match it. A junior like you wants to solely possess it? Only death awaits you."

At his command, the three peak-level Yuanfu bodyguards stepped out, moving towards Qin Wentian.

"I've said it before, if you take another step forward, die." Qin Wentian softly spoke, as a golden glint of cold light flashed past his eyes. In an instant, the three bodyguards felt their minds rumbling, as though they had just been the recipients of a vicious mind attack.

Shaking their heads clear, in the next moment, the wills of their Mandates gushed out, as a pressure akin to the heavy mountains enveloped the area.

One of them blasted forth with a palm and instantly, a blood-colored palm imprint the size of a mountain materialized, slamming towards Qin Wentian. Even from a distance, Qin Wentian could feel the will of the Mandate, causing interruptions in his blood flow.

“BOOM!” That blood-colored palm struck forth, as a deafening sound thundered out. And just when everyone thought that Qin Wentian was already dead, a sound like a mirror shattering echoed as Qin Wentian appeared again unharmed, calmly looking at them.

“Huh?” The Grandmasters all furrowed their brows, they could sense that at this moment, the Qin Wentian ahead was projecting a sense of ‘blurriness’, as though the silhouette in front of them wasn’t his real body but a kind of mirage instead.

Fenrir cupped his chin as a smile appeared on his face. Different Grandmasters were skilled in different aspects of the Dao of Divine Inscriptions. There were some that excelled in Divine Inscriptions combat, some claimed supremacy when it came to deciphering and neutralizing formations, while some were experts in forging weapons and others adept at the refinement of Puppets.

Similarly, for fourth-ranked Grandmasters, this was the case as well. Fenrir was more well-versed in Divine Inscriptions combat and neutralizing formations. And because he was a Heavenly Dipper Sovereign as well, his sharp sense of perception had already told him that there was a formation ahead.

This formation was an illusory-type formation and was that of the fourth-rank.

Not only this, what baffled Fenrir was that this illusory formation contained no killing arrays at all. It was a pure illusion-type formation so marvelously engraved all its runic outlines were concealed completely. That was why despite the presence of so many fourth-ranked Grandmasters, none of them had actually noticed the existence of this formation. Naturally, they didn’t see that the real purpose of this formation was merely a camouflage for the combat-type Divine Inscription traps which Qin Wentian had embedded into the ground.

These traps would be activated at the slightest touch, Fenrir was sweating on behalf of the other fourth-ranked Grandmasters.

He wondered how much determination did Qin Wentian have exactly, how far would he go to prove his point?

“Illusory Formation?” These fourth-ranked Grandmasters weren’t that useless. They could now tell that Qin Wentian had engraved an illusory-type formation here.

“Eccentric Song.” The old man with the sunken eyes stared at the highly respected Eccentric Song with inquiring eyes. Eccentric Song was extremely well versed with formations.

However, Eccentric Song was frowning as his eyes narrowed, a strong feeling of unease blossomed in his heart.

He was well versed with formations, but even he hadn’t seen through this before the bodyguards blundered into it.

This was sufficient to make him drop all carelessness and inspect it vigilantly. Upon seeing the mocking smile on the face of the young man before him, he couldn’t help but tremble with anger. “No worries, this formation is centered around illusive arrays, there’s no way for it to attack us. Go kill him.”

“KILL!” The sunken-eyed Old Liang immediately spat out a command when he heard the words of Eccentric Song. The three bodyguards advanced as they lunged towards the silhouette of Qin Wentian. Regardless of whether Qin Wentian was illusory or a real body, they would exterminate it all the same.

However right at this moment, a terrifying whistling abruptly echoed out. The pupils of the three bodyguards narrowed as they turned their eyes to the ground. On it, there was a radiant glow suddenly shining out. That was the glow indicative of Divine Inscriptions.

“Xiu, xiu, xiu...” Terrifying sounds of sword slicing transformed into an ear-splitting screech. The three bodyguards only felt a vortex of sword Qi gathering in spirals, roiling towards them. The maelstrom formed by the spiraling sword Qi seemed to have inexhaustible might and even a will of its own. The three of them immediately rose into the air, wanting to avoid the incoming tempest.

“RUMBLE!” Abruptly, another sound echoed as runic outlines shone again beneath their feet. Now, they felt a tremendous geo-magnetic force anchoring their feet onto the ground, they were no longer able to levitate.

In a blink of an eye, that maelstrom of sword Qi had already gushed over, enveloping the three of them within.

Expressions of unwillingness and terror warped their faces as the three bodyguards howled, “NOOOOOOOOOOO!”

Despair shone in their eyes as their bodies shuddered violently, the maelstrom of sword Qi surrounding them, was definitely a peak third-ranked Divine Inscription. It was currently devouring them.

“SAVE ME!” One of the bodyguards within howled in madness, gazing at the sunken eyes of their master, Old Liang. The hopelessness in his eyes shook the hearts of those spectating.

“Stay your hand.” Old Liang fiercely berated; however he only saw the maelstrom of sword Qi close in on the three bodyguards, completely devouring them. The lacerating sounds continued unabated as the torrential sword Qi remained as dense as ever. Occasionally, a dark red liquid would splatter on the ground and when the tempest ceased, nothing was left behind.

Three peak-level Yuanfu bodyguards vanished like smoke in the thin air. There weren’t even any traces that they once existed before.

The countenance of the spectators immediately turned incredibly unsightly. There were so many Grandmasters around, yet Qin Wentian was still able to kill three peak-level Yuanfu cultivators with his Divine Inscriptions.

Their gazes turned back onto Qin Wentian. Only now did they realize that the young man standing before them was not as easy to control as they had imagined.

“Fourth-ranked Grandmaster?” Qin Wentian stared at the old man with the sunken eyes, as sarcasm flashed past his eyes. “Does Grandmaster dare to attempt neutralizing my formation?”

Old Liang’s countenance sank as he shifted his glance at Eccentric Song, only to see Eccentric Song was narrowing his eyes in deep contemplation.

“That earlier Sword-type combat Divine Inscription was cloaked within his illusory formation. The formation itself actually hadn’t contained any killing arrays, and instead the three of them died to the peak-tier, third-ranked Sword Qi Maelstrom Divine Inscription trap hidden within it. Using the three of them to gain such valuable information have made their deaths worth it.”

Eccentric Song calmly commented while Old Liang turned ashen.

Wasn't that the equivalent to sending his guards as guinea pigs to test out Qin Wentian's formation?

This old undying freak was full of schemes indeed.

"Is that so? Since you already have first-hand information regarding my formation, would Grandmaster care to try it out?" Qin Wentian's eyes stared straight at Eccentric Song, as he commented. Eccentric Song stroked his beard and smiled, "Just a mere third-level formation, do I still need to personally neutralize it? Ghaus, go and break it in my stead."

Qin Wentian's smiled coldly, Ghaus was to go in Eccentric Song's stead?

"Old fox." Ghaus involuntarily cursed in his heart. Although he was extremely unhappy with Qin Wentian, he knew that at his level, he would surely face danger if he were to attempt neutralizing Qin Wentian's formation.

The other Grandmasters didn't say anything but chose to watch on silently. At this moment, their hearts were in shambles, their eyes couldn't even see through this illusory formation. Could this really be a formation at the third-rank?

In any case, they rather believed that there must be obscure methods of engraving formations, hiding the runic outlines from their eyes. It was better than to believe otherwise, because if this was a fourth-rank formation, it meant that...

But then again, they still felt that they were overly thinking things. The distance from third-rank to the fourth-rank was too wide apart, it was impossible to break through so easily. How old was Qin Wentian? It was impossible. Without tens of years of study and research, it was absolutely impossible.

"It must be because he comprehended some insights from the ancient scroll. The inheritance of that Ascendant must be truly formidable indeed," Bailu You spoke out, as the other Grandmasters nodded in agreement. That was the only thing that made sense, Qin Wentian must have stumbled upon some mysterious method of engraving formations from the information he acquired through the ancient scroll.

"Ghaus, faster," the black-faced, middle-aged man coldly commanded, "If you kill this brat, I will definitely not mistreat you."

Ghaus's countenance turned ugly, but he still nodded his head. Several Puppets appeared before him as he followed behind them, walking towards Qin Wentian.

"Kill," Ghaus commanded while his Puppets rushed forth. Although killing intent was gushing from him, he stood there motionless, acting extremely cautiously.

Abruptly the runic outlines embedded on the ground shone with resplendent light, as a terrifying aura burst out from within the formation.

An awe-inspiring Great Roc floated up in the air, as it flew towards the Puppets, colliding directly into them. During that instant of combat, Ghaus sent out his perception, his eyes glinting with a cold light.

"That Divine Inscription is so easy to break, Ghaus, what the hell are you waiting for?" the black-faced, middle-aged man coldly stated. Ghaus could only grit his teeth and nod in agreement. Although it wasn't difficult to neutralize that Great Roc Inscription, Ghaus was still extremely cautious, advancing forwards slowly.

However, as he took a third step forward, even before he neared the Great Roc Inscription, another set of runic outline glowed underneath its feet as it activated. It was unknown how many traps Qin Wentian had set within this formation.

"Buzz!" A shrill sound sliced through the air, Ghaus's countenance instantly paled. He had stepped on and triggered a trap, yet he didn't realize it until it was too late.

"Puchi..." A terrifying long lance penetrated downwards through Ghaus's body, nailing him onto the ground. His eyes were still wide open, with traces of regret floating past them when he stared at Qin Wentian. Why... Why had he chosen to appear in front of this monstrous freak once again?

Qin Wentian gently waved his hands as a column of flames descended, burning Ghaus's body into ashes. At the same time, with the death of Ghaus, Qin Wentian collected all the Puppets he had left behind. These Puppets now belonged to him.

The Grandmasters all stood there silently, their faces turning green. Was the inheritance of that Ascendant really that powerful, it could cloak and camouflage traps so well that even a peak-tier, third-ranked Grandmaster like Ghaus couldn't sense anything amiss?

“Fourth-ranked Grandmasters?” Qin Wentian turned his gaze onto the other cautious, or some may say cowardly, Divine Inscriptionists that were observing from afar. He coldly laughed, “Fourth-ranked? How many years have you all lived in comparison to me? Are you guys still not confident enough in the level of your attainments? Speaking so loudly, only knowing how to boast blindly, in fact, how sad is this? You’re all nothing but a bunch of trash!”

Chapter 283: The Truth Revealed

Qin Wentian delivered his words harshly, degrading the bunch of fourth-ranked Grandmasters in front of him as though they were all garbage. As if he intentionally wanted to ignite their tempers.

Who were these people? No matter where they went in Grand Xia, they would all be treated as valuable guests.

But today they were publicly reprimanded, their humiliation brought down by a young lad who was not even twenty. How could their hearts remain unflustered?

However, they made no reply, and no one else was lashing out in anger. Earlier when they forced Ghaus up to do battle, what they wanted was to merely use him as a guinea pig to test out the formation.

They didn’t feel the slightest amount of pity at Ghaus’s death, on the contrary, it allowed them to know that this mysterious illusory formation was strange and unpredictable, and contained many traps embedded within the area. Although the traps were only third-ranked, the mysterious illusory formation could cloak the traps in so many layers that the traps were invisible even to their senses. Hence, it didn’t matter how high their attainments were, because how can one neutralize something that they couldn’t see? Everything was useless if their perception wasn’t strong enough. So even if they were fourth-ranked Grandmasters, if they were careless they might end up dying in there.

Which of them weren’t old freaks who had lived at least a hundred years? Coming across such a situation naturally made them even more cautious.

It didn’t matter if others died, but their own lives were all extremely precious. They would never do something which they didn’t have absolute confidence in. Even if Qin Wentian repeatedly antagonized them, they wouldn’t budge in the slightest.

“Why are you so vicious, young man?” Eccentric Song stroked his beard as he coolly remarked, “You might have gained some insights from that ancient scroll, but do you really think you have the qualifications to behave so arrogantly in front of us?”

“Earlier, we held back so as to give you a chance. Yet I would never have expected that you would be so blind, so foolhardy. If any of us fourth-ranked Grandmasters inscribed fourth-ranked Inscriptions to kill you, would you even be able to withstand our onslaught?”

Eccentric Song laughed as he exchanged glances with the other Grandmasters.

The older in years one was, the more experienced they would be. Why would they need to neutralize Qin Wentian’s formation? They could directly inscribe fourth-ranked Inscriptions to kill him. A simple matter, with no risks attached.

“Truly thick-skinned.” Bailu Yi stared with disdain at those fourth-ranked Grandmasters. Not one of them dared to step forth to neutralize the formation and Eccentric Song still had to ‘explain’ their actions by spouting a load of bullshit. How laughable.

And more ludicrous than their reluctance to neutralize the formation was the fact that the bunch of old freaks were planning to gang up on a youngster by blasting fourth-ranked Inscriptions from afar.

With regards to Bailu Yi’s statement, the people concerned all chose to ignore it.

“Old Liang, this young pup killed your bodyguards, so if we want to kill him, Old Liang should be the one to do the honors.” The black-faced, middle-aged man looked at Old Liang, causing Old Liang to frown. The man continued, “I’ll get my Puppets to act as your protectors.”

He had refined several third-ranked Puppets, but his greatest wish was to refine fourth-ranked Puppets. Hence, the ancient scroll of the Ascendant was an opportunity for him.

“I will engrave a defensive formation to protect you,” Eccentric Song added. Old Liang’s eyes gleamed with an unknown emotion before he finally nodded in agreement.

