

Battle Through the Heavens #Chapter 401: The First Change of the Sky Fire Three Mysterious Change: Green Lotus Change! - Read Battle Through the Heavens Chapter 401: The First Change of the Sky Fire Three Mysterious Change: Green Lotus Change!

Chapter 401: The First Change of the Sky Fire Three Mysterious Change: Green Lotus Change!

From the moment that he obtained the silver-colored scroll until it had been snatched away had only been a split second apart. After hearing that mocking laughter appear, Fan Ling finally recovered from the change that had suddenly appeared. His expression suddenly darkened as he slowly lifted his head. His gaze was dense as he eyed the black-robed person on the tree branch. After seeing the familiar dressing, which he had seen at the auction ground before, he could not help but be startled. He immediately said in a dark and cold voice, "It's you?"

When Fan Ling spoke, the remaining ten plus Blood Guards in the battleground, who still had some combat strength began flashing aside with great teamwork. Coincidentally, they surrounded the black-robed man within their encirclement. Elder Luo's face was also dark and cold. His pair of icy eyes were filled with killing intent. Regardless of the intention of this person, this person must definitely not leave this place alive, since he had clashed with their operation.

"Ke ke, Junior Sect Leader Fan Ling, we meet again." The delicate and handsome face under the black robe was lifted into a mocking smile. Xiao Yan played with the silver-colored scroll in his hand, and was unconcerned of the Blood Guards who had completely surrounded him as he laughed softly.

"Hand over the scroll and I will leave your corpse in one piece." The long knife in Fan Ling's hand, which was as bright as liquid blood, was pointed at Xiao Yan. The dark and solemn words of Fan Ling had dark, cold killing intent gushing out from them.

Xiao Yan shrugged his shoulders. Not only did he ignore Fan Ling, but he also flicked his hand and the silver-colored scroll in his hand was rotated and stored into his storage ring.

"Good, good!"

The corner of Fan Ling's mouth twitched when he saw Xiao Yan's action. An angry green surged up onto Fan Ling's pale white face. The two words, which contained a sharp killing intent, were spat out from his mouth one after the other.

At the moment when these two words of Fan Ling rung out, the ten plus Blood Guards surrounding Xiao Yan suddenly cried out fiercely in unison. Dense, dark, blood-colored Dou Qi overflowed from their bodies, and finally wrapped around the entire long knives in their hands. Their feet abruptly stepped against the tree branches and the ten plus human figures shot explosively towards Xiao Yan.

The corner of Xiao Yan's eyes swept over the Blood Guards, who had rushed over and attacked from all directions. He slowly extended his hand and held the hilt of the Heavy Xuan Ruler hidden on the back of the black robe. He closed his eyes slightly and sensed the thick, cold force which was becoming increasingly close. A moment later, he suddenly opened his eyes, and a powerful force erupted from his body. An enormous black shadow, carrying a pressuring force, immediately lifted the black robe cover. It was like a black-colored wind wheel with Xiao Yan in the center as it began spreading out wildly.

“Clang, clang, clang...”

Any place where the black-colored wind wheel passed, sparks flew in all directions. Those long knives within the Blood Guards hands were actually shaken by the force contained in it until they fell from the their hands. Only a small number of Blood Guards, whose strength were a little stronger, were barely able to keep their weapons in their hands. However, that was on the precondition that the gap on their hand, between their thumb and their index finger, convulsed until they cracked.

The rotating feet suddenly paused and correspondingly, the black-colored wind wheel also disappeared. Xiao Yan lifted his head and watched those Blood Guards who had charged less than half a meter forward, but still had fierce faces. The corner of his mouth was lifted into a cold smile. His feet abruptly stepped on the tree trunk and following an explosion of energy, his body turned into a lightning-fast black shadow. He passed between the attack of the ten plus Blood Guards.

“Bang, bang...”

As his body shuttled past, muffled sounds repeatedly rang out. Each time a muffled sound was emitted, there would be a Blood Guard who would vomit out fresh blood and fall into the dense branches before smashing heavily into the ground. They would struggle a couple of times, but they all ended up collapsing powerlessly.

Fan Ling raised his head and watched the lightning sharp battle in midair. That originally dark and chilly face of his had suddenly become much calmer at this moment. His toes gently lifted a bloodied long knife from the ground. He extended his hand and held it tightly within it. He tore off his clothes readily and slowly wiped the traces of blood off the knife. In an indifferent voice, he said, “Around a four star Da Dou Shi... with this little strength, he still dares to snatch food from my mouth. He is really bold and prideful.”

“Elder Luo, let me handle this person. You stay over there. Stop him should he plan to flee.”

“Yes, Junior Sect Leader, be careful.”

The old man by the side nodded slightly. He lifted the other Elder Han, who had temporarily lost his combat ability, and took a couple of steps back. From the way Xiao Yan attacked the Blood Guards earlier, he had also roughly seen through Xiao Yan’s strength. In terms of strength and agility, this black-robed person was much stronger than the Da Dou Shi of the ‘Black Skeleton Tomb’ earlier. However, regardless of how one put it, he was still merely a Da Dou Shi. Fan Ling, on the other hand, was already a genuine Dou Ling!

“Bang!” The last Blood Guard was also smashed out of the air. Fresh blood covered his face as he gradually shut his eyes one last time.

Following the defeat of the final Blood Guard, Xiao Yan’s body gradually descended. He tilted the heavy ruler in his hand and bright red fresh blood followed the body of the ruler as it gradually dripped down.

“I think that the reason for you following us all the way should be because of that map fragment, right?” Fan Ling randomly threw aside his clothes, which had been contaminated by blood, as he suddenly asked in a faint voice.

The heavy ruler trembled slightly. That young and delicate face under the black robe suddenly had an additional coldness.

“Hee hee, looks like this young master’s luck is quite good to actually be able to obtain a treasure by stumbling across it accidentally. Since you are so concerned about it, I think that it should not be an ordinary thing. Once I return home, I will let father study it carefully. With his experience, he should be able to get some clues about that map fragment.” Although Xiao Yan’s action was extremely slight, it was still caught by Fan Ling, who had been paying careful attention to him. Fan Ling could not resist laughing coldly upon his find.

“You might not have this opportunity...” A calm voice was transmitted out from under the black robe. A green Dou Qi swiftly seeped out from within Xiao Yan’s body before wrapping around it.

“Is that so? I have seen too many boors like you, whose reasoning has been occupied by the treasures in the ‘Black-Corner Region’! However, their final endings do not appear to be any good.” Fan Ling lifted his eyebrows and emitted a dark, cold laugh. The dark, chilly, blood-colored Dou Qi also slowly surged out of Fan Ling’s body. A bloody scent immediately permeated the air.

As the bloody scent permeated the place, Fan Ling's back became slightly bent. He was like a ferocious beast which had discovered its prey. Blood traces gradually surfaced in his eyes, giving his appearance a certain wild, beastly aura.

Fan Ling's feet were inserted deep into the ground. At a certain instance, a low roar was abruptly emitted from Fan Ling's throat. He stomped his feet and his body was like an arrow that had left a bow. In an instant, he appeared in front of Xiao Yan. The sharp long knife in his hand, which was cloaked in blood-colored Dou Qi, carried a sharp sound of air being sliced as it viciously hacked downward.

This powerful strike of Fan Ling resulted in an unceasing ear-piercing sonic boom blasting through the air.

The enormous black ruler abruptly came forward. The green-colored Dou Qi on it was as dense as a thick viscous liquid. After which, it collided heavily with the blood knife.

“Bang!”

The sound of metal colliding sounded and a large amount of sparks spluttered. A mixture of green and red, twin-colored energy ripples spread out from the point of contact between the knife and the ruler. It directly and violently cut half a foot of soil from the ground, where both parties stood.

The soil flew all over and filled the sky. Xiao Yan felt his nearly numb arms and his face under the black robe changed slightly. His opponent was indeed worthy of being a strong Dou Ling. This strength was an unknown number of times stronger than a Da Dou Shi. It was just... why does this fellow's Dou Qi have a sort of thin feeling to it?

With Xiao Yan's strength, he might be able to contend with a strong Dou Ling for a few exchanges without using any Dou Techniques but he would greatly exhaust his Dou Qi. However, the attack from Fan Ling earlier, which appeared to be incomparably fierce, was not as strong as Xiao Yan had expected.

“This fellow has such great strength...” As the knife and the ruler came into contact, the legs of Fan Ling and Xiao Yan fought a few battles with one another in a lightning-like manner. After which, the other party's heavy ruler fell crosswise and they took a couple of steps back. Fan Ling felt the faint pain remaining in his feet and could not help but feel a little shock in his heart.

“What father had said is indeed true. Although our Blood Sect's Qi Method is overbearing and bizarre, it is overly reliant on external strength. This results in the Dou Qi within one's body to be unable to reach a condensed state. It is a little disadvantageous when fighting with others. However, it is fortunate that this fellow is only of the Da Dou Shi's class. It is not difficult to finish him off.” A thought quickly flashed across Fan Ling's heart. He suddenly threw the weapon in his hand aside. The originally pale-white face of his had also become strangely bright red. Following this

change, a blood color swiftly surfaced on his palms. It finally seeped into his palm thread by thread. In merely the blink of an eye, a pair of blood palms, similar to the ones which Fan Lao had used earlier to kill Elder Qing, appeared on Fan Ling's hands.

"No matter who you are, you already do not have the slightest chance to regret your choice today! However, in order to thank you for bringing me the good news that the map fragment has a secret value, I will let you become a shrivelled corpse after you die!"

A bloody stench that caused people to want to puke was repeatedly emitted from both palms. Fan Ling lifted his head and gave Xiao Yan a dense smile. His foot suddenly pushed off the ground and his body turned into a bloody mist which immediately shot explosively toward Xiao Yan. As he waved his palm, the blood mist basically filled the sky and land all around them.

"Bone Transforming Bloody Evil Palm?"

Seeing that Fan Ling's palms had transformed into fresh blood covered strange palms, the two Blood Sect Elders outside the battleground could not help but be startled. They exchanged gazes and said, "It is really unexpected that the Sect Leader has even taught the Junior Sect Leader this kind of Dou Technique. It can be considered that the black-robed person has collided into the tip of a spear by himself."

"Hei, he deserves it. He dares to rob something belonging to our Blood Sect. If it was me instead, I would drain all of his blood while he is still alive." The Elder Han who had lost his combat ability laughed evilly.

The pair of dark black eyes under the black robe stared intently at the blood-colored fog which had shot out forcefully. He sniffed the bloody stench that had spread all over. His outstanding Spiritual Perception of his caused Xiao Yan to clearly sense the ferocious force of the blood palms within the blood-colored fog.

"Little fellow. Be careful. Your current strength is no match for a strong Dou Ling." Yao Lao's reminder sounded in Xiao Yan's heart.

"That may not be true."

Xiao Yan laughed softly. He actually slowly closed his eyes. In the Acceptance Spirit within the middle of the vortex in his body, wisps of green-colored flames began spurting out like a volcano. Finally, it followed a mysterious and strange path as it began swiftly circulating within his body.

"You are thinking of..."

Following the strange circulation of the green-colored flame, Xiao Yan, who had his eyes closed, suddenly and faintly felt a powerful energy that was filled with a wildness swiftly seep out from all parts of his body as the flame circulated!

The bloody scent that filled the air came pouncing at him. The dark and cold force within the bloody mist had instantaneously reached Xiao Yan's body.

However, just as the bloody fog was about to wrap Xiao Yan's body within it, the eyes under the black robe suddenly opened. A green-colored flame shot explosively from his eyes. A powerful force, that was not weaker than anyone present in the battle ground, suddenly surged out from Xiao Yan's body.

Xiao Yan's hands were extended out of the black robe in a lightning-like manner and a green-colored flame was shrouded over it. As a thundering roar sounded within his heart, his palms carried a fiery force that could move mountains and flip the seas as it heavily struck outward toward the bloody fog in front of him.

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Chapter 402: Reward!

“Boom!”

A pair of bloody palms and a green-colored fire palm heavily smashed against each other within the bloody fog. A frightening air wave suddenly spread out from both of their hands, causing the two Blood Sect's elder, who were off to the side, to have no choice but to swiftly pull back as their expressions changed slightly.

There was only a momentary silence after the two palms collided within the bloody fog, before a shrill voice that contained some fear sounded, “Fire? Dammit, you actually possess a ‘Heavenly Flame’?”

“Boom!”

The shrill voice had just fallen when another wave of hot air spread out from within the bloody fog. As the air wave rolled, the bloody fog, which shrouded the air and land, was directly grilled by the hot air until it became much thinner.

“Glug...”

The sound of blood being vomited suddenly sounded within the gradually thinning bloody fog. Quickly following this, a shadow stuck close to the ground as it shot out from the bloody fog. His feet left a deep, nearly ten meter long scar in the ground before he finally collided heavily into a tree trunk. His shoulders shook and the tree trunk was immediately smashed into two.

With his back leaning against the tree trunk, the legs of the human figure became feeble and his body collapsed. His hands supported himself on the ground as blood began dripping down from the corner of his mouth. The hoarse, hurried sound of breathing was heard repeatedly, much like a bellow.

“Junior Sect Leader!” The gazes of the two Blood Sect’s elders shot toward the human figure, who was in extremely dire straits. Their faces changed drastically as they suddenly cried out involuntarily. They had never expected that Fan Ling would be turned into such a miserable state by a person, whose strength was merely that of a Da Dou Shi, after he had used such a vicious and strange Dou Technique like the ‘Bone Transforming Bloody Evil Palm’.

Fan Ling’s entire body trembled as he stood up from the ground. He lowered his head and eyed his charred hands. Shock involuntarily flashed across his pale face. He let out a couple of intense coughs as he raised his head and swept his gaze toward the gradually thinning bloody mist.

Following the silence of the three of them, this area also descended into a quiet atmosphere. A moment later, however, the sound of footsteps slowly sounded from the faint blood mist, causing the expressions of the three of them to completely change.

The sound of footsteps gradually became louder and clearer. The bloody fog also quietly disappeared. A human figure, which was completely wrapped in a green-colored flame, appeared in the sight of the three of them.

As they eyed the human figure, whose entire body was wrapped by the green flame and sensed the hot breath faintly seeping out, the two Elders of the Blood Sect sensed that the Dou Qi in their body began to be a little clogged up as it circulated. Their eyes shrunk immediately as they involuntarily let out a shocked cry, “On his body... is a ‘Heavenly Flame’?”

The Blood Sect’s Qi Method was rather unorthodox and purposefully took the dark and cold route. The flame element and everything about it was the other’s natural allelopathy. Of course, this mutual subjugation was merely with regards to a normal fire type Dou Qi. If they were to meet a natural flame of the earth and heavens, such as a ‘Heavenly Flame’, it would be like a mouse meeting a cat. This kind of meeting meant absolute suppression, where there was not the slightest counter force...

In the first rule of the Blood Sect, it writes that if they met a strong person with a ‘Heavenly Flame’, they should swiftly withdraw! From this, it could be seen to what extent the Qi Method of the Blood Sect would be suppressed by the ‘Heavenly Flame’. Moreover, when a person of the Blood Sect was to fight with a person possessing a ‘Heavenly Flame’, they would have difficulty displaying even fifty or sixty percent of their combat abilities.

It was however fortunate that there were not many people in this world who possessed a 'Heavenly Flame'. Therefore, the people of the Blood Sect had rarely met any strong people possessing a 'Heavenly Flame'. This time around, on the other hand, Fan Ling's group was destined to be very unlucky.

The green-colored flame shrouding Xiao Yan's body was lessened slightly, revealing a delicate and handsome face, which was so young that it left one speechless. He eyed the shocked faces of the three men and smiled slightly. However, that smile contained a faint chilliness.

"Who exactly are you? Why do you want to go against our Blood Sect? As long as you withdraw, I will use the name of the Junior Sect Leader of the Blood Sect to swear that I will definitely not pursue this matter." Fan Ling stood up and struggled to gather together with the two Elders as he cried out loud.

"You want to delay until Fan Lao hurries over?" Xiao Yan's smile was bright, but it hid an icy coldness. In one sentence, he revealed Fan Ling's goal.

Fan Ling's expression changed slightly when he heard this. His eyes stared intently at the face, which was much younger than his. He had difficulty imagining how, at such a young age, did the other party possess that kind of terrifying 'Heaven Flame', which even his father was afraid of, as well as an extraordinary mind.

"Junior Sect Leader, leave first. I will hold him back! With the Sect Leader's strength, I think he should have settled the matter with Elder Qing from the 'Sky Serpent Mansion'. As long as we delay him for a while, we will be able to endure until the Sect Leader arrives!" Elder Luo, who still had some strength left, held a long knife in his hand. Although fear for the 'Heavenly Flame' filled his heart, he was the only one who had the ability to fight with the other party at this moment.

Fan Ling clenched his teeth as he heard Elder Luo's words. Without any hesitation, he dragged his injured body, turned around, and ran.

Seeing Fan Ling, who did not hesitate to turn and flee, Xiao Yan suddenly smiled. His body did not move.

Fan Ling turned around and ran for some distance. When he did not feel any fierce battle behind him, a doubt rose within his heart. This doubt had just surfaced when in the corner of his uncertain eyes he caught the flash of a seven-colored shadow.

The seven-colored shadow was gone from his eyes in a flash but it was not ignored by Fan Ling, who was like a bird on the edge. His feet were inserted into the ground, sliding and creating a scar in it. The speed at which he was rushing forward came to a halt. However, he did not discover anything when his gaze swept in all directions. He furrowed his brows. He was just about to continue fleeing when an intense pain, like that of a hole being drilled through his heart, was transmitted from his chest. Fan Ling

slowly lowered his head and coincidentally saw a seven-colored shadow that entered through his back and penetrate through his chest.

After the seven-colored shadow penetrated through his chest, it turned into a small, seven-colored snake that was not even half a foot long under Fan Ling's very eyes. Fan Ling's eyes stared intently at the pair of bewitching and unusual snake eyes that belonged to the little snake. Fan Ling could not understand why it has broken through his Dou Ling's defence as though it was breaking through bean curd...

"I am about to die this time..." The intense pain that was transmitted from his chest caused Fan Ling's vision to gradually blur. Just as he was about to collapse, he forcefully twisted his head. His gaze passed through the gap in the forest and he coincidentally saw the green flame at that empty plot of land suddenly becoming more intense. He also heard two miserable shrill cries. Under the absolute suppression of the 'Heavenly Flame', the two Elders, one being slightly injured while the other being severely injured, could not possibly survive at the hands of Xiao Yan, whose strength had suddenly soared.

Fan Ling's body heavily smashed into the ground and his eyelids drooped slowly. He could faintly see a black robe. It slowly passed in between the trees and walked toward him.

Following the movement of the footsteps, the green-colored flame on Xiao Yan's body gradually withdrew back into him. That Qi, which was comparable to a strong Dou Ling was also quietly withdrawn at this moment.

Xiao Yan's footsteps stopped in front of Fan Ling's corpse. His Qi had once again returned to the strength of a Da Dou Shi, while his expression was somewhat pale. He coughed fiercely for a couple of times as he lowered his head and eyed his slightly burnt hand caused by the overly strong energy. With an involuntarily bitter laugh, he whispered, "This 'Sky Fire Three Mysterious Change' strength is indeed quite good. Unfortunately, the damage it causes to the body is also quite great..."

"It is really unexpected that you have really successfully learned one of the changes among the 'Sky Fire Three Mysterious Change'. It is just that you are still not proficient in using it to its fullest potential. Otherwise, you would only be slightly worn out and such injuries would, at the very least, not appear." Yao Lao's somewhat strange voice sounded in Xiao Yan's heart. He felt quite shocked that Xiao Yan had managed to grope the manner to use the 'Sky Fire Three Mysterious Change' within one month.

Xiao Yan nodded slightly. He returned the 'Heaven Swallowing Python' back into his sleeve and lowered his body to remove the storage ring on Fan Ling's finger. After which, he swiftly searched within it and took out a cold jade box.

Xiao Yan's mouth felt somewhat dry as he eyed the cold jade box in his hand, the value of which could be called terrifying. Even with his mental strength, his heart had also begun pounding hard at this moment.

After he inhaled a deep breath of air, Xiao Yan did not open the cold jade box. Instead, he threw it into his own storage ring. After which, he began flipping the inside of the storage ring wildly. A moment later, an ancient map fragment flashed and appeared.

When he pulled open the map fragment, the familiar lines, as well as that half of a demonic and unique drawing, appeared in Xiao Yan's sight.

"I have finally gotten ahold of it..." Xiao Yan held the map fragment as excitement surged onto his face. He carefully stored the map into his storage ring and let out a long breath.

"Little fellow, hurry up and leave. I have sensed the Qi of Fan Lao!" Xiao Yan had just stored the map fragment when Yao Lao's voice urgently sounded.

Xiao Yan's heart abruptly tightened. However, just as he was about to turn around, his body suddenly paused. He turned around once again and viciously struck Fan Ling's head. Only when he heard the sound of bones shattering did he feel completely reassured. His body turned into a black shadow which charged into the dense woods.

About ten minutes after Xiao Yan had disappeared, a red-colored figure flashed past in the sky of this part of the mountain forest. A moment later, his body appeared to have suddenly stiffened as he stared at an empty plot of land.

His expression was extremely dark and cold as he eyed the corpse on the empty land. The red shadow flashed and descended, landing on the empty ground. His gaze swept over the bodies of the Blood Guards one at a time. Finally, his eyes shrunk abruptly as they stopped on the corpses of over ten people whose clothes had a skull sewn on it. A creaking sound appeared as he clenched his fist tightly.

The gaze of the red figure swept over the corpses all over the places, but he did not find the one which he had wanted to find. He began to look around hurriedly and a moment later, his body turned into a blurry red shadow and charged into the dense forest.

The red shadow suddenly paused within the dense forest. His entire body trembled as he eyed a corpse on the ground. Suddenly, he raised his head and let out a vicious roar with a pale face.

After roaring for a while, the roar finally began to gradually disappear. Fan Lao hurriedly walked closer to Fan Ling's corpse. The glint of blood grew dense in his hand as he covered Fan Ling's head. Following the sign of the blood glow, a strange drop of liquid blood suddenly began to seep out from the back of Fan Ling's head and finally surfaced in front of Fan Lao.

Fan Lao's face was filled with a cold, dark enmity. He waved his hand and the liquid blood burst apart, turning into a tiny blood screen. Within that blood screen, a human figure, whose entire body was covered by a green-colored flame, partially surfaced. Due to the blood screen being too thin, however, Fan Lao was unable to clearly see the exact appearance of the human figure.

"Bang..." The blood screen continued for half a minute before it suddenly burst apart.

"Black Skeleton Tomb... good..."

Fan Lao slowly bent his body and carried the corpse of Fan Ling. After which, he walked out of the dense woods with a dim expression. That voice, which was filled with so much enmity that it caused people to shudder, slowly reverberated in that place.

"No matter who it is, as long as I find out who did this, I will definitely let him suffer the pain of having his flesh cut off by ten thousand knives!"

Chapter 403: Swallowing The Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill!

A black shadow suddenly flashed past a dense mountain forest. Occasionally, the black robe would collide with a tree branch, which grew wildly, causing the black robe to be lifted slightly to reveal a delicate and handsome young face. It was that of Xiao Yan, who was fleeing after killing Fan Ling's group and obtaining the treasures.

Seemingly because he was worried that someone would discover his footprints and other small clues if he were to run on the surface, Xiao Yan had chosen to leap from tree branch to tree branch ever since he had left the place where he had performed the act. Even when he occasionally landed on the ground, he would carefully cover his footprint and other things.

Xiao Yan borrowed the cover of the dense thicket of the forest. Although he had sensed a presence, which contained an incomparable dark chillness and killing intent flying past him in the sky when he was fleeing, he was able to hide his Qi with the help of Yao Lao. Therefore, he was not discovered by the furious Fan Lao during his journey, where he was doing his best to flee. He was really quite lucky.

After an entire day and night of fleeing with all his strength, Xiao Yan had finally thrown the 'Black Mark City' into the distance. At this moment, even if Fan Lao had the ability to communicate with the heavens, he would definitely not be able to seek Xiao Yan out in this place, which was a couple of hundred kilometers away.

The black shadow suddenly shot out from within the forest and onto the back of a cliff with a pernicious slope. After which, he steadily landed on a huge rock on the edge of the cliff. After an entire day of fleeing, the black robe had become slightly dirty and messy. He lifted the Doupeng off his head and revealed the face of a young man, who had once again recovered his energy after resting for an entire night.

TL: Doupeng - a hat with a cloth to cover one's face.

Xiao Yan stood at the edge of the cliff and inhaled a deep breath of air that contained a thin mist. That little tiredness, which remained, had finally completely disappeared. He eyed the path below the mountain cliff, which was like the meandering of earthworm. The corner of his mouth could not help but be lifted into a tiny arc. Closely following this, the smile became bigger and was finally transformed into a hearty laugh which resounded off the mountain cliffs for a long while.

This time around, Xiao Yan was like a canary with his reward far exceeding what he had expected. Originally, he merely wanted to obtain that map fragment. It was really unexpected that Fan Ling's group actually took the initiative to help him snatch other unique treasures like the 'Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill' and the 'Three Thousand Lightning Movement'. These two treasures, which created quite an extraordinary ripple even when placed in the entire Dou Qi Continent, had landed in Xiao Yan's hand in a somewhat comical fashion. This kind of thing was like a biscuit falling from the sky, causing the current Xiao Yan to have a trance-like feeling of being in a dream.

The laughter gradually dissipated. Xiao Yan's hand shook and an ancient map fragment appeared in his palm. Quickly following this, he tapped his finger gently on the storage ring. Another slightly larger map fragment and two other map fragments, which had been split from a single map by Hai Bodong the other time, flashed and appeared. His hands carefully put the three map fragments together and then eyed the large missing lower left corner. He could not help but laugh softly. It was really unexpected that in just a little over three years' time, three of the map fragments, which had scattered to unknown locations of the continent, had already landed in his hand. It must be said that he was really too lucky.

"It is fortunate that I had first obtained the map fragment which had the drawing of the 'Purifying Lotus Demon Flame' on it. Otherwise, it is likely that even teacher would not think of linking this map fragment to the 'Purifying Lotus Demon Flame', which is ranked third on the 'Heavenly Flame Ranking'. If we did not know the exact background of the map, even if we were to meet a similar map fragment in another place, it is likely that we would not act like this now, risking the danger of being chased and killed by a strong Dou Huang and a large faction in order to snatch these map fragments..." Xiao Yan was a little absentminded for a while as he faced the map before he suddenly muttered, feeling a little fortunate.

After Xiao Yan rejoiced in his heart for a while, he carefully stored the map fragment. He flipped his hand and a cold jade box, that was emitting white colored mist, appeared.

Xiao Yan's eyes stared directly at the cold jade box. His throat rolled slightly. That heart of his, which had originally already calmed down, once again began to pound intensely. Xiao Yan's mental strength had become much weaker in front of this kind of unique treasure.

Xiao Yan's hand slowly lifted the cover until a tiny gap was created. A thread of golden light shot out from within it. When he saw this, he quickly covered it again. That cautious manner of his was as though he were afraid that it would attract some strong person. After all, under the allure of a sky-high priced treasure like the 'Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill', it was likely that many people, other than a very few strong people whose class had already reached a certain level, or people who had no desires, would have difficulty concealing the greed in their hearts and directly kill him to snatch the treasure. Moreover, those two kinds of people that wouldn't bother with Xiao Yan were so few in this 'Black-Corner Region' that they could be ignored...

"Consume it. It is not safe to carry it with you..." A faint voice suddenly sounded from within Xiao Yan's heart.

"Uh? What?" Xiao Yan was startled when he heard this. He could not recover his senses for a period of time.

"I said consume this 'Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill!' Yao Lao could only helplessly repeat himself when he saw Xiao Yan looking as though his mind was blank.

"Here?" Xiao Yan's face was stunned. This was a tier seven medicinal pill. He was supposed to consume it in this place which could not be considered safe? When he consumed the 'Three-Lines Green Spirit Pill' in the past, he had to find a safe place where no one would disturb him in order to properly refine the medicinal strength.

"Don't say any more nonsense. Eat it!" Yao Lao impatiently urged.

"..."

Xiao Yan laughed bitterly and could only nod his head. He carefully lifted the cover of the cold jade box. At the moment when the box was opened, he abruptly covered it with his palm. After which, his green-colored Dou Qi surged out and blocked the golden light, which was about to shoot into the sky.

Golden light roamed on the surface of the 'Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill' in his hand. Two tiny golden-colored divine dragons repeatedly circulated within the pill. A faint dragon roar seeped out from the medicinal pill. If one were to carefully listen, that slight dragon roar seemed to be hiding a certain strange magical strength. It was actually able to cause a person's spirit to instantly tremble and become absent minded...

"Hu..."

Xiao Yan shook his head with all his might. When he looked at the 'Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill' once again, a little surprise could not help but appear in his eyes. It was indeed worthy of being a tier seven medicinal pill, possessing a strange energy which could influence one's spirit. It was the first time that he had met a strange sound which could cause his spirit to fall into a trance since the start of his training...

Xiao Yan held the 'Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill' with his hand. He inhaled a deep breath of air and then suddenly popped it into his mouth. Before he had the time to chew, the golden pill had already turned into a hot flow, moving along his throat and pouring into his body.

The surging hot flow was like a flood that swarmed into his body from all directions. Xiao Yan tightly clenched his teeth and hurriedly sat cross-legged, waiting for the moment that the medicinal effect would erupt.

Not long after Xiao Yan sat cross-legged, however, the expected volatilization of the medicinal effect did not appear. That hot flow that was surging like flood waters was like a flow of water entering a sponge. It slowly dissipated within his body until it completely disappeared...

Xiao Yan's originally tightly shut eyes gradually opened. He looked up and down at his body. Not the slightest activity has occurred. His mouth involuntarily twitched as he said in an utterly discomfited voice, "Teacher... don't tell me that this damn 'Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill' was fake? Why is it that there is not even the slightest reaction?"

"What reaction do you want? A golden glow to shine brightly all over your body? Then giving you such a great pain that you would rather die, just like the other medicinal pills which you have consumed in the past?"

Xiao Yan was dull. He helplessly said, "At the very least, there should be some sort of occurrence happening. The result of consuming the 'Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill' is just like drinking a cup of plain water... it is, at any rate, a tier seven medicinal pill."

"Didn't the auctioneer say during the auction fair... this 'Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill' is not some medicinal pill used to raise one's strength. Its greatest use is to 'stand after breaking'... that medicinal strength has already penetrated into your body. If you are to really enter into the juncture between life and death in the future and are lucky enough to activate it, you will naturally be able to obtain benefits which you cannot even imagine. For now... just treat it as though you have drunk a cup of water." When Yao Lao saw Xiao Yan's depressed expression, he could not help but feel that it was a little ridiculous as he spoke.

"... Don't tell me that there isn't even the slightest benefit right now?" Xiao Yan was slightly relieved as he stood up from the ground. However, he was still somewhat unwilling to accept the situation as he asked once again.

"That is not entirely so..."

After hearing Xiao Yan's question, Yao Lao was silent for a while before speaking after some time, "This 'Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill' has already reached the stage where the pill has gathered a spirit. Moreover, the items used to refine it are the

monster cores from the bodies two rank six dragon type Magical Beasts which have not yet been dead for more than seven days. Therefore, it contains some thin dragon aura. This is also why the dragon roar from within the medicinal pill would cause one to feel as though one's spirit is trembling.”

“Any person who has good luck and who has consumed the ‘Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill’ would have a small chance of receiving the thin dragon aura into their body. However, the chances of this happening are quite low. The Wind zun zhe, Gu Ling, did not obtain even a little of this ability from the ‘Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill’...” When he reached this point, Yao Lao suddenly said, “If you want to try, you can repeatedly circulate the Dou Qi in your body. If there is a strange energy separating from the Dou Qi when the Dou Qi is being rapidly rotated, that means that the thin dragon aura within the ‘Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill’ has already been inherited by you...”

TL: zun zhe - used to refer to a Dou Zun

“What benefit is there after one possesses a dragon aura?” Xiao Yan curiously asked.

“If you really possess that thin dragon aura, all you need is to obtain a scroll containing a sound attacking type Dou Technique. When you are to fight with people in the future and suddenly let out a roar that shakes the opponent's spirit until he is distracted, won't you gain a great advantage over them? In a battle between the strong, even a split second could well determine victory and defeat... Moreover, the sound wave containing a dragon aura has a very great lethality toward a spiritual body. If you meet any strong spiritual bodies in the future, this is a killing move against them. Otherwise, you would feel far too bounded. After all, you do not have that strange energy attack of the ‘Hall of Souls’.” Yao Lao said faintly.

Xiao Yan's eyes could not help but become much brighter when he heard these words. He stood on the edge of the cliff, inhaled a deep breath of ice cold air before gradually closing his eyes. The Dou Crystal within the vortex of his body emitted a slight tremble. Wisps of green-colored Dou Qi immediately surged forth and finally began to whiz past through his Qi Paths much like galloping waters.

As the speed of the Dou Qi circulating within the body wildly and abruptly became more intense, the powerful green-colored Dou Qi had already turned into a faint mist on the surface of Xiao Yan's body and completely shrouded Xiao Yan's body within it. Moreover, the energy fog had actually faintly had the intention of automatically agglomerating into Dou Qi Armor, even without his control.

Like a wind turbine, Dou Qi wildly circulated one wave after another. In the end, it actually emitted some strange, sharp, unusual noise. A faint throbbing pain appeared and disappeared from within his Qi Paths.

“Endure for a little while...” Yao Lao hurriedly said when he sensed Xiao Yan’s slightly twisted face. For some unknown reason, there was an additional seriousness and anticipation in his voice.

Xiao Yan clenched his jaw tightly. His hand had begun trembling slightly at this moment. A while later, the throbbing pain suddenly became more intense. Xiao Yan’s spirit trembled and he finally could not endure the pain any longer...

However, at the moment when Xiao Yan had reached his limit, the Dou Qi swiftly rotating in his body suddenly trembled. A wisp of strange and unusual energy was finally thrown out...

After this wisp of strange and unusual energy was thrown out, it appeared to be dragged by something as it directly rushed toward Xiao Yan’s throat...

Xiao Yan clenched his teeth tightly. At this moment, a strange energy forcefully broke through. A unique sound wave, containing something that caused a person’s spirit to tremble, came out with a mighty roar from Xiao Yan throat!

“Roar!”

Under this oppressive roaring, the mountains where the roars of Magical Beasts were originally occasionally heard, completely descended into a certain frightened silence.

“Ah... you are indeed a lucky fellow... it is really unexpected that you are actually able to inherit that dragon aura... If that Gu Ling knew about it, I’m afraid that his eyes might well have turned red with jealousy.” Yao Lao’s soft whisper slowly sounded as he felt the strange sound wave which came spreading out from Xiao Yan’s throat.

Chapter 404: Peace Town

The roar, which carried a strange sound wave, spread mightily between the mountains and gradually disappeared after a long time. Only at this moment did the mountains, which had suddenly become silent, quietly recover some of the sounds of life.

On the mountain cliff, Xiao Yan suddenly held his neck, and let out a couple of intense coughs. After which, he forcefully swallowed a few mouthfuls of saliva. Only then did the feeling, of a blaze burning in his throat, weakened slightly.

“A natural reaction, You need not be too concerned...” Yao Lao smiled and comforted when he saw the expression pasted on Xiao Yan’s face.

“Cough... teacher. Have I successfully inherited it?” Xiao Yan’s face may be flushed due to the intense coughing spell, but his face still contained an excitement as he asked eagerly.

“Ah, from the looks of it, you have indeed successfully obtained that strange dragon aura which possesses the ability to cause souls to tremble...” Yao Lao laughed. Gratification was present in his laughter.

The excitement on Xiao Yan’s face was much more dense when he heard this. Although the ‘Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill’ did not immediately raise his strength, this so called dragon aura caused him to have another attacking method that would take others by surprise. One can imagine how much help this ability would be to Xiao Yan in the future.

“Although the current you may have successfully inherited the dragon aura from the ‘Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill’, if you are to only rely on the dragon aura to emit that kind of sound wave, the damage it will create to your throat is extremely great. If you are not careful, you might end up turning yourself into a mute. That kind of loss would be too great.” Yao Lao voiced his thoughts.

“This so called dragon aura sound wave still needs to act in concert with those kind of sound wave Dou Techniques in order to be used?” Xiao Yan frowned slightly. After hearing Yao Lao’s acknowledgement, he could not help but smile bitterly, “Dou Techniques of that kind are quite rare. Obtaining it is easier said than done.”

“Take your time to look for it. Back then, I did indeed have a Xuan Class sound wave Dou Technique. However, due to some unforeseen events later on, I lost it. Therefore, you can only rely on yourself to go and search for one.” Yao Lao sighed.

Xiao Yan merely shrugged his shoulders when he heard Yao Lao’s words. It appeared that there was no hope of receiving a sound wave Dou Technique from Yao Lao.

Xiao Yan smoothly took out a bottle of clear water from his storage ring, and violently poured it into his mouth. He wiped the water stains at the corner of his mouth and suddenly asked in passing, “Teacher, you seem to understand this ‘Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill’ very well, no? You actually even know how to force out the dragon aura buried deep within the Dou Qi.”

Yao Lao suddenly descended into silence once Xiao Yan’s words left his mouth. When he saw Yao Lao’s action, Xiao Yan was also startled. He immediately recalled the initial reaction Yao Lao had when he saw the ‘Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill’ in the auction fair and could not help but feel a little embarrassed.

Yao Lao was silent for a long while before his faint voice once again sounded. However, the words that he said caused Xiao Yan to be a little stunned.

“Because the medicinal formula for the ‘Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill’ was created by me... Additionally, there are only two people on this continent who can refine this kind of medicinal pill. One of them is me. The other is...” When he spoke to this point, there was suddenly some additional faint, desolate feelings mixed with Yao Lao’s voice.

Xiao Yan clearly sensed the emotion within Yao Lao's voice, causing him to wisely maintain his silence and did not interrupt.

"The other person is my student, whom I viewed as the most perfect inheritor back then... his talent in refining medicine was not any weaker than yours. Moreover, the amount of effort I put into grooming him is similarly not any less than you. When he was still just a baby, I carried him out of some icy, cold debris and viewed him like my own son. I even treated him as the perfect inheritor to groom."

Yao Lao smiled. His voice was flat, "It is just that... finally, he chose to betray me, because of some small matters... Ke ke, perhaps, it is really because of his 'blessing' that I have turned into this current state."

"He ought to die."

Xiao Yan sensed the desolation in Yao Lao's voice. That was a coldness that crept out from deep within one's heart after being betrayed and hurt by the person closest to you. Xiao Yan slowly exhaled. The fists in his sleeves were tightly clenched. He gazed forward. That soft voice of his appeared to be speaking to the senior (shi-xiong) whom he had never seen before.

"We should not have left the 'Black Mark City' so soon. Since those people from the 'Eight Gate' have auctioned out this thing, I think that they should have met him before. Moreover, I think that he would not randomly let anyone deliver such a valuable thing. He might have personally delivered it..."

"Ke ke, so what if we really managed to find him in 'Black Mark City'?" Yao Lao said faintly, "I have already said that his medicine refining talent is not any weaker than yours. After being carefully groomed by me for so many years, the him back then was already the most dazzling, bright star in the alchemist world on the Dou Qi Continent. Now that so many years have passed, I'm afraid that he would be more outstanding than what he was before. Moreover, I am now being kept in check by the 'Hall of Souls' and don't dare to carelessly appear. With just your current strength, you are most definitely not a match for him whether in terms of refining medicine or training of Dou Qi."

Although Yao Lao's voice was calm, Xiao Yan could still sense a thread of anger that was hidden very deeply, due to them sharing the same body. That thread of anger was like the volcano churning under the extremely hard crust, being suppressed for a long time, waiting for the day when it completely erupts.

Xiao Yan inhaled a deep breath of air. He was silent for a moment before he lifted his head to look at the blue sky. His voice had suddenly become a lot gentler: "Teacher, I will surpass him. Regardless of whether it is in terms of refining medicine or one's Dou Qi strength. After which, I will clean the house... I will let you know that your eyes were not mistaken for a second time!"

TL: clean the house - to remove (usually kill) the traitors within an organization

“Ke ke, good, good... I, Yao Chen also believe that these old eyes of mine will not be mistaken a second time!” Xiao Yan’s soft voice suddenly caused the sourness, usually associated with tearing, to spread out from deep within Yao Lao’s spirit. The betrayal that he had suffered in the past really caused him too much trauma. It was fortunate that the heavens had not truly let him descend into that never ending darkness and hopelessness.

Xiao Yan’s hands forcefully wiped his somewhat reddened nose. He parted his mouth, smiled brightly and said, “Looks like it is time to hurry to the Jia Nan Academy in order to quickly raise my strength. However, I should also find some time to learn the ‘Three Thousand Lightning Movement’. That way, I can use it to flee if I were to meet any strong people whom I cannot defeat in the future.”

“The ‘Three Thousand Lightning Movement’ is a Di class Dou Technique. How is it going to be so easy to learn? Have you forgotten the hardship back then when you were practicing the ‘Flame Splitting Tsunami’? If you want to learn the ‘Three Thousand Lightning Movement’, the effort you need to put in will not be any less than that time.” Yao Lao temporarily put aside his emotions and smiled as he replied to this little fellow whom he had poured all his effort and expectations in.

“Do you think the hardship I have endured over these few years has been little?” Xiao Yan smiled gently and said. He smoothly took the map of the ‘Black-Corner Region’ out of his storage ring, the one which Duo Ma had given him back at the ‘Black Mark City’. He carefully observed it before keeping it and turning his gaze toward the northern direction. With a smile, he said, “Let’s go. we should be able to hurry over within three days’ time!”

“Ah, it is likely that the strange ‘Hall of Souls’ would not enter the region within the Jia Nan Academy. After all, those old fellows in that academy are not useless. However, you should also forget about borrowing my spiritual strength to cheat. The old fellows in there are very sharp. It is very easy for them to detect traces of me.” Yao Lao spoke with a smile.

“Uh... isn’t teacher greatly underestimating me? Although I have managed to repeatedly beat extremely strong people that I cannot hope to match during these few years because of you, do I need you to help me fight against people of my age?” Xiao Yan rolled his eyes when he heard this as he smacked his lips and replied.

“Hee hee, that may not be guaranteed. As the oldest academy on the Dou Qi Continent, the number of geniuses in Jia Nan Academy are uncountable. Moreover, I heard that there is an inner academy within the academy. The students there are truly the ones chosen out of ten thousand. If you, this little fellow, is placed inside, I’m afraid there will be quite a good show...” Yao Lao teased.

“In that case, I am looking forward to it...” Xiao Yan shrugged his shoulders. His back trembled slightly and the Purple Cloud Wings slowly extended from his shoulders. He flapped them lightly and his body rose abruptly before turning in midair. After which, they whizzed and he flew off into the northern horizon.

As Xiao Yan hurried through the journey this time around, he cautiously landed on the ground when he was passing through highly populated cities, as he was afraid that the movement by the Purple Cloud Wings would attract people’s attention. Other than that, he had used the Purple Cloud Wings to hurry through most of the journey. Although hurrying through the journey in this manner exhausted an extreme amount of Dou Qi, it was not too much of a problem for Xiao Yan, who carried more than ten bottles of ‘Energy Recovery Pills’ with him.

The three days flew by quickly as Xiao Yan travelled swiftly without stopping. The Jia Nan Academy on the map was also becoming closer to where Xiao Yan was.

Around the evening of the third day, Xiao Yan, whose entire face was tired, suddenly felt his spirit peak. This was because Yao Lao had suddenly opened his mouth to speak.

“Little fellow, we are approaching the Jia Nan Academy. Descend. No one is allowed to forcefully fly within fifty kilometers of the Jia Nan Academy. Otherwise, you will be attacked without question.”

Xiao Yan hurriedly nodded when he heard Yao Lao words. His flying speed was greatly reduced before he slowly descended. Finally, his feet landed on a small hill. He stood at the peak of the hill as his gaze wandered from afar and was coincidentally able to see a barely visible small town between two majestic huge mountains.

As Xiao Yan observed the small town, he no longer cared about his body being covered with dust. He swiftly rushed down the slope of the hill and converged with that yellow soil road, which led directly to the small town.

There were quite a number of people walking on this yellow soil road. These people had clearly come from the ‘Black-Corner Region’. However, what caused Xiao Yan to feel somewhat astonished was that although these people’s body had a fierce and brutal aura, there was not the slightest killing intent overflowing from their faces. However, this manner of theirs, where killing intent was hidden within their hearts, did not appear to be of the natural kind. Instead, it appeared to be forcefully made. Therefore, the expressions of these passersby were really somewhat weird.

Seemingly having sensed the fixed gaze of Xiao Yan, who was off to the side, these people also stared back ferociously, causing Xiao Yan to feel it was a little comical. If this were to happen in the ‘Black-Corner Region’, it was likely that these fellows would have already drawn their knives and attacked.

“Looks like it really is indeed as teacher had said. Anyone who walks until this point must withdraw the attitude that they have within the ‘Black-Corner Region’... Tsk tsk, that Jia Nan Academy is also quite strong to actually be able to suppress these people, who lick blood from their knives, until obedience has been instilled in them.” Seeing these people forcefully suppressing their fierceness and brutality, Xiao Yan could not help but shake his head and speak quietly in his heart.

Xiao Yan followed this yellow soil main road with lush green trees on both sides as he slowly approached the small town. That chaotic atmosphere within the ‘Black-Corner Region’ was indeed truly and completely isolated.

Ten minutes later, Xiao Yan stopped at the entrance of the small town and lifted his head to eye the horizontal sign board on the gate of the town. The words on it were very ordinary and very philistine. If it was placed in the ‘Black-Corner Region’, it would definitely be torn down the next day.

“Peace Town.” This was the first small town one would come across when one entered the area surrounding Jia Nan Academy from the ‘Black-Corner Region’.

Xiao Yan stood at the entrance of the small town. He was just about to step into this town when he suddenly felt that the voices around him had suddenly become much quieter. When he turned his head with some surprise, he realized that the faces of some of the people on the road, who had come from the ‘Black-Corner Region’ had become ghastly. Their ankles shivered as they eyed a large tree on the left, not far from the entrance to the small town.

The large tree was black in color with its tree top being spread in all directions, appearing to be displaying its claws. Under the shine of the setting sun, it emitted a faint, dark coldness. Xiao Yan’s gaze swept over the tree and his eyes abruptly shrunk. He saw that there were some corpses between the tree’s branches, which had been directly punctured and hung onto it. They swayed when the breeze blew over, emitting a creepy creaking sound.

“Is this that so called ‘Death Spirit Tree’....” Xiao Yan’s throat rolled slowly. Cold sweat quietly dripped from his forehead.

Chapter 405: Jia Nan Academy Law Enforcement Unit

The dense, dark aura emitted from that strange ‘Death Spirit Tree’ caused everyone, who had stopped at the entrance of the small town, to feel a chill in their bones. In the ‘Black-Corner Region’, the name of the ‘Death Spirit Tree’ had nearly already reached a stage where one would tremble with fear just from hearing its name. Many of the people, who had lived in the ‘Black-Corner Region’ for some years, would not forget the deadly and bloody battle between the ‘Black-Corner Region’ and Jia Nan Academy. There weren’t many people who really paid much attention to the reason for why that bloody battle began. The only thing that people knew was after that bloody battle, the

corpses of two strong Dou Wangs and one Dou Huang were hung on this 'Death Spirit Tree' with a incomparably cruel method...

From that day on, the area around Jia Nan Academy descended into a quiet region that was incomparable with the outside world. There were no longer any strong people from the 'Black-Corner Region' who dared to carry a face filled with killing intent and charge into these small towns. Even though there were a few riots, the people who were involved in it would become a corpse which was fixed onto the 'Death Spirit Tree' within an hour.

During these years, the notoriety of the 'Death Spirit Tree' had nearly spread throughout the entire 'Black-Corner Region'. Therefore even those diabolical people seldom had the courage to enter this place, which was like digging their own grave.

Xiao Yan stood at the entrance of the small town and inhaled a deep breath of air. The chillness in his heart was banished. He ignored those people, who hesitated and didn't dare to enter the town, and lifted his foot before stepping into this 'Peace Town', which represented the entrance into Jia Nan Academy.

The moment when Xiao Yan's footstep had just stepped into the 'Peace Town', he sensed a strange undulation sweeping through him.

Ignoring the undulation which carried the taste of an inspection, Xiao Yan raised his head and eyed the street of the small town. There were quite a number of people on the street, with various different stalls placed on either side. Some children were shuttling about as they played roughly and laughed. This serene atmosphere of harmony was too drastic of an appearance from the 'Black-Corner Region'.

Those people on the street naturally discovered Xiao Yan, who had walked in through the entrance of the town. Although their eyes had a cautious light to them, they did not have an overly frightened reaction.

Xiao Yan's gaze swept over the street. He was just about to step onto it, when his heart suddenly moved. As he lifted his head and threw his gaze toward the rooftops of the houses in the town, only to see more than ten shadows briskly rushing toward the direction of the town's entrance like monkeys.

A moment later, over ten human figures flashed and appeared at the small town's main entrance. Their gazes swept across Xiao Yan and the others. Among them, a middle-aged man, who was presumably the leader, said faintly, "Anyone who wants to enter 'Peace Town' must report their identity, name, etc. Otherwise, they will be directly expelled."

Xiao Yan's eyes drifted across these ten plus human figures. He realized that other than the middle-aged man, who was the leader, there were male and females among the

other ten plus people present. However, they were all very young. From their appearances, they appeared to be around twenty two or twenty three years old.

These young people were wearing the same pale-blue-colored clothes. Additionally, they wore an azure-colored badge on the chest area of their clothes. Within the badge was a dagger that was contaminated with some bright-red, liquid blood.

At this moment, these ten plus young people were using an alert and faint discriminating gaze as they stared at Xiao Yan and the rest.

“Additionally, after you have reported your name and identity, you will consume this medicinal pill.” The middle-aged man waved his hand, and a bottle of pale-red medicinal pills appeared in his hand. He carelessly glanced at everyone people who had just arrived from the ‘Black-Corner Region’ whose expressions had changed slightly as he coldly spoke, “Rest assured that this is not some poison. It is a medicinal pill refined by the alchemist department in the academy that senses killing intent. If you all possess killing intent within your hearts while you are within the academy’s borders, this medicinal pill will emit a red glow from within your bodies. Our Law Enforcement Unit will follow this red glow and come searching for you. You should all know how our Jia Nan Academy deals with those who bring the practices of the ‘Black-Corner Region’ into this place... Before you all plan to leave the small town, you can go to the heart of the town to obtain the antidote. However, once the antidote is in your hands, there will be the Law Enforcement Unit supervising you all the way out of the town.”

When they heard the words of the middle-aged man, the faces of the people at the entrance of the town could not help but change. With their sensitive nerves from frequently living on a knife’s edge, how was it possible for them to swallow an unknown medicinal pill? Was that not equivalent to putting their lives into another person’s hands?

However, just as some unruly people could not resist wanting to retort, the ten plus men and women behind the middle-aged man immediately let out a choking sound. They then drew the longswords that they carried on their waists in an orderly manner. Dou Qi of different colors seeped out from within their bodies as they finally pointed the tip of their swords toward the entrance of the town. They clearly had the thought of directly attacking and expelling those people, should there be any disagreement.

“The rules of the ‘Peace Town’ have always been like this. If you don’t want to, then don’t enter. Otherwise, if you enter and go against the rules, there might be more decorations to hang on the ‘Death Spirit Tree’.” The middle-aged man held out his hand as he spoke indifferently. As his words fell, a powerful force slowly began seeping out from within his body.

“This person’s strength should be at least above a seven star Da Dou Shi...” Xiao Yan softly muttered as he sensed the powerful force originating from the middle-aged man.

Seeing that the other party did not ease up, a fierce air involuntarily surged onto the faces of the people at the entrance of the town. However, when the corner of their eyes drifted toward the 'Death Spirit Tree' at the side, their entire bodies trembled as they felt a chill. The fierce aura, which they had just brewed, disappeared immediately and completely. They gritted their teeth and some people, who were still unwilling to swallow the medicinal pill, helplessly left.

As those people left, the remaining ones could only enter despite being unwilling. After which, they walked toward the middle-aged man and reported their names, took a pale-red medicinal pill and swallowed it in front of the Law Enforcement Unit.

The middle-aged man's indifferent expression only became slightly less dark when he eyed those people obediently swallowing the medicinal pill. However, he appeared to look badly upon everyone from the 'Black-Corner Region'. Therefore, he did not display any nice expressions from beginning to end.

"That... do the students of the academy need to eat this thing?" A young man in front of the middle-aged man suddenly asked when the latter habitually handed the medicinal pill to the former.

"Uh?" When they heard these words, the surrounding people, as well as the ten plus members of the Law Enforcement Unit, cast their stunned gazes over. As he eyed the young man's delicate and handsome face, the middle-aged man asked with a face filled with doubt, "You say that you are a student of this academy?"

"Back then, after I passed the student recruitment test, I took leave for a period of time. Therefore, I could only come by myself..." Xiao Yan shrugged his shoulders, smiled and replied.

"You have passed through the 'Black-Corner Region' by yourself in order to come here?" The middle-aged man was immediately blank when he heard this. His face was filled with shock. It should be known that usually, the new students of the academy would be escorted by some people sent by the academy all the way in after arriving just outside of the 'Black-Corner Region'. After all, a group of new students, who had just left their cottage, might not even be able to walk out of the Great Plains of the Black Region before they were finished off by a countless number of hidden knives. After all, this kind of chaotic place was somewhere people were eaten with their bones.

Xiao Yan simply smiled and nodded his chin slightly when faced with the strange gazes of the middle-aged man and the ten plus young male and females behind.

Seeing that Xiao Yan nodded his head, the astonishment in the middle-aged man's eyes became even more abundant. His gaze swept up and down Xiao Yan as he said, "Report your name, age, and recruitment instructor."

“Xiao Yan, eighteen, instructor...” Xiao Yan blinked his eyes. The mature woman who was as gentle as soft water back then surfaced in his mind. He could not help but say with a smile, “Instructor Ruo Ling.”

“Eighteen years old? You dare to cross the ‘Black-Corner Region’ at only eighteen years old? Little fellow, regardless of whether you are speaking the truth, it is the first time that I have seen anyone with such boldness.” The middle-aged man waved his hand. He was just about to turn around and instruct the people to investigate, when the expression of a young person, whose eyebrows were knit tightly together as he bitterly thought of something, changed abruptly. He cried out involuntarily, “Xiao Yan? Don’t tell me that you are that Xiao Yan from the Jia Ma Empire who had taken two years of leave in one go?”

The involuntary cry of the young person caused the people around him to be blank. Immediately, their faces were filled with a sudden understanding. They threw a somewhat strange gaze at Xiao Yan. Everyone in the academy had heard of the name of this thorn-like student who had taken two years of leave before he even entered the academy in this one year. Of course, the reason for Xiao Yan’s name being able to be deeply rooted within the hearts of the people at the Jia Nan Academy was naturally because he had a great relationship to Xun Er...

“Xiao Yan? That Xiao Yan ge-ge of junior Xun Er?” After the few young people were stunned for a moment, there was suddenly an additional unknown meaning within the gaze they used to look at Xiao Yan. This kind of expression was something that Xiao Yan had once seen in Young Master Jia Lie’s eyes back at Wu Tan City.

TL: ge-ge - older brother or an older male friend (latter meaning is used by females in an affectionate manner)

“Hei, this girl... I haven’t even come to the academy but she ended up creating all these inexplicable love rivals for me?” Xiao Yan was immediately amused as he eyed the expressions in the young men’s eyes. In his heart, he felt neither able to laugh nor cry as he shook his head.

“If you are speaking about the Xiao Yan from Wu Tan City of the Jia Ma Empire, then it should be me.” Xiao Yan spread out his hands at the middle-aged man, whose face was similarly surprised as he spoke with a smile.

“You should first come with us to the administrative office to check the records. If what you said is true, you don’t need to consume this thing. Oh right, I am called Huo De and I am the section leader of the second section of the Jia Nan Academy Law Enforcement Unit and also a Huang class instructor at the academy.” When Xiao Yan had mentioned the name Wu Tan City, the middle-aged man believed him a little more. However, in order to be safe, he still needed to have Xiao Yan follow him to the academy administrative office in the town.

“Instructor Huo De.” Xiao Yan greeted him. After seeing Huo De nodding his head, Xiao Yan followed him under the strange gazes of the ten plus Law Enforcement Personnel.

“Hey, is that fellow really Xiao Yan?” The ten plus academy’s Law Enforcement Personnel eyed Xiao Yan’s back as they followed at a distance, neither far nor near, behind Huo De. They could not help but begin to engage in private conversations.

“Looks like it should be the truth. He does not seem to be very handsome. Why does Junior Xun Er constantly think of him? She even directly rejected being wooed by our head because of him.”

“You should not really underestimate this Xiao Yan. Being able to charge into the ‘Black-Corner Region’ alone and safely arrive here is sufficient to explain something. At the very least, if we were to have a short stay of ten days to half a month within the ‘Black-Corner Region’, I dare not guarantee that my hands and feet would still be safe and sound.” A young man, whose face was ordinary, stared at Xiao Yan’s back, then glanced at his companions as he said faintly.

This ordinary looking young man appeared to have quite a great reputation in the Law Enforcement Unit. Therefore, when the other ten plus members of the Law Enforcement Unit were startled when they heard these words of him. They also nodded silently. As the first small town, which came into contact with the ‘Black-Corner Region’, they had seen many of those lunatics from the ‘Black-Corner Region’ everyday.

Chapter 406: Crucial Moment

“Hei, it actually is really that new student who took two years leave in one go...” Huo De was holding a casefile in his hand within the spacious room. There was a drawing in the casefile. Although the drawing was three years old with a face that still carried a little innocence, the overall outline was exactly the same as Xiao Yan’s.

Huo De closed the casefile in his hand before a genuine smile appeared on his face. He patted Xiao Yan’s shoulders and smiled before saying with a deeper meaning in his words, “Little fellow, you’re definitely not simple. The casefile states that you were merely a four star Dou Zhe two years ago, but now... I’m afraid that you are at least of the Dou Shi class right?”

Upon hearing Huo De’s words, those members of the Law Enforcement Unit were immediately startled. They threw their stunned gaze toward Xiao Yan. In two years, he directly advanced from a four star Dou Zhe to become a Dou Shi. This kind of speed was quite good.

Xiao Yan smiled, neither denying nor acknowledging.

“Are you planning to head directly to the academy now?” Huo De asked with a smile.

“Yes.” Xiao Yan nodded.

“Carry this with you. Only then will you be permitted into the academy.” Huo De took out an azure badge from his storage ring, and handed it over to Xiao Yan. After which, he appeared to have suddenly remembered something. He turned his head toward those members of the Law Enforcement Unit and smiled before he asked, “Oh that’s right... coincidentally, tomorrow happens to be the inner academy qualifying competition, no?”

“Ah, yes that’s right Section Leader Huo De.” A member of the unit hurriedly replied.

“You are really lucky to be able to see such a grand event after just entering the academy. However, I recalled that there seemed to be your name in the inner academy qualifying competition last year. This is something that Instructor Ruo Ling had helped you put in against all odds. Unfortunately, you did not come at the end. This really infuriated Instructor Ruo Ling. Therefore, I think that she is unlikely to put in your name this year. After all, the qualifying competition this time around concerns whether she can be promoted to a Xuan class instructor...” Huo De smilingly said.

“Uh...” Xiao Yan was startled when he heard this. As he recalled seeing the angry, green face of the gentlewoman back then, he laughed bitterly and said, “I really had something important and could not rush over at that time...”

“Hee hee, this does not concern me. If you want to explain, go and explain to her by yourself.” Huo De smiled gloatingly. His gaze eyed the sky outside, which was gradually becoming dark. He voiced his thoughts, “The sky is already quite dark now. However, I see that you are hurrying to go to the inner academy, so I shall not hold you back. However, there is still an extremely large region of primeval forest outside the academy. There are many high ranking Magical Beasts there, with it being quite dangerous to pass through at night. I can let people drive the Griffin carrier to quickly bring you directly over to Jia Nan City. Is that okay?”

“In that case, thank you very much, Instructor Huo De.” Xiao Yan rejoiced at hearing these words, and he quickly replied with gratitude. The map which Dou Ma gave him only covered the area of the ‘Black-Corner Region’. Xiao Yan’s head was shrouded by a mist as to which direction he should fly in after entering ‘Peace Town’. It was naturally his current wish for someone that could lead him to his destination.

“Ke ke, it’s fine.”

Huo De smiled. The current him did not conform with the coldness he had displayed at the town’s entrance at all. He waved his hand and called out two members of the Law Enforcement Unit, one male and the other female. After he gave instructions, he allowed the two to go out and make preparations.

“Xiao Yan, ah, I have to remind you once before you leave. Although you have not entered the academy, it is likely that you already have quite a number of potential

opponents within Jia Nan Academy. Ke ke, I think you also know what the reason for this is... the kind of outstanding girl like Xun Er really has too great of an attractiveness toward those favored, talented, young men of the academy. She has come to the academy for over two years but her reputation has already caught up to that little witch who gives people a headache. Therefore, those love rivals of yours are not made of simple stuff. However, I advise you to know how to endure. That would be a little smarter..." Huo De moved closer to Xiao Yan and reminded him out of goodwill.

Xiao Yan laughed softly when he heard this. Although he had missed two years of life at the academy, he believed that his life and death grinding during these two years would definitely not be poorer than any teaching methods. During these two years' time, he had even fought fearlessly against Dou Huangs and even Dou Zongs. Would he be frightened of those people who were the same age as him at the academy?

"Thank you for your reminder, Instructor Huo De. Xiao Yan will remember this in his heart." Xiao Yan smiled at Huo De, and cupped his hands together. He heard the screeching sound of the Griffin outside. Without wasting a moment, Xiao Yan turned around and swiftly walked out of the room, and saw the huge Griffin, which was standing on the street, outside. At this moment, the man and woman on the Griffin were smiling at Xiao Yan as they said, "Junior Xiao Yan, please climb aboard. We will escort you to Jia Nan City."

"Thank you very much." Xiao Yan smiled. His feet gently pushed off the ground and his body agilely leaped onto the back of the Griffin. His feet immediately appeared to stick to its back and did not make the slightest of movements.

Seeing Xiao Yan's totally still body, shock flashed across the faces of the two people on the Griffin's back. It should be known that the feathers of this Griffin caused a sort of strange moist air. Some people, who were riding it for the first time, could only sit on a specific man-made saddle in order to stabilize their body. Yet, Xiao Yan was able to completely rely on himself to let his body remain at equilibrium. This was something that was impossible for even the both of them to display so leisurely.

"What the Deputy Section Leader said is indeed correct. This Xiao Yan really does have some skill..." The two of them muttered in their hearts. They waved their hands at Huo De, who had walked out of the house, before emitting a whistle from their mouths. Immediately, the wings of the Griffin creeping on the ground was flapped. Its huge body began to rise into the air in a spiral.

As Xiao Yan eyed the small town, which was swiftly becoming smaller, he let out a breath of air. He lifted his eyes and gazed at the azure sky. An elegant and exquisite face of a young lady slowly surfaced in his mind. Her frown and laughter all caused the young man, who had lived two years of difficulty, to be that concerned.

"Xun Er, I can finally see you again..."

This flight continued for nearly the entire night. Of course, this also included the two to three hours rest midway. When dawn of the next day arrived, a thread of sunlight shot out from the edge of the land, expelling all the darkness between the land and sky.

At this moment, Xiao Yan, who had his eyes shut as he rested, opened them as though he suddenly sensed something. His gaze shot into the distance. There was an outline of a city occupying a large area, that left one speechless, slowly appearing within the faint mist.

“This is Jia Nan City huh...”

Although he was in the sky, he was still unable to see the entire city within his field of vision. From this, it could be seen just how large this city was.

“Ke ke, Junior Xiao Yan, we will stop this Griffin at the flying stop within the city. After that, you need to hurry to the academy on your own. It is our Law Enforcement group’s rotation this week, therefore, we cannot leave the ‘Peace Town’ for too long.” The young man from the Law Enforcement Unit smiled as he spoke to Xiao Yan.

“Thank you very much seniors.” Xiao Yan nodded and smiled as he voiced his thanks.

“There is no need...” The young man waved his hand. A whistle was once again emitted from his mouth and the Griffin immediately let out a soft screech. It waved its wings and shot down toward the large city.

From the flying stop at the Jia Nan City, Xiao Yan raised his head and watched the Griffin, which had once again risen into the air. He slowly exhaled, turned around, and exited this empty space.

A spacious, open street paved with green stone appeared in his eyes as he walked out of the flying stop. The human flow on the street was turbulent, causing Xiao Yan to quietly become breathless. This kind of human traffic was something that even the capital of the Jia Ma Empire could not compare with. It was indeed worthy of being the cradle of the oldest academy in the continent. Just its name alone would attract a countless number of people to this place.

Xiao Yan did not stop on the street for too long. He followed the route that the Law Enforcement member earlier had pointed out and hurried over. After going around in circles within the city in this manner for half an hour, Xiao Yan could only helplessly stop. He eyed that street, which he was still unable to see the end of, and could not resist bitterly laughing, “Dammit. Why was this city constructed until it became so big?”

Xiao Yan sighed despondently. He once again lazily hurried on, slowing his footsteps as he walked toward the Jia Nan Academy, which was located in the middle of the city.

