

Ancient GM 331

Chapter 331: Final Confrontation

The scenario at the Heavenly Stele Steps shook the spectators with its intensity. Eight people stood upon the 18th step while one stood upon the 17th. Such a spectacle had never been seen before during the past ten years.

“It’s rumoured that the middle segment of the 27th steps (the second segment of nine steps) were to test one’s will of their Mandates. If their wills weren’t persistent enough, without a sufficiently determined heart, they would never be able to step onto it. These nine people all possess an otherworldly determination and incomparable resolution.” The crowd mused. Yet, at this moment, all of the nine had already halted, no one was trying to advance to the next step.

The last segment of the 27th step was yet another barrier. The difficulty of advancing to the 19th step was beyond imagination.

Otherwise, in these past ten years where the Heavenly Stele Step had been opened three times to the public, a mere 18 steps wouldn’t have been the record.

Time flowed by, the nine of them maintained their motionless positions, and it was as though they had all forgotten time existed. In the blink of an eye, half a month passed, yet the nine people were still on their respective steps, tempering their wills of Mandates. For the 18th step, it didn’t mean that the Ancient Will’s attack would stop the moment you stabilized your footing. You had to persevere and engage the Ancient Will in constant battle until either you broke through or you were blasted down. There was no need to think about advancing to the 19th step if you couldn’t even conquer the 18th.

On the 18th step, their opponents were themselves. Their wills of Mandates were constantly being tempered, and as long as they weren’t defeated, their wills would grow unceasingly stronger.

“Situ Po, all three of his Mandates are already at the Perfection Boundary. He, who is still only at the eighth level of Yuanfu, actually maxed out all three of his first level insights before even stepping into the ninth level of Yuanfu. He’ll definitely be able to rank among the top thirty-six Heaven’s Chosen once he breaks through to the ninth level.” Many in the crowd speculated.

That was originally Situ Po’s goal. Now that such an excellent opportunity like the Heavenly Stele Steps had come along, how could he let himself miss out?

This test of the Heavenly Stele Platform was undoubtedly an absolute opportunity for demon-level geniuses. But for average-level geniuses like Ouyang Ting, this test was nothing but a nightmare.

“Ouyang Zheng and Zang Lengfeng are preparing to make their moves.” At this moment, the crowd noticed the movements of both men, they were in the midst of stepping on to the final segment, consisting of the last nine steps.

Both of them were Heaven’s Chosen on the Heavenly Fate Ranking, respectively ranked at the tenth and twelve position. The difference in their ranking wasn’t that far apart, hence right from the beginning, both had already felt a strong sense of competition against the other.

What would be waiting for them on this final segment?

Would they be able to surpass their own limits and break the past record?

Everyone was watching with bated breath.

“Chi...”

Fresh blood scattered about the air, seemingly at the same instant. Ouyang Feng and Zang Lengfeng were both blasted down from the Heavenly Stele Steps. However, before they could hit the ground, experts from both the Ouyang Clan and Multidirectional Thunderwind Sect intervened and saved them. The crowd couldn’t help but lament in their hearts, it wasn’t so easy to break that record.

However, simply by matching the record was already sufficient to prove their degree of talent. After all, those who managed to step on the 18th step within the past decade were all characters that could summon the rain and wind in Grand Xia.

Xuan Yan and Yue Bufan frowned slightly when they saw this scene. They didn’t have absolute confidence that they could pass the test on the 19th step as well.

“The Ancient Will of my Mandate of Dreams won’t be able to stop me.”

At this moment, a casual voice drifted out, Qin Wentian finally began to move. He advanced to the 18th step as the will of his Mandate gushed out.

The Ancient Will of Force, of Dreams, of Demons attacked him in a frenzy, and Qin Wentian's own will of Mandate was battered over and over. Yet, regardless of how much stronger the Ancient Wills were, Qin Wentian wasn't willing to lose, wasn't willing to give up, and wasn't willing for his will to be eradicated.

His steps were as heavy as mountains, standing erect upon the 18th step of the Heavenly Stele Steps. With this, he had become the ninth cultivator this time around that matched the past record.

Today, a total of nine cultivators had matched that previous record. However, the two strongest among them, Ouyang Zheng and Zang Lengfeng had failed when they tried advancing onto the 19th step. There were currently only seven cultivators remaining on the 18th step.

Xuan Yan finally steeled her heart, stepping with incomparable determination onto the 19th step. However, she instantly let out a terrifying blood-curdling scream. Like a kite with its strings cut, she fell from the platform in an extremely miserable state.

Xuan Yan failed. Only a total of six cultivators remained.

After which, Yue Bufan was also eliminated, leaving only five.

The four powerful Heaven's Chosen that ranked within the top thirty-six of the Heavenly Fate Rankings had all been eliminated when they tried to advance to the 19th step. Such a scenario could very well be described as bringing an extremely bitter sensation to the spectating crowd.

Situ Po, Qin Wentian, Ouyang Kuangsheng, Chu Mang and Fan Le. Was there still any hope remaining for this five?

"Just a single step to alleviate myself from the common crowd. I, Situ Po, can't lose. I can't afford to lose." Situ Po inclined his head and stared at the Heavenly Stele.

How can Situ Po allow himself to be defeated by Qin Wentian?

He could leave the Unmatched Realm, but he wouldn't be ousted from it forcibly. His pride wouldn't allow it.

The four Heaven's Chosen of the Azure Continent had all failed. He Situ Po, for himself, for his sect, couldn't lose.

He had never wanted something this much before, he lifted his foot. At this moment, Situ Po's entire body was filled with the stink of cold perspiration. He seemed to experience a full cycle of life and death in that instant. Howling in madness, boundless strength gushed out as his will protected his body from being exterminated. He was Situ Po, he had to win.

"BOOM!" Another step steadily took root. Situ Po stood firmly on the 19th level. A fearsome wave rumbled the entire flight of steps, and that formidable back view of his moved the heart and spirit of everyone spectating.

That was Situ Po from the Sword Extinction Sect, he stood upon the 19th step, he succeeded where others had failed, he'd broken the ten-years-old record.

He became the most dazzling of all geniuses in that moment.

The Heavenly Stele Platform was open, only for him.

"He won." Yue Bingying blossomed into a smile, this was her man, Situ Po. Even though she was injured, she didn't care. Situ Po had become the most radiant sun today. She glanced at those from the Azure Emperor Palace and the Sword Extinction Sect, these people should all be feeling pride at the accomplishment of Situ Po.

She then glanced again at the silhouette of Qin Wentian. She could sense that his death was near.

"Seems like another future competitor has appeared." Ouyang Zheng inclined his head, staring at Situ Po as he spoke in a low voice. Xuan Yan nodded in agreement. Situ Po had accomplished something none of them had managed to.

"If I win, you girls shall no longer interfere with our relationship." At this moment, Fan Le's voice thundered out, causing Xuan Yan's eyes to narrow. After which she saw Fan Le taking a step towards the 19th step.

“Xuan Yan, I will definitely win!” Fan Le roared as he decisively stepped up. A thunderous sound boomed, rocking the entire flight of steps. Fan Le at that moment, didn’t fear injury nor death. He only feared defeat. At that instant, his chubby frame became so tall and lofty in the eyes of the crowd.

No one expected that Fan Le the fatty would also succeed.

“FAN LE!” Xuan Xin shouted, her eyes filled with burning tears. Fan Le’s frame shuddered violently from the impact as he coughed out several mouthfuls of blood. Yet, he still remained standing there in triumph.

“Xuan Yan, have I won?”

Fan Le’s voice drifted over, and as Xuan Yan turned her gaze onto Fan Le, seeing his trembling body that was covered in blood, her mouth opened wide but she was at a loss for what to say.

“Swish...” The pressure turned into a blade, slicing relentlessly at Fan Le, as more blood sprinkled above the air, falling down like rain.

“Senior Sister.” Xuan Xin imploring gazed at Xuan Yan, her tears flowed unceasingly. Xuan Yan nodded slightly, she turned her head back to Fan Le, “I’ve lost.”

“Bang!” As the sound of her voice faded, Fan Le could no longer resist that pressure, he was flung down with terrifying speed. Xuan Xin soared upwards, using her entire strength to catch hold of him. They tumbled down together, landing in a heap on the ground. She looked down and saw Fan Le still grinning at her, “Xuan Xin, you didn’t make the wrong choice in picking this genius.”

“Mhm, I didn’t. My judgement was right.” Two rows of clear tears dripped upon Fan Le’s face. Fan Le was still grinning, hugging the little princess, before he fell into unconsciousness.

Fan Le became the second person to break the record. Although he only withstood the pressure for just a few moments, he had without a doubt, stood upon the 19th step of the Heavenly Stele Step.

Chu Mang also prepared himself. With a roar of rage, he lifted his foot up and was halfway through advancing to the 19th step before he was blasted down. He had failed.

Although he was defeated, there was no shame in it. He had done his best.

Ouyang Kuangsheng advanced as well. He stayed on the 19th step for a single instant before voluntarily giving up as he cursed, “Fuck it, your daddy me has no mood to play any longer.”

Because he was prepared, the rebound didn’t injure him that seriously. But still, he couldn’t help but grumpily comment, “Are these Heavenly Stele Steps something humans can play? Damn it.”

Too fierce, he could feel that he had been close to death. He knew he would have died for sure.

Currently, only two remained on the Heavenly Stele Steps. Situ Po on the 19th level, Qin Wentian on the 18th.

This Heavenly Stele Platform had originally been opened for them. One wondered if the current situation was a coincidence or the workings of fate. In the end, only the two of them remained.

The question was, could Qin Wentian even defeat Situ Po?

The difference of a single step, seemed as wide as the entire world.

Ouyang Zheng, Zang Leng Feng, Xuan Yan, Yue Bufan, none of them had succeeded. Only Situ Po had accomplished this feat. Fan Le at most could only be considered stepping half-a-step on the 19th step. He fought for love, he fought because he didn’t want Xuan Xin to be humiliated. He told Xuan Yan, he told the entire Mystic Maiden Palace, he told the entire Azure Continent that he Fan Le, wasn’t worse off compared to all the other geniuses.

After Situ Po stabilized his footing, he turned his head and locked his gaze with Qin Wentian. There was disdain in his eyes, yet his voice remained calm, “The difference of a single step separates us now. However, the difference between us cannot be quantified with a single step. I will show you how great that distance is.”

As the sound of his voice faded, Situ Po continued upwards, stepping on the 20th step.

“Hu...” The crowd held their breaths as their hearts trembled. Situ Po still wanted to continue.

As for Qin Wentian, he had his eyes closed, as though he were still struggling with the fight against the 18th step.

Was this competition even still necessary?

Three days passed, Qin Wentian remained motionless, ten days passed, Qin Wentian remained motionless, an entire month passed, but Qin Wentian still remained motionless!

As for Situ Po, he had already stepped upon the 21st step, a three-step difference compared to Qin Wentian, three insurmountable steps!

But the spectators discovered that Qin Wentian's demonic qi had grown increasingly intense. While Situ Po had advanced upwards, Qin Wentian's Mandate had evolved into the Perfect Boundary, able to resist the attack of the Ancient Will. He had transcended into his strongest state, now was the time for him to advance ahead!

Chapter 332: Ascending to the Peak

Time flowed on as many in the crowd left.

Ouyang Zheng, Zang Lengfeng and the rest all went into closed-door seclusion. Similarly, many of those from the major powers all left as well.

Only Situ Po and Qin Wentian remained on the Heavenly Stele Steps. No matter how many steps Situ Po ended up climbing, the news would be spread regardless, so there was no need to wait there like an idiot. Only those close to Situ Po, such as people from the Sword Extinction Sect and the Azure Emperor Palace, still remained below.

Aside from them, Ouyang Kuangsheng, Chu Mang, Fan Le and those in their camp were also there. Two months had already passed and all their injuries had healed, yet Qin Wentian still didn't move a single inch. This caused Fan Le and the rest to feel somewhat depressed. Cutting words about Qin Wentian's actions were discussed all around—what's the point of persisting there if he dared not advance? Was he going to waste his time until Situ Po cleared all 27 steps?

Right now, Situ Po was already on the 23rd step and he appeared to be closing his eyes in meditation while in a standing position.

Barely anyone believed that Qin Wentian could surpass Situ Po. The ending of their battle had already been decided. The difficulty of advancing a total of five steps from 18th to 23rd was so high that it was almost impossible.

“How long does Qin Wentian still intend to cultivate?” Xuan Xin whispered, she was also accompanying Fan Le. Those from the Mystic Maiden Palace were no longer as opposed to her being together with Fan Le after his outstanding performance. That still didn’t mean that the sect had accepted their love, but at least Fan Le made a huge step forward in terms of bridging the wall of animosity that used to exist between them.

“Could it be that he’s shameless enough to wait till the end of the year? By then Situ Po will surely go to the Ancient Kingdom, so even though Qin Wentian will have lost, he won’t have to die.” Nearby, Yue Bingying stated with contempt, not bothering to lower her volume. Situ Po was her pride, she wanted to be here to witness the ending, to see how badly Qin Wentian would be defeated.

“RUMBLE!” At this moment, an overwhelming aura gushed out from Situ Po as he straightened his back and opened his eyes, gazing at the Heavenly Stele ahead.

His cultivation base was at the ninth level of Yuanfu, and all three of his Mandates were already at the Perfection Boundary.

From today onwards, he possessed the qualifications to contend against the other top rankers in the Heavenly Fate Rankings. His power level now was already comparable to theirs.

“He broke through.” A gleam of fascination flashed through Yue Bingying’s eyes. From today onwards, Situ Po was no longer a mere chosen, he would be a Heaven’s Chosen presiding over all others.

Xuan Yan and Li Shiyu, who had also witnessed the sight, couldn’t help but lament in their hearts when they saw Situ Po breaking through. He was truly powerful.

“Speaking of which, I have to thank you. Without you, there wouldn’t be an opportunity for me to challenge the Heavenly Stele Step. The last of my Mandate wouldn’t have reached the Perfection Boundary so fast, nor would I have stepped into the ninth level of Yuanfu that quickly. I initially thought that I would only have this breakthrough when I journey to the Ginkou Continent. But thanks to you, I have even more time to prepare now.”

Situ Po serenely stated, his words causing many to sigh. Qin Wentian’s dispute with him caused the eccentrics of the Unmatched Realm to borrow the Heavenly Stele. Who would have thought that it would end up benefiting Situ Po instead?

“Situ Po does have Qin Wentian to thank indeed,” Li Shiyu calmly added. Xuan Yan nodded her head slightly, she knew that Situ Po at this moment had already exceeded her.

When he was at the eighth level of Yuanfu, his combat prowess was already extremely terrifying.

However, Situ Po spoke again, “Although I have you to thank for this, you will still die by my hands.”

After speaking, Situ Po took another step upwards, an incomparable stubbornness set within his heart. By securing his position on the 24th step, he had reached yet another fearsome height.