From this, Qin Wentian understood that although many people came today, the only fourth-ranked Grandmasters other than Fenrir, were these three standing in front of him. Other than that, he

couldn't be sure if the other Heavenly Dipper Sovereign that was standing at the back was a fourth-ranked Divine Inscriptionist or not.

This Heavenly Dipper Sovereign and Fenrir were the strongest cultivators here. The behavior of Eccentric Song and the others seemed to indicate that they somewhat feared this other Heavenly Dipper Sovereign. Since the beginning, they hadn't dared to ask him to do anything.

As for the others that came, they should all either be the disciples or bodyguards of Eccentric Song, Old Liang, and the black-faced, middle-aged man. Qin Wentian couldn't be sure if there were still any hidden fourth-ranked Grandmasters within this group of people.

Old Liang warily advanced step by step, his sunken eyes boring into Qin Wentian. His countenance had a heaviness to it, he no longer dared to underestimate Qin Wentian.

Qin Wentian couldn't help but laugh upon seeing how cautious everyone was. "I, Qin, will sit here and wait."

After speaking, he really sat down crossed-legged as he closed his eyes, appearing as though anything that happened outside the formation no longer concerned him.

"This brat is really cunning, Old Liang, don't be fooled by him." The black-faced, middle-aged man summoned a Puppet to act as Old Liang's protector, leading the way for him.

Old Liang released his perception to its maximum level as he stomped on the ground. With each and every step, the brilliant glow of runic imprints birthed into being. This fourth-ranked Grandmaster was starting to inscribe his Inscriptions.

Old Liang didn't dare to advance, he ultimately chose to maintain a certain distance between him and Qin Wentian.

A period of time later, an overwhelming aura gushed forth from the Inscription that Old Liang was currently inscribing. As an experienced fourth-ranked Grandmaster, he only needed two hours to inscribe a flawless fourth-ranked Inscription.

An hour later, Qin Wentian was still leisurely closing his eyes in meditation. A sinister glint of light flashed past Old Liang's eyes; this brat was waiting for death.

He didn't bother glancing at Qin Wentian any longer and continued to concentrate on completing his Inscription. The overwhelming aura emanating forth from his Inscription grew increasingly more intense.

"Too slow," Qin Wentian murmured. His palm slammed down onto the ground and instantaneously, the illusory form of a two-headed flood dragon explosively manifested into reality. With a roar of anger, the flood dragon transformed into a beam of light that shot towards Old Liang. The black-faced, middle-aged man coldly snorted, he had been surveying Qin Wentian and directed the Puppet he summoned to jump in front of Old Liang, intending to block the attack.

"BOOM!" Qin Wentian stomped the ground, materializing a countless number of arrows to fire at Old Liang, locking him down.

Old Liang snorted, such attacks were mere parlor tricks. He stomped on the ground as a shield appeared, formed from the glow of Divine Inscriptions. But the next instant, Old Liang only saw another demonic dragon, explosively flying his way. The two-headed flood dragon acted as its vanguard, driving the protector Puppet into retreat.

The demonic dragon slashed out with a scaly claw, causing Old Liang to retreat in agitation. Lacerating sounds rang out, signaling that the light shield had been torn into pieces.

"GET LOST!" The black-faced man roared when he saw Qin Wentian intent on slaying Old Liang. A terrifying shadow lance appeared in his hands as he dashed forwards, stabbing at the demonic dragon with it. The power contained within the shadow lance was beyond description. Another gigantic black dragon materialized, and a single claw slash was all it needed to dispel the manifestation of the demonic dragon.

Without a doubt, that lance was a fourth-ranked Divine Weapon.

As the last vestiges of the demonic dragon faded away, Old Liang's countenance turned incomparably ashen. The effort he had put in earlier was all wasted when the Inscription process of the fourth-ranked Inscription was disrupted half-way. The runic outlines shimmered in and out of existence as the complex interweaving lines untangled and fell apart, vanishing into nothing. Qin Wentian's objective had already been achieved.

"Everyone, stop wasting time, let's join forces together and slay this unruly child." The black-faced, middle-aged man brandished his shadow lance as he coldly commanded. With the intention of his

will, the manifestation of that terrifying black dragon dashed out again, causing the deafening sounds of an explosion to ring out. The black dragon plowed through the numerous Divine Inscription ramparts that activated automatically when they felt an incoming force. The attack by the black-faced, middle-aged man had no way to breach Qin Wentian's formation.

Qin Wentian spent a total of three days to set up this Grand Formation. Ever since Bailu Tong intercepted him back then, Qin Wentian's intuition told him that troubles would soon follow. Indeed, as he expected, a party of fourth-ranked Grandmasters all swooped down like a bunch of vultures descending on their prey.

Old Liang's eyes narrowed in anger when he heard the black-faced man's words. He had just narrowly escaped death. Since the black-faced man already had such a plan, why hadn't he suggested it in the beginning?

Eccentric Song stroked his beard as a sharp light flickered in his eyes. The other Heavenly Dipper Sovereign stood there silently, as though he were merely here to watch a play.

"What are your plans?" Eccentric Song directed the question to that Sovereign, his tone containing respect and a slight bit of fear. This man was the same as Fenrir; other than being a Heavenly Dipper Sovereign, he was a fourth-ranked Grandmaster as well.

"Depend on your own capabilities," the old man casually commented, yet the tone of his words were filled with an unmistakable arrogance.

"Fine, we will depend on our own capabilities then." Eccentric Song smiled as three Puppets appeared before him. One of the summoned Puppets was decked in battle armor, and its entire body was seemingly forged from Divine Weapons. Both its arms and legs were adorned with terrifying, wicked-looking blades and sickles, projecting an intense aura of extreme sharpness.

The sight of this caused Old Liang's heart to tremble with desire. This old freak had lived for so many years, the quality of his treasures would naturally befit his experience. That single fourth-ranked Puppet he summoned was already a priceless treasure.

The black-faced, middle-aged man said nothing, but shadowy wisps of darkness could be seen encircling his shadow lance. Its aura of power couldn't be belittled, it was a fourth-ranked Divine Weapon after all.

In their eyes, Qin Wentian was just a dancing clown that would die sooner or later. They were only wondering what would happen after Qin Wentian died. Who among them would obtain the ancient scroll? That was the real question. Hence, everyone had yet to go all out, as they had to preserve their strength for the real fight afterward.

However, what made them astonished was that ordinary methods couldn't kill Qin Wentian. To kill him, they had no choice but to decisively use the most tyrannical method at their disposal.

Old Liang silently cursed, it seemed that his treasures were the most lacking out of the three of them.

“Is this the true strength of a fourth-ranked Grandmaster?” Qin Wentian mused. He appeared as casual and relaxed as before, with no hints of worry staining his countenance.

Bailu Yi's heart couldn't help but clench from the sight of this. Bailu You sidled up and whispered maliciously, “Do you seriously think that Qin Wentian has a chance? These are fourth-ranked Grandmasters we're talking about.”

“Just wait and see.” Hints of stubbornness could be heard in Bailu Yi's voice, as the sight of Qin Wentian's serene expression bolstered her confidence.

Old Liang waved his hands as an umbrella appeared in his hands. After he had opened the umbrella, a golden radiance covered him as he pointed the tip of it towards Qin Wentian. He too began to advance in his direction.

“Chi, chi...” The shadow lance swept across space and an instant later, black-colored cracks trailed behind the tip of his lance. The surrounding ground all exploded into pieces as the black-faced, middle-aged man surveyed for hidden traps. His eyes flashed with a cold light, how could third-ranked Inscriptions, no matter how strong, resist an attack unleashed by his fourth-ranked Divine Weapon? Whether the traps were hidden or in plain sight, he would just adopt the most direct method, pure destruction.

Old Liang's umbrella revolved in a continuous spiral, sending out golden light and scanning the ground for hidden traps as he cautiously moved forward step by step.

As for Eccentric Song, his fourth-ranked, bladed Puppet took the lead, raking the ground apart with each step. Moments later as he neared Qin Wentian, he looked upon him as though looking at a dead man.

“Brat, how do you wish to die?” Eccentric Song sneered. Qin Wentian’s only response was to stand up, as he softly asked, “You guys are so confident?”

“No matter how obscure your cloaking methods are, in front of absolute strength, they’re just ineffectual garbage,” the black-faced, middle-aged man icily stated, waving his lance as he continued advancing, His statement undoubtedly referred to his trail of destruction, made of the shattered earth he left in his path.

“Oh? Why don’t you take a look behind you?” Qin Wentian indifferently added. The black-faced, middle-aged man laughed condescendingly as he decided to humor Qin Wentian. However, he found himself instantly stiffening with disbelief the moment he turned his head back.

Silvery beams of light exploded forth from the ground, interweaving together into the complete outlines of a Divine Inscription. The earlier destroyed ground didn’t seem to have any effect on the activation of this Divine Inscription.

This Divine Inscription continually revolved on the ground, emanating silvery beams of light that shone brighter and brighter, eventually fusing together into a silver-colored tornado that instantly blotted out the sun.

“RUMBLE!” The speed of the revolution ravaged the entire space surrounding it. With one motion, Qin Wentian directed the massive tornado over, its wind force lifting the three other fourth-ranked Grandmasters and himself into the heart of the tempest. In the blink of an eye, the interior of the formation transformed into a silver-colored world.

The Grandmasters were thunderstruck, their bodies quaking as they stared at the young man standing in the air. A myriad of tumultuous emotions passed through them in that instant, striking deep within their souls.

“Still confident?” Qin Wentian’s tone held no hints of anger, merely a cold indifference, and yet it was enough to impress upon them this earth-shattering revelation, jolting their hearts with the truth.

This was the might of a fourth-ranked!

Chapter 284: Slaughter

Being fourth-ranked, the sword Qi tornado contained within it an overwhelming aura of destruction. This was clearly an aura that only fourth-ranked Incriptions were capable of exuding.

Qin Wentian wasn't a third-ranked Divine Inscriptionist but rather a fourth-ranked one instead.

A fourth-ranked Grandmaster before the age of twenty, the implications of this piece of news caused the hearts of all to palpitate madly.

No wonder this young man was so arrogant, no wonder Qin Wentian had humiliated them earlier, calling them a bunch of trash. How long have these people lived for? Yet they were still only at the level of fourth-ranked Grandmasters. How could their accomplishments even be compared to Qin Wentian?

If Qin Wentian started studying Divine Incriptions when he was ten, then it had taken him less than ten years to reach the realm of a fourth-ranked. Meanwhile the three of them had studied Divine Incriptions for at least forty to fifty years before they reached the same level. The gap between their talents was too far apart.

But rather than just being thunderstruck, the greed in their hearts almost made them go crazy. It must be because of that ancient scroll. Upon witnessing the intricacies of Qin Wentian's formation, they were 100% sure that Qin Wentian's current attainment was only because of a stroke of good fortune; acquiring the inheritance of a fifth-ranked Grandmaster.

How then could they not be in a frenzy for the inheritance of that Ascendant? They must definitely obtain it.

The degree of their fervor was so high that they even forgot the danger they were currently in. Even if they had to risk their lives, it would still be worth it for that scroll.

They must kill this brat and snatch the inheritance away from him.

Spectating at the side, the large-eyed elder's heartbeat quickened as he witnessed the affair. He then shifted his glance onto Bailu Yi, "Did you already know? Was this why you said there'd be a good show?"

"Hehe, Elder Grandpa, what are your thoughts? Qin Wentian is only nineteen." Bailu Yi smiled.

“Only nineteen.” The large-eyed elder drew in a deep breath, trying to steady himself. Even if they left his talent in cultivation aside, then based on his talent in the Dao of Divine Inscriptions, Qin Wentian was already a character to be reckoned with in the future. This young man definitely had the opportunity to break through to become a fifth-ranked Grandmaster.

Divine Inscriptionists were the same as cultivation experts. The higher one was, the more status one had. How could a Heavenly Dipper Sovereign be comparable to a Celestial Phenomenon Ascendant?

And a fifth-ranked Inscriptionist would definitely be able to summon the rains and hail the wind in Grand Xia. Even Heavenly Dipper Sovereigns would fight on his behalf with just a single sentence from him.

Qin Wentian didn't just have a high level of attainment, his full potential wasn't completely exhausted yet.

Yet Bailu Tong's thinking was different. He naturally understood Qin Wentian had the talent and potential, but he firmly believed that the reason for Qin Wentian's remarkable improvement was none other than the ancient scroll of the Ascendant.

“Everyone, why don't we all take a step back?” the large-eyed elder frantically commented. At this moment, he no longer wanted the current situation to escalate. If Qin Wentian and the other fourth-ranked Grandmasters became serious, there would definitely be casualties suffered. Regardless of whether the casualty was Qin Wentian or the other fourth-ranked Inscriptionists, the large-eyed elder didn't want to deal with the aftermath.

Qin Wentian stood in the middle of the air, as their surrounding space transformed into a sword Qi tornado.

This Divine Inscription was indeed a combat-type Inscription Qin Wentian had learnt from the ancient scroll of the Ascendant. It was known as ‘Tempest of Sword Qi’ and had the ability to split itself into several other miniature windstorms. This Inscription could be considered an extremely powerful combat-type Inscription within the fourth-ranked level. Even at Qin Wentian's current level, he still had to spend a lot of time to inscribe it before he could succeed.

And right now, he was the controller of this tornado.

Within the tempest created by the roiling winds of the tornado, the three fourth-ranked Grandmasters were all extremely prudent of their situation, yet the stares directed at Qin Wentian were still filled with burning greed.

“Hey Elder, how could it be possible for us to stop now, even if you wished it?” The black-faced, middle-aged man coldly refuted. After which, he and Old Liang walked to the side of Eccentric Song.