As he slowly walked on that spacious street, Xiao Yan sensed the usual city's atmosphere and sighed in relief within his heart. It was fortunate that this place was not in any way similar to the 'Black-Corner Region'...

He once again walked passed a street. In the distance, he appeared to be able to see the vague outline of that ancient academy...

"Stop that fellow!"

Xiao Yan had just made a turn, when a cry was suddenly emitted from a spot not far in front of him. A minor disturbance immediately rippled onto the street with a huge group of people forming a circle and judged as they watched the fight within it.

Xiao Yan's gaze drifted toward the circle of people, who were watching the show, but did not move any closer. His palm gently patted the large Heavy Xuan Ruler on his back, as his footsteps began to lead him around the crowd at an even pace.

Just as Xiao Yan was about to directly walk toward the academy in the distance, a cold angry laugh in the human crowd caused Xiao Yan to suddenly pause his footsteps.

"Ma Yan, don't waste your effort. You actually want to go after my younger cousin with that strength of yours?"

"Brat, if you don't want to do it nicely... attack. We don't need his life, but he must see red!" After that cold laughter sounded, another voice that appeared to be angry from embarrassment sounded. Immediately, there was the muffled sound of flesh coming into contact from within the human crowd.

Xiao Yan had his back facing the crowd. He was silent for a while as he heard the muffled sound that appeared from within the circle before he sighed gently and immediately turned around.

Within the crowd, a young man in blue clothes, who was around eighteen or nineteen, was violently exchanging blows with a few men around him, while his eyes were filled with fury. Seeing the Dou Qi that was seeping out of the young man's body, it appeared that he was at the Dou Shi class. However, the four young men surrounding and attacking him clearly had strengths that were no weaker than his. Therefore, the blue-clothed young man was at disadvantage. His face would occasionally suffer a blow, and traces of blood flowed out from the corner of his mouth.

"Bang!"

Another wave of scuffles occurred. One of the young men coldly and viciously kicked at the blue-clothed young man's lower abdomen. The back of the latter's body immediately began to curl up. Despite the four young men seeing that he had no ability to retaliate,

they did not show even the slightest sign of stopping. Four legs moved together. In a tricky and vicious manner, they violently kicked at the blue-clothed young man's body.

"Bang, bang, bang..."

The feet, which contained a ferocious force, were about to land on the blue-clothed young man's body, when a black shadow suddenly flashed past. After which, it collided firmly with the four feet. Four horrible shrieks were immediately emitted. The four of them hugged their thighs and rolled painfully on the ground.

After the black shadow pushed the four people back, it turned into a large, black ruler that was inserted into the hard ground. The blue-clothed young man hugged his lower abdomen, and stood up with great difficulty. His expression was somewhat pale as he cupped his hands toward the black-robed young man, who had his back facing him, "Mister, thank you very much."

"Xiao Ning, you have a lot less vigor compared to when I last saw you two years ago." The black-robed young man slowly turned around. He looked at the blue-clothed young man, whose face was stunned at seeing the former, while speaking with a faint smile.

Xiao Ning. This blue-clothed young man was actually Xiao Ning, who had some grudge with Xiao Yan at the Xiao clan back then!

"You... you are Xiao Yan?" Xiao Ning's face was completely full as he eyed that face which he had not seen for two years. He finally recovered a long while later, but still had difficulty believing the situation.

"I thought that you would not recognize me." Xiao Yan laughed. Although he had some grudges with this fellow, whom he did not really see eye to eye with when they were a younger, the current him was no longer that impulsive child he had been back then. Those things had naturally vanished long ago. Moreover, no matter what happened, the person in front of him had a thread of blood relation to him.

"How can I forget. Younger cousin Xiao Yan..."

Xiao Ning let out a bitter laughter. He eyed Xiao Yan in front of him, feeling a complicated emotion. Now that he had muddled about on the outside for two years, he was similarly no longer a child. Only in the outside world, which contained all sorts of people, did he feel that those experiences in the clan back then were the most precious memories within his heart. No matter how one put it, one's kin was ultimately a little closer to oneself.

"Older cousin Xiao Ning." Seeing the apologetic smile Xiao Ning gave him, Xiao Yan also smiled. He patted the latter's shoulders.

"These fellows?" Xiao Yan turned his gaze toward the four people rolling on the ground and asked.

"Isn't it still because of Xun Er? These fellows know about our relationship and keep trying all sorts of means to get news about Xun Er from me. It is really too troublesome. However, they don't dare to attack me at the academy. Today, when I came out to buy something, I coincidentally ended up being seen by these fellows." Xiao Ning was somewhat helpless. From the looks of it, it appeared that this was not the first time that this had happened.

Xiao Yan could only laugh bitterly when he heard this. It really was true that beauty was a source of trouble. It was likely that the girl had now truly lost the innocence she had back then?

"Hee hee, Xun Er is very outstanding. A woman undergoes many changes when she grows up. She is now even more beautiful. There have been an unknown number of people who had fallen for her during these two years. I think that you will also be shocked when you meet see her again." Xiao Ning said with a laugh.

"How much can a child change?" Xiao Yan shook his head and laughed softly. When he said such aged words, he forgot that he was also merely eighteen years old.

"If you say these words in the academy, others will gang up to fight you..." Xiao Ning rolled his eyes. His expression abruptly changed as he appeared to recall something. He then grabbed Xiao Yan and ran toward the entrance of the academy, "Dammit, I have actually forgotten. Today is the Inner Academy Qualifying Competition. Instructor Ruo Ling could not resist Xun Er's spoiled pestering and took the risk of being promoted to a Xuan class instructor by putting your name in. If you are absent like you were last year, Instructor Ruo Ling can forget about being promoted for the next three years."

"Uh? She still wrote my name?" Xiao Yan's face was completely stunned.

"Ah, however, even if you got here in time, I don't think it would be of much help. The Inner Academy Qualifying Competition is not an ordinary one. All of those who have the qualification to participate are among the top students in the academy. Without at least the strength of a seven star Dou Shi, one might likely be eliminated once he enters the competition ground." Xiao Ning's hurried running speed slowed as he sighed.

Xiao Yan was startled. He opened his mouth, but before he had the chance to speak, Xiao Ning continued, "Forget it, forget it. Being able to come is better than being absent. Even if you lose, Instructor Ruo Ling would only lose this chance of promotion. There is still a chance the next time around..."

Once he finished saying those words, Xiao Ning pulled Xiao Yan with great force and quickly ran toward the ancient academy.

As a major event of the Jia Nan Academy, the so-called Inner Academy Qualifying Competition was naturally the event that attracted the most attention. Moreover, the renowned people in the academy would appear within this qualifying competition. The male and female students who were viewed as the idols of others, as well as their source of their adoration, were undoubtedly a great source of attraction.

Therefore, the stadium used by the academy was squished in and filled with people, despite the academy having already prepared the largest one for the competition's use. Countless numbers of students from the Jia Nan Academy squeezed and bumped heads as they charged into the seats of the stadium. At one glance, it was like a sea of dense black heads (hair) and the noise shot to the clouds.

The spacious open ground was circular in shape. The area surrounding the open ground was a set of rock stairs, which repeatedly spread upward. That shape was like an arena. The sea of people seated surrounding the arena could clearly see the entire place.

At this moment, there were two human figures on the open ground. One man and one woman. The two flashed and exchanged blows. Ferocious Dou Qi ripples shrunk and burst from the points where their palms made contact, causing the surrounding people sitting in the viewing gallery to frequently emit shocked sighs. However, clearly over half the gazes in the viewing gallery were paused on the lovely figure wearing a pale-green dress, with her lovely body flashing and moving in a light and elegant manner.

The two human figures engaged in one risky exchange after another. The pale-green colored figure suddenly paused. Her hands glowed brightly. It carried a ray of light as it imprinted itself onto the chest of the young man. A powerful force directly shook the latter until he was pushed out of the battle arena.

"Senior, thanks for giving way!" The green-clothed young lady smiled after defeating the opponent with a single blow. She bowed toward that man, who was quite handsome, in such a manner that no one could find fault in her manners.

"Junior Xun Er is indeed worthy of being the student with the greatest potential this time around. I have lost." Although the handsome young man had lost, he was straightforward. With a smile, his gaze watched that green-clothed young lady, who was like a lotus, causing people to be relaxed and happy. He immediately withdrew in a free and easy manner.

"Xun Er wins this round!"

The green-clothed young lady turned around and leaped down from the competition stage only after she heard the cry that sounded from the Referees Platform.

"Xun Er, not bad!" After the green-clothed young lady descended from the stage, a lady from the viewing gallery waved at her.

“Instructor Ruo Ling.” Xun Er ignored the heated gazes shooting at her from her surroundings, and ran into that specially arranged viewing gallery and shouted with a smile. She immediately turned her gaze toward a group of ladies, who were off to the side of the viewing platform, and smiled as she said, “Elder Cousin Xiao Yu.”

“Little girl is becoming more and more powerful. You were actually even able to defeat that Mo Wen. Looks like you will definitely be able to enter the Inner Academy this year.” A beautiful lady wearing a pale-purple academy uniform smiled as she walked over. When she walked, her pair of long, mellow legs wrapped in the trouser leggings immediately attracted some heated gazes, which were originally looking at Xun Er. Those alluring, long legs were really a killing weapon when it came to attracting men.

“Hopefully.” Xun Er smiled. After she greeted the ladies behind Xiao Yu, she dragged Xiao Yu’s hand, sat beside Instructor Ruo Ling and softly spoke with a smile.

“Elder Cousin Xiao Yu, that... has Xiao Yan ge-ge not arrived yet?” Xun Er softly asked as her eyes glanced at Instructor Ruo Ling off to the side who appeared to be relaxed. The brows of the latter, however, had some anxiety between them.

TL: ge-ge - elder brother or used to address an older male friend/relative (latter usually used affectionately by female)

“Yes.” Xiao Yu also sighed softly when she heard this. She immediately tightened her fist as she softly reprimanded, “I also don’t know exactly what that fellow has been doing. Back then, we agreed that he could only take one year’s leave. Now, he has dragged it on for a full two years. Moreover, he is still absent this year...”

“He should get here very soon.” Xun Er gently bit her lip as she replied.

“I also hope so... but today is the competition. If he is still absent, Instructor Ruo Ling...” Xiao Yu laughed bitterly.

While the two of them were quietly whispering privately, another three round of fighting had passed. A man flashed up onto the stage at the fourth round. The long lance in his hand landed on the ground with great force. The somewhat heated gaze of his swept toward the direction where Xun Er was at without any intention of covering it up.

“Xuan class - Third class Xue Beng against Huang class - second class... Xiao Yan!”

TL: Class as in classroom

As the voice from the referee seats fell, the noisy open ground suddenly became much quieter. A countless number of gaze were thrown toward the position where the Huang class - second class was at. During these two years, this name Xiao Yan, had already been firmly remembered by all the students and even the instructors of Jia Nan

Academy. After all, this was the first time that they had met such a thorny student, which had directly taken two years leave since the founding of Jia Nan Academy.

Of course, a greater reason was that during the last Inner Academy Qualifying Competition, that was the only name which was absent. Therefore, now that they heard this name again, everyone's gaze were thrown toward where Xun Er's group was seated. Due to Xun Er's outstanding performance at the academy, she had many suitors. However, during these two years, there was still no one who could move her heart. The only form of address, which one could hear the most from her mouth, was that so called Xiao Yan ge-ge. This kind of extremely affectionate address naturally caused Xiao Yan, who had never shown himself, to become everyone's common enemy.

When faced with the countless number of gazes being shot over, some cold sweat involuntarily surfaced on Instructor Ruo Ling's smooth forehead. Her fist was also tightly clenched as her eyes swept around her, hoping that the figure, whom she had valued greatly two years ago would appear once again like a savior.

The open ground, which had become silent, also caused Xun Er and Xiao Yu to become anxious. They exchanged glances and saw some anxiety from within each other's eyes.

"Xiao Yan huh.. a coward who dares not even reveal himself and letting a girl receive such unnecessary criticism. This person, won't do." A white-dressed young man on the viewing platform, who was not bad looking, shook his head and said faintly, "He is not worthy of Xun Er.."

The white-clothed young man was shockingly the person who had met Xun Er at the foot of the mountain a few days before. He appeared to be called Bai Shan, one of the outstanding people among the younger students in Jia Nan Academy. His strength was not much weaker than Xun Er's.

"Chi, this is the man whom Xun Er always talks about incessantly? Is his zodiac sign a turtle? If one were to follow this kind of man, isn't it better to follow me? What is so good about those stinky men? They only think with the lower half of their bodies." On another very good location in the viewing gallery, a young lady wearing a red-colored dress had her hands crossed in front of her chest. Her back leaned against an iron pipe with her exchanting curves appearing extremely alluring against the background of the straight iron pipe. The current her could not help but curl her lips as she eyed the open ground where there was actually no one who came out to engage in a fight. There was a little disdain as she spoke with a cold smile.

"Little witch, sit properly. Acting so presumptuously in public, where is your decency?" A white-haired old man by the side of the red-clothed young lady could not help but blow his beard angrily when he saw that posture of hers and the independent special words of hers.

The red-clothed lady unceremoniously rolled her eyes at this old man, who clearly had quite a high position within Jia Nan Academy as she coldly snorted, "To think that you are still the Deputy Headmaster of the Outer Academy. If it was up to me, I would have long kicked that Xiao Yan out of the academy. Two years leave. Humph. How arrogant."

"There is no choice. That girl Xun Er insists on protecting that boy." The old man helplessly shook his head. He immediately voiced his thoughts: "However, if he is to still absent this year, then I really have no other choice. The rules of the Jia Nan Academy cannot be broken..."

"Don't tell me that you hope that Xiao Yan would be able to appear during the last few minutes?" The red-clothed young lady gave the old man an opaque glance as she said.

"I really do hope so..." The old man sighed. He slowly closed his eyes and waited for this farce to end.

After the silent atmosphere continued for two minutes, some private conversations finally began to appear.

"Ah, this bastard didn't keep his promises..." Xiao Yu sighed and softly cursed when she saw the disappointment-filled face of Instructor Ruo Ling, who sat next to her.

Xun Er lowered her head. She pulled Instructor Ruo Ling's sleeves and softly said, "Instructor, I'm sorry..."

"Ke ke, you need not blame yourself. This matter is not related to you." Instructor Ruo Ling patted Xun Er's hand and forcefully gave a comforting smile, "It's alright. At the very most, I will wait another three years..."

"Let's go." Instructor Ruo Ling stood up and said to Xiao Yu and Xun Er. Seeing her somewhat reddened eyes, it appeared that she was not as free and easy as she had pretended to be with her mouth.

A group of male and female of the same class similarly sighed with disappointment as they stood up, preparing to leave the stadium. However, they had just stood up when Xun Er's lovely body suddenly stiffened. Her pretty face was abruptly lifted as she muttered, "He is here..."

"Uh? What?" By her side, Xiao Yu and the others were startled, having not heard clearly.

"Xiu!"

Just as Xiao Yu's question fell, an ear-piercing sound of rushing wind suddenly appeared on the open ground, attracting everyone's gazes.

As the sound of rushing wind appeared, a black figure suddenly shot down from the sky and suddenly smashed into the open ground. The hard ground was directly shattered into powder, which soared up and shrouded a small area.

“Who is it?” Seeing the black shadow which had shot up, the young man carrying a lance, who was called Xue Beng, could not help but cry out coldly.

Xun Er’s gaze stared intently at the area hidden in the dust. An excitement that she had difficulty hiding swarmed onto her face, “He is here!”

When they heard these words of Xun Er, the lovely bodies of Instructor Ruo Ling, as well as Xiao Yu and the rest quivered. Their gaze were immediately cast toward the area on the open ground.

Under a countless number of gazes, the soft sound of footsteps could be heard from within the dust. In the completely silent open ground, the sound of footsteps was like something stepping in people’s heart, causing their hearts to beat faster.

“Boom, boom.” The soft sound gradually became clearer. A black-robed young man carrying an enormous black ruler on his back faintly appeared from within the dust. A moment later, he finally appeared under everyone’s gaze!

“Huang class - second class, Xiao Yan!”

The black-robed young man took a step forward and raised his head slightly. That faint voice of his was like thunder as it resonated in the ears of everyone present.

Chapter 407: One Strike

The voice, which had suddenly appeared, directly caused the open ground, where private whispers had just broken out, to once again quiet down suddenly. Numerous gazes, that contained some astonishment, were thrown onto the black-robed young man in the middle of the open ground, who was carrying a huge black ruler, that was around his height. In an instant, the entire stadium was completely silent.

“Xiao Yan ge-ge...” Xun Er eyed the back of the figure standing on the open ground, who was taller compared to two years ago, but also a little skinnier. An elegant smile, that would cause the surrounding male students to lust for greatly, was immediately revealed on her exquisitely pretty face.

“This fellow... must he create such a big commotion every time he arrives. He really likes showing off.” Xiao Yu’s pretty eyes stared intently at the back, which she had not seen for two years. She heaved a great sigh of relief in her heart. However, her mouth was still unwilling to forgive as she spoke out loud.

“Ha ha, Xiao-Yu jie-jie, is that person the Xiao Yan ge-ge that Xun Er is always talking about? It is really unexpected that he managed to hurry over at the very last moment.” Beside Xiao Yu, a group of young ladies, who appeared to be of the same class as Xun Er, laughed as they asked while their gazes stared at the person’s back in the open ground.

TL: jie-jie - older sister or addressing a slightly older close female friend or relative

“That’s right. That is the brat which causes Xun Er to worry all the time. You are all disappointed, right?” Xiao Yu could not help but say as she took one glance at Xun Er, who had paused her lips and smiled.

“Hee hee, we must see his strength. What is the use of just being good looking?” The young ladies laughed as they spoke. In Jia Nan Academy, an environment where strength was similarly respected, being the most handsome was not the most important. Being able to easily defeat strong opponents in the competition and pull back elegantly, was the style of the perfect man within their hearts.

“However, even if he managed to get here in time, the situation is not very good. That Xue Beng is a nine star Dou Shi. Moreover, the Qi Method he practices is at the Xuan Class Low Level. His lance techniques have been practiced until they have reached their pinnacle. The Xuan Class Middle Level lance technique Dou Technique, ‘Overlapping Waves’, has defeated quite a number of opponents...” A young lady, whose appearance was quite beautiful, suddenly said somewhat sheepishly.

Xiao Yu and the others frowned slightly when they heard this. They immediately glanced at Xun Er whose eyes were totally calm. They said somewhat uncertainly, “That brat should be able to handle it. I don’t believe that he would achieve nothing during these two years, given that character of his...”

For a long time, Instructor Ruo Ling’s pretty eyes stared at the young man in the battle arena, who was carrying a large ruler. She also quietly sighed in relief within her heart. Since Xiao Yan had managed to get here in time, even if he were to lose the match, she would only lose the chance of being promoted to a Xuan Class Instructor for one year. She still had the opportunity to fight for it next year. After all, with the potential that Xiao Yan had displayed back then when she was recruiting students, she believed that Xiao Yan would be able to catch up as long as he was able to practice at the academy for a year.

“Good, good. Let’s all not daydream. Since this fellow has finally arrived, let us remain here and support him. Regardless of how long he can endure, he is at the very least a member of our Huang Class - Second Class.” Instructor Ruo Ling turned her head and looked past all the young ladies as she helplessly said. However, the meaning behind her words clearly indicated that she similarly did not hold much hope of Xiao Yan being able to defeat Xue Beng.

“Is he that Xiao Yan?” A white-clothed Bai Shan at the viewing gallery, whose figure was straight and tall, like a jade tree standing in the wind, looked at the black-robed young man in the open ground while feeling some doubt. He did not expect that this fellow had really managed to make it at the very last moment.

“His breath is very calm. Perhaps he might have some ability, but that is only so.” Bai Shan lifted his eyebrows, and said faintly as he watched the black-robed young man’s expression, which did not change even a little because of the surroundings that were filled with people. The him who had great expectations, he did not give this potential love rival a very high score.

“Is this the Xiao Yan ge-ge that Xun Er is obsessed with? He is finally willing to appear... but he does not appear to be very handsome. I really don’t know why she misses him so much.” The gaze of the red-dressed young lady swept over Xiao Yan’s body with great interest. However, she immediately curled her lips and said.

“What is the use of being handsome? Can it let the referee give him extra marks?” The white-haired old man by her side rolled his eyes. A pair of turbid eyes like that of an ordinary old man stopped on Xiao Yan’s body. A moment later, his brows were knit slightly together. Shock flashed across his eyes. Shaking his head, he faintly said with a smile, “A very interesting fellow...”

“I hope that he won’t be immediately defeated by Xue Beng the moment he comes out to fight. Otherwise, Xiao Xun Er’s face would be totally lost.” The red-clothed young lady’s delicate hand rubbed a thread of long, pale-red hair hanging down as she said somewhat gloatingly.

“Just watch...” The old man smiled. His gaze came into contact with the referee platform not far away and realized that there was also some shock within the eyes of the few old friends there. It looks like they should have also seen some of the unique points about this little fellow called Xiao Yan.

“You are Xiao Yan?” The long lance of the cold faced Xue Beng was heavily smashed into the tough ground in front of the tens of thousands of gazes in the stadium. His gaze shot directly at the black-robed young man as he coldly said.

Xiao Yan smiled and nodded.

“You are not worthy of her.” Xue Beng words were direct with disdain when he saw Xiao Yan nodded.

“Perhaps.” Xiao Yan immediately felt somewhat helpless when he heard this. Another person pursuing Xun Er. Looks like this girl had really muddled along quite well within this Jia Nan Academy.

“There are countless numbers of people in Jia Nan Academy who were waiting for you to make your appearance. From today onward, it is likely that you will have an unceasing number of troubles. I may be the first to challenge you but I will definitely not be the last.” Xue Beng coldly laughed. He immediately swung the long lance in his hand and pointed its tip toward Xiao Yan, “I will defeat you in front of her. A mediocre person like you does not have the qualification to possess an outstanding girl like her.”

“They are indeed just a group of jealous children...” Xiao Yan was somewhat speechless as he eyed Xue Beng, who declared war the moment they had met. He sighed and slowly grabbed the hilt of the Heavy Xuan Ruler in his hand. The body of the ruler trembled slightly as it tilted and pointed downward. As he waved the ruler, an extremely great sound of compressed air being sliced reverberated in the arena.

“I also quite dislike receiving never ending trouble. Therefore, in order to put an end to that, you will have to suffer a little.” The huge ruler left a vast black shadow on the ground as Xiao Yan lifted his head and smiled as he replied to Xue Beng.

“Oh? You want to use me to ‘kill the chicken to warn the monkeys’?” That Xue Beng was no fool. He understood Xiao Yan’s intention when he heard the latter speak in this manner. Immediately, a veiled fury flashed across his eyes as he coldly laughed, “Aren’t you afraid of twisting your tongue by boasting so much?”

TL: kill the chicken to warn the monkeys - a warning to others

“Can we begin?” Xiao Yan tilted his head and threw his gaze toward the seven or eight old men in the judge’s seats as he asked with a smile.

“Yes.” The few old men exchanged glances when they saw Xiao Yan looking over. They then nodded.

“Arrogant Brat!”

Xue Beng’s expression became slightly cold when he saw the judges nodding. His hand held his lance tightly as he feet abruptly stomped on the ground. The long lance vibrated and carried a sharp sound as it shot toward Xiao Yan.

Xiao Yan did not move his body. He eyed Xue Beng, who was the first to attack, while holding the long lance in his hand. The heavy ruler in his hand shook slightly. It was just as he had said earlier, Xiao Yan clearly understood that there were quite a number of people within Jia Nan Academy who possessed enmity toward him because of Xun Er. Now that he had just arrived, the only method to put an end to the unceasing challenges was to frighten them!

Moreover, even if he excluded having to remove those never ending troubles, Xiao Yan also urgently needed to obtain a suppressing victory that left no one in doubt when he had just come to Jia Nan Academy, where talented individuals gathered!

He wanted to prove one thing to everyone. That was the Xiao Yan ge-ge, whom Xun Er had never stopped talking about, had the strength to stand in front of her and help her block any storm!

He wanted to let everyone know that her judgement would not disappoint anyone!

Back then, he was a useless person. Therefore, Xun Er had once stood in front of him. Now, however, he did not want the things of the past to repeat itself.

Therefore, he did not need to have any stalemate-like bitter fight in this battle. What he needed was a destructive and uninteresting victory!

His assertive arrogance this time around was a tiny compensation to that girl who had bitterly waited for him for two years.

He wanted to let her know that he had not wasted these two years.

The thought in his heart was like a tide overturning. He inhaled a deep breath, and inserted the heavy ruler into the ground. His hands were extended out of his sleeves, which he rolled up.

Just as the opponent's fierce attack was about to reach him, he steadily arranged his sleeves. The sea of people surrounding the open ground were immediately quiet as they eyed Xiao Yan's calm manner. They could only use one word to describe Xiao Yan's current performance: Presumptuous!

Xue Beng's eyes were icy cold as he eyed Xiao Yan's action. The anger in his heart grew even greater. Following the change in the thoughts within his heart, the Dou Qi immediately rolled and poured into the long lance. The tip of the lance carried a pale-red glow as his palm abruptly struck the end of the lance's handle. The lance immediately shot out explosively. In the blink of an eye, it was about to reach the front of Xiao Yan's throat!

"Ah!"

The expressions of Xiao Yu and Instructor Ruo Ling could not help but change slightly when they saw that lightning-like attack of Xue Beng in the battleground. Only Xun Er was still maintaining her calm. In her heart, she clearly knew that the current Xiao Yan was no longer that useless person in the Xiao clan back then. Even Nalan Yanran, who was carefully groomed and taught by the Misty Cloud Sect, was defeated by his hands. From this, one could see just how strong the current Xiao Yan was!

Under the countless number of gazes, containing various different kinds of emotions, this long lance attack by Xue Beng, which had a mighty momentum, was in front of Xiao Yan's throat in a lightning quick manner. However, just as everyone was waiting for the

bloody scene, which was about to appear. the tip of the lance, which was less than half an inch from Xiao Yan's throat, suddenly stilled as though the air had solidified.

Countless number of gazes followed the long lance as they moved and finally stopped at the handle of the lance. A pale long hand was tightly holding the handle of the lance there. That incomparably ferocious attack of Xue Beng was actually forcefully stopped by one hand.

In the stadium, an uncountable number of gazes once again slowly moved along the hand. They finally stopped on the body of the black-robed young man, whose expression was indifferent. The entire place immediately erupted into chaos!

Xiao Yan lifted his gaze. He laughed at Xue Beng in front of him, whose expression had changed greatly. The corner of his mouth was lifted into a tiny arc as he softly said, "One strike!"

As his voice fell, Xiao Yan's body swayed and instantly turned into a blurry shadow. Xiao Yan tightened his right hand, and a sharp, ear-piercing force immediately screamed out!

Xue Beng sensed the terrifying force that suddenly rose. His eyes shrunk and dismay finally pasted on his face.

Chapter 408: Killing A Chicken To Warn A Monkey

TL: Make an example of others

The black-colored shadow carried a terrifying force and abruptly appeared in front of Xue Beng. A slight ripple surfaced in the air around any area where the fist passed. An endless number of ear-piercing explosions sounded, like that of muffled thunder.

Under Xiao Yan's ferocious attack, that was like a thunderbolt, one could hear the cracking sound repeatedly being erupted from the hard ground. Numerous crack lines began to swiftly spread out from Xiao Yan's feet under a countless number of shocked gazes.

The speed which Xiao Yan used to attack was as fast as lightning. However, Xue Beng was also not a person who relied solely on their tongue. Although he was shocked within his heart at the strength that Xiao Yan had displayed, his reaction was not slow either. When Xiao Yan's fist was swiftly expanding in front of his eyes, he did not hesitate even a little as he gave up the long lance, which the other party had clamped onto. He took a small step back and tapped his finger onto his storage ring. A silver-colored long lance that was completely made from steel instantly appeared in his hand.

With the lance landing in his hands, Xue Beng's fighting intent, which had greatly shrunk due to being shocked by Xiao Yan's terrifying attack, swiftly soared. A low, angry roar

was emitted from his throat and the Dou Qi in his body was circulated to its limit at this very moment. A pale-red-colored Dou Qi splurged out of his body and finally formed a red-colored Dou Qi cloak on the surface of his body.

Xue Beng's hands similarly did not even have the slightest pause as the Dou Qi flowed within his body. The tip of the lance shook and actually formed more than ten afterimages. The red glow surged like a storm and the afterimages abruptly came together. Finally, the entire long lance turned into an eye-piercing, red glow that pierced explosively toward Xiao Yan.

“Overlapping Waves!”

Xue Beng roared softly within his heart. The fierce forward momentum of the long lance in his hand pierced directly at Xiao Yan's fist. As the lance's body trembled, a red glow swarmed forward one wave after another. The hot air was like a red colored wave of fire.

Under the watch of a countless number of people in the open ground, an eye-piercing red glow carried a monstrous wave of air. This kind of momentum caused quite a number of people to create an uproar. He was indeed a top student, who had the qualification to participate in the Inner Academy Qualification Competition. This kind of ferocious force might well be able to catch up with those strong people who had just entered the Da Dou Shi class.

The red-colored glow was swiftly enlarged in those dark, black eyes. Xiao Yan sensed the heated force that came pouncing over but his expression still remained calm. During the two years, the opponents whom he exchanged blows with were mostly strong people that far surpassed him. He had even seen attacks that were tens or hundreds of times stronger than this. Therefore, wanting him to withdraw because of an attack of this level was undoubtedly an idiot talking in his dreams. However, the acute ability the opponent had to be able to unleash a full force resistance within such a short amount of time did cause Xiao Yan to be a little startled. But... that was all.

Xiao Yan's fist trembled slightly. The green-colored Dou Qi surged out abruptly and finally swiftly agglomerated into a green-colored cuticle layer on his fist.

“No matter how you struggle today, there is only one path for you!” The strength of the fist which was covered by a green-colored cuticle suddenly soared greatly. Xiao Yan lifted the corner of his mouth, and finally did not show any mercy or sluggishness as he swung his right arm. His fist smashed forward explosively and heavily collided with the tip of Xue Beng's lance in front of the eyes of countless number of people.

“Octane Blast!”

“Bang!”

The two came into contact. Instantly, a loud, explosion of sound was emitted from the battleground. The hard rock surface of the ground where the two people collided was directly shattered into powder with a bang. Crack lines repeatedly spread out like a spider web.

“Ka Cha! (crack)”

The powder soared into the air from the ground. In an instant after the fist and the lance came into contact, a clear metal cracking ‘ka cha’ sound was suddenly emitted from the point of contact. A human figure suddenly shot backward, out of the faint dust. He wildly vomited a mouthful of bright red fresh blood. After his body landed heavily on the ground, he actually nestled on the ground and rolled over the ground for over ten meters before he finally came to a stop.

Countless number of gazes hurriedly moved to the human figure that had been launched backward and swept over it. When their gazes saw the person who had flew backward in defeat, the entire open ground instantly descended into silence.

At the edge of the open ground, Xue Beng’s upper garments were basically shattered into pieces by the colliding force. His entire body was covered with blue-black dust, created from the rock fragments shooting at his body. The remaining blood trace by the corner of his mouth caused him to appear exceptionally miserable. Of course, what shocked people the most was the long lance, held in Xue Beng’s blood covered hands, had broken into two. The crack line of the lance clearly showed that it was directly broken by a strong force.

Being able to still use one fist to forcefully break a long lance made of steel after a nine star Dou Shi displayed a Xuan class Dou Technique. This attack was something that even some Da Dou Shi present would have difficulty doing. However, this Xue Beng, who had some reputation even within this Jia Nan Academy, was directly attacked by a new student, who had just come to the academy with this most raved tactic.

As they watched the edge of the open ground where Xue Beng was having a difficult time struggling to get up and then at the broken long lance, some of the people, who had certain thoughts, immediately felt a cold feeling surge out from within their hearts. From the looks of the strength which Xiao Yan had displayed, this new student who had taken a full two years leave was indeed not an ordinary person.

The dust above the open ground slowly fell. A young man wearing a black robe slowly walked out. The robe on his body, which was so tidy that there was not even the slightest fold, was two extremes when compared to Xue Beng, who was in an extremely dire state. From this, anyone, as long as they were not too stupid, could clearly understand that the strength of this young man called Xiao Yan had far surpassed Xue Beng!

Xue Beng's current strength was a nine star Dou Shi. Since Xiao Yan defeated him, then... his strength was at least that of a strong Da Dou Shi!

As they thought of this possibility, the crowded viewing gallery immediately emitted the sound of people inhaling a breath of cold air. The gaze that they used to look at Xiao Yan clearly had an additional unknown meaning behind it. A Da Dou Shi at this age. Even in this entire Jia Nan Academy, those were considered the outstanding people who were the cream of the crop!

"Very... very strong..."

The mouths of Xiao Yu and the others in the viewing gallery were wide open. Their faces were filled with shock as they watched the skinny back, who was standing straight and tall, on the open ground. A young lady sitting in the back could not resist muttering involuntarily as her eyes started seeing stars. Who could imagine that Xue Beng, whose strength was around that of a nine star Dou Shi, was defeated by one punch in a decisive manner after only one exchange. This was in spite of him unleashing his strongest Dou Technique!"

Originally, they were still discussing just how many exchanges Xiao Yan could hold out for. However, their discussion had yet to come to a close when this ending, that caused them to be stupefied, appeared in the battleground.

"This fellow... isn't his improvement over these two years a little too quick?" Xiao Yu said with a bitter smile.

Instructor Ruo Ling, off to the side, slowly recovered from her shock. She eyed the back of the young man in the battleground. Even at this moment, she was still somewhat in disbelief. This thorn-like student, who had missed two years of education, at the academy had actually broken through a top student of the Xuan class. Moreover, the method he used to defeat the opponent was actually the strongest and most direct kind.

As Instructor Ruo Ling recalled the thunder-like punch earlier, she questioned herself. If it was her instead, it was likely that she would not be able to completely endure it. Instructor Ruo Ling suddenly laughed bitterly as she thought like this in his heart. Two years ago, that little fellow in Wu Tan City, who had used all of his methods in order to walk out from under her hands after twenty rounds and was now displaying attacks that even she herself must carefully consider before she dared to guarantee if she could endure it. This improvement speed... was really frightening.

"No wonder he can let such an outstanding girl like Xun Er constantly bear him in mind. This fellow really does have some capital." Instructor Ruo Ling tilted her head and eyed the pretty face of Xun Er, which contained a smile, while Ruo Ling muttered in her heart.

At one side of the viewing gallery, Bai Shan crossed his hands in front of his chest. His brows were knit slightly together as he eyed the black-robed young man, who was

standing up straight, in the middle of the open ground. He slowly exhaled a breath a long while later and said with a faint smile, "Not bad, you do indeed have some ability. The current you has the qualifications to let me raise you to a position where I have to take you seriously. I hope that you can endure a few more rounds. When that time comes, I want to personally fight you if there is a chance..."

"A strong rival, but, she will definitely be mine!" Bai Shan gaze turned toward the direction where Xun Er was at. He softly muttered as he watched her wearing a pale-green dress. While being surrounded by a group of females, she appeared much as an elegant young lady like a lone lotus blooming.

"Ah, that fellow has a very sharp and powerful fist. Even Xue Beng's 'Overlapping Waves' could not withstand it for even a moment. I think that his strength should be around a three star Da Dou Shi." The red-clothed young lady, whose figure was as enchanting as a demon, used her eyes, which emitting a slyness, as she eyed Xue Beng, who was defeated in an extremely crisp manner. She could not help but speak with shock.

"Ah, it really is a sharp and powerful fist. Moreover, he even knows how to agglomerate energy to the different parts of his body and use it to increase his attacking and defensive strength. This is only possible if one has an excellent control over Dou Qi. On this point, he could even be comparable with you." The old man beside her nodded slightly. His voice similarly contained some surprise.

"Ke ke, now you know just what kind of judgement that girl, Xun Er, has? This fellow is no ordinary person. I think that even if you or Bai Shan were to face him, no one would know just who would obtain victory." The old man glanced at the skinny back on the battleground and said with a deeper meaning behind his words.

"Oh?" The hair-thin, curved, willow eyebrows of the red-clothed young lady rose when she heard this. She laughed in a spoiled fashion, "I want to find an opportunity to fight him. If I win, I want him to let me have Xun Er..."

"You... you, this brat. There are so many outstanding men wooing you. It is fine that you don't like them but why are you harassing Xun Er? Must you throw away all my old face before you are satisfied?" The old man was immediately furious when he heard the red-clothed young lady words as he whispered angrily.

"What is so good about those stinky men? Which of them would pursue me if it were not for this face of mine?" The red-clothed young lady pursed up her lips. Her delicate hand rubbed that sly elf-like pretty face as she spoke with disdain.

The old man was so furious at this lawless young lady that fumes were emitted from the seven holes of his body. However, he was helpless and could only swing his sleeves and continue to turn his gaze back toward the battleground.

Within the battleground, Xiao Yan glanced at Xue Beng, who was at the edge of the open ground. The latter no longer had any strength to fight. Only then did Xiao Yan turn his head toward the judges' seats and smile as he asked, "May I inquire if I have won this round?"

"Ke ke. Of course, yes." A gray-robed old man on the judge's seat smiled as he looked at Xiao Yan. His eyes contained an unknown feeling within them as he nodded.

When he heard those words, Xiao Yan bowed slightly. He shook his hands in front of the tens of thousands of gazes and the Heavy Xuan Ruler came flying over to him. After which, he grabbed it with one hand, flicked his wrist and inserted it on his back. He lifted his head to see that smiling, green-clothed young lady and some warm feelings rose in his heart. His feet pressed against the ground and his body gently leaped down the competition stage. Finally, he jumped toward the place where the Huang Class - Second Class was seated.

"Sorry. I am late..."

Xiao Yan watched the beautiful young lady standing prettily in front of him. That face had been deeply imprinted in a deep region of his heart during these two years. He ignored the numerous fiery gazes around him as he rubbed his head and said gently in a somewhat apologetic manner.

Xun Er lifted her pretty face and stared at that delicate and handsome face, which had less innocence and tenderness, but more matureness and perseverance compared to two years ago. A beautiful smile, that could turn all living beings upside down, suddenly appeared on her face. She immediately did an action that caused everyone's sight to be as dull as a wooden chicken.

The young lady in the academy, who had never displayed any action toward any man that was beyond those normal for an ordinary friend, opened her hands slightly. After which, she leaped into the warm embrace, which she had parted with for two years, greedily absorbing the warm feeling.

Chapter 409: Bumping Into One Another At Night

The entire open ground was silent as everyone watched the green-clothed young lady leaping into Xiao Yan's embrace. At this moment, one could almost hear the sound of countless hearts breaking.

Instructor Ruo Ling, as well as Xiao Yu and the others beside Xun Er, never expected that the young lady, who was usually reserved and indifferent, would actually perform such a bold action in public. Their faces were immediately stunned and they finally let out bitter laugh a long while later.

Xiao Yu eyed Xun Er, who had pounced into Xiao Yan's embrace, and then glanced at Xiao Yan, whose smile was like warm alcohol, much like a drunk person who had just drunk wine that had been stored away for a long time. An unknown and somewhat uncomfortable feeling suddenly rose within her heart.

On the other side of the viewing gallery, the faint smile present on Bai Shan's face finally became dark and solemn at this moment.

"When has Xun Er become so bold? Just because of a man?" The eyebrows of the red-clothed young lady also rose until they were almost vertical at this moment. Were it not for the old man beside her pulling her back when he saw the situation, she might have been unable to resist rushing over and forcefully pulling those two apart, who were stuck together like glue.

Xiao Yan's hand tightly looped around that delicate, willow-like waist. He lowered his head and gently sniffed the black hair of the young lady, which contained a refreshing fragrance. Since she was able to do such a bold action that announced the relationship between the two of them in public, then as a man, he naturally would not choose to withdraw. This was even though the heated gazes shot from all around him caused him to feel as though he was in a furnace.

"*Cough*..." After the two of them hugged for nearly a full minute, Instructor Ruo Ling, who stood off to the side, finally could not withstand the heated gazes bearing down on them from the surroundings, and immediately gave a gentle cough.

Hearing the cough, Xun Er, who was snuggling in Xiao Yan's chest like a little bird relying on a person, finally sobered up and woke up from the bliss and excitement from finally being able to see the person she missed so much in her heart. Immediately, an intoxicated blush flew up onto that elegant and indifferent, lotus-like face. She hurriedly pulled away from Xiao Yan's embrace and shrunk behind Xiao Yu like a Mimosa (sensitive/embarrassed plant).

Seeing the extremely rare but lovely shy side of this little girl, Xiao Yan also laughed softly. He turned his head and threw his gaze toward Instructor Ruo Ling and said with an awkward smile, "Hee hee, I'm sorry, Instructor Ruo Ling."

"You still remember that I am your instructor?" Instructor Ruo Ling glanced at Xiao Yan and said blandly.

Xiao Yan laughed bitterly when he saw her expression and attitude. He knew that over these past few years, he had really infuriated this lady, whose character was as gentle as water. However, due to him being in the wrong, he did not retort, but merely hardened the skin on his head, and received her criticism and fury.

"Humph, don't think that everything will be fine if you don't speak. You really do have some nerve to have missed two years of lessons. Do you know how many times I have

talked to the academy until my lips were worn out because of you?" Instructor Ruo Ling said furiously.

"Instructor, Xiao Yan, this brat, has indeed gone overboard with this matter. However, he had managed to arrive here in time today, and even defeated that fellow Xue Beng. As long as Xun Er and him can maintain an undefeated record in the remaining rounds of the Qualifying Competition, you will be promoted to become a Xuan Class Instructor. If you still think that that will not lessen your anger, it is not too late to wait until he has finished fighting all the rounds of the Qualifying Competition before punishing him. In any case, now that he has arrived at the academy, do you need to worry about him running away?" Seeing Xiao Yan smiled bitterly and helplessly, Xiao Yu may have quietly muttered 'you deserve it' in her hear, but the words she said with her mouth helped Xiao Yan absolve the situation.

Only after hearing Xiao Yu's words did Instructor Ruo Ling's furious face become warmer. She glanced at Xiao Yan and said, "Alright, I will wait for you to finish the Qualifying Competition before finding you to settle our score!"

Xiao Yan heaved a sigh of relief in his heart when he saw that Instructor Ruo Ling had temporarily gave up her criticism. He raised his head and threw a gaze of gratitude toward Xiao Yu. The latter, however, rewarded him by rolling her eyes and snorting.

"Hei, Elder Cousin Xiao Yu, after having not seen you for two years, you are becoming increasingly beautiful. Has anyone managed to woo you?" Xiao Yan ignored Xiao Yu expression and asked with a smile.

"Why do you care!" Hearing Xiao Yan's tone, which was the same as when he was a child, a strange feeling immediately surfaced in her heart. At the same time, those sexy long legs of hers were raised a little as though it was a conditional reflex, preparing to kick.

"Alright, don't flirt around here. The Qualifying Competition for today is going to be over soon. Follow me back. There are even more intense fights tomorrow and the day after. It is not something easy to get into the Inner Academy." Instructor Ruo Ling waved her hand. She ignored Xiao Yu, whose pretty face had turned an embarrassed red because of her words, turning around and leading them out of the open ground.

Behind Instructor Ruo Ling, Xiao Yu ferociously cut the gloating Xiao Yan with her eyes as she pulled Xun Er and quickly followed.

Xiao Yan carried the heavy black ruler and followed behind the group. Just as he was about to exit the open ground, his footsteps suddenly paused. He frowned slightly as he turned around and shot his gaze toward the other side of the arena. At that spot stood a young man wearing white clothes. The latter was facing him with a dark and solemn face, that carried a gaze which contained enmity.

“Who is this person? He appears quite strong...” Xiao Yan withdrew his gaze. He mused a little before shaking his head slightly. Then he turned around and under a countless number of gazes, he swiftly followed Instructor Ruo Ling and the others, who were about to exit the open ground.

They walked all the way out of the noisy open ground. Instructor Ruo Ling chased away those young ladies with starry eyes surrounding Xiao Yan. After which, she led Xiao Yan, Xun Er, and Xiao Yu, past a few paths filled with greenery before finally entering into an unique and elegant pavilion house.

Once they entered the house, Instructor Ruo Ling invited the three of them to sit randomly before turning her gaze toward Xiao Yan. She said with a faint smile, “Little fellow, I really cannot believe it. You’ve actually improved so quickly during these two years.”

“I was merely lucky.” Xiao Yan shrugged his shoulders and said with a smile.

“Forget it, I am not going to talk with that glib tongue of yours. Since you have come to the academy, and I have placed your name into the Inner Academy Qualifying Competition, in the next two days you and Xun Er must endure and enter the top fifty. That way, you will be able to obtain the opportunity to enter the Inner Academy to train. As for me, I will also be promoted from a Huang Class Instructor to a Xuan Class Instructor...” Instructor Ruo Ling waved her hand, and seriously said.

“What advantage is there to enter the Inner Academy?” Xiao Yan leaned on his chair with his ten fingers crossed in front of him as he asked.

Instructor Ruo Ling’s eyes stared intently at the smiling young face. A long while later, she suddenly sighed and said, “Looks like taking two years of leave is indeed good for you. Which part of the current you still has your innocence from Wu Tan City back then? With one glance at this you, no one would treat you as a young man who is only eighteen years old.”

Xiao Yan smiled without speaking. He had indeed experienced too many things during these two years. The few big ups and downs had also further solidified and stabilized the calm character he had groomed from a young age. The current him had truly and completely no innocence left from his youth.

“The Jia Nan Academy is divided into the Inner and Outer Academy. The Outer Academy is the place that we are currently living at. The new students whom we have recruited from the Continent will all train in the Outer Academy until their strength has reached a certain stage. They can then participate in the annual Inner Academy Qualifying Competition. As long as they are able to enter into the top fifty, they will be able to obtain the qualifications to enter the Inner Academy. The Inner Academy is different from the Outer Academy. One can bluntly say that the Outer Academy of the Jia Nan Academy is merely a place to test the new students. The true core of Jia Nan

Academy is within the Inner Academy!” Instructor Ruo Ling arranged her thoughts before slowly speaking.

“The Outer Academy of the Jia Nan Academy is divided into two different classes. The class which I manage is the Huang Class. That Xue Beng, who challenged you earlier, is from the Xuan Class. From this difference in class, you can know that the overall strength of a Xuan class is stronger than that of a Huang class. Of course, nothing is absolute. For example, Xun Er and you...”

“I see that your current strength is likely around that of a Da Dou Shi, right?” Instructor Ruo Ling suddenly stared at Xiao Yan and asked.

When she heard Instructor Ruo Ling’s question, Xiao Yu threw an astonished glance at Xiao Yan. The current her merely had the strength of a five star Dou Shi. This fellow had become a Da Dou Shi after leaving for two years. Isn’t this speed of progress a little too quick?”

“Yes.” Xiao Yan nodded slightly under Xiao Yu’s shocked gaze.

“You are indeed an abnormal being that can be compared with this girl, Xun Er.” Instructor Ruo Ling muttered, “According to the rules, I also cannot reveal too much regarding the matters of the Inner Academy. However, since it can be called the true core of the Jia Nan Academy, it will have areas that the Outer Academy has difficulty comparing to. It will only benefit you if you are able to enter.”

“Alright, I will do my best...” Xiao Yan widened his hands and said with a smile. On the way here, he had heard of Yao Lao mentioning that Inner Academy. Now that he had the opportunity to enter it... he would naturally not object.

“With your strength, I think that it shouldn’t be too difficult charging into the top fifty, as long as you do not meet the few people like Bai Shan and Little Witch.” Instructor Ruo Ling also sighed in relief when she saw Xiao Yan nodding his head as she continued.

“Bai Shan? Little Witch? I seemed to have heard the second name being mentioned by instructor two years ago...” Xiao Yan repeated these two names in his mouth as he smiled, his voice trailing off.

“That Bai Shan is one of the most prominent figures in Jia Nan Academy’s Outer Academy during these two years. He is handsome and has great strength. An unknown number of female students have also become crazy about him. Additionally, he appears to also be one of the people wooing Xun Er. Even if I don’t tell you, he would come and find you sooner or later.” Instructor Ruo Ling covered her mouth and laughed in a lovely manner.

Xiao Yan shook his head helplessly.

“As for that Little Witch, she is the granddaughter of the Deputy Headmaster. Her background is not simple. This, along with her frightening training talent that is not weaker than yours, as well as the Deputy Headmaster personally teaching her, I think that her strength might be slightly greater than Bai Shan’s. Due to her independent and special style of doing things, as well as her beauty, she similarly has quite a number of people pursuing her within the academy. However, it appears that she does not have much interest in men. Instead, she likes women very much. With Xun Er’s temperament and her talent, she is a natural target that the Little Witch covets... Therefore, your appearance should also cause her to feel an enmity toward you.” Instructor Ruo Ling let out a cough, as she said with a slightly red face.

Xiao Yan’s expression became a little strange when he heard this. He tilted his head and eyed the similarly helpless Xun Er, before saying in a manner which suggested he was neither able to laugh nor cry, “Capturing both the men and women?”

Xun Er followed Xiao Yan’s manner and spread her hands, indicating that she also did not have a choice regarding this matter. She had kept a sufficiently low profile during these two years. She even gave up entering the Inner Academy Qualifying Competition once because of Xiao Yan.

“Ah... there are indeed opponents everywhere...” Xiao Yan sighed gently. He lifted his head and smiled as he said to Instructor Ruo Ling, “However, for the sake of Instructor Ruo Ling being promoted, I will do my best to enter the top fifty.”

“That is good. You should rest here for today. This is the place where I am staying. Usually, Xun Er and Yu-er also live here with me. From tomorrow onward, the strong people of the Qualifying Competition will all appear. When that time comes, you will have some baseline of the strength of these opponents.” Instructor Ruo Ling stood up, waved her hand and instructed.

Xiao Yan smiled and nodded.

.....

In a quiet room, that was filled with book shelves, seven old men were seated on the chairs around a circular table. Seated amongst them was the old man who had spoken with the red-clothed young lady back at the competition ground earlier. From his Qi, which were as calm as before, one could see that his actual strength and position was likely not low. After all, an ordinary old man did not have the qualification to sit in this meeting room that decided the big and small matters within the academy.

At this moment, that old man, who was addressed by the red-clothed young lady as the Deputy Headmaster, slowly placed a document in his hands down. His gaze looked once around the room and said with a faint smile, “Tsk tsk, this Xiao Yan is indeed not an ordinary person. He contended with the Misty Cloud Sect of the Jia Ma Empire with his own strength and even directly kill a strong Dou Wang before finally successfully

escaping from the hands of a Dou Zong. This battle record is something that even the top students in the Inner Academy would have some difficulty achieving.”

“Oh?” As they heard the words emitted from the old man’s mouth, shock flashed across the shrivelled faces of those few old men around.

“This is the information regarding Xiao Yan. You can all take a look for yourself.”

The Deputy Headmaster flicked his finger and the information in front of him was automatically shot toward those old men below. His finger gently tapped on the table’s surface. A long while later, he heard the shocked gasps that those old men, who had finished reading the information, emitted in unison. He smiled as he said, “His potential is very great. However, his relationship with the Misty Cloud Sect has deteriorated a little too much and basically cannot be mediated...”

“His potential is indeed very great. If we groom him properly, he might well be another strong person at the peak.” One gray-robed old man softly said, “We need not be too worried about the Misty Cloud Sect. With just one Dou Zong, they don’t have the courage to do anything to us, the Jia Nan Academy.”

“The Misty Cloud Sect is indeed nothing... but behind them...” The Deputy Headmaster furrowed his brows. He had just spoken half way when he suddenly became quiet. His expression was changing slightly. Finally, he did not reveal some of the more sensitive matters. He waved his hands and said, “We should secretly observe Xiao Yan a little. If there is really value in grooming him, we can give it a try.”

“Yes...” When they heard this, the other old men did not have any objections as they nodded their heads. They exchanged gazes with one another as they saw the Deputy Headmaster becoming silent. Their bodies swayed slightly and strangely disappeared from their chairs.

.....

The late night was quiet as the faint moonlight scattered downward. That specially unique house appeared unusually quiet under the moonlight.

A white shadow suddenly flashed out from the quiet night. His feet gently pressed against a tree branch as his body elegantly drifted onto a small pile of rubbles not far from the house. His calm gaze shot directly toward a certain room of the house, and a faint silver-colored Dou Qi, that could be partially seen, seeped out from within his body.

“Xiu...”

After merely an instant after the Dou Qi within the white shadow surfaced, a black shadow shot out from within the house in a lightning-like manner. After leaping and sweeping past a couple of times, he steadily landed on a huge rock not far from the

white shadow. He lifted his head slowly and indifferently eyed that white-clothed, handsome, straight and tall man.

The two pairs of pupils collided in the dark night. Some sparks shot out without any forewarning.

“Leave her.” The white-clothed man’s voice was ethereal as it wandered out slowly.

Xiao Yan laughed softly when he heard this. He raised his head slightly. That delicate and handsome face appearing extremely untame under the shine of the moonlight.

“You dare?”

Chapter 410: Clashing For the First Time

The faint words reverberated throughout the night without disappearing.

The eyes of the white-clothed young man were ice cold, as he stared at the untamed and arrogant face of the other young man. The former did not say any other words. His wrists twisted slightly and a faint silver-colored Dou Qi began brewing in his palm. There was actually a faint, soft, muffled sound of thunder being emitted from within it.

“Lightning Type Dou Qi?” Astonishment flashed across Xiao Yan’s eyes as he heard the muffled lightning sound emitted from that silver-colored Dou Qi. He did not expect that this fellow actually possessed this rare Dou Qi element, similar to his Second Brother.

Xiao Yan moved his hand. A pale-green Dou Qi also overflowed from his palm as Xiao Yan watched this white-clothed young man whom he had met once during the daytime with an indifferent expression. He did not have the slightest fear or timidity.

“The weak do not have the qualifications to possess her!” The white-clothed man glanced indifferently at Xiao Yan, who did not shrink back. He laughed coldly and his toes abruptly pushed off of the pile of rubble. His body turned into a silver glow that cut through the darkness, and shot explosively toward Xiao Yan in a lightning like manner.

Due to the sharp offensive of this white-clothed young man within the darkness, some weak thunderclaps actually appeared out of nowhere.

The silver glow swiftly expanded within the dark, black eyes. Xiao Yan’s expression still remained calm. He slowly tightened his hand and a pale-green-colored Dou Qi slowly spat out and shrunk on his fist, much like numerous tiny long snakes.

“Bai Shan, what are you doing?” The silver glow cut open the dark night. However, just as Xiao Yan was prepared to unceremoniously counter the attack, a lovely cry, which contained some anger, suddenly broke the silence of the night. Quickly following this, a golden glow shot out and finally intercepted the silver glow in midair. The two energies

collided abruptly, and an intense energy storm blew the rock fragments on the ground until they flew in all directions.

Xiao Yan shook his head helplessly the moment the lovely cry sounded. He slowly relaxed his tightly clenched fist and lifted his head to watch the white-clothed man, whose body flashed back toward a tree branch after being intercepted by the golden glow.

A pale-green colored figure flashed out from the house and appeared by Xiao Yan's side an instant later. Her eyebrows were vertical as her pretty face contained a hint of anger, while she eyed the white-clothed man on the tree branch.

"It is nothing. I just want to spar a little with Junior Xiao Yan." After seeing the green-clothed young lady appear, the gaze of the white-clothed man remained paused on her body. He coldly glanced once at Xiao Yan by her side and immediately said with a faint smile, "Xun Er, why do you need to be so anxious? With Junior Xiao Yan's ability, how could he participate in the Inner Academy Qualifying Competition if he could not even block a random blow of mine?"

"Senior Bai Shan, I only treat you respectfully because I respect you as a senior. However, if you continue to cause unreasonable trouble in this manner, don't blame me for not giving you any face." Xun Er slowly calmed down the anger in her heart as she softly replied.

Bai Shan's calm face changed slightly when he heard this. Since he came to know Xun Er, their relationship may not be considered to be overly close, but based on what he thought, the two of them could at least be considered friends. Yet, when he heard Xun Er actually using such a tone to talk to him, he could not suppress the emotions within his heart, even with his scheming. His expression had become a lot uglier.

"If you are a man, then don't hide behind a woman." Bai Shan slowly inhaled a breath of air and suppressed the anger in his heart. He coldly glanced at Xiao Yan, lifted the corner of his mouth and laughed coldly with disdain.

"Bai Shan! You better not go overboard!" Xun Er's face quietly sunk. She shook her delicate hand and a golden-colored energy swiftly began to agglomerate in her palm. After Bai Shan had repeatedly provoked Xiao Yan, she had already reached her breaking point.

"Girl, stay behind. It is fine for us men to settle these matters." Xiao Yan suddenly extended one hand and grabbed Xun Er's wrist. She turned around to take a look, only to see the faint smile on Xiao Yan's face. With her comprehension of Xiao Yan, she knew that when it came to such an instance, he would be extremely serious. She immediately hesitated for a moment and could only nod her head and take a step back.

“Do you want to fight?” Xiao Yan took a step forward, twisting his neck. He glanced at Bai Shan on the branches, and softly asked with a smile.

“I will not mind if you want to.” Bai Shan gently flicked his sleeves as he coldly said. When he saw Xun Er, who had been maintaining a distance from him, was actually obedient and docile toward Xiao Yan, an evil flame surged up within his usually calm heart. With his appearance, strength and training talent, in what way was he weaker than this person called Xiao Yan in front of him? However, why does... she keep ignoring him?

“I mind!”

A cold cry was suddenly emitted from within the house. Instructor Ruo Ling immediately flew out. Her expression was somewhat ugly as she looked at Bai Shan before she said in a deep voice, “Student Bai Shan, this reckless action of yours is against the academy rules. If you want to challenge him, you can wait to see who is better in the Qualifying Competition. By coming stealthily in the night, not only are your actions against the rules, but you might also end up with the reputation of taking advantage of others.”

Seeing that even Instructor Ruo Ling had also come out after being disturbed, Xiao Yan shook his head helplessly. He knew that they could not fight this battle tonight. Immediately, he could only withdraw the Dou Qi into his body, pulled Xun Er before turning around, and slowly walked toward the house.

“Xiao Yan, I hope that you will not be eliminated from the Qualifying Competition. The weak do not have the right to obtain anything. When that time comes, I also hope that you do not continue to hide behind a woman. A man that Xun Er acknowledges should not be a coward, right?” Bai Shan said faintly as he watched the back of the two people who had turned around.

“Xiu!”

The sound of rushing wind suddenly sounded. A force cut past the black darkness and violently smashed toward Bai Shan’s face.

A cold glint flashed across Bai Shan’s face when he sensed the rushing wind force that came toward him from the front. He gently flicked his finger and a wisp of silver light shot out explosively. It finally collided with the rushing wind force and immediately shattered it into powder. If one stilled one’s eyes to see what the object shot out was, one would see that the item originally blasting through the wind was actually a piece of rock fragment.

“Can you not be so long winded like a woman? You are Bai Shan, right? One of the so-called popular people? You are only so-so. You might be a very experienced person when it comes to jealousy but you need not tell me those fierce and useless words with

your razor tongue. We shall see each other at the Qualifying Competition.” Xiao Yan’s faint, dark and cold voice slowly sounded.

“You will leave her if you are defeated?” Bai Shan coldly laughed.

“Are you sure you are called Bai Shan and not Bai Chi (Idiot)?” The footsteps of Xiao Yan who was about to enter the house suddenly paused. He turned around, and looked at the green-faced Bai Shan pitifully. After which, he shook his head and pulled the laughing Xun Er as they walked into the house.

TL: Bai Chi - wordplay from the name Bai Shan - means idiot

“Ah, you should go.” Instructor Ruo Ling could not help but sigh as she watched the green-faced Bai Shan. This person was usually very calm. Why was it that he had become this impetuous in front of Xiao Yan today? It appeared that he has deep thoughts for Xun Er. Otherwise, it would not result in him losing his footing in this manner.

Once she said these words, Instructor Ruo Ling turned around and drifted into the house, leaving Bai Shan alone. His expression was green one moment and white at another moment, as he stood on the tree branch, enduring the cold wind late in the night.

Bai Shan stood on the tree branch and inhaled a deep breath of icy cold air. He slowly tightened his fist and muttered, “It is really unexpected that I can actually lose my cool to such an extent because of her. Therefore... she will definitely be mine. That Xiao Yan... I shall defeat him in the Qualifying Competition. The woman whom, I, Bai Shan fancy... how could she run? Moreover, she is so outstanding. What qualifications does that, Xiao Yan, have to match her?”

Only after saying this did Bai Shan’s face gradually recover. He indifferently glanced at the house, and gently pressed down on the tree branch with his toes. His body drifted down and with a few immediate movements, he disappeared into the dark black night.

Xiao Yan watched the white-colored figure, who had gone far away, from the side of a window in the house. His eyes narrowed and a cold glint flashed across it. He turned around, eyed Xun Er behind him and helplessly shook his head, saying: “Girl, have you lived well these past two years?”

TL: Girl isn’t the best translation, it’d be more of an intimate “nickname” more so than anything else with a literally meaning

“Ah.” Xun Er’s delicate hand held Xiao Yan’s hand as she gently nodded.

Pulling Xun Er's hand, Xiao Yan sat in front of the window, and eyed the luster of the stars in the sky. He suddenly whispered with a smile, "Do you want to know how I lived these past two years?"

"Ah." Xun Er once again gently nodded. She held Xiao Yan's hand between hers and felt the faint warmth.

With one hand, Xiao Yan slowly rubbed Xun Er's soft, black hair, which extended to her waist. He was quiet for a moment. Only then did his voice, which was a little hoarse, appear. He slowly spoke about all the events after he had left Wu Tan City back then one at a time. Of course, he chose to vaguely pass over the connections he had with some girls during this time, the 'Heavenly Flame', and other things which needed to be kept a secret.

Leaving Wu Tan City, entering the Magical Beast Mountain Range, breaking into the desert, creating a mess in the Mo clan, entering the capital, dominating everyone with his skill during the Alchemist Grand Meeting, ascending the Misty Cloud Mountain, defeating Nalan Yanran, fighting the entire sect by himself, killing a strong Dou Wang, and after that, escaping from the hands of a strong Dou Zong. Each of these soul-stirring and blood boiling events were spoken about by Xiao Yan indifferently. Although his tone was indifferent, the various dangers contained in them still caused people to have the feeling that their hearts were being held tightly.

By the window side, the faint moonlight scattered downward, shining on the young man and young woman, covering them with a layer of faint, silver yarn.

A long while after Xiao Yan's words fell, Xun Er also descended into a silence. Her head gently leaned against the shoulders of the former. Even though she had known most of the events, she still felt an agitation in her heart when she once again heard Xiao Yan speak about it. He had also lived these two years very bitterly.

"Xiao Yan ge-ge. I believe that by the time you return to the Jia Ma Empire, the Misty Cloud Sect will no longer be able to block you." Xun Er smiled and replied with a gentle voice a long while later.

Xiao Yan smiled faintly. He merely raised his head and eyed the vast starry sky.

At the corner of the wall, not far behind the two of them, Instructor Ruo Ling was leaning against a wall. Her chest slowly rose and fell, as her face was filled with shock.

Battle Through the Heavens #Chapter 411: Bewildering - Read Battle Through the Heavens Chapter 411: Bewildering

Chapter 411: Bewildering

"It is really unexpected that the Misty Cloud Sect's Yun Shan is actually still alive... it really has exceeded my expectations." Xun Er's expression changed following the faint words from Xiao Yan's mouth. A long while later, her eyebrows were slightly vertical and a cold glint flashed across her autumn watery eyes while she softly said.

"It is indeed quite troublesome." Xiao Yan also sighed softly. If it was not because of Yun Shan's existence, the Misty Cloud Sect would not have been able to chase him until he had to flee all the way out of the Jia Ma Empire.

The corner of Xiao Yan's eyes glanced at the dark, black corner of the wall, where one could make a turn, behind him. He heard the soft sound of footsteps, which were gradually leaving from that spot. Only then did he turn his head to look at Xun Er. His expression was serious as he said, "Xun Er, there is something that I need you to honestly tell me, because this is very important!"

"Oh?" Xun Er was startled when she heard this. When she saw Xiao Yan's serious face, she immediately nodded and said, "As long as Xun Er knows, Xun Er will naturally not hide anything that Xiao Yan ge-ge wants to know."

TL: ge-ge - elder brother or used to address an older male friend/relative (latter usually used affectionately by female)

"After the first time I have left the Misty Cloud Sect successfully, I was worried that the Misty Cloud Sect would implicate the Xiao clan because of their anger. The truth was indeed so. When I returned to Wu Tan City, the Xiao clan had already received the revenge of the First Elder of the Misty Cloud Sect." Xiao Yan's voice was slightly dark and cold.

Xun Er's expression immediately changed when she heard Xiao Yan's words. Her eyebrows were nearly vertical and her pupils contained some anger, "Isn't this Misty Cloud Sect a little too bold? Did the clan suffer a serious blow?"

"There were some losses but they weren't too serious. However, father was chased out of Wu Tan City by the three elders of the Misty Cloud Sect. From that day on, he has been missing." Xiao Yan voice may have sounded extremely calm but his hand, between Xun Er's, trembled slightly and still revealed the anger within his heart.