“The path upwards to the Heavenly Stele is too difficult, I wonder how many heroes have fallen before it.” Situ Po’s voice contained a hint of melancholy to it. After which, he sat down cross-legged on the 24th step, closing his eyes in meditation.

“24th step, the 24th step!” A radiant smile of pride suffused Yue Bingying’s face. “Other than Situ Po, who can accomplish this?”

As the sound of her voice faded, a figure clad in snowy-white leisurely walked over. She appeared otherworldly, untouched by mortal dust, exuding an oppressive coldness wherever she passed.

Moments later, she was at the bottom of the Heavenly Stele Steps.

One step, two step, all the way to the ninth, she didn’t stop for a single instant. On the ninth step, she finally coughed out a mouth of blood, but it didn’t stain her robes of purest white.

Yue Bingying’s expression faltered, while Li Shiyu and the rest froze.

A maiden clad in pure-white robes, akin to a snow lotus atop an icy mountain. She was Yun Mengyi.

Her simple and elegant form seemed untouched by mortal dust, yet she was actually attempting the test of the Heavenly Stele.

In the blink of an eye, she crossed another nine steps and stood shoulder to shoulder with Qin Wentian.

“What the? How is she so powerful?” Everyone was thunderstruck upon witnessing this. Yun Mengyi had also gained access to all thirty-six halls. The speed in which she traversed the 18th step clearly showed how resolute her heart was, how firm her conviction.

Not only that, she didn’t halt in her steps. She continued forwards, stepping onto the 19th, 20th... all the way to the 24th, standing side by side with Situ Po.

Situ Po’s eyes narrowed as his heart pounded. How could this be?

Earlier, he was still so proud of himself, saying how many heroes except for him had fallen before the Heavenly Stele Steps.

Yun Mengyi didn’t even glance at him, and instead continued to advance. Climbing up the 25th step, and then the 26th, where she finally paused and stood there, like an immortal lady from another world, an unparalleled existence in this world.

Situ Po had had to strain himself with so much effort to even reach the 24th step, yet Yun Mengyi only used less than half an hour of time to advance to the 26th. He was completely suppressed.

This scenario caused the expressions of all below to turn dumbfounded. Situ Po wasn’t willing to admit defeat, he had to continue forwards, gritting his teeth, advancing all the way to the peak. He stepped on to the 25th step, the pressure heating him within until it almost baked him alive. He was now only one step away from Yun Mengyi. But for the final step, he hesitated. He finally hesitated.

At this moment, Qin Wentian moved.

“Qin Wentian is starting to move, he’s finally advancing to the 19th step.”

The gazes of the crowd instantly riveted onto Qin Wentian, only to see the demonic qi exuding from him was now at an unbelievable level. It was as though he wasn’t a human at all.

He stepped upon the 19th step.

Nine rays of light from the three Heavenly Steles slammed onto him, there was no way to avoid them.

“Puchi...” A crisp sound rang out, Qin Wentian’s body contorted as the light cleaved downwards. He finally understood why so many geniuses had failed when they tried to advance to the 19th step.

A body made from flesh and blood, imbued with a mortal’s fear. How could it not be afraid when facing this heavenly wrath?

An intense pain circulated around him as Qin Wentian’s heart grew cold. There was a hole in his chest where fresh blood was leaking out.

He finally understood what Fan Le experienced, what he had to endure.

Was this reality? Or an illusion?

If it was real, why was he still alive? How could anyone withstand such pain and not die? If it was fake, where did the blood come from? Why was the pain this intense?

Whether an Illusion or Reality, a single thought from him would determine which was true.

Qin Wentian continued, taking another step forwards, advancing to the 20th step.

There was no doubt, Qin Wentian was the fourth person after Situ Po, Fan Le, and Yun Mengyi to reach the 19th step.

As his feet landed on the 20th step, a column of light penetrated through his heart. He had never experienced such pain before, but he’d already understood the truth between illusions and reality. The only thing that mattered was what he thought.

If he retreated now, he would die.

Qin Wentian laughed, and continued forward. He understood the crux of this test.

With insufficient conviction, he would die. If his will wavered even in the slightest, he would also die.

Every step was a battle between illusion and truth, bringing him closer and closer into contact with Death.

If it were earlier, if there was even the slightest wavering of his will, then the beam of light that penetrated his heart would instantly turn the illusion into reality. He would die for real. That was why even at the 19th step, so many people were injured. They didn't believe that they could withstand that pressure.

"How can this be? He succeeded as well?"

Those below couldn't believe their eyes. Qin Wentian didn't pause, he instantly stepped on the 21st, 22nd, all the way to the 25th step. He was similar to Yun Mengyi, advancing so many steps with a single breath. At this moment, he stood side by side with Situ Po.

Who said that he'd already lost?

After being surpassed by Yun Mengyi, after being caught up by Qin Wentian, the smile on Situ Po's face had long faded away. The confidence he'd had, the vigor he felt, were all replaced by a jarring feeling of disbelief. How could this be? Was their will stronger than his? Was their conviction stronger? Impossible.

"You've lost," Qin Wentian calmly stated. Situ Po's countenance changed as he coldly replied, "Even if you are on the same step as me, you don't have the qualifications to say that yet."

"The belief you had in yourself is already wavering," Qin Wentian replied. He continued upwards, stepping onto the 26th step. At this moment, he stood side by side with Yun Mengyi, surpassing Situ Po.

"AWESOME!" Fan Le shouted. The expression on Situ Po's face was too riveting.

"Look, Situ Po is the last now." Fan Le laughed, directing his statement to Yue Bingying, harshly refuting her earlier words. So no one else other than Situ Po could reach the 24th step? What a load of baloney.

"Since you've succeeded, how can I fail now?" Situ Po spat out, after which, he too, took the next step upwards.

On the 26th step, there was only indescribable pain. His will was forcefully chopped away little by little, his conviction was peeled apart bit by bit. Yet, he continued to stand.

“ARGHHH!” A voice of agony echoed out, a blood vessel in Situ Po’s eyes burst. He was unwilling to give up, even as blood continued leaking freely from his eyes. Yet, he persevered, and finally stabilised his footing.

Drawing in a deep breath, Situ Po’s frame continued to tremble. He finally stepped on the 26th step. He had succeeded.

The three of them stood on equal footing, the 26th step.

“The final step!” Those below could feel their hearts trembling violently. They were witnessing history being made. Luckily, they had chosen to stay on.

The three of them needed only a single step to ascend to the pinnacle of the Heavenly Stele Steps. Just one step, yet who dared to take it?

Yun Mengyi took the lead. In an instant, countless streams of Ancient Will cascaded down, making contact with her body. Instantly, an appalling scene appeared—Yun Mengyi’s body was sliced apart bit by bit. The countless streams of Ancient Will wanted to destroy her body, reducing her into ashes.

“Puchi...” A crimson glow covered the skies as her blood dyed her pure-white robes a deep red. Yun Mengyi stumbled as she fell down the steps—so much blood covered her it was as though she had transformed into a being of blood.

Yun Mengyi could be said to be the most dazzling of all blazing suns that attempted the test, from the start of its history until now. She used the shortest amount of time to reach the 26th step, yet she was also the one that suffered the most grievous of injuries. The amount of blood was horrendous, the spectators had only one thought in their minds when they glanced at her. Was she already dead?

Situ Po’s heart was shaking. Yun Mengyi, someone so much stronger than him had ended up in such a state. His heart began to waver. On the 26th step, his mind had already been close to crumbling apart. What would happen if he took the 27th step?

No matter how strong one’s conviction was, in front of death, it would similarly waver.

“The seeds of fear have blossomed in your heart,” Qin Wentian calmly stated. Situ Po’s countenance stiffened as he glanced at the man beside him, adding, “This final step would be impossible for anyone to attempt.”

“What of it? At the very least, I want to see it with my own eyes.” Qin Wentian had never felt this composed before. He wanted to be ranked among the top three in the Heavenly Fate Rankings. How many thistles and thorns would he have to tread on his path in the future? He couldn’t afford to lose now.

How could he lose?

“DO YOU KNOW WHO YOU ARE?!” A thunderous sound reverberated within his mind. A silly-looking smile couldn’t help but appear on his face when he heard that. Who was he? He was Qin Wentian!

As he stood upon the last steps of the Heavenly Stele Steps, he experienced what Yun Mengyi experienced. The boundless Ancient Will split into countless streams that lacerated him, seemingly trying to peel him off layer by layer. With a smile on his face, he transcended the pain and stared right at the Heavenly Stele in front of him.

“Your will won’t destroy my body, Your will won’t destroy my intent, your will won’t waver my heart.” Qin Wentian stared at the Ancient Stele as he softly spoke, “I am Qin Wentian, my life, my fate, my destiny, is that of a demon!”

Chapter 333: Rewitnessing history

“I’m Qin Wentian, my destiny is that of a demon!”

Qin Wentian stood a step below the Heavenly Stele as he commented softly, yet his voice contained a resounding power filled with incomparable resolution.

Destiny of a Demon, how ‘hard’ was his fate? Powerful ancient primordial demons could exist, and continue living on with but a single breath. Qin Wentian’s entire life had only been a short 19 years, and he had already experienced countless dangers and even close shaves with death. Yet, his fate was as ‘hard’ as a demon, he had always been able to survive death by the skin of his teeth.

And even today, leaving aside the combat he would have with Situ Po, how could he be defeated by just the Ancient Will from the Heavenly Stele?

This Ancient Will, he didn’t fear it.

“27th step of the Heavenly Stele Step, he ascended to the peak.” Huge waves of commotion rocked the hearts of the spectators below.

Situ Po who was in the lead earlier had already been surpassed. He was now hesitating; even Yun Mengyi, someone whose talent and aptitude was higher than his, had been blasted down by the Stele. Yet Qin Wentian, the last to step up, had ascended to the peak. The Heavenly Stele was so close to him, Qin Wentian only had to reach his hand out to touch it.

“Impossible,” Yue Bingying breathed, her eyes filled with disbelief. Qin Wentian had stabilized his footing and was just below the Heavenly Stele. He was currently immersed in the starlight emanating out from the Stele, allowing the energy to gush through his body freely.

Xuan Yan, Xuan Xin, Li Shiyu all stared at the incredible scene happening in front of them. Had he accomplished something that no one had ever done before?

Xuan Yan had personally experienced the pressure on the 19th step herself, she knew very well how terrifying that was. Yet Qin Wentian was currently standing on the 27th step, the difficulty of this was so high that she didn't believe it could be possible but clearly, Qin Wentian had succeeded.

“Is the strength of a mortal's will innately birthed and cannot be changed? Or is it born from nothing and has to be slowly refined and tempered?”

Xuan Yan mumbled, asking herself this question. She didn't know the answer to this, she was born to a major power with a silver spoon in her mouth, and had outstanding talent. As the apple of her Clan's eyes, she was sent to the Mystic Maiden Palace to cultivate and had never ever lacked cultivation resources before. The sect pitted her against countless opponents of the younger generations, and she had prevailed all the way to the end before gaining the title of 'Princess' in the Mystic Maiden Palace. All this wouldn't be possible without talent, and of course, the resoluteness in her heart.

Yet why was there such a great distance between her and Qin Wentian? She was truly confused, she had faced so many opponents from transcendent powers just to climb her way up. Was it still insufficient? Could it be that the hardship she endured wasn't enough?

And Qin Wentian, he was just a nobody, wasn't he? He didn't even belong to any sect that was at the level of a transcendent power at all.

“Sigh, I guess the answer to my question should be the latter,” Xuan Xin mumbled in response. One's degree of talent might have been fixed, but one's accomplishment would never be fully quantified by that single word, 'talent'. As for one's will, it had nothing to do with innate talent.

Yun Mengyi was currently sitting cross-legged on the ground, doing breathing exercises in a bid to recover. She was still grievously injured yet, there was a hint of a smile flickering inside her eyes. Nobody understood the reason why.

For Ouyang Kuangsheng, Fan Le, Chu Mang and the rest, other than feeling totally astounded, there was naturally also great joy in their hearts. Qin Wentian had walked to the end of the steps, yet Situ Po was still hesitating. Would he dare to take the final step?

The moment Situ Po witnessed Qin Wentian's success, his heart wavered yet again.

In this generation, he was one of four that gained the approval of all thirty-six halls; before him was Yun Mengyi, after him was Qin Wentian. Both of them had dared to take the final step, but what about him? Did he dare?

Qin Wentian stood there, appearing to be at peace. Yet after what happened to Yun Mengyi, nobody knew what he was currently experiencing.

If Situ Po took this step, if his original heart was still as firm and unshakable as ever, he might become like Qin Wentian, standing on the 27th step, enduring hellish pain or Yun Mengyi, who'd been blasted down the steps. If his heart and will had weakened, he might even die instantly.

“Yet if I don’t take this step, my heart will never be at ease.”

Situ Po was also a character that could be classified as an absolute genius, he asked himself what it was that he truly wanted. Did he want to defeat the fear and terror in his heart? Did he want his will and his conviction to become even stronger?

In actuality, for the battle today, both he and Qin Wentian had already obtained immense benefits.

He stepped into the ninth level of Yuanfu with all three of his Mandates tempered to the Perfection Boundary while Qin Wentian, rushing up all the way with a single breath after the 18th level, it was obvious that not only had his Mandates evolved, the state of his heart had been tempered as well.

Powerful opponents could either destroy oneself or spur each other into becoming even stronger.

For this confrontation, both he and Qin Wentian had benefited each other.

Without Qin Wentian or Yun Mengyi, his current state of heart would definitely not be this resolute, persevering all the way to the 26th step.

And similarly, if it weren’t for him, Qin Wentian wouldn’t have ascended to the peak. Maybe, if he had halted at the 18th step, Qin Wentian’s will would have slackened the moment he stood on the 19th step.

Just like Fan Le, he contested against Xuan Yan because of Xuan Xin. Stepping upon the 18th step was already his limit. Yet, he exceeded that and forcibly climbed up to the 19th step, causing him to suffer serious injuries. But was that truly his limit? Since he stood there, why couldn’t he endure and stabilize his steps?

Because... Xuan Yan had already admitted defeat. Which was why Fan Le’s will had slackened, resulting in him being blasted off the 19th step.

Finally, Situ Po took the last step forwards. The instant he placed his foot upon the 27th step, only then did he feel what Yun Mengyi had experienced.

In just half a breath of time, Situ Po was blasted down as blood soaked his whole body. Even his heartbeat was erratic, he had almost died due to the rebound explosion.

When one felt their heart exploding, their body being lacerated, how could one’s will still remain resolute?

Situ Po was fiercely slammed onto the ground, Yue Bingying instantly appeared beside him as she cradled him gently into her arms. He resisted her as he struggled to sit up, his eyes still fixated onto the silhouette at the top. How had Qin Wentian accomplished it?

“Throughout the past ten years, the Heavenly Stele Steps have been opened to the public a total of three times. Yet how many could stand upon the 26th step as I have done? And that final step, who could have ever completed that final step?”