“Eccentric Song, although this brat can set up a fourth-ranked formation, you have a fourth-ranked Puppet as well. The two of us will act as your protectors while you control your Puppet to kill him. With his death, this Divine Inscription will naturally fade away and at that time, his attack will be automatically dissipated. We will share the ancient scroll among the three of us, how about it?”

“Fine.” Old Song lightly nodded. With two peak-tier, third-ranked Puppets on the left and right and the fourth-ranked Puppets leading the way, the three Puppets exuded a cold murderous aura as they advanced towards Qin Wentian.

“Elder, you heard it yourself. I, Qin, from the beginning to the end have always been the passive party. Yet they are the ones that want my life.” Qin Wentian glanced at the large-eyed elder as he spoke, his words causing the gaze of that elder to stiffen. He also knew that it was impossible to make these fourth-ranked Grandmasters abandon the notion of killing Qin Wentian.

Leaving the matter of the ancient scroll aside, if Qin Wentian was left alive, the threat he posed to them would be too great.

After today, there would certainly be other great powers paying a visit to the White Deer Institute to recruit this young man.

A nineteen years old fourth-ranked Grandmaster, even transcendent powers would rush to recruit such a character, allowing him to research the Dao of Divine Inscriptions unconditionally as long as he was willing to join them.

So no matter which angle they considered this matter from, Qin Wentian must definitely die here.

“Great Elder, at this point, it’s already useless for persuasion,” Bailu Tong faintly stated, naturally hoping that the battle would continue.

“Eccentric Song, command your Puppet to kill the brat. Old Liang, use your Divine Weapon to defend against incoming attacks.”

The black-faced, middle-aged man instructed. He could already tell that the umbrella-type Divine Weapon of Old Liang was defensive in nature.

“Fine, this brat is running far too rampant, let’s destroy him.” Eccentric Song stroked his beard as he stated with confidence. After which, his fourth-ranked Puppet rose into the air, the blades on its body easily tearing apart the space. Even the terrifying gales gushing forth from the tornado were quickly sliced apart.

Below the Puppet, the black-faced, middle-aged man waved his lance about in an intricate dance, destroying the ground around him, simultaneously creating a vacuum that swept away all nearby traps. While at the same time, Old Liang opened his umbrella and floated above the three, encasing them in a golden sphere of protection.

Within the protective fourth-ranked sphere of light, they didn’t dare to rashly move about. They depended on the protection of the umbrella to stand against the intense gales, while planning to use the power of the fourth-ranked Puppet to slay Qin Wentian. This was undoubtedly an excellent plan.

“Die!” Qin Wentian flicked out a finger and instantly, the terrifying sword tornado spiraled towards them with increasing speed, targeting the umbrella-type Divine Weapon. The impact created during the collision caused the golden sphere of light to tremble madly. At the same time, the fourth-ranked Puppet blasted forth with its palm, as a terrifyingly cold light slashed towards Qin Wentian.

“Hmph.” Qin Wentian snorted coldly, “I will gladly accept this fourth-ranked Puppet offering then.”

As the sound of his voice faded, a golden-armored Puppet appeared in front of him.

“Go.” Qin Wentian coldly commanded, as his golden-armored Puppet flew towards the bladed Puppet. Qin Wentian’s countenance was as unperturbed as before, once again turning his terrifying gaze onto the three fourth-ranked Grandmasters.

“Puppet, he too has a fourth-ranked Puppet!”

The countenance of Eccentric Song and the rest froze. The fourth-ranked bladed Puppet was entangled by the golden-armored giant Puppet. Qin Wentian wasn’t affected in the slightest.

With a wave of his hands, millions upon millions of sword rays gathered, amalgamating into the form of a gigantic sword which was exuding an incomparable keenness. In the next moment, the gigantic sword descended from the domes of Heaven, smashing directly against the golden protective sphere of light that enshrouded the three of them.

“What should we do, what should we do?” Eccentric Song panicked. This nineteen years old young man had totally surpassed his expectations.

“Damn, f*ck this.” Old Liang’s countenance turned ashen. He turned to the black-faced, middle-aged man and stated, “With the power of his attacks, my protective golden sphere will be broken through sooner or later. You have an attack-type Divine Weapon, go and open a path for us.”

“You want me to open a path?” The black-faced, middle-aged man stiffened. Although he had a fourth-ranked, attack-type Divine Weapon, his personal cultivation base wasn’t at the Heavenly Dipper Realm. He was only at the Yuanfu level, how powerful would his attacks be even with the augmentation of the fourth-ranked Divine Weapon?

They had initially assumed that they would have the advantage even though Qin Wentian could set up a fourth-ranked formation. With the weapons they had at their disposal, a fourth-ranked Puppet and a fourth-ranked attack-type and defensive-type Divine Weapon, they would still be able to obtain victory. Yet who would have thought that Qin Wentian also possessed a fourth-ranked Puppet, instantly salvaging the situation with a single move.

“RUMBLE!” The golden sphere of light trembled again as cracks were beginning to show on its exterior.

“If this goes on, we will definitely die.” Old Liang turned pale. They wouldn’t even have a full corpse remaining in the face of that terrifying tempest.

“Grandmaster Penga, HELP US!” Eccentric Song turned his pleading gaze onto the other fourth-ranked Grandmaster who was also a Heavenly Dipper Sovereign. They were all extremely fearful of this man, and their initial plan was that after they killed Qin Wentian, they would join hands to deal with Penga.

But now, they had no choice but to beg Penga for his help.

However, Penga remained extremely indifferent. A long spear, with a flame-type Inscription engraved on it, appeared in his hands, yet he stood there motionless, staring at the Divine Inscription ahead with a fire burning in his eyes.

At this moment, the fourth-ranked 'Tempest of the Sword Qi' completely exploded. This would be the instance where it was easiest to see through the runic structure of a Divine Inscription.

Cracks appeared on the umbrella-type Divine Weapon, and as the sounds of splintering rang out, the golden sphere of light crumbled into pieces. At this moment, Eccentric Song, Old Liang, and the black-faced, middle-aged man all had expressions of dread on their faces as they stared at the young man standing in the air.

At that moment, as Qin Wentian's cold gaze swept over, the three of them could clearly feel the intensity of his killing intent.

"Return." Eccentric Song commanded his Puppet. However, how could Qin Wentian fail to anticipate his actions? His golden-armored Puppet was forcibly restraining Eccentric Song's Puppet.

"Bzz." The silhouette of the black-faced, middle-aged man flickered as he dashed out, using the shadow lance in his hands to open up a path. The manifestation of the black dragon howled, as a pathway was instantly slashed open for him. However, the shrill keen of angry swords resounded and as a thunderous boom echoed out, he was blocked by the gigantic sword impaled on the ground right in front of him. When the black-faced, middle-aged man lifted his head again, he only saw countless beams of sword light poised his way. As long as Qin Wentian willed it, his burial ground would be right there in that place.

"Little Brother Qin, please stay your hand." At this moment, the large-eyed elder was extremely polite. A nineteen years old fourth-ranked Grandmaster, he naturally had to show his respect.

"The three of them are all extremely famous, this man is a guest elder of the Han Clan in the Moon Continent. The magnitude of the Han Clan's power isn't weak," the large-eyed elder gently reminded Qin Wentian.

"That's right, if you kill me, the Han Clan will definitely not spare you." The black-faced, middle-aged man glared at Qin Wentian.

"How mighty were you acting earlier? Yet how pathetic are you now? If the Han Clan wishes to take revenge for you, I will immediately join a transcendent power. Do you believe that the Han

Clan would still dare to touch me then?” Qin Wentian’s stare penetrated the eyes of the black-faced, middle-aged man, the coldness in his voice gave him the shivers. A nineteen years old fourth-ranked Grandmaster, as long as this news was circulated, there would be countless powers wanting to pull Qin Wentian within their ranks. What use would the Han Clan be then?

“So many treasures here, but they’re all wasted on idiots. Why not give them to me?” As the sound of Qin Wentian’s voice faded, a domineering sword Qi gushed forth, and the gigantic sword sprang up and slashed downwards. The shadow lance of the black-faced, middle-aged man blocked the attack, but his legs were shattered from the impact. An instant later, a beam of sword light flashed past from the side, leaving a bloody gash on his throat.

Eccentric Song and Old Liang were truly afraid when they saw how decisively Qin Wentian had acted. At this moment, there was only unending terror in their hearts.

Without warning, Qin Wentian had slaughtered the black-face, middle-aged man, a guest elder of the Han Clan. Within moments, a fourth-ranked Grandmaster had fallen just like that!

Chapter 285: Qing`er’s words

Not long ago, they once said that having the ancient scroll in Qin Wentian’s hands was the equivalent to wasting a great gift on a piece of trash. If Qin Wentian didn’t hand over that scroll, he would be slaughtered.

But now, Qin Wentian was returning those words right back. The tornado devoured the body of the black-faced, middle-aged man, after which Qin Wentian made a grasping motion and then the interspatial ring and shadow lance flew into his hands.

The treasures of a fourth-ranked Grandmaster should be extremely valuable, he had made a killing this time.

Shifting his ice-cold gaze onto Eccentric Song and Old Liang, the countenances of both were as white as a sheet. Eccentric Song mustered a smile as he stated to Qin Wentian, “Brother Qin’s talent in the Dao of Divine Inscriptions is truly heaven-defying. Now that you’ve stepped into the level of fourth-ranked Grandmasters, and before the age of twenty, it will only be a matter of time before your name rocks the Moon Continent. This old man was foolish and made the wrong decision out of greed. If I have offended you with my earlier words or actions, I hope that you won’t take it to heart. Let that fourth-ranked Puppet of mine be compensation to Brother Qin for my earlier transgression.”

Concluding his speech, Eccentric Song bowed low to Qin Wentian to convey his sincerity.

However, Qin Wentian's gaze was still as cold as ever, and felt even sharper than the edge of a blade. The terrifying sword-intent whistled past, as the sword keening further increased the terror in Eccentric Song's heart.

“This old man does not have a mortal grudge with Brother Qin, why must we end this with death?” Eccentric Song knew that it would be useless to convince Qin Wentian with words like background and status, and hence decided to use benefits instead. He continued, “As long as Brother Qin pardons this, this old man will definitely compensate with even better items.”

Just minutes before, this Eccentric Song was shouting for Qin Wentian's death, yet now he had the gall to claim he held no grudge between them. How ridiculous, Eccentric Song's words didn't have the slightest hint of regret in them.

In front of Qin Wentian, the tornado of sword Qi dissipated to be replaced by a terrifying gigantic sword. With a flick of his finger, the gigantic sword released a sword beam that penetrated through space, causing Eccentric Song's countenance to sink even further as his face became cloaked in a mask of despair.

“Chi.”

As the sword beam swept out, Eccentric Song's body was cleaved directly into two. The only survivor remaining was the sunken eyes man. Old Liang was involuntarily trembling, he knew he would be next if he stayed. In the next moment, he grabbed his umbrella-type Divine Weapon and rapidly ran away.

Qin Wentian had no intentions to pardon any of them. This young brat wanted to consign the whole lot of them to death.

But how could he still escape? As the sword beam flashed, his movements stopped. A gaping hole could be seen in the centre of his forehead.

Qin Wentian floated downwards, and began to collect the spoils of his victory. In short time, he had gained the treasures of three four-ranked Grandmasters, their total value was worth more than his entire fortune.

However, just as he was in the midst of gathering them up, the earth around him started to tremble violently. Qin Wentian's eyes turned sharp and as he turned his head, he realised that the silent spectator Grandmaster Penga had finally made his move. Penga had taken his time in observation before he acted, this strike of his contained a might sufficient enough to break the earth and shatter the heavens.

A Heavenly Dipper Sovereign who was also a fourth-ranked Grandmaster, was truly incomparable to a Yuanfu fourth-ranked Grandmaster. The difference in power further emphasized the importance of personal cultivation.

Now that Penga made his move, he completely disregarded the attacks of Qin Wentian's prearranged traps. An Astral Nova in the shape of an immense spear appeared, and as Astral Light inundated the area, each sweep of it caused Qin Wentian's traps to explode. Throughout this, the sword Qi tornado grew increasingly weaker.

After observing for so long, Penga had already calculated the steps of breaking this formation. His sudden attack was like a thunderbolt from out of the blue.

The might of a Heavenly Dipper Sovereign wasn't something a Yuanfu cultivator could match, even if he was paired up with a fourth-ranked Divine Weapon. Qin Wentian's silhouette flickered as he rapidly retreated, while simultaneously placing the bladed fourth-ranked Puppet in his interspatial ring and summoning his golden-armored Puppet to his side.

"BOOM!" Yet another Divine Inscription was destroyed. With a flick of his sleeves, the Astral Nova Spear penetrated through space, flying straight towards Qin Wentian. He felt his body shuddering, as though he were about to be pierced through. This was the will of a Mandate.

The Mandate of a Heavenly Dipper Sovereign was nothing to joke about.

"Go!" Qin Wentian commanded, the golden Puppet flew forwards in his place, colliding with the Heavenly Dipper Sovereign's attack. However, the Astral Nova seemed to have a mind of its own, as it increased the might of each stab, trying to break out of the golden-armored Puppet's grip. The impact resulting from the collision of the two forces caused the entire space to rumble.

Penga smiled, he didn't mind the interruption. The sharpness of his gaze seemed intent on drilling through Qin Wentian, and abruptly his silhouette flickered as he dashed forwards with an unbelievable speed.