"Missing?" Xun Er was initially startled. Quickly following this, her face also turned dark and solemn for the first time. She clearly understood the position Xiao Zhan had in Xiao Yan's heart. Therefore, she also came to a sudden realization as to why Xiao Yan would actually once again take the risk to charge into the Misty Cloud Sect after successfully leaving it.

"I think that Uncle Xiao Zhan should have landed in the hands of the Misty Cloud Sect, right?" Xun Er voiced her thoughts.

“No.” Xiao Yan gaze looked directly at Xun Er. He shook his head and said softly, “The First Elder of the Misty Cloud Sect, who chased after Father, has already been killed by me. Before he died, he said that while he was chasing after Father, Father had suddenly and strangely disappeared...”

“Disappeared?”

“That’s right. He disappeared under the eyes of the First Elder of the Misty Cloud Sect, who was chasing him...” Xiao Yan’s eyes focused intently at Xun Er’s face as he slowly said, “I guess that Father might not have disappeared by himself. Instead... he was captured by a mysterious strong person!”

“Mysterious strong person?” Xun Er’s willow eyebrows deepened further when she heard this. She lifted her head to eye Xiao Yan as she said, “What does Xiao Yan ge-ge wants to ask Xun Er?”

“Xun Er, I know that you are not someone from the Xiao clan and that your background is also extremely powerful. I don’t know exactly what kind of connection the strength behind you has with the Xiao clan, but I have my own source of information. Therefore, I guess that Father’s disappearance may perhaps be related to the faction behind you. I trust you. This has nothing to do with you. However, I need to find evidence that my father is safe. Otherwise, I will have problems eating and sleeping peacefully.” Xiao Yan held Xun Er’s hand instead as he said in a deep voice.

Xiao Yan’s words caused Xun Er’s face to change a little. A long while later, she shook her head and said in an extremely calm manner: “That won’t be the case. It was definitely not them. They and the Xiao clan have a certain provision. Therefore, they will definitely not do something brash, like forcefully capturing a person! The binding power of this kind of provision is not as simple as what you imagine. Therefore, even if there was someone among them who did this, he would face severe opposition. Moreover... since that person is able to capture Uncle Xiao Zhan in front of a Dou Wang without letting anyone find out, that person’s strength must at least be of the Dou Huang class. During this period of time, I have not received any news regarding this.”

“No? With the exception of myself, no one in the Xiao clan has come across a strong person of the Dou Huang class. What is the use of other strong people inexplicably capturing my father? Only the faction behind you has some relationship with the Xiao clan that I am aware of. At the same time, they also possess this kind of strength!” With the guess in his heart being overthrown, the hand which Xiao Yan used to hold Xun Er’s hand abruptly tightened. There was an additional anger within his voice.

“Xiao Yan ge-ge, Xun Er really did not lie to you. The faction behind me does indeed have some ties with the Xiao clan. At this moment, I cannot tell you some of the details and reasons for it. If I told you, it will instead be detrimental to you. However, regarding the matter of Uncle Xiao Zhan, Xun Er assures you that it is definitely not done by them!” Xun Er’s originally calm expression immediately crumbled when she saw Xiao

Yan's face, which contained a slight anger. She could not resist speaking in an aggrieved manner.

Seeing Xun Er's face, which contained some grievance, Xiao Yan also gradually recovered some of his clear-headedness. His hands gently scratched his head and exhaled a deep breath of air while muttering, "Looks like there were some secrets within the Xiao clan which I was unaware of. Alright, since you are unwilling to say anything, I shall not force you to. If it is really as you have said, and this was not done by the faction behind you, I'm afraid that the Misty Cloud Sect would still be the biggest suspect... That sect does not appear to be as simple as everyone thinks."

"Alright, you can go back and rest first. There is still the Qualifying Competition tomorrow. Temporarily put this matter regarding father aside. Although I am not certain about his current condition, his life should, at the very least, not be in any danger. Ah, I need to quickly raise my strength. Otherwise, even if I manage to find traces of my father in the future, I'm afraid that I also won't have the strength to retrieve him." Xiao Yan turned his head toward Xun Er. He patted her head, smiled, and spoke in a comforting manner.

"I will get someone to help investigate this matter and will immediately let you know if I have any clues." Xun Er nodded her head. Her delicate hands were suddenly intertwined together as her bright eyes looked at Xiao Yan. In a somewhat uncertain manner, she asked, "Xiao Yan ge-ge, will you blame Xun Er for not telling you the exact faction behind me, as well as their relationship with the Xiao clan?"

"Will you harm me?" Xiao Yan smiled, rubbed Xun Er's head and asked instead.

Xun Er was slightly startled. A smile appeared on her pretty face as she shook her head and whispered, "I won't."

"Therefore, I believe you. It is quite late, go get some rest." Xiao Yan extended his hand and hugged that soft, seemingly boneless, lovely figure for a moment. He immediately released her, waved his hand toward her, and finally turned around before walking to his room.

"Ah." Xun Er nodded her head slightly as she eyed Xiao Yan's back, which had disappeared at the door frame. She mused for a while before turning around, and swiftly walking back to her room. With a flipped of her hand, she closed the room's door and flicked her finger gently. A wisp of golden light shot toward a certain corner of the room. A dark, black shadow immediately became distorted before turning into a black-colored human figure, appearing in the room, with one knee kneeling on the ground.

"Let Ling Shi go to the mountain behind the academy tomorrow. Additionally, send someone to inquire if there are any traces of a mysterious strong person within the Jia Ma Empire. Additionally, I need all the information regarding the Misty Cloud Sect!" Xun

Er's face was calm as she glanced at the black shadow. Her voice was clear and cold as she ordered.

"Yes, xiao-jie." The black shadow did not voice any opposition when she heard Xun Er's orders. Following the appearance of a soft, female voice, the body swayed and once again turned into a dark shadow, which melded into the darkness before completely disappearing.

TL: xiao-jie - young lady of a certain wealthy or powerful family.

Xun Er only slowly sigh in relief when she saw the black shadow disappearing. Her muttering voice softly resounded within the room, "Dammit, just who exactly did this? He actually set his eyes on Uncle Xiao Zhan?"

The faint, warm sunlight scattered down from the sky the next morning. Following the slow rise of the dazzling sunlight over the horizon, the academy, which had been quiet for the night, was once again filled with energy. Countless youthful men and women repeatedly swarmed out from all over the academy. Their destination was extremely clear. It was that large stadium at the middle of the academy.

The Qualifying Competition these two days seemed to be an annual grand event within Jia Nan Academy. Those who had the qualifications to participate in the Qualifying Competition were all people who belonged to the outstanding group. The giant competition between them was worth watching. Moreover, the Qualifying Competition this year still had the participation of Xiao Xun Er, Bai Shan, as well as the red-dressed young lady, who were among the most outstanding people in the academy. This fact alone gathered more than half of the viewers.

Of course, other than these three, the large Jia Nan Academy still had some other outstanding competitors. Among them, Xiao Yan, who was able to defeat his opponent by using a blitzkrieg-style method despite having just arrived, was naturally the one who was the focus of attention. Moreover, the intimate relationship, which existed between him and Xun Er, who was viewed by a countless number of male students as the goddess in their hearts, further caused numerous people to grit their teeth, wanting to see him embarrass himself.

After washing himself simply within the house, Xiao Yan, along with Instructor Ruo Ling, Xun Er, and Xiao Yu walked out of the house together. After which, they walked toward the stadium.

As the person who was the focus of attention in the academy, there were a countless number of gazes, containing various different kinds of emotions, being shot over during the journey, causing Xiao Yan's forehead to feel numb. Seeing his helpless expression, Xun Er by his side also could not resist laughing softly. Her lotus-like elegant and warm smile directly caused the sound of people swallowing saliva to sound from both sides of the path.

Under the scorching hot gazes the group continued on pretty soon Xiao Yan's group walked into the stadium, which was already crowded with people. After which, they walked toward their designated seats.

With Xun Er and Xiao Yan, this pair who attracted stares, the entire stadium's gazes were naturally instantly shifted over to them.

After sitting down at his designated seat, Xiao Yan brows suddenly twitched while conversing with Xun Er. He seemed to have sensed something as he raised his head and threw his gaze toward the viewing gallery on the opposite side. At that spot, which was an excellent viewing location, a white-clothed Bai Shan was standing, while holding his hands together. Seeing Xiao Yan's gaze looking over, the corner of his mouth was lifted into a faint, cold smile. His palm was on the guardrail in front of him, and his finger did a very obscure provoking action toward Xiao Yan.

Xiao Yan eyes narrowed as he eyed the white-clothed, extremely handsome, jade tree like Bai Shan. He smiled faintly as a thread of a cold glint flashed across his lowered, dark, black pupils. He had never boasted that he was a good person. Since the other party has provoked him repeatedly, then he would act in accordance with him...

Chapter 412: Rival

Xiao Yan withdrew his gaze from Bai Shan, who was on the opposite side of the arena. His gaze then swept across the surroundings of the stadium once more. In the middle of the viewing gallery, there were some good seats with the best views. Seated on these seats were merely four, white-haired, old men. Although the auras of these four people were no different from ordinary old men, Xiao Yan's gaze landed on their bodies first. Other people might not have sensed anything, but with his outstanding Spiritual Perception was able to faintly sense a vibration in space that occasionally surfaced from the surroundings of these four old men. This kind of spatial fluctuation was only created when the strength of the Dou Qi in one's body had reached a certain limit, which enabled it resonate within the space of the outside world.

Among the strong people whom Xiao Yan was acquainted with, even Hai Bodong had yet to achieve this level. Only those who had already entered the peak level of a Dou Huang, like Jia Xing Tian or the even stronger Yun Shan, were able to achieve this.

While Xiao Yan was observing these four old men, who were dressed in an extremely plain manner, the four of them suddenly appeared to have sensed something. Their originally lazy eyes were raised and turid gazes made contact with Xiao Yan's eyes. The few pair of eyes looked at one another and Xiao Yan eyes immediately felt a little pain. The Dou Qi in his body swiftly circulated before a wisp of green flame suddenly flashed across his black pupils. Only then did that painful feeling gradually weaken. Besides being shocked in his heart, he hurriedly retracted his gaze.

“Huh?” Just as the wisp of green-colored flame quietly flashed across Xiao Yan’s eyes, a soft, shocked sound was spontaneously and simultaneously emitted from the four old men seated on those seats. Three among them exchanged glances with one another as they opened their mouths to speak, “What a strange Dou Qi. It is as hot and agile as a flame.”

“This kind of Dou Qi is the best fuel to refine medicinal pills. It would really be a waste if Xiao Yan were not an alchemist.” A shock flashed across the eyes of an old man who was seated furthest left as he slowly said.

“Ke ke, Old Huo, I heard that this Xiao Yan had once become the champion of the Jia Ma Empire’s Grand Alchemist Meeting. His medicinal refining talent is quite great. If you can recruit him to your place to refine medicinal pills, I’m afraid that his achievements in the future would leave people speechless.” A gray-robed old man in the middle said with a smile.

“Ah, having such an achievement at only eighteen. His potential is extraordinary. He is indeed a good seedling. However, I think that he should already have his own teacher. Otherwise, he would definitely not be able to reach such a stage at this age with just his talent alone.” The old man, who was addressed as Old Huo, first nodded before he immediately replied.

“There is no conflict even if he already has a teacher. There is not much conflict between the academy and private teachers. Moreover, Jia Nan Academy’s Alchemist Department has been founded for so many years. If he can enter it and practice, there are many benefits for him. After all, no matter how vastly knowledgeable his teacher is, it would be difficult to compare with the many years of inheritance your Alchemist Department has, right?” The gray-robed old man shook his head and said with a smile.

“Besides, the Alchemist Department is independent of the Outer and Inner Academy and does not have much conflict with them. If this Xiao Yan were interested in coming to the Alchemist Department, I would not mind having another outstanding student.” Old Huo glanced at Xiao Yan in the distance and said faintly.

“Among the four of them, the three people, starting from the left, are the Deputy Headmaster of the Outer Academy and two elders who have quite great prestige in the academy. They have extremely great authority to speak in the Outer Academy. Moreover, their strengths are around that of the Dou Huang peak level.” When she saw Xiao Yan’s gaze, Instructor Ruo Ling, who stood beside him, explained softly, “The quiet old man, who isn’t speaking much on the far right, is the Department Head of the Alchemist Department. He manages a large group of alchemists under him. Since an alchemist has a special position on the continent, the Alchemist Department is independent of the Inner and Outer Academy. There is no one who can interfere with their matters. Even the Deputy Headmaster cannot do so.”

“Alchemist Department?” Xiao Yan’s heart moved when he heard this name. This so called Alchemist Department was likely an existence that was similar to that of the Alchemist Association.

“The distribution of the faction in the Outer Academy is quite messy. Although I know that the strength which you are hiding is extremely strong, you need to be careful of two factions. One is the Law Enforcement Unit. There are as many strong people as there are clouds within the unit. Moreover, their unit’s position causes them to nearly have the authority to make unauthorized arrests. It is quite troublesome to offend them. The bloody fight between Jia Nan Academy and the ‘Black-Corner Region’ back then and finally the ‘Death Spirit Tree’, that gives people the creeps, were all their tactics... The other party would be the Alchemist Department. No matter what happens, an alchemist, no matter where he is, would be able to enjoy an extremely special position.” Instructor Ruo Ling sighed. There was some envy in her voice. The treatment of any random tier two alchemist within the Alchemist Department would far exceed that of hers as a Huang class instructor.

“Ah.” Xiao Yan nodded slightly as he firmly remembered these two faction in the academy within his heart.

“Additionally, I may have said yesterday that you only need to enter the top fifty in this Inner Academy Qualification but I think that with your true strength, you may perhaps try to break into the top five...” Instructor Ruo Ling smiled as she looked at Xiao Yan. She did not purposefully hide the fact that she had accidentally heard some things last night.

“Isn’t it all the same...” Xiao Yan smiled as he replied.

“It is not the same. If you are able to enter the top five in the Qualifying Competition, you would have the qualification to enter into the academy’s ‘Book Collection Hall’.” Xun Er continued on with a smile instead.

“‘Book Collection Hall’? Are the things inside extremely attractive?” Xiao Yan was startled as he asked.

“I can only say that over half of the people participating in the Qualifying Competition have come with the intention of entering the ‘Book Collection Hall’. Within them includes Xun Er, Bai Shan and the others.” Xun Er exhaled like an orchard by Xiao Yan’s side. Her smiling, warm and soft manner caused the surrounding gazes, which were looking at Xiao Yan, to suddenly become much hotter.

“The ‘Book Collection Hall’ is a forbidden place within the Outer Academy of the Jia Nan Academy. Its defenses are extremely tight. Usually, other than a few countable people, who have the qualifications to enter, it is in a locked state most of the time. Only each year after the Qualification Competition is over will it once again open for a limited period of time.” Xun Er said softly, “If someone is lucky, one would obtain a benefit that would be difficult to imagine from within it.”

“Oh?” Xiao Yan lifted his eyebrows. With Xun Er’s background, she still had such a high opinion of the mysterious ‘Book Collection Hall’. In that case, the things inside should not disappoint him. He only nodded slightly after thinking about this manner within his heart. There was also some excitement within his heart as he said with a smile, “Since it is like this, then let us do our best. However, I shall say this before hand. Do not place too much hope on me. After all, there are quite a number of strong people in Jia Nan Academy.”

“There should not be much problem with your strength. There are only five people you need to pay attention to during the Qualification Competition.” Instructor Ruo Ling said with a laugh. There was a marvel within her laughter: “The first is that Little Witch. Her training talent is not any weaker than yours. Moreover, she has followed beside a strong person like the Deputy Headmaster for so many years. By being exposed to her surroundings, her knowledge far exceeds those of the same age group as her. The class of the Qi Technique and Dou Skills which she has learned are also beyond the reach of an ordinary person. Additionally, her character is strange and unique and is unaffected by soft and hard tactics. She totally has the character of a little demon. However, it is fortunate that she does not have much interest in men, so you need not worry about being pestered by her. Of course... with your relation with Xun Er, she might vent her anger on you.”

“The second person is Bai Shan, whom you have met yesterday. As one of the most outstanding students and the one who received the greatest attention within the academy during these past two years, his strength is also extremely strong. It is not an exaggeration to call him a rival... the third is someone you have not met. However, that person belongs among the people of the ‘Law Enforcement Unit’, whom I have told you about earlier. Moreover, his position is quite high within it and has the trust of the current chief of the Law Enforcement Unit. Moreover, he is an orphan and will likely stay in this academy frequently. In the future, he might have the chance to take over the ‘Law Enforcement Unit’, such a strong faction, within his hands.”

“The fourth person is called Lu Mu. He is one of the top students in the Alchemist Department. Not only is his medicinal refining skill outstanding, but he is also similarly not weak in Dou Qi training. He is also an opponent that you cannot underestimate. You must also be especially carefully about him. This is because, according to the sequence, your opponent today might be him.” Instructor Ruo Ling reminded.

“Oh?” Xiao Yan was startled when he heard this. He inquired, “What class is that Lu Mu’s strength in?”

“Around a three star Da Dou Shi. However, that fellow is a complete ‘medicinal pot’. His Dou Qi is superficial and is nothing to be worried about.” Xiao Yu by the side suddenly pursed her lips and said.

“Ke ke, that Lu Mu is one of the top suitors of Xiao Yu. When she first entered the academy, that fellow disguised himself as a new student and brought Xiao Yu to

wander randomly around the academy for over half a day. After which, Xiao Yu sensed something and directly kicked him into a pond. Who would expect that ever since that one kick, that fellow came leaning over, repeatedly pestering Xiao Yu. Unfortunately, each time, he would be attacked until wounds covered all of his body. It is really fortunate that he is an alchemist. Otherwise, there would not be sufficient healing medicine for him to use.” Instructor Ruo Ling covered her mouth and laughed in a lovely manner.

A flush surfaced on Xiao Yu’s pretty face when she heard Instructor Ruo Ling’s teasing. She helplessly said, “Don’t mention that sticky candy which I cannot get rid of. He really irritates me to death.”

“Ah?” Xiao Yan was startled when he heard the words of the two of them. His eyes immediately revealed a surprise as he eyed Xiao Yu and jokingly said, “Tsk tsk. It is really unexpected that Elder Cousin Sister Xiao Yu is also quite charming. However, the fellow this time around appears to be a little better than that fellow from two years ago?”

“Hmph, do you think that everyone has the same eyesight as you? It is not that no one wants this lady...” Xiao Yu snorted when she saw the shock on Xiao Yan’s face.

Xiao Yan smiled and once again turned his gaze back to Instructor Ruo Ling. With a smile, he asked, “What about the last person?”

“As close as being in front of your eyes.” Instructor Ruo Ling craftily said.

“Uh?” Xiao Yan was startled. His gaze turned toward Xun Er. When he saw her saucy expression, he could not help but say with a bitter smile, “Indeed, a rival that must be taken seriously...”

Undoubtedly, the last person Instructor Ruo Ling had said that he needed to pay attention to was naturally the one with the most terrifying training talent and a mysteriously large background, Xun Er.

During the time that the few of them were laughing softly, the viewing gallery around the stadium was once again completely packed with students. Noisy sound directly broke through the clouds. The second day of the Inner Academy Qualifying Competition was finally about to begin.

Chapter 413: Fighting Lu Mu

When a middle-aged judge slowly walked onto the open ground, a deafening, ear-shocking cheer immediately erupted from the viewing gallery.

The cheer was suppressed by the judge’s hand until it gradually calmed down. This middle-aged judge looked once around the place before saying in a clear voice, “All students, after yesterday’s initial elimination and selection, there are one hundred and

seventy four of the originally three hundred participants remaining today. From this number, the fifty names, which have the qualification to enter the Inner Academy, should be born today.”

“Alright, it is time for the Qualifying Competition. We shall begin. Any competitor whose name has been called, please get in the arena as soon as possible. Once the stipulated time is over, we will handle it as you giving up.” The middle-aged judge was not long-winded. After introducing the rules of the competition, he slowly withdrew to the judge’s seats on the open ground. At this time, two names were emitted from the judges’ seats.

“Xuan Class - Third Class, Luo Fu!”

“Xuan Class - Fifth Class, Ge Li!”

When they heard the names being read, the two of them, who were already prepared, immediately flashed and leaped down from the viewing gallery. They steadily landed almost instantly in the arena and looked at one another. Sparks shot out from their eyes. Dou Qi of different elements came surging out from their bodies in a turbulent fashion. Powerful Dou Qi covered the bodies of the two of them, forming two perfect Dou Qi cloaks.

Although the two people, who had got onto the arena, could not be compared to the outstanding individuals within the academy like Bai Shan and the others, they did at least have some fame. Therefore, waves of cheers sounded from the viewing gallery when the two of them got onto the stage. Those able to participate in the Qualifying Competition and last until the second round could, at the very least, be considered to have middle to mid-upper strength within Jia Nan Academy’s Outer Academy, regardless of how one put it.

The two people in the arena were from the Xuan class. One of them used the agile and elegant wind element; while the other specialized in the heavy and calm earth element. One focused on nimble agility; the other on steady defense skills. The strength between the two, did not differ greatly and matched with different elements, this fight was destined to be a long, drawn out fight. Reality was also so. Ever since the competition had begun, that wind affinity student turned into a shadow that repeatedly flashed around the opponent, using his agile advantage. His palms were tricky as it directly struck the opponents lethal points. However, his attacks may have been sharp but his opponent was not mediocre. That body of his was like a rock touching the ground. With his large source of strength, he bitterly endured with that ground affinity Dou Qi, known for its long battle endurance. If one were to carefully observe, one would be able to discover that despite him appearing to be at a disadvantage, the sharp attacks of the opponent were reduced to dealing minimal damage.

The ruthless and fierce fight in the battleground, where one attacked and one defended, attracted most of the eyes of the stadium over. Numerous cries and cheers repeatedly

aggregated together, finally forming something like a rolling thunder that resounded unceasingly in the sky above the open ground.

“Looks like that Luo Fu has a good chance of winning...” Xiao Yan leaned against the backrest of the chair and whispered with a smile, while eyeing that competitor, who used the smallest price to offset his opponent’s attack.

“Isn’t he being suppressed by Ge Li?” Xiao Yu muttered by the side.

“Those attack by Ge Li may appear fierce, but if he continues like this for a long time, his Dou Qi will ultimately be unable to support him. By observing the color of his Dou Qi, I think that the Qi Method which he practices isn’t of a very high class. A low class Qi Method is unable to support this drain of his for a long time. On the other hand, Luo Du has not even moved from his starting position that much since the beginning of the fight. Each time he came into contact with the opponent’s attack, his feet would tremble slightly. That is an action which deflected the force into the ground. Although this defensive method was a little clumsy, it still allowed him to save a lot of unnecessary Dou Qi from being spent. Therefore, if that Ge Li does not have too strong of a killing move, his attack might well gradually become weaker after another thirty exchanges, all the way until he is defeated.” Xun Er by the side explained with a smile.

As they heard Xun Er explain in detail, not only Xiao Yu nodded, but even Xiao Yan also felt somewhat astonished as he eyed the girl. This was because even he did not see the battle with such detail.

“I wonder just what class this girl has reached after training for these two years. However, I think that she should definitely not be any weaker than me...” Xiao Yan muttered in his heart. He felt a little helpless. Originally, he thought that his training speed during these two years was already quite good. It was really unexpected that this girl was even more abnormal. However, just thinking of the strength of mysterious faction behind Xun Er, which even Yao Lao was fearful of, he also calmed down. No matter how one put it, Xun Er’s training talent was not weaker than his own. Additionally, she practiced tailor-made high class Qi Methods from youth. She also did not lack all those so-called “rare medicinal pills”, and could beckon them with her hand. It was naturally much better than him, who needed to personally go and gather medicinal ingredients with great difficulty...

During the time that Xiao Yan was letting his imagination run wild, the battle situation within the arena had finally started to change. The student called Ge Li appeared to know that he was going to be in big trouble. Therefore, after his wild attacks continued for a while, he finally reduced his attacking speed. However, just when he reduced his speed, that Lu Fu, who had not been moving who was like a tortoise hiding in his shell, suddenly unleashed his strength. A sharp Dou Technique attack, which was completely different from the defensive nature of his ground element, shook the opponent until he was forced to repeatedly pull back more than ten steps after just one strike. A mouthful of fresh blood was spat out and Ge Li seemed to have lost his combat ability.

“Unmoving like a mountain, moving like a thunderbolt, defeating the opponent in one strike. Tsk tsk, this is indeed worthy of being Jia Nan Academy. The combat quality of the students is actually strong to such an extent. No wonder Instructor Ruo Ling really disliked him for not living up to expectations back then when he wanted to take leave. If it were not for Teacher quietly teaching me, just relying on myself to fumble through my training would likely mean that I would really have difficulty catching up with the training progress of the geniuses in this academy.” Xiao Yan felt astonished as he shook his head and sighed in his heart when he saw that one strike Luo Fu used to obtain victory.

Xiao Yan sighed once in his heart and once again placed his attention onto the arena. After the judge announced Luo Fu’s victory in the open ground, the two people, who had completely different feelings, left the open ground under countless number of gazes. The next fight quickly followed as the competition got into a full swing.

This competition with no intermittence also ultimately pushed the atmosphere of the gallery, surrounding the open ground, until it reached a high tide. Deafening cheers shook people’s ears until they began to hurt.

In Xiao Yan’s eyes, the fights that came one after another flashed past, like a walking horse observing the flowers. Xiao Yan had an increased solemnness toward Jia Nan Academy. This Qualifying Competition could roughly represent the strength of the top level students in the Jia Nan Academy’s Outer Academy. From the fights between these people, Xiao Yan could vaguely see that the teachings that Jia Nan Academy adopted toward its students were indeed something fierce. The fighting methods between the students were far from those old-fashioned ones that Xiao Yan had imagined. Instead, they were like combat experienced veterans. When they fought, their sight was sharp and vicious. Moreover, they did not show any mercy when it was time to throw a vicious blow. This somewhat dangerous competition had already exceeded the sparing level of an ordinary academy.

However, a truly outstanding person would definitely not be born from a gentle Ivory tower. Without abundant combat experience and sharp ruthless eyes, one would not have sufficient ability to become a truly strong person. Jia Nan Academy could be considered to have some ability to build this kind of atmosphere within the academy.

“The academy also lets some students enter the ‘Black-Corner Region’ each year to train. Although this action is very dangerous and has even resulted in the academy losing some outstanding talents during each training session, it must be said that the students, who successfully returned, appeared to have undergone a metamorphosis. This kind of transformation is not only displayed in their strength, but it is more of that kind of change in their temperament.” A soft voice suddenly transmitted from the side. Xiao Yan turned his head to take a look and found that it was from Instructor Ruo Ling.

“Uh? Xiao Yan was startled when he heard this. It was a long while later before he nodded and said, “No wonder... that ‘Black-Corner Region’ is indeed a natural training ground. It is just that I did not expect the upper echelons of Jia Nan Academy to actually

have such boldness. That is a place where even the bones of a person will be consumed.”

“The students who go and train can choose to go alone or go as a group, according to their wishes. However, there are very few who choose to go alone other than some people who have absolute confidence in their abilities. On the other hand, if one chooses to form a group, the academy will send an Inner Academy student to go with each group. This student will act as the group leader and lead them to walk out alive from that cruel training ground known as the ‘Black-Corner Region’.” Instructor Ruo Ling’s eyes were slightly absent minded as she slowly spoke, “That Bai Shan, Lu Mu, and the others had once entered the ‘Black-Corner Region’ and they did so alone. Therefore, do not underestimate them.”

Xiao Yan raised his eyebrows and glanced toward Bai Shan in the distance. He did not expect that this fellow had also walked through and encountered the ‘Black-Corner Region’.

During the time that Xiao Yan and Instructor Ruo Ling were conversing, the competition in the arena also gradually reached its end. Following the announcement of the victor by the judge, the competitors, with one being seriously injured and the other suffering minor injuries, were supported by people as they withdrew.

“The thirty-eighth round: Alchemist Department Lu Mu against Huang Class - Second Class, Xiao Yan.”

A judge from the judges’ seats slowly stood up, and said with a clear voice after taking one look around the stadium.

As the voice of the judge fell, the noisy atmosphere immediately became quiet. Countless number of gazes immediately turned toward Xiao Yan. There was some feelings within those gazes. Of course, there were naturally a little more unfriendly ones.

“Looks like a lot of people are waiting to watch you embarrass yourself. After all, this Lu Mu cannot be compared with Xue Beng from yesterday. His strength can be considered within the top ten, even if placed in the entire Outer Academy. Moreover, I heard that he is able to control a flame that possesses quite a strong lethality, due to him being an alchemist. He is a troublesome person, you need to be careful...” Instructor Ruo Ling softly reminded as she eyed the surrounding gazes, which appeared to be gloating.

“Moreover, if you want to completely put an end to the kind of trouble similar to what Bai Shan did last night, the match of yours today is extremely crucial.”

“Xiao Yan ge-ge, do your best.” Xun Er smiled saucily and said from the side.

“Brat, you better not throw my face. If you are to lose to that troublesome fellow, you will be despised by me.” Xiao Yu waved her fist and warned.

“I will do my best.”

Xiao Yan smiled. Under the watch of everyone’s gazes, he slowly stood up and gently pressed his toes against the viewing gallery floor. His body gently drifted and landed on the stage. His straight body, and the large Heavy Xuan Ruler on his back, formed an extremely mysterious picture.

An instant after Xiao Yan landed in the arena, a clear whistle suddenly sounded outside of the arena. A blue shadow instantly cut through the air and finally pressed his legs gently on the surrounding pillars of the arena, before somersaulting in midair and landing in it.

When that blue-clothed figure revealed himself, a tsunami of cheers immediately erupted from the viewing gallery in the surroundings. From the looks of it, there were many people in Jia Nan Academy who hoped Lu Mu would be able to suppress and defeat this Xiao Yan, who had just arrived at the academy, but had displayed great strength.

“This fight should be able to let Xiao Yan display all the limits of his body. That fellow Lu Mu is not like that Xue Beng yesterday.” The corner of Bai Shan’s mouth was lifted into a cold smile as he watched the two people in the arena indifferently. “I want to see just what ability you, Xiao Yan, has, to be together with Xun Er!”

“Fight, fight. It is the best that both of you fight until you are both crippled. In that case, Xun Er will not need to be ruined by Xiao Yan. Otherwise, I will have to fight.” On the other side of the viewing gallery, the red-clothed young lady glanced at the round today, which attracted the most attention while she curled her lips and said.

As various people had sinister motives in their hearts, a match, which was considered quite important to Xiao Yan, was finally about to begin.

Chapter 414: Playing With Fire

The scattered hair of the blue-clothed young man, appearing in front of Xiao Yan, was rolled down. A lazy expression hung on his face, while his body straightened. Although his appearance was not as handsome as Bai Shan, it could still give people a harmonious feeling in their hearts. A face that appeared harmless to human and animals made it extremely easy for people to let their guard down when they looked at him. It was little wonder why Xiao Yu, given her character, would be teased by this fellow when they met for the first time.

“You are Xiao Yan, right? Xiao Yu’s younger cousin brother?” While Xiao Yan was weighing the blue-clothed young man, the latter watched him with a smile and asked.

“Yes.” Xiao Yan only nodded slightly, and responded when he saw that this fellow did not display an expression similar to that of Bai Shan.

“Hee hee, we’re family, we’re family. Relax, brother Xiao Yan, I will hold back when the match begins in a little while and will definitely not cause you to be injured. Otherwise, I will be unlucky if Xiao Yu is infuriated.” Lu Mu immediately laughed when he saw Xiao Yan nodding his head and said with an extremely warm smile.

“Uh...” Xiao Yan was speechless when he heard these words. This fellow really acted familiar all by himself. He was able to pull their relationship to that extent despite this only being their first time meeting. How talented.

“Since it is like this, then I will thank Senior Lu Mu very much. However, I am also very interested in the top five spots. Is Senior Lu Mu willing to let me have it?” Xiao Yan laughed softly.

“*Cough*... Brother Xiao Yan, everything we do should be down to earth, so don’t be too ambitious. Even I don’t have much confidence to get into the top five. Although you have defeated Xue Beng, you should know that fellow’s strength can only be considered the average level in the Qualifying Competition.” Lu Mu’s face reddened as he coughed and said with a smile after hearing Xiao Yan’s words.

Xiao Yan could not resist smiling when he saw Lu Mu’s performance. This fellow was also quite straightforward and was unlike that dark, cold character Bai Shan.

“Start!” At this moment, a middle-aged man from the judge’s seat waved his hand and yelled in a clear voice.

“Senior Lu Mu, defeat Xiao Yan!”

“Let him know the strength of Jia Nan Academy!”

The middle-aged judge’s voice had just fell when waves of cheers were emitted from the viewing gallery. However, most of those who shouted these words were males. Additionally, following this somewhat intense reaction by the male students, it caused some female students, who had some sympathy, to feel a little unhappy. No matter how one put it, the strength that Xiao Yan had displayed yesterday was sufficient to cause many to be shocked. Moreover, Xiao Yan was also not bad looking. His tall body, as well as the delicate and handsome face, also attracted many female gazes. Therefore, not long after those shouts to defeat Xiao Yan sounded, waves of orderly clear female cheers helped Xiao Yan raise his momentum.

“Ke ke, looks like this fellow Xiao Yan is quite liked by the girls. He has only been here for one day and there are already people cheering for him.” Instructor Ruo Ling could not help but cover her mouth and laugh when she heard those lovely cries.

Xun Er also smiled gently by the side.

“Xiao Yan, defeat this medicinal pot!” Xiao Yu was carried by the two different types of cheers that had erupted on the open ground until her face turned red. She hurriedly placed her hands by the side of her mouth and shouted out loud.

Xiao Yan shook his head speechlessly as he heard the two opposing cheers in the stadium that entangled unceasingly with one another. He lifted his head, eyed Lu Mu on the opposite side and shrugged his shoulders. His hand gently grasped the hilt of the Heavy Xuan Ruler on his back. With a swash sound, the heavy ruler cut through the air and was tilted sideways as it pointed toward the ground. A green-colored Dou Qi began to slowly rise within his body and finally wrapped Xiao Yan’s entire body within it. A powerful Qi spread out.

“Senior Lu Mu, please!”

Lu Mu was startled as he sensed the rising, powerful Qi within Xiao Yan’s body. The lazy expression on his face immediately began to gradually disappear. Light from his storage ring flashed out and a metallic sword appeared. He gently lifted the sword and pointed it to Xiao Yan. With a serious expression, he said, “Seeing the Qi of Junior Xiao Yan, I think that you should have already advanced to the Da Dou Shi class, right? No wonder you could easily defeat Xue Beng yesterday. Your training talent is really outstanding.”

“I am also very interested in the top five spots and cannot give them to you. Therefore, I can only use all my strength!” As Lu Mu’s voice fell, a powerful force, that was not much different from the one that came from Xiao Yan, surged out from within his body. After which, it turned into a cluster of red flames that wrapped Lu Mu within it. From a distance, the fiery red glow rolled and burned, much like a cluster of flame.

The two people in the arena now were completely isolated from the noise of the outside world. They were attentive, and their breathing was calm. As they exchanged glances with one another, the Dou Qi that covered their bodies appeared to be breathing as it repeatedly exhaled and shrunk.

The two people in the arena appeared to have remained quiet at the same time. A gentle wind swept past the arena and the swords rattled!

Seemingly having sensed the fight in the arena, which would erupt at the first move, the surrounding viewing gallery also became slightly quiet.

Two Qis, which had each shrouded half of the air within the arena, suddenly solidified. In an instant, everyone felt their eyes become blurry. Two shadows abruptly flashed. The sound of metal colliding and sparks flying immediately erupted from the center of the arena.

Most of the people in the viewing gallery could only see vague black and blue figures in the arena, as well as hear the sound of air being split as the heavy ruler was swung.

After which, they saw the crack lines on the rock surface, which were formed as it repeatedly trembled, due to the colliding of the Dou Qi in the arena. Although they could not see the exact battle, no one could deny the intensity of the fight from the two auras, which were of approximately the same level.

Within the arena, Xiao Yan's heavy ruler swung widely. He used the broad ruler's body and each time he waved, there would be the sound of strong compressed wind. At times, when it was filled with Dou Qi, the sharp force of the ruler's body would smash until crack lines appeared on the ground, even without coming into contact with it. From this, it could be seen just how terrifying the strength was when Xiao Yan swung the heavy ruler.

The metallic sword in Lu Mu's hand was the total opposite of Xiao Yan's big motion attacks. It was instead like a tricky, soft snake and did not come into contact with Xiao Yan's heavy ruler. Occasionally, when they did come into contact, he would pull back at the moment of contact and did not give the slightest opportunity for the heavy ruler to transmit the force over.

The human figures on the open ground flashed, and their Dou Qi collided violently. Numerous pillar-like Dou Qi waves would gush out from their palms and finally collide together, spreading out an energy ripple which swept away all the debris on the open ground.

"This fellow has very tight defense. Even with my sword speed, I am actually unable to make the slightest contact with him." The metallic sword in Lu Mu's hand came attacking in a lightning-like manner. Numerous afterimages, which carried a flaming red Dou Qi, surfaced in front of him. However, regardless of how fast Lu Mu attacked, that enormous ruler would instantly change its direction. Xiao Yan borrowed the broadness of the ruler's body and its extremely hard material to easily block all ten plus afterimages.

As the fight between both parties prolonged, the laziness on Lu Mu's face had gradually disappeared. Only now was his face completely covered with a serious expression. The strength that Xiao Yan had displayed was sufficient to let him treat it with caution.

"Hu..." Lu Mu let out a long breath as his footsteps suddenly retreated slightly. His body immediately leaned forward and the fiery red Dou Qi on the surface of his body swiftly swarmed into the metallic sword. In an instant, a longsword, that contained a cold glint, was transformed into a flaming sword that emitted a high temperature.

A sleek redness also surged up onto Lu Mu's face following the change in the longsword. His hand suddenly trembled and a clear, thunderbolt-like sound appeared from his joints. As the fire sword in his hand pierced out explosively. The high temperature cut through the sky, and even carried a faint, charred smell.

Xiao Yan's eyes became cold when he sensed this change in the other party's longsword. His hands held the hilt of the Heavy Xuan Ruler tightly and with a low cry, the heavy ruler cast a shadow as it stood in front of him like a huge, black-colored wall.

"Clang!"

The fiery red longsword pierced toward the black-colored huge ruler. As this clear ring of the sword sounded, the peak of the sword suddenly bent. The longsword swayed along with the ruler's body and flashed out of the boundary where the black ruler could block it. The longsword violently cut upward and carried a fiery cold glint as it cut toward Xiao Yan's hand, which was holding the ruler's hilt tightly.

Xiao Yan was startled at the other party's longsword, which had suddenly transformed until it was as soft and gentle as a snake. His hand swiftly released the ruler's hilt but his body did not pull back. Instead, he abruptly charged forward.

When his hand left the Heavy Xuan Ruler, the Dou Qi, which was suppressed in Xiao Yan's body, immediately began to soar like a flood. His speed had also greatly increased by a few times as his body turned into a black shadow, which missed the stunned face of Lu Mu in a lightning-like manner. At the moment when they passed each other, Xiao Yan's elbow abruptly smashed downward, which coincidentally smashed into Lu Mu's wrist. The fiery red longsword immediately fell. Lu Mu's hand, however, had become completely numb at this moment.

"Clang..." The longsword fell onto the ground as Lu Mu's body miserably rolled away, dodging the sharp kick, which Xiao Yan had unleashed from behind him.

Xiao Yan only slowly turned around when his attack was futile and appeared to give an unsmiling smile toward Lu Mu who had pulled back by more than ten steps.

The lightning swift exchange finally and abruptly became slow once more. When the students at the viewing gallery saw Lu Mu rolling a couple of times like a pastry, their faces were involuntarily filled with astonishment.

"What great speed. What strong force." Lu Mu's left hand lightly touched his wrist. He used his strength and gave a pull. The corner of his mouth shivered. After which, he shook his head with a face filled with amazement.

Xiao Yan smiled. He slowly walked toward the side of the Heavy Xuan Ruler. However, he did not place his hand on it.

"Ah, I have really underestimated you. Looks like I have no choice but to get serious." Lu Mu sighed. He extended his hands out of his clothes and his gaze stared intently at Xiao Yan as he said, "You should also know of my other identity. Alchemist... the thing I am good at is not Dou Qi... but rather playing with fire!"

Pride flashed across Lu Mu's face. His hands trembled and a deep, blue-colored flame instantly seeped out, and swiftly covered his hands within them. The high temperature caused his face to become a little illusionary.

Surprise flashed across Xiao Yan's eyes as he eyed the deep, blue flame, which had swarmed out of Lu Mu's hands. This should be a kind of 'Beast Flame'. However, the words that Lu Mu had said caused a strange, laughable feeling to surface within his heart. Playing with fire? Hei, with his current flame controlling abilities, even a tier four alchemist would not dare to say something absurd like playing with fire in front of him.

"Brother Xiao Yan, you should be careful. This Blue Crystal Flame has once wounded a strong Dou Ling."

Xiao Yan's smile was strange as he raised his head and watched the proud face of Lu Mu. He nodded slightly and under a countless number of gazes, his long white hand also slipped slowly out of his black robe. After which, he obtained a purple-colored Danwan from his storage ring and stuffed it into his mouth. He then began chewing.

Xiao Yan chewed for a moment before his middle finger and thumb gently rubbed across each other. A clear snapping sound appeared in the stadium.

Following the rubbing movement of the two fingers, Xiao Yan opened his mouth. A cluster of purple flames were immediately spat out in front of many shocked eyeballs. His right hand swayed, and the purple-colored flame was suspended over his palm.

Xiao Yan eyed the purple-colored flame leaping like an elf before raising his face. His actions, caused the entire stadium to descend into a silence. On the opposite side, the originally proud faced Lu Mu had also become stunned at this moment.

"Ke ke, Senior Lu Mu. I'm sorry. What I specialized in is also not Dou Qi... but rather playing with fire!"

Chapter 415: Pill Flame Skill

Two figures were facing each other on the enormous open ground. The hands of the two of them were respectively shrouded by a deep blue and purple-colored flame. As the flames rose, they carried a high temperature that caused the space around the two of them to become a little twisted and illusionary.

The viewing gallery was completely silent as they watched the two different colored flames on the hands of the two of them. It was only a long while later before there was someone who released an exclamation of disbelief.

"Why can that Xiao Yan summon out an essence flame? Isn't that something that can be only done by an alchemist or a strong person of the Dou Wang class and above?"

“Don’t tell me that this fellow is also an alchemist?”

“Purple colored flames, how beautiful...”

Numerous shocked sighs or doubtful voices repeatedly sounded on the viewing gallery around the open ground.

“Why does this brat also have this kind of flame?” Xiao Yu was also startled when she saw the change in situation within the arena. A moment later, she suddenly muttered, “That’s right, back then before he left, I heard that this fellow had a mysterious alchemist teacher. From the looks of it now, he should also be an alchemist? No wonder he can summon out an essence flame similar to Lu Mu’s.”

Xun Er, standing by the side, whose gaze had been staring at the arena, nodded slightly. According to Ling Ying’s report, she clearly knew in her heart that if Xiao Yan were to display all the trump cards which he currently held, it was likely that hardly any strong person of the same class within this academy would be able to defeat him. That Lu Mu may be considered a talented strong person who was hard to come by but he still did not possess too much of a threat from Xiao Yan’s point of view. The current Xiao Yan was far from that useless young man in the Xiao clan back then, who endured looks of disdain and ridicule. Currently, the training talent he had would cause anyone to feel shocked!

On the other side of the viewing gallery, Bai Shan’s expression had become a little darker and more solemn after Xiao Yan had summoned out the purple-colored flame. He also did not expect that the latter would actually possess such a powerful hidden card.

“Hee hee, Big Brother Bai Shan, you need not be worried. Even if that fellow has that kind of flame similar to Lu Mu, it does not mean that he is a match for you. Didn’t that Lu Mu back then lose to you despite having that Blue Crystal Flame of his?” As Bai Shan’s expression became slightly gloomy, a laughter that contained some flattery was emitted from his side. Bai Shan turned his head over to take a look. It was actually the few students from his class who usually followed him around. Bai Shan’s face did not display any joy at these fawning words, which he liked. He merely nodded his head and said faintly, “The Blue Crystal Flame of Lu Mu’s does indeed cause people to be afraid. Back then, I also relied on some luck when I defeated him. However, I wonder if his Blue Crystal Flame or that purple-colored flame is stronger.”

“Regardless of whoever wins, they would only face the prospect of being eliminated when they meet Big Brother Bai Shan. When that time comes, Junior Xun Er would naturally know how outstanding Big Brother Bai Shan is. Her seemingly indifferent but haughty character would definitely not allow her to walk together with a failure. By then, Big Brother’s wish would be fulfilled.”

The corner of Bai Shan's mouth was lifted. No one got tired of hearing nice words. Moreover, the current him liked it the most when other people belittled Xiao Yan in front of him.

"Xiao Yan, I hope that you can defeat Lu Mu. Otherwise, won't it be less fun for me? I will utterly defeat you in front of Xun Er. I want to let you have no face to appear in front of Xun Er again!" A clear, cold laughter sounded in his heart. The smile on Bai Shan's face gradually turned warm. His hands hugged the front of his chest as he faintly watched the arena.

On the other side, that red-clothed young lady was similarly slightly shocked because of the Purple Flame which Xiao Yan had created. However, she quickly recovered. She quietly whispered to herself before throwing her focus into the arena. Compared to those fights earlier today, it was likely that this competition between Xiao Yan and Lu Mu would undoubtedly be the most interesting one. The haughty and arrogant her did not deny this point.

"Old Huo, how is it? Can you see what the origin of that Purple Flame of Xiao Yan's is?" The Deputy Headmaster seated in the chair in the middle smiled as he eyed the old man of few words seated on his left.

"Seeing the thing which he had eaten earlier, I think it should be a medicinal pill or Yaowan that contained the seed of a wild flame. It is really unexpected that he could actually think of this method. However, this thing may appear easy to use but it is extremely difficult to control. There might be some difficulty if Xiao Yan wants to rely on this to contend with Lu Mu's Blue Crystal Flame." The old man called Old Huo mused for a moment before speaking slowly.

Although most of the information regarding Xiao Yan was known to the upper echelons of the Jia Nan Academy, they merely stopped at the rough record, etc. They did not know much about details similar to what kind of flames Xiao Yan possessed, or the finer details. Even though Jia Nan Academy had an information network that left one speechless, it could, after all, not find out everything that happened within the Jia Ma Empire, which was located tens of thousands of kilometers away. Due to them being pressed for time, the sources of information regarding Xiao Yan were mostly some information that their subordinates in their information network had gathered from the ordinary people of the empire. Moreover, there were many things about Xiao Yan which had not spread in that kind of place and in its place were baseless assertions that spread. Therefore, even the upper echelon of the Jia Ma Empire, which had obtained some information about Xiao Yan, were unaware just what kind of stage Xiao Yan's control over the flame had reached.

This also predestined the heartfelt shock that they had felt today!

On the arena, Lu Mu also slowly recovered from the shock that the purple-colored flame above Xiao Yan's hand had given him. He looked deeply once at the black-robed young

man as he asked with a smile, "I didn't expect to meet someone of the same occupation. I think that you should also be an alchemist, right?"

Xiao Yan nodded slightly without denying it.

"Although I don't know your exact tier as an alchemist, I think that it should at least be around tier two. This kind of talent is really shocking." Lu Mu sighed gently. The blue-colored flame in his hand immediately drifted slowly as he stared intently at the flame. A moment later, a surging combat intent seeped out of his body.

"Xiao Yan use your entire strength. Let me see exactly what extent you have reached with the fire that you specialize in!" Lu Mu inhaled a deep breath of air. He abruptly lifted his head and let out a stern cry. A fiery combat intent filled his eyes. As an alchemist, he could be unconcerned with losing to other people in terms of Dou Qi. However, he had an arrogance that belonged to him when it came to playing with fire!

As the stern cry fell, the blue-colored flame in Lu Mu's palm suddenly surged explosively. Finally, it turned into two blue-colored circular fire arcs. The fire arcs circled around Lu Mu's body like two blue snakes that possessed intelligence. They swam up and down, protecting him in their midst.

Xiao Yan's ten fingers intersected each other. He immediately pulled them apart. Between the ten fingers, ten tiny purple colored flame were like tiny whips that coiled around each other. They agilely linked into a long whip, where the purple colored flame was rising from. The long whip shook and was lashed at the ground. A charred, black trace immediately appeared on the hard rock surface.

The two people in the arena appeared to be performing their extremely beautiful flame controlling ability. Countless number of people exclaimed from the viewing gallery. Some of the girls even could not resist forming stars in their eyes. This kind of pretty and elegant fighting method caused their hearts to have limitless yearnings toward this noble occupation known as alchemists.

Shock flashed across Lu Mu's face when he saw the extremely long flame whip in Xiao Yan's hand. The flame control ability of the other party was a little beyond his expectations. However, if it was only just to this point, it was still within the limit which he could handle.

Lu Mu's feet moved slightly. The heels of his feet were slightly raised and suddenly stomped downward an instant later. His body appeared to have transformed into a blue shadow that directly shot explosively toward Xiao Yan.

"Chi!" Xiao Yan's hand moved when he saw Lu Mu charging directly at him from the front. The long Purple Flame whip immediately turned into a vague, purple shadow that burst out. When the high temperature cut past the sky, it carried a strange sound, like hot oil meeting icy snow.

The attacking speed of the long Purple Flame whip was extremely quick. However, just as it was about to reach Lu Mu's body, those two blue-colored fire arcs, which shrouded the surface of his body, suddenly increased their speed. They collided heavily with the Purple Flame whip. In an instant, countless sparks exploded out from the two colored flames.

The sparks continued for an instant when the blue shadow shot out once again. Xiao Yan's long Purple Flame whip was actually completely blocked by Lu Mu's fire arcs!

Lu Mu's toes pushed and he shot into the region three meters from Xiao Yan's body. The corner of his mouth was curled and his hands opened and close. Blue-colored flames suddenly materialized and in a sudden and immediate manner, began spiraling upward. It formed a spiraling, conical flame, only the size of a palm in an extremely short amount of time!

"Hee hee, Xiao Yan, this is an alchemist attacking skill that is unique to our Alchemist Department. Using fire to turn into Qi. The force that erupts from it would not be any weaker than Dou Skills! In the Alchemist Department, we call this 'Pill Flame Skill!'" The conical swirling flame emitted a humming sound from within Lu Mu's palm. Lu Mu parted his mouth and smiled. His palm suddenly smashed toward Xiao Yan's chest.

The tip of the conical flame was directly pointed at Xiao Yan. The sharp portion of the peak created a circular, blue-colored line of wind due to the high speed rotation, turning it into a swirl that appeared at the tip of the flame.

"'Pill Flame skill'? The Alchemist Department here does indeed has some skill. It actually allows the alchemist to use a flame in this manner! No wonder even teacher gave such high praises for Jia Nan Academy. It does indeed has some outstanding places!" Xiao Yan clearly sensed the terrifying energy contained in the conical flame that was shooting explosively toward him. A shock flashed across his heart. Moving with his thoughts, the purple-colored flame whip in his hand instantly shrunk into a cluster of purple-colored flames. The flames wiggled swiftly and under Xiao Yan's abnormally great Spiritual Strength, the purple-colored flame cluster was divided into two in the blink of an eye. A large portion of it was forcefully constructed into a purple-colored flame curtain, while the other small portion was quietly rolled down along Xiao Yan's hand. Finally, it fell onto the ground like a dead snake without anyone noticing.

At this moment, that spiraling conical flame also finally carried a sharp wind splitting sound as it violently smashed into the flame curtain. An intense explosion immediately appeared. It carried a circle of two colored flame waves that erupted and surged out from the center of the arena. An instant later, the heat wave swept through the entire stadium. Those students in the surrounding viewing galleries could not resist turning their heads sideways to avoid the hot air that had suddenly appeared.

Within the arena where the flame wave exploded out, a blue figure suddenly shot back explosively. After his feet slid on the ground for a couple of meters, he finally raised his

head and watched the spot where the flame wave had gradually disappeared. A moment later, the flame wave had completely disappeared, but he did not see a human figure within it.

Lu Mu was slightly startled when he saw this scene. He looked all around him when he suddenly realized that his arms and legs had a slight searing feeling. As he hurriedly lowered his head, his eyes shrunk, realizing that his hands and feet had unknowingly been entangled by two purple-colored chains!

The two fire chains revolved around Lu Mu's hands and legs, much like two small snakes, while emitting a faint heat.

"Don't move. Otherwise, these fire chains will explode. Should that happen, you would not be able to keep your hands and legs." A faint voice suddenly sounded from behind Lu Mu, causing Lu Mu, who had just wanted to resist, to stiffen his entire body.

Lu Mu turned his head with some difficulty. He looked at Xiao Yan, who had unknowingly appeared behind him, and realized that the current him has his right palm slightly opened. Following the movement of his finger, Lu Mu could clearly sense that the temperature of the fire chains that bound his hands and legs had already gradually leaped.

"This fellow... is actually... actually able to control the flame in such an exquisite manner!" Lu Mu eyed Xiao Yan, who was around ten meters from him, but was actually still able to control the flame which had left his body. Shock flashed across Lu Mu's eyes. This kind of distance was something that not even an ordinary tier four alchemist could achieve!

Xiao Yan stood over ten meters away from Lu Mu on the arena while the latter was standing in the same spot with his entire body stiffened. There were a few chains formed by purple-colored flames on his body, which were slowly roaming over him, much like a rope which trapped him within and caused him to be afraid of making the slightest struggle.

In the surrounding viewing gallery, those students, who had just turned their heads away due to the wave of hot air, once again threw their gaze into the arena. However, they coincidentally ended up seeing this strange scene causing astonishment to immediately surface on their faces.

There were only a few countable people in the viewing gallery who had clearly seen how Lu Mu was defeated. Even Bai Shan and the others failed to discover. Therefore, his face was currently completely covered with shock.

"Good brat. Dividing the flame into two. One of them was used to defend and attract Lu Mu's attention while the other was lying hidden underground, creating a trap and waiting for Lu Mu to step onto it. Although the trap was hidden quite coarsely, this was during

combat and there was also the cover of flames. Who would spend a great effort to observe their feet. This kind of doing two things simultaneously requires quite a great amount of Spiritual Strength to complete. This Xiao Yan is worthy of being someone who became the champion of the Jia Ma Empire's Alchemist Grand Meeting." The Old Huo, in the middle viewing gallery, slowly exhaled. His face was filled with amazement.

"I have lost..." Lu Mu did not dare move his body. A long while later, he merely sighed, turned his head toward Xiao Yan and bitterly said.

Xiao Yan smiled when he heard this. He clapped his hands softly and the purple-colored flame surrounding Lu Mu's body immediately transformed into nothingness. Xiao Yan's unintentionally revealing this caused Lu Mu to laugh bitterly once again.

"This Alchemist Department's 'Pill Flame Skill' is also very strong. If I had not used the Dou Qi to agglomerate a small part of the Dou Qi Armor in front of my chest earlier, I would not have been able to block Lu Mu's Spiraling Conical Flame with just the Purple Flame curtain. Looks like if I have the chance in the future, I should study the 'Pill Flame Skills'. Should I be able to practice it, there would be some additional tactics when I fight with others in the future." Xiao Yan lowered his head and eyed his black robe, where a hole had been burned while muttering in his heart.

"This match is won by Xiao Yan of the Huang Class - Second Class!" A clear voice from the judge's seats was once again emitted.

"Boom!"

As the voice of the judge fell, a cheer that came from all direction immediately sounded. The fight between two alchemists today was an eye opener for them!

The name Xiao Yan, would perhaps begin to spread within the entire academy from this moment on. Only until this moment did those doubts about Xun Er's judgement begin to completely disappear. No matter how one put it, a person who not only had an outstanding training talent in terms of Dou Qi but also had a great gift in terms of refining medicine, was someone that one could hardly find, even if placed in the entire Outer Academy!

The Xiao Yan today had truly become famous after one battle!

Chapter 416: Law Enforcement Unit : Wu Hao

As he heard the thunder-like cheers that sounded from the surrounding viewing gallery, Xiao Yan smiled as he cupped his hands together and said to the bitter looking Lu Mu, "Thank you Senior Lu Mu for going easy on me."

"What going easy, a loss is a loss. There is nothing to give in. My open mindedness is not something that most people can compare with." Lu Mu rolled his eyes and

immediately said with a bitter smile, "But little fellow, I did not expect that you were actually hiding your strength so deeply. You might really be able to enter the top five. I will come seek your advice should there be a chance in the future."

Once he said that, Lu Mu cupped his hands at Xiao Yan, turned his body toward the exit of the stadium, and walked over in an extremely decisive manner.

"This person is also quite honest and is much better when compared to that Bai Shan. I can befriend him if there is an opportunity." Xiao Yan eyed that back, and smiled faintly. He lifted his head, and glanced in the direction where Bai Shan was seated, coincidentally coming into contact with the coldness in the other party's eyes. At that instant, the dislike and caution Xiao Yan had toward this person became much denser.

Xiao Yan inserted the Heavy Xuan Ruler onto his back, turned around and descended from the competition stage. After which, he entered the area where the Huang Class - Second Class was seated, under countless number of heated gazes, only to find that a group of young ladies, whom he had only seen once yesterday, had appeared there. When these lively young ladies saw Xiao Yan return, their eyes immediately became starry as they went forward to surround him. Their chattering voices caused Xiao Yan, who had just had a big fight, to feel a little giddy.

"Alright, alright, all of you quiet down." Seeing Xiao Yan being surrounded by this group of pretty and lovely young ladies, Instructor Ruo Ling helplessly shook her head. She could only speak and pull the minds of these young ladies with worshipful looks back.

"Ha ha, no wonder Xun Er jie-jie never paid attention to any other man during these two years in the academy. You actually had such an outstanding person in your heart." A young lady leaped to Xun Er side, and teased with a lovely laugh.

TL: jie-jie - older sister/ older female friend

As she heard this, an alluring blush surfaced on Xun Er's exquisite face. The instant, charming style of hers caused even Instructor Ruo Ling, who stood beside her, to feel her heart move, let alone those male students around them whose eyes had suddenly straightened.

Xiao Yan smiled and took two steps forward to sit beside Xun Er. He sniffed the body fragrance transmitted from the young lady beside him and sensed the jealous envious gazes shot from around him, causing him to be unable to help but suddenly feel slightly absent minded. Back then, during the period of time in Wu Tan City, when he was a useless person, the surrounding gazes were always filled with ridicule and superciliousness when he walked with Xun Er. At that time, it was likely that those people were thinking in their eyes: Did this toad not feel ashamed by walking next to a beautiful swan?

Now, after two years of tough training, there was no longer anyone who used the look back then to look at him when he walked beside Xun Er again. This was because the talent and strength that Xiao Yan had currently displayed completely gave him the qualification to be comparable to Xun Er, this girl favored by the heavens.

This was the difference between having ability, and not having it!

Back then, he had always said at every single moment that he was working hard for the three year agreement. However, deep within his heart, he was also thinking of working hard and raising his own strength, so that there would no longer be anyone who would use that kind of expression to look down at him when he was together with Xun Er in the future.

Three years had already passed since the time that he had been a useless person. During these three years, Xiao Yan relied on his own effort to fulfill his desire to successfully defeat Nalan Yanran, and allowed himself to possess the qualification to be together with Xun Er!

Xiao Yan let out a long breath. He tilted his head to eye Xun Er, whose gaze was staring at the competition within the arena. Being shone under the faint sunlight, the current Xun Er was almost completely wrapped in a circular golden light, appearing quiet and gentle, much like a beautiful picture. This caused an intoxication, which rose from his heart, to flash across Xiao Yan's eyes. The two years of lonely training had allowed Xiao Yan to understand that the girl in front of him was the one who possessed the deepest imprint within his heart!

This imprint was firmly imprinted when he was young. Actually, Xun Er had always said that if it were not for the ignorant Xiao Yan charging into her room when they were children, and using his Dou Qi, which he was totally unskilled in, to warm her seemingly weak body and persisting to do so for a couple of years, how would she have completely placed Xiao Yan deep within her heart? However, she had also maintained the same warmth and respect toward Xiao Yan when he was in his most despondent moments, causing that inner heart of Xiao Yan, which far exceeded those of his age, to completely open up toward this girl who only displayed her kindness and cuteness to him.

Xiao Yan's hand slowly moved along under the table and extended over. He finally grabbed Xun Er's seemingly boneless, small hands and felt the delicate and smooth palm. The inner heart of Xiao Yan gently trembled.

Xun Er's lovely body gently shook when Xiao Yan suddenly grasped her small hand. She used her gaze and appeared somewhat guilty as she looked at Instructor Ruo Ling, Xiao Yu, and the others nearby. She only sighed in relief when she saw that none of them had discovered Xiao Yan's action. Turning her head toward Xiao Yan, she said in a soft, annoyed manner, "Xiao Yan ge-ge."

"You are mine. No matter how large the faction behind you is, I will definitely not give up!" The hand, which held that delicate small hand, slightly tightened. Xiao Yan used a voice that only the two of them could hear as he slowly spoke. Although his voice was calm, it was not difficult to hear an overbearingness and determination from within it.

Xun Er was initially startled when she heard Xiao Yan's words. A blood redness, like that of dawn, immediately and suddenly rose up onto her snow-white exquisite face. She did not expect that Xiao Yan would actually say such words of love that contained a very rich, hidden meaning at this moment.

Even with Xun Er's indifferentness, she also could not act as though nothing had happened under these sudden words of Xiao Yan's. Her face was as red as an apple. For the first time in all these years, a wave that could not be hidden rose within her heart, which was rippleless, like an old well.

"Xun Er, is something wrong?" Xun Er's unusual expression did not escape Instructor Ruo Ling's gaze at the side. She was initially startled before her gaze immediately drifted downward and coincidentally saw Xiao Yan's hand, which was hurriedly being pulled back. A sleek redness had also similarly swarmed up onto his face. She helplessly shook her head and appeared to talk to herself: "Young one, you should control yourself in public. Although I know your relationship with Xun Er is an intimate one, you should not provoke those male students who have intentions toward Xun Er in such a public place. If you do you will provoke a riot, I want to see if you can withstand a thousand people by yourself.

Xiao Yan smiled awkwardly, but did not dare to interrupt. He hurriedly threw his gaze toward the intense battle in the arena.

Beside him Xun Er also swiftly withdrew her rolling heart, as she guiltily glanced at Instructor Ruo Ling by her side. After which, she also threw her gaze back toward the arena, where a fight was taking place.

"Ah, this girl. She is able to be so indifferent when faced with an outsider, but in front of Xiao Yan, she is no different from a little girl in love. It really is one person surrendering to another. I really don't know how this fellow Xiao Yan managed to hook away the heart of a girl like Xun Er." Instructor Ruo Ling saw the remaining redness, that was still present on Xun Er's face, and shook her head while bitterly smiling in her heart.

TL: one thing surrendering to another thing - everything in this world has a weakness

As the names sounded from the judge's mouth, many human figures repeatedly flashed onto the arena. After undergoing an intense or boring fight, the victor would have an excited face, while the loser would withdraw from the arena in a dejected manner.

As one round after one round of competition passed, the originally one hundred and seventy plus people had gradually been eliminated until there were only sixty plus

people left. If this continued for another few round, it was likely that the names of those who had the qualification to enter the Inner Academy would be born.

“The forty-first round: Xuan Class - First Class, Yan Cheng... Law Enforcement Unit, Wu Hao!”

When the names for the next fight in the arena were announced again, however, the stadium suddenly became a lot quieter. Under the pressure of a certain renown name, the students in the viewing gallery could not help but lower their voices.

“Law Enforcement Unit, Wu Hao...” Xiao Yan slowly repeated this name. He turned his head toward Instructor Ruo Ling and said, “I think that this should be that person whom Instructor mentioned the other day?”

“Ah.” Instructor Ruo Ling’s face became a little more grave. She softly said, “This Wu Hao has quite a great reputation in the Law Enforcement Unit. The number of people from the ‘Black-Corner Region’ who died to his hands during these past two years is at least over a hundred. His strength is quite frightening.”

Xiao Yan nodded slightly. Looks like this would indeed be a difficult rival.

“Additionally, I shall tell you something that will give you headache. This Wu Hao once wooed Xun Er, and even directly voiced his intentions in public. However, he was later rejected by Xun Er. Nevertheless, this fellow does not seem to have given up.” Instructor Ruo Ling teased, “Before you have arrived at the academy, this Wu Hao was viewed by Bai Shan as his strongest love rival. Unfortunately, these two people, who were thought of by a countless number of people in the academy as the ones most likely to woo Xun Er, failed because of your appearance.”

“Beautiful women are the root of trouble.” Xiao Yan laughed bitterly as he shook his head. His gaze was immediately thrown to the arena. At this moment, there was already a young man standing within it. With his outstanding eyesight, Xiao Yan was able to clearly see the bitterness on this young man’s face.

“He is able to cause his opponents to feel fear within their hearts before even appearing. This Wu Hao...” Xiao Yan muttered in his heart. His eyes, which were staring at the arena, shrunk. On the opposite side of the young man, there was a human figure, whose entire body was wrapped in a blood-red robe, standing on the originally empty rock surface. It appeared like he was a ghost which had suddenly appeared.

“What frightening speed. This person is very strong!” Xiao Yan’s eyes stared intently at the blood-red human figure, and a rare seriousness swept across his face.