Situ Po stared at the back view of Qin Wentian, the complicated look in his eyes also revealing a trace of his frustration.

“I’ve lost,” Situ Po whispered.

“You didn’t, it’s just that your will wavered for a second, and there’s only the difference of a single step. It doesn’t count for anything,” Yue Bingying consoled him.

“A defeat is a defeat. Even if time reversed and I could challenge him again, I still wouldn’t succeed,” Situ Po replied in a low voice. In his life, this was the first time he’d faced defeat.

Yue Bingying’s body violently trembled. She inclined her head and also gazed at the back view of Qin Wentian who stood beneath the Stele. Situ Po had lost to him.

Back then when she heard that his talent was outstanding and had obtained approval of all thirty-six halls, she hadn’t minded it that much. But today, Qin Wentian had completely trampled on her source of pride—Situ Po.

This was the first time Yue Bingying heard Situ Po admitting his defeat on his own accord.

“Situ Po, this is only one defeat, it can’t count for anything. With your talent, you will definitely surpass him in the future, don’t let this incident cast a shadow over your heart.” Yue Bingying was terribly afraid that Situ Po would be psychologically impacted in a negative way.

“Don’t worry, I won’t succumb to this so easily.” A sharp glint of light cut through the air as Situ Po stared at the silhouette of Qin Wentian on the steps.

“His will and his belief in himself are even stronger than mine. I don’t mind being expelled from the Unmatched Realm, but Qin Wentian must die,” Situ Po added in a low voice, his countenance stern, as he exuded an intense killing intent.

He was truly impressed by Qin Wentian, but that didn’t alter the fact that he still wanted to kill him, not even slightly. On the contrary, it made him even more determined to kill him. Qin Wentian had to die.

“But, those eccentrics...” Yue Bingying worriedly replied. Qin Wentian was the one that stood at the peak and this contest was designated by the eccentrics of the Unmatched Realm. This indicated that at the very least, a few eccentrics would be present today. If Situ Po acted to kill Qin Wentian now, the eccentrics would definitely not stand aside and do nothing.

“I know, let me heal up first,” Situ Po spoke as he closed his eyes, concentrating on his recovery.

Although defeat shook his heart, it wasn’t able to affect his will. He had stepped upon the 26th step, just a single step away from the peak. He had no regrets, nor would there be any demons of the heart being born because of his failure. In fact, he couldn’t have been more happy with his harvest. His strength had undergone a remarkable improvement, this wasn’t a bad thing.

As long as Qin Wentian died, everything that happened here would be concluded. As for his damaged reputation, he would have more chances in the future to fix it when he journeyed to the Ancient Kingdom to contend for the top positions on the Heavenly Fate Rankings.

At that time, when he succeeded in obtaining one of the top few ranks on the Heavenly Fate Ranking, who would doubt his ability then?

As for Qin Wentian, what he was currently experiencing was far more complicated than what others were imagining. At this moment, his will was actually drawn into the Heavenly Stele.

“Ancient Will of the Heavenly Stele, instead of merely capable of subverting the will of the user against themselves, could it be that the Stele has its own will as well?” At this moment, a vast empire was in front of his eyes, majestic and imposing. Yet Qin Wentian’s heart trembled with shock at the realization that he seemed to be familiar with this empire.

“Back then in the fragmented memories of the tiny Astral-Being, I saw that damn old fogey bringing a woman out from this place. The scene I saw back then, was it the same as the scene I see now?” Qin Wentian thought back to his past memories, he felt extremely sure he had seen this place before. However.... Abruptly, his body violently trembled.

That beautiful woman his father brought out had such an uncanny resemblance to her?!

Thinking of this, huge waves rocked Qin Wentian’s heart. What in the world was going on exactly? How could this be...

Studying the sight in front of him, this ancient empire was even more majestic than what existed in his memories. A jade-like beauty appeared on top of a flight of steps. The wind fluttered her long hair as she wielded a longsword in her hand. She emanated an aura that was beyond comparison, unexcelled in the world. Her beauty was on a level that was so radiant, even if all the world’s beauties were to stand beside her, they would immediately lose their luster.

Nine monstrous auras gushed out, warping the surroundings as nine men appeared out of nowhere, staring at the maiden.

“Princess, the Ancient Kingdom is no more, Grand Xia has already been split into nine, don’t resist anymore.” One among the nine men growled as unmasked greed flickered in his eyes.

If Qin Wentian read through the ancient dossier regarding the history of the Ancient Kingdom, he would realize that this maiden was known as the last princess of Grand Xia, Princess Tianyu. She was also the person with the highest amount of talent to ever appear in the history of Grand Xia.

There were many rumors and speculations regarding what happened to Princess Tianyu in the end. Yet the majority of the rumors and speculations all bordered more to the negative side. Princess Tianyu with her heavenly countenance, in addition to her unparalleled talent, how could she still be fine after landing into the hands of the nine men? She would definitely be ****!

As for those scholars that studied Grand Xia’s history, every time they read this in the annals, they couldn’t help feeling extreme heartbreak. Yet now, Qin Wentian was personally witnessing that exact historical scene unfolding before his very eyes!

Although Qin Wentian had no idea what had happened to cause the Ancient Kingdom to splinter apart, he'd heard rumors that a long time ago, Grand Xia wasn't initially split into the nine continents, and there weren't so many transcendent powers.

The Ancient Kingdom of Grand Xia conquered everything, and countless experts existed within the vast territory. It was so unfathomably strong that no other enemies could resist it.

It was only later that Grand Xia was splintered into nine, where transcendent powers rose up one after another, and the Ancient Kingdom was then divided.

As for the Ancient Kingdom today, it was no longer the same as what it had been previously. Many years ago when Grand Xia was divided in power, it had already spelt the Ancient Kingdom's doom. As of now, it was rumored that only a single bloodline remained. But as to whether this was true or false, no one knew.

Hence when Qin Wentian stared at the scene unfolding in front of him, his heart couldn't help but tremble.

"This Heavenly Stele, what treasure was this? Why would it have records of the end of the Ancient Kingdom of Grand Xia? Does that mean that this Heavenly Stele is a remnant from that time?" Qin Wentian mused.

When had the Heavenly Stele Platform existed within the Azure Continent?

Many suspicions and speculations floated up in his heart. Qin Wentian pushed them aside as he concentrated on the scene before him. A frightening, towering aura gushed out from her body, so powerful that it shot up to the Heavens, while a true dragon seemingly coiled around her longsword.

"Princess Tianyu, do you want the bloodline of Grand Xia to be totally annihilated?"

An extremely cold voice echoed, causing despair to be reflected in Princess Tianyu's eyes. That man walked in front of her, a smile of lust painted over his face. "Princess, did you know that I've been in love with you since a long time ago?"

Princess Tianyu's countenance turned pale-white as she bit her lips tightly, with an extremely frigid expression on her face.

"If you are willing to bear the seeds of all nine of us, our sons shall then inherit our positions. They who possess your bloodline, will be the future of your Grand Xia." The middle-aged man smiled at Princess Tianyu. Her countenance turned even paler as her hand that wielded the sword, trembled involuntarily.

Did she want her bloodline to continue?

These people all wanted to taint her.

"If you agree, throw away the sword in your hand," the man calmly continued. Princess Tianyu was shuddering, feeling incomparable agony. Her heart felt as though it were experiencing the hellish torment of the underworld.

She wasn't willing to give up, if the traitors didn't die, she couldn't die before them.

A light sound rang out as the sword in her hand fell to the ground.

A sinister smile of satisfaction appeared on the face of the middle-aged man. He slowly walked up as both his hands greedily caressed Princess Tianyu's skin. He was finally going to obtain this world-ravishing beauty that everyone in Grand Xia was so enamored with.

With a wave of his hands, the armies they led all departed, leaving only the nine of them.

The middle-aged man sliced apart Princess Tianyu's clothing and gradually, her flawless and exquisitely sculpted, jade-white body appeared in full view before the nine of them.

"Xia Tianyu, you are truly everything I've dreamed about." The fires of his nefarious lust stirred within his eyes. He moved forward abruptly, he couldn't restrain his eagerness any longer. His hands were everywhere, roaming every inch of her body. As he felt her up for all she was worth, he was at times gentle, and other times rough. Princess Tianyu's tears dripped silently down her face at the horror she was experiencing, yet her heart had never been this resolute before.

She vowed, even if a thousand years passed, even if ten thousand years passed, she would have her revenge.

"Break the Divine Stele into nine pieces. From now on, each of us shall own a portion." That man commanded in a husky voice after he had finished his insulting examination of her body, his lust temporarily sated for now. The eight men behind him turned and gazed at the Divine Stele outside the palace of the Ancient Grand Xia.

"From now onwards, the mastery of Grand Xia's nine ultimate arts shall belong to our nine bloodlines respectively. Although the Divine Stele can never be destroyed, it can still be broken up into pieces. The nine of us shall each take a piece and never meet again, we must not allow the Divine Stele to restore itself." That person licked his lips as he turned his attention onto Princess Tianyu's perfect frame once more, as though he couldn't wait to taste her fully, before he too, walked out of the palace. After which, the nine of them unleashed their most powerful attacks, intending to break the Divine Stele.

The significance of this final scene hit Qin Wentian in full force.

He had already formed some conjectures in his mind.

Firstly, the scene before his eyes was the last scenario recorded by the Divine Stele. This meant that the three-sided Stele in front of him was one of the nine remnant pieces that formed the Divine Stele. But right now, only one remained here.

Secondly, he knew with certainty that the origin of the nine continents of Grand Xia had been birthed from what he'd seen.

That pitiful Princess Tianyu, forced to endure humiliation to such a degree. As for what happened to her later on, no one knew...

According to the middle-aged man's command, the Divine Stele which contained nine of Grand Xia's ultimate arts, was then broken into nine remnants and given to the nine of them to govern. They would then ensure that the nine broken remnants of the Divine Stele would never be united and restored again.

“Hu...” Qin Wentian’s will withdrew from the Heavenly Stele as he took a deep breath. A sudden thought struck him as Qin Wentian sent out the Yellow Springs Monument from his interspatial ring, allowing it to float in the air. A terrifying blood might emanated forth from it.

“Can your body, made from flesh and blood, withstand this power?”

Qin Wentian remembered the words of the Ancient Will. Power, the test during the first segment of nine steps, was to withstand power attacks. After which, the second segment tested them with will attacks.

And as for the Yellow Springs Monument, it was an attack that used blood might. Because the Monument was now under his control, the power it could unleash wasn’t that great.

“The Azure Emperor eventually obtained the Yellow Springs Monument. Was it part of the nine broken remnants? Afterwards, this monument was given to Fairy Qingmei who used it to set up the path of the Yellow Springs in the Celestial Lake’s Refinement Grounds. Similarly, it was used to test one’s talent and will. My conjecture...” Qin Wentian’s heart trembled, he knew he was right. Back then the Azure Emperor must have acquired one of the nine broken remnants of the Divine Stele.

Yet, the truth wasn’t complete yet, it was still covered by a haze of doubt and suspicion.

Those nine bloodlines from back then, did they still exist? And as for the the Heavenly Stele, how did it appear here and why didn’t anyone come to snatch it away? Who was the owner of this three-sided Stele?

And after the Divine Stele was broken up into nine pieces, cultivators could clearly control them to unleash their power just like how he was controlling the Yellow Springs Monument. Did the Ancient Will that emanated from the Heavenly Stele truly belong to the Stele itself? Or was there someone controlling it?

Lastly, and most importantly. What did this all have to do with him?

He wasn’t even twenty, and that damn old fogey of a father must have definitely fallen after he was born. His father couldn’t be someone from a few thousands years ago right?

But still, he arrived here, either by the workings of chance or the machinations of fate. Was all of this truly nothing but coincidence?

This was impossible...

Because the woman his damn old fogey brought away, looked exactly like Yun Mengyi!

“Forget it, I should take this chance to properly cultivate. Otherwise, it would be too much of a waste.” Qin Wentian had no way to resolve the suspicions in his heart. He could only cast the distracting thoughts aside as he calmed his heart down and cultivated.

Luckily, the Ancient Wills had already weakened, and wouldn’t affect him too immensely. This factor confirmed his suspicions. The three-sided Stele had definitely been under the control of someone earlier. If not, there was no way it would be able to unleash that much power.

After a few moments, Qin Wentian had totally cast aside all distractions and was immersed in his cultivation. After washing out the impurities of his will and heart, the state of his heart improved yet

again. This was the best time for him to rush through to the next level. Situ Po also broke through under similar conditions, he could do the same as well.

“The Ancient Will has weakened,” Fan Le and the rest below commented in surprise.

“Mhm, what’s going on exactly?” Puzzlement flashed through Ouyang Kuangsheng’s face, he didn’t understand anything at all.

Situ Po didn’t as well. He decided to ignore it for now and concentrate on his recovery.

However at this moment, a light flashed in Yun Mengyi’s eyes. She couldn’t help but sigh in her heart as she stared at the silhouette standing before the Heavenly Stele.

“You have lost.” A voice suddenly sounded on in her mind. Nobody could hear this, except for her alone.

Yun Mengyi nodded her head lightly, she knew that she’d lost.

She came here today with the same purpose as Situ Po, to compete against Qin Wentian. Yet, she had lost. She failed to step upon the last step, and couldn’t acquire the Heavenly Stele that should have belonged to her.

“Since you’ve lost, from now onwards, you should give your loyalty to him. For this upcoming trip to the Grand Xia’s Ancient Kingdom, go accompany him. After all, you are many times much more familiar with that place compared to him.” The voice resounded in her mind again. Yun Mengyi glanced at Qin Wentian, maybe... this was her destiny.

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Qin Wentian’s cultivation proceeded smoothly, he used only a month’s time to break through the shackles of the sixth level, stepping into the seventh level of Yuanfu.

And not just him, those who took the test of the Heavenly Stele Steps all made remarkable improvements, especially for those that made it up to the eighteenth step. Their wills of Mandates all experienced growth as their spirits and hearts grew stronger. Evidently, their strength went up another level.

Currently, Chu Mang had already stepped into the eighth level while Fan Le and Ouyang Kuangsheng both broke through to the seventh level. As of now, Ouyang Kuangsheng was even preparing his breakthrough to the eighth level. Their wills of Mandates had also significantly improved as well.

Yun Mengyi progress couldn’t be neglected as well. Her Mandates were all already at the Perfection Boundary prior to joining the test. As of now, she had managed to step into the ninth level of Yuanfu.

Naturally, the ones who improved the most, were undoubtedly Situ Po and Qin Wentian.

Situ Po, ninth level of Yuanfu, three Mandates at the Perfection Boundary.

Qin Wentian, seventh level of Yuanfu, three Mandates at the Perfection Boundary, gained a strengthened will, and an incomparably unwavering heart.