A nineteen years old fourth-ranked Grandmaster did indeed have heaven-shocking potential. There would also be countless powers wanting to recruit him. Nevertheless, a dead genius was no longer a genius, but rather, was just a corpse.

Now, Penga wanted nothing more than to kill Qin Wentian and plunder the ancient scroll away.

“Qin Wentian, you still have a chance.”

Qin Wentian’s pupils narrowed upon hearing Bailu You’s words; it seemed he still thought to take advantage of Qin Wentian’s current peril by coercing him into handing the ancient scroll over to his father, Bailu Tong.

“Great Elder.” A pleading look for help appeared in Bailu Yi’s eyes as she stared at the large-eyed elder.

“Great Elder, don’t you wish for the birth of a fifth-ranked Grandmaster in our White Deer Institute? I have to obtain that ancient scroll at all costs,” Bailu Tong coldly remarked at the side. The battle had already attracted the attention of many experts in the White Deer Institute. When they arrived by the side of Bailu Yi and the rest, they couldn’t help but ask, “What’s going on?”

“Qin Wentian, a nineteen years old fourth-ranked Grandmaster. He’s my good friend, yet Elder Bailu Tong wants to kill him just to plunder the ancient scroll he obtained from the secret realm of the Gold-Element Ascendant,” Bailu Yi explained, her words caused the eyes of those nearby to widen in shock. A fourth-ranked Grandmaster at the age of nineteen?

“What about the other fourth-ranked Grandmasters?” someone asked.

“They were all killed by Qin Wentian from his Inscriptions and formation,” Bailu You coldly replied. Because of Qin Wentian, he was at opposing standpoints with Bailu Yi.

“Father.” Bailu Yi turned her gaze onto Bailu Shan. Bailu Shan’s eyes shone with a strange glow as he watched Qin Wentian making use of several defensive third-ranked Inscriptions to block his opponent’s attack. Yet, they only managed to slow down the Astral Nova slightly.

“Grandmaster Penga, enough.”

Bailu Shan called out as he stepped forth, blasting out his aura.

“Brother Shan, what are you trying to do?” In the next moment, Bailu You’s silhouette flickered as he appeared in front of Bailu Shan, blocking his path.

Bailu Yi grew pale with worry as she frantically stared at the large-eyed elder. The large-eyed elder appeared to be contemplating something as he soon replied in a calm tone, “Relax, don’t be so nervous.”

Yet how could Bailu Yi not be nervous? Penga was raising the tempo of his attacks, he must be determined to kill Qin Wentian immediately. He used his Astral Nova to tie down the fourth-ranked Puppet, while the flame-inscribed long spear in his hands tore apart the defensive third-ranked Inscriptions Qin Wentian threw at him like a hot knife through butter. Penga plunged out the long spear as it transformed into a beam of cold light, shooting straight towards Qin Wentian.

“Bzzz.” The raging speed of the spear broke the sound barrier as a sonic boom burst out. However at the last moment, a lotus bloomed in front of Qin Wentian, disrupting the trajectory and negating the force behind the spear.

All of a sudden, a female silhouette appeared in front of Qin Wentian. This female’s figure was flawless, clad in white and her features were obscured by a veil. She gave off an otherworldly aura, resembling that of an immortal maiden.

Traces of a gentle smile appeared in his eyes as Qin Wentian noticed the appearance of this figure. She always showed up at the most crucial moment, silently protecting him from the shadows.

“I’ll send the Puppet to help you, let’s kill this person together.” Qin Wentian’s eyes turned ice-cold the moment he shifted his gaze back onto Penga.

“It’s okay... This man is not very strong, I can do it...” Although the tone of her words was cold, Qing`er’s voice was extremely melodious and gave Qin Wentian feelings of great comfort as he listened.

Penga’s countenance stiffened, becoming incredibly ugly to behold.

Those from the White Deer Institute also had dumbfounded expressions on their faces. There was actually a Heavenly Dipper Sovereign protecting Qin Wentian.

Not only that, even with her features obscured, they could tell that this Sovereign was actually quite the transcendent beauty, akin to a celestial in a portrait. Their gazes involuntarily fixated onto Bailu Yi, only to see her in a similarly stunned state.

Qin Wentian had said before that Mo Qingcheng was his girlfriend. In that case, who was this ephemeral beauty right in front of their eyes?

If she remembered correctly, this maiden seemed to have appeared once before.

Penga glanced at Qing`er, and then swept his gaze to the supreme experts of the White Deer Institute. He knew that his objective today was no longer possible.

“Farewell.” His Astral Nova revolved protectively around him, as he snorted and leisurely walked away, his face a loathsome mask of unsatisfied greed.

Qinger stood there quietly, allowing him to leave. She didn’t actively act to pursue him.
Qin Wentian smilingly glanced at Qinger. He refrained from saying a word.

However, Qing`er’s beautiful lashes fluttered as though she knew of Qin Wentian’s intentions. After which, her lips gently moved as the sound waves of her voice joined together into a single thread, drifting into Qin Wentian’s ear.

“He won’t escape, the people of my Celestial Lake Palace are already waiting outside. Nobody will dare to touch you today.”

Qing`er’s words caused Qin Wentian to start. The people from the Celestial Lake Palace had arrived here?

An expression of astonishment crossed Qin Wentian’s face. When had the people from the Celestial Lake Palace appeared?

Sweeping his gaze across to the crowd within the White Deer Institute, he saw Di Cheng, as well as a young man with an extraordinary demeanor. The man could only be Di Feng.

In that moment, Qin Wentian suddenly understood. So it turned out that Fairy Qingmei had always been monitoring his actions. As the Azure Emperor’s love, Fairy Qingmei should be in possession of many secrets that no one else knew.

Everything that happened in the White Deer Institute, including the arrival of Di Feng, as well as the problems he faced, were perhaps all already known by Fairy Qingmei.

As he had once guessed, the relationship between Fairy Qingmei and the Azure Emperor had never broken off at all. It was totally different from what had been spread outside. There was no one else who cared more for the Azure Emperor other than Fairy Qingmei. And as he was the Azure Emperor's true successor, Fairy Qingmei supported him unconditionally, for no other reason than because he was the one that possessed his authority token.

"They are here? What great timing." Qin Wentian smiled. He had just revealed that he was a fourth-ranked Grandmaster, and now he had Fairy Qingmei's support.

In that case, regardless of who the power behind Di Feng was, Qin Wentian didn't lose out in the slightest.

"I will take my leave as well." Grandmaster Fenrir laughed. He knew that this wasn't the time for him to remain behind. Claspng his hands, he then bid his farewell to the crowd and soared through the air.

As for the followers of the other fourth-ranked Grandmasters, they had long sneaked away after witnessing the deaths of their masters. It was as though they feared they'd be killed by Qin Wentian if they were to retreat half a step slower.

Hence, in this location, other than the members of the White Deer Institute, the only outsiders remaining were Qin Wentian and Qing'er.

"Fourth-ranked Grandmaster." Bailu You suddenly laughed, as he turned to those from the Institute. "Everyone, this suspicious young man infiltrated our White Deer Institute to 'study' Divine Inscriptions, despite already having such a high level of attainment in it. Not only that, he also has the protection of a Heavenly Dipper Sovereign. I wonder, what unfathomable motives might he be harbouring in his heart?"

"What is this guy's problem?" With a silent sigh of resignation, Qin Wentian dragged his gaze over to the persistent Bailu You.

A cold smile was reflected on Qin Wentian's face. "Ever since I, Qin, joined the White Deer Institute to cultivate the Dao of Divine Inscriptions, I have never done a single thing that went against the Institute's code of honor. How ridiculous, if you want to steal the ancient scroll from me, you can just say so. Why is there a need to be so hypocritical?"

Bailu You narrowed his eyes. He knew that if he allowed Qin Wentian to leave the White Deer Institute today, there would never be another chance to acquire the ancient scroll of the Ascendant.

More and more experts from the White Deer Institute arrived, and when about six to seven of the nine elders came, only then did Bailu Tong suddenly speak out, "Everyone, can I hear your opinions on how we should handle this matter? I, Bailu Tong have immersed myself in studying and researching the Dao of Divine Inscriptions for so many years, and my attainment in it cannot be said to be weak. There's a chance for me to break through to become a fifth-ranked Grandmaster if I can obtain the ancient scroll of the Ascendant. All of you should be extremely clear of the value and prestige a fifth-ranked Grandmaster would bring to our Institute."

"Qin Wentian is only nineteen and has already broken through to the fourth-ranked. Not only that, he is also a good friend of mine. Why must the Institute do such a vile and filthy thing, robbing him of the inheritance he rightfully earned? Obviously, he would have a much greater chance to break through to being a fifth-ranked Grandmaster compared to Elder Bailu Tong," Bailu Yi countered.

"Impudent. Little Yi, the elders may hold you in high regard but you do not have the right to speak about an elder this way!" Bailu You roared. "And so what if he has a greater chance? Ultimately, he is still an outsider."

"There are some words that must be said, no matter how inappropriate they may sound now." Bailu Yi knew that Qin Wentian was the inheritor of the Azure Emperor Token. She wondered what would happen if the elders from the Institute blindly continued to offend him like this.

"Uncle Yu, could you lead them down and guard the back mountains, not allowing others to enter?" Bailu Yi instructed an elderly looking figure, this person was someone extremely loyal to the White Deer Institute.

Uncle Yu understood Bailu Yi's intention. With a wave of his hands, he gathered the non-core members as he led them down, following Bailu Yi's instructions.

"Do the two of you want to go and take a break as well?" Bailu Yi stared at Di Feng and Di Cheng.

“Little Yi, Di Feng is a valuable guest of our Institute, there’s nothing to hide from him,” Bailu Tong cut in.

“I, Di Feng, can guarantee that Miss Yi’s words will definitely remain behind closed-doors.” Di Feng laughed.

Bailu Yi glanced at him, and turned her gaze onto those from the White Deer Institute. “Elder Tong, humor me. In terms of the Dao of Inscriptions, which of the two of us has the higher attainment and talent?”

Bailu Tong stared at Bailu Yi, but he didn’t reply. Another elder added, “Naturally, elder Tong’s attainment is higher. But with regards to talent, Little Yi may still be slightly better.”

“In that case, if the White Deer Institute acquires the ancient scroll of the Ascendant, who do you all think the inheritance should belong to? Who would have the greater hope of breaking through to being a fifth-ranked Grandmaster?” Bailu Yi asked again, causing a myriad of expressions to flicker on the countenances of the crowd.

Bailu Shan’s eyes lighted up. By that logic, the inheritance would be given to his daughter instead.

Yes, that was right, his daughter had a deep relationship with Qin Wentian.

“We will all share it,” Bailu Tong icily replied, traces of unhappiness could be seen flickering in his eyes.

“How laughable. If Qin Wentian acquired the ancient scroll, then it clearly belongs to him. But you want to have a share in it?” Bailu Yi coldly laughed. “Let me tell all the elders this, Qin Wentian did indeed obtain the inheritance of the Ascendant and he will definitely become a fifth-ranked Grandmaster in the future. And just to be clear, he has already given the ancient scroll to me.”

Everyone who heard the words were left flabbergasted. Qin Wentian actually gave the ancient scroll of the Ascendant to Bailu Yi?

It seemed like the relationship between them was really that of lovers. And Qin Wentian truly loved Bailu Yi.

Laughter appeared on Bailu Shan's face. In that case, his choice was already extremely clear. He would undoubtedly choose to stand on the side of Qin Wentian.

Bailu Yi's grandfather, one of the nine grand elders of the Institute also stroked his beard and laughed. His impression of Qin Wentian was improving by the minute.

"Consider this carefully before making any decision. If Elder Bailu Tong makes a move against Qin Wentian, I, Bailu Yi will be too ashamed to remain in the White Deer Institute. Does the Institute really wish to lose two potential fifth-ranked Grandmasters?" Bailu Yi's powerful words resounded in the air.

Momentarily, Bailu Tong's countenance became exceptionally unsightly to behold.

Even if Bailu Yi was one of their own members, there was no way he would give up the ancient scroll.

"Little Yi, are you threatening our Institute?" Bailu Tong coldly remarked, "Not only that, as a junior, since you've acquired the ancient scroll, why haven't you passed it to the elders? Is this something a junior should do?"

"Today, I have really seen the true face of Elder Tong. Even when coveting the possession of others, you can still sound as though you are in the right. Why should I give it to you?" Bailu Yi mocked. Turning her gaze onto the other elders, Bailu Yi continued, "Would the other elders please make their decision."

"Elder Tong, you've gone overboard." Bailu Yi's grandfather naturally stood on the side of his granddaughter.

"Enough of this internal conflict, this is so embarrassing."

The large-eyed elder couldn't help but berate them upon seeing such a happening occurring. After which, he turned his gaze onto Qin Wentian and spoke, "Little Brother Qin is a guest of Little Yi. Our White Deer Institute apologizes for the matters here today, please pardon our transgressions. When the other fourth-ranked Grandmasters came over to plunder the inheritance, it was one thing for our elders not to stop them, but to think that one of the elders actually aided and abetted the other fourth-ranked Grandmasters because of his own selfish desires. Please accept our apologies. I, as the Great Elder, have failed in my duties indeed. This was my mistake."

The Great Elder personally acknowledged that he made a mistake, his actions causing the others to shut up without further comment. The core members that arrived late already understood what happened today.