The moment the blood-robed human figure appeared, the originally noisy stadium suddenly became quiet. A bloody scent slowly permeated the entire open ground.

Chapter 417: Challenge

The noisy open ground had become much quieter following the appearance of the blood-robed figure. When the bloody scent came spreading out, some of the students, whose strength was still inferior, felt a chill all over their body despite the sun hanging high in the sky at this moment.

“I’m afraid that this fellow has just returned from performing his mission. This bloody aura is even more dense than those fellows from the ‘Black-Corner Region’.” The red-clothed young lady’s eyebrows became vertical. Her pupils directly eyed the blood-robed human figure while she spoke softly.

“He has indeed managed to hurry back, huh...” The originally smile filled face of Bai Shan became slightly darker and more solemn when he saw the blood-robed human figure appear. In the Outer Academy of the Jia Nan Academy, the one which he feared the most was not the Little Witch, who caused the expressions of others to change when they heard her name, nor was it Xun Er, whose character was indifferent, but strength was great and unfathomable. Instead, it was this man, whose body was filled with a bloody aura!

During these two years, Bai Shan and Wu Hao had openly and secretly exchanged blows more than ten times. Unfortunately, each time, he did not obtain victory. The other person’s aura, which was composed of an intent to kill for the sake of killing, was really too frightening. Bai Shan could foresee that if Wu Hao were given sufficient time to grow, it was likely that his achievements in the future would be extremely terrifying. In the countless number of clashes between Jia Nan Academy, and the ‘Black-Corner Region’ during these few years, this blood-robed man was bathed in blood all the way as he stepped over a countless number of corpses. He activated and maximized his potential in those brutal life and death battles. One step at a time, he walked from being an ordinary member of the Law Enforcement Unit to the level he was now!

In the Law Enforcement Unit, this man had a nickname that caused people to respect and fear: Blood Demon! A fierce name that was formed from blood and a countless number of corpses.

“What a dense bloody aura. Ah, Wu Tian Liang, that lunatic. Does he really want to train Wu Hao into a person who exists for the sole purpose of killing people?” On the seats in the middle of the stadium, a yellow-robed old man frowned and said, “If this continues, Wu Hao would sooner or later lose his reasoning due to his killing aura being too rich.”

“I don’t think so. Although Wu Tian Liang may be eccentric and vicious, he has always viewed Wu Hao as his own child. I think that by letting him come to participate in the Inner Academy Qualifying Competition, he wants to let Wu Hao temporarily take leave from the Law Enforcement Unit. The Inner Academy, where all sorts of weird, talented individuals gather, should be able to suppress Wu Hao, whose character is indifferent

and who views human lives as worthless.” The Deputy Headmaster mused for a moment before slowly speaking.

“Hopefully... if such an outstanding seedling were to be damaged, that would be a great loss to the academy.” The old man earlier sighed again before he replied.

“That’s right. Back then, even the Headmaster personally said that if Wu Hao is given ten years and his reasoning is able to remain uncorroded by the bloody aura, his strength might well reach an extremely strong stage.” The old man who was called Old Huo also nodded slightly as he spoke.

“Ke ke, looks like there are quite a number of extremely outstanding seeded competitors in the Qualifying Competition this year.” The Deputy Headmaster smiled and said, “Bai Shan, Wu Hao, Xun Er, and that Xiao Yan who had appeared out of nowhere. Looking at the strength displayed by these few people, this year’s one is of far higher quality.”

“You have forgotten about that Little Witch of your family that gives people a headache. How many people in this Outer Academy are not afraid of her?” The old man on one side rolled his eyes and said.

The Deputy Headmaster laughed bitterly when he heard this. His gaze was turned toward one spot on the viewing gallery. As he eyed the red clothed young lady leaning on the guardrail, his eyes pulsed and suddenly said in a flustered and exasperated manner, “I am extremely satisfied with her talent. However, that character of hers causes people to be afraid of paying compliments. The old me is still waiting for her to find a good man to birth a baby and continue the family line. Who would have thought that she... actually pays no attention to men!”

The three old men could not resist laughing involuntarily when they heard these words of him.

“That Bai Shan, Wu Hao, Lu Mu, or even Xiao Yan. All of them are talents that one could rarely find. Among the younger generation, they belong to the exceptionally outstanding class. After the Qualifying Competition is over and they enter the inner academy, the first five will have a special examination according to the rules. When that time comes, I think that Jia Hu would be a little moved after living with them for some time.” The old man beside the Deputy Headmaster comforted with a smile. Hu Jia, was likely the name of that red-clothed young lady.

“Bai Shan’s talent is indeed not bad, but his open-mindedness is a little inferior. Wu Hao is dedicated to fighting and killing. During these years, I have never seen him have any feelings for any girl with the exception of Xun Er. As for Lu Mu, the person he likes is not the type of girl like Hu Jia. We don’t even need to bother mentioning about Xiao Yan. With that kind of beautiful and outstanding girl like Xun Er, would he go and love another person?” The Deputy Headmaster shook his head and smiled bitterly.

Hearing this, the three old men could only display completely helpless expressions.

The Deputy Headmaster sighed and threw out this problem which gave him a headache. His gaze was once again focused on the competition.

Following the appearance of Wu Hao, who was wearing a blood robe in the arena, the judge waited for a moment before shouting the catchword for the competition to begin.

The cry of the judge had just fell when Wu Hao's opponent hurriedly withdrew more than ten steps. The Dou Qi circulated swiftly through his body, and finally formed a Dou Qi cloak on the surface of his body. He gripped his weapon tightly in his hand as his gaze stared intently at Wu Hao, who remained still across from him. He had not even blinked once.

The students in the viewing gallery around the arena did not let out any mocking laughter when they saw this action of his. During these few years, the name of the Blood Demon Wu Hao was not any less famous than the Little Witch Hu Jia, or Xun Er within the Jia Nan Academy's Outer Academy. From a certain angle, Wu Hao may have even greatly surpassed the two of them.

The blood robe moved slightly. There was a pair of pupils filled with killing intent, much like a bloodthirsty pack of wolves in the grassland. Just this pair of eyes, which did not contain any emotion, caused his opponent to feel that his head had become a little numb while his hand was drenched with perspiration.

"Are you not going to concede?" A hoarse voice slowly sounded from under the blood robe .

Hearing this, the expression of the competitor called Yan Cheng became a little ugly. He gritted his teeth and said with a strong front while feeling weak inside, "Just attack. I want to see just how strong the Blood Demon actually is!"

After saying this, it appeared that Yan Cheng was afraid that if he continued the face off, he would sooner or later lose the courage to fight in front of everyone's gazes. Immediately, he stepped off the ground and his body shot explosively toward Wu Hao. With the increase of the Dou Qi in the sharp weapon within his hand, he directly cut open the air.

The blood-robed figure did not even move when faced with Yan Cheng's attack, which contained a hint of anger. However, just as the attack was about to strike his body, his body suddenly wavered. The human figure instantly disappeared in a bizarre manner.

Yan Cheng's attack missed and he shrank his eyes. Without any hesitation, the weapon in his hand once again pierced toward his back.

“Clang!” The tip of the sword, which was made of steel, had just pierced toward his back when a blood-red colored heavy sword appeared out of nowhere, easily blocking the sword in front of him. The heavy sword was quite large in size, with its body being around three inch wide. It was almost comparable to Xiao Yan’s Heavy Xuan Ruler.

As one heard the sound of compressed wind emitted when the heavy sword was swung, it was likely that the weight of the sword could not be underestimated.

The two swords came into contact. With a random gentle swing of the heavy sword, the force contained on it shook the longsword in Yan Chang’s hand until it flew out of his grasp. The latter used all his strength to hold onto it. Not only did he not succeeded, but the area between his thumb and index finger was convulsed by the enormous strength on the sword until it broke open, fresh blood flowed.

In their first exchange, a weapon was brought down. This scene caused even Xiao Yan who sat in the viewing gallery to feel a little surprise. No matter how one put it, that Yan Cheng was also a five star Dou Shi.

Astonishment flashed across Yan Cheng’s face as his weapon fell. His feet swiftly withdrew and had just pulled back about ten meters when he suddenly felt a cold air flowing behind him. Before he had the time to react, a heavy sword, containing a blood color, was fixed onto his neck. The thick, cold air that was emitted from the sharp edge of the sword caused Yan Cheng’s body to instantly stiffen.

In just two exchanges, that Yan Cheng, who had the strength of a five star Dou Shi, was defeated. This kind of result caused an uproar to sound throughout the stadium. Although there was hardly anyone who held the extravagant hope that Yan Cheng could defeat Wu Hao, no one expected that Yan Cheng could only endure two exchanges before a sword was placed against his neck...

“What a fast speed...” As Xiao Yan watched Wu Hao in the arena holding a blood-colored heavy sword while calmly standing behind Yan Cheng, some seriousness surfaced on Xiao Yan’s face.

“The thing that Wu Hao is best at is speed. Moreover, he also practices a Xuan Class High Level Agility Dou Technique: ‘Blood Shadow Flash’. He has borrowed the unique effect of this Agility Dou Technique in order to appear behind Yan Cheng without leaving a trace earlier. Moreover, his strength is also extremely strong. This can be clearly seen from how he lifts that large heavy sword and waves it around in his hand as though it is something light.” Xun Er, by his side softly revealed some of the information regarding Wu Hao. She was also a little worried that Xiao Yan would be at a disadvantage, due to not having sufficient information should he end up facing Wu Hao.

“His speed and strength are not weak... Isn’t that quite similar to me?” Xiao Yan lifted his eyebrows and glanced at the heavy sword in Wu Hao’s hand. He then glanced at the Heavy Xuan Ruler on his back. The two were similarly heavy type weapons. If the

two of them were to fight, it would be a match of speed against speed, strength against strength. A breathtaking battle that would leave everyone speechless.

“This fellow seems to be an opponent that is even more formidable than Bai Shan. I must be more cautious toward this person in the future.”

“It is indeed worthy being the Jia Nan Academy. Strong young people emerge endlessly from this place. If I had not undergone the tough training these two years, it would really be difficult to catch up with these abnormal fellows.” Xiao Yan exclaimed. When he was training in the Jia Ma Empire, other than Nanlan Yanran, who had borrowed help from her sect, he had seldom met anyone else among the younger generation who was on par with him. However, he had only arrived at Jia Nan Academy a few days ago, when opponents who were well-matched with him appeared frequently. This caused Xiao Yan to be unable to help but sigh emotionally. This place was really where the talented gather!

At the moment Wu Hao placed the heavy sword on his opponent’s neck within the arena, a judge hurriedly shouted the phrase for the competition to end. The Qualifying Competition can tolerate injuries but the academy did not wish to see deaths. Therefore, there was a rule in the competition that one could not deal a killing blow when the other party did not have any ability to resist. Otherwise, he would be severely punished. This rule was something that other people may comply with but for Wu Hao, who was used to killing people, it was merely something in passing. Therefore, that judge did not dare to delay. He was afraid that if his shout was a mere second late, another bright redness would be added to that heavy sword, which was already tainted with countless amounts of fresh blood.

The blood-colored heavy sword in Wu Hao’s hand trembled slightly when he heard the judge’s cry. He immediately slowly pulled it back. As the heavy sword left, that Yan Cheng’s entire body became exhausted as he collapsed while repeatedly panting.

Wu Hao ignored Yan Cheng who knelt next to his leg. His blood-red robe shook slightly, and a pair of indifferent eyes slowly moved up along the viewing gallery. Finally, he stopped at the place where the Huang Class - Second Class was watching from. More accurately speaking, it should be that it stopped at Xiao Yan, who sat beside Xun Er.

Under the focus of a countless number of gazes present, he lifted the blood-colored heavy sword in his hand. Finally, he pointed at Xiao Yan from a distance. His hoarse, indifferent voice resounded throughout the stadium.

“You are Xiao Yan?”

“Do you dare to come down and have a fight with me?”

The indifferent, hoarse voice caused the entire viewing gallery to be startled. Immediately, countless number of gazes gave out a 'swish' sound as they turned toward the black-robed young man not far away!

Chapter 418: Heirloom Jade Piece

Wu Hao's hoarse, indifferent voice focused all of the gazes in the stadium onto the black-robed young man. These gazes were filled with a gloating feeling, expectations and all sorts of other emotions. Regardless of what it was, the sentence Wu Hao had just said caused Xiao Yan to be the focus of attention in the entire arena.

Xiao Yan's gaze stared intently at the blood-robed human figure in the arena. His eyes narrowed before he immediately stood up slowly in front of the countless number of gazes. There was not the slightest hint of fear on his face, even when faced by the great strength of his opponent.

The two sets of gazes met in midair, and faint, powerful Dou Qi simultaneously surged out of the bodies of the two of them without any prior agreement. A slight energy ripple also spread out from the surface of the two people's bodies. This was the phenomenon created by Dou Qi swiftly circulating within their bodies.

Seeing the two of them, who were steadily beginning to face each other with their force, the students in the surrounding viewing gallery immediately got excited. If these two people were to fight, it would definitely be a fierce battle.

Xun Er frowned slightly by Xiao Yan's side. She opened her mouth. That hesitating manner of hers where she hovered before speaking, otherwise revealed her desire to stop Xiao Yan, but at the same time worried that if she was to speak, those students would think that Xiao Yan only knew how to hide behind a woman. Therefore, the words that came to her mouth were finally not voiced.

"Hee hee, fight. It would be best if the both of you end up suffering serious injuries and letting me save some energy." Bai Shan coldly smiled and watched the two people facing off against each other from the other side of the viewing gallery.

"It would be really fun if they were to really fight. Unfortunately, that old fellow will definitely not let such a thing happen." The red-clothed young lady placed her hands on the guardrail. Her gaze swept across Xiao Yan and Wu Hao as she said regretfully.

Seemingly accompanying her thoughts, an old cry suddenly sounded, just as the force of Xiao Yan and Wu Hao in the stadium gradually escalated. The voice suddenly shook the force that the two of them took much effort to raise until nothing was left.

"The both of you better follow the rules and not create any trouble. Now is the Qualifying Competition, not a place for the both of you to privately challenge one another!"

The force which the two of them had already brewed was forcefully shattered, causing Xiao Yan's and Wu Hao's bodies to tremble. Each of them immediately took a step back. They lifted their gaze and looked in the direction of the voice, only to find a white-haired old man, who carried a fury on his face at the middle position.

"That is the Deputy Headmaster Hu Gan. Other than the Headmaster, he has the greatest authority in the Outer Academy. Do not contradict him. Otherwise, it would not be good if you leave a bad impression." Xun Er's soft voice suddenly sounded by Xiao Yan's ear.

Xiao Yan nodded slightly. His gaze paused for an instant on Wu Hao's body in the arena before he lowered his gaze and slowly sat back down.

"Wu Hao, you will also withdraw. Tomorrow is the last day of the Qualifying Competition. When the time comes, there will naturally be an opportunity for all of you to fight with one another!" After seeing Xiao Yan pull back, Hu Gan's gaze turned toward the blood-robed human figure in the arena and shouted.

Wu Hao knit his brows slightly when he heard Hu Gan shout. His eyes, however, were staring intently at Xiao Yan, who sat in the viewing gallery. The latter also looked back at him without any change in expression. After they exchanged stares for a while, Wu Hao shook his hand and the blood-colored heavy sword was placed into his storage ring. A hoarse voice was slowly emitted, "I hope that you will not disappointment me tomorrow. I don't wish to see that the person whom Xun Er has waited for such a long time, to be a useless person."

Xiao Yan smiled faintly, but did not reply. Once Wu Hao spoke these words, he, too, did not continue to stay. He turned around and walked out of the arena.

Seeing that the Deputy Headmaster had forcefully torn apart an intense fight that was about to break out, the students in the viewing gallery immediately shook their heads in disappointment.

"Alright. The competition will continue." Hu Gan ordered, after breaking the two of them up with a wave of his hand

As the voice rang out, names were once again begin read from the judges' seats.

During the next ten plus competitions that followed, Xiao Yan had finally personally witnessed Xun Er in a fight. However, after observing for a while, he helplessly shook his head. It was clear that this girl only displayed a portion of her strength to fight with her opponent. Even if this was the case, she obtained her expected victory after only ten exchanges.

Xiao Yan eyes watched that saucy-looking Xun Er, who had withdrawn from the arena, and rolled his eyes. Seeing this action of hers, Xiao Yan's intention of analyzing her exact strength during her fight was dashed.

Not long after Xun Er fought, Bai Shan and that red-clothed young lady also came forward to fight once. The two people were indeed worthy of being the ones whom Instructor Ruo Ling had warned him to be careful of. The two people's opponents were a six star Dou Shi and a seven star Dou Shi respectively. The six star Dou Shi, who had faced Bai Shan, was a little better. After ten plus exchanges with Bai Shan, he chose to take the initiative to admit defeat and ended up leaving the arena unharmed.

The opponent of the red-clothed young lady, on the other hand, was very unlucky. The two people finished performing the initial etiquette and before the judge's voice could finish saying 'begin', the red-clothed young lady had already strangely appeared in front of her opponent. Her gentle, drifting palm contained a powerful force that caused people's expression to change greatly. With a slap, she violently smacked the seven star Dou Shi, who had a Dou Qi cloak, out of the arena. After which, the latter continued rolling on the ground for over ten meters before he came to a miserable stop.

On the viewing gallery, shock involuntarily appeared on his face as he watched the red-clothed young lady's sturdy action, which left some people speechless

After Bai Shan and the red-clothed young lady participated, there were not many interesting situations in the remaining competition. Therefore, after Xiao Yan, Xun Er had observed a few rounds, they chose to be the first to exit the noisy stadium. Xiao Yan and Xun Er slowly walked within the academy, enjoying this warm moment of being alone together, something which had been absent for the last two years.

The sky gradually darkened. Xiao Yan and Xun Er once again returned to that elegant home which belonged to Instructor Ruo Ling. When they returned to the house this time around, they met a familiar person, which Xiao Yan had remembered quite deeply back then.

There was a tall, young lady standing prettily in the living room. A pale-purple colored blouse, and a short skirt that placed the legs together undoubtedly exposed the liveliness and energy of the young lady. That face, which held some enchanting and pure characteristics, now appeared even more filled with temptation. Her large, watery eyes appeared as though they could speak.

The face of the young lady contained a smile as she looked over. She appeared to be muddling along quite well in the academy. Of course, with her appearance, there would be a large number of people courting her no matter where she went. However, this young lady, who usually appeared extremely calm in front of the men, anxiously stood up when she saw Xiao Yan enter. She then timidly called out 'Elder Cousin Xiao Yan'.

After Xiao Mei stood in front of him for a while, Xiao Yan eyed that face, which was even prettier than in the past and now filled with temptation. He smiled and nodded but was not overly warm. Back then, when he had become a useless person, the young lady in front of him had chosen to avoid him, completely hurting his younger self. Therefore, Xiao Yan had a great resistance toward her. Although after two to three years, that kind of resistance had paled significantly, Xiao Yan did not reveal an overly warm expression. He accompanied Xun Er, Xiao Yu, and the others to chat with Xiao Mei in the living room for a while before randomly finding an excuse to stand up and return to his room.

The girls sat on the soft sofa and eyed Xiao Yan's back as he slowly went up to the next floor. Xiao Mei bit her red lips tightly with the back of her teeth. Her eyes were filled with dismay and regret. After some things were done wrongly, there was no longer any chance to reconcile with him. Back then, before Xiao Yan had become a useless person, the relationship between Xiao Mei and Xiao Yan could be unceremoniously said to be comparable to that between Xiao Yan and Xun Er. However... ever since the genius fell from the sky, she chose a route that was in the opposite direction from Xun Er. Xun Er still stayed by his side and never betrayed him, while she was too realistic, cutting an extremely heart-breaking boundary between the two of them...

That boundary still had an eye-piercing crack line even now, regardless of how she tried to make-up for it.

Xun Er could only maintain silence as she eyed Xiao Mei's gloomy expression. She understood Xiao Yan extremely well. This man, who appeared to be gentle, was peerlessly haughty within his heart. Xiao Mei had hurt him back then. Regardless of whether it was on purpose or not, intentionally or unintentionally, she would forever lose the chance to completely mend the relationship between the two of them.

No matter how a person, who had hurt him in the past, treats him in the future, he would have great difficulty accepting them. On this point, Xiao Mei was such a person, and Nalan Yanran was also this way. Back then, when Xiao Mei had chosen to alienate herself from her relationship with Xiao Yan, as well as when Nalan Yanran had come to the Xiao clan to cancel the engagement, Xun Er had said one sentence, "I hope that you will not regret this in the future..."

At this moment, the two women, whom had once hurt Xiao Yan, indeed regretted their actions. However, it was already too late. This man with a proud heart would no longer go and touch something which had abandoned him, nor would he think that it was worthwhile to do so.

Xun Er suddenly smoothed out her breath as she thought up to this point. She rejoiced a little at her choice back then. Otherwise, no matter how outstanding she was, it was likely that she would never break into that man's heart.

Faint moonlight scattered into the quiet room from the window. Xiao Yan sat cross-legged on the bed. There was a slight fluctuation in the air around him. Threads of energy followed his breathing and entered his body. After which, they were refined into Dou Qi and stored within the Dou Crystal of his vortex.

This training continued for three hours. Only then did Xiao Yan slowly opened his eyes. A wisp of green-colored flame flashed past his dark pupils. It swiftly disappeared.

“There is an increasing amount of Dou Qi in the Dou Crystal. According to this speed, I should be able to reach a six star Da Dou Shi if I am given another ten days.” Xiao Yan clenched his fist as he softly muttered.

“Ah, my strength is still far from sufficient...” Xiao Yan frowned and waved his hand. An ancient jade piece appeared in his hand. The jade piece was entirely pale-green in color. There was a spot of light slowly swimming in it. This spot of light represented the life of Xiao Yan’s father, Xiao Zhan. If the spot of light was lit, it meant that his life was not in any danger, if the light spot disappeared, that was the moment when Xiao Zhan, including his spirit, had been destroyed.

Xiao Yan held the ancient jade piece. He felt a little absent-minded and sad. When he was young, regardless of whether he was a genius or a useless person, his father had never flashed him any unusual looks. At the time when there were eyes rolling and ridicule all over the clan, his father still maintained his pampering toward him. Each time when the Xiao Yan, who was a little boy, was injured, he would smile, pat the little boy on his shoulders and tell him that a man must be strong. Tears and dispirited feelings would not let anyone become a strong person.

All of this caused Xiao Yan, who had another matured spirit to accept him, place his father in an extremely important position in his heart.

“Father, I will find you.” Xiao Yan held the jade piece tightly in his head. His eyes had slowly become a lot colder. Regardless of what kind of great beings captured his father were, he would let them pay the price in the future!

As the emotions fluctuated within his heart, a wisp of green-colored flame rose from his palm. The sudden appearance of the green-colored flame caused Xiao Yan to be startled. Immediately, his expression changed drastically. With a thought, the green-colored flame swiftly disappeared. Xiao Yan hurriedly spread out the hand, which he used to hold the jade piece. However, he was stunned to realize that the ancient jade piece, which he originally thought was extremely weak, was actually able to resist the terrifying temperature of the ‘Green Lotus Core Flame’.

“This...” Shock flashed across Xiao Yan’s eyes. For the first time, he used a scrutinizing gaze to study this piece of ancient jade, which had always been passed down within the Xiao clan. According to the Elder, this jade piece was something old that only the clan leader had the qualification to hold. Even they did not know much about it.

Xiao Yan's eyes carefully observed the ancient jade piece. He borrowed the moonlight and suddenly realized that under the shine of the moonlight, this jade piece seemed to have some extremely complicated and mysterious markings. Xiao Yan's eyes observed it for a very long time until he started to feel dizzy.

Shaking his head, Xiao Yan shook off the feeling from his mind. The astonishment in his heart grew even more intense following his careful observation. This piece of jade did not appear to simply have the effect of storing a thread of the spirit of the clan leader as he had thought. Xiao Yan's hand moved along the edge of the jade piece and slowly rubbed it. A moment later, his finger abruptly stiffened. When he rubbed up and down along the top edge of the jade piece, he realized that the edge at this point was different from the other sides. The other sides were naturally formed but this spot appeared to be like a whole piece of jade was forcefully split apart.

"What exactly is this thing? It appears that I can only properly ask the few elders the next time I return to the Xiao clan. The Xiao clan seems to have some things that we, the younger generation, do not know about." Doubt rose within Xiao Yan's heart. He stared at this ancient jade piece for a long time, but did not discover anything. He could only shake his head helplessly as he carefully returned the jade piece to his storage ring.

Not long after Xiao Yan stored the jade piece, the dark, black ring on his finger trembled slightly. Immediately, the illusionary figure of Yao Lao slowly drifted out.

"I do not sense the presence of the 'Heavenly Flame' in this Jia Nan Academy." Yao Lao said somewhat helplessly the moment he came out.

"Uh?" The bad news that had suddenly arrived caused Xiao Yan's expression to change immediately. He frowned and whispered, "Did teacher not say that it was possible to obtain news about the 'Fallen Heart Flame' here at the Jia Nan Academy?"

"Back then, I had indeed discovered the presence of the 'Heavenly Flame' in this region belonging to the Jia Nan Academy. Now, however, I do not have that kind of feeling." Yao Lao laughed bitterly.

"Don't tell me that it has ended up in someone else's hand?" Xiao Yan expression was a little ugly. The 'Fallen Heart Flame' was a key factor for his strength to soar.

"I don't think that is the case. Although I cannot sense the exact presence of the 'Fallen Heart Flame', the unique attraction between 'Heavenly Flames' allows me to use the 'Bone Chilling Flame' to vaguely sense that there is still a weak remanent presence of the 'Fallen Heart Flame' within a few thousand kilometer radius of the academy.

"Thousands of kilometers... until when are we going to find it?" Xiao Yan pulled at the corner of his mouth.

“I think that with those old fellows within the Jia Nan Academy, it is not possible that they did not discover the presence of the ‘Fallen Heart Flame’. I keep feeling that the Inner Academy has a little relation to this...” Yao Lao spoke slowly.

“Inner Academy?” Xiao Yan was startled.

“Yes, the Inner Academy is the true core of the Jia Nan Academy. If you can infiltrate it, I think we should be able to obtain some information about the ‘Fallen Heart Flame’.” Yao Lao was quiet for a while before he suggested.

“Ah, I will try my best...” Xiao Yan sighed. Since he had already arrived at Jia Nan Academy, it was natural that he would not leave empty handed.

“Ah, I will seldom appear in the future. There is a strong person concealing himself around your little girlfriend. It is not convenient for me to appear for too long in order to avoid being discovered...” Once Yao Lao said this, his body swayed and entered the black ring.

Xiao Yan knit his brows slightly together when he saw Yao Lao disappear. He lifted his head and looked at the moon shining outside the window while muttering, “Inner Academy? Does that place really have the ‘Fallen Heart Flame?’”

“I hope that it will not disappoint me.”

Chapter 419: The Last Qualifying Competition

Today was destined to be the most lively day in Jia Nan Academy. This was because the Inner Academy Qualifying Competition, which gathered the gazes of all the students, would reach a high tide where everyone would be the most excited.

Hu Jia, Bai Shan, Wu Hao, Xun Er, Xiao Yan. These five people, who clearly displayed their powerful strengths, caused everyone to be shocked during the past two days of the competition. Today, the most eye catching collisions between the strong would unfold among these five outstanding students from the Outer Academy in this competition!

It was due to this that the number of people who gathered at the stadium today was many times more than the past two days. Not all of the surrounding audience were students of the academy. There were many who had come with admiration from Jia Nan City, outside of the academy. As members who lived in Jia Nan City, in all of these years, they clearly knew that this was the most lively day in Jia Nan Academy every year. Therefore, they would naturally not miss this distinguished affair.

When Xiao Yan and the others arrived outside the stadium and eyed the human dragon, which had totally blocked the entrance to the stadium, they could not help but feel a little speechless. Finally, they relied on Instructor Ruo Ling’s connections in order to enter the stadium from a tightly guarded side entrance.

After passing through a long, dark tunnel, they finally walked out of the hole at the edge of their vision. The moment they exited, various, incomparably noisy sounds suddenly surfaced next to their ears, causing Xiao Yan's group, which had just been in a somewhat quiet environment, to feel giddy as their eyes became blurry. It was quite a while later before they gradually recovered. They raised their heads and eyed the dense human crowd around the open ground, and could not help but look at each other with bitter smiles.

The group moved along the bottom of the stadium and finally stopped at the Huang class seats they had occupied over the last two days. Only then did they sigh in relief before sitting down.

Xiao Yan, with Xun Er by his side, began to converse with a smile as they sat on the seats. Suddenly, they ceased speaking. Their gaze turned toward a certain special tunnel entrance. At that spot, a group of people, like the stars flattering the moon, clustered around Bai Shan in the middle and were walking towards them. When he saw Xiao Yan's gaze, a cold smile involuntarily surfaced on Bai Shan's handsome face. His mouth moved slightly. Although he did not speak, Xiao Yan could still make out the words that he said.

"I want your reputation to totally disappear today!"

A cold glint flashed across those dark, black eyes. A shallow smile was lifted on Xiao Yan's face as he nodded slightly at Bai Shan. His mouth also moved, "I await you!"

"Xiao Yan ge-ge, you should be careful if you are to fight with Bai Shan. His character really causes people to dislike him but for him to be able to stand out in Jia Nan Academy, a place where talented people are as numerous as the clouds, it means that he definitely has a frightening attainment in terms of his training talent." Xun Er, who had been paying attention to Xiao Yan, naturally discovered the hidden battle between him and Bai Shan. She immediately gave a soft reminder.

"Ah." Xiao Yan nodded slightly and did not refute. He did indeed have some enmity and caution toward Bai Shan but that did not mean that it would not cause him to form any disdain or a belittling mentality toward the latter. What Xun Er said was true. If one did not have some ability, even if you were handsome to the point where you could shake the heavens and move the earth, one would definitely not be able to stand out in this Jia Nan Academy, where strength was honored and from there, become one of the top people in this competition.

Not long after Bai Shan entered the stadium, that red-clothed young lady also slowly walked in. Following her entrance, there were quite a number of people in the stadium who threw their gazes over. No matter how one put it, Hu Jia could be considered a beauty. Moreover, the thing which really moved people's hearts was her background. Jia Nan Academy's Deputy Headmaster. This position, with monstrous authority, was not any weaker than some of the first rate factions in the continent. Moreover, due to Jia

Nan Academy's special position, even some of the strong Dou Zongs would not dare to appear too arrogant in front of Hu Jia's grandfather. After all, even if one did not mention the countless number of strong people who had stepped out of Jia Nan Academy, just the strength of the Jia Nan Academy on the surface was sufficient to frighten those first rate factions until they did not dare do anything funny.

Many people in Jia Nan Academy knew that whoever managed to woo Hu Jia would not only have a warm fragrant soft jade (beautiful woman) in their embrace but would also allow himself to reduce his need to struggle and work hard for at least ten years! There were not many who doubted these words. After all, the Deputy Headmaster of Jia Nan Academy, Hu Jia's grandfather, had this kind of ability!

Although there were many people who were very interested in this kind of enticement, and there were some people who boasted about being a genius had once tried to make contact with Hu Jia, not only did these people not manage to get the beauty, but they ended up returning with wounds all over their bodies. The red-clothed lady used the fiercest attacks to shock all those irritating people courting her until none dared to come and create noise. Therefore, until now, there was no male student who could successfully capture the heart of this Little Witch.

As Xiao Yan eyed the red-clothed young lady, who was slowly walking over to the viewing gallery on the other side, Xiao Yan suddenly recalled Instructor Ruo Ling saying that the lady actually had some feelings toward Xun Er. His face involuntarily became a little strange. A moment later, he shook his head and muttered, "She is indeed worthy of the name 'Little Witch'. Even her tastes are this extraordinary."

Around half an hour after Hu Jia entered the stadium, the number of people in the viewing gallery around the arena had finally been packed to the point where it seemed about to burst. As one glanced over the dense, black mass of hair, one would not be able to see an end to it. The noisiness agglomerated together and shot directly to the clouds.

"Dong!"

The moment the sun rose high in the azure sky, a clear gong sound finally resounded on the open ground. When they heard the gong, the noisy stadium finally began to become quieter. A countless number of gazes moved toward the gong sound, and eyed the extremely spacious arena.

As all the gazes in the stadium were gathered into the middle of the open ground, the Deputy Headmaster, Hu Gan slowly stood up. His gaze looked all around him while his powerful voice hovered through the air of the open ground, like that of a soft thunder, "Yesterday, the Inner Academy Qualifying Competition has chosen the final fifty people. They all have the qualification to enter the Inner Academy to train. However, the Inner Academy has a clear separation of various grades. If one wants better training conditions within the Inner Academy, one must do their best to obtain the best results in

this final competition. Each rank that you rise will provide you with a great amount of help. Therefore, do your best in order to obtain an even more excellent training status!”

Hu Gan’s gaze glanced at those students who were quivering with excitement. He smiled and said, “In the past years, we have chosen a competition where students compete in different rounds. This year, however, after a discussion during the Academy Conference, we will enact a slight change in the method used for this final round of competition.”

The students in the stadium were stunned when they heard Hu Gan’s words. They immediately threw their doubtful gazes back toward the arena.

“Now, can the top fifty students all enter the arena.” Hu Jia smiled and spoke brightly.

Xiao Yan and Xun Er were slightly startled when they heard this. All fifty people in an arena?

Although there were many people who did not quite understand Hu Gan’s words, human figures repeatedly flashed over from all over the viewing gallery after his words were uttered. They finally appeared in the arena.

As more and more human figures appeared in the arena, the atmosphere in the viewing gallery immediately became more invigorated. Especially with the appearance of Bai Shan, who wearing white clothes and appearing extremely handsome, as well as that hot figure of the red-clothed young lady, Hu Jia. The atmosphere was raised to a higher level. An orderly cheer, that was deafening to the ears, erupted from the crowd.

“Let’s go.” As he eyed the human figures scattered across the arena, Xiao Yan also laughed softly and stood up with a smile, before speaking to Xun Er who sat beside him.

“Do your best!” Beside them, Instructor Ruo Ling waved her fist and smiled as she encouraged them.

“Yes.” Xun Er smiled and nodded. Their two bodies leapt up and their toes pushed off of the guardrail. Two arcs cut through the air, created by their bodies. Under the gazes of a countless number of people, they gently landed in the arena.

Following the entrance of Xiao Yan and Xun Er, the originally heated atmosphere once again suddenly soared.

“Today, we do not want a competition where you compete one round at a time. Instead, it will be a large, chaotic elimination competition, which is filled with passion and enthusiasm. Those able to last the longer in this elimination competition will have a higher ranking and vice versa.” Hu Gan smiled as said, while eyeing the numerous competitors, who had successfully entered the competition ground, “Within this arena, no matter what kind of methods you use, even if you join hands with others to form a

group, is fine. As long as you all are able to protect yourself in this chaotic battle, you will obtain victory.”

Hu Gan’s voice had just sounded when private conversations sounded in the stadium. Clearly, the different competition method this year caught them a little off guard.

“Once the competition begins, those who leave the arena will be considered to have lost. We have people specially recording the numbers. Therefore, as long as you can last a little longer in this chaotic battle, your ranking might be higher by a lot. Hence, endurance is victory.”

“This kind of elimination method is quite interesting.” Xiao Yan’s gaze slowly swept across the competitors present while standing beside Xun Er. His gaze finally mockingly stopped on Bai Shan, who stood not too far away, as he smiled and said, “However, if this is the case, we won’t stand to be in a great advantage. Since we can join hands, girl, let’s first chase away all the other people.”

“Yes.” Xun Er would naturally not reject Xiao Yan’s suggestion as she nodded obediently. Her gaze swept through the arena and suddenly said, “Actually, this kind of competition method also has an extremely great advantage for Bai Shan, Hu Jia, and Wu Hao. All of them possess quite a great reputation in the academy. I have taken a look at the competitors in the arena. There are quite a number of people among them who usually interact with the three of them. Therefore, when the chaotic battle is to start later, they might be able to combine with quite a number of people.”

“Uh? I see that you also have quite a great reputation in the academy. Don’t tell me that you cannot rope in some people?”

Xun Er saucily spoke when she heard this, “If this was in the past, there would really be people who come to be the envoys defending the flower. However, that flower already has an owner. Would other people dare to come?”

Xiao Yan face was dull for a second. He immediately nodded helplessly and said, “Alright, since it is like this, looks like we have to really rely on each other in this final elimination competition... I think, other than the situation where everyone present combines strength and attacks us, I just want to see who has the ability to kick us out of the arena? Bai Shan? Wu Hao? Or that Hu Jia?”

Xun Er tilted her head to eye the skinny looking young man who carried a huge black ruler on his back. She then saw the confidence that was revealed on the delicate and handsome face before she suddenly smiled. She liked the confidence on his body.

“Regardless of whether we face some monstrous waves in front of us, let us charge through it together.” Xun Er’s small hand suddenly held Xiao Yan’s hand as she softly muttered.

Chapter 420: Big Chaotic Battle

“Do all of you understand the rules of the competition?” When there was no longer anyone entering the arena, Hu Gan’s gaze swept around once and asked in a clear voice.

“Understood!” An orderly reply sounded within the arena when they heard Hu Gan’s words.

“Alright, since all of you understand, I announce that...” Hu Gan slowly raised his hand. Finally, under countless number of gazes, it fell suddenly, “The final round of the Inner Academy Qualifying Competition will now begin!”

“Bang!”

As Hu Gan’s hand fell, the originally quiet arena immediately let out a bang. A rainbow of different colored Dou Qi abruptly erupted in a dazzling fashion. Following a muffled sound being emitted, the human figures in the arena quickly flashed. Most of the people flew swiftly toward the edge of the arena. They were all afraid that there would be someone using an underhanded method to throw them out in this kind of situation, where enemies were everywhere.

Those in the viewing gallery watched the arena where a fight had broken out almost as soon as the competition began. They immediately let out sharp, excited cries which resounded throughout the clouds. Many people tore their throats as they cheered for the competitors whom they liked. This kind of huge grand battle had a stimulation that far exceeded round after round of one on one fights.

“Ke ke, Deputy Headmaster, this is not a bad idea. Although it cannot be considered absolutely fair, this kind of scene where one has to take precautions against sneak attacks all the time will make it extremely easy to cultivate a person’s cautious mindset. Moreover, the people who join hands will also gradually understand the strength of a group. This method is not bad.” As he eyed the chaotic arena, an old man in the central viewing gallery turned around and spoke to Hu Gan beside him.

“I am also sick of watching the one on one battles in the past, therefore, I wanted to change it to something new to try. From the looks of it now, it appears to be quite good. However, some students, who are usually not good at communicating, will not have anyone trustworthy to help guard their backs in this kind of situation where enemies are all around. They are likely going to struggle a little.” Hu Gan smiled as he spoke and threw his gaze back to the chaotic battle.

There would be frequent head-on battles within the arena at this moment. However, it was clear that many people were afraid of an underhanded attack from behind. Therefore, even when fighting with one another, they would merely make contact and pull back, not daring to get tangled up in a fight. Their gaze repeatedly swept cautiously

in all directions. Anyone who dared to charge into their territory would cause them to swiftly pull back or attack like a bird startled by a bowstring (panicstricken person).

Although the initial competition was extremely chaotic, some students had become much smarter after seven or eight people were attacked successively and were struck out of the competition while spitting out blood. There were people who saw each other daily and quickly put in good words to draw people together. Those who did not could only pull back and search for similarly solitary people who did not have any companions. Although this kind of improvised groups did not have a good relationship or great trust between each other, this was currently the only method.

Xiao Yan tilted the heavy ruler in his hand to one side while standing with Xun Er on the edge of the arena. A green-colored and yellow-colored Dou Qi wrapped around the two of them. Two extremely powerful Qis seeped out from their bodies. Those competitors who had become a little giddy because of the chaos in the arena, were frightened until they dared not carelessly charge over to this area.

Currently, the two of them did not charge into the totally chaotic battleground. They knew that this kind of extremely chaotic atmosphere would not last too long. As long as Bai Shan and the others gathered their people, the chaos in the arena would gradually descend into a situation where a few strong groups survived. Then they would respect the other groups and the chaos would be greatly reduced. However, that time would be when the two of them would face a real battle.

Under the numerous cries and shouts from the viewing gallery that shook the sky and ground, competitors were being repeatedly knocked out of the arena from within the competition ground. The moment this happened, the recording officers, who were already around the arena, would swiftly record the competitors who had been knocked out of the arena.

As time slowly flowed by with the shouting that permeated the sky, the chaos in the battleground finally began to show the trend of being reduced. With the examples of those who were miserably struck out as lessons, some scattered individuals also began to learn how to look for companions. In a short while, the chaotic fights in the arena were greatly reduced. There were also more and more of those small groups which were formed by two or more people.

Following the change from individual chaotic battles to a group battle, Xiao Yan and Xun Er finally could no longer remain isolated from the fight. When a small group, consisting of four men, failed in their attempt to surround and attack them and were instead struck out of the arena one after another, Xiao Yan abandoned his 'wait and see' action. His hand held the Heavy Xuan Ruler tightly while he took heavy footsteps. Green-colored Dou Qi surged out of his body like a flood, and the powerful suppressive strength of a Da Dou Shi swept horizontally across the entire arena!

However, not long after Xiao Yan unleashed his strength of a Da Dou Shi, five similarly strong strengths also erupted within the chaotic battleground. They were separated into small groups that occupied each of the four corners of the arena.

Xiao Yan's gaze moved to the places where the strengths erupted, causing him to look over. He saw that other than the three of them belonging to Bai Shan, Hu Jia, and Wu Hao, the other two were men that he had never seen before. Behind each of these two men were a cluster of four or five competitors, whose strength were clearly not weak. With the exception of Bai Shan and the two others, this group was the strongest one.

At this moment, the strengths of most of the groups were clearly displayed. Among them, the strongest three were naturally Bai Shan's, Hu Jia's, and Wu Hao's groups. Between the three of them, Wu Hao's group's strength was the strongest. Other than them, it was the two groups earlier which possessed a Da Dou Shi each. These five groups belonged to the strongest ones in the arena. Other than them, there were some scattered two man groups, or even individuals. Xiao Yan and Xun Er belonged to the so-called two man small groups.

Although their numbers were far from those six man groups, no one dared to underestimate their small group. It was not because of any reason other than that this group was formed by Xiao Yan and Xun Er!

Any one of the two of them could squeeze into the top five in terms of individual strength. Now that the two strong people had teamed up, even strong people like Bai Shan, Wu Hao, Hu Jia, and others viewed them as strong opponents who hindered them.

"Xiao Yan ge-ge, where should we fight now?" Xun Er tilted her head and asked with a smile. She glanced at the clearly distinct territories in the arena.

"Let's wait for a moment. There are at least thirty people still in the arena. This includes Bai Sha, Wu Hao, and other strong people. If the two of us don't display our trump cards, I'm afraid that it is really impossible to completely block all of them. Therefore, we can only wait for them to exhaust each other. Perhaps Bai Shan and the other two might want to defeat us but they are also afraid that someone will strike them ruthlessly from behind. Therefore, within a short while, we need not worry about being attacked." Xiao Yan waved the Heavy Xuan Ruler in his hand, and supported it with his shoulders.

Xun Er smiled slightly and nodded. She moved her delicate hand and an eye-piercing golden light was stretched out from her palm. The strong energy contained in the golden light was something that even Xiao Yan, by her side, gave a sideward glance at.

It was just as Xiao Yan had said. Although Bai Shan and the two others viewed Xiao Yan's two-man group as their greatest opponent, they did not dare to attack at this moment. The three groups exchanged glances and immediately began to eliminate

those scattered, small groups with a tacit agreement. Only after completely eliminating or swallowing these small groups would they be able to begin the final fight.

Following the start of the extermination by these three groups, other than Xiao Yan's and Xun Er's small, two-man group within the arena, the remaining groups crumbled apart not long after coming into contact with these opponents. There were some who were lucky to escape, but most of them were forcefully expelled from the arena.

Xiao Yan narrowed his eyes and watched those scattered competitors, who had been expelled until they were fleeing in all directions. He mused slightly before wildly taking a step forward in front of the gazes in the entire arena. He cried out with a deep voice, "Those people who don't have a group. If you don't wish to get a lousy ranking, you can come over to this side."

When they heard Xiao Yan's cry, those competitors in the arena who had nowhere to run, immediately wildly rejoiced. As they faced being expelled by three of the strongest groups, even the other two groups who had Da Dou Shi present did not dare to accept them. Now that Xiao Yan had stepped forward, they would naturally be like drowning people grabbing the last straw as they hurriedly ran in the direction that Xiao Yan and Xun Er were in.

This cry from Xiao Yan directly caused the remaining seven competitors in the arena to be embraced under his arm. In an instant, the small group, which only had two people, immediately soared to having a number of people which could contend with those groups of Bai Shan and the others. Of course, this was only in terms of numbers. Those people in the groups of Bai Shan and the two others clearly had a strength that surpassed the people in Xiao Yan's hands, who had been forced to flee in all directions.

However, Xiao Yan did not have the wishful thinking that he could defeat Bai Shan and the others by relying on these competitors. He only needed these people to exhaust some of the people his opponents had.

Although this action of Xiao Yan had managed to buy people's hearts, it caused the three strongest groups belonging to Bai Shan, Hu Jia, and Wu Hao to be a little dissatisfied. The last two were a little better but Bai Shan was one who really did not want his actions to benefit others. Moreover, this other person was Xiao Yan, whom he disliked the most. Therefore, his expression gradually became gloomy. He waved his hand and eight competitors, who were quite strong, followed him as they slowly walked in the direction where Xiao Yan's group was standing. From the looks of it, they were actually directly declaring war on Xiao Yan's group.

"Chi."

Seeing Bai Shan's group, whose faces were dark and solemn, come over, Xiao Yan raised his eyebrows. The heavy ruler in his hand carried the sound of pressuring wind

as it rolled off his shoulders. He coldly smiled and asked, "What? You cannot endure any longer?"

Xun Er, who was beside Xiao Yan, also glanced over at Bai Shan and the others. The golden-colored Dou Qi that shrouded the surface of her body became increasingly dense, awaiting the huge battle.

"Four of you, go and expel the scattered individuals behind Xiao Yan. Another four will go and temporarily hold off Junior Xun Er. Leave Xiao Yan to me." Bai Shan's hand shook slightly and a long, silver-white lance flashed and appeared. A faint glow flowed on the body of the lance. One look at it and one would know that it was a weapon with a Monster Core inserted. As he held this long lance, he began to issue instructions blandly.

Upon hearing Bai Shan's order, the eight people behind him immediately began spreading out, dividing the work.

"Xun Er, prepare to fight." Xiao Yan tilted his head, smiled, and spoke upon seeing that Bai Shan's group had spread out like a fan as they headed over.

"Yes." Xun Er nodded slightly. She was truly mesmerizing as the golden glow shrouded her body.

The moment Bai Shan's group began the attack, Wu Hao and Hu Jia also began to expel the other two remaining groups.

The most exciting and heart-stirring head-on fight in this chaotic battle had finally arrived!

At this moment, the sharp shouting and cheering from the surrounding viewing gallery sounded like a thunderclap.

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Chapter 421: Shaking Lightning Arc Blast

Xiao Yan slowly exhaled a breath of air as he eyed Bai Shan's group, whose footsteps were becoming increasingly fast. Within the interior of the vortex of his body, the rhombic Dou Crystal trembled slightly. Threads of surging, green-colored Dou Qi flowed out and circulated, moving along the Qi Paths, like flood water as it roared and galloped. Finally, it surged out of his body and suddenly raised Xiao Yan's strength to its peak.

The enormous Heavy Xuan Ruler was covered by the green-colored Du Qi. This powerful Dou Qi caused the surrounding air around the heavy ruler to have some slight undulations appear. Xiao Yan raised his head while holding the hilt of the ruler tightly in his hand. He tilted his head toward Xun Er and said faintly, "Finish them off quickly. Don't delay too long."

"Three minutes." Xun Er nodded slightly. Golden-colored Dou Qi surged out from her body. An eye-piercing golden glow caused her to be as radiant as the sun, appearing extremely conspicuous.

Xiao Yan nodded his head as he sensed the fierce Dou Qi erupting explosively from behind him. He lifted his foot slightly and immediately stomped it on the ground. The sound of energy exploding appeared from the bottom of his foot as he immediately turned into a black-colored blur that carried an intense wind pressure. He shot fiercely toward Bai Shan, who wore an icy cold face.

"Hmph! Don't think that you can run amuck just because you defeated Lu Mu. There are many within Jia Nan Academy who are stronger than him." The intense pressure of the wild wind blew against Bai Shan's white clothes until they were pasted tightly to his skin. His expression, however, held no fear. With a cold laugh, his long, silver-colored lance abruptly shook and the flashing silver lightning Dou Qi covered the entire lance, like numerous, small snakes. He held the handle of the lance and with a stern cry, the long lance turned into a silver-colored light that shot toward Xiao Yan's neck in an extremely ruthless manner.

"Clang!" A large black shadow suddenly fell vertically and the silver-colored glow directly pressing against the enormous ruler's body. The force contained in the attack merely caused the hand, that Xiao Yan used to hold the heavy ruler, to tremble slightly.

Although the vicious attack was blocked, Bai Shan's expression did not change even a little. His hand suddenly shook, and carried a lightning-like, silver-colored Dou Qi which moved along the long silver-colored lance and erupted explosively. Finally, it turned into a few opaque silver-colored lance shapes that strangely moved around the heavy ruler and pierced toward Xiao Yan's head from behind.

The silver-colored Dou Qi carried a lightning glow and emitted 'chi chi' sounds as it passed through the air. Xiao Yan already had a sense of the attacking strength of the lightning affinity Dou Qi when he sparred with his second brother, Xiao Li, long ago. Therefore, he would naturally not underestimate it within his heart. The few silver-colored lance shapes that came roaring at him like angry dragons were swiftly becoming magnified in Xiao Yan's dark black eyes. Xiao Yan's body quivered. A powerful, green-colored Dou Qi surged out fiercely. In an instant, it agglomerated into a green-colored, substance-like energy helmet that tightly wrapped around his entire head, including his face. The silver-colored lance shapes violently exploded around his helmet, but one could merely see that the silver-colored glow only left a countless number of tiny marks on the surface of the helmet.

The lightning lances disappeared and Xiao Yan abruptly took a step forward. The helmet on his face had almost instantly disappeared. He swung the heavy ruler in his hand horizontally and an enormous force, which carried the sharp sound of air being cut violently, smashed toward Bai Shan's head.

The terrifying force created by the swinging of the heavy ruler caused the corner of Bai Shan's eyes to twitch involuntarily. Only after personally fighting at close range with Xiao Yan did he know just how frightening the latter's strength was.

A silver-colored glow suddenly flooded out from his feet as Bai Shan swayed his body. With a 'chi' sound, silver light flashed and his body actually pulled back nearly five to six meters. His speed was so fast that it left people somewhat speechless.

"Your strength may be great but don't tell me that you didn't know that the lightning affinity Dou Qi not only has a strong attacking strength but is also very good at increasing one's agility?" Bai Shan coldly laughed after borrowing the Agility Dou Technique of an unknown name to avoid Xiao Yan's attack.

"It is indeed very fast."

Xiao Yan randomly waved his heavy ruler. He faintly nodded, and the corner of his eyes glanced at Xun Er and the other few competitors, who had come to seek refuge. They had already begun coming into contact with each other. At Xun Er's side, the four strong people, who belonged to the peak of the Dou Shi class, were suppressed until they could only parry her attacks. From the looks of it, it appeared that she would be able to completely expel the four of them from the competition within three minutes. On the other side, the situation was also completely one-sided. Although Xiao Yan's group's numbers were larger, the seven people, who were attacked until they did not have any strength earlier, were still defeated after ten exchanges despite only facing four people now. In just one minute, nearly three of the seven people, who had come to seek refuge, were finished off by their opponent's attack.

"They are indeed a group of slush that cannot support a wall (useless people). If they don't have their courage, how would they fight with people?" Xiao Yan frowned slightly and shook his head. He withdrew his gaze. As long as he held off Bai Shan, Xun Er would have sufficient time to completely eliminate all of the opponents. At that time, once Xun Er was able to lend a helping hand, this Bai Shan would only be left with the single fate of being defeated.

"I will first defeat you. After that, even if Junior Xun Er is able to struggle free of the others, I can be considered to have withdrawn after successfully completing my mission. It is fine if I am defeated by her. Before this, however, I want to let you, Xiao Yan, become a defeated opponent of mine in front of all the students in the academy!" Bai Shan appeared to be clear of Xiao Yan's intention. He coldly smiled, and pointed his sharp, long lance at Xiao Yan from a distance as he spoke indifferently.

“On what basis?” Xiao Yan inserted the heavy ruler, in his hand, into the ground and smiled as he replied.

“By relying on my five star Da Dou Shi’s strength and this...” A dark coldness was lifted from the corner of Bai Shan’s mouth. His hands were suddenly placed over the middle section of the lance. He immediately rotated it wildly. As the long, silver-colored lance rotated crazily, an intense silver glow suddenly appeared on Bai Shan’s body. Threads of silver-colored lightning, which were like small snakes, began to repeatedly discharge and shrink. From a distance, it appeared that Bai Shan was currently like a silver-colored ball of light. Moreover, the surface of the ball of light was covered with countless numbers of silver-colored tentacles.

The intense, wild wind blew until Xiao Yan’s eyes narrowed. He sensed the powerful energy that was agglomerating in the long lance within Bai Shan’s hands. That was a kind of energy which contained an extremely wild element, much like a thunderbolt.

“He directly used such a powerful Dou Technique from the start. Does he plan to finish me off quickly...” Xiao Yan narrowed his eyes and slightly knit his brows together as he watched the swiftly soaring energy in the long lance within Bai Shan’s hand. He moved his palm slightly and a pale green flame began surfacing in a partially visible manner under the cover of the green-colored Dou Qi.

“Xiao Yan, let me show you just what a true genius is! You are not good enough for Xun Er!” There was the vague sound of soft, dark, cold laughter from Bai Shan being transmitted from within the whirring sound of the wind. Quickly following this, the sound of wind that permeated the sky suddenly paused. Xiao Yan glanced over, only to realize that the long silver-colored lance in Bai Shan’s hand, which was rotating like a wind wheel, suddenly paused in his hands without moving anymore. The current long lance appeared to have completely turned into a silver-colored lightning lance. Lightning flashed from the body of the lance and there was the sound of thunderclaps being emitted. When the long lance moved slightly, it emitted a powerful energy that would cause the space around it to ripple unceasingly.

“Go and die!”

A dense darkness flashed across Bai Shan’s eyes. He held the long lance tightly as his legs slid. The long lance was slowly lifted above his head and, an instant later, released the sound of a thunderclap as it suddenly smashed into the hard ground. In an instant, a ground shaking explosion pulled all the gazes from the entire stadium over. When they saw Bai Shan, who was like a silver-colored sun, as well as the frightening strength contained in his long lance, roaring repeatedly resonated from the viewing gallery, one after another.

“Shaking Lightning Arc Blast!”

The ice cold cry suddenly rang out from the silver-colored circle of light. Under a countless number of shocked gazes, a silver-colored lightning arc, that was at least ten feet long, was immediately channeled out explosively from the area where the long lance made contact with the ground. Anywhere that the lightning arc passed, the hardened surface of the arena was damaged until it was a complete mess.

The lightning arc was like a meandering silver snake. Its speed was so fast that it caused people to be unable to react in time. Outside the arena, everyone could merely see the silver light flashing within the arena, immediately, they saw a deep gully which was formed while emitting a crackling sound. The appearance was like a field which was plowed by a bull. After this, everyone heard a deafening explosion. Their gazes hurriedly followed the sound to take a look, only to see that the spot where the explosion occurred was actually in the direction where Xiao Yan was standing.

As they eyed the large gully, which appeared where the silver-colored lightning arc passed through the ground, numerous people swallowed a mouthful of saliva. Even a seven or eight star Dou Shi would likely be seriously injured on the spot if they were to receive this kind of terrifying attack.

Dust slowly rose and pervaded the spot where the explosion occurred. There was not the slightest sound within the dust. It was as though the person within it had turned into dust under this terrifying attack by Bai Shan.

A paleness surfaced on Bai Shan's face as his long lance made contact with the ground. A few drops of cold sweat also rolled down from his forehead. He immediately inhaled a deep breath of air and raised his head to observe the dust, where no movement could be seen. The corner of his mouth was pulled into a dense look. This 'Shaking Lightning Arc Blast' was a High Xuan Dou Technique. It was one of the high class Dou Techniques which he had mastered. Back then, when he was training in the 'Black-Corner Region', he had once used this attack to seriously wound a strong Dou Ling, who could not raise his defences in time, before finally taking the person's head. He believed that even though Xiao Yan's strength was comparable to his, the former would definitely not be able to survive this attack.

The dust in the arena gradually scattered while the arena was completely silent. Countless numbers of gazes were focused intently at this spot. They really wanted to know if that Xiao Yan, who had swiftly and suddenly risen within Jia Nan Academy like a falling star, would be really able to contend against an outstanding and prominent person like Bai Shan.

The dust slowly became thinner. A huge, black ruler, that was inserted into the hard ground, was first to appear in front of everyone's sight.

A wild wind suddenly blew, and the dust completely disappeared. A human figure that was completely wrapped in a green-colored flame appeared in front of a countless number of gazes.

Bai Shan's dark gaze suddenly solidified. His expression changed slightly as he eyed the human figure with a green-colored flame writhing over his entire body. Even though they were this far apart, Bai Shan could still feel a terrifying heat from that strange flame.

"Have you attacked until you are satisfied?" The green-colored flaming figure lifted his head slightly. A faint voice was emitted. The flame on his face was slightly thinner as it revealed an indifferent delicate and handsome face. It was shockingly Xiao Yan!

Bai Shan's face trembled slightly. He held the long, silver-colored lance in his hand. Only now did the current him faintly sense just exactly how strong Xiao Yan was.

"If you are satisfied, then it is my turn." Bai Shan did not speak, but the green-colored flame human figure muttered to himself.

Bai Shan's eyes watched every single move Xiao Yan made. After hearing the latter say these words, he suddenly pulled back. However, he had just taken a few steps back when he sensed a heat that was transmitted from behind him. He hurriedly turned around and a pale green figure coincidentally flashed past the corner of his eyes. A fist that was wrapped by a flame was immediately and suddenly becoming larger in his eyes!

Chapter 422: Fight

The fist carried a hot, green-colored flame. Although it had yet to come in contact with his body, Bai Shan could still sense a burning pain, which he could not endure, erupt from his skin. He clenched his teeth to withstand the pain. Silver light once again surged and appeared on his feet. With a sway of his body, it strangely flashed and withdrew a couple of meters.

However, just as Bai Shan withdrew out of Xiao Yan's attacking range, the green figure in front of him flashed again before he had the time to lift his lance to attack. Xiao Yan's indifferent face once again appeared in front of Bai Shan. Both of Xiao Yan's fists appeared to be crazy as they created more than ten afterimages and ruthlessly smashed toward various parts of Bai Shan's body. Each and every punch landed on flesh. For a period of time, the muffled sound of fist contacting flesh repeatedly sounded within the arena.

"Bastard!"

The waves of pain that were transmitted from all over his body caused the anger within Bai Shan's heart to surge. Xiao Yan's attacks were all unleashed at close range. This kind of distance did not allow him to display his lance skills. Although using the 'Wind Lightning Movement' Agility Dou Technique could allow him to pull some distance away, Xiao Yan, who had removed the restraint of the Heavy Xuan Ruler, was coincidentally able to use his great increase in speed to catch up with Bai Shan. Therefore, it was

completely futile no matter how Bai Shan used the 'Wind Lightning Movement' to increase the distance between him and Xiao Yan.

If he pulled back by two meters, Xiao Yan would follow and advance by two meters. No matter what happened, Xiao Yan always engaged in close combat with Bai Shan, not giving Bai Shan any opportunity to display his lance techniques. Bai Shan, who had lost the help of his strongest weapon, was undoubtedly a great tragedy when engaging in hand to hand combat with Xiao Yan.

The Xiao Yan holding the Heavy Xuan Ruler was not terrifying. What was frightening was the Xiao Yan who had escaped the restraint of the weight of the Heavy Xuan Ruler as well as the strange effect of suppressed Dou Qi in his body.

Perhaps Bai Shan could still use his lightning affinity Dou Qi and his outstanding lance techniques to fight with the Xiao Yan when he was holding the Heavy Xuan Ruler. However, in hand to hand combat, Bai Shan's best option was to create a gap between the two of them as soon as possible. However, he was completely suppressed by Xiao Yan on this point. Therefore, a moment of carelessness would cause him to fall into a situation where he could not turn things around.

Xiao Yan had basically turned into a vague black shadow that repeatedly shuttled around Bai Shan. His fists carried waves of ferocious wind as they violently struck Bai Shan's body, which was completely covered with silver-colored Dou Qi. At this moment, the fist, palm, arm, elbow, leg, knee... any part of Xiao Yan's body could turn into an attack weapon. As he waved his fists, there were afterimages that repeatedly appeared.

Faced with Xiao Yan's nearly insane melee attacks, the long lance in Bai Shan's hand was snatched away. Although he occasionally used his fist to exchange one or two blows with Xiao Yan, was the 'Green Lotus Core Flame,' wrapped around Xiao Yan's body, an ordinary thing? Each time they exchanged blows, a red swell would appear on Bai Shan's fist. If he did not have the protection of Dou Qi, it was likely that his skin would be incinerated into pig trotters by the high temperature of the 'Green Lotus Core Flame' the moment it came into contact with him.

In the arena, Bai Shan, who had been acting pompous earlier, had suddenly turned into a conspicuous punching bag that could only take a beating. This extremely drastic change caused a countless number of people in the viewing gallery to be totally stunned. Was that Bai Shan being chased and beaten by Xiao Yan, having no means of fighting back, really that powerful and influential genius within the academy?

"Crazy fellow..." Instructor Ruo Ling's and Xiao Yu's faces were similarly completely stunned as they eyed Xiao Yan, who was performing his outburst. They did not expect that this fellow, who appeared to be gentle, would actually be this frightening when he was fighting seriously...

“That flame on Xiao Yan’s body should be... a ‘Heavenly Flame’, right?” The old man in the middle seats of the stadium, who was addressed as Old Huo by Hu Gan, eyed the green-colored flame burning on Xiao Yan’s body. His usually calm expression had finally changed a lot as he slowly spoke.

“Yes, that should be true. A temperature that would cause even us to feel some fear. It is indeed a ‘Heavenly Flame.’ It’s just that I don’t know what kind of flame it is. If Xiao Yan were to display this ‘Heavenly Flame’ when his strength has increased a little more, even a strong Dou Wang may not dare to easily receive it.” Hu Gan nodded and said.

“This Xiao Yan, my Alchemist Department wants him...” Old Huo mused for a moment before he immediately spoke in a soft tone.

“Uh? He is someone going into the Inner Academy, Old Huo.” Hu Gan was startled as he spoke after hearing this.

“Entering the Inner Academy and entering the Alchemist Department does not conflict with one another. Xiao Yan is also an alchemist. It would only benefit him if he comes to the Alchemist Department. Moreover, this would also not hinder his training in the inner academy.” Old Huo replied faintly.

“In that case, do as you please. I have no objections as long as you are able to get him to enter the Alchemist Department. After all, it is more than what I can wish for to be able to add another outstanding alchemist to the academy.” Hu Gan shook his head as he spoke with a smile.

Old Huo nodded slightly, but no longer spoke. He continued to throw his gaze into the arena. Those indifferent, old eyes of his stared intently at the green-colored flame rising on Xiao Yan’s body. An extremely rare emotion of envy flashed across his eyes a long while later.

Another punch violently smashed into Bai Shan’s chest. Immediately, a soft ‘Ka Cha’ sound suddenly sounded. Xiao Yan smiled coldly as he eyed the slowly shattering Dou Qi Armor on Bai Shan’s body. Another kick shot out, landing heavily on Bai Shan’s stomach. A loud sound could be heard, and the lightning Dou Qi Armor on the surface of Bai Shan’s body was actually forcefully broken by Xiao Yan.

The force of this kick from Xiao Yan was extremely great. Therefore, Bai Shan bounced against the ground of the arena for dozens of meters before he came to a slow stop. He could not resist spitting out a mouthful of fresh blood. With a pale expression, he grit his teeth and stood up with a quivering body. After viciously looking at Xiao Yan in the distance, he took out a black-colored medicinal pill from within his storage ring, stuffed it into his mouth and swallowed it.

At this moment, Xiao Yan was not in a hurry to bother about Bai Shan’s action. This was because he had discovered that seemingly graceful, naturally flowing Dou Qi in his body

had actually began to become extremely turbulent during that wild hand to hand combat. Waves of Dou Qi flowed wildly within his Qi Paths. The air around Xiao Yan also began to fluctuate swiftly. Threads of pure energy were forming with a gushing and pouring tendency as they surged into Xiao Yan's body. From the looks of it, it was clearly the activity that only occurred just before one was about to advance in strength!

Xiao Yan actually luckily achieved the opportunity to break through during the continuous and thoroughly unconcerned display of his physical attacks earlier. This resulted in the automatic flow of Dou Qi into his body. His strength was also beginning to rise naturally as though everything had fallen into place!

However, the place to raise his strength appeared to be quite bad....