Those who had left the vicinity earlier were all extremely depressed when they heard of what had happened. They actually missed out seeing the three absolute geniuses of the Unmatched Realm contending against each other on the 26th step. Qin Wentian actually became the first person to conquer the Heavenly Stele Steps, defeating Situ Po.

However, it was regretful that Qin Wentian's cultivation base was still too low. There wasn't much time before the end of the year, and therefore it should be impossible for him to contend for the positions of one of the top rankers in the Heavenly Fate Rankings.

Naturally, Qin Wentian didn't think of it this way. Right now he had already paused his cultivation. A confident smile appeared on his face as he stood up.

Without the tempering this time around from the Heavenly Steles, he couldn't have improved so much in a short few months. The eccentrics of the Unmatched Realm, and his dispute with Situ Po, did indeed give him a very good opportunity to raise his strength.

"Many thanks to Senior." Qin Wentian clasped his hands to the old figure sweeping the platform as he politely stated.

"You are the one that succeeded on your own, why are you thanking me?" The old man casually replied.

Qin Wentian smiled, he knew in his heart that this old man was someone remarkable.

"Junior bids his farewell then." Qin Wentian bowed respectfully as he prepared to depart.

"The Heavenly Stele is yours. Take it." The old man waved his hands, his words causing a light to flash in Qin Wentian's eyes.

This Heavenly Stele was part of the Divine Stele. This old man wanted to give it to him?

"Back then my Master once commanded me, the Heavenly Stele belongs to whoever conquers the 27th step. And so it has been done. This is yours, take it and go," the old man impatiently added.

Qin Wentian didn't act courteous any longer. He collected the Heavenly Stele, placing it inside his interspatial ring together with his Yellow Springs Monument. His heart was still in an enigma, he wanted to solve the mystery, but sadly, he didn't have enough information as of now.

Turning, Qin Wentian walked down the steps. That old man continued sweeping, turning his gaze on to the horizon. A gentle warmth flickered in his eyes, as though he were lost in fond reminiscence.

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A long time ago... the Venerate Heavens Sect was one of the governors of certain regions of Ancient Grand Xia. They predicted the forthcoming of future events by studying the movements of the constellations.

At this moment, within the Venerate Heavens Sect, an old man was studying the stars. A bright light flickered in his eyes, piercing through the void into the Nine Heavenly Layers. The Constellation that represented Grand Xia could be found over there.

“The Demonic Constellation is glowing brighter and brighter, overshadowing that of the Grand Xia Constellation. A bloody storm will soon come about as the wind and clouds changes in Grand Xia. Each resplendent star represented a power, yet there will be one faction among them that will dominate and unite the rest.” The old man’s heart pounded with great feeling—a foretelling of this magnitude was rarely seen, not even once in a thousand years!

Chapter 335: Gathering of the Nine Continents

Everyone below watched in silence as Qin Wentian descended. Without the Heavenly Stele, could this platform still be known as the Heavenly Stele Platform?

That Stele had actually been given to Qin Wentian as a present.

But naturally, these spectators all didn’t know what the Heavenly Stele was exactly. If not, the commotion caused would definitely shake the entire Grand Xia.

The Divine Stele was the symbol of Grand Xia’s prosperity and its eventual decline. There was a time when countless heroes of Ancient Grand Xia could enjoy its baptism before.

The Divine Stele was like an ancient mirror, an annal of ancient historical records. The nine ultimate arts of Grand Xia were engraved upon it, but it had long been broken into nine pieces and prevented from being united ever again.

If Qin Wentian were a little more familiar with the history of Grand Xia, he would have known that for the nine continents of this era, some of the transcendent powers possess ultimate arts or techniques that serve as the foundation of their entire sect or clan. The origins of all these arts and techniques were all derived from the engravings on the Divine Stele.

And even though these remnant arts were still powerful, they were no longer as powerful as they were in the past.

The Ancient Kingdom of Grand Xia was many times stronger compared to the now fragmented Nine Continents of the current era. One could even say that even if all the transcendent powers joined their forces together, they would be unable to match the radiance and might of Ancient Grand Xia. If not, the Ancient Emperor wouldn't have been able to conquer the world, gaining control of the incomparably vast territory which eventually came to be known as Grand Xia. Yet, why would it have fallen if it were all-powerful?

The old man with the broom started sweeping the steps once more. Perhaps this was the last time he would appear here.

“Boss, can you lend me the Heavenly Stele to play around with for a couple of days?” Fan Le's eyes glinted as he grinned. Such a powerful artifact becoming the sole possession of Qin Wentian. It should be quite an interesting thing to use on his opponents right?

Qin Wentian glared at Fan Le as he walked over to their group. Glancing around at his companions, he was gratified to find that their individual levels of strength had clearly improved. This time around, the Heavenly Stele Steps had proved to be of invaluable help.

Shifting his eyes, he turned his gaze onto Situ Po and Yue Bingying. Situ Po was also looking right at him. Situ Po then calmly stated, “I will see you in the Ginkou Continent.”

As the sound of his voice faded, Situ Po and Yue Bingying's silhouettes flickered as they disappeared from sight. Qin Wentian's eyes flashed with a glint of cold light, it was unknown what he was thinking about.

Situ Po was still emitting killing intent. Very well, Qin Wentian would put an end to this enmity between them in the Ginkou Continent then. Since the end of the year was already nearing, all these people should be making their way to the Ancient Kingdom soon.

“Xuan Xin, let's return.” Those from the Mystic Maiden Palace prepared to leave. Xuan Xin's beautiful eyes gazed at Fan Le as she smiled, “You will be going to the Ginkou Continent as well?”

“Mhm.” Fan Le nodded.

“We will meet there then.” Xuan Xin sweetly smiled before she left with Xuan Yan and her fellow disciples of the Mystic Maiden Palace.

Fan Le had a silly smile on his face even after Xuan Xin left. Qin Wentian couldn't help but perspire when he saw that—was love really capable of turning people into idiots, even someone as shameless as Fan Le?

Nearby, the maiden clad in white also prepared to leave. However, Qin Wentian abruptly called out, "Yun Mengyi."

Yun Mengyi halted her steps as Qin Wentian's silhouette flickered, before appearing beside her. "I have some things I need to ask you."

After speaking, he pulled Yun Mengyi along as he sped ahead. The riddle in his heart, maybe Yun Mengyi knew something that could solve it. Why did Princess Tianyu look exactly like Yun Mengyi?

Yun Mengyi's brows furrowed slightly, she wasn't used to being pulled along by others. But since she had lost to Qin Wentian, she silently allowed him to drag her away. This scene caused Ouyang Kuangsheng and Fan Le to stare in dumbfounded amazement.

"My boss is too fierce."

"... indeed." Ouyang Kuangsheng nodded in agreement. Where was Qin Wentian taking Yun Mengyi off to?

Qin Wentian walked beside Yun Mengyi, and after some moments he asked, "Who are you exactly?"

Yun Mengyi returned his gaze, as she icily replied, "Yun Mengyi."

"Did you already know who I was before I even entered the Unmatched Realm?" Qin Wentian stared directly into Yun Mengyi's eyes.

At this moment, Yun Mengyi shook his hand away. She knew that Qin Wentian had already seen the scenes recorded on the Stele. "I am Xia Tianyu."

Qin Wentian's countenance froze. "Impossible."

“You don’t believe me?” Yun Mengyi stared at Qin Wentian, as a strange smile flashed past her eyes. “Would you believe me if I told you I’m your older sister?”

Qin Wentian didn’t reply. The current Yun Mengyi gave him an extremely strange feeling. That smile on her face felt like that of a stranger.

There was nothing to prove the credibility of her words. As to whether it was real or fake, Yun Mengyi was the only one who knew the truth.

“No,” Qin Wentian replied.

“Since that’s the case, why are you still asking me? I will look for you once you arrive in the Ginkou Continent.” Yun Mengyi leisurely walked away, the aura that exuded forth from her, was as icy as always.

“Hu...” Qin Wentian drew in a deep breath, he still couldn’t decipher the riddle. Was the woman whom that damned old fogey of a father rescued back then, Yun Mengyi?

What was the relationship between Yun Mengyi and Xia Tianyu exactly?

And why did the Heavenly Stele end up in his hands? Could the reason really be so simple, because he obtained the recognition of the old man sweeping the steps? There had to be something more to it.

That old man himself was already an extremely fearsome character, otherwise, how could he have successfully guarded the remnant of the Divine Stele for such a long time? He said that he was following the orders of his master, in that case, who then and how powerful might his master be?

“What’s wrong?” Ouyang Kuangsheng and the rest walked over, seeing that Qin Wentian was standing there dumbly. Little Rascal dashed into Qin Wentian’s chest and snuggled there.

“Nothing’s wrong.” Qin Wentian shook his head. He wasn’t even sure of his own origins, nothing could be accomplished even if he revealed what Yun Mengyi had said. He wondered if this trip to the Ancient Kingdom would prove to be the key that unlocked this mysterious riddle he’d held close to his heart.

“It’s about time for us to set off for the Ginkou Continent. The majority of those from the Azure Continent have already set off, and the Ginkou Continent should already be definitely extremely bustling.” Ouyang Kuangsheng laughed, as hints of anticipation could be seen flickering in his eyes. A once-in-three-years journey to the Ancient Kingdom, how many talented geniuses would gather there? Almost every major power of Grand Xia would definitely send the members of their younger generations over to test their mettle.

“Right, there’s only a few months left.” Qin Wentian felt that time was too tight. With his current level of power, it was still impossible for him to contend against the top three rankers on the Heavenly Fate Rankings.

The top three rankers stood at the pinnacle of Yuanfu within the entire Grand Xia, and without a doubt, their Mandates would definitely already be at the Perfection Boundary. Not only that, there may even be some who’ve already comprehended the second level of insights of their individual Mandates, while still in the Yuanfu Realm.

“Let’s go back to my Ouyang Clan first, I think there’ll be many members of my clan going on this journey as well,” Ouyang Kuangsheng added. Qin Wentian and the rest didn’t have any objections and thus followed Ouyang Kuangsheng back to the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan.

Ouyang Kuangsheng reported his findings to the upper echelons, who decided in seven days time, all those who were powerful enough to contend for a rank in the Heavenly Fate Rankings would journey together to the Ancient Kingdom of Grand Xia.

At this moment in Ouyang Kuangsheng’s residence, a three-sided Stele floated in the air as Qin Wentian, Fan Le and Chu Mang sat below it, feeling the pressure of that Ancient Will emanating forth from it.

“Strength, use my strength against me, attack my body.” Qin Wentian’s body trembled with the impact. He had concluded that the three-sided Stele did possess its own will, and the magnitude of the power it unleashed could be controlled by him.

“Stronger. I can still endure.” Qin Wentian floated into the air as a thunderous boom echoed. The terrifying energy of the Stele blasted into him, causing him to cough out blood. In spite of this, his eyes flickered with an unending thirst for more power and incomparable determination.

With such a heavenly treasure like the Stele, how could they afford to waste time? They had to use the power of its intense pressure to break through their own limits.

The Divine Stele that was used to baptize members of Royalty of the Ancient Grand Xia was now being used by Qin Wentian to progress to further heights.

Ouyang Kuangsheng, Fan Le, and the rest were happily enduring the ‘torture’ the Heavenly Stele was bestowing. Although the pain was terrible, they could feel their strength and will being strengthened as they endured it.

In the blink of an eye, seven days passed. Today, members of the Ouyang Clan who were eligible for the trip to the Ancient Kingdom all gathered at the main training grounds. Over here, several demonic beasts were being prepared to serve as mounts for the journey to the Ginkou Continent.

Qin Wentian’s gaze swept past the crowd. There were over several hundred cultivators present who had a cultivation base at the ninth level of Yuanfu.

As an Aristocrat Clan, they naturally wouldn’t lack cultivators at any level of the Yuanfu Realm. But even with a few hundred cultivators at the ninth level of Yuanfu, the majority of these were still cannon fodder. And with just this number from the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan, one could well imagine the sheer number of cultivators descending upon the Ginkou Continent.

“Let’s go.” The clan lord of the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan personally went to send the cultivators off on their journey. Although this group of cultivators was all from the latter generations, if they could withstand the tempering of this journey and perform outstandingly, they would all have a chance to become core members of the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan.

The demonic beasts took off into the air, the demonic qi they exuded covered the skies as they flew towards the Ancient Kingdom of Grand Xia.

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In the Nine Continents of Grand Xia, the Ginkou Continent, Moon Continent, and the War Continent were situated in the shape of a triangle and were collectively deemed the core region of Grand Xia.

And among the three, the Ginkou Continent had always been considered a location of most importance, even back in the times of Ancient Grand Xia. Even the small countries bordering Ginkou, had overwhelming power compared to countries like Chu. The experts over there were as common as the floating clouds.

Although the Ancient Kingdom had effectively been destroyed, the Ancient Capital was still the most magnificent and luxurious capital in the entire Grand Xia. This capital represented the glory of Ancient Grand Xia, with countless streams of humans and demonic beast mounts flooding in without pause.

For the human experts, some of them traveled here alone or in small groups of three to five. They were chatting as they flew in the air, the blood in their hearts surging with excitement. While those that traveled on the ground, they were also filled with excitement as they gazed upon the Ancient Capital.

At this moment, a terrifying sharp aura sliced through the clouds, heralding the arrival of a group of sword cultivators. They were all clad in white-colored garments, each standing upon a flying sword in the air.

“Are they Swallow Swordsmen from the Yan Continent?”

“Look in that direction, so many demonic beasts. Are they from the Demon Continent? The Skydemon Sect and the Beast King Hall?”

“Hey, what about over there? What a powerful looking troop formation. They should be from a transcendent power.” The gazes of the crowd stared in another direction as they exclaimed, only to see that among them was a single silhouette standing proudly in the air. The imposing aura he exuded could be felt even from several miles away, and it was as though no matter where he was, or no matter how many people surrounded him, his presence would overshadow everything in his vicinity.

“Hua Taixu. I’ve seen him before, he’s from the Hua Clan in the Moon Continent. And as for the group of people beside the Hua Clan, from the looks of it, they seem to be from the Moon Continent as well—the Pill Emperor Hall.”

The gazes of the crowd raked through the air as they saw a few outstanding silhouettes other than Hua Taixu.

“That young man whose eyes seem to glitter with a golden light, is he Zhan Chen? I heard that he’s cultivating the cultivation art he inherited from an Ascendant, I wonder how much stronger he is now? I also heard rumors that he’s intentionally suppressing his cultivation base. He didn’t want to break through to Heavenly Dipper so early because he wanted to use this chance to obtain the position of the top ranked on the Heavenly Fate Rankings.”

“Oh, and who’s that maiden? Such a transcendent beauty, her looks could even topple empires.”

“That maiden should be the direct disciple of the Pill Emperor’s daughter, Luo He. Usually, she keeps a low profile so no one knows much about her. But in spite of this, she’s still extremely famous and popular in the Moon Continent.”