As a Divine Inscriptionist, this Bailu Tong was filled with greed for wanting to possess the Ascendant's ancient scroll. And because of Qin Wentian's relationship with Bailu Yi, he wasn't thick-skinned enough to act directly against Qin Wentian. But rather, he spread the news to outsider fourth-ranked Grandmasters in order to borrow their influence to coerce Qin Wentian into caving in. Then the next step would be to make him surrender the ancient scroll to himself, an elder of the White Deer Institute, for protection.

These outsider fourth-ranked Grandmasters naturally also understood Bailu Tong's scheme. But the lure of the ancient scroll was too great. Hence, they weren't willing to give this chance up, and acted according to Bailu Tong's machinations.

Yet no one would have anticipated the ending. Qin Wentian had too many cards up his sleeves. He could inscribe fourth-ranked, combat-type Divine Inscriptions, had a fourth-ranked Puppet, and also the protection of a Heavenly Dipper Sovereign.

Those greedy fourth-ranked Grandmasters had all been slaughtered, causing Bailu Tong's plan to transform into mist and shadows. Hence, he chose to no longer mask his intentions, and instead decided to use the entire White Deer Institute to pressure Qin Wentian, ignoring the fact that he might be offending Bailu Yi.

All this led to the situation happening right now.

Bailu Tong was still unwilling to give up, yet the large-eyed elder didn't agree with him.

Qin Wentian could see that the large-eyed elder was a sincere and honest man. He also knew that the elder always had a good impression of him since the beginning. Hence, Qin Wentian added, "This matter occurs only because of Bailu Tong, and has nothing to do with the White Deer Institute. I, Qin, understand this clearly."

Since the large-eyed elder intended to form good relations with him, Qin Wentian naturally wouldn't create tension of his own volition. After all, he would take charge of the entire White Deer Institute sooner or later.

“Excellent, excellent, it’s good that your heart is so magnanimous.” The large-eyed elder nodded as he laughed. In fact, he hadn’t acted before this because he wanted to see if Qin Wentian had the capability to settle things on his own terms. If Qin Wentian really couldn’t handle it, the large-eyed elder would definitely have stepped in.

“Great Elder, I’m afraid this matter isn’t up to your decision. I will report this to the supreme elders, and will let them decide instead.” It was then that the silent Bailu Tong spoke out once again, causing the countenance of the crowd to sink as they smiled wryly in their hearts. This matter was getting more and more out of control, escalating the internal conflict in the White Deer Institute.

Bailu Tong dared to behave this way because his father was one of the four supreme elders. Not only that, Bailu Tong’s father was well known as someone who blindly shielded his shortcomings.

The large-eyed elder’s countenance turned exceptionally unsightly once he heard Bailu Tong’s words. How shameful.

Because of greed, Bailu Tong had initiated this internal conflict, something the large-eyed elder was unhappy to witness.

“Since you have the ancient scroll, just take it out and share it with everyone.” A voice drifted over from afar. Many among the crowd couldn’t help but shudder slightly once they heard this voice.

One of the supreme elders had spoken.

The crowd speculated that this supreme elder definitely wanted Qin Wentian to hand over the inheritance so as to share the ancient scroll with everyone. This would be an overall boost in the standards of the Divine Inscriptionists from the White Deer Institute. This kind of thinking wasn’t wrong.

Qin Wentian cast his gaze into the horizon. It seemed like one of the supreme elders supported Bailu Tong.

Even after he had become a fourth-ranked Grandmaster, the White Deer Institute’s attitude still hadn’t changed. Evidently, they still treated him like an outsider.

Luckily he hadn’t revealed that he held the Azure Emperor Token back then. If not, he didn’t know what attitude the Institute might have now.

“As an impartial observer not involved in the matter, I too, think that Qin Wentian should share the ancient scroll. Of course, the White Deer Institute could repay him by offering protection for his safety,” Di Feng stated, causing a smile to appear on Bailu Tong’s countenance.

Qin Wentian cast a glance at Di Feng as he coldly smiled. “How fair. Who are you to butt your nose into my affairs?”

“Someone you can’t afford to offend,” Di Cheng who was beside Di Feng, icily replied. “You are just a mere fourth-ranked Grandmaster, even a finger would be enough to crush you to death.”

“How arrogant. Are you not a descendant of the Azure Emperor? Main bloodline of the Di Clan?”

As the sound of Qin Wentian’s voice faded, everyone in the crowd was thunderstruck, as they turned gazes filled with incomparable sharpness onto Qin Wentian.

Qin Wentian actually knew of the White Deer Institute’s greatest secret.

The crowd then gazed contemptuously at Bailu Yi, with even a few elders looking at her in disappointment. Didn’t Bailu Yi know what was important? How could she divulge this secret to Qin Wentian?

“Traitorous slut.” Bailu You snorted in disdain. After which, he took a step closer to Qin Wentian. “In that case, you should die even more.”

Qin Wentian had given him the perfect excuse to act, Qin Wentian was courting death.

Yet, Bailu Yi was staring in amazement at Qin Wentian.

Was he preparing to lay all his cards out on the table?

“Yup, he deserves death.” Di Cheng coldly grinned. Qin Wentian would definitely die today.

“You’ve all heard it directly, even the descendants of the Di Clan want him to die.” Bailu You turned his gaze towards the crowd. Upon hearing his words, Qin Wentian softly commented, “All of you respect the Azure Emperor that much?”

“Obviously. Everyone in our White Deer Institute can basically be said to be the descendants of the Azure Emperor. Didn’t Bailu Yi tell you this?” Bailu You coldly laughed.

“If the successor of the Azure Emperor Token wanted you to die, would you die?” Qin Wentian glanced at Bailu You with amusement.

“Sure, if he appears, why not?” Bailu You smiled. He had to grab this chance to show his support for Di Feng. Di Feng would surely stand on his side in future.

“Oh?” Qin Wentian nodded his head with amusement. “Okay, you can go ahead and die then.”

After that, Qin Wentian gazed into the horizon as he channeled his voice, causing it to erupt forth, “Qin Wentian seeks an audience with the supreme elders of the White Deer Institute.”

His voice was filled with power, travelling a far distance while resonating in the air.

“Who do you think you are? Do you think you can meet the supreme elders just because you want to?” Bailu You sneered.

“You, are unqualified.” Di Cheng had hated Qin Wentian ever since his recent bout of humiliation. Today, his date of death had finally arrived

Qin Wentian laughed coldly as he stretched out a hand, he was holding something in between his fingers. “What about now?”

“Huh?” The gazes of everyone riveted to the object Qin Wentian held in his hands, and then they felt as though explosions had gone off in their minds. Shaking their heads, the crowd narrowed their eyes for a clearer look.

In the next instant, it was if they had all turned to ice, their hearts pounding madly with a myriad of emotions.

That word on the token... that word, was the word Azure!

Di Feng's eyes turned sharp, feeling as though a huge wave had rocked his heart. Qin Wentian held in his hands the Azure Emperor Token!

Qin Wentian swept his gaze over to Bailu Tong, Di Feng and Di Cheng, speaking slowly and clearly, enunciating each word. "I, Qin Wentian, am the true successor of the Azure Emperor!"

As the sound of his voice faded, the crowd exchanged glances with each other in dumbfounded amazement.

The Azure Emperor Token, that was the Azure Emperor Token.

Di Feng had a lineage belonging to the Di Clan.

But Qin Wentian, with the Azure Emperor Token in his hands, was the Azure Emperor's true successor!

Chapter 287: Subordinates Offending their Superior, Shall All be killed without Mercy!

The Azure Emperor Token.

Qin Wentian actually possessed the Azure Emperor Token.

This undoubtedly meant that Qin Wentian was the true successor of the Azure Emperor.

Those from the Di Clan, as well as the core members of the White Deer Institute naturally understood the meaning behind the Azure Emperor Token.

"Does everyone now understand the purpose of why I came to the White Deer Institute?" Qin Wentian stared at Bailu You, laughing coldly.

Harbouring unfathomable motives? With the authority token in his hands, he could do anything he wanted in the White Deer Institute. How unfathomable could those motives be?

Qin Wentian shifted his gaze onto Di Cheng only to see a sinister light shining in his eyes. How could this be possible? Why would the Azure Emperor Token be in Qin Wentian's hands?

“A finger is enough to crush me? I would like to see you try. A mere descendant of the Di Clan daring to talk to me in this manner? Even the current head of your Di Clan wouldn’t dare speak to me like this. A lowly being offending your superiors, tell me, what punishment do you deserve?” Qin Wentian coldly rebuked, as his eyes bored into Di Cheng. Di Cheng felt only overwhelming pressure crushing him from where he stood, the feeling so heavy his face became contorted.

A lowly being offending your superiors, tell me what punishment do you deserve?

Indeed, as a descendant of the Di Clan, failing to pay respect to the successor of the Azure Emperor could be said that Di Cheng was a lowly being offending his superior.

Even the experts and elders of the main bloodline would have to pay their respects and obey the holder of the Azure Emperor Token, let alone a mere Di Cheng.

The large-eyed elder drew in a deep breath. When Di Feng arrived at the White Deer Institute and showcased his outstanding abilities, they had all thought that Di Feng, as the successor groomed by the main bloodline, would definitely be the future leader of the Azure Faction.

Yet they had never expected that the holder of the token, the true successor of the Azure Emperor, would actually be Qin Wentian.

Qin Wentian, a nineteen years old fourth-ranked Grandmaster, he had come to the White Deer Institute for no reason other than because he was the true successor to the Azure Emperor.

Back then, he patiently waited for the right moment because he was unsure of the White Deer Institute’s attitude. But at this moment, there were members of the Institute, as well as descendants of the Di Clan, who wanted to band together to kill the successor of the Azure Emperor? How could he still continue to endure?

Although this sounded dramatic, such was the reality.

The gazes of the crowd shifted to Bailu Yi, who was the only one not shocked. Apparently, Qin Wentian had already revealed the truth of this matter to her. And considering the closeness of their relationship, Bailu Yi would definitely never betray Qin Wentian.

Qin Wentian had absolute trust in Bailu Yi.

After all, all things considered, the secret of his confidential identity was too sensitive a matter.

The large-eyed elder had a blinding headache as he glanced at Di Feng and the rest. Everything that had happened today was out of his expectations, and now, this matter was no longer about the ancient scroll of the Ascendant but rather, an issue that would affect the future of their White Deer Institute.

Will the White Deer Institute obey the commands of the Azure Emperor's successor?

If yes, then who? Di Feng from the main lineage, or Qin Wentian, the holder of the Azure Emperor Token?

The level of difficulty for this question was absurdly high.

Di Feng, someone ranked #5 in the Heavenly Fate Rankings. If it was before, Qin Wentian couldn't even be compared to him. But now, Qin Wentian was a nineteen years old, fourth-ranked Grandmaster! In terms of talent, both of them were exceedingly outstanding.

Di Feng's advantage was that he had the support of the main bloodline. As for Qin Wentian, he was still young and still had room for advancement in terms of both cultivation and the Dao of Divine Inscriptions. His potential was monstrous.

If not, how could Qin Wentian possess the Azure Emperor Token?

This indicated that Qin Wentian may be the one that passed the tests the Azure Emperor left behind.

"Allow me to inspect this token. How else would we know if it's real or fake?" Di Cheng countered, he had no way to accept this reality, no way to accept that Qin Wentian was the true successor.

"Who the hell are you? Do you have the qualifications to even touch the Azure Emperor Token?" Qin Wentian coldly replied.

“Di Yi of my Di Clan was captured by the Nine Mystical Palace, subsequently the Azure Emperor Token has gone missing, and yet today it appears in your hand. How could we not suspect its origin? Or are you someone from the Nine Mystical Palace wanting to control our Faction? We have to investigate this clearly today.”

Although Di Cheng was far from the level of Di Feng, he was still quite intelligent, full of little cunning schemes.

He naturally knew that his clan’s future plans included taking full control over the Azure Emperor Palace. This was why they had spent so much time in the White Deer Institute, setting up their preparations and groundwork. But now, who would have thought that the Azure Emperor Token would appear in the hands of Qin Wentian? How could they allow this sudden variable to totally ruin their plans. It was impossible.

Just Qin Wentian and a Heavenly Dipper Sovereign? They were far from enough.

Yet Qin Wentian laughed as he put away the Azure Emperor Token. “Do the supreme elders of the White Deer Institute still wish to watch the drama? Isn’t it about time for you all to show yourselves?”

Yet as the sound of his voice faded, not one of the supreme elders made their appearances. Through this, Qin Wentian understood the difficulty of controlling a power that was allowed to grow unsupervised for thousands of years.

Evidently, the supreme elders were acting this way to show Qin Wentian their own inclinations on the matter. First, leaving aside the ambiguity of the current situation, even if matters were to stabilize and the White Deer Institute recognised him as the true successor, what of it? If they refused to heed his commands, what could he do?

A ‘hidden’ branch of the Azure Faction had grown in power and matured on their own for over thousands of years. By handing over control of the White Deer Institute to such a young man, wouldn’t this be the equivalent of taking an extremely huge risk? How could the White Deer Institute so easily accept this? Even Di Feng from Di Clan’s main bloodline had not completely gained the recognition and approval of the Institute’s elders. At most, it could only be said that Di Feng had gained their respect.

And now, even with all that had happened, the supreme elders of the White Deer Institute still chose not to show themselves, all because they wanted to see how Qin Wentian and Di Feng would handle this.

“You better explain your identity to us first,” Bailu Tong coldly stated.

“Yup, the Azure Emperor Token? Pass it to me so I can take a better look to see if it’s real or fake,” Bailu You added, as he coldly laughed.

“You guys... How dare you.” Bailu Yi didn’t expect that Bailu Tong and his son would be this tough to handle. They totally disregarded the fact that Qin Wentian had already taken out the Azure Emperor Token.