The activity that Xiao Yan had created could naturally not escape some of the people with good eyesight. Therefore, shocked shouting of "Xiao Yan is actually advancing his strength in combat?" quickly followed. This sounded one after another from the viewing gallery. A countless number of people were stunned as they watched the human figure, who was wrapped in the green-colored flame. Why was it that this fellow always did things that caused people to be stunned? The fight in the arena was now of a crucial moment. Yet, he actually suddenly gained the chance to advance his strength at this moment. This really caused people to be unable to laugh or cry at his luck.

It should be known that when one was increasing their strength, one cannot receive too much interference. Otherwise, if it were mild interference, one would be injured, if it were serious interference, one's life could be in danger. If it was during a normal time, many people would envy him greatly when such an event occurred. However, who would think that this situation was a place to raise one's strength?

"No way?" At this moment, Xiao Yan could not resist letting out a curse at this sudden situation that had occurred. He also understood that it was basically impossible for him to quietly raise his strength in this situation. In addition, Xiao Yan had not the slightest intention to push forward his advancement this time around. It had automatically found him and did not allow Xiao Yan to reject it. This was the point where Xiao Yan felt unable to laugh or cry. In the past, this kind of condition did not come despite him begging over a hundred times. Now that he did not want it to arrive, it actually caught up with him.

"Ha ha, Xiao Yan, looks like even the heavens are helping me!" A nearly abnormal flush suddenly surged onto Bai Shan's pale face after he consumed that pale black medicinal pill. His originally weak Qi had also abruptly soared by quite a lot. When he saw Xiao Yan standing in the same spot, unable to move and the activity around him, he came to a sudden understanding. He could not help but laugh wildly. His palm sucked at the long, silver-colored lance, which had fallen some distance away and the long lance turned into a dark shadow which shot into Bai Shan's hand.

"Xiao Yan ge-ge, you can complete your advancement. I will help you temporarily hold them back!" A pale golden figure suddenly flashed in front of Xiao Yan as Xun Er smiled and said. At this moment, the eight competitors under Bai Shan had already been totally expelled out of the arena by her.

"Give me ten minutes." Xiao Yan hesitated for a moment before clenching his teeth and nodding. He immediately and hurriedly sat cross-legged on the ground, sunk his mind into his body and controlled the energy that was wildly entering his body.

Xun Er eyed Xiao Yan as he closed his eyes and controlled the disordered interior of his body. She then turned her cold gaze toward Bai Shan. A golden glow flashed on her delicate hand as she faintly said, "If you want to come over, just attack. However, I will no longer hold anything back."

Hearing these extreme words of Xun Er, a ferocity suddenly surged onto Bai Shan's face. He inhaled a deep breath of air and suppressed the fury in his heart. Suddenly he turned his gaze toward the other side of the arena. At that spot, the groups led up Wu Hao and Hu Jia, had coincidentally, expelled the two groups who had Da Dou Shis, allowing them to take charge of the arena. At this moment, Wu Hao and Hu Jia had also clearly sensed the strange movement around Xiao Yan. Their faces were immediately astonished. Clearly, even they did not expect that Xiao Yan would meet an opportunity to raise his strength during such a situation.

"Wu Hao, Hu Jia, I think that we can perhaps join hands to first get rid of Xiao Yan and Xun Er. You should also know the strength of the two of them. Moreover, Xiao Yan is now in a breakthrough stage. If he is to successfully breakthrough, his strength would greatly rise to another level. At that time, can the two of you, who fight by yourselves, stop the two of them? If this continues, we would sooner or later be defeated!" Bai Shan's soft voice suddenly sounded by their ears just as Wu Hao and Hu Jia were feeling surprised at the strange action of Xiao Yan.

The two of them were startled when they heard Bai Shan's words and immediately knit their brows tightly together.

"Hei, don't the both of you covet Junior Xun Er? If we can get Xiao Yan out of the competition, then he would lose the qualification of entering the top five. With your status, you should know that the top five has a special examination. At that time, we will be together with Junior Xun Er. Without Xiao Yan, that annoying brat, we will only need to see who can move Junior Xun Er's heart." Bai Shan's voice continued to hover over the ears of the both of them, "Hu Jia, you cannot find a second girl who has a greater temperament than Junior Xun Er in the entire Jia Nan Academy. Do you want to see her ruined by Xiao Yan? And Wu Hao, in so many years, Junior Xun Er is the only person who has moved your heart. If Xiao Yan continues to be by Xun Er side, when would you get an opportunity? Therefore, he is our common enemy! Don't hesitate any longer. If Xiao Yan is allowed to successfully advance his strength, the ones who fail will be us!"

Bai Shan's words caused Wu Hao's and Hu Jia's expressions to change slightly. These words has coincidentally stomped on their weakness. A long while later, they exchanged glances and nodded. In deep voices, they replied, "Alright, let's first get rid of Xiao Yan from the competition."

Chapter 423: Xun Er's Strength

As the three of them reached an agreement, Wu Hao and Hu Jia waved their hands. Both of them brought each of their four remaining competitors as they slowly walked in the direction which Xiao Yan and Xun Er were at.

A dark coldness swept through Bai Shan's eyes when he saw the actions of the two of them. He turned around and viciously stared at Xiao Yan, who had his eyes closed. After which, his gaze once again stopped at the young lady, who was standing prettily in front of Xiao Yan, some intoxication surface on his face. He clenched his fist tightly and softly muttered, "You are mine!"

Bai Shan grasped the handle of his lance and strode toward where Xiao Yan and Xun Er were at.

The movement of everyone in the arena did not escape Xun Er's notice. When she saw the three groups actually choosing to come over at the same time, she appeared to have understood something. For the first time, a faint coldness appeared on her elegant and exquisite face. She waved her sleeves gently and golden-colored Dou Qi swiftly surged forth. A force that was not weaker than a seven star Da Dou Shi erupted explosively from Xun Er's body without being held back. The golden-colored Dou Qi agglomerated into two clusters of golden light in her palms, much like small suns, appearing attractive to people's eyes.

"What? Do you want to combine forces and attack together?" Xun Er watched the eleven people, who were coming closer as she asked faintly.

"Hee hee, Xun Er, relax, we will not hurt you. It is just that I must get rid of that fellow." Hu Jia pointed at the closed eyed Xiao Yan as she spoke with a smile.

"You can come and try." Xun Er replied in an ice cold manner. At the same time, the two clusters of intense golden light in her palms became more and more eye-piercing. Bai Shan, Hu Jia, Wu Hao and another eight competitors, who were at the peak of the Dou Shi class, this line-up was sufficient to cause her to feel extremely troubled to deal with. Moreover, she still needed to pay attention to Xiao Yan in order to protect him.

"Ah, Xun Er, don't you understand my feelings toward you? What is so good about these stinky men?" Hu Jia's watery pupils, which contained a cunningness, stared at Xun Er in a pitiful manner. Her warm voice caused the expression of Bai Shan by her side to appear a little unnatural. Was it not better to allow him to be the one who said these words?

Xun Er shook her head and ignored Hu Jia. She took a step back and placed Xiao Yan behind her, using her actions to announce her intent to Hu Jia and the others.

“Junior Xun Er, it is just as Hu Jia has said. We will not harm you. We only want you to not interfere with us.” Bai Shan smiled as he spoke to Xun Er.

Xun Er coldly looked at him. This time around, she was too lazy to even talk to him. She did not feel how abominable this fellow was in the past. During these short few days, however, Xun Er’s hatred for Bai Shan had reached the extreme.

The ice cold gaze of Xun Er once again caused Bai Shan to tremble slightly. He inhaled a deep breath of air and tried his best to force a smiling face. He then spoke to Hu Jia and Wu Hao, “Let’s act. We cannot delay any longer. Otherwise, Xiao Yan will successfully advance.”

Hu Jia and Wu Hao nodded their heads when they heard Bai Shan’s urging. Dou Qi slowly surged out of their bodies, and in an instant, the arena was divided and occupied by a few strong forces.

The change that occurred in the arena similarly caused a wave to rise in the viewing gallery. From the looks of the actions of Bai Shan and the others it was clear that they wanted to fight three against one. This kind of method, where a larger group bullied the smaller one, caused waves of uproars to sound from the viewing gallery. However, when these people recalled that this competition method did not lean toward absolute fairness, they could only helplessly shrink back.

“Aren’t these fellows too despicable? To actually fight three against one?” Xiao Yu’s face could not help but flush as she cried out angrily when she saw the situation in the arena, which had reached the point where Xun Er was surrounded.

“Ah, the rules of this competition this time around did not disallow using such a method. Therefore, we can’t do anything about it.” Instructor Ruo Ling sighed gently. The phalanx of her finger under her sleeves had turned slightly white because she had clenched her fist too tightly, “Hopefully, Xun Er can hold out for ten minutes. As long as Xiao Yan completes his advancement, everything will be fine.”

“Hu Gan, looks like this attempt of yours has too many loopholes. Even something like three against one can actually appear.” Old Huo frowned slightly as he faintly spoke, while looking into the arena. There was some ridicule within his voice.

At this moment, Hu Gan’s expression was a little ugly. He could only laugh bitterly when he heard these words of Old Huo before sighing, “This kind of competition is indeed very chaotic. I have already said at the beginning of the competition that they are not breaking the rules by doing this. You should not think that I have chosen to turn a blind eye to this because Hu Jia is participating. That was her own decision and I will not interfere even a little. Similarly, if she fails or some other thing happens, I will also not

interfere. All of these are issues that belong to them, the young people. I will definitely not interfere.”

“Hopefully.” Old Huo nodded and spoke faintly as he once again threw his gaze into the arena.

Under a countless number of gazes, the encirclement in the arena finally locked onto Xun Er. Eight participants, who were at the peak of the Dou Shi class, were the first to attack. The eight figures directly carried a fierce force as they shot toward Xiao Yan behind Xun Er.

“Guardian Trigram Palm!”

Xun Er’s pretty face became cold. The golden glow within her body surged and her legs actually left the ground by a distance of half an inch. Her long hair, which extended down her back to her waist, moved automatically without wind. The golden glow in her palm surged and eight palms struck out in succession. One could see the afterimages of the eight palms pausing in midair before they immediately left a golden-colored energy trail as they shot out in a lightning-like manner. Finally, they heavily imprinted themselves into the chests of the eight competitors, who could not dodge in time. In an instant, the eight of them vomited a mouthful of fresh blood and were directly knocked out of the competition arena by this one strike of Xun Er’s, under a countless number of stunned gazes.

“So strong...” One move and she settled eight people at the peak of the Dou Shi class. Numerous people in the viewing gallery inhaled a deep breath of cool air. Within Jia Nan Academy, Xun Er had seldom used her true strength. Currently, because of Xiao Yan’s matter, the actions of Bai Shan and the others had clearly enraged her, touching her bottom line. Finally, she ceased holding back. Therefore, she used such a powerful strike when she attacked!

The golden glow in front of them had just disappeared when a bloody aura suddenly pounced over. A blood-colored human figure flashed in a bizarre manner as it advanced. As Wu Hao waved his hand, he carried a blood-colored fog and attacked Xun Er.

“Bang, bang, bang!”

Xun Er’s expression did not fluctuate in the slightest when faced with Wu Hao’s frontal attack. Her hands, which were shrouded by a golden light, chose to meet the attack head on and collided with Wu Hao. Each time their hands struck against each other, an ear-piercing energy explosion would appear.

Only after they exchanged nearly ten blows did Xun Er’s lovely figure sway slightly and took half a step back. On the other hand, Wu Hao took a full three steps back.

Wu Hao had just stepped back, when the figure of a whip, carrying a thundering noise, fell from the sky. Xun Er turned her hand and raised it. A golden glow shot out explosively and knocked away the long whip which Hu Jia had lashed over. At the same time, Xun Er's toes suddenly pulled her body back as she gave a violent kick behind, pushing back Bai Shan, who had wanted to make a detour to launch a sneak attack on Xiao Yan from behind.

Within less than two minutes, Xun Er used her own strength to defeat eight people at the peak of the Dou Shi class and forced back Bai Shan, Hu Jia, and Wu Hao, whose strength were not far from hers. Although this was because the three of them did not really use their trump cards, her skill was still really shocking.

After the first exchange, Bai Shan, Hu Jia, and Wu Hao also had a rough outline of Xun Er's strength. Some seriousness immediately surfaced on their faces. They exchanged glances with one another and the Dou Qi within the three of them began to surge simultaneously. Immediately, the three figures launched their fiercest attacks toward Xun Er at the same time.

One could only see human figures flashing as they heard the loud noises erupting from the collision of Dou Qi and watched energy ripples form within the arena. Bai Shan and the two others used all their tactics with the intention of attacking Xiao Yan, while Xun Er was like an enormous mountain that blocked the three of them. Any attack that was shot toward Xiao Yan would be accurately blocked by her. That intuition, which was nearly abnormal, gave Bai Shan and the two others an extremely great headache.

“Bang!”

Xun Er's two hands once again collided with Bai Shan's and Hu Jia's attack. The three of them took a few short steps back. Xun Er had just pulled back to defend Xiao Yan when she suddenly sensed a bloody aura flowing from her right. When she turned around to take a look, she realized that Wu Hao had actually taken advantage of the time when she was fighting with Bai Shan and Hu Jia to approach Xiao Yan without her knowing.

A fury flashed across Xun Er's face as she watched Wu Hao approaching Xiao Yan. Her toes pressed gently against the ground and her body instantly appeared in front of Wu Hao. The golden glow on her right palm surged and it immediately carried a powerful force to slam ferociously at Wu Hao's chest.

This attack of Xun Er was something that even Wu Hao did not dare to slight. He immediately and hurriedly met the blow with a palm which was shrouded by a bloody aura.

“Bang!” The two palms smashed together and the rock surface under Wu Hao's feet was shattered into powder.

“Chi!” Xun Er had just exchanged blows with Wu Hao, when rushing wind appeared behind her. Her eyebrows were slightly knit together. Her right hand carried a ferocious golden glow as she thrust it over.

“Bang!” The glowing golden palm, which she had just shot over, was blocked by Hu Jia. In the arena, Xun Er actually relied on just herself to handle two strong opponents without showing any signs of being defeated. This kind of strength could be called terrifying.

“Hei, Junior Xun Er, I’m sorry. This fellow must be kicked out of the arena today.” Just as Xun Er was tied up by Hu Jia and Wu Hao, a cold laugh suddenly rang out from behind her. She hurriedly turned her head behind, only to see that Bai Shan was using a leg to viciously kick at the closed eyed Xiao Yan.

“Bai Shan, you dare!” An ice cold killing intent flashed across her face for the first time in all these years. The golden glow surged explosively from Xun Er’s body. She shook both her hands and actually managed to force both Wu Hao and Hu Jia back with just her own strength. Her body immediately flashed and she appeared in front of Xiao Yan. She extended her arms and hugged Xiao Yan into her chest. However, by doing so, she coincidentally exposed her back to Bai Shan. That leg of his was heavily swung at her shoulder. Immediately, Xun Er’s face became slightly red as a faint blood trace surfaced at the corner of her mouth, which she swiftly wiped away.

“Bai Shan! You dare to hurt her!” When he saw a blood trace that flashed and disappeared from the corner of Xun Er’s mouth, Wu Hao, who was extremely sensitive toward fresh blood, could not help but become furious as he turned his body and shouted angrily at Bai Shan. Some fury was also present on Hu Jia’s pretty face by his side.

“I only wanted to get Xiao Yan out of the arena. It is Junior Xun Er who got herself injured in order to protect him. How can you blame me?” Bai Shan coldly shouted.

“You don’t need to continue to be a hypocrite. Bai Shan, if you are able to leave the competition ground unscathed, I, Xiao Xun Er, will no longer need to continue staying at Jia Nan Academy.” An ice cold voice was suddenly emitted from Xun Er’s mouth. She slowly stood up. Her autumn water eyes were suddenly, yet gradually, covered by a golden glow. Following the appearance of the golden glow in her eyes, an extremely powerful energy radiated out from Xun Er’s body. Her long hair, which extended to her waist, had also begun to grow longer with the increase of energy. From her appearance, it seemed that she was activating a certain Secret Technique.

However, just as Xun Er’s growing long hair was about to extend across her buttocks, a white hand suddenly extended out from behind her. It immediately grabbed onto Xun Er’s arm and that familiar faint voice caused Xun Er’s wildly growing black hair to swiftly shrink. It also caused a smile to surface on her ice cold face.

“Alright, let me handle the rest.”

Chapter 424: One versus Three

The faint voice slowly reverberated across the stadium. After which, the skinny, black-robed, young man pulled Xun Er behind him under the focus of a countless number of gazes. He raised his head slightly, and his indifferent gaze stopped on the faces of Bai Shan, Hu Jia, and Wu Hao.

“This fellow is finally awake...” Instructor Ruo Ling and Xiao Yu on the viewing gallery finally let out a long sigh of relief as they stared at Xiao Yan, who had exited his training mode at a crucial moment.

As they watched Xiao Yan, whose aura had become much stronger than before, Bai Shan and the two others clearly understood that the current Xiao Yan had already successfully increased his strength. The fight after this might really be unexpectedly fierce.

There were no ripples in Xiao Yan’s dark black pupils, which were like old wells. Xun Er, who was by his side, however, could clearly sense the brutal emotion that faintly seeped out from within his body. Clearly, the actions of Bai Shan and the other two joining hands to surround and attack Xun Er had enraged Xiao Yan.

“Xun Er, you should withdraw a little first. Let me handle the rest of them.” Xiao Yan said faintly.

“Xiao Yan ge-ge, the three of them all possess the strength of a five or six star Da Dou Shi. The Qi Methods that they practice are also not of a low class. Moreover, they also have powerful Dou Techniques . If it is you alone...” Xun Er said hesitatingly.

“Leave it to me.” Xiao Yan repeated once again. A faint, green-colored flame began to slowly seep out from within his body. The high temperature caused the air around him to become blurry until it appeared illusionary.

“Then... alright. I will stand by the side to watch the fight. If there are any unexpected changes, Xiao Yan ge-ge should not blame Xun Er for acting.” When she heard Xiao Yan repeat himself, Xun Er could only nod her head. She slowly pulled back while speaking softly.

Xiao Yan nodded. He once again turned his gaze back to Bai Shan and the two others. A long while later, he slowly said, “If you all walk out of this arena unscathed today, then I, Xiao Yan will never take another step in Jia Nan Academy again!”

Xiao Yan’s words caused the expressions of the three of them to change slightly. They could clearly sense the coldness and the suppressed fury contained within these words that the former had spoken.

“Humph, just boast. Although you have currently advanced by one star, you only have the strength around that of a six star Da Dou Shi. This level is just enough to contend with any one of us alone. However, if you want to fight all three of us by yourself, I think that you are only looking to be humiliated!” Bai Shan waved the long lance in his hand and coldly laugh.

“My original intention was not to hurt Xun Er. After you are defeated, I will let Bai Shan pay the price for the kick of his earlier.” Wu Hao, whose entire body was wrapped in a blood-colored robe, eyed the calm Xiao Yan as he spoke.

“Hee hee, you must count me in.” Hu Jia laughed lovingly.

When he heard the words of the two of them, Bai Shan’s expression could not help but change slightly. However, he smiled instead and said, “I also feel extremely guilty of accidentally hurting Junior Xun Er earlier. Later, there is no need for the both of you to act. I will withdraw by myself in order to apologize to Junior Xun Er. However, before this, we must first defeat Xiao Yan before we discuss anything more.”

“Isn’t it a little late to talk about all this?” Xiao Yan waved his hand and ignored Bai Shan, who wore a cold smile on his face. His hands slowly formed some strange seal in front of him. Following the forming of the seal, the green-colored flame that shrouded the surface of Xiao Yan’s body suddenly coagulated. Immediately, it completely entered his body with a ‘suo’ sound.

Following the disappearance of the green-colored flame, a green-colored flame gradually swarmed into that pair of dark black eyes of Xiao Yan. In an instant, a pair of dark pupils turned into a pair of eyes that were now filled with a green colored flame.

“The First Change of the Sky Fire Three Mysterious Change: Green Lotus Change!”

The calm voice slowly sounded in Xiao Yan’s heart. When the last word sounded, the aura over Xiao Yan’s body was abruptly withdrawn. An instant later, the aura appeared to be like a volcano, which had broken through the restraint of the land as it erupted forth in all directions!

The green-colored flame Dou Qi hurriedly swarmed out from Xiao Yan’s body. It immediately swept horizontally through the air. The hot flame caused the temperature on the open ground to swiftly rise. Perspiration involuntarily appeared on the faces of some of the students whose strengths were weaker.

At this moment, Xiao Yan’s Qi had already far surpassed the Da Dou Shi class. If one were to vaguely measure it, it was at least something that could stand shoulder to shoulder with a strong Dou Ling!

The faces of a countless number of people in the viewing gallery were shocked and dull as they stared at Xiao Yan in the arena, who was wrapped by a large cluster of flame. They sensed the change in force, which had suddenly soared explosively.

“Dou Ling?” Bai Shan’s expression could not help but change a little as his gaze stared intently at Xiao Yan. A seriousness had similarly surfaced on Hu Jia and Wu Hao’s faces by his side.

“Boom!”

Bai Shan’s voice had just left his mouth when the sound of an energy explosion abruptly rang out from within the flame. A vague, green-colored figure let out a ‘chi’ sound and tore through the hinderance of the air. The ten plus meters between the figure and Bai Shan was shuttled past in less than a second. This terrifying speed caused the eyes of Bai Shan and the two others to be dazzled. A green-colored, flaming figure that was around three meters tall brought a high temperature as it appeared in front of them.

A fist abruptly shot out from within the flames. It turned into three afterimages. Each of them carried the hot green flame and violently smashed at the heads of the three of them.

The speed of Xiao Yan after he had activated the ‘Sky Fire Three Mysterious Change’ had already risen to such a degree that even a Dou Ling of ordinary strength would be unable to match him. Therefore, only when the fist was about to reach their heads did Bai Shan and the two others sense something. Their expressions changed greatly. In their haste, their arms were swiftly crossed in front of their heads. Dou Qi flowed immediately and repeatedly strengthened their defenses.

“Bang!”

The green-colored flame fists landed heavily on the crossed arms of the three of them. Three muffled sounds immediately appeared in an orderly fashion. A sleek redness rose onto the faces of Bai Shan and the two others as their feet rubbed against the ground while they quickly slid back.

After the three of them pulled back for more than ten steps, their feet violently stomped against the ground and they finally managed to redirect the force. They sensed their hands, which had nearly become numb from being struck by Xiao Yan, and shock surfaced on the faces of the three of them. They did not expect that Xiao Yan’s strength had actually soared to such a powerful degree all of a sudden. One versus three. Not only did he show no sign of losing, but he also suppressed them until they were at a disadvantage.

“Go all out!”

Bai Shan clenched his teeth and shouted coldly. Silver-colored Dou Qi was suddenly attached to his body. The long, silver-colored lance was shaking in front of him. Dou Qi, like electric snakes, swiftly danced and flashed from the tip of the lance. Following an intense tremble of the lance in Bai Shan's hand, the silver-colored Dou Qi began to agglomerate at the tip of the lance, which emitted soft 'Chi La' sounds. From its appearance, it was clear that he was preparing a Dou Technique with an impressive force.

Beside Bai Shan, Wu Hao, and Hu Jia also hesitated for a moment before their Dou Qi also began to swiftly gallop around their bodies. With their reputation within Jia Nan Academy, their haughtiness caused them to be extremely unwilling to be defeated by the hands of a young man, who was around their age, at the same time with two others. At this stage, it was naturally impossible for them to choose to hold anything back.

As they decided on this thought, a deep, green-colored and blood-colored Dou Qi began to wildly surge out from within Hu Jia's and Wu Hao's body respectively. On top of the whip and the heavy sword, strong offensive type Dou Qi was swiftly being brewed. After their defeat earlier, the current them had begun to go all out to counter attack!

Against everyone's expectations, Xiao Yan did not choose to continue attacking after defeating the three of them with one punch earlier. Under the shroud of the green-colored flame, he had a cold face as he took out a purple-colored Yaowan and stuffed it into his mouth. He began chew it before spitting a mouthful of purple-colored flame, which he finally held in his palm.

Xiao Yan glanced at the purple-colored flame. His right hand shook again and a green-colored flame rose from within it. Xiao Yan slowly raised his head and eyed Bai Shan and the other two who had prepared to go all out just before their defeat. There was not the slightest emotion within Xiao Yan's eyes, which were filled with the green-colored flame. His hands gradually moved closer together. The purple-colored and the green-colored flames began to merge!

Looking at his manner, Xiao Yan was actually thinking of displaying a small scale 'Angry Buddha Lotus Flame'... It appeared that the actions of Bai Shan and the two others had truly caused Xiao Yan to be in a furious state.

"That Xiao Yan should have used a certain kind of Secret Technique that can temporarily raise his strength, right? Otherwise, it is impossible for his strength to rise by this much." The Deputy Headmaster, Hu Gan, on the organizer's platform eyed the green-colored flame figure, who had ceased moving within the arena, and then Bai Shan and the two others, who were brewing their powerful Dou Qi on the other side before he slowly spoke.

"The current Xiao Yan likely already possesses the strength of a strong Dou Ling. However, looking at the Dou Techniques that Bai Shan and the two others are

displaying, it is clear that they aren't ordinary things. Under the combined strength of the three of them, even a strong Dou Ling would not dare to carelessly slight them. If Xiao Yan doesn't intend on letting Xun Er participate in this competition, I'm afraid that it may end up in a stalemate." An elder in the academy by Hu Gan's side said with a smile.

"There won't be a stalemate..." A faint voice was suddenly emitted. The gaze of Old Huo, who sat off to the side, stared intently at the green-colored flame which had wrapped around Xiao Yan as he softly said, "If what I think is happening is not wrong, the competition will end after this attack."

"Oh?" When the others heard this, even Hu Gan felt a little astonished. He threw his gaze into the arena and a moment later, he suddenly sensed that there was an extremely wild and violent energy ripple that had appeared from it. His expression immediately changed. That sharp gaze of his directly shot toward the green-colored flame, "Good fellow. Exactly what Dou Technique is this Xiao Yan actually displaying? It is actually strong to such an extent?"

The silent atmosphere in the arena lasted for less than a minute before it was abruptly broken!

"Glorious Thunder!"

"Quiet Woods Poisonous Snake Vine!"

"Blood Splitting Chop!"

Within the arena, the eyes of Bai Shan and the two others abruptly widened. The powerful Dou Techniques within their hands were finally brewed to their limits. They shook their weapons abruptly and in an instant, silver, green, and red, three incomparably fierce and powerful energies, Dou Techniques were shot out. Anywhere the three energies passed through, the hard surface ended up completely cracked. Numerous eye-piercing crack lines spread all the way to the edge of the arena before stopping.

While the three ferocious energies were shooting explosively, an indifferent voice also gently sounded from within the green flame human figure not far away. Immediately, a greenish-purple glow shot out from the green-colored flame in a lightning like manner. Finally, it quietly carried a beautiful, green-purple trail, and suddenly collided with the three energies under the focus of a countless number of gazes!

"Bang!"

The moment they collided, the four energies were at first silent for a moment before an earth-shaking explosion suddenly appeared!

Quickly following this, dense dust rose and spread throughout the arena. At this instant, the entire open ground was turned into ruins!

While they watched the arena, which had basically turned into ruins, the viewing gallery of the arena also descended into a death-like silence!

Chapter 425: No Mercy

Under the focus of a countless number of nearly dull gazes, the dust that permeated throughout the arena slowly dispersed. The complete mess and rock fragments that appeared in their sights caused the viewing gallery to emit waves of sounds created by the sudden inhalation of cold air.

At this moment, the hard arena, which was originally created by neatly piling huge rocks on each other, had actually turned into complete shambles. A deep, expansive pit appeared in the middle of the ruins. Strange rocks were strewn everywhere around the deep pit. Looking at their appearance, the competition arena looked completely different from before. No one had expected that the collision between Xiao Yan and Bai Shan's three man team would actually create such a terrifying destructive strength.

"This fellow... he really is too abnormally strong." Xiao Yu was stunned as she observed the competition arena that had turned into ruins. It was a long while later before she let out a deep breath of air and spoke with a bitter smile. Even though she had already thought highly of her cousin, who had his own independent and special behavior since young, even she did not expect that this fellow would actually become so strong until his strength caused people to become ashamed after not seeing him for only two years.

At her side, Instructor Ruo Ling nodded as she shared the same feelings deep within her. She muttered quietly in her heart. Just exactly how did this fellow train during these two years? Back then, at Wu Tan City, Xiao Yan may have had extraordinary talent, but even after going all out, he could barely survive twenty exchanges with her. Now, however, Instructor Ruo Ling herself thought that her chances of victory were not very high if she were to fight Xiao Yan.

In the ruined arena, where a countless number of gazes had gathered, a green-colored figure suddenly flashed onto the top of a huge rock. Her gaze swept over the ruins and finally stopped at that huge pit. There were still three weak Qis present there.

The dust that rose from the deep pit also gradually settled down. The situation within finally appeared in front of the eyes of everyone present.

Within the deep pit, there was an area which was relatively flat. There were no rock fragments in that area. Instead, there was a thick layer of rock dust. Clearly, at the area where both the energies of both parties collided, the frightening energy explosion had shattered the rock fragments to dust. From this, one could see just how powerful the Dou Qi displayed by the four of them was!

In the empty spot within the pit, three human figures were holding onto the rock wall behind them with their hands. That was the only way they could support their bodies shakily. At this moment, Bai Shan and the other two were extremely miserable looking. Dust covered more than half of their faces. There were also quite a number of spots on their clothes which were tattered. Moreover, the faces of the three of them were pale. Traces of blood were vaguely visible on the corner of their mouths. Their harried breathing had already lost the steadiness it had before. Clearly, under that 'Angry Buddha Lotus Flame' explosion attack of Xiao Yan, which one would not dare to receive head on, Bai Shan and the two others were seriously injured.

A countless number of gazes paused on the miserable looking bodies of the three of them. There was faint disbelief in their eyes. The three very powerful, top students within Jia Nan Academy this time around, were actually reduced to such a state by the hands of a young man who had merely arrived at the academy less than three days ago?

"Where is Xiao Yan?" Bai Shan wiped the blood trace from the corner of his mouth. He raised his head and his gaze looked all around him. A sleek redness surfaced on his pale face as he said in a hoarse voice, "Looks like he should have been buried under the ruins in that energy explosion. Fighting one against three. He is indeed wildly arrogant but his ending is not good either."

Hu Jia and Wu Hao by his side ignored him. They swallowed their saliva and moistened their dry throats. A long while later Hu Jia clenched her teeth and said, "Dammit. If I had known earlier, I would not have listened to your incitement. We totally cannot mess with that Xiao Yan!"

"He is very strong, stronger than all of us!" Wu Hao lifted his head. Most of his large, blood-colored robe had been torn. Therefore, it revealed a somewhat white, young face. Wu Hao did not appear very handsome and could only be called ordinary looking. However, the dense, cold, bloody aura that would occasionally flash across his eyes would cause people, who were exchanging looks with him, to feel creeped out. At this moment, solemnness and fear flashed across his eyes, which usually contained a hidden killing aura, for the first time.

"So what if he is strong? Under the combined attack of the three of us, even if he could live, he would at least have broken an arm or a leg!" Hearing the implication of fighting Xiao Yan from the words of the two of them, Bai Shan's eyebrows were involuntarily knit together as he coldly laughed.

"Bang!"

Bai Shan's words had just been uttered when a piece of huge rock at the edge of the deep pit in the ruins suddenly blasted apart. The movement attracted all the gazes present, including that of Bai Shan and the two others who were panting with their mouths wide open.

Faint dust permeated over from where the large rock burst apart.

“He... he hasn’t died! I can sense his Qi!” Wu Hao’s eyes stared intently at the cluster of dust. He inhaled a deep breath of air as he spoke slowly.

Bai Shan’s face twitched swiftly by his side. His originally pale face had turned a lot more pale at this moment. Clearly, this talented student, who was one of the top people of the year within the Outer Academy of the Jia Nan Academy, had already formed some fearful emotions toward the black-robed young man that he would not admit within his heart. Especially after the soul-stirring large battle earlier.

Under the focus of all the gazes in the stadium, there was suddenly the soft sound of feet stepping on some rock fragments being emitted from the dust. After hearing the sound of footsteps, Bai Shan, Hu Jia, and Wu Hao’s expressions could not help but change.

The sound of footsteps came nearer and nearer. Bai Shan’s eyes did not blink as he stared at the dust. A while later, his eyes suddenly shrunk. A black-robed young man, whose clothes were as clean as they were before the battle, slowly walked out from the dust and appeared in front of everyone’s sight!

The entire stadium suddenly became quiet as everyone eyed that black robe which appeared brand-new, as well as the calm face of the young man who appeared exactly the same as when he entered the arena.

Who would expect that after experiencing the terrifying energy explosion earlier, this fellow not only did not break his arm or leg as Bai Shan had anticipated, but his Qi had remained forceful and his exterior remained tidy. This appearance was like heaven and earth when compared with the miserable looking Bai Shan, Hu Jia, and Wu Hao.

This difference in appearance had also completely highlighted the victor this time around! No one would think that Xiao Yan, who could keep his initial appearance after such an intense battle, did not have the qualification to become the champion of the Qualifying Competition this time around!

After this fierce fight, the strongest person of the Qualifying Competition had gradually become clear.

“Xiao Yan ge-ge has indeed become strong. The strength of the terrifying flame lotus Dou Technique that he had displayed earlier has almost reached the peak of the Xuan class Dou Techniques...” Xun Er, who was standing on a huge rock, smiled and whispered to herself before she eyed the black-robed young man, who was slowly walking out. There was a faint look of relief and pride currently on her face. She was unconcerned about whether she could be in the limelight and the focus of a countless number of people. However, if Xiao Yan was able to display a strength, which caused

people to be shocked, in this kind of place, Xun Er would feel a happiness from within her heart.

Xiao Yan slowly stepped out from the dust. His expression remained indifferent as he carelessly glanced at the three of them. Without any warning, brutality suddenly swarmed into his dark eyes!

At the same time, Xiao Yan moved his body and it suddenly turned into a black shadow. In a mere instant, it carried a sharp wind sound and a pressurizing aura as he appeared in front of them, causing the breaths of the three of them to become stagnant.

“Xiao Yan, what do you plan to do? We are already...” Bai Shan’s eyes were blurred. He suddenly realized that Xiao Yan had appeared in front of him. His eyes collided with those dark black pupils and coincidentally saw the tyranny and killing intent within them. Immediately, he hurriedly cried out.

However, before his cry sounded, a black shadow swept across his eyes. An intense pain was transmitted from Bai Shan’s lower abdomen. A huge force shook his body until it rolled backward and finally smashed violently into the rock wall. Immediately, the soft sounds of bones cracking could suddenly be heard.

“Xiao Yan, you...!” The sudden attack also caused Hu Jia and Wu Hao to be startled. They immediately reacted swiftly. Their bodies pulled back quickly as they cried out with their mouths.

“How can that kick earlier be so easily offset?” As Hu Jia was hurriedly pulling back, the black shadow entered into close proximity, like a ghost while those cold indifferent words sounded.

“Xiao Yan, you dare!” The cold words caused Hu Jia to feel a chill in her heart. Her voice had also become sharp at this moment. Since she was young until she had grown up, when had she been abused and beaten in this manner, especially given her identity and background?

Xiao Yan’s expression was cold. He did not reply to Hu Jia sharp scream. Without the slightest hesitation, he suddenly swung his right leg. A powerful force that carried a low and deep sonic boom heavily swung into Hu Jia’s lower abdomen, while being watched by a countless number of dull eyes. Following a deep muffled sound, Hu Jia’s body immediately rubbed against the ground, drawing a scar that was over ten meters long before she heavily collided with a rock. Immediately, she spat out a mouthful of fresh blood.

Faced with Xiao Yan’s vengeful chase, Wu Hao did not let out an involuntary cry, like the two people earlier. He clenched his teeth and the little blood-colored Dou Qi remaining within him completely surfaced on his body. When the Dou Qi surfaced, Wu Hao’s speed clearly became quite a lot faster.

However, how could Wu Hao, who was in a heavily wounded state, compare to Xiao Yan in terms of speed? The instant after Hu Jia was thrown aside, the black blur was like a shadow following his body, appearing just behind him. An indifferent voice along with a ferocious force suddenly smashed into Wu Hao's back.

"This is payback for Xun Er. If you are not satisfied, you can come and find me anytime. Among the three of you I, Xiao Yan, only view you seriously."

"Bang!"

Wu Hao's body, which was moving backward, suddenly paused. That enormous force that was transmitted from his back directly caused Wu Hao's body to lean forward and collapse. Finally, he became like a rolling gourd that rolled over ten times before he forcefully stopped his rolling body with great difficulty. He wiped the blood trace from the corner of his mouth, lifted his pale face and eyed the black-robed young man. The latter had ceased chasing him and was throwing over an indifferent gaze. Wu Hao swallowed a mouthful of saliva that contained some blood. In so many years, this was the first time that he had been beaten to such a state by someone from the same age group.

Wu Hao's gaze stared intently at the tall and somewhat skinny young man for a long while. Finally, his hoarse voice spat out a word from his mouth.

"Satisfied!"

Chapter 426: The End of the Competition

The sudden attack of Xiao Yan in the arena was beyond anyone's expectations. Moreover, the former attack was completed in a mere instant. Hence, many people in the viewing gallery could only see a black shadow flashing within the arena. Immediately after, there were three muffled sounds, and finally Bai Shan, Hu Jia, and Wu Hao each vomited blood and were forced back before smashing heavily into rocks.

The audience watched Bai Shan and the two others, who were leaning against rock walls, struggling futilely as they made attempts with great difficulty to get up, the entire stadium was quiet. Numerous gazes, that were almost dull, stared at the tall, young man in the arena. At this moment, there was a chill that seeped out from the hearts of a countless number of people. This fellow, who usually appeared to wear a smile, was actually the most terrifying one...

In the viewing gallery, Instructor Ruo Ling and Xiao Yu were similarly stunned. It was a long while before they exchanged looks with one another. Earlier, the manner of Bai Shan and the other two clearly indicated that they were in a defeated state. It was really unexpected that Xiao Yan actually gave another ferocious additional strike. Many people, including the two of them, understood that this was the revenge Xiao Yan took on behalf of Xun Er for that kick...

The Deputy Headmaster, Hu Gan, and the others on the middle of the organizer's platform in the stadium were also stunned. A long while later, Hu Gan eyed the pale-faced Hu Jia, who had a trace of blood at the corner of her mouth. His heart felt a little pained. Finally, however, he could only helplessly sigh. He had said earlier that he would not intervene in the matters between the younger generation. Since he had not said anything when Hu Jia and the other two had joined hands together to attack Xun Er and Xiao Yan earlier, now that Xiao Yan's strength had greatly soared and defeated the three of them openly in front of a countless number of people, he had no reason to open his mouth to reprimand Xiao Yan's actions. Hu Jia and the other two had only themselves to blame. Therefore, he had no choice other than to sigh and shake his head.

"Ke ke, this Xiao Yan is ruthless enough." On one side, Old Huo's gaze stared at Xiao Yan in the arena, and ignored the helpless expression of the Deputy Headmaster. He nodded his head and an ugly smile surfaced on his stiff face for the first time.

"Deputy Headmaster, this... is this considered against the rules?" A middle-aged judge in the judges' seats had a face filled with a bitter smile while he eyed the Deputy Headmaster and the others on the platform above as he carefully asked. If Hu Jia was not present in the arena, he would not have much to fear. Unfortunately, that Little Witch was among them. Moreover, she was beaten to such a miserable state. Honestly speaking, having been in Jia Nan Academy for many years, it was the first time that he had seen someone who dared beat Hu Jia, without mercy, to such a state. This was also not only because of her background but also because Hu Jia herself was an extremely pretty lady. Although her character was unrestrained, causing people to be unable to understand her but her angel-like face and devil-like figure also resulted in quite a number of people in the academy liking her. When fighting against this kind of lady, there were many people in the academy who would give in to her, even if they could win. Very seldom would one see a person like Xiao Yan, who would not show any mercy because of any scruples.

"The competition this time around was originally not considered to be absolutely fair. Therefore, Xiao Yan also cannot be considered to have violated the rules. After all, we have all clearly seen his strength." The Deputy Headmaster waved his hand and sighed. He immediately turned his gaze toward Hu Jia in the arena and said in his heart, "Girl, treat it as buying a lesson this time around. Being under my protection all these years has resulted in everything being too smooth for you. Being able to have this Xiao Yan knock you around has some benefits for you."

Xiao Yan exhaled a long breath of air in the arena. He ignored the dull gazes of the entire stadium and turned his head to allow his gaze to meet that of the green-clothed young lady who was on top of a rock within the ruins. A warm smile was drawn on his cold face. Moving his body, Xiao Yan turning into a black shadow that appeared beside Xun Er. He extended his hand and wipe off the remanent trace of blood from the corner of her mouth before inquiring in a gentle manner, "Are you alright?"

"It cannot even be considered a superficial wound." Xun Er laughed softly. Her eyes immediately flowed over Xiao Yan's body as she pursed up her lips and said with a smile, "It was really unexpected that Xiao Yan ge-ge would actually advance during the fight. It was really shocking."

Xiao Yan shook his head helplessly when he heard this. He patted Xun Er's head before throwing his gaze toward the judges' seats. He asked with a clear voice, "May I inquire if the final round of the Qualifying Competition can be considered over now? If not, I can continue playing with the three of them."

"Yes, yes. The competition is over. Over."

One person from the judges' seats hurriedly stood up and replied quickly when he heard Xiao Yan's voice. The degree of ruthlessness that Xiao Yan had displayed earlier had already far exceeded their expectations. If they were to let him continue on like this, whether Bai Shan and the two others could leave the competition ground alive may be questionable. The background of the three of them were not ordinary. Should something happen, quite a lot of trouble would brew forth.

"The Inner Academy Qualifying Competition this year is over. After an intense fight, the top five have already appeared. They are Xiao Yan, Xiao Xun Er, Wu Hao, Hu Jia, and Bai Shan!" A judge, who was older, stood up from the judges' seats, looked around the stadium before immediately announcing in a loud voice.

Once his voice sounded, overwhelming cheers suddenly rang out from the entire stadium. In this torrent-like sound wave, the entire stadium trembled as it emitted a rustling sound. A countless number of people from the viewing gallery stood up and eyed the young man and young lady, who were standing by themselves amid the rubble. Those people's eyes were filled with envy and respect. Xiao Yan had used his own true strength to announce to everyone who the strongest person in Jia Nan Academy was this time around. At the same time, he let them know that he, Xiao Yan, had the right to be with an extremely gifted girl, favored by the heavens, like Xun Er!

All of this was built upon his strength and his fists. In this academy, where strength was honored, only this method was the most convincing reasoning!

While they heard the cheers and cries that reverberated throughout the entire stadium, Bai Shan, Hu Jia, and Wu Hao within the middle of the ruins, each leaned their backs against the rock wall. Their slightly twitching faces indicated the intense pain that was being transmitted from within their bodies. That earlier blow Xiao Yan had given to each of them had not shown the slightest mercy. Currently, the three of them had already completely lost their fighting strength. Moreover, it was unlikely the injuries of theirs would fully recover without seven or eight days of rest.

Their hurried breathing was somewhat disorderly. The three of them raised their heads and threw their gaze toward the young man and young lady standing above the rubble. The main characters of this entire arena were now them.

“This bastard, he attacked so strongly. He really isn’t a man!” The back of Hu Jia’s teeth bit her red lip. At this moment, her originally clever and sly pupils had partially visible grievances and moisture. In all these years, this was the first time that she had been thwarted by a man. Moreover, that man’s age hardly differed from hers. This caused her haughty heart to really have some difficulty accepting the outcome.

“Xiao Yan, you are very strong, but I believe that I will surpass you!” Wu Hao held his chest as he let out a couple of intense coughs. A sleek redness surged onto his pale face. A heat filled his eyes. The setback he received earlier not only did not cause him to be dispirited but instead it evoked a fighting spirit within him due to Xiao Yan’s strength. This kind of character, where one became more courageous the more he was defeated, was basically an accelerator to him becoming a strong person. No wonder that Elder of the academy has disclosed that even the mysterious Headmaster said that if Wu Hao were given ten years time, he would definitely become an extremely strong person as long as he was not destroyed by his killing aura!

“This matter is not considered to be over! I, Bai Shan, will definitely get you to pay for the humiliation today a hundred times over! Xiao Yan, just you wait! Sooner or later, I will let you kneel at my feet!” A pernicious glint flashed over Bai Shan’s downcast eyes. He clenched his fist tightly. At this moment, he could not even move his back a little. That heavy strike from Xiao Yan earlier had already broken a couple of his bones. However, compared to the pain on his body, the frustration and the blow to his heart was the one that Bai Shan had the greatest difficulty enduring.

During these two years, he was pushed toward being an outstanding person with the highest profile within the Outer Academy through a countless number of compliments. Today, however, this title of the so-called “person of the year” was actually fragmented by Xiao Yan’s brutal attacks. In the future, when the people of Jia Nan Academy mentioned Bai Shan, they would not be filled with respect like they did when they looked up to him in the past. This was because there would forever be one person standing above his head. That person was the existence whom they respected and looked up to. This kind of situation was undoubtedly more difficult for Bai Shan, whose character was exceptionally arrogant, to accept than if he had lost his life.

Once someone fell after mounting the genius shrine, whom people looked up to, they would feel as though they had an extremely great fall. Many people were unable to bear the dispiritedness or the distortion in one’s heart from this kind of fall. It was almost so for the Xiao Yan back then. The current Bai Shan was also the same!

The current Xiao Yan naturally did not bother about the different emotions within the hearts of the three of them. He only knew that now that he had obtained the permit to enter the Inner Academy, the distance between him and the ‘Fallen Heart Flame’ was

much closer. He had even begun to anticipate just what kind of drastic and immense change would occur after he absorbed the second kind of 'Heavenly Flame'? Yao Lao had once said that for the 'Flame Mantra' swallowing one kind of flame was just a foundation. Only after the second kind of 'Heavenly Flame' was also successfully swallowed and the two different flames merged would it cause someone to undergo a thorough change as though one was reborn! Xiao Yan anticipated this kind of feeling. This was because he could faintly tell that after being reborn this time around, it might really let him become a truly strong person!

A strong person who had the ability to seek revenge and protect his own kin! Something different from now where he needed to borrow Yao Lao's ability for everything!

"'Fallen Heart Flame', you belong to me!" Xiao Yan tightened his fist. His emotions surged a little. As long as he obtained that thing, he would truly possess the qualification to be among the strong people in the continent!

As the judge announced the competition to be over, some students wearing alchemist robes flashed down from all over the viewing gallery. They entered the arena and lifted Bai Shan and the two others, who were seriously wounded, before scattering and leaving the place.

"Hei, Xiao Yan, excellent job. Your methods... I, Lu Mu, really take my hat off for you. However, you may have obtained victory today but it is likely that you have offended all three of those fellows. If you have the chance in the future, come and muddle in the Alchemist Department. In this Jia Nan Academy, not even the Deputy Headmaster nor the Law Enforcement Unit dare to do anything drastic to people from our Alchemist Department." A young man who was giving orders to the students from the Alchemist Department to carry away those injured suddenly turned his head over and threw his gaze toward Xiao Yan. It was actually Lu Mu, who was defeated by Xiao Yan yesterday.

"Ke ke, if there is an opportunity, I naturally also want to go to the Alchemist Department to take a look." Xiao Yan smiled as he replied. Which part of his calm manner could one see even a little of the tyranny earlier?

Lu Mu smiled, turned around and followed the Alchemist group out of the competition ground.

"Let's go, the competition is over. Now, let's wait for the notice from the Inner Academy." Xiao Yan eyed the surrounding ruins before he spoke with a smile to Xun Er.

"Yes." Xun Er nodded with a smile. The two of them slowly walked out of the thundering noisy stadium while watched by a countless number of gazes.

The largest annual competition gradually came to an end as the two of them took their leave.

Chapter 427: The Peace After The Great Competition

Xiao Yan slowly walked on the small, tree-lined trail within the academy. He narrowed his eyes and did not really bother with the heated gazes shot from around him. Ever since he became the champion of the Qualifying Competition two days ago, these kinds of gazes accompanied Xiao Yan. Initially, he was a little frustrated. However, as more time passed, he could only numbly act as though he disregarded them. He had no choice regarding this. After all, their eyes were not under his control.

Today was already two days after the Qualifying Competition had concluded. During these two days, not only did Xiao Yan fully recover from the injuries he received during the competition but his strength had also completely stabilized at the six star Da Dou Shi level. His condition was such that he was basically always in peak condition. The Dou Qi was circulating unceasingly within his body like flood water, causing a comfortable feeling to seep out from all over his body.

According to the rules of the academy, the top fifty students of the Qualifying Competition must begin to prepare to enter the Inner Academy within seven days after the end of the Qualifying Competition. As for Xiao Yan and the others in the top five, they could choose a time to enter the academy's 'Book Collection Hall' within these seven days. They had the qualification to rely on their luck to choose something that belonged to them as a reward.

Xiao Yan was also very interested in that mysterious 'Book Collection Hall,' which even Xun Er constantly kept in her mind. However, the top five people who could enter, according to the rules, had to enter at the same time. Yet, Bai Shan, Hu Jia, and Wu Hao, were still lying in the clinic. Based on what he heard from Lu Mu, the three of them could forget about walking without three to five days of rest. While Lu Mu said these words, the gaze which Lu Mu used to look at Xiao Yan was somewhat strange and filled with happiness. Clearly, he was thinking that it was fortunate that when he was fighting with Xiao Yan, this fellow did not become crazy and beat him up into that miserable state. As a person from the Alchemist Department, the hardship that Bai Shan and the two others had undergone these past two days was something that he had clearly witnessed with his own eyes.

"I wonder what exactly is in the 'Book Collection Hall'. Hopefully, I can find something suitable for myself." The warm sunlight passed through the gap between the tree branches, shining on Xiao Yan's body as he muttered with hope.

"Elder Cousin Xiao Yan."

While Xiao Yan's footsteps were walking at a steady pace, a somewhat timid voice suddenly sounded from in front of him. Xiao Yan's footsteps paused when he heard the voice. He opened his narrowed eyes and looked forward, only to see a group of lively and pretty young ladies. Among this group of young ladies, Xiao Mei was being clustered around like a moon surrounded by stars. Honestly speaking, with Xiao Mei's

appearance, she could be considered among the elite, even in this academy... The current her was somewhat ill at ease while she eyed Xiao Yan, who had walked over. This was a young man, who had used less than ten days to raise his reputation to the peak within this academy, where a countless number of talented individuals gathered.

“Wow, Xiao Mei, he really is your cousin? He is walking over, walking over...” Beside Xiao Mei, those young ladies eyed Xiao Yan, who was slowly walking over. A flush involuntarily and swiftly surfaced on their faces. They pulled Xiao Mei as they softly shouted somewhat excitedly.

The reputation that the current Xiao Yan possessed within Jia Nan Academy had basically surpassed Bai Shan’s in the past. Before, his act of fighting one against three had been relished by a countless number of students. As they repeatedly conversed of the event between one another, Xiao Yan’s position swiftly rose among many students. This, in addition to the fact that Xiao Yan’s face also belonged to the delicate and handsome class, despite not being extremely handsome, and that his face frequently contained a warm smile, resulted in many young ladies winking at him during these short two days. A man who had strength was filled with charm.

As Xiao Yan’s reputation rose within the academy, it also caused his original reputation of being extremely thorny, which had been passed around due to him having taken two years leave, to become synonymous with having a great amount of character.

Young people were like this. If it was a person whom they liked and respected, they would all try their best to ignore or remedy any shortcomings he had in the past and do their best to let him become the most perfect person in their hearts. The current Xiao Yan did not give any explanation but that bad reputation of him skipping classes for two years had been twisted into “being full of character...”

Xiao Yan slowly walked toward the somewhat uneasy Xiao Mei. He smiled and nodded toward her before stopping in front of her. He carelessly chatted a little with her while smiling. After which, he brushed past Xiao Mei.

Although Xiao Yan’s face was warm and had a smile, Xiao Mei still felt an unfamiliarity from within it. As she heard the envious voices of the young ladies around her, she felt the tip of her nose ache a little. Her pupils were filled with a gloominess. Originally, they could be very close. She did not need this kind of superficial greeting. Instead, she would rather he display anger toward her. That way, she would at the very least feel rejoiced. If there was anger, it meant that she was worth him being angry over. Yet, this calm manner of Xiao Yan’s caused her to feel an extreme pain in her heart. Hating a person was not being angry at her, but to completely ignore her. The current Xiao Yan appeared to have already reached this stage.

All of this was the result of a mistake in her attitude back when she was still a child!

As Xiao Yan brush passed her, Xiao Mei drew her nose and tried her best to not let the moist air agglomerate in her eyes. Although the regret in her heart tortured her until she could not wait to hug someone and have a good cry, she lifted her pretty face and forcefully smiled at the young ladies around her, who still had envious gazes. After which, she turned her body to leave.

“That’s right, can you leave with me? I want to tell you something.” Just as the dejected Xiao Mei was about to leave, a smiling voice suddenly rang out, causing her body to stiffen on the spot. She hurriedly turned around, only to find the warm faced Xiao Yan. After being startled, she hurriedly nodded. She did not say goodbye to the young ladies around her as she swiftly followed Xiao Yan under the envious gazes of those young ladies.

Strange gazes followed them the entire way as Xiao Yan led Xiao Mei slowly toward a quiet lake. He stood in front of the lake and was quiet for a moment before telling her about all the things that had happened to the Xiao clan in detail. No matter how one put it, Xiao Mei was a member of the Xiao clan. She had the right to know that the clan had moved. Moreover, Xiao Yan felt guilty regarding the matter of the clan moving. If it was not because of his conflict with the Misty Cloud Sect, the clan need not be implicated in this manner. Although this clan had not left him with a good impression since he was young, the clan was ultimately the blood and sweat of his father and the various ancestors of the Xiao clan. Now that his father was missing, he, Xiao Yan, must become the acting Clan Head of the Xiao clan. One would know about this from the moment the three elders decided to hand him the mysterious jade piece, which was a family heirloom that also possessed the ability to store a speck of the spirit belonging to the Clan Head. This was because the jade piece was the symbolic status of the Clan Head of the Xiao clan over the generations.

“The clan has moved?” Xiao Mei was also startled when she heard the news. Her eyebrows knit together slightly. She eyed Xiao Yan’s expression and the intelligent her blinked her eyes. She guessed, “This is because of the matter regarding the Misty Cloud Sect, right?”

“Yes.” Xiao Yan laughed bitterly before becoming slightly quiet. His tone had suddenly become much more cold, “I killed one of their elders and after that, our ties have been strained since. I will settle this matter properly with them when I return to the Jia Ma Empire in the future. During this period before I return, you should try to not return to the Jia Ma Empire as much as possible. If your movement is exposed, you and the clan may receive a destructive blow.”

Xiao Mei nodded obediently. The corner of her eyes glanced at Xiao Yan as she softly said, “Elder Cousin Xiao Yan, rest assured that no one in the Xiao clan will blame you for this matter. I’m afraid that even those Elders would feel extremely proud that you act like this. In so many years, there aren’t many people who dare or have the qualification to fight with people from the Misty Cloud Sect.”

Xiao Yan smiled when he heard this. He immediately nodded and said, "Hopefully. The Xiao clan is my father's blood and sweat. I will do my best to protect it."

"The current Elder Cousin Xiao Yan is able to do it. Back then..." Xiao Mei's words suddenly came to a stop. Her pretty face became pale and her hand really wanted to pull at her own mouth. It was not easy to finally have some warm atmosphere, but she had to choose to bring up that matter.

"Yes, let the things back then stay in the past. We are no longer children and there is no use to keep remembering those things." Xiao Yan's gaze stopped on the sparkling surface of the lake. He turned his head and eyed Xiao Mei's worried manner before saying, "No matter what happens, you are always my younger cousin... If you have some problems in the future, you can come and find me. Although I don't have the strength to protect the clan's fate in the Jia Ma Empire, I am able to ensure that the members of the Xiao clan will not be bullied within this Jia Nan Academy."

Xiao Mei smoothed out a breath within her heart. These words of Xiao Yan's caused an additional smile to appear on Xiao Mei's face as she nodded.

"Alright, I also need to return. Remember, if there is a problem, come find me where Instructor Ruo Ling stays." Xiao Yan smiled and patted Xiao Mei's shoulders. He immediately turned around before walking to the outside of a small path.

Xiao Mei stood on the same spot and eyed the figure, which had become distant. She suddenly cracked a smile. This appeared to be an opportunity to break the deadlock between the two of them, right?

.....

Five days after the Qualifying Competition was over, Xiao Yan went to see Instructor Ruo Ling, Xun Er and Xiao Yu were both present when he returned to Instructor Ruo Ling's unique home. In front of them also stood a middle-aged man, who was wearing the academy's Instructor robe.

"Ke ke, what is this about?" Xiao Yan smiled and asked as he walked into the living room. He turned his gaze toward Xun Er.

"Xiao Yan ge-ge, this is Instructor Ku Lu." Xun Er smiled and stepped forward. She smoothly received Xiao Yan's jacket and said gently, "Bai Shan, Hu Jia, and Wu Hao have already recovered. According to the rules, this afternoon is the time when we will enter the 'Book Collection Hall'."

Xiao Yan's footsteps paused a little. He was a little surprised. Immediately, he smiled and nodded. It had finally arrived. He had highly anticipated this so-called mysterious 'Book Collection Hall'. Now, he hoped that it would not disappoint him...

Chapter 428: The Mysterious Book Collection Hall

The book shelves were staggered within the brightly lit room. There were all kinds of ancient books placed on the book shelves, giving it an exceptional scholarly atmosphere. At this moment, there were three people standing in the middle of this room. Behind the table, which was in front of them, was a white-haired old man, who was slowly flipping through the documents in his hands. The entire room was in a silent atmosphere.

The three people standing in the room were two males and one female. If one were to carefully observe them, they were actually Bai Shan, Wu Hao, and Hu Jia, who had been beaten by Xiao Yan until they were seriously injured. At this moment, Bai Shan and Wu Hao had their eyes lowered. Their faces may still be a little pale but their complexion was much better compared to the day of the competition. On the other hand, Hu Jia had her eyes wide open as she looked at the old man flipping through the book. A long while later, she stuck out her tongue, appearing aggrieved.

After the silent atmosphere continued for nearly ten minutes, the Deputy Headmaster, Hu Gan, finally shifted his eyes away from his book. He said faintly, "Don't count on me to help you vent your anger. This is something you've inflicted on yourselves. If you have the ability, you can directly go and hit Xiao Yan to vent your anger. However, I am not going to bother as for who is able to defeat who. The Jia Nan Academy does not prohibit those kinds of fights. As long as you want to, you can do so any time."

"Hmph, it is not as though I expect you to do anything. I was defeated in that manner that day because I was caught off guard. I had not used my trump card. Otherwise, we don't know who exactly would have won or lost." Hu Jia snorted as she continued, "I am just angry that this fellow actually doesn't know how to be tender to a woman. At the very least, I am also a girl. Can't he be a little gentler when he attacks? I do not have rough skin and thick flesh like the two of them."

Hu Gan could not resist laughing when he heard Hu Jia's muttering. He replied helplessly, "At that time, who cares about showing tenderness to a woman. The three of you joined hands to attack him alone. If Xiao Yan was to still hold back, then it really was unjustifiable. Of course, that last action of his also caused me to be extremely surprised. That kid is definitely a ruthless fellow."

"The three of you should not become enemies with him because of this matter. Young people should be more open minded. It is not worth becoming enemies over such small matters. Xiao Yan's future potential is extremely terrifying. Remember, one more friend is better than one more enemy. Moreover, this enemy has reached the stage of causing one to feel creeped out." Hu Gan eyed the three people in front of him and spoke to them earnestly.

"Hmph, women are the ones who can really hold a grudge. I remember that kick. He better not give me an opportunity." Hu Jia curled her lips and said.

Hu Gan laughed when he heard Hu Jia putting it like this. With his understanding of the former, he naturally understood that whenever it was a time like this, she would really no longer bear any grudge. However, it was clear that Xiao Yan's kick did indeed cause some resentment to remain in Hu Jia's heart. She might not become enemies with him in the future, but it was likely that she would not display any friendly expression to the other party.

"I will not view him as an enemy, but I will view him as an opponent that I must surpass." Wu Hao responded calmly.

Hu Gan nodded slightly. This Wu Hao was indeed a person that was crazy about combat. However, it was also because he was such a person that he would be able to walk even further on the path of a strong person. No wonder the Headmaster was extremely optimistic about him.

"Ke ke, we were merely sparring to exchange pointers. It is extremely normal to be injured. Why would we bare a grudge?" Bai Shan gave his reply. One could not see the slightest anger on his face, which was full of a smile.

However, it was this smiling manner of Bai Shan that caused Hu Gan's eyebrows to knit slightly without leaving a trace. As the Deputy Headmaster of the Jia Nan Academy and with his shrewdness from living for so many years, how would he not be able to hear whether these words of Bai Shan were hypocrisy or truth?

Hu Gan looked deep into the smiling Bai Shan but he did not continue to speak. He clearly understood the latter had greatly enjoyed being sought after by others during these years. Now that Xiao Yan had beaten him until what he had enjoyed was shattered, his heart would definitely be extremely unwilling to let bygones be bygones. However... he hoped that this person would not do anything stupid. Hu Gan did not think that the young man, who dared to use his own strength to challenge an entire sect within the Jia Ma Empire, would be someone ordinary.

"Creak."

The clear sound of the room's door being opened suddenly sounded quietly. A voice was transmitted into the room, "Deputy Headmaster, Xiao Yan and Xun Er have arrived."

"Let them in." Hu Gan closed the book in his hand and smiled as he spoke. Immediately, he turned his gaze toward Bai Shan and the other two and said, "When you all enter the Inner Academy in the future, you might have to fight and struggle together. Therefore, don't turn your relationship sour. If the new students who enter the Inner Academy each year do not form groups, their fates are not very nice. Additionally, strength is honored within the Inner Academy. Whoever has a harder fist will be able to obtain the best training conditions. Whatever background you have will be useless once you are there. That includes my power."

Hu Gan's gaze stared intently at Hu Jia when he said the final sentence. The meaning within it was understood without being spoken.

Hu Jia's mouth twitched. Although she was noncommittal within her heart, she still nodded on the surface.

Not long after Hu Gan's voice sounded, two human figures slowly walked in from where the door was. Their gaze swept once around the spacious room before finally stopping on Hu Gan, who was behind a table. The two of them took two steps forward and bowed.

"Ke ke, the two of you have finally arrived." Hu Gan smiled as he watched the two of them. His gaze paused a little longer on Xiao Yan's face. During the ten days since Xiao Yan had arrived at Jia Nan Academy, this was the first time that Hu Gan had exchanged gazes at such close proximity with this top student, whose reputation had already reached the peak of the academy.

Mild and gentle. Two words suddenly came leaping out from Hu Gan's heart the first time they looked at each other. He muttered a little in his mouth, only to laugh bitterly. These two words, and the wildness that Xiao Yan had displayed during battle were two complete extremes.

After Hu Gan carefully stared at those dark, black, ink-like pupils for a while, his sharp, old eyes finally sensed an irritability and restlessness that was like a flame flowing under the calmness. The manner was like a tranquil mountain that was hiding a volcano. At anytime and anywhere, the frightening volcano could erupt into terrifying energy and angry flames that would leave one speechless.

"The Dou Qi in his body appears to be gently circulating but it faintly emits a restless feeling, like that of a volcano. Looks like this should be related to the 'Heavenly Flame', which he controls." Hu Gan's gaze swept over Xiao Yan's body and was actually able to sense the nature of Dou Qi within the other person's body. This skill was indeed worthy of being the Deputy Headmaster of Jia Nan Academy's Outer Academy.

"Since you are all here, I shall not continue to be long-winded. You should all know the reason as to why I called all of you over." Hu Gan stood up from his chair and said with a smile, "You are the top five students of this Qualifying Competition. According to the rules, you have the qualification to enter the 'Book Collection Hall' to try your luck."

As he spoke, Hu Gan walked to a wall behind him. His hand randomly tapped a couple of times on it and a soft, deep rumbling noise resonated. A dark tunnel immediately appeared in front of the five of them.

"Follow me." Hu Gan waved his hand at the five of them and took the lead in entering the dark tunnel. Behind him, Hu Jia, whose face was filled with curiosity, followed him without any hesitation. Following which, Wu Hao and Bai Shan entered. Only after they

had entered did Xiao Yan pull Xun Er and carefully enter this dark, black tunnel. These years of training had forged that cautious character of his.

After entering the tunnel, Xiao Yan discovered that there were huge glowing pearls inserted in the walls. The faint glow shone onto the tunnel until it appeared a little hazy. However, this little bit of light was already sufficient for Xiao Yan and the rest.

The atmosphere was quiet within the tunnel. There was only soft rustling footsteps. Xiao Yan swept his gaze over Hu Gan, who was leading the way in front of them. The hand which he used to hold Xun Er grew a little tighter. As a new person who had just arrived, it could not be said that he was familiar with this Jia Nan Academy. He similarly had very superficial knowledge of the character of the extremely strong Deputy Headmaster.

Having seemingly sensed Xiao Yan's anxiety, Xun Er gently patted his hand, smiled at him and shook her head.

Xiao Yan nodded slightly and inhaled a deep breath of air. His emotions gradually recovered to being calm, and his footsteps also became a little quicker.