Countless voices whirled about from countless discussions that echoed throughout the air. To bear witness to this display of numerous heroes, each representing a major power from all nine continents, to see them all gathered right here in the Ancient Capital of Grand Xia—it was a matter of course that there’d be a never-ending array of topics to converse on!

Chapter 336: Old Acquaintances

Within the Ginkou Continent, all reputable inns were bustling with customers, so busy to the extent that they couldn’t cope. There were simply too many people, not only were there outsiders from the other part of Grand Xia, those from the Ginkou Continent didn’t want to miss this event as well.

At this moment, there were a few figures walking on a main street of the Ginkou Continent. Among them were two extremely beautiful young ladies, accompanied by an old man behind them. The aura that exuded out from the old man was extremely weak, as though he was almost an ordinary mortal.

“The Ginkou Continent is truly luxurious.” The old man gazed at the surrounding buildings as he sighed. Thinking back to events in his past, he couldn’t help but find his actions ridiculous. The Sky Harmony City was but an ant-like existence when placed in the perspective of Grand Xia. Anyone here, any commoner on the street, had a status far above his.

His perspective had changed and so had his heart.

“Autumn Snow, you have to work harder to catch up to your younger sister. This world is truly too vast.” Bai Qingsong sighed. Autumn Snow nodded her head, “Mhm, father, I’ll do my best to catch up, but I’m afraid it won’t be possible.”

“Elder sis, you have to have more confidence in yourself.” The beautiful young lady beside Autumn Snow lightly smiled. This younger-looking lady was even taller than Autumn Snow, with an extremely well-proportioned figure. She had skin as white as snow and an extremely beautiful countenance. Only her eyes seemed to contain within them a depth that was far beyond her years, as though she had experienced many things before.

This younger-looking lady was the little sister of Autumn Snow, Bai Qing. Currently her status was extraordinary among those in the Mystic Moon Hall and had fetched her family over to live under her sect’s protection.

“Confidence?” Autumn Snow shook her head, “I wonder if he will be here...”

Thinking of him, Bai Qing had a radiant smile on her face. After experiencing so many things, she learned to let go of the hatred for her family members that had once entangled her. And not just herself, her father Bai Qingsong had learned to let go as well. He didn’t blame Qin Wentian in the slightest for crippling him. In fact, it was because of Bai Qingsong’s regret that convinced Bai Qing to reconcile with him and her sister Autumn Snow.

“He?” Bai Qingsong froze, as a bitter smile surfaced on his face. “Sometimes when I think about events of the past, there are so many what-ifs that flash through my mind. If I hadn’t been so selfish back then, maybe the two of you would have been a couple that engenders envy in others.”

“Let’s not talk about the past anymore,” Bai Qing gently interjected, causing Bai Qingsong to shake his head as he sighed, “You are right, everything’s already in the past. What’s the use of talking about it now?”

Bai Qing reminisced, her thoughts going back to when she’d met her Wentian gege at the Refinement Grounds in the Celestial Lake. Such a long period of time had passed since then, and now she was already at the eighth level of Yuanfu. Naturally, it was due to her hard-working nature and her many past experiences. But despite her current strength, Qin Wentian’s talent was still above hers, so his own cultivation surely wouldn’t lose out to her own.

Fond delight flickered in her eyes, a smile of innocence gracing her face.

.....

Qin Wentian was walking on a pathway, when he suddenly sneezed out of nowhere. He then commented in a low voice, “Hmm, is there someone thinking of me?”

“Stop being so thick-skinned. Just a sneeze and suddenly you assume someone is thinking about you.” Fan Le grinned. “Do you think you’re me?”

Qin Wentian rolled his eyes as Little Rascal let out a snort-like bark in his arms, before mimicking an expression of shrugging, causing Fan Le to rap it lightly on its head.

They had arrived in Ginkou yesterday, and early morning, Fatty had already dragged all of them out to wander the streets.

There were many restaurants and inns around this region, and the pathway they were walking on was also extremely spacious. Even a hundred people walking abreast on that pathway wouldn't feel congested. Unbroken lines of demonic beasts mounts passed beside them, the entire Ancient Capital was bustling with noise and excitement.

Occasionally on the pathway, they would also meet extraordinary characters that hailed from the other transcendent powers.

“Who are those people, the aura exuding from their bodies feels as sharp as that of sword cultivators, albeit somewhat different,” Qin Wentian inquired of Ouyang Kuangsheng, as he stared at a group of young cultivators passing by.

“They're from the War Continent. Cultivators that hail from that region emphasize more on forging and the usage of divine weapons. Even their innate techniques and cultivation arts usually require a particular type of divine weapon to complement it. Hence, the sharpness you feel is an aura similar to the sharpness of divine weapons,” Ouyang Kuangsheng replied.

“The War Continent isn't very far from the Ginkou Continent. Those two, in addition to the Moon Continent, can be considered the three core regions of Grand Xia. All of them are home to the strongest transcendent powers, a fact that has instilled within their respective cultivators an inborn sense of superiority.”

“In that case, the major powers from those three continents should be in Ginkou for this event as well?” Qin Wentian asked in a low voice. Ouyang Kuangsheng nodded, “Naturally, even transcendent powers such as the Nine Mystical Palace and Greencloud Pavilion will send their people here, and they're both located so far away in the Qing Continent. Oh yeah, shouldn't you be more familiar with them, seeing that you're from Chu? Chu was under the administration of the Nine Mystical Palace back then, wasn't it?”

Nine Mystical Palace, Qin Wentian couldn't be considered as being familiar with it. But previously, he did have more than a few run-ins with the people of the Nine Mystical Palace, and if he were to meet them again this time around, there were some things he had to clarify with them.

As for the Greencloud Pavilion, he was only familiar with two people, Gongyang Hong and Qian Mengyu. Currently, he didn't know the whereabouts of Senior Gongyang Hong.

After Gongyang Hong left Chu, Qin Wentian had journeyed to the Moon Continent. Hence, if he were to return to Chu, he wouldn't be able to find Qin Wentian.

"Chu!" Qin Wentian felt traces of longing in his heart. That weak little country had many people he cared about living within its borders.

"I wonder if Qingcheng came along with those from the Pill Emperor Palace for this trip to the Ancient Kingdom?" Qin Wentian mused. As a core disciple under Luo He, along with her extraordinary talent with medicine and pills, Mo Qingcheng's speed of advancement and strength shouldn't be beneath his own.

"How fragrant." At this moment, Fatty's nostrils widened as he took a sniff in the air. That, was the thick aroma of sweet wine. Fan Le gulped as he started searching for the source of that fragrance.

"There." Chu Mang pointed to a luxurious inn with a flag outside of it. Three words could be seen on the fluttering flag – Drunken Immortals' Residence.

"Good name." Ouyang Kuangsheng laughed, "Let's go in and drink a few cuppas."

"Yeah, I wanna drink too." Ouyang Xiaolu suddenly butted in, even as she stood beside Ouyang Kuangsheng. Ouyang Kuangsheng blinked, as he glared at his sister, "No. Go drink milk instead."

"Hmph." Ouyang Xiaolu unhappily snorted. "Wait till I see Sister Jiang Ting. I'm going to complain to her and make her bully you for me."

The Jiang Ting which Ouyang Xiaolu was referring to, was naturally Ouyang Kuangsheng's fiancée that hailed from the Wind Continent. Apparently, the Jiang Clan had also come to the Ginkou Continent.

"Che, you still don't know who wears the pants in my relationship with her." Ouyang Kuangsheng grinned.

"Oh? Really? Would you dare say that again?" Ouyang Xiaolu disdainfully replied.

“Even if that lass Jiang Ting came, I will definitely show her who’s the boss,” Ouyang Kuangsheng confidently replied. As the sound of his words faded, Ouyang Xiaolu burst out into laughter, her actions causing Ouyang Kuangsheng to feel a strong sense of unease. As he turned, the expression on his face froze when he noticed a female silhouette standing there.

Qin Wentian and Fan Le already deduced who was standing there even without turning their heads, both their faces were filled with utter sympathy as they looked to Ouyang Kuangsheng.

“You guys...” Ouyang Kuangsheng knew that he’d fallen into a trap, but nobody had tried to warn him. These two buddies of his were too unreliable.

Since their parting at the Celestial Lake Palace, Qin Wentian had yet to meet Jiang Ting again. The current Jiang Ting had matured quite a bit, her figure was slender and elegant and radiated an aura of feminine charm. Her eyes flickered with an unknown light and just when it seemed she was on the verge of an explosion, Ouyang Kuangsheng headed her off with a bright, innocent smile on his face, “Ting`er you’re here! Why didn’t you let me know in advance? My damnable little sister didn’t tell me anything as well :)”

“Hmph.” Jiang Ting ignored Ouyang Kuangsheng as she stomped her way ahead, brushing him aside. Ouyang Kuangsheng quickly caught up with her as he tried to placate her, “I was just joking dear, just a little harmless joke.”

Upon seeing such a scenario occurring, Qin Wentian and the rest couldn’t help but smile. The brazen Ouyang Kuangsheng was reduced to such a state by his fiancée? How unexpected. Afterwards, they entered the inn and found a window seat on the second level, where they enjoyed the wine and leisurely chatted away.

At the entrance to Drunken Immortals’ Residence, countless streams of people entered and exited. At this moment a group of cultivators entered, consisting of three males and three females.

Of the three females, one of them was extremely petite with an ordinary countenance, exuding a faint sense of self-induced inferiority. She trailed behind the group in silence. The most talkative of the three had a coquettish manner of speaking, with a figure as provocative as her words. Her ample bosom stretched tightly across the top of her revealing clothes, causing people of the opposite sex to drool over her half-exposed, alabaster skin.

As for the last remaining female, she was by far the most dazzling among the group. She seemed have been born with an overflowing abundance of sex appeal, with sultry eyes and pouty lips of a rosy hue. Although she didn’t say much, her presence and inherent magnetism alone could invoke

jealousy from those of the same gender, and most assuredly made her the most dazzling among the three females.

“Yang Xia, don’t you worry. My buddy will be joining us later for a meal. Just let me handle the talking and I’ll butter him up a little. Joining the Pill Emperor Hall shouldn’t be a problem at all.” One of the young men stared at the coquettish-looking girl, and then, as if he was compelled to do so, glanced for long moments at the glorious display of her magnificent snowy-white peaks. Obviously, he wanted nothing more than to get a closer look at that valley’s beautiful scenery!

Chapter 337: Chen Clan of Ginkou Continent

When Qin Wentian left Chu, the situation in Chu had already stabilized. Chu Wuwei became the Emperor, resolving all the grievances and grudges of the previous era and rebuilding the Emperor Star Academy. The country of Chu was in the phase of recovery after the war.

The standings of the noble clans changed according to the prosperity or decline of those whom they had chosen to back.

Luo Huan knew that there was no longer a need for her to stay in Chu and hence, she decided to roam Grand Xia as well. Setting off in the western direction, she visited many countries and had even gone to the Qing Continent where the Greencloud Pavilion and Nine Mystical Palace were both situated in. Her perspectives had long changed and she now knew that Chu was really too small and her individual strength was too weak.

And because of her innate charm, the beauty of her features, and her personality, it was easy for her to become an object of desire whom men coveted over, salivating at her looks. She had come across quite a few dangerous situations because of it. Luckily, as she was someone clever in nature, she knew how to protect herself. In conclusion, she learned the importance of having a major power behind one’s back.

She wanted to join a major power, because she had experienced too many things throughout these years when she roamed Grand Xia. Although her talent wasn’t weak, she wasn’t strong enough to the point where she could dazzle the crowds. Only by joining a major power would she be able to better protect herself.

After arriving in Ginkou, she had acquainted herself with a group of people and hence decided to travel beside them as companions. Although the group was obviously made up of braggarts, she still feigned civility and accompanied them on their travels. After all, for a lone female who had to take care of herself, it was still safer to be in a group. And as for one of her ‘companions’ saying that he

knew someone from the Pill Emperor Hall, Luo Huan was only interested in finding out more information, she didn't specifically want to join the Pill Emperor Hall.

Yet Luo Huan didn't expect that the lying words of that braggart would have truth mixed in them too. The person he knew, Jing Yu, was truly a disciple of the Pill Emperor's daughter, Luo He. Once, Jing Yu had even visited Chu together with Luo He before, fetching Mo Qingcheng away.

Naturally, what made Luo Huan sit up in surprise was that she had actually run into Qin Wentian at the inn. This little fellow was exuding a presence totally different compared to the past. Luo Huan still remembered clearly the first time she and Mustang had met Qin Wentian as he was escaping from the Ye Clan.

In that moment, their eyes locked as warm smiles suffused their lips. The relationship between the two of them had long transcended into the level of real siblings, now that they'd met again after such a long while, how could he not feel moved in his heart?

It was truly a precious feeling.

Fan Le also noticed Qin Wentian's unusual reaction. Shifting his gaze in the direction of where Qin Wentian looked at, his eyes abruptly lighted up. To think that they would meet their Senior Sister Luo Huan in a place like this.

"Jing Yu, you've arrived." At this moment, the young man from Luo Huan's table stood up. Up the stairs, a young man leisurely walked up. Luo Huan's eyes flashed with a crafty light as she noted Jing Yu's entrance.

She made a gesture to Qin Wentian and Fan Le as she winked, signalling that she had some dastardly plot in mind.

Qin Wentian swept his gaze over and also saw Jing Yu approaching. He couldn't help but feel his heart trembling. Since Jing Yu was here, those from the Pill Emperor Hall shouldn't be too far from this place.

Maybe Qingcheng's current location was nearby!

As he thought of this, Qin Wentian gave a slight nod of his head, signalling that he understood and would comply with Luo Huan. He remained silent and went back to enjoying his wine, as though he hadn't noticed Jing Yu's arrival.

Jing Yu was here together with another young man. This young man was clad in luxurious clothings and was extraordinary good-looking. Luo Huan's eyes flickered as she studied the young man, the aura he exuded didn't seem to be faked, but was completely natural indicating that he was at least, also from a transcendent power.

Jing Yu was clad in white, and there was a crease in the centre of his brows as though he were worrying about something. Meanwhile, the young man beside him had the vigor of dragons and tigers, and appeared to be in glowing spirits.

This young man was evidently someone from the Chen Clan.

In the Ginkou Continent, the Chen Clan had existed since the time of Ancient Grand Xia, making them one of the most ancient clans around.

It was even rumoured that the Chen Clan was one of the nine main bloodlines that divided Grand Xia.

After Ancient Grand Xia was no more, the clan lord of the Chen Clan at that time decided to relocate to the Ginkou Continent and thus established their roots there.

And if one were to rank all the transcendent powers of Grand Xia, without a doubt, the strength of the Chen Clan would definitely be ranked among the top three.

The cultivation art of the Chen Clan was to draw power from the sun and gain the ability to transform the 'universe.' [1]

The Great Solar Universe Cultivation Art was rumored to be one of the ultimate arts of Ancient Grand Xia. This art contained boundless powers and practitioners of it were able to birth Great Solar energy from within their bodies, easily capable of incinerating the Heavens and boiling the Oceans. After which, one's blood would be endowed with the Great Solar attribute and upon unleashing this art, it would decimate any nearby opponents within a certain radius.