And the attitude of the supreme elders also made it clear that even now, they still didn’t have enough confidence in Qin Wentian.

Even if Qin Wentian had monstrous talent, it didn’t necessarily mean that the White Deer Institute would grant him absolute authority. This decision would affect the future of their Institute, Bailu Yi could understand that, even if it did leave a bitter taste in her mouth.

Because at the very least, they should still show Qin Wentian a modicum of respect.

“Don’t forget what you said earlier, that you would die if the successor of the token tells you to do so. In that case, I want you to die now.” Qin Wentian’s eyes bore into Bailu You’s as he stated this, yet his words caused Bailu You to howl in laughter. “Ridiculous, you haven’t even proven your identity and you want me to die? It seems we won’t be able to move forwards unless we carefully inspect the secrets you are hiding inside your interspatial ring.”

Qing`er stepped forwards, standing in front of Qin Wentian, while Bailu Yi mirrored her movements.

“Haha, I really wish to see the contents inside his interspatial ring as well.” Di Cheng coldly laughed. An elderly protector, also at the Heavenly Dipper level, silently appeared at his side. The elderly protector took a step forward, standing in front of Di Cheng.

At this exact moment, in skies far away from the White Deer Institute, there were quite a number of fearsome-looking demonic beasts soaring through the air.

And on the back of one of these fearsome flying beasts, there was a silhouette belonging to a demonic middle-aged man. The eyes of this man shone with a fiendish light, as golden beams penetrating through space, observing the current happenings in the White Deer Institute. The scenes were then channeled from his vision and projected onto a screen created from Astral Light, showing it to the others on the back of these fearsome beasts.

“What audacity! Have they forgotten how to show the respect due to the holder of the Azure Emperor Token?”

As they observed, a terrible, terrible baleful aura emerged from an old woman equipped with a snake staff.

Trampled beneath the foot of this old woman, was a dead man. If Qin Wentian was here, he would surely have recognised that this dead man was none other than the Heavenly Dipper Sovereign that had escaped earlier, the fourth-ranked Inscriptionist named Grandmaster Penga. Now, he was nothing but a corpse.

“How audacious, indeed. Not just this show of disrespect, how dare they go as far as to threaten him even to the point of acting against him.” An extremely withered-looking, skinny old man icily stated. The demonic light shining in his eyes was as cold as that of the old woman.

“Geh geh geh!” Weird laughter resounded, as an extremely alluring enchantress giggled evilly. This woman’s figure was exceedingly sexy and the clothes she wore were designed to rouse the blood of males; they were revealing and served to further accentuate her racy figure. “Not only that, these old fogeys still pretend to be ignorant, do they want to shirk their responsibilities and make Young Master Qin handle this himself?”

“Since those old fellows still don’t want to come out, you guys go handle this on their behalf then.” In that moment, the middle-aged woman leading the group exuded an aura akin to the deadly chill of winter. As her command echoed in the air, these demon-like humans all began to cackle madly.

The golden screen of Astral Light vanished as the middle-aged man from earlier retracted his demonic vision. The whole lot of them began to rush forwards with astounding speed.

At this instant, on the lush green grass, several silhouettes advanced threateningly in the direction of Qin Wentian. Even now, the supreme elders of the Institute hadn’t appeared, choosing to adopt a ‘wait-and-see’ attitude instead. Even though they wouldn’t let Qin Wentian die, their actions didn’t have the slightest modicum of respect to the successor of the Azure Emperor.

Di Cheng, his protector, Bailu You and Bailu Tong slowly advanced forwards, while Qing`er and the fourth-ranked golden armored Puppet stood protectively in front of Qin Wentian.

“The successor of the Azure Emperor? I really want to see how powerful you are.” Di Cheng coldly laughed.

“All of you will no longer have the chance to see ‘anything’.”

At this moment, a voice drifted across the air, alarming everyone in the crowd.

Lifting their heads and shifting their gaze into the horizon, they could sense terrifying waves of demonic Qi gushing over.

“Who?” At this moment, a few old-looking cultivators flew through the air, entering the area.

These three old men were none other than the supreme elders of the White Deer Institute. Only now did they realise that there had been people spying on what was currently happening in this location. Because the distance was too far apart, they hadn’t sensed anything previously.

The wind whistled as many fearsome-looking demonic beasts hovered in the airspace above the back mountains. Several pairs of demonic-like, emotionless eyes riveted onto the supreme elders of the White Deer Institute, as one among them icily commented. “You’re only coming out now? It’s already too late. The matter here will be handled by us on behalf of the White Deer Institute.”

“Who might you be? And what do you mean?” The countenance of one of the supreme elders stiffened, as he coldly asked.

Just as coldly, the old woman wielding a snake staff shot back, “It is unnecessary for you to know who I am. And as to what I mean, these four have forgotten the ancestral laws to the point where they’re even acting against the successor. Initially with disrespect and now foolishness. No matter, they shall all be killed without mercy, to serve as a warning to others.”

After the sound of her words faded away, an ice-cold intent radiated from her, enveloping Bailu You, Bailu Tong, Di Cheng and Di Cheng’s protector. The frigid stare of that old woman caused a gut-wrenching terror to blossom in their hearts.

These people were here to protect Qin Wentian.

These people wanted to kill them!

“YOU DARE?!” That supreme elder madly roared in anger, his progeny was among these people whom the old woman outlined as targets to be slaughtered.

Only to see that old woman’s demonic eyes staring icily at him, akin to the stare of a poisonous serpent. “The White Deer Institute actually has the audacity to shield those who offend the successor of the Azure Emperor? In that case, there’s no longer a need for this ‘hidden’ branch of the Azure Faction to exist any longer!”

Chapter 288: Dominance

“In that case, there’s no longer a need for this ‘hidden’ branch of the Azure Faction to exist!”

These words caused a chill to bloom in the hearts of those from the White Deer Institute.

This old woman was threatening them, threatening to eradicate the entire White Deer Institute.

“Since you’ve dared to become a sinner that can even disrespect the Azure Emperor’s successor, then why should the Azure Faction still need a ‘hidden’ branch like yours?”

“Who the hell are you guys?” That supreme elder stared at the old woman and her party. Each of their auras felt as towering as the Heavens, so incomparably terrifying it was sufficient to cause foul wind and bloody rain in the White Deer Institute, completely annihilating it. There was no need for doubts, this group of people had the power to back up their words.

“We are the protectors of the Azure Emperor’s successor,” the old woman coldly stated, sweeping her gaze downwards. Di Cheng and the other aggressors all paled. The four of them were already surrounded and that terrifying aura was enveloping them with the threat of death. This feeling was extremely intense.

“We are merely spectating, but we definitely won’t allow any harm to come to the Azure Emperor’s successor. Could madam please show mercy?” Another supreme elder beseeched.

With the appearance of these people, there was no mistaking Qin Wentian's identity.

“Oh we trust you, but while we were peacefully spectating, there were actually quite a few people not knowing their places to the extent of even wanting to make a move against the successor. This group of people, there is no longer a need for them to remain alive.”

As the sound of the old woman's voice faded, a corpse fell down from the skies. The hearts of the crowd couldn't help but to go cold when they saw the face of the corpse. This was none other than Grandmaster Penga, the Heavenly Dipper Sovereign that made a move against Qin Wentian. He had already fallen.

While the supreme elders of the Institute were observing the happenings, so were these group of people.

Yet seeing how disrespectful they all were, how could they not kill this whole lot of insolent fools to establish dominance? If not, then after a few thousand years, would all the 'hidden' branches of the Azure Faction forget the awe that the name Azure Emperor once inspired? Losing even the most basic form of respect for the Azure Emperor's successor?

“I'm a descendant of the Di Clan, direct line of descent of the Azure Emperor's main bloodline!” Di Cheng involuntarily screamed as he glanced upwards at the old woman, feeling the ice-cold intent she radiated twisting his heart.

The old woman shifted her gaze onto Di Cheng, her demeanor as icy as before as she stated, “As a descendant of the Di Clan, you should abide by the last orders of the Azure Emperor even more. You broke the law while knowing the rules, you deserve death even more.”

After speaking, she wielded her snake staff, stabbing out a manifestation of a demonic serpent howling in anger. It wrenched its maw open, flying in the direction of Di Cheng with the intent to devour him.

“NOOOOOOOOO!” Di Cheng's countenance turned pale-white, he didn't think that these people really wanted to kill him, he didn't want to die.

A terrifying suction force drifted over, Di Cheng wanted to evade it, but to no avail, he was drawn within the maw of the demonic serpent and disappeared totally, dying a miserable death.

The whole scenario was an extremely ghastly sight to behold; the protector of Di Cheng wanted to escape, but he saw a withered-looking old man standing ahead, blocking his path. That old man blasted forth with his palms as a surge of ominous-feeling qi enveloped the protector. In an instant, and in only an instant, the body of the protector corroded away completely.

“What a fearsome Mandate.” Qin Wentian involuntarily trembled in his heart as he felt the might of that Mandate. He knew that if he were the one fighting against this, he would die too, without a doubt.

Qin Wentian finally understood why Di Yi was the one in charge of keeping the hidden map, while only Fairy Qingmei’s Celestial Lake Palace’s Refinement Grounds could unravel the secret of the map.

The Azure Emperor must have long predicted that after his death, the remnants of his Azure Faction wouldn’t be so easily controlled by his successor. This was why he left this task to the person he trusted most—Fairy Qingmei. She was the one in charge of silently guarding his successor.

Di Cheng and his protector were killed without ceremony. Di Feng watched silently as a brilliant light flashed in his eyes. He had already guessed the origins of these protectors.

He didn’t expect that the shadow of Fairy Qingmei was perpetually there. In that case, the difficulty of him becoming the future leader of the Azure Faction had just skyrocketed.

As for Bailu Tong and Bailu You, the father-and-son duo’s countenances turned ashen when they saw the death of Di Cheng. They could feel the intent of death surrounding them.

Why had it happened like this? Never would they have expected that in their quest to plunder the ancient scroll, it would lead to them feeling the threat of death.

“Since you guys are the protectors of the Azure Emperor’s successor, why is there a need to be so ruthless?” Bailu Tong’s father stepped forwards, how could he watch his progeny die just like that in front of his eyes.

“Kill.” That middle-aged woman standing in the air gave the command, her baleful aura hadn’t diminished at the supreme elder’s words. In fact, it grew even stronger. Just from her gaze alone,

the supreme elder could sense his heart palpitating in fear, the strength of this woman was something far beyond him, he didn't dare to act blindly without thinking.

"Geh, geh." The alluring enchantress giggled as she swooped downwards, while the palm of that withered old man wavered, causing the foul qi of corrosion to gush forward. It enveloped the entire space where Bailu Tong and Bailu You stood.

"Bzzz."

A pair of feathered wings appeared at the back of Bailu Tong, he soared skywards seeking to escape. However, he was soon forced downwards by a herculean man, stomping down at him from the air. That stomp of the herculean man had the power to fissure the earth. Bailu Tong's body was pitifully repelled, slamming into the ground with such might, a mini-crater had been formed from the impact.

The surrounding space around their targets was locked down by gravity. There was no way their prey could escape.

"YOU ARE GOING TOO FAR." Bailu Tong's father exuded a terrifying aura.

"You guys better stop him." The middle-aged woman swept her eyes over to the other supreme elders. "If not, don't blame me when the White Deer Institute loses a supreme elder."

"ARGHHH..." A foreboding cry echoed in the air. Bailu You's body was withering away at an unbelievable pace. An instant later, he was reduced into nothing more than a puddle of blood.

Never would Bailu You have imagined that he would die in this place he called home, and the reason for his death was none other than fuel for these protectors to establish their dominance.

"When the Azure Emperor created the 'hidden' branches of the Azure Faction, it wasn't so you could all enjoy peace and happiness. Have you all forgotten your ancestral teachings? Your one and only purpose for surviving is to wait for the appearance of the Azure Emperor's successor, following him to rise up once more, returning to glory. As the descendents of one of the hidden branches, although you have the right to 'test' the successor, not the slightest bit of respect was shown at all. In that case, for such a small branch like yours, there's no need for it to exist any longer."

The voice of the middle-aged woman was colder than ice, “The White Deer Institute isn’t the only branch of the ‘hidden’ Azure Faction. But today, since Young Master Qin has arrived here, you can decide right here and now if you wish to serve him. But remember this, even without the support of your White Deer Institute, the rise of the Azure Faction will not be affected. And at that time, don’t say I didn’t warn you. If the Azure Faction rises to the peak once more, they would naturally need to restructure the various branches. At that time, the power of choice will no longer lie in your hands. Think this through clearly, even if you wish to be independent, first consider the fact if you have sufficient power.”

Her words faintly held the hint of a threat, but her meaning was clear—At present, your White Deer Institute still has the right to make a choice, but you better think carefully about your decision. In the future when Qin Wentian has amassed enough power to control the other ‘hidden’ branches of the Azure Faction, leading them to the pinnacle of Grand Xia, the only fate for the White Deer Institute is to be left behind in their dust.

At that time, even if the White Deer Institute wished to declare their allegiance, the choice of acceptance would then lie solely in the hands of Qin Wentian.

Currently, the four supreme elders and the Headmaster of the White Deer Institute had all fully gathered.

Bailu Yi’s great-grandfather stepped forth and looked to the middle-aged woman. “I’ve already heard of the matter, and our White Deer Institute has no objections to your handling of the matter. They’ve shown disrespect to the successor of our ancestor, and as you’ve said, they deserved death.”