After walking in the tunnel for nearly half an hour or so, a bright light finally appeared at the end of the tunnel. When they saw this light, the footsteps of the few people within the tunnel also became much faster. A moment later, they finally arrived at the end of the tunnel and took one step out of it.

Eye-piercing light scattered down from the horizon, causing Xiao Yan and the others to shut their eyes habitually. A long while later, they slowly opened them and looked at the scene that appeared in front of them. They were slightly shocked.

At this moment, the scene that was in front of Xiao Yan and the others was clearly a certain valley groove. That precipitous mountain wall extended all the way up vertically. Finally, it extended all the way to the edge of one's sight. Within the three surfaces of the cliff, there was coincidentally an extremely spacious empty land. At this moment, a massive, ancient pavilion, which was so large that it left one speechless, was standing there.

Their gazes slowly swept across the large, ancient pavilion and finally stopped on an extremely ancient horizontal signboard that was on the pavilion. On it, three words, that had become blurry due to the destruction of time, appeared faintly visible.

Book Collection Hall!

The ancient words may have undergone the destruction of time but Xiao Yan and the rest still felt shock at the rustic artistic conception contained within those words. It was worthy of being the mysterious Book Collection Hall of the Jia Nan Academy's Outer Academy. Just this horizontal signboard had already revealed its status.

Hu Gan led the five of them as they slowly walked toward the Book Collection Hall. They were about to enter a twenty meter distance from the Hall, when Hu Gan suddenly stopped. He cupped his hands in the direction of the Book Collection Hall and said, "The top five names for this year's Qualifying Competition have already been born. According to the rules, I have brought them here. Elders, please open the door!"

Hu Gan's words were carried by Dou Qi as they reverberated unceasingly within the small mountain valley. They did not disappear for a long time.

Not long after Hu Gan's words sounded, Xiao Yan's eyes, which were staring intently at the Book Collection Hall, suddenly shrunk. His gaze shifted abruptly. Finally, they stopped on the two grey-robed figures, who were seated cross-legged on the ground. When they had entered earlier, he clearly saw that there was not a single person here!

Yet, at this moment, these two grey-robed people appeared, as though they had been sitting here all this while. This bizarre scene caused some chillness and shock to appear in his heart. On top of being shocked, however, the interest he had for this Book Collection Hall grew increasingly dense. For it to be treated this solemnly by the Jia Nan Academy, it was likely that the things that were placed here should also not be some ordinary things.

"This place is indeed worthy of being part of Jia Nan Academy. Its heritage is indeed rich."

Chapter 429: The Mysterious Guardians of the Hall

Hu Gan's voice slowly dissipated from the mountain valley. However, there was not the slightest movement from the two gray-robed human figures. It was as though they did not hear him.

Although he saw that there was no reply to his words, Hu Gan also did not speak again. He maintained his posture of having his hands cupped together as he waited quietly.

Behind Hu Gan, Xiao Yan, and the others faced each other after seeing this scene. Even Hu Jia, who had a lawless character, also wisely kept her mouth shut. She had never been here before, but she knew that with Hu Gan's status in Jia Nan Academy's Outer Academy, there was hardly anyone that could compare with him. However, he was now this courteous in front of these two gray-robed human figures. From this, one could see just how frightening these two gray-robed human figures guarding the 'Book Collection Hall' were. She may be lawless, but she was no fool. She knew who she could provoke and who she could not.

In the silence, the finger under Xiao Yan's sleeves suddenly gently rubbed the dark, black, ancient ring. His drooping eyebrows could not help, but knit together. This was because he had discovered that ever since the two mysterious gray-robed people appeared earlier, the thread that represented the connection between Yao Lao and

himself had actually completely disappeared. This kind of situation was a first ever since he had come in contact with Yao Lao.

This kind of connection was between both parties. However, Xiao Yan did not taken the initiative to sever the connection. In that case, it was clear that it was Yao Lao who had taken the initiative to cut it. Yao Lao had never done such a thing in the past. Now, however... Xiao Yan blinked his eyes. He looked at the two gray-robed people at the pavilion as he exhaled quietly within his heart. By being able to cause Yao Lao to be fearful enough to cut off all connections, these two people were indeed frightening. This was worthy of being Jia Nan Academy, a place where tigers and dragons hide...

The quiet atmosphere in the mountain valley continued for nearly ten minutes before the robes of the two gray-robed human figures seated crossed-legged at the main entrance of the hall moved slightly. Immediately, two pairs of calm, old, well-like eyes, similar to those of an old monk, were lifted slightly. They swept indifferently across Hu Gan and the others one at a time before finally and suddenly stopping on Xiao Yan's body. Their gray robes trembled slightly and there was a soft hoarse exclamation that was quietly emitted, "Heavenly Flame?"

The soft sound slowly reverberated through the quiet mountain valley, and also clearly entered the ears of Xiao Yan and the others.

"May I know what the name of this young friend is?" The gaze of one of the gray-robed men remained on Xiao Yan. There was a vicissitudinous that was accumulated with time seeping out from within his hoarse voice.

Hearing that the gray-robed person actually cast Hu Gan aside and questioned Xiao Yan instead, everyone in the valley was startled. Immediately, they turned their heads and threw strange gazes at Xiao Yan. From the respectful attitude that Hu Gan had used to treat the two gray-robed men, it was clear that these two people had an extraordinary position within the academy. Yet, Xiao Yan was able to cause the two of them to form a little interest in him. This kind of treatment caused Hu Jia and the rest to quietly be envious.

Xiao Yan was also startled at the gray-robed person's question. He immediately and hurriedly cupped his hands together as he spoke respectfully, "This little one, Xiao Yan, greets both Elders."

"The flame tends toward a greenish color. The flame is like a lotus and a volcano. If the old me is not mistaken, the 'Heavenly Flame' that young friend controls should be the 'Green Lotus Core Flame' that is ranked nineteenth on the 'Heavenly Flame Ranking'." The old voice resounded beside Xiao Yan's ear, causing his calm heart to suddenly tighten. There was an additional fright in the eyes that he used to look at the two gray-robed people. This mysterious gray-robed person was the first person who had managed to see through the exact details of his flame before he had even displayed the 'Green Lotus Core Flame'. This person was truly frightening!

Xiao Yan's throat rolled a little as he nodded slightly. His gaze glanced over to Xun Er and the rest around him before he realized that it was as though they had not heard the words that the grey-robed person had said earlier. He could not help but become stunned. His heart came to an immediate and sudden understanding. This was likely a trick of the two mysterious gray-robed people.

"Being able to control a 'Heavenly Flame' at such an age, how truly gifted..." The gray-robed person on the left side gently sighed. There was some admiration within his voice. Immediately, he shifted his gaze toward Hu Gan and said with a hoarse voice, "The top five this time around are much better than the previous five."

Hu Gan sighed in relief when he heard these words. He smiled as he said, "Since that is the case, can I request both Elders to open the Space Lock."

"Space Lock?" The foreign name caused Xiao Yan and the others to become blank.

"Xiao Yan ge-ge, look at the spot in front of Deputy Headmaster Hu Gan." Xun Er's soft voice was suddenly transmitted into Xiao Yan's ears. The latter lifted his head and took a look. Initially, there was still some doubt on his face. A moment later, the doubt gradually disappeared and was replaced by a grave expression.

Xiao Yan's eyes stared intently at the place around half a meter in front of Hu Gan. A moment later, he realized that if he were to carefully observe the space there, one would actually be able to discover very shallow folds. These folds were hidden in the air and were extremely difficult to discover. Xiao Yan's gaze followed the movement of the appearing and disappearing folds before he suddenly realized that the folds of this space had nearly become something like a wall — protecting the entire 'Book Collection Hall' behind it!

"This is a Space Lock. An extremely strong mirror knot that only a strong Dou Zun would have the ability to lay. This Space Lock is left behind by a predecessor of the academy a few hundred years ago. If we didn't have the two Elders inside to use a special method to open it, even a strong Dou Zong would not be able to break in." Hu Gan, who was in front, seemed to clearly understand the loss that Xiao Yan and the others felt as he gave a smile and explained.

Xiao Yan and the others nodded their heads in sudden comprehension. Their hearts were, however, slightly shocked. A mirror knot that even a strong Dou Zong was helpless to break. This was far too frightening.

The two gray-robed people outside of the pavilion slowly extended their pair of shriveled hands from within their sleeves. Immediately, they began to use their fingers and their palms to slowly form some hand seals. As the seals were formed by their hands, Xiao Yan could clearly sense that there were two extremely strong, shapeless ripples that were being emitted from their palms, like waves.

The shapeless ripples gradually disappeared and finally came into contact with those folds in space. When the two came into contact, the space in front of Xiao Yan and the others immediately became like a mirror that appeared to be formed by water as circles of ripples repeatedly surfaced. A moment later, the ripples ceased and something like a door was slowly being pulled open by a formless, large hand.

“Let’s go.” Hu Gan waved his hand when he saw the doorway into this space. After which, he took the lead and walked in. Behind him, Xiao Yan and the others hesitated for a moment before they carefully walked into this shapeless doorframe.

After taking one step through the shapeless door, Xiao Yan realized that the sight in front of him had become much brighter. The eyes, which he used to look at the pavilion had also become a little clearer. They had truly entered into this Locked Space.

“Ke ke, we have troubled both Elders.” Hu Gan smiled and said to the two gray-robed people seated cross-legged outside the hall.

“It is but our duty.” The two mysterious human figures wrapped in gray robes did not even move their bodies as a hoarse faint voice slowly sounded.

“You can all enter the ‘Book Collection Hall’ now. Remember, no matter what you want to obtain, you cannot insist and forcefully try to obtain it. That is because there is an energy layer added to everything here. If your hand is able to pass through the energy layer without any resistance, you can take away the thing inside. Of course, no matter how many you can take, you can only bring one of it out of the ‘Book Collection Hall’. Do not be greedy. Otherwise, you will gain nothing at the end, just like if you try to fetch water with a bamboo basket.”

TL: Bamboo Basket - Cookie Jar example for western cultures

“If you cannot pass through the energy layer, then you should give up. With your current strength, you cannot break them. There are quite a number of people among those who enter the ‘Book Collection Hall’ every year who end up returning empty handed. Therefore, leave everything to fate. Don’t try to forcefully take those things that you are unable to.” Hu Gan pointed at the ‘Book Collection Hall’ with his finger as he explained the situation to Xiao Yan and the others.

Xiao Yan and the rest nodded when they heard this. They exchanged glances with one another before they finally and slowly lifted their legs and walked toward the ‘Book Collection Hall’.

Only the rustling of footsteps sounded in the quiet mountain valley. Xiao Yan and Xun Er walked at the back of the group. The few of them passed through the grass patch in front of the pavilion. They finally stepped onto the green rock steps, which had been ravaged by time until they were full of potholes.

There was a green layer that covered the rock stairs. When one stepped on it, one would feel that they were somewhat slippery. However, it was fortunate that it did not pose much of a hindrance to Xiao Yan and the others. They followed the green rock stairs and walked for a while before arriving in front of the 'Book Collection Hall'. When they raised their heads to eye the ancient horizontal signboard, a desolate feeling spread out from it, lingering over everyone's heart and did not disappear for a long while.

“*Cough*...”

A hoarse cough suddenly sounded, awakening the five of them from their absent-minded state. The five of them were blank before they hurriedly and immediately moved their sight away from the horizontal signboard.

“What a weird horizontal signboard. It actually has the demonic strength to attract people's mind. Why is it that every part of the 'Book Collection Hall' is filled with this mysterious aura?” Xiao Yan lowed his head and sighed while muttering in his heart.

“Go in. The door will only be open for one hour. After one hour, you must come out regardless of whether or not you have obtained anything.”

The sleeves of a gray-robed person to the left of the five of them was blown by the breeze until they fluttered. The tightly-shut main door immediately let out a creaking sound as it was slowly opened, revealing a dark tunnel behind.

As the main door was opened, an ancient, bleak aura came pouncing toward them. It caused Xiao Yan and the others to hurriedly tighten the defense of their mind, not daring to have even the slightest thought of something else.

Hu Jia, who was leading them inhaled a deep breath of air and took the initiative to step into the 'Book Collection Hall'. Behind her, Bai Shan and Wu Hao hesitated for a moment before following closely.

“Let's go, Xiao Yan ge-ge.” Xun Er pulled Xiao Yan's hand and spoke with a smile as she eyed Hu Jia and the two others, who had disappeared in the black tunnel.

“Yes. Be careful.” Xiao Yan nodded. The corner of his eyes swept past the two mysterious gray-robed human figures beside him. He immediately pulled Xun Er and walked into the 'Book Collection Hall'. Finally, they quietly disappeared endured by their soft footsteps.

After all five of them entered the 'Book Collection Hall', the main door, which was open, began to creak as they were slowly closed. Finally they were tightly shut.

As he once again watched the tightly closed main door, Hu Gan sighed gently and said with a smile, “Hopefully these little fellows can find the things that they like. It is a very

rare opportunity to be able to enter the 'Book Collection Hall' of the Jia Nan Academy. They must not waste it."

Chapter 430: Fighting and Grabbing

When he heard the sound of the main door behind him being tightly shut, Xiao Yan's footsteps paused for a moment. Immediately, he once again pulled Xun Er as they walked forward. After five minutes, a pale, yellow-colored light was transmitted from a spot not too far in front of them. Their footsteps became involuntarily quicker. After a while, they finally passed through the dark, black tunnel, and a brilliant light shot at them, causing them to turn their heads away.

The place, which appeared in front of both Xiao Yan and Xun Er, was an extremely spacious, large room. On the walls around the room, there were nearly ten energy barriers. At this moment, these energy barriers were slowly releasing and pulling back a light glow, shining through the entire room until it was like daytime.

Hu Jia and the two others had already arrived at the room. When they heard the sound of footsteps, the three of them turned around to take a glance. Hu Jia took a step forward upon seeing the two of them and smilingly said: "Xun Er, we can huddle together after we enter the Inner Academy in the future. Although I have never entered the Inner Academy, I heard from my grandfather that if one wanted to obtain the best training conditions, one must see whose fist is harder. Therefore, if we, these new students who has just entered, were to separate, we will definitely be unable to avoid being oppressed and bullied."

Hu Jia's gaze merely swept once across Xiao Yan before she leapt at him. Clearly, she still bore some grudges within her heart towards the ruthless attack which Xiao Yan had inflicted upon her a couple days before.

"Ke ke, that's right. If the new students who has just entered are not united, it is very easy for them to be bullied." Bai Shan, who stood beside her, laughingly said: "However, I have a brother from my clan who has already stayed in the Inner Academy for two years. When that time comes for us to enter, as long as Junior Xun Er and all of you are with me, we can definitely avoid the most difficult transition period for new people with him looking after us."

"Ke ke, we appreciate Senior Bai Shan's good intentions. It is good enough for us to rely on ourselves with regards to these matters." Xiao Yan laughed softly. His gaze immediately looked all around him and a shock surfaced in his eyes. It appeared that this huge room was already the end of the 'Book Collection Hall'. Why was it that he could not see anything?

The corner of Bai Shan's mouth twitched slightly when he heard Xiao Yan's words. A dark coldness involuntarily surfaced on his smile-filled face before it immediately disappeared. He said thickly in his heart: "If you don't want to do things the easy way,

then fine. Then I'll let you act as though you are tough. I hope that you can still be this tough after you enter the Inner Academy. At that time, I want to take care of you until you crawl out of the Inner Academy!"

"Stop looking. There does not seem to be any other place. All there is are those strange energy barriers. Don't tell me they want us to enter?" Hu Jia's mouth twitched as she said upon seeing Xiao Yan's gaze sweeping in all directions.

Xiao Yan could not help but furrow his brows slightly when he heard this. What was their intention?

Just as Xiao Yan and the few others were at a loss in the enormous room, there was suddenly a slight sound of rushing wind that sounded in the room. Although that voice was extremely mild, it was undoubtedly as clear as a muffled thunder to Xiao Yan and the rest. Immediately, the gazes of the few of them hurriedly followed the noise and move. Finally, they stopped at an energy barrier that was to their left side.

"That spot... it seems there is something that is about to appear?" Xun Er eyed the energy barrier there as she said uncertainly.

"Appear?" Xiao Yan was slightly startled. He did not have the time to reply when his heart suddenly tightened. Before he made a move, he saw a cluster of purple light suddenly shooting out explosively from within the energy barrier. It immediately turned into a ray of light that shot towards the five of them.

"Be careful!" When they saw the purple light shooting over, Bai Shan and the others, who did not know the details, hurriedly dodged. Xiao Yan's body leaned to one side and avoided it. While he was pulling back, his mouth did not forget to shout at Xun Er, who was standing at her original spot, without even moving.

Xiao Yan's cry had just sounded when the purple light suddenly increased its speed and shot ferociously at Xun Er. The latter stared intently at the purple light and extended her hand in front of Xiao Yan's face, which had immediately changed color. She actually directly grabbed at the purple light.

"Chi."

Her pretty hand grabbed the purple light with her palm in front of the gazes of everyone in the room. After which, the purple light slowly disappeared, and a purple scroll, that was wrapped by a layer of energy appeared in her hand.

"Xuan Class High Level Qi Method. Purple Lightning Burst?" As Xun Er held the purple-colored scroll, she hand probed a little and actually passed through the energy layer without any hinderance. She eyed the words that were written on the surface of the scroll and could not help but read it out softly.

“Qi Method?” Xiao Yan and the others were black as they heard Xun Er’s voice. Immediately, they suddenly came to an understanding. The things would actually automatically be spat out from those energy barrier...

At the moment that Xiao Yan and the others came to a sudden understanding, a great cluster of rushing wind noises sounded once again. Quickly following this, one energy cluster after another, which were of different shapes and colors, were spat out from the energy barrier from all directions. After which, shuttled without stopping through the enormous room, carrying a humming rushing wind sound.

Seeing those energy clusters, which carried different momentums, a joy surfaced on Xiao Yan’s face. His feet sprung from the ground and his body rushed up into the air like a cannon ball. He hurriedly grabbed with his hand and when he landed on the ground, there was already a cluster of pale-green light in his palm.

As his gaze passed through the green light, Xiao Yan was able to discover that within the cluster of light, there was actually a medicinal ingredient, which entire body was like an emerald. His eyes swiftly swept across the emerald medicinal ingredient and finally stopped on the jade-like fruit at the top portion of this medicinal ingredient. Xiao Yan’s heart quivered: “Sky Jade Fruit?”

According to what Xiao Yan knew of the ‘Sky Jade Fruit’, this thing can be directly consumed and would be able to let a person’s Dou Qi’s strength be raised by around one star. If it was used to refine medicinal pill, it would definitely be a mysterious pill that could directly raise the strength of a strong Dou Wang should one succeed. This thing belonged to the category of a ‘sky-high price’ outside and was extremely difficult to find. It was really unexpected that there would actually be one of it being spat out within the ‘Book Collection Hall’. This really caused Xiao Yan to be speechless.

“Unfortunately, although it is rare, it is not the thing that I need now.” Xiao Yan was somewhat unwilling as he sighed while holding this ‘Sky Jade Fruit’ in his hand. He relaxed his palm and the former once again turned into a green glow that shot upwards before finally infiltrating into the bright energy barrier that permeated the place and quietly disappeared.

“Xun Er, snatch them!” Xiao Yan tilted his head and shouted loudly to Xun Er. His body moved according to his intentions and hurriedly grabbed at a cluster of light.

As Xiao Yan’s loud cry sounded, Bai Shan and the others appeared to have also began to respond. Immediately, their few figures of theirs began moving, turning into numerous shadows that swiftly flashed within the room and repeatedly grabbed the clusters of light that were shot out from the energy barrier.

In an instant, the entire room was filled with whistling sounds. Xiao Yan and the few others hurried all over. Once they found that the item they grabbed was not suitable for

themselves, they would hurriedly abandon it and continue to maximize the use of the time to snatch a treasure that suited them.

“Ha ha, Di class Dou Technique?” A joyful laughter suddenly sounded within the room filled with whistling noises. Xiao Yan and the others hurriedly turned their heads around and coincidentally saw that a cluster of silver-colored light had been caught and raised high in the sky by Bai Shan’s hand. From the glow that was vaguely visible, Xiao Yan and the others could faintly see that the thing inside appeared to be something like a scroll.

Bai Shan held the silver-colored cluster of light tightly. He could not resist smiling gloatingly at Xiao Yan as his hand swiftly inserted itself into the silver glow. However, just as his hand had just made contact with the interior of the silver-colored cluster of light, an enormous repulsive force abruptly appeared and suddenly shook off his hand. Immediately, the light grew very bright and forcefully broke free from Bai Shan’s hand. It turned into a ray of light that shot into an energy barrier.

Bai Shan was startled as he eyed that silver-colored light cluster, which shot straight back into the energy barrier and disappeared. His expression immediately and abruptly became gloomy. With a furious roar, his body transformed into a white shadow and heavily smashed against the energy barrier.

“Bang!” Bai Shan collided heavily onto the energy barrier. The energy barrier did not even move a little but the former shot back explosively. A mouthful of blood was thrown up. Finally, he smashed onto the wall on the other side.

Xiao Yan and the others were stunned as they watched the Bai Shan, who had been laughing gloatingly a moment ago, be shaken until he spat out blood and forced to pull back. They exchanged gazes with one another and the corner of their mouths could not help but twitch slightly. A typical case of a tragedy formed from extreme joy. Did this fellow forget that the Deputy Headmaster Hu Gan had said to follow fate just before they had come in earlier?

“*Cough*...” Xiao Yan let out a dry cough and temporarily halted his actions. He smilingly said to Bai Shan: “Senior Bai Shan, are you alright?”

Bai Shan climbed to his feet with a green face. He ignored Xiao Yan. Instead, he raised his head once again and threw his gaze towards the countless number of light clusters whistling in the space above the room. A moment later, he feet pushed off the ground and his body shot out once again.

Xiao Yan shrugged his shoulders. He took two step back and placed himself next to Xun Er as he whispered: “Although those things are isolated by an energy layer, if one carefully observe, one can still faintly see some clues. Remember, look specifically for those energy cluster with a greater energy undulation and grab them.”

“Yes, alright.” Xun Er nodded slightly when she heard Xiao Yan’s reminder. She did not continue the pointless snatching. Instead, she quietly stood on the spot as her gaze tightly focused on energy barrier, which was unceasingly spitting out clusters of light.

By her side, Xiao Yan closed his eyes. In this kind of place, the Spiritual Perception strength that he was endowed with was his greatest advantage. He was able to observe the strength of the energy cluster that had yet to appear before other people.

Xiao Yan’s Spiritual Perception permeated throughout the entire room. His body did not move even a little. Even when some energy clusters occasionally flew in front of him, he did not show the slightest reaction. These things were not worthwhile for him to move his hand to grab it.

The silence persisted for nearly ten minutes. Xun Er had already grabbed five to six energy clusters during this period of time but none of them had reached the level which she wanted. Therefore, all of them were thrown back.

In an instant, the heart of Xiao Yan, whose body had maintained its motionless state, suddenly tightened. His eyes opened abruptly. Without any forewarning, his feet pressed against the ground and his body shot explosively towards an energy barrier that was towards the left. Just as Xiao Yan’s body moved, a fiery-red glow let out a ‘xiu’ sound as it shot explosively out of the energy barrier.

The moment the fiery red glow appeared, the temperature of the entire huge room also rose by quite a bit. Therefore, the gaze of Bai Shan and the others were also hurriedly thrown over. When they saw the momentum that this fiery red glow carried, they were momentarily startled before they immediately shot explosively over as a conditional reflex.

However, just as they have just started moving, Xiao Yan, who had discovered this cluster of fiery red glow before them, had turned into a black shadow before suddenly appearing. He grabbed with his palm, withstood the heat that was transmitted from it, and pulled the fiery red glow into his hand. His body immediately shot back and Xun Er also came flashing forward in an extremely intelligent manner, blocking Bai Shan and the other two.

“Hee hee.” Xiao Yan parted his mouth and laughed in the direction of Bai Shan and the other two. He grabbed the fiery red glow as he went over to Xun Er’s side. When his gaze swept the interior of the glow, he was immediately a little startled. His throat rolled slowly.

“Not bad, it is indeed something good...”

Battle Through the Heavens #Chapter 431: Sonic Dou Technique - Read Battle Through the Heavens Chapter 431: Sonic Dou Technique

Chapter 431: Sonic Dou Technique

Within the fiery-red cluster of light in Xiao Yan's hand was a pale-red scroll. The high temperature was also being emitted from within it. If one's gaze passed through the glow and scanned across the pale-red scroll within it in detail, one would vaguely be able to see a few words on top of it.

"Nine Layer Phoenix Flame Skill, Di Class Middle Level."

The simple few words caused Xiao Yan to strain himself and swallow a mouthful of saliva. Di class Middle level. Since Xiao Yan was born until now, a Qi Method at this kind of level was the highest level Qi Method he had ever seen. Even if this kind of Qi Method was placed in the 'Black-Corner Region', where stolen or smuggled goods from the continent flowed through, it would definitely be able to set off a sensation. Countless number of factions would fight over this Qi Method until their heads broke and their blood was spilled. However, this Di class Qi Method, that had a value which was difficult to determine, landed in Xiao Yan's hand in such an easy manner. It really was somewhat drama like.

Xiao Yan's palm tossed the extremely light scroll in his hand. His hand, however, felt a somewhat heavy feeling. Something that he would never imagine getting his hands on in the past was now randomly spat out from this mysterious 'Book Collection Hall'. The vast collection that the Jia Nan Academy owned caused Xiao Yan to be endlessly shocked.

The gaze of Bai Shan and the two others sparkled as they stared at the fiery red cluster of light in Xiao Yan's hand. Up till now, this scroll was the item which had caused the greatest commotion. Although they did not know exactly what it was, they were able to vaguely guess the range of its class.

"Hei, you three, what is it? Aren't you going to grab by yourself? Don't tell me that you are thinking of snatching it from me?" Xiao Yan tossed the fiery red glow in his hand and smilingly said. Although there were three people in the other party, whose strength were not weak, Xiao Yan had Xun Er as his helper on this side. Even if they were to really fight, the other party would not be able to gain anything good.

"Ke ke, Junior Xiao Yan must be joking. However, you have also said earlier that these things rely on fate. It was with your ability that you were able to grab it, but you can only be considered to have truly obtained it if you have the luck to take it out from the cluster of light. Otherwise, what happened to me earlier would be an example." Bai Shan

glanced at the fiery red cluster of light in Xiao Yan's hand as said with a faint smile: "I want to see whether Junior Xiao Yan has this luck."

Xiao Yan's eyebrows were slightly knitted together when he heard this. He exchanged glance with Xun Er. His right hand held the fiery red cluster of light, while his left hand was slowly extended into it. After which, he gently made contact with the fiery red cluster of light.

The hearts of Bai Shan and the others were also suddenly raised when they saw Xiao Yan's action. Their eyes stared intently at his hand.

Light that permeated the place shot past them. Numerous clusters of light repeatedly flew past in front of them. However, none of them were currently in the mood to stop them. Instead, they threw their gazes on Xiao Yan's body. When faced with such a good thing, many people had the attitude of 'if I cannot have it, you can also forget about getting it'. Therefore, they really wanted to be happy over Xiao Yan's misery when they saw Xiao Yan's depressed appearance over failing to obtain the item.

Xiao Yan's hand was slowly passed to the cluster of light. A warm feeling spread from his palm. However, for Xiao Yan, who frequently played with fire, this little temperature was merely a small dish. His hand gradually extended into the cluster of light and a moment later, finally met with a feeling of resistance. He slowly exhaled and clenched his teeth. His hand abruptly pressed downwards, and the fiery red glow suddenly became brighter. A wild joy immediately swarmed up onto Xiao Yan's face as his hand was extended into the cluster of light in a lightning like manner and immediately drew it out once again. There was an additionally dark-red-colored scroll in it.

"Ha ha, looks like my luck is quite good." Xiao Yan held the dark, red-colored scroll tightly. The excitement on his face was difficult to hide while he laughed out loud.

"Hmph." Bai Shan's expression could not help but become a little ugly when he saw Xiao Yan actually succeeded in obtaining the item. He snorted and shifted his gaze away from Xiao Yan, beginning to look for the next target to catch.

Hu Jia and Wu Hao also eyed the dark red scroll in Xiao Yan's hand with eyes that were filled with envy. A moment later, they could only turn their heads around and look for their prey.

"He he, congratulations, Xiao Yan ge-ge." Xun Er turned her head over and said smilingly to Xiao Yan.

Xiao Yan smiled. He stroked the dark red scroll in his hand gently. A moment later, he suddenly tossed the scroll over to Xun Er and smilingly said: "It is useless for me to hold this Qi Method. If Xun Er likes it, I will give it to you. In all these years, I have never given you such a valuable item."

“This fellow is really generous. That is a Di class Qi Method...” Although most of the attention of Bai Shan and the two others were placed on searching for a target, the action where Xiao Yan tossed the Qi Method to Xun Er was similarly seen by them. This was especially when they heard that last sentence which Xiao Yan had said. They could not help but be stunned. Their expressions immediately became a little strange. Di class Qi Method. This was a priceless item. Was this fellow not a little too generous?

“Uh?” Xun Er was a little stunned when she received the scroll. However, she shook her head and said with a gentle voice: “During the Qualifying Competition, I observed the color and the degree of power of your Dou Qi during your battle. I think that the Qi Method that you are practising is merely of the Xuan class, right?”

“It temporarily is.” Xiao Yan helplessly nodded. The current ‘Flame Mantra’ had indeed only evolved to the Xuan class.

“You still want to give it to me? This Qi Method is obviously of the fire affinity and is more suitable for you.” Xun Er said in an annoyed manner.

“Due to some reasons, I cannot change my Qi Method. Therefore, other than giving it to you, I have not the slightest use for it.” Xiao Yan spread out his hand. He could not explain the matter regarding the ‘Flame Mantra’ too clearly. Immediately, in order to prevent Xun Er from continuing to pursue him with more questions, he could only give a displeased face as he said: “Hold it if you want it. If you don’t want it, just throw it.”

When she saw Xiao Yan’s expression, Xun Er pursed up her lips and give a sweet smile. She said: “Alright. Coincidentally, I now need a transition Qi Method. This thing is just suitable.”

“That’s right, what does Xiao Yan ge-ge want to look for? Let Xun Er help you look for it.” Xun Er said softly.

“I need a scroll containing a Sonic-type Dou Technique.” Xiao Yan frowned a little before sighing: “I don’t know if I can find one here.”

“Sonic-type Dou Technique?” Xun Er was startled when she heard this. She immediately voiced her thoughts: “This kind of unorthodox Dou Technique is extremely rare. We can indeed find some low class ones, but I think that Xiao Yan ge-ge would not be attracted by ones of those class. A high class one, however, is extremely difficult to find. Ah, we can only try our luck.”

“Yes.” Xiao Yan nodded. He raised his head and eyed the dense light cluster in midair and could not help but feel the skin on his head becoming slightly numb. The treasures that are collected in this ‘Book Collection Hall’ had actually reached such a terrifying number. If those people in the ‘Black-Corner Region’ were to know about this, they might all become crazy. No wonder this ‘Book Collection Hall’ was hidden so stealthily.

Moreover, there are even two mysterious grey-robed people with frightening strength guarding it.

After giving that scroll containing the Di class Qi Method to Xun Er, Xiao Yan once again shut his eyes. He relied on his Spiritual Perception strength to probe those light energy clusters. As Xun Er did not have such an outstanding Spiritual Perception ability, she could only rely on her senses to grab. However, the chances of obtaining what she was looking for by using this method was too low. Even after grabbing over ten clusters of light, Xun Er did not find what she needed.

The other three people in the 'Book Collection Hall' had all obtained something that could grudgingly be satisfied with after putting in an immense amount of effort. Moreover, they were able to successfully take the object out of the light cluster. Bai Shan obtained a silk armor that was nearly transparent. This thing had a shocking defensive strength. If one were to discuss its ability to endure being hit, it had surpassed the inner vest, which could resist the Amethyst Winged Lion, that Yun Yun had given Xiao Yan back when he was in the Jia Ma Empire. Hu Jia had obtained a purple-colored pill with an unknown effect. As for Wu Hao, he appeared to have obtained a scroll containing a Dou Technique. However, he did not let slip even a little information about the class of the item after obtaining it. Therefore, other than himself, Xiao Yan and the others were uncertain just what use the Dou Technique, which he had obtained, had.

At this moment, there was only ten minutes remaining till the one hour limit, that they could stay in the 'Book Collection Hall', was up. However, the Sonic Dou Technique, which Xiao Yan had anticipated, did not appear.

A pale-green shadow flashed down from midair. Xun Er wiped off the perspiration on her forehead. She waved the cluster of light in her hand towards Xiao Yan and said with a bitter smile: "Rank six Monster Core from a Magical Beast... this is also a rare good item. Unfortunately, it is not what we need."

Xiao Yan nodded slightly. As time slowly flowed by, the tension of his Spiritual Perception also grew tighter and tighter. At a certain instance, the heart belonging to him, whose Spiritual Strength was tensed till the extremely, suddenly trembled. The Spiritual Perception, which permeated the entire room, sent an extremely tiny vibration in the air into his mind.

"This vibration..." Xiao Yan's tightly closed eyes snapped opened. His body was like a cannonball, which shot directly into the air. His hand violently grabbed at a cluster of light before he landed steadily on the ground.

"Xiao Yan ge-ge, have you obtained it?" Xun Er hurriedly asked when she saw Xiao Yan's action.

Xiao Yan slowly spread open the cluster of light in his hand. His gaze passed through the light and swept within it. Initially, he nodded but he immediately sighed in

disappointment: "I have indeed found one, but unfortunately... it is merely a Huang class High level Sonic Dou Technique. This is quite a big gap from what I had expected."

"What should we do? Why don't we continue to wait awhile?" Xun Er said hesitatingly.

"There is not enough time." Xiao Yan laughed bitterly. He lifted his head to look towards the other side of the room only to coincidentally see Bai Shan's gloating gaze. He shook his head and could not be bothered with him. Facing Xun Er, he said: "Forget it, let's go. Although its class is low, I can first improvise and use it." Once he said this, he turned his body and walked towards the path which he had entered from.

"Hee hee, Junior Xiao Yan, looks like you are the person with the worst luck." Behind him, Hu Jia and the other two also followed them, due to the constraints of time. Bai Shan's could not resist the comfort in his heart when he saw Xiao Yan's depressed face as he opened his mouth and said.

"Are your bone itchy for another beating?" Xiao Yan's footsteps suddenly paused as he tilted his head and said with a cold smile.

Bai Shan's expression changed slightly. He gave a faint smile, but did not continue to speak. In his heart, he said darkly: "You can now continue to be arrogant. There is much for you to see once you enter the Inner Academy!"

When he saw that Bai Shan did not dare to reply, Xiao Yan curled his lips with disdain. Finally, he glanced at the energy barrier, which was still spitting out items at a slowing rate. He sighed in his heart, turned around, and was about to leave.

"Xiu!"

The instant Xiao Yan turned around, the glow of energy barrier at a corner suddenly became brighter. Immediately, a sharp, strange sound sounded throughout the entire room. That strange sound passed through the air and was propagated out turbulently, causing the spirit of Xiao Yan and the others to be a little absentminded.

he absentmindedness merely lasted for an instant before it disappeared. Xiao Yan's walking footsteps suddenly paused. He immediately and suddenly turned around as his body's speed was unleashed to its maximum. Finally, he turned into a black shadow that shot explosively towards an energy barrier within the room.

At the moment when Xiao Yan acted, a transparent energy cluster shot out from that energy barrier. Following its appearance, the sharp sound waves basically turned into a ripple-like form that spread throughout the room.

Chapter 432: Lion Tiger Gold Shattering Roar

As the transparent energy cluster was shot out, a sharp sound wave turned into substance-like ripples, and began to spread in all directions, with the energy cluster acting as an epicenter.

Bai Shan and the others were startled at this disturbance, which had suddenly appeared. Immediately, they swiftly came to an understanding. Each of their expressions were different as they watched that black shadow, which Xiao Yan had turned into, shooting out wildly.

Under the observation of the few people in the room, Xiao Yan unleashed his speed to its limit and appeared in front of the transparent energy cluster within two blinks. His hand was curled slightly, like the claws of an eagle, as he grabbed at the energy cluster in a lightning-like manner.

Seemingly having sensed Xiao Yan's actions, that energy cluster, which was originally shooting forward, suddenly paused. It shook immediately and actually began to retreat in order to dodge him.

"Humph." Sensing the nearly conditional reflex-like dodging of the transparent energy cluster, Xiao Yan let out a cold laughter. He shook his sleeves and his hand appeared to have been elongated by a section. With a grab of his claw-shaped hand, he firmly caught the transparent light cluster into his palm.

Once he obtained the thing, Xiao Yan's body did not show the slightest hesitation as he withdrew in a lightning-like manner. At this very same instance, an enormous suction force suddenly exploded out from the energy barriers within the room. Under the pull of this suction force, the energy globs that lingered and permeated the room was unceasingly being pulled back into the energy barrier. In an instant, the light clusters that permeated the place shuttled past. Countless number of light clusters, which had been spat out earlier, with the exception of the items in Xun Er, Bai Shan and the others hands, which energy covers had been broken, were once again being completely swallowed by the energy barrier at this moment.

As he sensed the suction force being emitted from the energy barrier, Xiao Yan knew that this was all because they were approaching the end of their time limit. His hand grabbed the transparent light cluster in his hand, that was repeatedly shaking, wanting to flee. This thing also felt the drag of the suction force and began to want to escape from Xiao Yan's restraint.

"Xiao Yan ge-ge, quickly try and see if you can obtain the thing within it!" Xun Er hurriedly reminded when she saw Xiao Yan's hands, which were being sucked until he was dragged towards the barrier.

Only after hearing Xun Er's words did Xiao Yan recover. His right hand held the light cluster tightly, while his left hand was abruptly inserted into it.

“Bang!”

Xiao Yan’s hand was inserted into the light cluster while being watched by the few of them. An instant later, a enormous force suddenly surged out and actually directly repelled Xiao Yan. Moreover, this repulsion force was large. It was sufficient to cause Xiao Yan to take quite a few steps back before he could neutralize the force.

“Damnit. I actually cannot.” Xiao Yan’s expression immediately became ugly when his hand was blocked. At this moment, the suction force, that was being emitted by the energy barrier, also became increasingly stronger. There were only a few countable light clusters still lingering within the entire room.

A gloating cold smile involuntarily surfaced on Bai Shan’s face as he looked at Xiao Yan’s hands, which were being bounced off the light cluster.

“Xiao Yan ge-ge, hold tight. Let me try!” A green-colored shadow flashed beside Xiao Yan. Xun Er’s hand was also swiftly extended into the energy cluster.

Seeing Xun Er becoming increasingly close to the cluster of light, Xiao Yan’s heart was also suddenly raised. If even Xun Er was unable to, then this Sonic Dou Technique, which had reached his hands, was likely to grow wings and fly away. At that time, Xiao Yan really could only make do with the Huang class Sonic Dou Technique from earlier.

Under the intense focus of gazes in the entire room, Xun Er’s hands were abruptly inserted into the light cluster. A moment later, the kind of resistance that Xiao Yan had faced earlier did not appear. Joy surfaced on Xun Er’s face. Her hands merely stopped for an instant within the light cluster before it was swiftly withdrawn. A crystal clear-like scroll appeared in everyone’s eyes.

As he eyed the scroll, which Xun Er had successfully removed, Xiao Yan’s nervous heart finally calmed down. He let out a smile on his face as though he had placed down a heavy burden.

“Xiao Yan ge-ge, here.” Xun Er rubbed the perspiration on her bright and smooth forehead. She was also very afraid that her failure would lead to Xiao Yan’s disappointment. Fortunately, however, the worst case scenario, which she had expected, did not appear. She smiled and handed over the transparent scroll in her hand to Xiao Yan.

“It’s really thanks to you.” Xiao Yan received the scroll and said with some heart palpitations. If it was not for Xun Er being here, it was likely that he would have to watch this thing, which had already reached his hands, once again be swallowed back with his own eyes. He licked his lips and turned his gaze towards the words on the scroll within his hands. Initially, he was a little startled, but he immediately nodded with satisfaction.

“Lion Tiger Gold Shattering Roar’, Sonic Dou Technique, Class: High Xuan class. When the lions and tigers roar in union, all beasts submit. It has the enormous strength of shattering gold and shaking the soul...”

Xiao Yan read the words on top of the scroll once, and felt a great satisfaction within his heart. The thing which he currently needed most, was a Sonic Dou Technique of this class. If it was too low, he would scorn it. If it was too high, it would be too difficult to practice and it was likely that he would have difficulty truly practicing it until he had enough power which might be a long period of time. After all, the higher the class of the Dou Technique, the higher the difficulty of practicing it would be.

“I have finally obtained it...” Xiao Yan released a long breath. He carelessly threw away the High Level Huang class Dou Technique which he had obtained earlier. When it left his hand, it was wrapped by a cluster of light and finally shot back into the energy barrier before disappearing.

“Let’s go.”

Xiao Yan kept this Xuan class High level Sonic Dou Technique inside his storage ring and waved his hand at Xun Er. Immediately, he took the lead to turn around and walked into the tunnel, which he had entered from earlier. When he passed by Bai Shan, his footsteps paused for a moment and spoke to him with a faint smile: “Looks like I have to disappoint Senior Bai Shan. I have gotten my hands on the thing that I need.”

Once he finished saying that, he did not continue to stay. Instead, he and Xun Er turned around and walked back into the dark tunnel.

“umph.” Bai Shan snorted coldly when he saw Xiao Yan’s smiling expression. His face was dark and solemn as he followed. Behind him, Hu Jia and Wu Hao also followed closely.

As the five of them left, the ripple-like energy barrier surrounding this room also began to slowly become smaller. An instant later, the energy barrier turned into a small point, which completely disappeared with a tiny ‘crack’ sound. At this moment, the entire large room also became empty. No one would have expected that this place was filled with countless number of treasures, which would cause a stir in the outside world, just minutes earlier.

“Creak.”

The tightly-shut, ancient main door was suddenly gently pulled open. A warm sunlight followed the gap of the door and shone into it, shining a long light trace within the dark tunnel, that reached all the way to the end...

The main door was opened. Xiao Yan and the four others walked out. They stood at the stairs and eyed the lush, green color of the valley. Their hearts could not resist sighing in relief. The atmosphere within the 'Book Collection Hall' was indeed a little too heavy.

"The space occupied by this 'Book Collection Hall' is so vast. I'm afraid that the large room which we had entered is merely one of the corners. Mystery is really seeping out from all over this place..." After walked out of the main door, the corner of Xiao Yan's eyes swept over the two grey-robed people, who were seated on both sides, like old monks in meditation, without leaving a trace as he spoke to himself in his heart.

Upon hearing the sound of the door opening, a robe of a grey robe person suddenly moved a little. Xiao Yan and the others immediately sensed a vast and majestic shapeless energy scanning them. The strength of that energy caused an aghast to surface in their hearts.

The shapeless energy appeared to only have the purpose of scanning them. Therefore, it lasted for only a short ten seconds before it withdrew like the tide until it completely disappeared.

"Time is up. You can go. Remember, you cannot reveal even a little bit of everything that happened here, including the information about the interior of the 'Book Collection Hall'." A hoarse, old voice slowly lingered over where the main door was.

Xiao Yan and the others hurriedly lowered their heads when they heard this.

"Ke ke, have all of you come out?" When he saw the five of the walking out, Hu Gan, who had been standing in front of the pavilion, said with a smile: "All of you didn't leave empty handed, right?"

The five of them nodded.

"That's good. No matter whether the thing you obtained is what you wanted, at the very least, you have gained something." Hu Gan smiled when he saw this. He bowed towards the two monk-like, grey-robed people beside the main door and said: "Since these little fellows have already come out, I shall not disturb you two Elders in your training. Goodbye."

The two grey-robed people still did not have any response towards Hu Gan's words. Hu Gan also did not mind. He waved his hand at Xiao Yan and the others and said: "Follow me."

Hearing Hu Gan's voice, Xiao Yan and the four others also bowed towards the two grey-robed people, who sat cross-legged without moving, much like wooden pillars. They slowly walked backwards, walked down the green rock stairs, before turning around and arriving at Hu Gan's side.

Hu Gan's gaze swept over the five of them. Only when he saw that they were not injured did he once again cupped his hands towards the two grey-robed people, turned around, and walked towards the invisible doorway which was being pulled open by a shapeless large hand.

"Follow me. Don't touch those spatial folds. Otherwise, even I cannot save you." Hu Gan turned his head around and reminded when they were about to pass through the doorway. After which, his upper body remained still as he strided out, stepping across the doorway in one go. Behind him, Xiao Yan and the others carefully followed. None of them dared to make even the slightest dissimilar movement.

After they safely passed through the invisible doorway, an energy ripple was slowly formed. Xiao Yan turned around and take a look, only to see that the invisible doorway, which was ripped opened, had already begun to slowly disappear. A moment later, an extremely tight space fold wall once again appeared, hiding the 'Book Collection Hall' behind it.

Xiao Yan's gaze leapt across those spatial folds, that were difficult to sense and swept across the main entrance of the 'Book Collection Hall'. His expression suddenly changed slightly. Those two grey-robed human figures, who were originally still seated cross-legged there earlier, had strangely disappeared at this moment. This movement that could be called specter-like caused a chill to continue to rise within his heart. Just who exactly were these grey-robed people guarding the 'Book Collection Hall'?

"This Jia Nan Academy could still stand after so many years while staying at the danger filled 'Black-Corner Region'. They do indeed have an extremely substantial foundation..." Xiao Yan sighed in his heart and shook his head. He swiftly followed Hu Gan and the others in front and once again entered into that mountain cave which he had come from earlier.

Following the disappearance of Xiao Yan and the others, this small mountain valley, which was hidden in an unknown location, once again reverted into the silence it had before. Only until the end of next year's Inner Academy Qualification Competition would this place once again be opened...

Chapter 433: Training

Within the spacious study, Hu Gan eyed the wall beside the study, which was slowly closing. Only then did he turn and face Xiao Yan and the four others in front of him. He said smilingly: "Alright, it can be considered that you all obtained your reward. Rest for the next two days. In two days, you will all be entering the Inner Academy. At that time, there will be chances for you all to cry bitterly."

Xiao Yan and the others watched Hu Gan's smiling manner. They exchanged glances with one another before nodding slightly.

“That’s right, I will remind you once again that if the new students entering the academy want to avoid being bullied by the older students, the only way is for your fist to be harder than theirs. Of course, students who can enter the Inner Academy are basically the past top students of the Outer Academy. Their training talent is not weak. Adding this to the unique training methods in the inner academy, it is likely going to be a little difficult for you new students, who have just entered, to catch up to their progress.” Hu Gan’s gaze swept across the five of them as he said: “Therefore, I advise all of you to try your best to abandon the enmity between each other and cooperate. Otherwise, you would suffer quite a bit in the end.”

“Don’t tell me that our hands and legs will be broken or we will be killed by those fellows?” Hu Jia rolled her eyes, while the other people were non-committal. In order to be able to become the top five of the Qualifying Competition, which of them did not have the ability to defend themselves?

“It is unlikely to be the case. After all, this place is an academy, not a battlefield. However, that feeling of others using their strength to trample over you is ultimately not a good one, right? Which of you fellows is not filled with arrogance in your heart?” Hu Gan smiled and shook his head while he said.

“Alright, if there is nothing else, all of you can go back. Report here two days from now. I will bring all of you into the academy at that time.” When he saw Hu Jia twitching her lips, wanting to say something, Hu Gan’s face immediately became stern as spoke while waving his hands towards Xiao Yan and the others.

“Deputy Headmaster, thank you for your reminder. We will pay attention to it.” Xiao Yan nodded a little. He bowed and greeted Hu Gan before he immediately leaving together with Xun Er. Behind him, Hu Jia and the other two also left one after another.

“These fellows don’t know what pain really is without having collided into a wall. Once you enter the Inner Academy, you will realize that surviving there is very tough. That place has never lacked talent...” Hu Gan sat on his chair and eyed the few people who had left. He tapped his finger against his table and said helplessly.

After entering the ‘Book Collection Hall’ and obtaining the thing which he needed, Xiao Yan used the remaining two days to enter into the large mountain behind the academy. He used all his effort to search for a secluded training ground, and thus began to study the two kinds of Dou Techniques he had obtained.

Although Xiao Yan was not too concerned about Hu Gan’s words, a premonition within his heart caused him to faintly feel an impulse telling him that he needed to quickly raise his strength. If he was alone, it would not matter. However, now that Xun Er was also following him as they entered into the Inner Academy together, as a man, he naturally needed to protect her until she did not feel even the slightest bit of danger. Moreover what Hu Gan had said did have some logic to it. Which of those people, who could become the top fifty of Jia Nan Academy’s Outer Academy, were not geniuses who had

been gathered from all over the continent? If he lacked some foundation, even Xiao Yan would not dare to say that he could muddle along very well within the Inner Academy that he did not know much about.

Therefore, the current Xiao Yan needed to raise his strength as soon as possible. He would not be able to make much progress in terms of Dou Qi cultivation during this short period of time. Therefore, he could only rely on the two kinds of Dou Techniques in his hands.

“Three Thousand Lightning Movement.”

“Lion Tiger Gold Shattering Roar.”

One was a Low Level Di class Dou Technique, while the other was a High Level Xuan class Dou Technique. One was a Agility-type Dou Technique, while the other, a Sonic-type Dou Technique. One to dodge, one to attack. If Xiao Yan wanted grasp some of the knowledge of the two Dou Techniques, it would clearly not be an easy matter, even with Yao Lao’s help. Therefore, after some consideration, Xiao Yan first placed his focus on the ‘Lion Tiger Gold Shattering Roar’. This High Level Xuan class Dou Technique was clearly much easier to practice compared to the Low Level Di class ‘Three Thousand Lightning Movement’. Moreover, it was an extremely unorthodox attacking technique. If he were to fight with people in the future, it could obtain the effect of catching someone off guard.

Of course, this so-called ‘much easier to practice’ was built on the foundation of the comparison between the ‘Three Thousand Lightning Movement’ and itself. No matter how one put it, the ‘Lion Tiger Gold Shattering Roar’ also belonged to the High Level Xuan class. If an ordinary student was able to possess one type of technique of that class, he would be able to rely on it to stand out amongst his peers. Therefore, the difficulty of practicing it was also at an extremely tough level. This was especially so for people like Xiao Yan, who was practicing a Sonic Dou Technique for the first time. The difficulty was multiplied when he practiced it.

This place was a small-sized waterfall, which was surrounded by lush, green, dense forest. A silver river-like waterfall brought a loud rumbling sound as it flowed off the cliff and rolled down. Finally, it smashed against the mountain rocks and splashed water everywhere.

On a certain mountain rock, just below the waterfall, a black-robed young man had his mouth wide open with a flushed expression on his face. He emitted a soft roar. That roaring sound of his was quite strange. It appeared like a tiger roar, but also appeared to be a lion roar. The roaring reverberated throughout the mountain unceasingly before overlapping with the sound of the waterfall splashing down, shaking the surface of the lake until circular ripples began to spread outwards.

“*Roar*... *cough*, *cough*...” Xiao Yan once again let out a roaring sound with a flushed face before he could finally not resist coughing intensely. He did his best to swallow a mouthful of saliva to moisten his burning throat. With a bitter laugh, he said: “Isn’t this damn Sonic Dou Technique too difficult to practice? I have roared for nearly an entire afternoon. My throat is about to become mute. Yet, it is still this lethargic tone. Can this really be used to attack?”

At this moment, if one were to carefully listen to Xiao Yan’s voice, it was clearly much more hoarse compared to two days ago. It appeared that in order to practice this so-called ‘Lion Tiger Gold Shattering Roar’, he had suffered quite some hardship.

“It can already be considered quite good that you can mostly imitate the roar of a tiger and lion within a day. As long as you continue to diligently practice, you will sooner or later be able to control the strength of the roaring sound and not end up causing your own throat to be injured.” Yao Lao smiling voice sounded within Xiao Yan’s heart.

“I also want to spend the entire day and night imitating. However, didn’t teacher said that there is a strict daily time limit when one practices this kind of Sonic Dou Technique? It seemed to be three hours, right? Once one has exceeded this time limit, one would place an extremely great burden on one’s throat. If one is not careful, one might turn into a mute.” Xiao Yan’s hand scratched his throat, which was beginning to feel some pain, as he helplessly said.

“This is indeed so for an ordinary person. However, with me around, do you still need to worry about this small problem?” Yao Lao smiled proudly.

“Teacher has a solution?” Xiao Yan was startled when he heard this. He immediately and hurriedly asked.

“Have you gathered all of the medicinal ingredients that I asked you to prepare last night?”

“They are gathered... the medicinal ingredients warehouse in Jia Nan City is far richer than that of the Jia Ma Empire. I have let Xun Er help me to prepare all of the medicinal ingredients that you need.” Xiao Yan nodded and said.

“Take out the medicinal ingredients. After which, refine one thing by yourself. I will transmit the medicinal formula into your mind.” As Yao Lao’s voice sounded, Xiao Yan’s mind suddenly swelled. Immediately, he felt that there was a heap of information being forcefully stuffed in.

“‘Ice Spirit Throat Protecting Liquid’, an assistance type medicine. It is able to relieve various searing pains and protect the throat, such that it would not be affected and destroyed by the sudden appearance of heated energy. The medicinal ingredients needed to refine it are: Ice Spirit Leaf, Three Flower Grass and a Water Type Monster Core.”

“This is a bauble, which I had successfully researched in the past, when I had nothing better to do. It can protect your throat. After you consume this, you need not be concerned with that time limit of the Sonic Dou Technique. As long as your spirit can endure it, it is up to you how long you want to roar. Your throat will not become mute.” Yao Lao smilingly said.

Xiao Yan’s eyes brightened when he heard this. He nodded his head excitedly. If an ordinary person were to practice a Sonic Dou Technique, he could only practice for a maximum of three hours a day. However, if he were to consume this so called ‘Ice Spirit Throat Protecting Liquid’, he would be able to continue to train for a couple of days without stopping. It was said that hard work could make up for one’s clumsiness. Xiao Yan believed that he would be able to grasp the essence of the ‘Lion Tiger Gold Shattering Roar’ if he went all out and trained hard during these two days. Moreover, Xiao Yan was not clumsy!

This so called ‘Icy Spirit Throat Protecting Liquid’ basically could not even be considered a medicinal pill. Although one must pay extreme attention to some of its refining details, refining it went very smoothly for Xiao Yan, who had an unusually strong Spiritual Perception. Therefore, after he took out the medicinal ingredients, which he had already prepared, he began to raise his hand and refined it. Nearly half an hour later, the medicinal ingredients, that were placed in front of him, had already turned into pale-blue liquid and easily filled two small, jade bottles.

“Ah, not bad. Your ability to control flames has improved very quickly. Looks like the effect of having an outstanding Spiritual Perception is quite great.” Yao Lao nodded his head and exclaimed a little as he eyed the small jade bottles in Xiao Yan’s hand. Although it was not difficult to refine this so called ‘Icy Spirit Throat Protecting Liquid’, being able to maintain a success rate of seventy percent on Xiao Yan’s first attempt at refining it could indeed be considered an extremely outstanding result.

“Swallow one mouthful every hour. After that, you can practice the ‘Lion Tiger Gold Shattering Roar’ recklessly. If you are lucky, you might be able to grasp some initial control over it during the remaining time that you have.” Yao Lao smilingly said: “As for that ‘Three Thousand Lightning Movement’, you should temporarily steer clear of it. One reason is that there is not enough time. The second is that practicing Di class Dou Techniques is not as easy as you think. Therefore, we can only wait until after you enter the inner academy before I can find some opportunity to help you design a training procedure.”

“Yes.”

Xiao Yan nodded. He first kept one small jade bottle before pouring a mouthful of liquid from the other bottle into his mouth. The moment the ‘Icy Spirit Throat Protecting Liquid’ rolled down his throat, it turned into an icy cool feeling that began spreading out. Xiao Yan was able to clearly feel that these icy cool liquid were covering the spot where his

throat was. The remnant searing pain, that had been present earlier, swiftly disappeared at this moment.

“Hei, it is indeed a good thing... now, let us strive to grasp the initial control over this ‘Lion Tiger Gold Shattering Roar’ during the remaining time.”

As he sensed the searing pain disappear, Xiao Yan could not help but feel a little strange at the swift effect of this liquid. He parted his mouth and smiled. Immediately, he inhaled a long breath of somewhat moist air before that strange roaring sound once again roared out from Xiao Yan’s mouth a moment later. Finally, it turned into a circular-shaped ripple which spread out in all directions with Xiao Yan at the center. It formed waves of ripples across the surface of the lake.

Under the waterfall, the strange roaring, which was covered by the loud splashing of the waterwall, was becoming increasingly sharp and pressurized.

Chapter 434: Tiger Roar Shaking The Mountain Forest

The gentle breeze blew over the endless sea of trees causing the branches to sway. The sea of trees were scattered with bursts of green-colored waves that spread out towards the edge of one’s sight.

Within the sea of trees, there would occasionally be a silver, river-like waterfall present as ornaments. It carried a loud bang as well as a fog rose up and permeated the sky. Under the waterfall, the fog was spread over the surface of the lake, appearing hazy as though one was in the territory of the immortals.

There, a black-robed young man was seated cross-legged on a huge rock on the edge of the lake. His hands formed the training seal and the air around his body fluctuated slightly. Threads of faint energy surfaced and unceasingly poured into the young man’s body.

The clean and transparent lake, where one could see the bottom, contained the rumbling sound of the waterfall, and a dense fog filled the air. It was an artistic scene formed from its special environment. Under this environment, the energy, which swarmed out from the air surrounding the black-robed young man, was also becoming increasingly dense. The young man did not refuse the energy that came to him. His body was like a black hole which could not be filled, swallowing all that came near him and refining them.

After training for an hour, the energy surrounding Xiao Yan finally began to gradually become faint. His eyelashes moved a little before he slowly opened his eyes. A clear glint shone in his dark, black eyes and disappeared swiftly.

“This place is not a bad place to use for training. In just two short days, the Dou Qi in my body has been enhanced by quite a lot. According to this training speed, I might be able

to advance to a seven star Da Dou Shi if I was to train here for two months.” Xiao Yan undid the seal formed by his hand and sensed the surging and flowing Dou Qi in his body as he whispered in a somewhat surprised voice.

“Unfortunately, after two days of tough training, I still have not learned the trick to the ‘Lion Tiger Gold Shattering Roar’ despite having the help of the ‘Icy Spirit Throat Protecting Liquid’. Although I am now able to barely emit a sound wave, its attacking strength is too weak. It basically cannot be used to face an opponent.” Xiao Yan slowly stood up, flipped his hand, and placed it on the huge rock. He eyed the calm surface of the lake and sighed with a bitter smile.

After sighing gently, Xiao Yan shook his head. He threw aside the helplessness in his heart as his gaze stopped on the calm surface of the lake, where no ripples were formed. A long while later, he slowly closed his eyes and raised his head slightly. His Spiritual Perception broke out of his body and quietly spread out. Finally, it covered the entire surface of the lake.

Being wrapped by the Spiritual Perception, the quiet atmosphere that the small lake carried was instantly amplified by many dozens of times. Under the influence of this quiet atmosphere, Xiao Yan’s originally somewhat impetuous heart also gradually recovered its calmness.

The black-robed young man placed his hands behind him on the huge rock as he stood up. His body was as straight as a pen, much like a long spear releasing a sharp cold aura, its vigor threatening others.

Xiao Yan did not know how long he stood like this. That roaring sound of the waterfall crashing downwards suddenly gradually became more faint in his ears. At this moment, the entire world in Xiao Yan’s ears seemed to have descended into a somewhat short and bizarre temporary silence.

The current him appeared to have borrowed the silent atmosphere of the lake’s surface to unknowingly enter a mysterious state.

Xiao Yan was in a condition where everything was silent. At this moment, one strange roar after another swiftly flashed through his mind involuntarily. These roars were emitted by Xiao Yan during his training of the ‘Lion Tiger Gold Shattering Roar’ over the past two days. Under normal circumstances, he would not have realized the weirdness in his roar. However, during the recollection in his mind at that moment, he was like a machine that was extremely precise and accurate, identifying the tiny soundwaves from those roars.

Countless number of roars sounded at the same time. One by one, the disagreement between each wierd sound wave was identified. After which, it was excluded. The roar, which was originally in disarray, began to faintly have the tendency of being synchronized. The quantity of roars also began to be reduced from the countless

number, no... it could not be said to have been reduced. Instead, they had begun to merge together until they had become synchronized, turning into one single sound.

The disarray in the roaring within his mind had become less and less under Xiao Yan's nearly accustomed manner of identifying and eliminating. It also became increasingly louder and more clear.

Under this strange condition, Xiao Yan did not have any concept of time. The only thing he could do in this kind of perplexing condition was to rely on his instinct to analyze the fluctuations of these roaring sounds until it achieved its final perfect form.

Xiao Yan did not know how many hours the never-ending analysis continued for. However, he was slow to exit from that condition. This was because after the countless number of roaring perfectly merged into a single sound, there was no longer any progress. Although Xiao Yan also knew that the roaring sound at this moment could already be considered to have reached the initial stage of the 'Lion Tiger Gold Shattering Roar', he kept having the feeling that the roar seemed to be missing something...

What is it missing? The thought in Xiao Yan's mind circulated in a lightning like manner. However, he ultimately had difficulty searching for the thing he needed.

"Roar!"

Xiao Yan's bitter pondering continued for an unknowingly long period of time. However, the instant before Xiao Yan had a premonition that this mysterious condition was about to disappear, a shocking roar, that shook the entire mountain forest, suddenly sounded from the mountain range in the outside world. The tiger roar followed the sea of trees and began to spread. Finally, it came mightily to the lake. The suppression that was contained in the tiger roar caused some wild beasts around the lake to completely become paralyzed.

The clear and loud tiger roar was not isolated from that condition Xiao Yan was in. Therefore, that roar, which contain the might of the tiger, was transmitted directly into Xiao Yan's ears.

As the tiger roar entered his ears, the roaring sound in Xiao Yan's mind, that had just undergone countless number of analysis in order to merge into one, suddenly fluctuated. At this moment, Xiao Yan heart suddenly brightened. What his own roar was lacking was this kind of true tiger's might. Compared with a true tiger's roar, his own roar merely had the shape!

Within that incomparably clear mind of his, the tiger roar, which had entered his ear earlier, was actually put together and formed a winding substance-like silver-colored wave with extreme curvature. Under Xiao Yan's control, this thread of waves began to merge with the most perfect roar of his, which he had analyzed earlier.

The two sound waves entwined with one another and successfully merged perfectly without too much resistance.

The moment the two sound waves merged, the mysterious condition Xiao Yan was in broke apart abruptly. He suddenly opened his eyes and a clear glint flashed through them explosively. He inhaled a deep breath of air and the Dou Qi flowed wildly within his body. A thread of dragon aura, which he had inherited from the 'Yin-Yang Mysterious Dragon Pill', swiftly surged out, and finally directly charged into his throat.

“Roar!”

Xiao Yan's mouth filled slightly. His face was a little flushed as his hands suddenly formed a seal. His mouth widened. At that moment, a thunderclap-like loud tiger roar came explosively out of his mouth.

The shapeless sound wave had just exited his mouth when the air in front of Xiao Yan began to fluctuate intensely. Immediately, the sound wave began expanding outwards in a lightning-like manner. He could only hear a loud bang. The calm lake surface appeared to have a bomb placed within it. A huge wave, that was seventy to eighty feet high, exploded and rose before falling with a bang. Splashes and fog covered the entire small valley in a thick mist.

The sound of tiger roar was like angry lightning formed from densely placed storm clouds. It rolled and swept out with Xiao Yan as the center. Even the loud sound of the waterfall crashing downwards was covered by the tiger roar. One could even vaguely hear it five kilometers away. Anywhere the sound waves passed, hundreds of beasts felt weak. Even the spirit of some of the strong and powerful Magical Beasts quivered intensely due to the dragon aura that the tiger roar contained. Some of the weaker low rank Magical Beasts, who were also in close proximity from the lake, were actually directly shocked to death by this angry thunder-like sound wave.

Just one roar from Xiao Yan was actually this terrifying!

The roaring sound slowly became weaker a long while later. The fog that had permeated the small mountain valley also gradually disappeared. On the huge rock, the black-robed young man's face was filled with excitement and shock as he eyed the messy ground all around him. He coughed intensely before muttered with great joy: “I have succeeded? This is the strength of the 'Lion Tiger Gold Shattering Roar'? It is indeed very strong!”

“You really are a boy blessed by the heavens. To actually be able to grasp the rhythm of the tiger roar within a short two days. Without undergoing half a year's of tough training, normal people would definitely not be able to achieve this. Although you have borrowed the strength from entering that quiet condition in order to merge the tiger's roar and use it for your own purpose, this speed and achievement really is extremely amazing.” Yao

Lao's voice suddenly sounded in Xiao Yan's heart. When he saw the latter experiencing that strange situation earlier, even he could not help but feel amazed.

Xiao Yan laughed when he heard this. He did not expect that by stumbling around, he would actually be able to enter into such a condition.

"However, you should not be too happy. For now, you have merely grasped the initial stages of the 'Lion Tiger Gold Shattering Roar' and can barely display thirty to forty percent of its strength. Without some time to hone it, it will not be possible for you to reach complete mastery. Moreover, this kind of honing has no shortcuts." Yao Lao reminded.