One could well imagine how ferocious and tyrannical this cultivation art could be. In the entire Grand Xia, it was difficult to find another art or technique that was capable of resisting such power.

The Pill Emperor Hall and the Chen Clan had shared a connection with each other since back then. After the Pill Emperor Hall's members arrived in the Ginkou Continent, the Chen Clan would naturally welcome them and play host, inviting them to rest in the Chen Clan's Estate.

Chen Ran, upon seeing Mo Qingcheng, was completely blown away by her beauty. The fact that many distinguished and talented males of the younger generations had already been turned down by Mo Qingcheng made her even more appealing to Chen Ran in his heart. However, he knew that there would be many love rivals competing for her, with the strongest among them being Hua Taixu and Zhan Chen. He had already prepared himself to be disappointed, until he found out that Mo Qingcheng scorned their presence as well. This made his heart beat with joy again, and hence, after some investigation, he'd decided to form a closer relationship with Jing Yu, who was a fellow disciple of Mo Qingcheng under the Pill Emperor's daughter, Luo He.

If not for this, with Chen Ran's status, why would he deign to hang out with Jing Yu?

Hence, Chen Ran's heart was currently burning passionately yet Jing Yu's, for some reason, was filled with worry. Jing Yu had already stagnated and was incapable of advancing further in the Pill Emperor Hall. His talent was only average and his master, Luo He, was extremely disappointed with him because of some matters regarding Mo Qingcheng.

He had fallen so deeply in love with Mo Qingcheng, yet he could only admire her from afar. He didn't even have the courage to confess. And now, there were too many geniuses circling her, with even some of them approaching him in a bid to get him to help pull some strings. This made the bitterness in his heart even more intense, and one could well imagine how terrible Jing Yu was feeling. In these few days after arriving in the Ginkou Continent, Jing Yu drank himself to sleep every night, seeking his solace in alcohol. As luck would have it, he met his blood brother Jing Feng yesterday and was subsequently invited to make a trip to this inn today.

As he walked towards their table, Jing Feng greeted him, yet Jing Yu merely nodded his head in response.

"Jing Yu, this is Luo Huan and Yang Xia. Both of them wish to enter the Pill Emperor Hall, do you have any suggestions?" Jing Yu's blood brother, Jing Feng, signalled him with his eyes. Jing Yu laughed coldly in his heart, his brother Jing Feng was too wretched. He didn't want to put in any effort in his cultivation and only knew how to womanise everyday. To think that now, he still wanted to use him, Jing Yu, as a tool to get girls into his bed. How ridiculous.

Jing Yu shifted his gaze over, completely disregarding the ordinary looking girl beside Yang Xia. Yang Xia was pretty good-looking and was currently throwing coquettish glances at him, all while standing in a posture that accentuated her figure. Such a woman was too vulgar for his tastes,, wasn't she acting like a prostitute? Maybe only Jing Feng would be interested in her.

Because Jing Yu was used to seeing Mo Qingcheng, there really weren't many woman that could still catch his eyes nowadays.

But as Jing Yu's eyes landed on Luo Huan, his eyes finally brightened. Her eyes were filled with an innate charm that immediately attracted him. Even though her figure was covered up, her well-endowed assets couldn't be hidden. When compared to Yang Xia, who was indeed beautiful with her own share of generous curves, it was the deliberate exposure of her cleavage that was an instant turn-off. Quite simply, and with just a single glance, Luo Huan was able to set the flames in his heart ablaze.

"Such a beautiful maiden, if I can enjoy a night of passion with her, I wouldn't mind giving up a year of my life." Jing Yu stared at the beautiful countenance in front of him, as his heart stirred with lust.

As for Chen Ran, he naturally understood 70% to 80% of the context just from the situation alone. He couldn't help but sneer in his heart, he knew the reason for Jing Yu's depression was because of his love for Mo Qingcheng. It was a love that would never be reciprocated because compared to the other radiant geniuses around her, each and every one of them was many times better compared to him. He was just a toad lusting after a swan's flesh.

"Well, I have to hand it to him, this maiden's beauty is truly outstanding as well. If I'd never met Mo Qingcheng, I would've also wanted to play with her for a few nights. But since Jing Yu already has his eyes on her, I might as well help him so his obsession with Mo Qingcheng can come to an end." Chen Ran mused. After which, he laughed, "Brother Jing Yu is a disciple under Senior Luo He. If he wants to bring people into the Pill Emperor Hall, although he would need to expend some effort, it shouldn't be too difficult for him. However, why should he help people he's unacquainted with?"

Jing Yu sipped a cup of wine. He totally agreed with Chen Ran's statement.

"I have some treasures on me, and they're yours if you'll help us." Earlier, Yang Xia was still somewhat suspicious about Jing Feng's words but when she noted Jing Yu and Chen Ran's extraordinary aura, she had been totally convinced. This was an extremely rare opportunity.

"Brother Jing Yu is a disciple of the Pill Emperor Hall, why would he need your treasures at all?" Chen Ran's eyes roamed over Yang Xia's figure. How could Yang Xia fail to understand what he meant? Yang Xia turned her glance onto the two of them and mused, it wouldn't be too bad, she wouldn't lose out even if she agreed to their terms.

"As long as it's something I can give, I'm willing," Yang Xia shyly added as she lowered her head. Their meanings were already extremely obvious, yet at this moment, Chen Ran's gaze turned to focus on Luo Huan. Evidently, the target of his choice wasn't Yang Xia, which caused Yang Xia's countenance to stiffen, as she felt her cheeks burning from her previous assumption.

Luo Huan had no difficulty in understanding what was happening. She felt extremely depressed in her heart. Initially, she thought that Jing Feng would find a trickster to come over, yet who would have thought that this wasn't the case. Chen Ran's cultivation base was surely above hers, just a glance from him was sufficient to give her pressure.

These two people were definitely from transcendent powers, yet their behavior was no different from lechers. Luo Huan was already used to seeing how filthy men could be and wasn't that surprised by it. This must also be the reason why they weren't attracted to the free-for-all coquettish Yang Xia and had turned their attentions onto her instead.

"My talent isn't high enough, I don't think I'll be able to join the Pill Emperor Hall," Luo Huan smiled as she replied. Although she felt disgusted in her heart, she wouldn't easily show her feelings on her face. She, who had roamed Grand Xia, was now much more cautious compared to back then when she was in Chu.

"It's no problem, as long as you are willing to invest something, I dare to guarantee I can make a transcendent power accept you," Chen Ran persuaded in a low voice. After all, this matter wasn't something glorious, and it would hurt his reputation if people identified him.

And his insinuations were already becoming extremely obvious. No one could misunderstand what he was trying to say—he wanted Luo Huan to pay him with her body.

Qin Wentian was silently monitoring the happenings before him, and upon noting the appearance of Jing Yu and Chen Ran, he understood that his senior sister Luo Huan was going to be in trouble. And at the moment when he heard Chen Ran's words, he couldn't help but laugh coldly in his heart.

"Sorry, I've got something on. I've got to go." Luo Huan stood up with a smile on her face, appearing extremely polite.

Chen Ran's eyes slightly narrowed before they glinted with a fiery light. Seeing Luo Huan turning, he coldly added, "I think you'd better sit down instead."

"Luo Huan, sit," Jing Yu also spoke, his countenance falling. It seemed that Chen Ran was also interested in Luo Huan.

Luo Huan's countenance slightly changed, yet at this moment, Qin Wentian who was in front of her, stood up and smiled at her. Luo Huan returned his smile, before she continued walking in Qin Wentian's direction.

“Try taking another step forward.” Jing Yu’s emotions today were originally in an awful state. He could only secretly admire Mo Qingcheng from afar, but today, a female with no background actually dared to snub him? Wasn’t this rubbing salt into his wounds?

“Senior Sister, there’s no need to concern yourself with trash.” Qin Wentian smiled, as he too, walked towards Luo Huan. Upon hearing Qin Wentian’s words, the smile on Luo Huan’s face became even sweeter. Back in Chu, Qin Wentian had a cautious personality and a style of playing it safe. For him to speak such words, it was apparent that he didn’t fear Jing Yu and his friend at all. Her smile grew more brighter as she glanced at Qin Wentian’s companions. She couldn’t help but notice that aside from Fan Le, he was also accompanied by Ouyang Kuangsheng and Jiang Tiang. None of them could be considered less than extraordinary!

Chapter 338: Great Solar Energy

As the sound of Qin Wentian’s voice faded, a terrifying cold gleam of light flashed in Jing Yu’s eyes.

Trash....? Recently he’d been so dispirited and often asked himself where had his supposed talent gone to? Not only did his master doubt him, even his fellow disciples no longer trusted him. The word ‘trash’ was like a needle pricking right into his heart.

“Slut, get your ass over here. Don’t blame me if I use you as my plaything,” Jing Yu remarked in an icy voice, without turning around. Jing Yu, whose back faced Qin Wentian, was visibly trembling, his entire face contorted. Usually, Jing Yu would never lose control of himself like this, but recently his mood had really been terrible, and now with the stimulation of this ‘needle’, all the darkness in him came gushing out.

The spectators at the inn all froze as they glanced at Jing Yu with expressions of interest on their faces. By all appearances, this man seemed to have a distinguished background, and yet he was actually capable of uttering such words. It was completely unexpected.

Luo Huan’s countenance stiffened as a cold light flashed in her charming eyes. For these few years, she had kept a low profile, living with prudence and humility, yet she had never lost her pride. Yet Jing Yu’s sordid words were too much to take, and pushed her over the edge.

“If Luo He knew that she had such a disciple, I wonder how she’d feel then?” A palpable coldness radiated out of Qin Wentian. Jing Yu put down the cup of wine in his hands and turned around. But as he saw Qin Wentian, his entire body stiffened in shock.

Although he wasn’t very familiar with Qin Wentian and had only met him twice, he could still vividly recall the first time they met outside the bamboo lodge of Gongyang Hong. He and Yan Qi had told Qin Wentian off, looking down on him with contempt. They’d told him that he was only a crow, unfit to be together with a phoenix like Mo Qingcheng.

Not only that, during their second run-in, he’d laughed coldly in his heart at what an idiot Qin Wentian was. This fool actually chased Mo Qingcheng all the way to the gates of the Pill Emperor Hall. And after which, he’d even had a confrontation with Zhan Chen.

Afterwards, there had been countless news reports covering Qin Wentian, all circulated throughout the Moon Continent. The youngest fourth-ranked Grandmaster ever, in a fit of rage regarding a woman, had killed Hua Xiaoyun. In the crazy battle, he sacrificed all his Puppets and had managed to escape by holding Shu Ruanyu hostage, his body riddled with injuries. In that battle, three assassins were killed and even Zhan Chen’s pristine name had been dragged into the mud. Many people even speculated that Zhan Chen was the true murderer of his fiancée because of what Qin Wentian had said then.

And today, for the third time, Qin Wentian stood in front of him. Qin Wentian stared at him, as though gazing at a pitiful ant. It was the kind of gaze he used to regard Qin Wentian with, but currently the roles had already reversed. The needle in his heart pierced in even further.

“It’s you!” Jing Yu exclaimed in shock. Locking eyes with Qin Wentian felt like a sharp knife directly slicing through his sea of consciousness. Momentarily, he felt a terrifying pressure boring down on him, evoking a sense of trepidation. It was as though a fearsome primordial beast had appeared, and wanted to lacerate his sea of consciousness into pieces.

“BOOM!”

Qin Wentian took a step forward as Jing Yu’s heart pounded. His forehead was covered in a sheen of perspiration as he shifted backwards, collapsing onto the floor, knocking down a chair and almost knocking down the table.

“If you say another word with even a hint of obscenity in it, I’ll make it so that you can only crawl out of here today,” Qin Wentian icily stated. Jing Yu scrambled up with difficulty, his countenance turning pale-white when he noted the reactions of the crowd. All of them were pointing their fingers

at him, while whispering snidely to each other. Jing Yu felt like his breath was caught in his throat, he'd never felt this mortified.

“Luo He of the Pill Emperor Hall actually has such a disciple?”

“I heard that the little disciple of Luo He is as beautiful as a fairy and even has the mystical Seven Apertures Heart. To think that her senior brother would be such a character. It's unbelievable.” Many people shook their heads and sighed.

Qin Wentian ignored the voices of the crowd, he walked and stood in front of Luo Huan, tenderly regarding his senior sister as he gently cradled her face.

“Senior Sis, you've lost weight.”

“Smelly brat, stop taking advantage of your beautiful senior sister me.” Luo Huan's face was filled with a warm smile. This little fellow had truly grown up, he was already strong enough to protect her, unlike the youth back then who looked to her for safety.

“Who asked my senior sister to be this beautiful? Might as well take advantage while I'm acting cool.” Qin Wentian smiled as he embraced Luo Huan into a hug. There were no feelings of lust or romance that stems between a male and a female, it was a hug of pure friendship and of family love. Qin Wentian had long placed Luo Huan on the same standing as Qin Yao in his heart, treating her like his elder sister.

“Oi, your beautiful sister can't breath.” Luo Huan was speechless when she felt Qin Wentian's strength. The two of them parted as Fatty Fan Le waddled up, opening his arms wide as he greeted Luo Huan, “Senior Sister!”

“Damn fatty, what happened to your dieting plan?” Luo Huan giggled. Fatty shrugged and replied, “Senior Sister, you can't be this biased.”

“Wait till you have Wentian's figure before talking to me.” Luo Huan gaily laughed, causing Fatty to be extremely dejected.

“Come sit over there with us.” Qin Wentian pulled Luo Huan along when abruptly, Chen Ran who had been maintaining his silence suddenly spoke, “Wait.”

Chen Ran contemplated Qin Wentian, as well as those who came together with him. Those sitting at the table, especially Ouyang Kuangsheng and Jiang Ting, exuded extraordinary auras, so they should also be members from a transcendent power. As for Qin Wentian, although he didn't have that innate feeling of superiority, his actual level of strength shouldn't be bad.

But regardless of who he was, when they were in the Ginkou Continent facing someone from the Chen Clan, that person would still have to crawl on the ground even if he was an almighty true dragon.

Right now, this was the best opportunity to generate goodwill and make Jing Yu feel beholden to him.

“No matter who you are, you'd best come over here and bow in apology to my brother Jing Yu.” Chen Ran's finger rapped on the table as he commented in a detached voice.

Yang Xia and the rest watching by the sides had assumed that Jing Yu's status as a disciple from the Pill Emperor Hall meant that he was the highest among them, but now they knew Chen Ran's background and status was even more frightening compared to Jing Yu. If not, he wouldn't have dared to speak out after Jing Yu was humiliated by Qin Wentian.

Qin Wentian glanced at Chen Ran, his ears ringing with the rudeness of Chen Ran's words. He was already holding back because this was the Ginkou Continent. To think that Chen Ran had no thoughts of sparing him.