As the Headmaster, he understood what he should do. Regardless of the White Deer Institute pledging their full support to Qin Wentian or not, they couldn’t afford to offend him. After all, with the support of this level of power, it would be difficult even if Qin Wentian didn’t want to rise up.

Qin Wentian also silently lamented in his heart, it appeared that talent alone was insufficient to move the hearts of the core members in the White Deer Institute. He knew that if it weren’t for the overwhelming support given to him by the Celestial Lake Palace, there was probably no way for this to proceed as smoothly as it had today.

“Puchi!” A crisp sound rang out. As the crowd turned their gaze in the direction of Bailu Tong, several of the core members shuddered involuntarily as they drew in a deep breath.

Just like that, an elder of the White Deer Institute had fallen here today.

How could he, with all his machinations, ever have calculated that the outcome of today would be his own death? And it all stemmed forth from his initial plan to bring in those fourth-ranked Grandmasters to pressure Qin Wentian.

All in all, too many experts had fallen here this day.

“Young Master Qin, for the matter today, is there anyone else you wish to punish?” the Headmaster politely inquired.

“Senior can just refer to me as Wentian.” Qin Wentian smiled, “If Senior doesn’t mind, you may think of me as Little Yi? It would please me to refer to you as Great-Grandfather.”

“Great, in that case, this old man will shamelessly accept.” The Headmaster’s heart warmed after seeing Qin Wentian’s courteous attitude. This young man’s character wasn’t bad indeed, he didn’t have the temperament of an overbearing bully.

“Great-Grandfather don’t say that, nobody could have anticipated today’s events. I still have to apologize for what has happened.” Qin Wentian dipped into a bow, only to see the Headmaster of the White Deer Institute nonchalantly waving it away.

“This has nothing to do with you, but rather, the mistake was because of this old man’s inability to instill the right values in my members.”

“As the Great Elder, I too, cannot escape from censure.” The large-eyed elder spoke, such an incident was something everyone hadn’t wished to see, causing the relationship between the Institute and Qin Wentian to be strained. If they could mend that gap today, it would naturally be all for the best.

“Great Elder has always been kind to me. Wentian has never forgotten your fairness. The matter today has nothing to do with Great Elder.”

Today, in order to establish their dominance, the experts from the Celestial Lake Palace had already killed the main instigators, the Bailu Tong and Bailu You father-and-son duo. Also, seeing that the Great Elder was an honorable man, Qin Wentian didn’t wish for this matter to create internal unrest from the White Deer Institute. Naturally, it would be good to mend their relationship as soon as possible.

Plainly speaking, although the White Deer Institute’s actions did show a lack of respect for him today, he could understand things from their perspective and thus did not hold it against them.

The eyes of the middle-aged woman flashed with traces of gentleness. She was extremely satisfied and happy with Qin Wentian's decision.

In order to shield away bad feelings towards Qin Wentian, she had taken the role of executioner to drive a point in the hearts of the core members of the White Deer Institute. Let her Celestial Lake Palace be the villains instead.

Qin Wentian still had to become the leader of the Azure Faction, it wouldn't be too good for him to strain the relationship between him and the 'hidden' branches that would be his vassals.

Shifting her gaze onto Di Feng, that middle-aged woman stated, "Inform your elders, and tell them to remember it clearly, Azure Emperor's last orders."

Di Feng's countenance remained unperturbed. He bowed to the middle-aged woman as he replied, "Junior understands and will definitely inform my elders."

The middle-aged woman's eyes flickered with a sharp glint of light when she saw Di Feng's reaction. Di Feng was the nominated successor of those from the Di Clan, and in the future, he would definitely become Qin Wentian's strongest competitor in his quest to control the Azure Faction.

However, this was also a challenge for Qin Wentian, who had to do what the Azure Emperor once did; face all challenges that may cross his path and surpass them, emerging as the ultimate victor.

"Junior shall leave now to inform my clan elders that the Azure Emperor's successor has appeared. Farewell." Di Feng clasped his hand towards the crowd, giving a bow in the direction of the supreme elders, then turned and departed without another word!

Chapter 289: Very Adorable

After Di Feng left, his group of followers all rose in the air and followed after him.

They could already guess where this group of protectors came from, the incident today had already surpassed what they could have predicted.

The reveal of the Azure Emperor Token as well as the appearance of those from the Celestial Lake Palace had forced them to accept that their mission here at the White Deer Institute, was effectively futile. They could only choose to leave for now.

Not only that, with the way things were developing, it was a disastrous blow to the plans that they had been making.

The Azure Emperor Token already had an owner, and to think that that owner also had the support of Fairy Qingmei. In this case, it would be almost impossible for them to control the remaining 'hidden' branches of the Azure Faction. Because Qin Wentian, this successor of the Azure Emperor, would also carry out what they planned to do—to unite all the hidden branches and eventually become the leader of the Azure Faction.

Now, the only recourse left to Di Feng was that he had to mature even faster. Only by having heaven-defying combat prowess and a sufficiently domineering power would he be strong enough to disregard even the Azure Emperor Token.

Only after killing the four transgressors did those from the Celestial Lake Palace quiet down. Each of them descended onto the ground and turned their gazes onto Qin Wentian as well as the silhouette standing beside him—Qing`er.

“Young Master Qin, Princess Qing`er.” All of them bowed low in greeting. Qin Wentian was the Azure Emperor’s successor, while Qing`er was the favourite disciple of Fairy Qingmei. In the Celestial Lake Palace, Qing`er’s status was comparable to that of the Palace Mistress.

Qing`er lightly nodded her head as she quietly stood there. Yet the gazes of those from the White Deer Institute were filled with extreme shock when they looked at Qing`er. So it turned out that this celestial-like beauty beside Qin Wentian actually had such a terrifying identity. That group of supreme powerhouses still had to refer to her deferentially as ‘Princess Qing`er’.

“Go contain this news. No external people can know of this.”

The headmaster waved his hands, instructing the various elders of the White Deer Institute. The matters here today would definitely attract the attention of the other powers, and so they needed to prepare measures to deal with any sort of aftermath.

“Don’t worry, we flew down straight from the skies. Other than the members of your White Deer Institute, there should be no other powers that knew of our presence. Granted, you should still take

all the appropriate measures, we don't want any accidents to happen." The middle-aged woman directed her sentence to the headmaster. The only people remaining here today belonged to either the Celestial Lake Palace or the White Deer Institute. Even though their agendas might not be the same, there was one thing both sides would never compromise—the security of the secret of the Azure Emperor's 'hidden' branches.

"Noted, I will make the arrangements." The headmaster nodded. However, he knew that the deaths of the fourth-ranked Grandmasters couldn't be totally concealed. After all, at the time when they died, Fenrir and some others were present as well.

The middle-aged woman came to face Qin Wentian and Qing`er, a smile appearing on her face. Her smile wiped away all traces of the fearsome facade she wore as a mask, revealing the aged beauty of her features.

"Did you bully our Qing`er?" the middle-aged woman teased.

"Erm..." Qin Wentian blinked rapidly, did he bully Qing`er?

He didn't even know where Qing`er was half the time, she always appeared and disappeared with the same elusiveness as an apparition, so how could he bully her?

"Senior Sister, why must he bully me?"

This girl was still as innocent and adorable as before.

The middle-aged woman involuntarily laughed when she heard Qing`er's words. Smiling, she gently pulled on Qing`er's arms and led her to the side.

"Qing`er, Master wants us to ask you something," the middle-aged woman spoke in a low voice, her secretive tone causing Qing`er to blink. "What does Master want to ask?"

"Master asks...do you like him?"

A crafty and astute light flashed in the eyes of the middle-aged woman. Although this was something Fairy Qingmei wanted her to ask Qing`er, she also wanted to take this chance to tease this emotionless junior sister of hers.

Yet how could poor Qing`er understand matters of the heart? An expression of contemplation appeared on her face as she seriously replied, "I... don't know."

"Ehhh..." Qin Wentian, who stood at the side, rolled his eyes. Even though the volume of their words was low, it wasn't so low that Qin Wentian couldn't hear them.

"Then, what do you think of his character?" The middle-aged woman laughed as she continued her questions.

Qing`er's eyelashes fluttered, turning her head to glance at Qin Wentian, before replying, "He's very adorable!"

"Cough, cough..." Qin Wentian's face was immediately covered with black lines when he heard Qing`er's words. His heart was filled with melancholy, 'very adorable'... these words were used by himself on Qing`er back then, to think that she still remembered the definition of these two words!
[1]

The middle-aged woman involuntarily let out peals of laughter, the image unbecoming of someone her age. She turned her head to glance at Qin Wentian with a knowing smile in her eyes, causing his face to burn from the embarrassment.

"To Fairy Qingmei, Little Sister Qing`er is the apple to her eye. You have to take good care of our Qing`er, okay?"

The middle-aged woman laughed heartily, yet her imposing aura unconsciously exuded again. Evidently, her status in the Celestial Lake Palace was exceptionally high as well.

This time around, she had personally led her sect members over here, and with her actions she established a domineering might on behalf of Qin Wentian. It was also a form of deterrence to the White Deer Institute. She wanted them to carve this memory into their hearts.

"Senior, actually Qing`er has always been the one taking care of me." Qin Wentian felt terribly ashamed. After being acquainted with Qing`er, she had constantly stayed in the shadows protecting him.

“It’s good that you know this. If I’ve learned that you bullied her, I will definitely not spare you.”

Apparently, the middle-aged woman was truly concerned about Qing`er. She repeatedly reminded Qin Wentian of this in a teasing tone, but her manner of speaking didn’t seem to be a joke. She truly cared for Qing`er.

At the side, those from the White Deer Institute had long fallen silent. They were all thinking, if this middle-aged woman was already so terrifying, who might her master be?

As for the four supreme elders and the headmaster, they already guessed the origins of this group of protectors and had a clearer understanding of Qing`er’s position.

“Enough. Qing`er, we will return first.”

The middle-aged woman spoke, and Qing`er responded by lightly nodding her head, with no other hint of emotions. Their group naturally wouldn’t fault Qing`er for this, they were already long used to this celestial-like junior sister of theirs.

“Take good care of Qing`er,” the middle-aged woman reiterated. Qin Wentian nodded, as he asked, “Seniors are leaving so soon?”

“Yes. We have already completed the things we came here to accomplish. For the other challenges which you might face, you have no one to depend on but yourself, don’t expect us to help you again. As the successor of the Azure Emperor, you have to rely on your own strength to walk to the top.”

After speaking, her silhouette flickered as she instantly appeared high up in the skies. Waves of demonic qi surged, as a pair of gigantic wings appeared on her back. The other members of the Celestial Lake Palace similarly soared skywards, and moments later, all of their silhouettes disappeared as they flew through the clouds, vanishing from the eyes of the crowd below.

They appeared in a grandiose manner, and departed in such a low-key manner.

The people from the Celestial Lake Palace only had a single objective today. They were here to help Qin Wentian establish dominance and to let those from the White Deer Institute know of Fairy Qingmei’s stance.

Only after those from the Celestial Lake Palace left did the members of the White Deer Institute heave a sigh of relief. The headmaster cast his gaze to the horizon, as a pondering expression appeared on his face.

“Wentian, you can be at ease and remain in the Institute for your cultivation in the future. If you have any demands or requirements, you can let Little Yi know, or just directly come to me,” the headmaster stated.

“Right.” Qin Wentian smiled as he nodded his head.

“From today onwards, how you treat Wentian should be the equivalent of your treatment of me. But keep this matter a secret from the non-core members,” the headmaster added to the crowd.

“Wentian, I hope you understand why we must still maintain a low profile.”

“Don’t worry, Great-Grandfather. Wentian understands.” Qin Wentian smiled. “Oh, and one more thing, I once told Little Yi before, even if the White Deer Institute is willing to submit to my control, I wouldn’t casually use the Institute to do things, or place it in danger. Before I have absolute confidence in my own power, I will not reveal the fact that the White Deer Institute is a branch of the Azure Faction.”

“Understood, it is only that this decision is too major. There are some decisions I cannot make alone. I will organise an elder-level meeting and inform you once we have come to a decision.”

Undoubtedly the reason behind the headmaster organising an elder-level meeting was solely for him, the Azure Emperor’s successor.

“Everyone, help to spread the information to the other elders not present today,” the headmaster instructed. As a power with a solid background of over thousands of years, the White Deer Institute didn’t merely have the four supreme elders and nine grand elders, there were other elder-level figures of the previous generations in the Institute as well. These group of elders were known as the doyens, and they were all extremely powerful cultivators at the peak of Yuanfu. They were currently in seclusion to focus on their cultivation and didn’t participate in matters of administration for the White Deer Institute. If the current matter wasn’t of such magnitude, these elders wouldn’t have been disturbed.

The crowd respectively nodded. It had been far too long since the White Deer Institute mobilised the doyens.

“Let us leave as well,” the headmaster stated to a supreme elder, only to see that the supreme elder had been fixedly staring at Qin Wentian, with a sharp light in his eyes. This supreme elder was none other than the father of Bailu Tong.

Qin Wentian knew that this supreme elder would definitely harbour hatred for him for the death of his son and grandson. But he believed that the headmaster would have a method to resolve this conflict peacefully.

After the headmaster and the supreme elders left, the large-eyed elder smiled and stepped forth, patting Qin Wentian on his shoulders. “Don’t take to heart what happened today. With you acquiring the Azure Emperor Token and the approval of the Celestial Lake Palace, there was no need for us to doubt your talent in terms of cultivation. Moreover, as a nineteen-year-old fourth-ranked Grandmaster, your achievements are too illustrious. I believe that even without our White Deer Institute, your name would still be able to rock the whole of Grand Xia.”