"Yes." Xiao Yan nodded. He twisted his neck and heard the clear cracking sound between his bones before he let out a long breath. Originally, he did not think of reaching complete mastery of the 'Lion Tiger Gold Shattering Roar'. Being able to achieve his current achievement had already far exceeded his expectations. Therefore, he would not be too ambitious.

"It is good that you know this. There is someone coming over, I will withdraw first..." Yao Lao completely disappeared after this without the slightest movement.

Xiao Yan's hand brushed the water from his clothes. His head turned towards the entrance of the small mountain valley. The tree branches moved slightly at that spot and a green-colored figure immediately flashed out in a lithe manner, much like a butterfly. Finally, she quietly stood on a small rock protruding at the side of the lake. Her silvery bell-like laughter was like the chanting of the mountain bell, causing Xiao Yan's mind, which had not relaxed for two days and two nights, to quietly ease up.

"Xiao Yan ge-ge, the two days of preparation is already up. Today, we are entering the Inner Academy. Are you prepared?" The green-clothed young lady raised her elegant and exquisite pretty face. She said smilingly with a gentle voice as she eyed the young man, whose body appeared even taller while standing on a huge rock with his arms behind his back.

Xiao Yan nodded his head with a smile. He patted the large Heavy Xuan Ruler on his back. His toes pressed against the rock surface and his body turned into a black shadow that flashed and appeared at the exit of the mountain valley. After waving his hands at Xun Er, he immediately turned around and slowly walked out of the small mountain valley.

"Inner Academy huh? I anticipate it greatly... hopefully it won't disappoint me."

The human figure gradually disappeared within the thicket, leaving behind a faint voice that slowly resounded in this place.

Chapter 435: The Location of The Inner Academy

When Xiao Yan and Xun Er arrived at the deputy headmaster, Hu Gan's, study, they saw that there were already quite a number of people standing on the empty ground in front of them. These people were divided into quite a number of large and small groups. Each of them softly conversed with a smile. Amongst these groups, the three groups consisting of Bai Shan, Wu Hao, and Hu Jia respectively, were the largest.

Xiao Yan's and Xun Er's appearance also caused the noisy, open ground to become slightly quieter. Other than a small number of people, most of the gazes that were used to look at the two of them were filled with respect. In the Qualifying Competition a few days ago, Xiao Yan used a tyrannical battle style of one against three to shock and deter all the dissatisfied voices. Therefore, his reputation had already faintly surpassed Bai Shan, Wu Hao, and the others despite having only arrived at the academy less than a month ago.

Xiao Yan and Xun Er directly passed through the human crowd and arrived at an empty spot near the front. They exchanged glances with Bai Shan and the two others. With the exception of Bai Shan, Hu Jia and Wu Hao nodded towards them. Their attitudes were clearly much better than before. Clearly, the words that Hu Gan had told them two days before were not totally ignored. When they were just entering the Inner Academy, a place where strong people were as numerous as the clouds, it was likely that they would suffer a little if they were not a little more united. Although the two of them were haughty they were not stupid. It would naturally be best if they did not need to endure pointless suffering.

At this moment, the open ground was also surrounded and filled with quite a number of other students. In the hearts of all the students in the outer academy, being able to enter the Inner Academy to train was an honor that caused many people to be extremely envious of. Countless number of people had been working hard towards this direction from the moment they entered the academy. Therefore, each year, when the students who had passed through the Qualifying Competition were entering the Inner Academy, there would be many people who would come to see them off, or simply to watch them.

Ten minutes after Xiao Yan had arrived at this place, the tightly shut door of the study was opened. Deputy Headmaster Hu Gan and a few old men slowly walked out. When the people on the open ground saw them arrive, the private whispers on the open ground gradually became quiet. A moment later, it was completely silent.

Hu Gan's gaze slowly swept across the fifty students on the open ground. When he saw that there was no one missing, he nodded with satisfaction. With a step forward, he clearly said: "Students, today is the day that you will all be entering the Inner Academy. I will congratulate all of you here. Your hard training had finally finally reaped rewards. I believe that after entering the Inner Academy, all of you might not suit the training method in there; however, there is one point that I am very certain. That is, in there, you will be able to activate your own potential to the greatest extent there, ke ke, I am not exaggerating, you only need to stay in the Inner Academy for one year and you will be

totally transformed... There may be people amongst you who know some students in the Inner Academy. After all, they would occasionally have some leave to come out of the Inner Academy. Therefore, you should all be clear just how large a gap there is between the strength when students come out and when they first entered.”

When they heard Hu Gan’s words, there were a few students on the open ground who nodded slightly. Clearly, they should have some interactions with those students who had come out from the Inner Academy. The majority, however, had faces filled with anticipation and excitement. What Hu Gan had said was what they were pursuing. Was it not their aim to pursue an even greater strength when they fought to enter into the inner academy? They believed that regardless of how strange or tough the training method of the Inner Academy was, they would endure it all the way!

Being able to stand out within Jia Nan Academy proved their talent and hard work. The people who were able to stand up here were not those who thought that strength would just come without any effort.

“The Inner Academy is the core of Jia Nan Academy. Due to the need to keep its location secret, most of the students in the Outer Academy, as well as the instructors, are unaware of its exact location. Therefore, we will send you to a certain place.” Hu Gan smiled. He raised his head and eyed the distant, blue sky. At that spot, ten black shadows were flying over. A moment later, the black shadows gradually became bigger. They were surprisingly ten enormous Griffins.

The ten Griffins carried their enormous dark shadows as they swept past the academy. Finally, they stopped in the air above Xiao Yan and the other students. They flapped their wings and wild wind shot everywhere, fanning the students below until some of them began to sway.

“Griffins? Don’t tell me that the Inner Academy is very far from here?” A glint of surprise flashed past Xiao Yan’s eyes as he looked at the Griffins hovering above.

Hu Gan waved his hands towards the Griffins in the sky. Immediately, the dark shadows began to press towards the ground. Finally, the ten Griffins landed in an empty spot not too far away after a wild wind brushed past. Everyone’s gazes scanned them, only to find that there were two people on the back of each of the Griffins, driving them.

“Alright. Time’s up. All students, please get on. Five people to a group.” Hu Gan pointed at the Griffins and smilingly said after seeing that they had landed.

When they heard Hu Gan’s words, the students on the open ground immediately turned around. They were like a swarm of beasts as they rushed onto the open ground, after which they appeared to be like fleas as these impatient fellows climbed onto the large backs of each of the Griffins, hearing ‘suo suo’ sounds as they did so. However, when their feet stepped onto the backs of the Griffins, the slightly slippery feathers caused them to suffer. Some of the people, whose feet were not stable, directly slid and fell

down. Their bodies smashed into the rocky ground, causing banging sounds to appear repeatedly.

“Ha ha, young fellows, don’t try to be brave. There are seats placed on the Griffins. Don’t be delusional and try to stand on its back. That is something that only those with the strength of a Da Dou Shi can do.” Hu Gan laughed loudly. He immediately turned his head towards Xiao Yan and the others and said: “The top five. You five will be one group. Climb on up.”

“Uh?” Xiao Yan and the four others were startled when they heard this. He did not expect that Hu Gan would actually arrange for the five of them to be together in a group. They hesitated for a moment. Other than Bai Shan, who knit his brows together, the others nodded indifferently.

“Let’s go.” Xiao Yan spoke to Xun Er. His body flashed and immediately appeared on the back of a Griffin. His feet steadily stood on its slippery feather without moving even a little, as though he was a metal pagoda. When the students, who had fallen from the Griffins earlier, saw his steady movements, they could not resist having their faces fill up with admiration. Having tried to forcefully get onto the Griffin, they clearly knew just how difficult it was for someone to stand on those damn feathers.

Behind Xiao Yan, Xun Er and the others also flashed onto the Griffin at the same time. The four of them also did not borrow the help of anything as they immediately stood straight and tall on the back of their Griffin. This strength was indeed worthy of being the top five rankings of the Qualifying Competition.

After seeing the performance of these five people, Hu Gan and the other old people beside him took one look around the empty ground. When they saw that everyone had boarded their Griffins, they exchanged glances with each other and nodded. Hu Gan waved his hand. He and three other elderly men moved and flashed into midair. Their shoulders shook and four pairs of beautiful Dou Qi wings extended out. Each pair of Dou Qi wings were flapped, and their bodies were suspended in mid air without moving in front of numerous, envious gazes from below.

Being able to coagulate and form a pair of Dou Qi wings and fly freely had always been the dream of many who cultivated.

“We will personally escort you all the way there.” Hu Gan looked down at the open ground from high above in the sky and smiled. He waved his hand and the people, who drove the Griffins, let out a sharp whistle. Immediately, the Griffins suddenly flapped their wings and their huge bodies slowly rose into the air, accompanied by the increasingly shrinking shadows, they rose up off the ground.

“Xiao Yan, Xun Er, We wish you all the best! If your performance in the Inner Academy is outstanding, you will receive time off.” A voice suddenly sounded from below as the Griffins were rising into the air. Xiao Yan and Xun Er lowered their head to take a look. It

was actually Instructor Ruo Ling. At this moment, Xiao Yu, Xiao Ning, and Xiao Mei had lifted their heads to watch the group of Griffins, which were ascending higher and higher. They waved towards Xiao Yan when they saw him looking over.

As the Griffin's wings swiftly flapped, the human figures below became smaller and smaller. In the end, they were nearly the size of ants. Looking down at the entire Jia Nan Academy from this high up in the sky, one could see every location in their line of sight.

Ten large Griffins were flapping their wings in the blue sky, flying in the direction of the endless stretch of mountains behind the academy. Ahead of the Griffins flew Hu Gan and the three elderly men. They formed a four-sided shape that surrounded the entire Griffin formation within. Powerful Dou Qi surfaced outside their bodies. No matter how wild the wind raged, it did not even touch their bodies.

"The Inner Academy is indeed not within the Jia Nan Academy. Don't tell me it is located within the boundless mountains behind the academy?" Xiao Yan softly muttered as eyeing the Jia Nan Academy as it disappeared from his line of sight.

"It is rumored that the location of the Inner Academy is a great secret. Even some of the students, who have come out from the Inner Academy, would not be able to find the location of the Inner Academy if they did not have the Griffins trained for the purpose of taxing them in and out." Xun Er smilingly said. A faint, golden glow seeped out from her body, completely blocking the wild wind that was blowing at her from the front.

"Do you all know what's so special about the Inner Academy?" Xiao Yan turned his gazes towards Hu Jia and the other two, taking the lead to break the stiff atmosphere. Since the Deputy Headmaster requested them to be on the same Griffin, that meant that they were already a group. Since this was the case, it was a must to release the tension in the relationship between them no matter how little.

"Grandfather has never mentioned anything about the Inner Academy to me, so I am also uncertain. However, each time we see the students come out from the Inner Academy, their strength have all risen sharply compared to when they previously entered." Hu Jia glanced at Xiao Yan. She similarly knew Xiao Yan's intentions. She finally opened her mouth to reply after recalling Hu Gan repeatedly reminding her not to strain their relationship.

"I also don't know. I very seldom bother about these things." Wu Hao also shook his head. As a battle-crazy person, he had spent most of his time in the past pursuing and killing the people of the 'Black-Corner Region' who had strayed into Jia Ma Academy's boundaries. Where would he find time to bother about the Inner Academy?

"Won't we naturally know when we get there?" Bai Shan said faintly. Although he knew a little, he was unwilling to share this information with Xiao Yan. He earnestly wished for the other party to suffer a little more.

Xiao Yan looked at Bai Shan, who had his arms crossed in front of his chest, deeply. However, he did not continue to ask anything else. The guard he felt towards this fellow within his heart had become much more dense.

Xiao Yan shifted his gaze away from Bai Shan. He gazed at the lush, green ocean of trees beneath them, which were swiftly rushing past. He exhaled a long breath in his heart. The Inner Academy... was the 'Fallen Heart Flame' really at this place?

Chapter 436: Fire Energy Hunting Competition

The vast sea of trees held various different kinds of Magical Beasts within it. Every once in awhile, there would be ferocious auras of Magical Beasts shooting out from within the sea of trees in an explosive manner. However, when these Magical Beasts entered within a hundred meter radius of the group, they would be shocked by the powerful force emitted from the barrier that Hu Gan's and the three elders created until they warily retreated.

Of course, this was not the case for every one of them. As the Magical Beasts were widespread in such a concentrated manner within the vast endless mountains, there was naturally no shortage of frighteningly powerful creatures. Half an hour after the flying formation began travelling within the mountains behind the academy, there were some powerful Magical Beasts who forcefully charged and attacked the Griffin formation, in spite of the pressure being released by Hu Gan and the other three people. At this time, Hu Gan and the other three old men began to display their shocking strength. Each time they waved their hands, powerful blasts of energy shot across the sky like a thunderbolt. Immediately, Xiao Yan and the others would hear a muffled sound, and the large-sized Magical Beasts suddenly exploded into fresh blood and fell down.

As they flew, various kinds of ferocious Magical Beasts swarmed over, pouncing from the rear and front. However, there wasn't a single Magical Beast who could break through the blockade that was Hu Gan and the three others.

Xiao Yan and the others stood on the Griffins. Their faces were stunned as they watched the Magical Beasts' bodies being shredded to bits. From their Qis, most of these Magical Beasts appeared to possess the strength to contend with any one of the students present. Even if that was the case, they were still turned into a mist of blood each time Hu Gan and the others waved their hand. This kind of strength really caused people to turn green with envy.

"No wonder they need to escort us all the way there. It is really unexpected that there are so many dangers lurking in the mountains behind the academy. If we were to travel by foot through the forest, it is likely that given the strength of the other students, there would hardly be anyone who would be able to walk out alive." Xiao Yan laughed bitterly as he eyed another cloud of blood form from an explosion fifty meters away from their location. Earlier, when the group flew past the vast mountain range, he could clearly

sense that there were at least rank 5 or Dou Wang class Magical Beast auras existing in the dense forest below using his outstandingly large Spiritual Perception. However, the Magical Beasts, which had reached such a rank had already gained intelligence which was not inferior to that of a human's. Therefore, they could naturally sense the strength of Hu Gan and the others. Hence, they did not act like the weaker Magical Beast, attacking the Griffin formation recklessly. It was also fortunate that these high ranked Magical Beast knew what fear was. Otherwise, even with Hu Gan and the three other Dou Huang level experts escorting them, it was likely impossible that this Griffin formation of theirs would arrive at their destination unscathed.

Bloody mist accompanied them all the way as they continued to fly. Hu Gan and the three others were like sharp cones that tore out a path within the Magical Beast that came attacking in all directions. The strength of a Dou Huang was strong to such an extent.

This nearly peremptory charging continued for almost an hour before the flying speed of the Griffin formation finally slowed down. When he sensed the reduction in speed, Xiao Yan swept his gaze in front of him. However, he was uncertain when he discovered that, other than a bottomless gorge under their feet, the other places were still an endless green carpet where they could not see the edges. Forget about the Inner Academy, there wasn't even a single human figure.

"What is happening?" Xiao Yan exchanged looks with Xun Er and the rest. All of their faces were filled with doubt and confusion.

"Descend!"

The sharpness in Hu Gan's eyes gradually disappeared. The powerful force, that soared from within his body earlier, was quietly retracted back into his body. He smilingly waved his hand, and the ten Griffins flapped their wings as they slowly descended towards the mountain gorge below.

The Griffins carried a dark shadow and wild gusts of wind as they landed smoothly on the ground. Xiao Yan and the others saw the waving gestures that Hu Gan showed them. They exchanged glances before leaping down from the Griffins and began to land and gather on the empty ground. Their gazes looked all around them while their faces were at a loss.

"Where is this place? Don't tell me that the Inner Academy is here?" After they landed on the ground, Hu Jia was the first to be unable to bear it and questioned Hu Gan. When the others heard this question, they turned also their gazes towards Hu Gan. Clearly, they also wanted to know the answer to it.

"It is not so easy to enter the Inner Academy." Hu Gan smiled faintly. Immediately, he slowly took ten steps forward under everyone's gaze. After which, his footsteps paused. With a wave of his hand, a wave of energy shot out explosively and arrived at the space

in front of him. A strange scene surfaced almost instantly. They saw that when the energy shot past a certain empty area, it actually created a wave-like ripple. This ripple swiftly fluctuated. Finally, a large pale, silver-colored door, that was over seventy to eighty feet high appeared out of nowhere.

Xiao Yan and the others were shocked when they eyed the large, silver-colored door that had appeared out of nowhere. Clearly, they did not think that this seemingly ordinary place would actually hide such a profound secret.

The silver-colored door carried a clear sound as it slowly opened in front of everyone's eyes. The scene behind the door was also a thick forest, as it has always been. It appeared that this forest in front of them was no different than what they had seen earlier.

"Follow me." Hu Gan waved his hand and took the lead to walk through the large silver-colored door. Behind him, tens of students followed closely while wearing expressions that were filled with curiosity.

Xiao Yan did not walk near the front. He stood in the back and eyed the people who entered the silver-colored door in front of him. After which, his gaze was once again thrown onto the space outside of the large door. He was somewhat stunned to discover that those people who had entered the silver-colored door seemed to have entered another space and just disappeared into thin air.

"What a strange place..." This scene caused Xiao Yan to exclaim and shook his head. He recalled the spatial folds in front of the 'Book Collection Hall' and came to a sudden understanding. The tactics of super elites were indeed something that they had difficulty understanding at their current level of strength.

After Xiao Yan exclaimed in his heart, he lengthened his stride and followed the group. After which, he past through the large silver-colored door. Following which, he also disappeared.

The large door only slowly shut itself tightly after everyone, including the ten Griffins, had entered through them. Finally, a silver-colored energy ripple spread out, and the large silver-colored door gradually dissipated until it completely disappeared. At this moment, this entire region had changed into an extremely ordinary forest.

As Xiao Yan stepped across the large silver-colored door, he suddenly felt his mind go blank. His two feet were pressed firmly on the solid ground as his gaze swept across the place in front of him. However, he was a little surprised to discover that the scene in front of them was similar to the forest earlier. It was just that... at this moment, two old men and a few middle-aged men had actually unknowingly appeared near the forest. Additionally, there were over twenty young people standing behind them. Xiao Yan's gaze swept over their bodies and discovered that they were all wearing badges on their chest, which had drawing similar to a tower.

“Ke ke, Old Hu, you are punctual as always. We can always rest assured when we let you escort the new students. How are the new students this year?” At this moment, one of the two old men smiled at the leading Hu Gan and said when he saw the large group of people entering.

“Not bad. It is definitely a little better than last year’s group.” Hu Gan smiled and said: “It is really unexpected that it is your turn to carry out the duty this year. Looks like it’s going to be quite tiring.”

“There’s no choice.” The two old men helplessly shook their heads.

“The five of you come over.” Hu Gan turned his body and beckoned Xiao Yan and the four others with his hand. When he saw that the five had arrived by his side, he pointed towards the two old men and said: “These two are Elders in the Inner Academy. This is Elder Su, and this other person is Elder Qing. If you have any problem in the Inner Academy in the future, you can look for them. Ke ke, these five little fellows were the top five ranked in this year’s Qualifying Competition. Their strength is not bad.” These final two sentences were naturally spoken to Elder Su and Elder Qing.

“Oh?” The gazes of the two Elders carried a bizarreness as they swept across the five of them. Finally, they nodded and said: “Being able to obtain the top five at this age. Their potential is indeed much better than the last batch.”

“Yo, what beautiful girls. Looks like there will be two more names on the ‘Beauty Ranking’ within the Inner Academy.” After Xiao Yan and the four others came out, the eyes of the few young people standing behind those middle-aged fellows immediately brightened as they whistled and said.

“Shut your mouth. Whoever says any more nonsense will have their tower training time cut by five days!” Elder Su turned around and chided. The young men behind smiled mischievously as they immediately shut their mouths. Clearly, the deduction of the so-called tower training time caused them to be extremely afraid.

After rebuking that group of young people until they did not dare to say anything more, Elder Su turned around. He faced Xiao Yan and the other new students as he slowly spoke: “You’re all new here, so I hope that you can all get used to this place. That way, you will all obtain the greatest benefit possible. Look at these bastards. In previous years, they may have passed through the Qualifying Competition in the Outer Academy but they are merely ranked at the bottom. However, in merely one year’s time, I dare say that with their strength, they would definitely be able to enter the top ten amongst all of you.”

Xiao Yan was slightly startled when he heard this. His gaze was thrown towards those young people and his gaze solidified slightly. He could sense that these young people were indeed very strong. Amongst this group of new students, it might well be possible to count the number of people who could defeat them with just both hands. Yet these

people were merely those ranked at the bottom in the Qualifying Competition of previous years. From this, one could see just how the strength of these people advanced by leaps and bounds after entering the Inner Academy.

“Alright, let’s not say any more nonsense. Although you all have already passed through the Qualifying Competition and obtained the right to enter the Inner Academy, it is still not over...” Elder Su smiled. He waved his hand and a large pile of black-colored crystal sheets appeared in his hand. With a random toss using his hand, he threw the crystal sheets. Immediately, the crystal sheets appeared to have grown eyes as they began to suspend themselves in front of everyone. Xiao Yan and the others were startled as they extended their hands and held them.

Once the crystal sheets entered their hands, Xiao Yan and the others immediately sensed a strange heat energy seeping out from within it. They lowered their heads to observe for a moment and discovered that it was a transparent screen of crystal. Imprinted on the screen was a large red-colored number: “5!”

“What does this mean?” Xiao Yan was somewhat doubtful as he eyed that red-colored number. He lifted his gaze and was somewhat stunned when he saw that the group of young people standing behind the middle-aged men were eyeing the dark, black crystal sheets that was held in his and the others hands with heated gazes. There was a desire within their gazes that they did not hide.

“Due to some things, it is quite difficult explaining it. You will naturally understand it in the future. However, there is only one thing which you need to know for now. Protect the crystal sheets in your hands as though it is your life. Once you enter the Inner Academy, you will understand its importance! Of course, just take a look at the expression in the eyes of this group of people and you will understand this point.” Towards the end of his speech, Elder Su pointed at the group of young people behind and smilingly said.

Xiao Yan and Xun Er exchanged glances and nodded their heads. The crystal sheets in their hands shook and were stored into their storage ring.

“Next, you will all need to enter this forest. After which, you must successfully reach the Inner Academy at the edge of the forest.” Elder Su’s finger stopped at the group of young people and said faintly: “You will need to be careful of them when all of you are passing through this forest... According to the rules of the academy, they are able to randomly fight within this forest. In other words, they can attack any of you.”

“Remember, the number on the top of the crystal sheets in your hands is an extremely great temptation to them. Therefore, with the exception of killing people, they will use all sorts of methods to obtain the... ‘Fire Energy’ on your crystal sheets... you will feel that this term is extremely familiar and very lovely in the future... For now, you need to avoid them or defeat them. As long as you are not captured by them and successfully arrive at the academy, you will have your final reward. The earlier you arrive, the richer the reward.”

Elder Su's finger suddenly turned towards the dark, black forest behind him. "With regards to this seizing in the forest, our Inner Academy calls it the 'Fire Energy Hunting Competition'."

"Now, I announce that this year's 'Fire Energy Hunting Competition' has formally begin! Students, begin to flee!"

Chapter 437: Snatching

Sporadic sunlight shown between the gaps in the tree cover.

"Hey, the few of you actually have the leisure to argue at a time like this?" A faint, mocking voice suddenly sounded between the trees.

The five people, who were walking, suddenly stiffened. They hurriedly raised their heads only to see that five young people descended upon them and stood on tree branches above their heads in an orderly fashion. They each wore a badge, which had the appearance of a tower on it, on their chest. At this moment, the five young men were eyeing the five people below with faces filled with ridicule. That expression was like a cat who had seen a mouse.

"You're all here to snatch the so-called 'Fire Energy' from us, right?" A tall and large young man amongst the five people said with a cold smile. For him to be able to rank amongst the top fifty in the Outer Academy of the Jia Nan Academy, his strength was naturally not low. He was not too afraid of these young people, who were of similar ages to him.

"Smart." A young man on the tree branch, who had a snake-like scar on his face, let out a clear snap with his fingers. He immediately smilingly said: "Since you know why we are here, then there is no need to say any more nonsense. Hand over the 'Fire Energy' and you'll avoid your suffering. What do you say?"

"In your dreams?" A skinny, weak-looking man smacked his lips. However, his voice had just sounded when the human figure in front of him flashed. Immediately, a human figure appeared in front of them. A gentle breeze tore through the air suddenly sounded out. After which, a leg heavily stepped on the stomach of the skinny and weak-looking young man in a lightning-like manner. Immediately, the latter's body shot backwards and smashed into a tree trunk. A mouthful of fresh blood was spat out. He struggled a little, but still failed to successful climb to his feet.

"Attack!" Seeing that their companion had been beaten, that tall and large young man became furious. He cried out angrily, desiring to fight. However, his voice had just sounded when he heard a muffled sound behind him. He hurriedly spun around to see what had happened, only to see that his other three companions were already kicked around like a rolling gourd. Beside them were three young men with their hands crossed over their chests. Their face was filled with disdain.

“Brother, remember, no matter how well you might have muddled along in the Other Academy in the past, when you enter the Inner Academy, you will coil if you are a dragon and you will lie down if you are a tiger. These are the lessons that we, your seniors, have learned after undergoing countless amounts of physical pain. Today, I will teach you this lesson for free.” A laugh suddenly sounded by the ear of the tall and large young man. A shadow immediately flashed over. A fist, the size of a casserole, violently smashed into his face. Immediately, that young man fell onto the ground. His mouth was filled with fresh blood.

“If you don’t want to continue being beaten, hand over your Fire Crystal Cards.” The young man with the snake-shaped scar twisted his fist and said faintly.

When they heard his words, the expressions of the five new students changed slightly. A moment later, however, they could only clench their teeth and thought in their hearts that a wise man knew better than to fight when the odds were against him before taking out the so-called Fire Crystal Cards.

A heat flashed across that young man’s face as he received the cards from the hands of the five beaten students. He hugged the cards and gave them a ferocious kiss. After which, he waved his hand and threw the remaining four cards to his four companions. He flipped his hand and a pale, blue-colored card appeared in his hand. If one looked at it carefully, there was actually a fiery red number 47 on the screen of this pale-blue card.

The scarred young man held the dark, black card with one hand and the pale-blue card with the other. After which, he brought them close together and rubbed it with all his might. Immediately, a light flashed from the two cards. A moment later, the light was extinguished. However, the number on that pale-blue card had become 50 at this moment. On the other hand, the number on that dark black card and turned from a 5 into a 2.

“Chi, what stupid rules. We must leave two days of ‘Fire Energy’ for the new students. How wasteful.” That scarred face young man curled his lips and said with great dissatisfaction when he saw the number remaining on the black card.

“Let’s go, Lin Ge. We need to maximize the time to continue to look for other groups. We have finally managed to obtain the qualification to participate in the ‘Fire Energy Hunting Competition’ with great difficulty. If we cannot obtain six days worth of ‘Fire Energy’, we will have made a big loss.” Another young man kept the Fire Crystal Card properly and threw the dark Crystal Card back to the unfortunate new students before turning towards the scar-faced young man and said.

“Ah, let’s go.” The young man, who was called Lin Ge, nodded his head. He said smilingly towards the five new students on the ground: “Pitiful little fellows. This is the result of not knowing how to work as a team. You should remember this in the future. After that, you can be like us next year, coming to snatch the ‘Fire Energy’ of new, naive

students. Don't hold it against us. This is because, because this is the path that every new student who enters the Inner Academy must undergo. Ha ha, let's go."

With a loud laugh, Lin Ge waved his hands and the five of them flashed onto the tree branches. After which they chased in the direction that led deeper into the forest, leaving behind five crestfallen and green-faced new students.

As that group of older students left, the few new students could only climb to their feet with a gloomy face after being dispirited for a while. Each of them exchanged ferocious gazes with one another and actually spread out, each taking their own path.

Five people were hiding within the dense thicket tens of meters from this empty ground. The direction which their gazes were looking towards was the direction in which the five new students had left. Obviously, they had clearly seen the misfortune that the five new students had encountered with their own eyes.

"Looks like the 'Fire Energy' in these Crystal Cards seems to serve an extremely important purpose within the Inner Academy. Otherwise, those fellows would definitely not rush like a flock." Xiao Yan slowly withdrew his gaze, and eyed the dark Crystal Card, as well as the large number 5 on it while speaking.

"Yes." Xun Er and the others nodded slightly. The target that those fellows were snatching from was extremely clear. It was merely just the 'Fire Energy' on the Crystal Cards.

"Let's go. Those fellows should have also left. In any case, let's not dawdle here. Didn't that Elder Su say that the earlier we arrive, the richer the reward we will receive? Let's not waste more time." Bai Shan knitted his eyebrows and urged.

"Wait." Xiao Yan waved his hand and stopped Bai Shan. The latter frowned a little and said in a cold voice: "What do you want?"

Xiao Yan glanced at him and said in a slow and deliberate manner: "No matter what conflict exists between us, I think that since we are currently a group, we should perhaps know a little of the so-called team spirit. Otherwise, that group of new students earlier will be us."

Hu Jia and the others nodded. From the way that group of older students had attacked with great understanding and teamwork between one another earlier, it was clear that they were frequently worked together. Their strength was not much weaker than Xiao Yan's group. If it was a one on one fight, the five of them might perhaps obtain victory. However, if it was a group fight, with the kind of teamwork the other party had just shown, it would not be too difficult for these people to handle Xiao Yan's group, where each member had his or her own ulterior motive.

“What do you suggest?” Hu Jia’s bright eyes stared at Xiao Yan as she asked with a frown.

“Since we are in a group, we naturally need a leader. In other words, the leader will command and assign. What I suggest is that we must find a leader amongst the five of us. Otherwise, if we were to each fight on our own, we will be as strong as a pile of loose sand. I’m afraid that it would be very difficult for us to successfully leave this forest with those fellows cutting us off and surrounding us...” Xiao Yan said slowly.

Hu Jia and the few others were startled when they heard this. They immediately hesitated for a moment before all of them nodded. These words Xiao Yan said were true. A group that acted on command would forever be able to display a stronger fighting strength when compared to a group of scattered individuals!

“Then... who is going to be the leader?” Wu Hao, whose entire body was wrapped in a blood-colored robe, was silent for a moment before asking the most knotty question.

Xiao Yan and the others all descended into silence when Wu Hao said these words. A moment later, Xun Er’s moved her footsteps and stood by Xiao Yan’s side. She used her action to indicate her choice.

Seeing Xun Er’s action, the expression of Bai Shan and the others each underwent a different change. A long while later, Hu Jia, who had her eyebrows tightly knit together, could only helplessly shake her head and said: “Alright. On account of Xun Er’s face, I will trust you once.”

Once she finished saying this, she also walked over to Xiao Yan’s side and threw her gaze at the other two.

“Your strength... I submit. I don’t have any issues temporarily listening to your commands...” Wu Hao’s low voice slowly sounded. Immediately, he also walked towards Xiao Yan.

Bai Shan’s expression was a little ugly as he watched the three people standing by Xiao Yan’s side. His eyes flashed in an undefined manner.

“Bai Shan, if you are unwilling, then the four of us will leave first.” Xiao Yan’s gaze stared at Bai Shan and said faintly.

“You...” Bai Shan’s expression changed when he heard this. He could only nod with hatred as he strided over to Xiao Yan’s and said coldly: “Alright, you are now the leader of our group. However, I will say this first. Don’t think of using us to fight at the front. We are not fools that will allow others to use us like hatchet men.”

“These matters are common matters for our group. I will naturally not ask anyone to go and block the enemy by themselves.” Xiao Yan eyed the four of them. A sharp glint

suddenly swarmed into his black eyes as he softly said: “However, now that I have already become the group leader, I hope that before we leave this forest, none of you will do something that would cause us great harm because of you being double-faced towards me. Otherwise, you should not blame me, Xiao Yan. It is not the first time that we have made contact. You should all be clear about my character. The last time, I was able to let all of you lie in the clinic for seven days. This time, I am still able to...”

Hearing Xiao Yan’s words that contained a warning, Hu Jia curled her lips but did not voice any objection, Wu Hao nodded and the corner of Bai Shan’s mouth twitched. It was a long while later before Bai Shan managed to suppress the surge of emotion within his heart.

However, no matter what reaction the three of them had, at the very least, Xiao Yan had currently obtained the power to command this small group in name. Next, they would need to truly break down the walls between them!

Chapter 438: Reverse Snatching

The leaves in the quiet, dense forest suddenly moved a little. A few human figures flashed out from the tree branches. Their bodies were like agile monkeys as they pressed against the tree trunks, and shot forward once again. After a few leaps like this, they swiftly disappeared from the edge of the branches.

“Stop!” As the human figure flashed, the human figure leading the group suddenly raised his hand vertically. The four human shadows behind him immediately landed on the branches in an extremely agile manner. After which, they turned their doubtful gazes towards the black-robed young man.

“What is it?” Hu Jia’s gaze swept around in all directions, but did not discover any movement. She could not help but whisper in a somewhat doubtful manner.

“There is someone coming. Let’s hide first.” Xiao Yan’s gaze stared intently to his left. His extraordinary Spiritual Perception had gifted him with the outstanding ability to survive in the jungles. He was able to sense movement that others were not able to sense, one step ahead of them. On this point, it was basically very difficult for him to be involuntarily attacked in this hunting competition.

With the exception of Xun Er, Hu Jia and the others were a little stunned when they heard Xiao Yan’s words. They did not sense any presences approaching. However, when they eyed Xiao Yan’s expression and recalled his current status as the group leader, the three of them could only nod slightly. Immediately, the five human figures flashed simultaneously and swiftly fled into a dense thicket below.

Around five minutes after Xiao Yan and the others had hidden themselves, there was suddenly a slight sound of rushing wind being transmitted from the dense forest not far away. Immediately, five figures gradually appeared and stopped in the air, a spot not far

away from where Xiao Yan and the others were hiding. Their sharp gazes slowly swept across this stretch of quiet thicket.

The gazes of Xiao Yan and the four others passed through the gaps of the thicket and stared intently at the five older students of the Inner Academy, who stood not far from them. Judging from the Qis that were seeping out from their bodies, it appeared that these people were actually all around the one star Da Dou Shi level or so.

The strength of these people may not be weak but when compared to Xiao Yan's five man group, there was still some gap between them. Adding to this, Xiao Yan and the others were not novices who failed in terms of mentality. Therefore, they would naturally not make any unnecessary coughing or other noises at this moment. Therefore, the five older students above them could only helplessly leave after quickly scanning the area once.

After their group left, Bai Shan's body moved slightly, wanting to stand up. However, Xiao Yan's expression changed slightly as he softly said: "Don't move"

"What are you so anxious for? They've already left." Bai Shan was extremely unhappy with Xiao Yan's scolding and could not resist biting back. Although his mouth said this, his body still obeyed and did not dare to make too large of a movement.

Xiao Yan ignored him. He only turned his gaze towards the position where the five people had vanished. Upon seeing this action of his, Bai Shan and the others were startled and could only continue to move along with his gaze.

The silent atmosphere shrouded the forest in such a manner for around three to four minutes before the tree branches, which the gazes of Xiao Yan and the others, suddenly shook. Immediately, a few human figures landed on them and appeared. From their appearance, it was shockingly the same group of people who should have left earlier. Immediately, Bai Shan's expression changed slightly and he felt a little bitter.

"There is no one. Liu Mu, you really are paranoid. We cannot exhaust our time in this manner." The people on the tree branches shook their heads when they saw that there was still no movement. They then turned their bodies to face the skinny, green-clothed, young man and said.

The young man, who was called Liu Mu, helplessly nodded. He hesitatingly said: "I practice Wood affinity Dou Qi, therefore my senses are much sharper than ordinary people in this forest. Earlier... perhaps it is really was me sensing wrong. Let's go." Even though he said this, he was still a little uncertain. He could only wave over that feeling. After which, he turned around and rushed towards another part of the dense forest. Four other human figures followed closely behind him.

"The people in this Inner Academy are indeed not people of ordinary caliber..." Xiao Yan eyed the group, which was becoming distant. Only then did he slowly stand up from the

bushes and let out a sigh. If it was not because of his use of Spiritual Perception to survey their surroundings, he might really be caught by those fellows who appeared to have left but were actually hiding in the corner, peeping back.

Hu Jia and the others also crawled out from the bushes and stood up. Their gazes shifted from the spot where that group of people earlier had left from and turned towards Xiao Yan. The gazes of Hu Jia, Wu Hao, and even Bai Shan more or less had a trace of being convinced. At the very least, when they had not discovered the other party's trace, Xiao Yan had the ability to sense it first and brought them to avoid the original situation, where they would get caught. Just on this point, Xiao Yan was successful in being this group leader.

"Let's go. It is just that instead of scurrying around wildly like we had been before, we no longer know what position we are in right now, so if we just randomly charge around..." Xiao Yan frowned a little as he slowly said.

"I feel that... should we think of ways to obtain some information regarding this forest? The exact number of older students who are participating in this hunting competition and their level of strength? Otherwise, if we just go rampaging around all the way, we will end up falling into a situation of being surrounded due to the lack of information about our opponents. Perhaps we might be able to obtain victory when we face one group of older students. However, if we end up attracting the other groups of older students during the fight, I think that we are unlikely to be able to defeat all of them, right? For some unknown reason, these students of the Inner Academy seem to be very experienced in fighting..." Xun Er hesitated a little before suddenly opening her mouth to speak.

Xiao Yan and the others were startled when they heard this. They immediately mused for a while and nodded. What Xun Er said was true. In this place where they were unfamiliar with the terrain and people, they would sooner or later meet some older students who were stronger than themselves if they were to randomly run everywhere and their speed would slow.

"In this place, the people who have the information we seek seems to be only those Inner Academy's students, right? Don't tell me that we should get the information from their hands?" Bai Shan knit his eyebrows together and said.

Xiao Yan's hand fondled his chin. A long while later, he voiced his thoughts: "Let's walk for a bit and take a look around. If there is a chance for us to act, we can perhaps choose a group of older students to strike. We are not like those ordinary groups. As long as we are more careful and don't attract the other groups of older students over. I think that we should be able to eat one of them."

"Uh?" The expressions on Hu Jia and the others faces were stunned when they heard Xiao Yan's words. Other new students were thinking of methods to avoid the groups of seniors, however, Xiao Yan was actually now trying to attack an older students' group?

"This is too risky." Bai Shan shook his head in disagreement.

"Everyone, sharpening the axe will not interfere with chopping the wood. If we were to stroll in this vast forest by ourselves, how long would it take? Moreover, you should also have seen just how much those older students seem to covet this so called 'Fire Energy'. I think that this should be an extremely important aspect in the Inner Academy. Since they are able to snatch our 'Fire Energy', why can't we snatch theirs? In order for us not to regret our decisions in the future, we would not lose out by taking such risks." Xiao Yan waved the black crystal sheet in his hand and said smilingly.

A glint flashed across Hu Jia's and Wu Hao's eyes as they felt some motivation. They mused for a while before the two of them nodded their heads heavily: "We can try."

Xiao Yan sighed in relief when he saw that the two of them did not disagree. He turned his head, threw his gaze towards Bai Shan, asked with a smile: "What about you?"

Bai Shan's expression repeatedly changed in front of the gazes of Xiao Yan and the three others. It was a long while later before he clenched his teeth hard and said: "Alright. Let's try. However, I will say this beforehand. If any accidents are to happen, you, the group leader, will be held responsible for dealing with it."

Xiao Yan smilingly nodded. He simply acted as though he had not heard the last sentence as he waved his hand and said: "Since everyone shares the same opinion, let's go. Instead of being robbed by others, why don't we go and snatch what belongs to them?"

Once he said this, Xiao Yan took the lead to move his body, turning into a black shadow that flashed into the dense thicket. Xun Er and the others followed closely behind.

After deciding to accept the strategy, Xiao Yan and the others began to place their attention on those groups of older students that they occasionally found. Nearly two hours later, they had met a total of three groups but they could not help but give up the opportunity to attack as the three groups were fighting far too close to one another.

Xiao Yan and the other four people once again watched a group of older students flash past them, above their heads, from within the dense bushes. They helplessly shook their heads. Xiao Yan could sense that there was another group, which had stopped around one hundred meters north of their location. The fighting noise here would definitely be transmitted over. Hence, for their own safety, they could only continue to give up this opportunity to attack.

Xiao Yan gestured to the few people behind him. Therefore, the four of them, whose Dou Qi had already begun to circulate, could only once again calm down.

Not long after that group of older students passed them, Xiao Yan was about to stand up and lead them away when his footsteps paused. He tilted his head and threw his gaze towards the north. He sensed that the group there had suddenly stopped.

“Go.” Xiao Yan hesitated for a moment. He waved his hand and immediately lead the four others as they moved like moles, passing through the dense thicket and quickly headed north.

After around five minutes, the bodies of Xiao Yan and the others suddenly paused. Their gazes passed through the gaps between the dense leaves, and eyed the empty ground outside. At this moment, there were ten human figures interweaving and flashing. Every once in awhile, a young person who would vomit blood and faint. This pattern continued for two or three minutes before the five young people, who were clearly new students, were completely defeated. Their group was then surrounded in the middle of the empty ground. Around them were five older students who were standing around them lazily. Faint Dou Qi extended and appeared on their fists.

Xun Er, Hu Jia, and the other two turned their gazes towards Xiao Yan after watching the scene on the empty ground. Clearly, they were waiting for his decision.

Xiao Yan’s eyes narrowed. His Spiritual Perception was spread out to its limits at this moment. His eyes slowly opened as he nodded slightly.

“Tsk tsk, we are really lucky today, having already met two groups of new students. Ha ha, our acquisition is not bad.” A blue-clothed young man on the open ground eyed his card having gained 3 more ‘Fire Energy’. He could not help but lick his lips as he said this with a smile.

“Hey juniors, thank you very much. If you are dissatisfied, you can come to the Inner Academy to look for us in the future. We await your challenge any time. Of course, the precondition is that you must have sufficient ‘Fire Energy’.” The blue-clothed young man waved the Crystal Card in his hand at the green-faced new students as he gloatingly said.

“Let’s go and look for the next target.” Once he said these words, the blue-clothed young man waved his hand. His four companions turned around and immediately rushed off in another direction.

“There is no need to look. We are here.”

Just as the blue-clothed young man’s five man group was about to turn around, a faint laughter suddenly sounded from the tree branches. The former hurriedly lifted their heads only to see that there were three men and two women who had appeared on the surrounding tree branches at an unknown time and had already surrounded them.

The blue-clothed young man's group was surprised by the five new students who has just appeared. They could not really recover. Weren't all the new students supposed to be fleeing like some mice? Why did these few fellows actually dare to openly appear in front of them?

"Oh, what beautiful girls. Everyone, be a little gentler when you attack later. Otherwise, if we are to leave a bad impression, there would no longer be a chance in the future." A moment later, the blue-clothed young man's five man group finally recovered. Their gazes swept across the few people on the branches before their gazes brightened greatly as they stopped on the two young ladies. Immediately, their teasing laughter sounded.

"What about those three fellows?" One of his companion asked smilingly.

The blue-robed young man smiled when he heard this. A fierce aura flashed across their eyes as they spread their hands and said helplessly: "Since these new students are so arrogant, we as their seniors, should naturally properly teach them how they should survive in the Inner Academy, right? Therefore, let them see some blood first. This kind of method is the most effective one in letting them understand just what kind of attitudes they should maintain within the Inner Academy."

"Haha." When they heard his words, the four older students by his side laughed. They immediately raised their heads, and their gazes were filled with ill-intent as they stared at the three young men on the tree branches.

"Their strength is barely around that of a two star Da Dou Shi. Each of us can take care of one. Do not drag it out. Finish the battles quickly. Remember, we cannot let any of them flee!" Xiao Yan eyed the five older students on the empty ground below indifferently. He turned his head to look as Xun Er, Bai Shan, Wu Hao, and Hu Jia as he reminded.

"Yes." The four of them nodded slightly. They exchanged glances with one another as their bodies shook slightly. Powerful Dou Qi suddenly surged out of their bodies. They immediately moved and appeared on the empty ground as fast as lightning!

At the moment Xun Er's powerful Dou Qi and the others' Dou Qi surged out, the expressions of the blue clothed man's group of five finally changed drastically. Looking just at these Qis of theirs, these five new students were actually all much stronger than them!

"We have kicked an iron plate this time! Why are these new students so strong?" A thought that was anything but assuring swiftly flashed across the blue-clothed young man's heart. He waved his hand. However, before he could even utter the words to shout at his companions to hurriedly retreat, a black shadow suddenly and strangely appeared in front of him. The eyes of the former shrunk. His fist, which contained

powerful Dou Qi, did not hesitate even a little as it was ferociously swung at the black shadow's head.

At the instant that the blue-clothed young man threw his punch, the black shadow moved. A sharp force actually caused the air to emit a muffled sonic boom as a punch came in a lightning-like manner. Regardless of speed or strength, it far surpassed the attack of the blue-clothed young man!

"This time around, our boat is about to sink in the Gutters." A horrorstruck feeling surfaced within the blue-clothed young man's heart, as he sensed the strength and speed in which the black shadow unleashed that punch. He lifted his gaze and saw a delicate and handsome face that carried some coldness along with a pair of dark, ink-black eyes.

TL: boat is about to sink in the Gutters - meaning something totally unexpected or should not happen happened.

Chapter 439: The Use of 'Fire Energy'

That pair of fists each contained powerful, surging Dou Qi. An instant later, they crashed into each other and an underlying force rippled out. Wherever it crossed, it acted like a wave that came surging out violently. At that moment, all the withered leaves on the ground, around the two of them, were lifted and drifted all over the place.

"Glug!"

As the two fists came into contact, the blue-clothed young man was finally able to genuinely feel just how terrifying the strength contained in Xiao Yan's fist was. The instant their fists came into contact, a numbing feeling began to spread through his arm from his hand. Finally, an underlying force that caused people's expression to change exploded out, moving along the point of contact between the fists, and transmitted into the blue-clothed young man's body. Finally, it resulted in him spitting out a mouthful of bright red, fresh blood.

After spitting out a mouthful of fresh blood, the blue-clothed young man's footsteps hurriedly took a couple of steps back. A ferocious aura swept past his face. He shook his body, and a pale, blue-colored Dou Qi swiftly swarmed out of his body. After which, it formed a blue-colored Dou Qi Armor on the surface of his body. However, the moment the Dou Qi Armor had just formed, the black shadow once again appeared in front of him like a ghost. A cold laughter was transmitted towards him. Immediately, a dazed look rose from the eyes of the blue-clothed young man. Quickly following this, an immense pain spread out from his chest. Finally, he felt that his body fell and shot backwards before smashing heavily against a tree trunk a moment later. Another mouthful of fresh blood was spat out. The blue-clothed young man lowered his head with great difficulty and was shocked as he discovered that his Dou Qi Armor, which he had just congealed earlier, had actually shattered with just one strike from the opponent.

The body of the blue-clothed young man huddled up like a large prawn. Before he raised his head, he heard another muffled sound sounding off to the side. After that, his four companions rolled towards his side with faces that were similarly dripping with blood. Only at this moment, was there truly an additional panic on his face.

The blue-clothed young man hugged his chest as a pair of legs suddenly appeared in front of him. A faint voice also sounded: "If you want to continue being beaten, then you can all curl up. I don't mind throwing a few more kicks."

When he heard these words, the entire body of the blue-clothed young man trembled. After which, he hurriedly lifted his head while shivering a little. He eyed the black-robed young man in front of him as well as the two men and two women behind him. There was some terror in his eyes. "You... what do all of you want?"

"I will ask the questions and all you need to do is answer." From a higher vantage point, Xiao Yan looked down at the five older students who wore horrified expressions. His hand slowly held the Heavy Xuan Ruler on his back and immediately drew it in a sudden motion. The heavy ruler carried an enormous pressuring sound of wind as it was inserted into the ground in front of the young man's face. The large ruler's body gave the latter an enormous sense of pressure bearing down on him.

"What would you like to ask?" The blue-clothed young man swallowed a mouthful of saliva. He also slowly became calm. No matter what happens, something like killing people was not allowed within this forest according to the rules. Otherwise, the Elders, who were observing all activities within this forest at all times, would immediately reveal themselves. The punishment for those who broke the rules would be determined based on the situation. Therefore, other than needing to be a little worried that they would suffer physical pain, they had nothing to worry about with regards to their lives.

"How large is this forest?" Xiao Yan mused for a moment. The first thing he asked was the simplest but also the most important question. If the size of the forest was large, then he would need to make preparations for a long-term battle. If it was small, they could perhaps change their tactics and directly go on a rampage and charge directly to their destination.

"Very big." The blue-clothed young man replied, causing Xiao Yan to helplessly sigh in his heart.

"Do you have a rough map route?" Xiao Yan glanced at the blue-clothed young man. However, he suddenly waved his hands, tilting his head towards Xun Er and the four others: "Each of you grab one person and question them in one corner. After that, we will check if the information each one gives us is legitimate. If someone's answer is different from the others, then he should not blame us for being ruthless. Although we cannot take people's lives here, accidentally beating them until they are seriously injured should not be against the rules, right?"

Xiao Yan had naturally turned his body towards the blue-clothed young man's five man team and spoke the last sentence to them with a smile.

Xiao Yan's ruthless heart directly caused the expressions of the five people to turn extremely ugly. This kind of action completely dispelled their intentions to lie.

Hu Jia and the three others each led one incumbent student, and walked towards their own corner. When Wu Hao was leading one of them, a voice was involuntarily transmitted out from under the blood robes: "Good tactic."

Xiao Yan smiled, turned his body and threw his gaze onto the blue-clothed young man. He slowly said: "Answer now."

"There is a rough route map. However, it cannot be considered precise. This map is something that we bought in the Inner Academy before participating in the Hunting Competition. We spent one day's worth of 'Fire Energy'." The blue-clothed young man laughed bitterly as he obediently took out a rough piece of paper and handed it to Xiao Yan.

"Don't all of you view the 'Fire Energy' as extremely important? You are actually willing to spend it to buy such a coarse item?" Xiao Yan received the piece of paper. The route on the map had exceeded the tolerable limits, appearing like a few large black crosses. This caused the corner of Xiao Yan's mouth to involuntarily twitch a couple of times. Could this even be called a map?

"No one is willing. However, this is something the Inner Academy forces us to buy. We have no choice but to buy one." The corner of the blue-clothed young man's mouth shivered a little when this was mentioned. A pain surfaced on his face as he spoke in a biting manner. When he had to purchase this broken thing, his heart was dripping blood. If it was not because they could snatch the 'Fire Energy' from the new students if they participated in the hunting competition, he would not have willingly spent one day's worth of 'Fire Energy' to buy this nonsense map even if he were beaten to death. Those bastards in the Inner Academy were really blood sucking demons.

"How many older students are participating in this Hunting Competition?" Xiao Yan kept the route map properly and asked with a frown.

"There are around fifty people. Five people to a group with a total of ten groups." The blue-clothed young man's eyed the other four corners where interrogations were going on and sighed. He could not tell if his companions would tell the truth or lie. However, if he was to compare the chances of the two, he could only choose to tell the truth.

"What are their strengths like? Are they approximately the same as all of you?" Xiao Yan continued to ask.

Xiao Yan's words caused the blue-clothed young man to roll his eyes. What was 'approximately the same as all of you'?

"There are eight groups which are approximately the same as us. We are all students who entered the Inner Academy last year. There are still two more groups, who are the older students from the previous year. They have stayed in the Inner Academy for a longer time than us. Therefore, their strength is stronger than us. I think that they are likely around your level..." The blue-clothed young man looked at Xiao Yan somewhat strangely, seemingly muttering to himself about; "Why was it that this new student was actually so strong?" It should be known that last year, when their batch of new students just entered the academy, even the few fellows ranked in the top five were also robbed once in this forest. Although they did resist, the conflict between each of them after that resulted in them having difficulty forming a large scale retaliation. Therefore, they were each separated and defeated. It was totally unlike this strange occurrence this year where the older students were being robbed instead.

As he thought of this depressing matter, the blue-clothed young man had the impulse to scold his mother. They were similarly new students, but why was it that the gap between their treatments were so big?

"Around the same as me?" Xiao Yan frowned intently when he heard this. The members of these two groups were about as strong as him. That was a little troublesome. It appeared that there would really be some difficulty in trying to break through this 'Fire Energy Hunting Competition' with ease.

"Those two groups are very easy to identify. All the members of one of the groups are dressed in black, while the other is dressed in all white. In the 'Fire Energy Hunting Competition' each year, there would be two strong groups participating. The Inner Academy calls these two strongest groups the 'Black White Evil Stopper'. In the last ten years, no one has heard of any new student group being able to break through their obstruction." There was some respect in the voice of the blue-clothed young man.

"'Black White Evil Stopper'?" Xiao Yan uttered this name in his mouth as he nodded slightly. He turned around and exchanged glances with Xun Er and the others. After which, he asked the the most important question: "What is the use of this so-called 'Fire Energy' within the Inner Academy? Why are all of you so crazy about it?"

"'Fire Energy' is the most important thing in the Inner Academy. This is also the reason why the strength of the new students would increase by leaps and bounds after entering the Inner Academy to train." The blue-robed young man hesitated before answering this question for quite a while before he helplessly opened his mouth to speak when Xiao Yan grasped the hilt of the Heavy Xuan Ruler with his hand: "In the Inner Academy, there is a 'Sky Flame Qi Training Tower' buried underground. If one were to train within the tower, one would be able to obtain the strange effect of gaining more with less effort. Moreover, the farther down one goes to train in the tower, the faster the training speed. Of course, the price is also expensive to the point of being outrageous..."

“If one wanted to enter the ‘Sky Flame Qi Training Tower’, one must have sufficient ‘Fire Energy’ in their Fire Crystal Card for the expenses. ‘Fire Energy’ appears in numbers of days. The Fire Crystal Card in your hands is able to cover the cost of you all training in the tower for five days. After five days, you can only go and earn ‘Fire Energy’ by yourself. Of course, on the first day of every month, the Inner Academy will also give everyone seven days worth of ‘Fire Energy’ as... living expenses.” When he said this last phrase, the expression of the blue-clothed young man was a little strange.

Xiao Yan’s face was stunned when he heard the words of the blue-clothed young man. It was unexpected that the training method of the Inner Academy was so strange yet wonderful. If one wanted to enter the so-called ‘Sky Flame Qi Training Tower’ to train, one actually needed to pay a fee. This so called fee was the ‘Fire Energy’ on the Fire Crystal Card...

“If one wanted to train, one would need to use the ‘Fire Energy’ as an expense. No wonder these fellows covet the ‘Fire Energy’ in our hands to such an extent...” Xiao Yan laughed bitterly. He glanced at the blue-clothed young man and said softly: “Then what if we use up all the ‘Fire Energy’ on it? How do we get more? Don’t tell me that we can only wait until it is distributed the next month?”

“Of course not. In the Inner Academy, you can obtain ‘Fire Energy’ using various different means. For example, you can sweep the tower, copy scrolls, etc. Naturally, the ‘Fire Energy’ one gets by relying on this is way too little. Therefore, some of the stronger students would go and hunt Magical Beasts, using their Monster Core to exchange for ‘Fire Energy’. Alternatively, they can find someone to challenge. As long as the other party agrees, they would be able to compete in the Inner Academy’s Sports Arena. The one who wins would be able to obtain the ‘Fire Energy’ that is deducted from the loser. In summary, there are quite a number of methods to obtain ‘Fire Energy’. However, there is one precondition. That is you must have sufficient strength. Otherwise, not only will you not be able to earn ‘Fire Energy’, but you will also lose everything you have.” The blue-clothed young man spread his hands, hesitated a little, before continuing: “There is one more method to earn ‘Flame Energy’. That is to ascend to the top of the ‘Strong Ranking’ in the Inner Academy. As the name suggests, this is the ranking system that is used to measure one’s strength. It is also the ranking that is worth the most in the Inner Academy. There are only fifty names on the ranking. As long as you are able to grasp a position on it, you will be able to obtain the reward that the Inner Academy issues each month. The reward is linked with the rank. One would naturally get more the higher up the ranking they are. In that case, they would be able to hide themselves within the ‘Sky Flame Qi Training Tower’ all day to train and need not worry about exhausting the ‘Fire Energy’. Therefore, all the students in the Inner Academy are working hard and striving towards this ‘Strong Ranking’. That competition is so intense, that it simply leaves one speechless. There are many people who got onto the ranking on the first day before they were pulled down on the second day by people who desperately challenged them.”

Xiao Yan exhaled a deep breath of air and nodded slightly. Although his expression was calm, his heart was already beginning to be hooked by the mysterious rules of the Inner Academy, forming true anticipation and curiosity. This kind of extreme system was indeed worthy of being the cradle which created strong people.

In the Outer Academy, it was extremely difficult for the students to feel such competition. Therefore, the Outer Academy may not be short of people with outstanding talent, but it was ultimately impossible for them to compete with the Inner Academy. This was because the system here was basically created to groom strong people!

“‘Fire Energy’... Ha ha, looks like it is indeed something that really hooks onto people’s hearts. Now, even the temptation of this ‘Fire Energy’ has hooked onto the desires of my heart.” Xiao Yan laughed softly. He turned his head to eye Xun Er and the other three. Coincidentally, they had also turned their gazes towards him. The five gazes interlaced with one another and each of them could see the heat in each other’s eyes. Clearly, this Inner Academy had also caused them to be interested. The ‘Fire Energy’ was also firmly branded into their hearts.

In the Inner Academy, having ‘Fire Energy’ meant that their training speed would increase. It also represented that their distance on the journey of becoming strong people was becoming closer!

“‘Fire Energy’... is indeed something good...”

Xiao Yan muttered in his heart. The corner of his mouth was suddenly lifted into a evil smile that caused the blue clothed young man’s heart to feel a chill. He lowered his head and smiled as he watched the latter. In a harmonious manner, he said: “Thank you senior for informing me. However, can you please hand me the Fire Crystal Card in your hand next?”

The blue-clothed young man widened his mouth as he eyed Xiao Yan’s smile. His expression changed drastically. Dou Qi flowed suddenly. However, before he could even make a move, a huge, black shadow, carrying a pressuring wind sound, smashed down heavily, finally stopping just in front of the pale face belonging to the blue-clothed young man.

The blue clothed young man swallowed a mouthful of saliva with great difficulty as he eyed that enormous ruler’s body. A long while later, his face was ashen as he sat back down on the ground. His hands quivered as he took a pale-blue Fire Crystal Card out of his storage ring.

Xiao Yan smilingly received this pale-blue-colored Fire Crystal Card. When he gaze saw the red-colored 28 on it, the smile on Xiao Yan’s face grew much richer than before.

Xiao Yan held the black and blue Crystal Cards. After which, he rubbed them heavily. A glow flashed and on the dark black card, the number 5 turned to 26 while that the pale-blue card shrunk to a 7.

“Starting from now, the position of the hunter and the hunted in this Hunting Competition is going to be reversed. This is because this hunted have already begun to feel some interest towards the hunters...”

Xiao Yan softly muttered as he eyed the 26 on his dark, black Fire Crystal Card.

Chapter 440: The Switch Between The Hunter And The Hunted

The five new students, whose entire bodies were covered in bruises and had traces of blood on the corner of their mouths eyed Xiao Yan’s group with stunned expressions. Only at this moment did they realize what had happened in this sudden turn of events. These fellows were actually snatching the ‘Fire Energy’ from the older students?

The corner of their mouths twitched a couple of times. These five unlucky new students, who were robbed by the blue-clothed young man’s group earlier, saw that Xiao Yan’s group actually rudely knocked out the five Inner Academy older students after snatching their ‘Fire Energy.’ Their expressions were extremely brilliant. Not that long ago, they exchanged blows with this group of older students. However, after merely just a few exchanges, they were completely defeated by these strong older students who had a wealth of battle experience. However, now... The group of older students, who had been swaggering triumphantly after their previous victory, had ended up in a miserable state, similar to their own, within just two to three minutes of fighting with Xiao Yan’s group. This huge gap really caused these students to feel a little dull.

“They are indeed worthy of being the top five ranked people of the Qualifying Competition. Their strength is actually this great.” As the new students being hunted this time around, they naturally knew Xiao Yan’s five man group. However, they still did not expect that when these five people gathered together, they were actually able to defeat the older students within the Inner Academy. This group was really strong.

“Tsk tsk, it is really expected that the Inner Academy is actually this unique. It really did not betray my expectations.”

Hu Jia played with the Fire Crystal Card in her hand, and glanced at the five Inner Academy students, who had been forcefully beaten until they fainted, and tied to a tree trunk by Xiao Yan. She laughed in a lovely voice. Earlier, she had obtained eighteen days worth of ‘Fire Energy’ from the older student she had just interrogated. Therefore, the number on her Fire Crystal Card had already turned from five to twenty-three.

“How unfortunate. We are actually unable to snatch away all the ‘Fire Energy’ in their hands and must leave a seven day minimum of ‘Fire Energy’.” Hu Jia was a little regretful as she looked at the crystal card in her hand and muttered.

“Looks like the ‘Sky Flame Qi Training Tower’ in the Inner Academy should be the reason why the students of the Inner Academy are able to train this quickly. It is really astonishing.” Xun Er gently smiled and said.

“It is indeed beyond my expectations.” Wu Hao slowly nodded and continued, “However, if we were to compare, I am more interested in that so-called ‘Strong Ranking.’ I will find an opportunity to challenge them after we enter the Inner Academy.”

Xiao Yan helplessly shook his head when he heard the heated fighting spirit hidden in Wu Hao’s words. This person was too crazy about fighting.

“What should we do next?” Bai Shan’s usually ice-cold expression also had a rare smile at this moment. The reason was something that everyone naturally understood; the twenty days of ‘Fire Energy’ that he had plundered from the unfortunate fellow’s hands.

Xiao Yan’s gaze swept over the faces of the five older students, who had been knocked out. After ensuring that they did not have any reaction, he raised his head and took out the extremely crude route map from his storage ring. After looking at it for a long while, he finally pointed at a certain spot with some hesitation and said, “The size of this forest is extremely large. Our current position should be around here. If we continue walking along this path, we might be able to walk out of this forest within a day’s time.”

“Let’s hurry. Don’t waste any more time.” Bai Shan hurriedly urged when he heard this.

Xiao Yan looked at him, but did not move. The dark, black, crystal sheet was swiftly rotated between his fingers. His black eyes flashed slightly. A moment later, he moved his finger and clipped the crystal card precisely between his fingers. With a smile, he said, “Everyone, since you all already know about the importance of ‘Fire Energy’ within the Inner Academy, do all of you want to take this chance to obtain a little more?”

“Who doesn’t want more? I earnestly wish to be able to obtain enough ‘Fire Energy’ to be able to train in the ‘Sky Flame Qi Training Tower’ for a whole year.” Hu Jia curled her lip and replied. The others also nodded a little. From the mouths of the few older students, they had also clearly understood just how important and necessary the ‘Fire Energy’ was for those within the Inner Academy.

“In that case, are you all willing to take a risk for the possibility to obtain more ‘Fire Energy?’” Xiao Yan smiled as he spoke.

“What do you mean?” Bai Shan frowned slightly. His eyebrows twitched as he said in surprise, “Don’t tell me that you are targeting other groups of older student?”

“Since they can snatch ours, why can’t we snatch theirs?” Xiao Yan smiled faintly and continued, “Moreover, if we were to look at it in terms of strength, with the exception of the two so-called ‘Black White Evil Stopper’ groups, any of the individual remaining

groups would be unable to contend with us so long as we don't let them join forces and attack us. This is our opportunity! What do you say? Do you dare to give it a try?"

Hu Jia, Wu Hao, and Bai Shan fell into silence when they heard these words from Xiao Yan. Xun Er gently laughed and still stood by Xiao Yan's side, using her actions to express her choice.

The silence continued for a moment. Wu Hao was the first to nod his head as he replied in a deep voice, "There is only reward if there is risk. As long as you dare to do it, I will not cower even a little."

"Ah, crazy fellow. Alright, alright, who asked me to also greatly lust for 'Fire Energy.'" Hu Jia spread her hands and spoke helplessly.

"Alright, I have no objections either." Seeing that everyone had agreed, Bai Shan glanced at the Crystal Card in his hand once again before clenching his teeth and saying, "I'll go all out."

"Alright, since everyone has agreed, then this will be our course of direction for now." Xiao Yan clapped his hands and smiled. He immediately hesitated a little before saying in a deep voice, "However, before we begin, I will say this first. Should we not first decide how we should distribute the 'Fire Energy' should we once again successfully obtain it from another group? I don't want a situation where the group breaks apart as a result of unequal distribution."

Bai Shan and the others were startled when they heard this. They immediately nodded. If this problem was not properly resolved, it might really result in the group breaking apart. Should the group break apart in this kind of place, any single person among them would unlikely be able to rely on his own strength to successfully walk out of the forest. What one needed in this forest was teamwork and not the courage of one person!

"Distribute it equally. If there is an instance where there is an unequal distribution, we will compensate him first the next time. What do all of you say?" Xun Er mused for a moment before opening her mouth to speak.

"I have no objections." Hu Jia and Wu Hao nodded their heads. Soon after, Bai Shan also nodded in agreement.

"Since this is the case, then let's act according to this distribution pattern." Xiao Yan sighed in relief within his heart. He saw that their most realistic problem, which was also the one that was the easiest to break apart the group, had been settled so easily. He turned his body around to glance at the five new students, whose faces were covered in bruises, not far away. He waved his hand and threw over a few jade bottles. "These are healing medicine. They will help reduce your external wounds."