“Senior Sis, let's go.” Qin Wentian merely glanced at Chen Ran before he continued leading Luo Huan towards his table, totally disregarding Chen Ran's words.

Chen Ran's finger continued drumming the table, while his countenance turned a blazing red. The surrounding temperature became scorching hot.

Only core members of the Chen Clan were allowed to cultivate the Great Solar Universe Art. Evidently, Chen Ran was one such member.

If he wasn't worth something, he wouldn't dare to woo Mo Qingcheng.

Earlier, when Chen Ran spoke, Ouyang Kuangsheng had already noticed him, taking note of the radiant light flashing in Chen Ran's eyes. And after Qin Wentian returned to the table, Ouyang Kuangsheng quietly informed him, "He seems to be a core member of the Great Solar Chen Clan in Ginkou."

"Chen Clan?" Qin Wentian murmured. He already had more than a faint understanding of the transcendent powers around Grand Xia. And on the way to Ginkou, Ouyang Kuangsheng did introduce some of them to him.

The Great Solar Chen Clan is an extremely ancient aristocratic clan that has existed since the era of Ancient Grand Xia. It's also one of the nine main grand bloodlines belonging to one of the nine strongest subjects of the Ancient Emperor back then. The cultivation art they cultivated was the exceedingly tyrannical Great Solar Universe Art.

After knowing of the Great Solar Chen Clan, the first thing Qin Wentian thought of was the scene that heralded the end of Grand Xia. The nine subjects of the Ancient Emperor rebelled and divided the Divine Stele into nine pieces, each of them possessing one of the Nine Ultimate Arts of Grand Xia.

For the Chen Clan, they were undoubtedly the descendants from one of the nine traitorous subjects back then.

Chen Ran's eyes flashed as he stared at Ouyang Kuangsheng. What a sharp intuition this person had, he'd been able to discern right away that he was from the Chen Clan.

"Who are you?" Chen Ran impassively asked.

"Ouyang Aristocrat Clan, Ouyang Kuangsheng."

Ouyang Kuangsheng didn't hide his identity. He directly replied, causing the spectators in the inn to exclaim in surprise. Today, there was too much excitement in the Drunken Immortal Residence; the Great Solar Chen Clan, Ouyang Aristocrat Clan and Pill Emperor Hall, it seemed that the conflict between them would soon deepen.

But matters like these were what the crowd wanted to see the most. It would be great if both sides fought against each other, giving them a free show to watch.

“Ouyang Kuangsheng.” Chen Ran’s eyes glinted, he naturally heard of this name before. Of all the members from the younger generations of the transcendent powers, Ouyang Kuangsheng of the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan was included in a list that Chen Clan had to take note of, especially since he was a rising star himself as well.

“Who is he?” Chen Ran shifted his gaze back onto Qin Wentian.

“He’s my brother Qin Wentian. Today, me and my fiancée Jiang Ting, as well as my brothers are here admiring the wine. I hope you won’t spoil our mood,” Ouyang Kuangsheng quietly replied.

The corners of Chen Ran’s mouth curled up in a cold smile, “But my mood has already been disrupted. Not only that, he sneak-attacked my friend. I’m sure I’m not going overboard by just wanting him to apologize.”

Ouyang Kuangsheng understood that the party had no intentions of giving him face. If that was the case, there was no need to waste words. He shifted his gaze aside, totally disregarding Chen Ran.

Chen Ran gently placed his palm on the table and an instant later, a terrifying heat incinerated it into ashes. Even the metallic cups on the table were melted down into a puddle of metal liquid by that heat. The spectating crowd hurriedly retreated, the blazing radiance in Chen Ran’s eyes was even more brilliant compared to earlier, as crushing intent radiated out from him.

“If I have to act personally, it won’t be as simple to resolve with just an apology. The woman you are with shall belong to me as well.” Chen Ran’s voice turned cold. He was from the Chen Clan, why would he need to give face to Ouyang Kuangsheng? In any case, he wasn’t the one who’d acted offensively to the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan and besides, Qin Wentian and Luo Huan weren’t from any transcendent powers. Why couldn’t he do what he wanted to to them?

“Senior Sis, give me a moment.” Qin Wentian gazed at the stiffened expression on Luo Huan’s face. He set down the wine cup in his hands and stood up, walking towards Chen Ran.

An instant later, a gut-wrenching aura blasted out of Qin Wentian. His countenance turned increasingly demonic as his eyes narrowed into slits, and it gave chills down the spine of people who saw it.

“Not bad, you have some strength. But sadly at the seventh level of Yuanfu, you are not qualified to act in this way in front of me,” Chen Ran also stood up as the spectating crowd hurriedly took cover. Everything near him, like the table and chair, had all been incinerated into ashes.

Great Solar Universe Cultivation Art—practitioners of this Art would birth Great Solar energy within their bodies, enabling them to even incinerate the Heavens and boil the Oceans. When the might of this Art was unleashed, those within a certain radius would die.

Although Chen Ran's proficiency wasn't at that level yet, trepidation and fear could be felt in the hearts of those standing near him.

As for the aura he was exuding, it was at the eighth level of Yuanfu.

“Boom!” Chen Ran stepped out as the visible outline of a heavy footprint could be seen. His palms were turning the color of burning crimson, as a terrifying heat crackled around him as he lunged towards Qin Wentian.

“For the sake of giving face to the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan, I will give you one last chance.” A terrible gleam flickered in his eyes, the light of the energy birthed from the Great Solar Universe Art he cultivated, akin to the terrifying radiance of a blazing sun!

Chapter 339: Meeting Her Again

The crowd all retreated quickly, standing far away with some even running out of the inn.

The Great Solar Chen Clan's ultimate art was exceedingly tyrannical, and if one's cultivation base wasn't high enough they would be incinerated into ashes, being corroded by the energy from the Great Solar Universe Art.

The power of this technique was ranked within the top ten among the entire Grand Xia, extremely terrifying.

“Let's take this outside,” Qin Wentian indifferently replied. Chen Ran's lips curled up in an extremely cold smile when he heard that. This person's cultivation base was at the seventh level of Yuanfu and he actually had the gall to challenge him to combat? It had been a long time since he, Chen Ran, had met such an interesting person.

As a core member of the Chen Clan, he naturally possessed the ability to fight those above his level, let alone fighting someone a full level lower than him.

“Fine, I agree.” Chen Ran cupped his hands as an incandescent ball of flame, reminiscent of the sun, blasted the roof of the inn into pieces. After which, he soared up through the air and flew towards an empty plot of land nearby.

“Swoosh.” Qin Wentian’s silhouette flickered as he followed after Chen Ran. The spectators all followed at a safe distance—they didn’t want to miss this battle.

Ouyang Kuangsheng, Luo Huan and the rest rushed out as well, following after Qin Wentian and Chen Ran.

Standing in the air, Qin Wentian’s demonic qi towered over the Heavens. Presently, there was a gigantic ball of flame akin to a blazing sun behind Chen Ran, collecting the rays of sunlight.

The spectators gazed up at the skies as thunderstruck expressions appeared on their faces.

“Great Solar Universe Cultivation Art, he’s someone from the Chen Clan.”

“Chen Ran from the Chen Clan! Among the many Chen Clan disciples, he could be considered one of the more outstanding ones. I wonder who would be so audacious and dare to provoke him with a cultivation base at the seventh level of Yuanfu? This’ll be a good show.”

Chen Ran had an expression of something akin to laughter in his eyes. Terrifying swirls of energy circulated his entire body as a scorching heat infused his hands. His expression was one of obvious mockery—whether or not Qin Wentian was from the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan, his Great Solar Chen Clan had no reason to fear.

“Bzz!” A massive wind filled with blistering heat swept past the air. Chen Ran dashed towards Qin Wentian with a huge ball of flame hung behind his back. With a single casual strike, it was sufficient for Qin Wentian to clearly understand the destructive power of the Great Solar Energy.

Qin Wentian stepped out as layers of demonic qi enveloped his arms. An attack of an attack, Qin Wentian answered with a palm strike of his own. Both of them had no intentions of dodging, they competed completely on strength.

The two silhouettes instantly collided into each other as the terrifying might of their palms joined together. A deafening sound echoed out as the demonic qi and the scorching heat interweaved into a terrifying tempest, devastating everything in their surroundings.

Chen Ran felt a mighty force gushing right at him, his inner organs vibrated violently from its power, and his arm felt as though it would fall apart. His countenance abruptly changed and with a low groan of pain, he rapidly retreated ten feet away.

A black-colored qi coated Qin Wentian's palm as a current of heat energy was being forcibly tunneled through his palms, transforming into flame embers that incessantly grew in size, manifesting into a miniature sun set to incinerate his arm.

“Great Solar Energy.” Shock suffused Qin Wentian's countenance, there weren't many people in the eighth level of Yuanfu that could deal substantial damage to him. But this sliver of Chen Ran's Great Solar Energy actually made him feel a hint of a threat. One could see how tyrannical this Art truly was.

For this exchange Qin Wentian didn't even retreat half a step. Evidently, he possessed the advantage. He then turned his frigid gaze onto Chen Ran who had an unsightly expression on his face, as he sarcastically added, “Eighth level of Yuanfu? Is that all you can do?”

The hearts of the crowd were all pounding with confusion. They didn't understand why the one who retreated after the exchange of blows was Chen Ran and not Qin Wentian. After all Chen Ran had a higher cultivation base and was from the Great Solar Chen Clan, he'd even practiced the Great Solar Universe Art. Jing Yu's current expression was extremely fascinating to behold; the young man whom he'd once looked down on with disdain had actually become so powerful he could trample over him as easily as a flip of his palms.

“Your strength is above average, but if you only have pure strength, you are still far from being my match.” Chen Ran snorted. How could he admit defeat so easily? His Astral Souls erupted forth a the blazing light of the sun cascaded downwards. His Astral Soul was in the form of the blazing sun, how much more explosive and violent could it get? A corona of sun-flames enveloped Chen Ran, a ring of light so resplendent that it pierced the eyes of those who looked directly at it.

“Amazing, this is the Great Solar Illumination of the Great Solar Universe Art. It complements his blazing sun Astral Soul and achieves a synergistic effect that boosts his attack power. I wonder how much his current strength is augmented by this. Those from the Chen Clan are too terrifying.”

It was exceedingly rare for the crowd to witness a Chen Clan's member in combat, hence expressions of excitement painted their face. With the boost garnered from the Great Solar Illumination and the augmentation his Astral Soul provided, Chen Ran could easily incinerate people of the same level. Qin Wentian wouldn't find it so easy to get close to him.

“Do you dare to match palms with me one more time?” Chen Ran coldly laughed as the Great Solar light emitting from him grew even more radiant.

“Words from a loser, what do I have to fear?” Scaly demonic armor cloaked Qin Wentian’s entire body as he took on his demonic form. The searing heat Chen Ran was generating was too overwhelming, Qin Wentian knew that this was not something he could take on if he was in his normal form.

Chen Ran snorted with disdain as he flew towards Qin Wentian.

The instant he sent out a palm strike, a miniature sun tyrannically blasted outwards, set to burn Qin Wentian to death.

With an extra layer of demonic qi coating his arms, the wills of both his Mandate of Force and Demon intermingled and erupted forwards. At this instant, Qin Wentian’s strength was beyond formidable.

“Ruptured Void!” Qin Wentian majestically slammed forth with his palms, and the instant their attacks collided, the demonic scaly armor covering Qin Wentian’s arm combusted into flames. The sun flames from the Great Solar Illumination frenziedly gushed into his body, utterly devastating it.

Simultaneously, Chen Ran was catapulted forcefully through the air. This time around, his face had lost all color. With a hand grabbing his chest, he coughed out a mouthful of fresh blood. Even now he could still feel the impact shuddering his internal organs—if Qin Wentian used just a little bit more force, his internal organs would have definitely been shattered.

Qin Wentian’s earth-shattering strength directly blasted into Chen Ran’s body, ignoring all defenses with the aid of his technique, Ruptured Void.

“Rumble!” An inconceivable amount of demonic qi was being evaporated by the heat. After a few breaths of time, Qin Wentian smothered the sun flames devastating his body into nothingness, then immediately moved like the wind towards Chen Ran. Not wanting to take the role of a passive combatant, he directly initiated the attack instead.

Chen Ran’s countenance stiffened as he gritted his teeth and retaliated. The Great Solar Energy transformed into streams of light, capable of penetrating everything, let alone mere bodies made from flesh and blood.

Qin Wentian directly responded by blasting out his Ancient Draconic Imprint. Wrathful roars shattered the void as the dragons manifested from Astral Energy burned away, becoming droplets of rain that rained down the sky. The destructiveness of this battle swept away everything in this area, as terrifying explosions rang out one after another, it was an unnerving scene.

Chen Ran continuously spat out fresh blood, yet Qin Wentian gave him no chance to retreat. After a few more moments of being forced to exchange blows, Chen Ran was ruthlessly slammed into a construct as the metallic surface caved in. His blood had flown everywhere unchecked, he was in an extremely miserable state.

“Cough, cough...” Blood spilled out of his mouth, Chen Ran’s current aura was noticeably weaker as the rays of the sun flames surrounding him also grew less intense. Qin Wentian stood high up in the air and stared down at him. “Too weak.”

As the sound of his voice faded, Qin Wentian flicked his sleeves and left, leaving behind Chen Ran with a bloodless countenance, who had completely lost all face.

He, Chen Ran, was from the Great Solar Chen Clan. Even when using the Great Solar Universe Art, he was suppressed to such a state by someone with a lower cultivation base. The words ‘too weak’ reverberated through the air, and seeing the numerous gazes riveted at him, Chen Ran felt that even his heart was dripping blood.

Everyone was currently speculating from which transcendent power did Qin Wentian come from. How could his attacks be so savage and terrifying? Qin Wentian definitely had the ability to contend for a position in the Heavenly Fate Rankings.

Jing Yu’s countenance turned incredibly complicated, while Yang Xia and the others all didn’t dare to say anything. Their hearts were still pounding, who would have thought Luo Huan would have such a powerful junior brother? Luckily they didn’t offend Luo Huan, if not they probably wouldn’t be spared either.

From the beginning till now, Qin Wentian didn’t even glance at Jing Yu and the rest. He walked back to Luo Huan and his companions only to see Luo Huan giggling while looking at him. Her charming eyes contained hints of fascination and a brilliant light. Her junior brother had already become so much stronger than her.

“If we return to Chu now, I wonder who could stand against you? You’re not even twenty right?” Luo Huan sighed.

“Well if I slack off my cultivation, who would protect my beautiful senior sister?” Qin Wentian laughed.

“You are getting better at the flowery speech.” Luo Huan smiled, and just like in the past, she linked her arms together with Qin Wentian, her actions causing Fan Le to snort in envious disgruntlement.