“Great Elder thinks too highly of me, but the matter today may be a blessing in disguise.” Qin Wentian smiled.

The news that Qin Wentian became a fourth-ranked Grandmaster soon circulated around the Moon Continent, easily creating waves of commotion and even attracting the attention of the Star-Seizing Manor.

A nineteen-year-old fourth-ranked Grandmaster? This was unprecedented in the history of the Moon Continent.

Regretfully, the Moon Continent had no transcendent powers that strongly emphasized on the importance of Divine Inscriptionists. It would be a different matter if Qin Wentian was in the War Continent, there would surely be people fighting over themselves to recruit him for his talent in forging Divine Weapons.

But naturally, even though they were in the Moon Continent, there would still be people from the transcendent powers out scouting to see if it were possible to recruit Qin Wentian into their ranks.

And when the Leng Clan of Moon Continent’s Eastern Region received this news, they thought of the lasting enmity between themselves with Qin Wentian. The thought of what might have been, angered them so much they almost coughed out blood!

Chapter 290: ThousandJue Alliance

Initially, Qin Wentian's name in the higher echelons of the Leng Clan was extremely obscure. Those who knew of him were only a few elder-level figures. Back then, the incident of Leng Ning's death created a grudge between the Leng Clan and Qin Wentian. The death of Yan Tie further exacerbated their animosity, as it resulted in the Leng Clan losing their qualification to even enter the secret realm. All of this was negatively implicated to one person—Qin Wentian. Hence, the disciplinary elder, Leng Mao, chose to suppress this news, not allowing the upper echelons of the Leng Clan to catch wind of it.

But now, when the news of Qin Wentian stepping into the level of fourth-ranked Grandmaster circulated to the Leng Clan, there was no way to hide what had happened any longer.

Very swiftly, the entire events concerning the Leng Ning – Yan Tie saga were quickly revealed and spread throughout the entire Leng Clan.

Now, in the great hall of the Leng Clan, the majority of the elder-level figures—and those above—had gathered. Other than that, Leng Ning's uncle, Leng Jian, and her cousin, Leng Lin, as well as those that had a direct connection with Leng Ning's death were all present.

A solemn atmosphere permeated the air, as the overwhelming pressure within it could be palpably felt.

“We once had the chance to become excellent friends with a nineteen-year-old fourth-ranked Grandmaster, yet because of the actions of you people, he is now our irreconcilable enemy. Hehehe, LOOK AT WHAT YOU'VE DONE?!” A sturdy old man shouted, his gaze directed at Leng Jian and the rest. The targets of his gaze could only lower their heads, not even daring to speak out.

During the exchange organized by the Star-Seizing Manor, Qin Wentian spared nothing in his quest to kill Yan Tie. From this, one could see that Qin Wentian would definitely seek revenge for Leng Ning. How could he forget the main culprits behind this incident? Back then, he hadn't carried out his revenge because he wasn't strong enough yet. But now as a fourth-ranked Grandmaster, so long as he joined a transcendent power, or if he were to turtle up his cultivation further, the Leng Clan would definitely suffer the flames of his wrath.

The potential of a nineteen-year-old fourth-ranked Grandmaster was impossible to ignore.

“Originally, our Leng Clan decided to gift Leng Lin over to Yan Tie. Was this the case?” the sturdy-looking old man indifferently added.

Leng Mao nodded, “Indeed that was so, but then Leng Lin found a companion, a young man that was a peak-level, second-ranked Grandmaster. And in addition to Leng Jian’s pleading, we eventually decided to change the ‘gift’ from Leng Lin to Leng Ning.”

“Oh? In any case, I heard that our forging division needs a maid or two,” the sturdy-looking old man continued. Instantly, Leng Lin’s countenance turned ashen, her voice quavering as she weakly replied, “N..no... please...”

The Leng Clan could be considered to be a major clan in the Moon Continent that focused more on Divine Inscriptions. In the Leng Clan, there was a forging division where Divine Inscriptionists gathered. The Divine Inscriptionists over there were either Leng Clan members or guest Inscriptionists that had been invited over for a high price by the Leng Clan.

Divine Inscriptionists all had an extremely revered status in the Leng Clan, and they would naturally need maids to serve them. Occasionally, some of the Inscriptionists would unleash their primal urges, to rid their body of the flame of lust’s desire. Usually, their first choice would be to look for their maids, hence the Leng Clan’s maids were all selected from extremely beautiful commoners. These maids were actually very pitiful people; if they met a nice Inscriptionist, all was well but if they met an abusive one, they could only blame it on their own luck.

“No? Then who will bear the responsibility?” The sturdy-looking old man swept his cold gaze onto Leng Lin, as he continued, “Tell the one in charge of the forging division that this woman is from our Leng Clan, and will be given to any Inscriptionists that show their worth.”

“Father! Save me!!” Leng Lin screamed, yet Leng Jian couldn’t do anything. His face was already red from his suppressed emotions, but he now understood that it would be difficult for him to save even himself.

“Leng Jian, you will be banished to the forging division, where you will do odd-jobs for them as a collateral worker for ten years.” The old man spoke again, his words like the cross of damnation, causing Leng Jian to turn pale-white.

Being a collateral worker meant that he would be the one filling up the embryonic weapon casts for the Divine Inscriptionists, living the life of a slave under the command of others.

“Leng Mao, as the disciplinary elder, you can’t escape from censure. I want you to prepare generous gifts and personally send it to the White Deer Institute to convey our apologies. Try to dissolve this grudge between Qin Wentian and our Leng Clan.” Leng Mao nodded as he sighed in his heart. He hadn’t expected Qin Wentian’s talent to be so brilliant. If he had, he would have distanced himself from those who forced Leng Ning to her death.

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By now, Qin Wentian’s name had already rocked the entire Eastern Region and news of his achievements had even spread throughout the whole of Moon Continent. However, he acted like nothing remarkable had happened and continued cultivating within the White Deer Institute.

After the fourth-ranked Grandmasters died, their possessions all belonged to Qin Wentian, each item exceedingly abundant in value.

Putting aside the vast number of Yuan Meteor Stones in their keeping, Qin Wentian was so overwhelmed by the sheer amount of third-ranked Divine Weapons left behind that he began to view them as excess junk. He also found a number of valuable and rare forging materials that could be purely converted into Yuan Meteor Stones, further ensuring that Qin Wentian’s cultivation would last for quite a while. With this additional means of support, he could retire from the Hell Arena since he no longer needed to earn Yuan Meteor Stones anymore.

Naturally, the most valuable spoils he’d obtained were still the fourth-ranked bladed Puppet, as well as a few other fourth-ranked Divine Weapons. Regretfully, the attainment of those fourth-ranked Grandmasters he killed weren’t that high yet; the fourth-ranked Divine Weapons all belonged to the lower-tier category. If not for this, the value of his victory spoils this time around would be far superior.

“Seems like I need to find a place to sell all these unwanted items, or at least trade them into cultivation resources for my own use,” Qin Wentian mused.

“Boss, are there any interesting items in the stash? Give me some to play with.” Fan Le who was standing by his side, was fiddling with a few third-ranked Divine Weapons. His eyes brightened as he tried to teasingly provoke Qin Wentian.

“You? Forget it, these third-ranked Divine Weapons are already sufficient for your level.” Qin Wentian rolled his eyes, this Fatty had already palmed off five peak-tier, third-ranked Divine Weapons from him.

“Hehe, it would be so so much better if I could play around with a fourth-ranked Divine Weapon.” Fan Le grinned. Qin Wentian was speechless; with their current cultivation bases, they had totally no way to unleash the power within fourth-ranked Divine Weapons. And it would only be detrimental to their growth if they kept depending on such powerful weapons.

“Fine, wait till you step into the Heavenly Dipper Sovereign level. At that time, it won’t be too late then,” Qin Wentian replied in a half-mocking tone. Fan Le winked, flashing a thumbs-up gesture in response.

Chu Mang who was by their side, remained quiet all the while, his hands fiddling with the great axe Qin Wentian had given to him. He had only chosen two Divine Weapons; an attack-type Great Axe and a defensive-type Divine Armor. Since the two pieces of equipment augmented both his attack and defense, he was already sufficiently satisfied with his gains.

Sadly, there weren’t any fourth-ranked defensive-type armor in the spoils he had obtained. Otherwise, he would be able to give Qing`er a present. Fourth-ranked defensive-type Divine Armors were just too difficult to forge.

“Are you guys still not done yet with the distribution of your victory spoils?” From afar, Bailu Yi approached, smiling at the three of them.

“Are there people looking for me again?” Qin Wentian smiled back. During this period of time, there had been many people requesting an audience with Qin Wentian, but they had all been turned away.

Not only was he an unaffiliated fourth-ranked Grandmaster, he possessed the ancient scroll of the Ascendant. As to these unknown, unfamiliar major powers that were trying to recruit him, Qin Wentian wouldn’t even put them to mind.

Even the White Deer Institute had people like Bailu Tong, wanting to murder him to plunder the Ascendant’s scroll away.

“Yeah, at first I didn’t want to bother you with their requests, but there are a few powers that are pretty unique in their own rights, which was why I thought it would be better in the end to let you know of them.” Bailu Yi withdrew a book and passed it over to Qin Wentian. “This is a summary of the various powers currently within Grand Xia, take a look.”

“Right.” Qin Wentian flipped the book open as he studied it. After he came to the Moon Continent, he only knew that there were four transcendent powers residing here. Other than those four, he wasn’t that clear regarding the other major powers.

“Currently, there are three different powers that came to pay you a visit. First, the Star River Association. I believe you should have heard of this organization before.” Bailu Yi’s words caused Qin Wentian’s countenance to falter slightly. Of course he had heard of the Star River Association, they had a branch set up within Chu.

In his memories, the Star River Association was extremely mysterious and powerful. Although they could be considered a major power in their own right, they weren’t embroiled in any political disputes or struggles for power. They were a power that stood on their own. And despite having no allies, no transcendent powers would willingly make an enemy out of the Star River Association. This was a testament to how powerful they were.

“I’ve heard of it, there’s a branch in my hometown,” Qin Wentian stated. Not only did they have a branch in Chu, they even had one based in the Sky Harmony City.

“The Star River Association is a unique power that covers the entire Grand Xia. Although they keep a low-profile and rarely interfere with the disputes of other powers, their accumulated resources and overall strength are fearsome to behold. Not only that, they’ve made it a point to secretly recruit several extremely talented elites in the fields of alchemy, divine Inscriptions and even stellar martial cultivators. Nobody knows what they’re planning.”

Bailu Yi continued, “Many in Grand Xia have guessed that the Star River Association’s organization structure is like a pyramid. An extremely strict top-down structure where information is tightly controlled. Those at the bottom belong to the lower tiers, but as long as they can prove themselves as worthy, even they have a chance at climbing up to the higher levels. The higher one climbs, the greater the authority one wields. There were also rumors saying that the Star River Association originates from an empire outside of Grand Xia, and the countless branches spread out across Grand Xia have all been a bid to consolidate their foundations prior to activating their plans. But of course, these are only rumors.”

“The Star River Association is actually this powerful?” Qin Wentian was somewhat stunned. Back in Chu he had heard that the Star River Association set up branches around the major cities of Chu. Now he was receiving information that the Star River Association actually had branches spread out across the entire Grand Xia. This was a different scale altogether. This degree of infiltration, was beyond shocking.

From Bailu Yi's words, he also understood that the branches in the Sky Harmony City and Royal Capital of Chu belonged to the lower tiers of the pyramid structure. If those two branches had that much power and were still considered low level, then how much authority and power would a higher level authority wield?

“There's also been news through the grapevine that several powerful rankers in the Heavenly Fate and Heavenly Dipper Rankings have already been bought over and recruited by the Star River Association. Some of them have even openly announced this fact. Seeing as how they've come to pay you a visit, it's obvious what their intentions are. They wish to recruit you, a nineteen-year-old fourth-ranked Grandmaster, into the Star River Association.”

Bailu Yi's words left Qin Wentian stunned. Right from the beginning, he'd never had a good impression of the Star River Association. Back in the Sky Harmony City, Murin had indirectly caused the death of many members from his Qin Residence.

“The second power interested in you, is also an extraordinary one. Have you heard of the ‘Thousand-Jue Alliance’?” Bailu Yi asked, then continued to explain, “The Thousand-Jue Alliance is the largest organization of unaffiliated individuals. Usually unaffiliated cultivators are at a disadvantage when facing off against the major powers, even to the extent of losing their lives. Therefore, a few thousand years ago, a group of unfathomably powerful unaffiliated cultivators came together to form the Thousand-Jue Alliance, in order to provide support to those who needed it. Now, after thousands of years, the foundations of their organization have become even more deeply entrenched. Within the Alliance, as long as you have made sufficient contributions in its name, you will be granted a certain level of power and authority.”

“They're considered a transcendent power. Although their headquarters aren't located in the Moon Continent, you can still find people who work for them here. And now, the purpose of their visit is also undoubtedly to recruit you within their ranks.”

Bailu Yi continued, “As for the third power, it's none other than the Leng Clan. The disciplinary elder, Leng Mao, has personally paid a visit hoping to dissolve the grudge between you and the Leng Clan!”

Abruptly, a glacial-like light flashed past Qin Wentian's eyes. To think, the Leng Clan actually dared send Leng Mao to apologize? Did they really believe that everything would be resolved, just like that? How utterly ridiculous!