At this moment, Qin Wentian's brows suddenly twitched as he turned his gaze onto Ouyang Kuangsheng. "Ouyang, can you bring them along with you first? I still have something I need to do."

"You want to tail Jing Yu?" Ouyang Kuangsheng asked in a low voice. He knew Qin Wentian's girlfriend Mo Qingcheng was in the Pill Emperor Hall and since Jing Yu had appeared here, how could he still not understand Qin Wentian's eventual line of thinking?

"Mhm, I'm only going to take a look. Don't worry, I won't be impulsive," Qin Wentian lightly explained.

"Xiaolu, you bring them back. I will go with you then. If the Pill Emperor Hall's people sees me with you, they won't dare to act rashly and do anything against us," Ouyang Kuangsheng suggested. Qin Wentian considered for a moment before nodding in agreement.

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Jing Yu's current state of emotion was incomparably gloomy, he could no longer stand to be in that inn. Hence, he immediately headed towards his lodgings, where the other Pill Emperor Hall cultivators were also currently residing.

In the Chen Clan of the Ginkou Continent, their Estate was incomparably vast, their style akin to that of royal palaces. In the Great Solar Chen Estate, there was a magnificent villa that stood alone amidst an enchanting environment. This was the place Jing Yu was returning to and with his strength, there was no way for him to discover that he was currently being tailed by someone.

Outside the Chen Clan, Qin Wentian sat down in nearby location, obscured from view, and closed his eyes. In the centre of his brows, a radiant gleam of golden light was glowing, as though a third eye was located there.

His terrifying heart sense shot out and covered Jing Yu—wherever Jing Yu went, Qin Wentian would be able to track him easily.

And after arriving at that magnificent villa, Jing Yu instantly turned his gaze onto a pavilion in the distance as he sighed involuntarily. In his eyes, there were traces of hope, and also traces of frustration.

Following Jing Yu's gaze, Qin Wentian's monstrous perception swept in the direction of that pavilion and slowly seeped inside. Moments later, his heart sense entered into an elegant-looking room.

Within the room, he saw a maiden currently sitting cross-legged. She was clad in white, with a heaven-defying countenance. A sheen of perspiration covered her forehead as a boiling alchemy

cauldron floated in front of her. A seven-colored flame flickered beneath the cauldron as the smell of medicinal herbs drifted out from the cauldron.

“Qingcheng...” Qin Wentian’s heart thudded loudly, overcome with emotion. After all these long years, he was finally near her once again. Comment by Lord Bluefire: i like this hehe

Yet, in that moment, Mo Qingcheng’s countenance changed as a strange light flashed in her eyes. She turned her gaze directly towards the person spying on her as she coldly inquired, “Who are you?”

Chapter 340: Man in Black

Mo Qingcheng had a formless halo of light surrounding her, emitting a sacred and holy air. As someone who possessed the Seven Apertures Mystical Heart, her perception was highly acute, which enabled her discovery of Qin Wentian’s heart sense probing her.

Qin Wentian and Mo Qingcheng perceptions had one thing in common—they both projected their senses by using their hearts.

The instant Mo Qingcheng turned her head back, her face appeared clearly in Qin Wentian’s perception. A rush of warmth flooded his heart, with that holy, sacred glow surrounding her presence, she was somehow a shade more beautiful now than compared to her appearance in the past. There was a streak of resilience in her peerless countenance—evidently, she had matured as well.

Mo Qingcheng trembled; this was not the spying of an enemy, but the perception of one exceedingly familiar to her. She couldn’t help but murmur, “Wentian, is that you?”

That gentle voice contained countless traces of longing, and Qin Wentian wanted nothing more than to howl to the heavens, It was him! He had arrived, he was outside the Chen Clan!

“Qingcheng, what’s wrong?”

A silhouette stepped into Mo Qingcheng’s room. It was none other than her master, Luo He. Her brows were furrowed, it was as though Luo He had sensed someone spying on Mo Qingcheng as well. However, the instant she entered the room, Qin Wentian had already retracted his heart sense completely, leaving not a hint remaining.

Suspicious still littered Luo He's heart, but she could understand what happened as well. In the Chen Clan, where experts were as common as the clouds, it was pretty ordinary for some to be overcome with curiosity. Truthfully, it wasn't surprising when situations like this occurred.

"Master." Mo Qingcheng couldn't help but feel a sense of loss when she felt the heart sense of that person disappear.

"Are you imagining things again? With that little bit of strength he possesses, how could his perception be strong enough to infiltrate the Chen Clan? And will he even come to Ginkou?" Luo He faintly remarked. The 'he' she was mentioning was naturally referring to Qin Wentian.

"He will be here. I know this for sure," Mo Qingcheng seriously replied, "Not only that, I can sense it, he's definitely near me."

"I don't know how your brain works. It's already been quite a few years, why can't you let go of a past romance? With your current status, do you know how many young, talented elites would kill to be with you?" Luo He helplessly stated.

"No one can replace him." Mo Qingcheng shook her head. She'd had this conversation with her Master several times already, and everytime, there would be no conclusion.

"Master, do you still remember the promise between us?" Mo Qingcheng's beautiful eyes gazed at Luo He, solemnly flickered within. This matter was extremely important to her.

"Of course, I do. Back then when you wanted to go out and find him, I stopped you, and even wanted to make him disappear. So we came to a compromise, I won't make a move against him and you promised not to look for him and would concentrate on your cultivation," Luo He quietly replied. She didn't want anyone disrupting Mo Qingcheng's cultivation.

"No. I promised you that until the end of this year, I wouldn't meet him. Even if I did, I would treat him like a stranger." Mo Qingcheng shook her head.

"Are you that confident in him?" Luo He continued, "There isn't much time left, and with Zhan Chen's current level of power, he's strong enough to obtain one of the top three rankings in the Heavenly Fate Rankings. If Qin Wentian can defeat Zhan Chen during the competition for the rankings, I won't continue to restrict you. But if he fails, you have to obey me and focus on your cultivation."

“It’s good that Master remembers.” Mo Qingcheng smiled. He would definitely be able to do so, Luo He gave him too much pressure, so Mo Qingcheng could only give in. First, she had to agree in order to ensure that the Pill Emperor Hall wouldn’t make a move against Qin Wentian. Secondly, it was simply that she had the confidence in Qin Wentian.

Even if Qin Wentian was defeated, she would still continue to wait for him, even if it meant waiting an eternity. Only until the day came when Qin Wentian was strong enough to lord over the Pill Emperor Palace, thus taking her away. When that time came, who would be strong enough to stop them?

Her only wish now was for Qin Wentian to remain safe.

Luo He swept her gaze onto that floating cauldron in the middle of the room and momentarily, rage suffused her features. “You, why are you still concocting such a pill?”

“Master, you don’t have to worry about this matter.” Mo Qingcheng lightly shook her head.

At this moment, there were sounds of movement from outside the pavilion. Luo He’s silhouette flickered as she moved to the window, casting her sight downwards. “Jing Yu, what’s going on?”

Jing Yu replied, “Master, it seems that the Chen Clan discovered some people spying on them outside their Estate.”

“Mhm?” Luo He frowned. She soared up the skies as she cast her gaze towards the horizon. Momentarily, her gaze froze when it landed in a certain direction outside the Chen Clan.

Outside the Chen Clan, two groups of people were facing off against each other. Aside from the Chen Clan members, there were two young men on the other side. And one of them, she had already recognised.

The youth back then had undergone such a great degree of transformation. Was that sliver of perception earlier truly from him?

Mo Qingcheng appeared behind Luo He as similarly, she cast her gaze towards the commotion. Her heart pounded violently before entirely stopping for a full second. Over there, she saw someone, a person she had been pining for. Their gazes penetrated through everything and finally met.

In this moment in time, regardless of all that could happen in future, nothing could prevent their hearts from connecting.

He finally smiled, a blazing smile as radiant as the sun.

She too, smiled, a smile filled with sweetness, gentleness and warmth.

He had come in search of her.

Time and distance still couldn't dilute the feelings they had for each other.

Just when Mo Qingcheng was about to fly over, Luo He coldly interjected, "Have you forgotten our agreement?"

As the sound of her voice faded, Mo Qingcheng's countenance fell as she forcibly stopped herself.

As Qin Wentian took note of Mo Qingcheng's reaction, an expression of puzzlement flashed through his eyes. What was going on, was there some reason behind her hesitation?

Why did her earlier smile fade away, replaced by a look of worry?

After which Qin Wentian discovered that Luo He and Mo Qingcheng disappeared from his sight. They weren't heading in his direction—they had vanished completely.

A heavy sense of disappointment threatened to drown Qin Wentian's heart. But soon after, he recovered and said with a smile, "So long as you are safe, the skies will never be overcast. The day remains as sunny as ever."

After seeing that sweet smile on Mo Qingcheng's face, Qin Wentian's heart was at ease once again. It didn't matter if they couldn't meet now, it was enough that she knew he was here for her.

“Ouyang Kuangsheng of the junior generation pays his respect to the elders of the Chen Clan.”

At this moment, Ouyang Kuangsheng opened his mouth and introduced himself in a tone that was neither servile nor overbearing.

The eyes of the Chen Clan elder stiffened as he replied with a smile, “So, it’s Nephew Ouyang. If you were planning on visiting us, why didn’t Nephew let us know earlier, instead of acting suspiciously outside our premises?”

“Although I wanted to enter and state my intentions, I didn’t want to disrupt my good friend here from meeting his old friend, and so I delayed the greetings a little. I apologize if our actions seem suspicious.” Ouyang Kuangsheng smiled.

“Oh, your friend has an old friend that’s currently residing in our Chen Clan?” That middle-aged elder shifted his eyes on to Qin Wentian.

“Not to lie to the esteemed elders, but my friend’s girlfriend goes by the name of Mo Qingcheng, and she’s currently residing in the Chen Clan.” Ouyang Kuangsheng laughed, his directness causing Qin Wentian to be speechless. This buddy of his was truly unafraid of blowing matters up and causing a huge deal of commotion.

Indeed, the expressions of those from the Chen Clan all changed. After which, that middle-aged man casually stated, “If that were true, why didn’t Mo Qingcheng come out here to clarify things? I advise Nephew Ouyang not to make jokes like this.”

“Believe it or not, it doesn’t matter to me. And one more thing, the reason for my visit here today are on the orders of my second uncle to bring a message. Our Ouyang Aristocrat Clan has always held the Great Solar Universe Art of the Chen Clan in the highest esteem. If there’s an opportunity, it would be good for the younger generations to exchange pointers with each other. I wonder, would it be possible?”

Ouyang Kuangsheng brushed matters of the earlier incident totally aside and instantly shifted topics. What did he mean that it was on the orders of his second uncle? It was obviously an idea he came up with himself.

However, since they had already been discovered, Ouyang Kuangsheng naturally needed to think of a reason for their presence there. Although his tone was polite, a trace of a challenge could still be heard within.

“Hehe.” The countenance of that elder changed as he coldly laughed. “Since Brother Ouyang wants to witness the magnificence of our skill, I would have to trouble Nephew Ouyang to help to inform your second uncle of this. I will make the arrangements and send someone to notify him, and during that time, I hope that the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan won’t miss the appointment.”

“Naturally, since I’ve already stated my uncle’s intentions, this junior shall bid farewell then.” Ouyang Kuangsheng bowed as he exchanged glances with Qin Wentian, then the two of them turned and slowly walked away.

Upon seeing the two juniors walking away, those from the Chen Clan couldn’t help but to coldly snort. The Ouyang Clan wanted to witness how powerful their Great Solar Universe Art was? Well then, they’d show them up close how powerful it could be.

They truly wanted to see how many talented cultivators from the junior generations in the Ouyang Aristocrat Clan would measure up to their own talents.

At this moment, a silhouette flew out at lightning speed from the Chen Clan, chasing after the direction in which Ouyang Kuangsheng and Qin Wentian had departed in.

“Zhan Chen?” A strange expression flashed in the eyes of those from the Chen Clan. Why was Zhan Chen pursuing them?

Qin Wentian and Ouyang Kuangsheng soon discovered that someone was heading towards them. As they stopped and turned, Qin Wentian’s eyes involuntarily radiated with coldness when he saw that their pursuer was none other than Zhan Chen.

Currently, Zhan Chen had glints of golden light in his eyes, and his whole person seemed to shine with a faint luster of golden radiance accompanied by a terrifying sharpness.

“Zhan Chen, it seems that you’ve really been cultivating the Gold Element Art left by the Ascendant.” Qin Wentian’s eyes flickered as he studied Zhan Chen. The Zhan Chen right now bore more than a passing resemblance to the golden Puppets Qin Wentian had met before inside that secret realm.

“Since you’re too weak, it was inevitable for that Art to belong to me instead.” Zhan Chen’s eyes shot out terrifying rays of light set to penetrate through Qin Wentian. “Back then you sullied my

reputation, deliberately pointing a deer as a horse. You misrepresented the facts and said that I was the killer of my fiancée. If I don't kill you now, how can I still maintain my prestige? Where would I put my face then?"

As the sound of his voice faded, Zhan Chen advanced forwards step by step. With every step he took, the air became filled with a sensation of terrifying sharpness that bore down on Qin Wentian and Ouyang Kuangsheng.

"Perfection Boundary of the first level of the Mandate of Gold, and Perfection Boundary of the first level of the Mandate of Swords." Ouyang Kuangsheng's countenance fell. In the past, Zhan Chen was already ranked #11 on the Heavenly Fate Rankings. Now that he had cultivated an Art left behind by an Ascendant, how much stronger had he become now?

"Let's leave," Ouyang Kuangsheng remarked.

Qin Wentian's eyes flickered as he nodded in agreement. The two of them rapidly soared through the air and retreated at their fastest speed.

The current Zhan Chen exuded a sense of strangeness, as well as a strong feeling of threat.

How could Zhan Chen spare Qin Wentian so easily? He moved like the wind, flying upon a sword, like a streak of golden lightning.

Three silhouettes rapidly flew through the air.

And just when they zoomed past the rooftop of a certain building, a black-robed figure abruptly descended downwards, the force of his landing causing the entire building to tremble violently.

"Huh?" Zhan Chen, Qin Wentian and Ouyang Kuangsheng were all filled with confusion as they noticed the presence of the black-robed figure. This person's movements were extremely mysterious, and was clad entirely in black. Not only that, the aura that person exuded made all three of them feel an intense, impending sense of doom.

A terrifying current of devil-might swirled around him, with him in the centre, as the surrounding light in that area was absorbed and then transformed into darkness.

Zhan Chen halted as he stared right ahead. The eyes of that figure locked onto him, and they were the eyes of a devil that seemingly came from the Nine Spirits Purgatory. The primal fear they wrought couldn't be described. Just a single glance was sufficient to make Zhan Chen shiver in fright as he broke out in a cold sweat.

“Devil Arts!” Zhan Chen's gaze stiffened. This was a forbidden cultivation art. There didn't seem to be any devil-oriented major powers in Grand Xia, who was this black-robed figure then?!