The new students scrambled to catch the healing medicine that Xiao Yan had thrown over. They were stunned. A warm feeling flowed through their hearts as they nodded heavily toward Xiao Yan. Their eyes were filled with a kind of gratitude.

Sending charcoal in the snow is forever an action that would easily capture people's hearts.

TL; Sending charcoal in the snow - Giving people what they need the most when they are in trouble

Xiao Yan randomly waved his hand and called toward Hu Jia and the other three. Immediately, five human figures dashed into the thicket, and swiftly disappeared.

Now, the hunted began to look for the hunters to attack!

There were two old men seated cross-legged on top of a huge tree within the forest. Their bodies did not move even a little. The gentle breeze blew over them, but the clothes on their bodies were like steel and did not even shift, appearing extremely strange.

At a certain moment, the two old men, who had their eyes shut, suddenly opened their eyes. They looked at each other and saw a hint of shock and laughter within each other's eyes.

"Hee hee, good, good.... the new students this year are much more interesting than those of the previous years." A gray-robed old man was the first to open his mouth as he spoke with a smile.

"Those five little fellows should be the top five ranked of this year's Qualifying Competition, right? Their strengths are all quite good and their potentials are extraordinary. No wonder they are able to even beat senior student groups from the Inner Academy." The other blue-robed old man nodded and praised.

"That little fellow leading them seems to be called Xiao Yan, right? He is quite bold. I like him." The gray-robed old man fondled his beard as he spoke with a smile. Hearing the conversation, it appeared as though they had witnessed all of the actions of Xiao Yan's group.

"Ke ke, he is indeed quite good. Originally, that group was not harmonious but this little fellow integrated them together. The top five students in the Qualifying Competition of the previous years were all filled with haughtiness and none of them would submit to each other. Finally, they were separated and defeated by the older student groups from the Inner Academy. This time though, this group just might be able to exceed people's expectations." The blue-robed old man laughed as he replied.

“However, we are also unable to conclude results now. The ‘Black White Evil Stopper’ this year is a group of fellows that has come running out from the battle arena. Their strength is not something that an ordinary group can compare with. If that group of Xiao Yan’s were to meet them, it is difficult to say just who would win and who would lose.” The gray-robed old man said with interest.

“Yes, all of those fellows have experienced hundreds of battles. They are extremely rich in battle experience and the teamwork and cooperation that exists between them is at a very high level. If Xiao Yan’s group were to meet them, it is likely they will have a tough battle. However, I really like the exchanges between the strong.” The blue-robed old man let loose a soft laugh, which actually contained some anticipation within it.

“It seems that we are not going to be so bored in the near future. Let’s wait to see a good show.” The two old men faced each other and laughed softly. Immediately, they once again slowly shut their eyes.

.....

Five human figures slowly walked over a pile of withered leaves within the dense forest. As their feet stepped on the withered leaves, they emitted a soft ‘sha sha’ sound. All of these five people wore a tower-shaped badge on their chest.

“Aren’t we too unlucky? Since we entered the forest, we haven’t met a single group of new students? If this continues, we won’t even be able to recoup the capital we used to participate in the Hunting Competition!” A young man, among the five people, suddenly could not resist cursing.

“Don’t create so much noise. Let’s continue looking. There are a total of fifty new students, why are you so anxious?” That man, who was leading the group, frowned as he scolded the young man.

“You five, are you looking for us?”

When the man leading the group was scolding, a soft laughter suddenly sounded not far in front of them. The five older students from the Inner Academy were surprised. They hurriedly raised their heads, and were stunned to discover that not far away from them, a group, consisting of three males and two females, were smiling as they watched them.

“Capture them!”

The shock on the face of the man leading the group was gradually replaced with a wild joy. He let out a hurried cry and the five men suddenly went over and surrounded the newcomers.

“The old rules. One on one. We will collectively distribute the gains once we get our hands on the Crystal Cards.” Seeing that the five people had actually taken the initiative

to charge forward, the smile on the black-robed young man's face grew much richer. He turned his head to the four people behind him and smiled as he spoke.

"Yes."

"Since we are clear, then... let's attack. For our 'Fire Energy!'"

The black-robed young man smiled. Immediately, five powerful auras of Dou Qi suddenly erupted from within the dense forest.

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Chapter 441: Swiftly Growing Coordination

Dou Qi suddenly surged violently within the dense forest. A moment later, a human figure slid against the ground as he shot backward before finally smashing heavily into a protruding rock that was on the ground. His face twitched and a trace of blood flowed from the corner of his mouth.

The intense pain that transmitted from his back caused a fierceness and brutality to flash across this yellow-clothed young man's eyes. However, without waiting for him to act, the black shadow in front of him suddenly flashed and stopped. An enormous, dark shadow carried the sound of wind being split as it heavily and angrily smashed at the head of the former in front of him.

"Don't!" The dark shadow pounced in front of him. The terrifying force contained in it finally caused a shock to flash across the yellow-clothed man's eyes as he cried out involuntarily.

As the voice of the yellow-clothed man sounded, the dark shadow, that was smashing toward his face, suddenly stopped. Even though the dark shadow had stopped extremely punctually, the wind that was contained with the swing still passed through the air and ruthlessly caused the yellow-clothed young man's face to go through an upheaval of changes a couple of times as though it was a water wave. Only then did he recover.

The dark shadow gradually left and an enormous ruler was heavily inserted into the ground in front of the yellow-clothed man. The black-robed young man looked down at the yellow-clothed man from above. His faint voice caused the latter's face to tremble again, "Hand over your Fire Crystal Card."

“You... you are new students. Why do you need our Fire Crystal Cards?” The yellow-clothed man swallowed a mouthful of saliva and eyed the four other intense battles going on. His eyes rotated a little as he opened his mouth to ask.

“Naturally, we want the ‘Fire Energy’...” Xiao Yan softly laughed. His palm, which was holding the Heavy Xuan Ruler tightly, tightened its grasp a little further. He smiled and said, “Hand over your Fire Crystal Card within ten seconds or I will first beat you until you are half dead and take it myself. Which option do you choose?”

A coldness swarmed into the yellow-clothed man’s heart as he eyed the smiling, delicate, handsome face that belonged to Xiao Yan. This fellow was really terrifying... As he sensed the ice-cold tone within Xiao Yan’s voice, the yellow-clothed young man felt unwillingness in his heart, but he did not dare to procrastinate. His face was filled with bitterness as he took out a pale, blue-colored crystal card from his storage ring, and handed it over to Xiao Yan.

Xiao Yan smiled as he received the card. His eyes glanced at the number on it: thirty-two, and nodded quietly in his heart. Not bad. A very fruitful harvest. It was really unexpected that this fellow was actually even wealthier than the people that they had previously robbed.

Xiao Yan’s body suddenly moved as he held the card in his hand. His right leg kicked at the yellow clothed man’s temple with a strength that was neither hard nor soft, coincidentally controlling the strength such that he only kicked that fellow until he fainted, and not to the extent of him losing his life.

Not long after Xiao Yan finished off the yellow-clothed man, the other four battles also approached their ends. A moment later, when four human figures bounced heavily off the ground and collided together, the battle had finally ended.

“Five Fire Crystal Cards. If we subtract the seven days of ‘guaranteed minimum’ ‘Fire Energy’, we have gotten our hands on a total of a hundred twenty-five days worth of ‘Fire Energy’, which can be distributed... Each person can coincidentally be allocated twenty-five days of ‘Fire Energy’. There is no disagreement right?” Xiao Yan received the Fire Crystal Cards from the hands of the four of them and calculated. After which, he waved the five cards and smiled as he asked them a question.

“Yes.” The four of them nodded. As they had already agreed on this distribution method, it would naturally be impossible for them to disagree.

Seeing that the four of them nodded, Xiao Yan smiled and threw the cards toward the four of them while speaking with a smile, “Everyone, take it for yourself. If there is not enough, take it from another crystal card.”

The five people held a card in each of their hands and used force to rub them against each other. A glow immediately flashed. The original red-colored number on the dark, black Crystal Card increased by a little bit once again.

After snatching the 'Fire Energy', Xiao Yan threw the pale-blue crystal cards back onto the chests of the few Inner Academy students. He smiled at them, who were tied to a tree trunk, immobilized, and said, "Seniors, thank you for your gift. We will repay you if we have the time to do so in the future. For now, we will first bid you farewell."

"Hurry up and leave. I sense that there are other groups headed toward us." Xiao Yan turned around, and spoke one sentence to Hu Jia and the other three. After which, he waved his hand and swiftly fled into the dense forest. Behind him, the four people, whose faces were filled with excitement, followed shortly after. Now, they suddenly realized that selecting Xiao Yan as the leader was quite a wise decision. In just a few hours, they had already successfully obtained the 'Fire Energy' from two groups of Inner Academy older students. This bountiful harvest really caused them to be extremely excited.

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Around five to six minutes after Xiao Yan's group disappeared, the tree branches of this part of the forest suddenly shook a little. Immediately, five shadows flashed out. After they appeared and saw those five Inner Academy older students that had been tied to the tree, with even their mouths were covered, their faces were immediately stunned. They exchanged glances with one another. One of them carefully cut the rope. Immediately, that five unlucky people fell down flaccidly and panted swiftly.

"We were actually robbed by the new students!" After catching his breath, that yellow-clothed man immediately jumped up and cursed out loud with a green face.

The group of older students, who had just arrived after hearing the clash of the fight, were startled when they heard the curses of this yellow-clothed man. Their faces were instantly filled with strange expressions as they looked at the yellow-clothed man's group.

"What are you looking at? If you were to meet that group, you would definitely not be in much better shape! Why does this batch of new students have such abnormal fellows?" The strange expressions of the other party caused the yellow-clothed man to be furious. He did not care whether it was this group which had fished them out of the deep waters or another. He simply parted his mouth and scolded. In any case, they may be able to rob new students in this forest, but they were also allowed to attack the older students.

"Rest assured that we will not be as useless as some people who actually had their 'Fire Energy' stolen by the new students. This is a strange occurrence that has never happened before in the past ten years of the inner academy. In the future, you will likely be considered famous within the Inner Academy." A person leading that group had also

become a little angry because of the yellow-clothed man's words and was too lazy to continue stopping here. He waved his hand and led his companions to swiftly move into the dense forest. They immediately disappeared.

"When you all meet them, you will know the definition of depression. What use is there to have such a tough mouth now?!" The yellow-clothed man waved his fist furiously at the group which had just left. He took out the pale, blue-colored Fire Crystal Card from his chest and saw the eye-piercing number on it: seven. His expression was gloomy, much like a storm was about to approach. He appeared extremely frightening.

Nearly three hours after Xiao Yan robbed the yellow-clothed man's group, they had finally met another solitary group of older Inner Academy's students as the sky gradually became dark.

This time around, however, their plans were completely dashed. This was because this group of older students had a degree of cooperation and teamwork that far surpassed the expectations of Xiao Yan's group. When they met the two groups from the Inner Academy earlier, Xiao Yan's five man team had relied on their outstanding individual strength to spread out the opponent and finally defeat each of them individually. This time around, however, they had met a tough metal plate.

Although this group had initially felt some panic when they were ambushed by Xiao Yan's five man group, it was merely for an extremely short while before they swiftly recovered their calm. The five of them had their backs facing each other, much like a metal drum. No matter how Xiao Yan's five man group tempted them, they only relied on their excellent cooperation and teamwork, combining their strength to resolve the attacks. After this seemingly stalemate-like situation lasted for around half an hour, Xiao Yan finally made a decisive decision, waved his hand and lead his team to retreat. This time around, they returned from their hunt without reward. It was also because they had undergone this failure that they clearly understood just what kind of difference existed in the degrees of cooperation of this team of theirs when compared with those of the Inner Academy.

After recognizing their shortcomings, Xiao Yan's five man group also began to feel out and train together. After one sleepless night of training, the degree of cooperation between them may not be said to have soared greatly but compared to yesterday, it was an enormous improvement. This was because at the very least, they had recently begun to know how to join hands and not just rely on their own strength to interwise with one of the five opponents at the same time like they had initially planned.

It must be said that this one night of cooperation practice among Xiao Yan's five man group did indeed benefit them greatly. This was because the next morning, Xiao Yan's group had coincidentally and luckily met with the group that had forced them to retreat yesterday. When the two parties met, they were originally startled. Quickly following this, however, a fiery battle once again erupted!

This time around, Xiao Yan's group finally, unlike yesterday, did not feel as though their hands and legs were bound. Although they still had difficulty breaking through the metal drum-like cooperation, at the very least, there was the faint trend of them being able to retaliate.

That group from the Inner Academy also discovered Xiao Yan's group's improvement. Moreover, they were also shocked to discover that as the entanglement between both parties became more intense, the cooperation within Xiao Yan's group was also honed during the battle and gradually became more skillful. If it went on like this, it was likely that they would truly be finished off should they wait until their opponent's cooperation became even more skillful.

However, not long after Xiao Yan's group began to have the advantage, Xiao Yan's expression suddenly changed. He could sense that there seemed to be two groups around them, which were flying in their direction and hurrying to this battleground of theirs. Clearly, they were attracted by the undulations of Dou Qi caused by the fight here. Immediately, he did not dare to delay any longer. With a wave of his hand he said sternly, "Let's get out of here!"

Hearing Xiao Yan's cry, Bai Shan and the others, who had already fought until they had some feeling, were immediately stunned. Although they felt some reluctance toward leaving this good situation, due to Xiao Yan's extremely accurate warning during these two days, they could only forcefully stop and follow Xiao Yan to swiftly flee into the dense forest. Finally, they disappeared from the line of sight of the Inner Academy's group whose members were covered with perspiration after having fought against Xiao Yan's group for quite some time.

"Bastard. The improvement of these fellows is too much. The next time we meet, our cooperation is likely not going to pose much hindrance to them." A young man, who looked like the leader of this group, stared at the spot where Xiao Yan's group had disappeared into. He could not resist softly cursing with a gloomy face.

After the fight this time around ended in a draw, this group of older students from the Inner Academy suddenly felt a chill in their hearts as they discovered that this group of new students, three men and two women, seemed to expressively hook onto them. As long as there were no other groups nearby, this group of new students, which were hiding in some dark and quiet corner, would attack them from different directions, tiring them until they were totally exhausted.

In a mere short day, this group of older students from the Inner Academy had been attacked by Xiao Yan's group no less than five times. Moreover, during these five instances, they realized that the cooperation and teamwork within Xiao Yan's group was becoming stronger and stronger. Only at this moment did they discover that these fellows were actually using them as a stepping stone!

However, by the time that they realized this, it was already a little too late. Therefore, the current them had discovered that they were once again surrounded by Xiao Yan's five man group, which had been lingering and pestering them. This time around, the cooperation that Xiao Yan's five man group displayed finally caused them to end up in despair. In less than ten minutes, the group, which had caused Xiao Yan's five man team to be at a loss on their first encounter, was attacked by this group until they fell to pieces. As the loser, the 'Fire Energy' in their hands naturally served as the spoils of war and were seized by Xiao Yan's group.

After this battle, the news that there was a group of new students who were hunting for the 'Fire Energy' in the hands of the older students of the academy had finally and gradually began to spread within the forest. Therefore, some of the groups of senior students from the Inner Academy began to panic. The entire forest for the Hunting Competition had also begun to become chaotic. The good show appeared to have formally begun.

Chapter 442: The Fighting Strength After Forming A Group

"Hei, I heard that there is a group of new students in the forest that hunt the older students instead!"

"Ah? That can't be right? Which group is strong enough to do so? They were actually able to defeat those fellows?"

"Ha ha, who else? Of course it's the strongest group of incoming students."

"Xiao Yan's group?"

"They have guts! During these two days, we, the new students, were bullied by those bastards in all sorts of ways. Now, it's their turn to taste what it is like to be robbed and beaten. Very good! It really relieves my anger!"

"Ha ha, let's hurry. If we are lucky, we might even be able to meet Xiao Yan's group in the forest. As long as we follow behind them, we need not worry about those older students from the Inner Academy!"

Various different kinds of rumors began to spread throughout the forest. By this time, the matter regarding Xiao Yan's group hunting down older students had almost spread throughout the entire forest. Regardless of whether it was the older students or the new student groups, they were all stunned by this shocking news.

Not long after this rumor began to spread, just when these people had maintained a doubtful attitude, four frighteningly gloomy-faced older student groups from the Inner Academy were filled with melancholy and anger as they directly headed to the edge of the forest without hearing or bothering to look around them. Even though they occasionally met some new student groups along the way, they did not attack them.

They simply left the forest with dark and solemn faces. The new students may have had some doubts with regards to their actions but the older student groups understood it very clearly. According to the rules, if the older student groups in the forest were to lose any of their 'Fire Energy' until they had less than ten 'Fire Energy,' they would have lost the qualifications to continue staying within the forest to participate in the Hunting Competition. Moreover, they needed to leave the vicinity immediately.

Clearly, these four groups were leaving this place, which caused them great embarrassment, in an extremely unwilling manner because the number of their 'Fire Energy' had fallen below ten.

Numerous gazes within the forest sent off the four groups. Immediately, the place became somewhat quieter. It was only a long while later that the doubt still present in some of the gazes finally and completely disappeared. Replacing it was a seriousness and faint anger.

The occurrence of new students robbing the older students instead had basically never happened during these past few years. As the older student groups within the Inner Academy, the current sudden occurrence of such an event happening within this forest was like a slap being ruthlessly thrown onto the faces by the younger classmen. Moreover, this slap was actually loud and clear.

"New students who are acting in an uppity manner? They will pay the price because of their own arrogance..." The gazes of all the older students withdrew from the edge of the forest as they spoke viciously. Immediately, one human figure after another suddenly flashed out from within the forest. Some groups, who thought highly of themselves, began to be unable to endure it any longer as they took the initiative to begin searching for Xiao Yan's group. Each year, the new students were suppressed by the older students. This was basically a tradition at this point. Therefore, they really did not want any new students to break this cycle that they had once undergone. Hence, they currently needed to completely kill off the arrogance of that group of new students!

Due to this, the few groups of older students began to rifle through the entire forest. However, after searching for an entire day, they did not find the slightest traces of Xiao Yan's group. Just as they thought that Xiao Yan's five men group had begun fleeing far away out of fear, this arrogant new student group once again appeared against everyone's expectations.

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In an empty clearing within the forest, withered, yellow leaves were spread all over the ground, forming a thick layer that looked like a yellow-colored carpet.

At this moment, there were five new students, whose faces were covered with dirt and dust on this open ground. They had their backs facing each other as they formed a small circle. Their gazes were filled with anger as they eyed the five young men who

had surrounded them. Each of these five young men wore a tower-shaped badge on their chest.

“Hand over the ‘Fire Energy’ and you will avoid a ruthless beating, what do you say?” A young man, who was clearly an older student within the Inner Academy, lifted his eyes. His hair was gathered at his shoulders. At one glance, he had a feminine aura. At this moment, this long-haired young man was eyeing the five new students putting up a resistance as he said with a faint smile.

“Hand over my ass. If you want, you can directly come and snatch it. I, your father, will go all out and bite you once even if I have to endure a hard beating.” The five new students, who were surrounded, had a tough character and plenty of attitude. They carelessly wiped the traces of blood from the corner of their mouths and one of them immediately spat out blood as he cursed furiously.

TL: Your father - This is a chinese way of cursing where one refers to himself as the other party's father

“Ke ke, what a hard bone.” The long-haired young man clapped his hands and laughed softly, “Alright. Since you all won't cooperate, we can only knock you down first and take it for ourselves.”

“Bah! What is there to be arrogant about? Don't think that you can walk horizontally without fear just because you are older students! When you all meet Senior Xiao Yan and the others, you can only obediently hand over your ‘Fire Energy.’ Ha ha, who says that us new students don't have the ability to resist?” A new student laughed out loud. The laughter contained a ridicule that was difficult to hide.

“Xiao Yan?” The eyebrows of the long-haired young man jumped a little when he heard this name. The smile on his face gradually paled as he coldly laughed, “It seems that all of you have placed your hopes on them. Unfortunately, that group has disappeared during these past two days. Who knows where they have gone to hide themselves? The next time that they appear, their ending will not be much better than yours. Hence, stop having such daydreams. Obediently hand over your ‘Fire Energy’ and you can avoid a harsh beating.”

Once he said that, the long-haired young man waved his hand. His four companions, who had surrounded the new students, slowly took a step forward. Powerful Dou Qi rose from within their bodies. As the Dou Qi flowed, many of the the withered yellow leaves began to flutter around.

“Ke ke, this senior, are you referring to us?” Just as that group of older students was preparing to defeat the audacious group in one go, a soft laughter suddenly sounded out, ringing throughout the empty clearing.

The sudden voice that had sounded caused the flowing Dou Qi in this place to become a little dull. All gazes suddenly followed the direction where the voice had come from, where it was thrown over. Finally, they stopped on a tree branch outside the open area. At that spot, three males and two females had unknowingly appeared. They were smiling as they stood there. The black-robed young man leading them had a large, black ruler strapped to his back, revealing their identities.

“Senior Xiao Yan!”

The group of new students, who were surrounded, paused their stunned gazes on the black-robed young man before a wild joy immediately swarmed onto their faces. An excited voice was involuntarily shouted out. In this forest, where the new students could only be bullied, Xiao Yan’s group was undoubtedly the life-saving last straw within the hearts of all the new students. This was because this was the only group who had successfully defeated the older students.

“You are Xiao Yan? In that case, you must be that group who is running around hunting down the older students for their ‘Fire Energy,’ right?” When he heard the young man’s shout, the expression of that long-haired youth changed slightly. His gaze stared intently at Xiao Yan’s five man group as he laughed coldly.

“Very good, it is really unexpected that you all actually have the guts to appear.” Seeing Xiao Yan nodding his head, that long-haired young man slowly took a step forward. Powerful Dou Qi surged out from within his body. With a wave of his hand, four human figures flashed over from behind him. They immediately landed around this long-haired young man in an orderly manner. It may appear that they were randomly standing around, but it was quite ingenious. This formation would allow them to react to any attack from any direction at anytime.

“Hand over the ‘Fire Energy’? Or shall we take it by ourselves?” When the five man formation was formed, the long-haired youth’s confidence greatly soared. He lifted his head and slowly spoke to Xiao Yan.

“These words... can you let me say them?” Xiao Yan laughed softly. He eyed the dark and solemn expression that was instantly formed on the long-haired young man’s face and a coldness flashed across his dark eyes. His body shook a little and appeared at a spot two meters in front of the long-haired young man in a lightning-like manner. He tightened his fist and a green-colored Dou Qi swiftly surfaced. Finally, it solidified into a green-colored layer with spikes protruding from his fist. Following its appearance, the strength on Xiao Yan’s fist suddenly soared greatly.

“Presumptuous fellow!”

The long-haired young man laughed as he coldly eyed Xiao Yan, who was attacking by himself. Before he even spoke, his four other companions flashed out at the same time. The short few steps that distanced them was instantly covered, and four pairs of fists

and legs, each carrying a low sonic boom from cutting through the air, violently smashed toward Xiao Yan at the same time. They wanted to rely on their great cooperation and teamwork, using four people's strength to injure Xiao Yan with one blow!

Four older students, who were not much weaker than Xiao Yan, attacked at the same time. That force was something that even Xiao Yan would have difficulty receiving directly. However, he simply ignored the attack of these four people. His eyes stared intently at that long-haired young man behind the shadows of the fists. The green-colored Dou Qi became increasingly concentrated on his fist.

Just as the fists and legs, containing ferocious force, were about to reach Xiao Yan's body, the sharp sound of rushing wind suddenly tore through the air. Human figures flashed past like light. Immediately, everyone was dazzled for a moment, only to see four black shadows descending from the sky like a metal tower and landed exactly around Xiao Yan. An attack which had already been brewed to perfection was suddenly emitted. In an instant, under repeated low explosive sounds, they heavily collided with the four older students. Energy ripples spread out from the points of collision. The thick, withered carpet of leaves on the ground took flight with a 'shua' sound, turning the leaves into a rain that fluttered through the air.

"Glug!"

The fists and legs of the four older students were blocked by Xun Er, Bai Shan, Wu Hao, and Hu Jia, who had suddenly appeared. The powerful force caused the former's bodies to tremble slightly. An instant later, they finally could no longer withstand the powerful force that was swiftly being transmitted over. Their faces turned red. Mouthfuls of fresh blood were spat out wildly while their bodies shot backward like falling leaves in the autumn wind. Finally they sat down on a pile of withered leaves. Their faces were filled with shock.

The moment when the bodies of the four older students fell back, a black shadow immediately followed up. With a flash, he appeared like a ghost in front of the long-haired young man, whose expression had changed drastically. He smiled at the latter as his hand shook. The fist, that was wrapped in a layer of green energy that contained spikes, smashed through defense of his crossed arms that the latter had placed in front of his head and heavily smashed into his shoulders. A force immediately exploded out and one could hear a clear 'crack' sound. The long-haired young man's body fell and shot back. His feet dragged against the ground, leaving a long scar. Finally, he collided with a tree trunk. A muffled sound appeared and fresh blood flowed out from the corner of his mouth. The long-haired young man rubbed away the blood trace with his hand and he lowered his pale-white face, which was filled with disbelief. Didn't people say that this group of new students had strong individual strength but the coordination between them was extremely appalling? Why was it that... in just two short days, the cooperation that they displayed was already strong to such an extent?

The five new students, who stood in the middle of the empty ground, were stunned as they saw that the victor among the two groups was decided in a mere exchange. They then looked at the black-robed young man, who was twisting his fist while standing tall as well as the four others beside him. It was a long while later before they inhaled a deep breath of cool air. After these five people formed a group, their combat strength had actually become this strong.

Chapter 443: Grand Retaliation

“Chi!”

Xiao Yan smiled a little as he eyed the glow that was emitted from the two Fire Crystal Cards as they were rubbed together. He also smiled at the number on the dark, black crystal card, which had jumped up once more. Currently, his Fire Crystal Card stored a full seventy-four days worth of ‘Fire Energy’ within it. If he were to count, it appeared that this amount of ‘Fire Energy’ was sufficient for him to train for over two months in the ‘Sky Flame Qi Training Tower.’ This could be considered a plentiful harvest.

“Adding this group, we should have collected from five groups by now.” Xun Er returned her crystal card properly. She took one glance at the five people, who were tied to the tree trunk after they were knocked out and continued happily, “Other than the two groups known as the ‘Black White Evil Stopper’, we can still snatch from the other three groups.”

“It a pity that this forest is so large. It might become difficult to locate the last three groups within it. Once we expose our whereabouts, it is likely that those groups will all hurry over to surround and cut us off. Although our cooperation is much better after those two days of special training, we can only handle one group at a time. Two groups would be our limit. If there were three, we would definitely be defeated.” Hu Jia voiced her thoughts.

Xiao Yan frowned slightly. A moment later, his gaze swept across the five new students, who were still standing in the middle of the empty ground, in a stunned state. His heart suddenly moved as he slowly said, “Currently, there are only three older student groups, not including the ‘Black White Evil Stopper,’ who still have the qualifications to participate in this Hunting Competition. In other words, there are still fifteen people. Yet, us new students don’t have the restriction where we lose qualification to participate if our ‘Fire Energy’ is less than ten. Therefore, I think that there should be quite a lot of new students who are still wandering around within this forest, right? After all, this forest is too big. They don’t have a route to follow, so they would have great difficulty successfully leaving the forest within such a short time.”

“What do you plan to do?” The four of them were startled when they heard Xiao Yan’s words. Bai Shan knit his eyebrows and asked.

“Gather all the new students together. After that, let news slip to attract the other three groups. Use the strength of all the new students to finish them off altogether. What do you think?” Xiao Yan said faintly.

“Attract all of them over? That means all three groups will be attacking us. What if the other new students are unable to successfully block them? Won’t this be similar to a goat entering the tiger’s lair?” Bai Shan’s expression immediately changed a little when he heard this extremely bold suggestion from Xiao Yan. They needed to use tacit cooperation in order to just defeat one group. If it were three groups, the one who would lose would definitely be them. He did not want to give the ‘Fire Energy,’ which he had snatched with great difficulty, to someone else.

TL; a goat entering the tiger’s lair - seek death

“That may not be true. If there is a sufficiently large number of new students, we will definitely be able to gain the advantage. Don’t look down on the other new students. Their strength is definitely not weak if they are able to enter the top fifty. It is just due to the lack of cooperation between them that they collapse after receiving a single blow from the older students.” Xiao Yan shook his head and replied.

“Moreover, we cannot continue to drag things out like this. Finding an opportunity to finish all of them off in one go would save us a lot of trouble. Don’t you all want to quickly head to the Inner Academy and witness this ‘Sky Flame Qi Training Tower?’” Xiao Yan spread his hands and questioned.

“Ah, we have already spent three or four days within this forest. It is not a solution to continue dragging it out.” Wu Hao nodded and replied in a deep voice.

“I’m fine with anything. At the very most, we will just have to return the ‘Fire Energy’ that we’ve obtained.” Hu Jia curled her lips. She faced Xiao Yan and said, “Now, you are already the group leader. You can just decide on these matters alone. There is no need to be overly sensitive.”

Xiao Yan helplessly shook his head when he heard this. This action of his, to obtain opinions from his companions, had been criticized as being overly sensitive.

“Ah, alright. I will listen to you once more. Hopefully, you don’t ruin it.” Seeing that Wu Hao and Hu Jia did not have any objections, Bai Shan could only nod his head. He clearly knew that in this group, Xiao Yan already had credibility that caused Hu Jia and Wu Hao to be convinced in their hearts after these two days of fighting together. Moreover, Xun Er always agreed with everything that he said. Therefore, Bai Shan’s words were basically something that was dispensable in this group. Who let him be in a position where he had few supporters?

Seeing that the opinions were once again unanimous, Xiao Yan smiled and nodded. He mused for a moment before suddenly turning toward the other five students. With a

smile, he walked over and flipped his palm. A couple of healing medicines appeared in his hand, which he then handed over. "Are you guys alright?"

"Senior Xiao Yan, thank you very much for lending us a hand. Otherwise, I'm afraid that we wouldn't have been able to escape from being beaten into pig heads today." A young man, who appeared to be the leader, spoke with a face filled with gratitude. He was somewhat excited when he received the healing medicine, which Xiao Yan handed over.

"Ke ke, we are all new students. We ought to support one another." Xiao Yan laughed indifferently. His gaze stared at them as he suddenly asked, "Do you want to help us retaliate against those fellows?"

The five new students were startled when they heard this. They naturally understood that the 'those fellows' that Xiao Yan had just mentioned referred to the older students from the Inner Academy that were participating in the Hunting Competition. After hesitating for a moment, they grit their teeth and nodded. During these past two days, they had endured quite a lot of those fellows hopelessly stupid anger, but they only dared to be angry and did not dare to say anything due to the difference in their strength.

"Since that is the case, I would like you all to help me with something." Xiao Yan smiled and said softly.

"Senior Xiao Yan has rescued us once, just tell us what needs to be done." When he heard Xiao Yan's words, a young man hurriedly pounded his chest and basically agreed without any hesitation. His companions beside him also nodded with faces that were filled with excitement.

Seeing that this small group of people had agreed in such a straightforward manner, Xiao Yan was also startled. Perhaps even he himself did not know how deep of an impression he had left within this batch of new students when he lead his group to hunt down the older students. Most of the current new students already viewed Xiao Yan as an idol which they worshipped within their hearts. It was not for any other reason besides him having the strength and courage to contend against those older students who had bullied them.

"Ke ke, in that case, thank you very much... It's like this, I want to ask you to try your best to spread out and search for other new students within the forest. After which, tell them that if they want to regain all the 'Fire Energy' that they have lost and that if they trust me, they can all gather at this place. I will lead them in a ruthless battle against those arrogant Inner Academy students!" Xiao Yan cupped his hands toward them and asked softly, "May I know if the few of you will agree?"

"Alright! Coincidentally, we are communicating with some of the new students. As they were worried of being captured by the older students, many of them have already

hidden themselves.” A fiery heat swarmed on the five new students face. They had been led by Xiao Yan’s words until their hot blood was boiling. After so many days of being bullied and suppressed, they were now finally able to retaliate. How could they not be excited?

“Yes, the few of you should take advantage of this opportunity. Additionally, if you were to meet the older student groups alone during the journey, you should first hand over your ‘Fire Energy’ to them. I, Xiao Yan, will compensate the ‘Fire Energy’ which you have lost after this is over.” Xiao Yan sighed in his heart as he reminded these five people.

The five new students nodded their heads when they heard this. They immediately cupped their hands toward Xiao Yan and said, “Senior Xiao Yan can just wait for us to bring the other new students over. As long as you are leading us, we dare to follow you to retaliate against those bastards.”

Once they said that, the five of them swiftly separated. Under Xiao Yan’s focus, they swiftly entered into the dense forest and disappeared between the moving tree leaves.

“Hee hee, it’s settled. Next, let’s wait for the rest of the new students to gather. Once everyone has been gathered, our absolute grand retaliation will begin!” Xiao Yan stood up, turned around and smiled as he spoke to Xun Er and the three others.

Perhaps it was because they had the hope of retaliating against the older students of the Inner Academy, but the efficiency of the five new students was so outstanding that it caused Xiao Yan to be somewhat astonished. In merely one morning, there were new students carefully appearing around this clearing one after another. Only when they saw that the the ones seated cross-legged between the trees and resting were Xiao Yan’s five man group were they completely convinced. After which, human figures began to flash within the quiet forest. One by one, miserable-looking figures landed and entered into this empty space. When their gazes swept across the five older students, who were tied to a tree trunk by Xiao Yan, the hatred which had accumulated in their hearts for two to three days finally began to ease up.

These new students agglomerated here from various locations and were extremely conscious, not daring to interrupt Xiao Yan’s five man group, who were training with their eyes closed. One by one, they formed a circular shape, surrounding Xiao Yan’s five men group.

As time passed, more and more new students came flashing out successively from the dense forest toward this empty ground. Their gazes involuntarily gathered on the black-robed young man in the middle of the encirclement, carrying a faint heated worshipful feeling within them.

At a certain instance, Xiao Yan, who had his eyes shut, finally opened them slowly. He eyed the the surrounding new students, who were seated cross-legged in an orderly

manner around him with sparkling eyes. A gratified smile surfaced on his face. This number did not disappoint him.

“Everyone, do you want to return the grievances that you endured these past two days due to those self-righteous Inner Academy’s older students?” Xiao Yan slowly released his pent up breath and his voice suddenly sounded among the trees.

“Yes!” Orderly low furious voices shook the tree leaves on the trees around them.

Xiao Yan nodded slightly as he eyed the fury and resentment that swarmed onto the faces of the new students. What he wanted was this fury that had agglomerated into anger!

The tree branches between the trees suddenly moved. Two or three human figures flashed out. There were instantly dozens of gazes jumping over from the open ground.

“Senior Xiao Yan, we did as you asked and exposed our position to the other three groups. Now, they are likely hurrying to this place!”

“Good.”

Xiao Yan clapped his hands together heavily. He suddenly stood up and his gaze looked around at the new students, whose eyes were filled with fury, despite their miserable appearance. In a deep voice, he said, “Everyone, hide yourselves properly. Today, we will give those haughty older students a ruthless slap!”

As Xiao Yan’s voice fell, nearly forty students immediately began entering the dense brush around them in an agile manner. In just the blink of an eye, the originally crowded open ground had once again become empty.

“Everyone, prepare yourselves. We need to finish them off in one blow.” Xiao Yan smiled and reminded Xun Er and the three others.

“Yes!”

On top of a huge tree somewhere in the dense forest, two old men were sitting cross-legged there with open eyes. They looked at one another. A soft laughter slowly reverberated through the air.

“Hee hee, it’s going to get lively now!”

Chapter 444: The Fight Between The Strong

Xiao Yan’s group of five sat cross-legged with their eyes shut on the empty forest ground. The entire forest descended into silence. However, that somewhat-pressuring

low yet deep atmosphere indicated that there was going to be a storm arriving in this place.

The silence continued for an unknown length of time. At a certain moment, Xiao Yan, who had his eyes tightly shut, suddenly opened them. His gaze suddenly swept towards the north side of the forest. More than ten powerful Qis had already appeared within the range of his Spiritual Perception from that location.

“They are coming.” Xiao Yan let out a gentle breath. He twisted his body, and the vortex in his body trembled slightly. Threads of Dou Qi came flowing out. Finally, it became like a flood that was galloping and circulating through his Qi Paths. The feeling of being filled with strength caused Xiao Yan’s condition to rise to the peak, just before the arrival of this big battle!

Hearing Xiao Yan’s soft words, Xun Er and the four others beside him also opened their eyes. They nodded slightly and a faint Dou Qi glow began to become partially visible on the surface of their bodies, waiting for the big fight that was imminent.

Not long after Xiao Yan spoke, some brushes in the distance suddenly shifted a little. More than ten shadows immediately flashed out and their feet landed heavily on the empty plot of land almost simultaneously. Like ocean waves, powerful Qis immediately swept over Xiao Yan’s five man group, who were seated cross-legged.

“Bang!”

Just as the oppressive aura entered a five meters radius from Xiao Yan’s five man group, five, different colored, powerful Qis suddenly erupted from within their bodies, turning into a bright curtain of Dou Qi that lingered in the air above them, completely blocking the rampaging aura.

“They do indeed have some skill. No wonder they dare to be so arrogant.” Seeing that their oppressive force was nullified, a look of surprise flashed across the face of a young man who wore a smile and blandly said.

Xiao Yan slowly lifted his head. His gaze swept across the ten plus young men on the other side of the open clearing. He counted carefully. There were exactly fifteen people. In other words, other than the ‘Black White Evil Stopper’ groups, the last three groups in this Hunting Competition had arrived.

“Very good...” Xiao Yan nodded his head gently. His voice carried a little laughter that resounded throughout the empty ground: “Finally, all of you have arrived.”

“Your arrogance ends right now. Hand over the Fire Crystal Cards.” A young man, whose hair was slightly white, perhaps as a result of some reason, glanced at Xiao Yan’s five man group. He coldly said: “Don’t think that just because you have some strength you can break the rules. In so many years, the rules of the ‘Fire Energy

'Hunting Competition' was to let the older students give you arrogant new students a blow within this forest. This is beneficial to your Inner Academy life in the future... this rule had persisted for many years. No one can break it. If you want to become the first people who do so, you might have to prepare yourselves to pay the price for it."

Xiao Yan laughed. He grasped the hilt of the Heavy Xuan Ruler in his hand. A black shadow immediately flashed passed. The heavy ruler carried a tyrannical force which blew the withered leaves on the ground until they drifted apart. He glanced at the three groups in front of him and said: "Don't tell me about those antiquated rules. Since you can snatch the 'Fire Energy' in our hands, why aren't we allowed to do the same? As long as you have strength, the position of the hunted and the hunter can change anytime. Currently, you are all our prey."

"Very presumptuous. However, I have also seen quite a number of people like this in the past. However, they did not fare very well upon arrival in the Inner Academy." A young man with a huge build coldly laughed. Looking at the position where he stood, he appeared to be the leader of one of the groups. His skin was strangely a grayish-white, appearing like rock. His arm, which was nearly double the size of an ordinary person's also appeared to have a feeling of great strength. Clearly, this young person should be the kind of person whose physical strength was extremely high.

"I admit that you are all quite strong. However, for the sake of the face of the older students, we do not plan to have a fair fight this time around." A young man who had a smile plasters on his face shrugged. After which, he smilingly said towards the two young men who had spoken earlier: "Leng Bai, Xiu Yan, let's attack together. From the looks of their Qis, it might be quite difficult for us to obtain victory within a short time with just my group."

"Yes."

The two young men known as Leng Bai and Xiu Yan, hesitated for a moment before nodding their heads. Even if they ended up with a reputation of relying on more people to bully a smaller group, they must completely suppress these arrogant new students. Otherwise, once the news of these new students robbing the older students spread throughout the Inner Academy, the older students who participated in this 'Fire Energy Hunting Competition' would have difficulty raising their heads in the Inner Academy.

As the two of them nodded, fifteen powerful Qis suddenly erupted from the area. Their aura turned into energy ripples that directly blew the withered leaves off the ground until they danced in the sky.

"Sorry, but actually, we did not intend to fight fairly either." Xiao Yan narrowed his eyes and watched the somewhat eye-piercing Dou Qi glow on the other side. He smiled and immediately waved his hand. Following which, a sharp whistle was emitted from his mouth and resounded through this section of the forest.

“Shua! Shua!”

Xiao Yan’s whistle had just sounded when dozens of human figures suddenly flashed out from the surrounding dense thicket. Finally, they formed a circle and surrounded the fifteen older students in the middle. Various colored Dou Qi agglomerated on the surface of their bodies. Although their individual strength could not be considered close to that of the fifteen older students, having dozens of Dou Qi appearing at the same time immediately caused their force to become the stronger one present!

The moment the dozens of human figures appeared, the expressions of the three group leaders suddenly became gruesome. At this very moment, they had finally understood what happened. Immediately, the expression of the smiling young man became somewhat dark and solemn as he said: “I’m afraid that the news earlier was something that you allowed to be leaked, right?”

As he sensed the powerful force that erupted from over forty new students, Xiao Yan heaved a long sigh of relief in his heart. With the help of these new students, he had absolute confidence that he could completely decimate these three groups.

“Good tactics. It is just that I did not expect that you would have the boldness and resolution to actually gather all the new students together.” When Xiao Yan did not reply, it naturally meant that he admitted to it silently. Seeing this, an additional seriousness and shock could not help but appear in that young man’s voice. During the ‘Fire Energy Hunting Competitions’ in the past, there was no lack of new students who wanted to gather all their strengths together and retaliate against the thieving older students. However, which of these students could pass through the Qualifying Competition and enter the Inner Academy did not belong to the top of their own class? They were naturally extremely unwilling to listen to someone else’s commands. Hence, very seldom would there be any one who could successfully gather all the new students together in the past ‘Fire Energy Hunting Competition’. Yet, Xiao Yan had successfully done so. It was no wonder that this older student would lose himself.

“You overpraise me.” Xiao Yan smiled faintly. He slowly lifted the heavy ruler in his hand and smilingly said: “I would like to trouble you to hand over your ‘Fire Energy’. Many of us, these new students have been robbed by you. Therefore, they need to take back what is rightfully theirs.”

“Ugh...” The same young man sighed once again. He turned his head to face the other two group leaders, Leng Bai and Xiu Yan, and said: “Looks like there is going to be a bitter battle today. From the looks of it, we can only work together.”

“Yes. I was coincidentally thinking of trying out just how strong the top five new students were.” The large built Xiu Yan slowly clenched his fist. As his hand curved, his steel-like muscles flexed slightly giving off a feeling of him releasing strength.

“To capture a thief, one must first capture their king. Although there are many new students, their courage is merely built on the person called Xiao Yan. Once we defeat him, this coalition of new student will naturally collapse. Su Xiao, looks like the three of us will have to cooperate.” A glint flashed in Leng Bai’s eyes as he managed to identify the weakness of the new students with a single glance.

“Since that is the case, then let’s allow the strong to face off against the strong and forcefully tear apart their barrier.”

Hearing this, the young man called Su Xiao smiled and immediately waved his hand gently. His voice was slowly emitted: “Leng Bai, Xiu Yan, and I will stop the three people in front of us. The others should block the new students and the two beautiful girls on the opposite sides.”

The twelve Inner Academy’s older students nodded their heads upon hearing Su Xiao words. Although there were a large number of new students, these new students were much weaker than them. It should not pose too much of a problem to block them.

“Hu...” Su Xiao let out a long breath and slowly took a step forward. Leng Bai and Xiu Yan similarly took a step forward to stand beside him. The ground trembled slightly when their feet landed on it. The force of the three of them, which was around that of a six star Da Dou Shi, abruptly surged out from within their bodies and swept over the entire empty ground.

“Each of you will take one. This is a tough battle. The men will face them... Xun Er, you and Hu Jia should help the new students hold off the attacks of the twelve older students.” Xiao Yan’s expression solidified as he eyed the force that was emitted from the bodies of Su Xiao and the two others. He turned his head and spoke to Xun Er.

“Yes. Be careful, Xiao Yan ge-ge.” Xun Er nodded gently as she and Hu Jia slowly stepped back. Finally, their bodies flashed as they merged into the new student group.

“Leave that big fellow to me.” Wu Hao’s gaze swept over the three of them. Finally, it stopped on the grayish-white skinned young man and spoke calmly. He specialized in strength and speed. Therefore, when he chose his opponent, it would naturally tend to be people who were of the physical strength type.

“Leave that white haired fellow to me.” Bai Shan hesitated a little before his gaze paused on Leng Bai.

“In that case, I will be seeking advice from Senior Su Xiao.” Xiao Yan smiled. He waved his heavy ruler and the sound of wind tearing caused all the withered leaves on the ground around him to drift away.

“Ah, it is very expected that we would be actually arranged and chosen by others.” Seeing the action of Xiao Yan’s three men group, Su Xiao laughed. He raised his hand

slowly and immediately pulled it down. His laughter contained additional killing intent: "Let's fight and finish this quickly! Remember, do not look down on these fellows even a little bit. They are all very strong!"

"Yes."

Leng Bai and Xiu Yan nodded with serious expressions. Just as the sound was emitted from their noses, the three figures started moving like lightning at almost the same time. They turned into flashes of light and shot explosively towards Xiao Yan and the other two!

At the moment that Su Xiao and the other two moved, Xiao Yan's three man group also disappeared from the spot with a 'shua' sound. The next time they appeared, six human figures were already in the middle of the empty ground. As the strong began to fight, powerful blows were thrown!

Chapter 445: The Start of The Big Fight

"Bang!"

Six human figures tore through the hinderance of the air in a lightning-like manner in the forest clearing. In an instant, they collided in the center and Dou Qi surged out like an erupting volcano, permeating through the air. As the Dou Qi collided, they formed a strong Dou Qi wind that shattered all the withered leaves on the ground!

Xiao Yan's opponent was the young man called Su Xiao. His physique was perhaps the most delicate and weakest among the three group leaders. However, from the discussion earlier, Xiao Yan knew that this fellow should be a little stronger than the other two people. Otherwise, with the haughtiness that Leng Bai and Xiu Yan displayed, they would not pay much attention to his words. However, the two of them did not disagree with the various suggestions of Su Xiao just now. It was like Su Xiao was their leader.

"Chi!"

The large Heavy Xuan Ruler cut through the air as it carried a cluster of black shadows and immense crushing winds like a large mountain pressing down as it smashed heavily down toward Su Xiao, who had appeared in front of him.

The enormous ruler was merely half a foot from Su Xiao's head when the latter's body gently drifted one step back like a leaf being lifted by a gentle breeze. The enormous ruler merely carried its force past Su Xiao's body by about half an inch. The wind that was contained in it blew Su Xiao's hair until all of it was lifted.

"Very great strength." Su Xiao smiled and said after narrowly avoiding the attack from Xiao Yan's heavy ruler. His feet immediately pressed against the ground, and his body

appeared as though it was weightless as he suddenly charged forward. He deceptively approached close to Xiao Yan in an instant, and two dark daggers that were around two inches long shot into Su Xiao's hands from his sleeves. Immediately, his hands danced like a windmill as the dark daggers quietly carried numerous afterimages and a faint rotating wind around their tips. They stabbed in a wild, dazzling manner directly at Xiao Yan's body.

Su Xiao's attack where he waved his two daggers had a speed that was quite shocking. In terms of attacking speed, Xiao Yan admitted that he would not be able to achieve such speeds. He may be unable to achieve such speed, but it was not too difficult to defend against. The size of the Heavy Xuan Ruler may be big and heavy, but it similarly had an advantage that was difficult to conceal.

When the heavy ruler was pulled back, it would appear in front of Xiao Yan like a shield. All of those nearly endless dagger attacks of Su Xiao landed on the ruler's blade. One could only hear continuous 'clang' sounds and see sparks flying in all directions. In just a couple of breaths' time, Su Xiao had waved his dagger nearly twenty to thirty times in a somewhat crazed and wild manner. However, these swift and violent lightning-like dagger attacks were completely useless against Xiao Yan's impenetrable heavy ruler defense!

From the faint rotating wind shrouding Su Xiao, it appeared that the Dou Qi he practiced belonged to the fast and agile wind affinity. Therefore, his speed and agility were truly shocking. After seeing that his wave of violent attacks were unsuccessful, Su Xiao did not withdraw because of it. Instead, he relied on his drifting, leaf-like agility, and repeatedly flashed around Xiao Yan. The dagger on his hand would occasionally draw a cold arc as it shot explosively toward the occasional gaps which Xiao Yan revealed. In his heart, he clearly knew that the heavy ruler in Xiao Yan's hand held great lethality. If he allowed the opponent to pull apart the gap between them and use it, it would pose an extremely great threat to him. Hence, he could not afford to give Xiao Yan any opportunity to use his ruler to its maximum capabilities.

If he wanted to fight, he needed to suppress his opponent until the latter had no means of retaliating! When he fought with others in the Inner Academy, Su Xiao relied on his agility and attack speed, which he was proud of, to suppress his challengers until the latter was at a huge disadvantage before the latter could completely display their strength!

"The strength of a six star Da Dou Shi... The students in the Inner Academy are indeed very strong!" Xiao Yan's body occasionally moved slightly. The heavy ruler in his hand was like a shield, repeatedly moving and flashing about all around his body. His peripheral vision repeatedly swept around him. Although Su Xiao's attack speed and agility was somewhat beyond his expectations, for Xiao Yan who had Spiritual Perception to act as his eyes, he would be able to absorb everything within his field of vision almost instantly, regardless of when the opponent attacked. After which, he would adopt defensive and counter-attack measures. Therefore, it may appear that Su Xiao

was violently attacking in the battleground, but he did not pose even the slightest bit of a threat to Xiao Yan.

On the other hand, Xiao Yan had already roughly grasped Su Xiao's strength during their contact earlier. He could not help but be amazed in his heart. Su Xiao's age was perhaps merely around twenty-five years. Although this kind of training speed did still have some gap when compared with himself, it could be said that it was quite remarkable to possess this kind of strength at that age. Back then, when Xiao Yan was in the Jia Ma Empire, the strongest Da Dou Shis he had met, with the exception of Nalan Yanran, were mostly people who had stepped into their middle-aged years. Moreover, Xiao Yan's father, Xiao Zhan, was included among them. From this, it was evident that with Su Xiao's achievements, he was likely called a genius regardless of where he was placed in the Jia Ma Empire. However, a genius of this class was not considered to be rare within the Inner Academy.

"It is indeed where the core of the Jia Nan Academy lies. This Inner Academy is really causing my curiosity to grow..." Xiao Yan muttered in his heart. He waved his hand and the heavy ruler abruptly swung toward the back. Finally, it deflected aside two daggers which had pierced over in a lightning-like manner.

At this moment when a fierce battle had begun where Xiao Yan was at, the other places had also suddenly entered into battles that would cause people's heated blood to boil. In an instant, roaring sounds, the sound of swords and knives colliding, and the explosion of Dou Qi repeatedly appeared in the originally quiet and empty forest. It was like a firecracker, appearing extremely lively.

Faced with Leng Bai, whose strength was similar to his own, Bai Shan did not dare to slight the former by even a little. The long, silver-colored lance in his hands was like a giant lightning python. As it swung abruptly and violently, lightning cut through the air and carried a 'chi chi' sound, which was extremely frightening.

That Leng Bai was quite surprised by the strength which Bai Shan displayed. His expression gradually became serious. His hand held an extremely large knife with a cold glint. The cold aura was sharp as he hacked down and pulled it up. Occasionally, when the blade cut past Bai Shan's clothes, it would cause some red dots to rise up on his skin.

Compared to Xiao Yan's and Bai Shan's fights, Wu Hao's one was the one which caused people's heart to be gripped with fear. The young man called Xiu Yan did not use any weapons. However, during battle, there was a grayish-white Dou Qi shrouding his entire body. Under the cover of this Dou Qi, his originally grayish-white skin had turned into something like a mountain rock, giving people an extremely eye-piercing view of rigid strength. As he waved both his enormous fists, they were like rocks flying past. If it was a timid person, it was likely that he would not dare to recklessly fight head on with Xiu Yan.

Xiu Yan's attack completely belonged to the pure force type, which completely lacked any tricks. If it was another person fighting with him, the opponent might perhaps adopt an evasive fighting style to combat him. Wu Hao, however, was different. Seeing the heavy blood-colored sword that he used, which was similar to Xiu Yan's heavy ruler, his strength was also terrifying. This was indeed the case. When faced with Xiu Yan's hard attacks, he did not even take half a step back. Blood-colored Dou Qi unceasingly surged out from within his body. He immediately waved his heavy fists, carrying a soft and low explosive sound, as he repeatedly caused head-on collisions with Xiu Yan.

This stance of his where he did not evade also caused Xiu Yan to feel more comfortable the more they fought. When he fought with people within the Inner Academy, there was seldom anyone who would fight with him in this manner. Immediately, he could not resist the pleasant feeling within his heart as he faced the sky and laughed loudly. He might have been laughing but the whirling smashes of his fist had not weakened even a little because of this. Instead, the attacks had become increasingly sharp. The 'hu hu' sound of the wind from his fists shook people until their eardrums ached. Within half a meter radius of him, any drifting withered leaves that came into contact with his fist would be shattered into a pile of powder.

On the open empty grounds, intense energy explosions were repeatedly emitting from the three battlegrounds. Six human figures were like glue as they adhered to one another. Their underlying strength was like blades. When they were occasionally revealed, they would cut the trees surrounding them into two, right down the middle!

Outside these three battles, the most lively area naturally belonged to the place where the group of new students were fighting with those twelve older students. Multi-colored Dou Qis stained the battlefield until it appeared very colorful and extremely gorgeous.

In this chaotic battle circle, the new students might have greater numbers but they were disadvantaged in that they did not have good cooperation or teamwork. On the other hand, the twelve older students in the Inner Academy not only had individual strength that far surpassed the new students, but also a degree of cooperation that was far from what the new students could hope to compare with. Hence, after this battle had begun, there would occasionally be new students who were sent flying from this battle circle. However, the disadvantage of the new students began to gradually turn around with the participation of Xun Er and Hu Jia. This was because with a cornerstone, the new students' attacks gradually became orderly. Finally, Xun Er and Hu Jia each brought some new students as they cut the metal drum defence of the twelve older students like two sharp knives, spreading apart the twelve men group which was hugged close together and gradually swallowed them up.

It must be said that the effect Xun Er and Hu Jia had achieved was extremely important. After the other party's defensive circle was torn apart, the older students finally began to panic. In merely seven to eight minutes, there were two to three older students who were heavily knocked out of the battle circle after their bodies received more than ten fists and legs at the same time. After which, they threw up blood and collapsed.

The entire battlefield had gradually turned white-hot at this moment. The degree of brutality of the battle also caused people to be somewhat stunned. Other than not having caused any deaths, there were quite a number of people, who due to their reddened eyes, had beaten their opponents until the latter was seriously wounded. Among them were both new students and older students.

In summary, the 'Fire Energy Hunting Competition' this year would likely shake the entire Inner Academy. This was because this was the first time in the last ten years where the new students participating in the Hunting Competition had pressured the older students to such an extent.

As the fight in the battleground entered this white-hot phase, a change finally began to occur in Xiao Yan's battleground.

After exchanging blows for over ten minutes, Xiao Yan could be considered to have completely grasped Su Xiao's attack patterns. Following this, it was time for the latter's wild storm-like attacks to cease.

Xiao Yan's hand held the heavy ruler tightly. He let out a low cry as his body began to swiftly spin like a gyro. The enormous black and dark shadow carried a frightening wind that covered the region within a two meter radius from his body.

"Clang!" Xiao Yan's sudden change from defense was also beyond Su Xiao's expectations. He swiftly pulled his body back as his hand pressed a dagger into the ruler's body in an extremely skillful manner, using the force to push his body into the air.

Seeing Su Xiao leap back, the corner of Xiao Yan's mouth lifted into a cold smile. The heavy ruler in his hand was abruptly inserted into the ground and his hands quickly formed some seals. An instant later, his head tilted back a little, while his mouth formed a convex shaped and instantly opened in a sudden manner. Immediately, a tiger's roar that contained a strange sound wave was emitted from Xiao Yan's mouth.

The roar had just come out from Xiao Yan's mouth when Su Xiao, who was facing him on the opposite side, suddenly felt an explosive, thunder-like rumbling within his mind. In an instant, Su Xiao's mind sank to a giddy and faint state.

'Lion Tiger Gold Shattering Roar'! This was the sonic Dou Technique which Xiao Yan had practiced just before his trip to enter the Inner Academy. Now that he had displayed it for the first time, he obtained an effect that caused him to rejoice!

Although Su Xiao's giddiness last for merely an instant, this instant would determine the victor in the battle between the strong!

Chapter 446: Temporary Victor

As the momentary giddiness in his mind disappeared like lightning, the heart of Su Xiao, who had recovered, immediately tightened a little. He clearly knew just what kind of a price he would have to pay for being absent-minded at such a moment.

His expectations were not wrong. With Xiao Yan's eyesight, how would he easily abandon this kind of opening? Therefore, the instant Su Xiao recovered, Xiao Yan's feet stepped off the ground and a clear energy explosion sounded from beneath him. The energy attack waves directly shook the ground until a hole, around half an inch deep was formed. Xiao Yan borrowed the powerful and violent shooting strength as his body became like a ghost, appearing above Su Xiao's head in a single breath. He tightened his fist. Without any tricks, he used this incomparably powerful Dou Qi and strength as his fist ruthlessly smashed toward Su Xiao's head.

The fist, which was usually not very large, was like the fist of a giant at this moment. The force contained on it directly cut through the air. A sharp rushing wind sound and a deep low sonic boom merged together. It appeared to have exploded within people's hearts, causing people to be unable to endure the fear that rose in them due to the frightening power, resulting in them being afraid to put up defenses.

This fearful feeling within Su Xiao's heart lasted for merely an instant before it was forcefully tossed out of his heart. Faced with this swift and violent thunderclap-like attack, he could only swiftly circulate the Dou Qi in his body in haste. Finally, a pale-green Dou Qi Armor appeared on his body with a bright glow. His head was immediately tilted back as he forcefully avoided his vital points.

The fist, covered with green-colored Dou Qi, was affixed to Su Xiao's front, and finally heavily smashed against his chest. The Dou Qi was momentarily silent before it unleashed an extremely powerful strength like a volcano erupting as Xiao Yan let out a low cry within his heart.

"Octane Blast!"

The low and deep cry accompanied the frightening force that had caused Su Xiao's expression to change greatly. The force was like an overflowing surge of flood water, completely smashing down on the firm armor that protected the latter's body!

Immediately, a green-colored energy ripple abruptly formed a circular shape as it spread turbulently out from the point of contact between the two. Most of trees in the dense forest at the side were severed horizontally while being engulfed by this energy ripple. The emerald green tree leaves were like green-colored rain covering this entire open forested area.

"Crack..."

Following the spread of the energy ripple, a clear cracking, ear-piercing sound suddenly sounded through the air. In the reflection of Su Xiao's shock-filled eyes, one could see

that numerous crack lines were swiftly spreading through his hard Dou Qi Armor. In a mere second, the crack lines covered the entire armor. Finally, the Dou Qi Armor was overwhelmed. A cracking sound appeared as it shattered into glowing shards that floated into the sky. It was separated from Su Xiao's body, and quietly turned into nothingness.

With the final defense broken, the force on Xiao Yan's palm, which had not been completely resolved, firmly landed on Su Xiao's body. Under the erosion of his force, which was still strong and violent, a sleek redness swarmed onto Su Xiao's shocked face. A blood trace immediately spilled out from the corner of his mouth. A moment later, he finally could no longer resist the spreading of the force as a mouthful of bright red fresh blood was wildly spat out. His body also appeared to be like a bird which had lost its wings, powerlessly smashing down to the ground.

The fresh blood which had been spat out from Su Xiao's mouth evaporated into nothingness upon entering a one foot radius of Xiao Yan due to the high temperature exuded from his body. Xiao Yan's toes pressed off the empty air and his body rolled in the air before landing beside the Heavy Xuan Ruler. Only after he landed did the sound of a heavy object landing on the ground ring out. He tilted his head slightly and saw Su Xiao lying on a pile of withered leaves with a face that was already pale. The shock in the latter's eyes still remained.

A person whose strength was around that of a five to six star Da Dou Shi had revealed a fatal opening under Xiao Yan's unexpected 'Lion Tiger Gold Shattering Roar.' Finally, he was completely defeated under Xiao Yan's thunderclap-like attack.

Xiao Yan shook his somewhat numb fist and once again grasped the hilt of the Heavy Xuan Ruler tightly in his palm. His gaze carried an ice-coldness as it swept across the other battlegrounds, which were still in an extremely chaotic stalemate. His ice-cold voice suddenly spoke up, "Su Xiao has already been defeated. Do you still want to continue?"

The sudden cry sounded beside everyone's ears like exploding thunder. At this moment, the chaotic battlefield immediately turned quiet. Various sounds of knives and swords clashing also came to an abrupt halt at this moment. All the gazes followed the origin of these words and moved, finally stopping on Xiao Yan, who was holding a heavy ruler in his hand, as well as Su Xiao lying on the ground behind the former, unable to move.

"Su Xiao had actually lost?"

The two gazes which paused on Su Xiao's paper white face coincidentally belonged to Leng Bai and Xiu Yan who were facing Bai Shan and Wu Hao. Their expressions suddenly changed. It should be known that if they were to discuss who was the strongest among the three of them, Su Xiao was ranked at the top. However, no matter how they imagined the battle, they would never have thought that in this battle, Su Xiao

would actually be the first to be defeated. Moreover, he was defeated in such a swift and straightforward manner.

“This fellow... is already strong to such an extent?” Shock surfaced in Leng Bai and Xiu Yan’s eyes as their gazes swiftly turned from Su Xiao’s body to Xiao Yan, who was holding the heavy ruler in his hand. Only now did they understand a little about why this young man, whose age seemed to be a little younger than most people on the battlefield, would actually have the courage and resolution to gather all the new students together. With this kind of strength, forget about the new students, even some of the older students in the Inner Academy were likely no match for him.

“Group Leader?! Bastard, your attacks were actually so vicious! Brothers, let’s go all out against them. If we are to be defeated by a group of new students, how would we be able to survive in the Inner Academy in the future?” An angry shout suddenly sounded from within the quiet atmosphere of the battleground. Immediately, three human figures covered by Dou Qi suddenly shuttled out of the chaotic battleground and shot explosively toward Xiao Yan.

The cry which had suddenly appeared, broke the silence within the battleground. It also caused some fierce auras to swarm into the eyes of the older students. Reputation was extremely important within the Inner Academy. They did not want to end up with an embarrassing reputation. Otherwise, it would really be as the cry had said. How would they survive in the Inner Academy?

As the fierce auras surfaced, powerful Dou Qi once again surged out from the remaining older students. Finally, they fiercely pounced on the new students, who had suffered heavy losses. When they attacked, there was an additional ruthlessness!

Xiao Yan did not expect someone would pose a disturbance at the critical juncture after he had put in great pains to use the might of having defeated Su Xiao to quell the older students. Immediately, an anger appeared in his heart. He coldly watched these three figures who had shot explosively over. His hand suddenly released the Heavy Xuan Ruler as his feet stepped on the ground. His body charged forward instead of withdrawing and took the initiative to charge into an area surrounded by the three people as he shot forward. A shapeless force exploded out of his palm in all directions striking the three man formation until it was broken into pieces.

“Bai Shan, Wu Hao. Finish your battle quickly! Stop holding back!”

Green-colored Dou Qi enwrapped Xiao Yan’s entire body as he shouted out in a low voice. His body immediately flashed and appeared behind one of the older students like a ghost. His heavy palm was thrown out and imprinted itself on the latter’s shoulder in a lightning-like manner. The powerful force directly pushed the latter until he staggered. Finally, he became like a rolling gourd as he rolled a long distance away before he knocked into a tree trunk and fainted.

The current Xiao Yan undoubtedly displayed his usual strength to its peak form. Having separated from the restraints of the Heavy Xuan Ruler, his speed was as swift as a shadow. The other two Inner Academy's older students could merely rely on the tremors of the air around them to identify Xiao Yan's location. However, they were clearly not adept in using this ability to identify Xiao Yan's position. Therefore, in merely a couple of minutes, the two people received a few heavy punches. They continued to endure it in this manner for another four to five minutes before their bodies finally feebly collapsed and they temporarily lost their senses.

The strength of the three of them were around that of someone who had just entered the Da Dou Shi class. This strength could be considered among the top for an ordinary new student. However, in the face of Xiao Yan, a six star Da Dou Shi with extensive combat experience, it was not too difficult to finish them off. It was already extremely extraordinary for the three of them to rely on their cooperation to drag it out with Xiao Yan for quite a while.

Although the Xiao Yan's surface strength was around that of a six star Da Dou Shi, due to him carrying the extremely heavy Heavy Xuan Ruler for a long time, his speed, strength, and even endurance, far exceeded that of an ordinary six star Da Dou Shi. Moreover, after Xiao Yan was separated from the Heavy Xuan Ruler, even if he did not display any agility Dou Techniques, his speed would likely rival that of a seven or even eight star Da Dou Shi.

Of course, Xiao Yan did not possess that kind of Agility Dou Qi which could flash and dodge during combat. The Agility Dou Technique, which he had obtained long ago, did have a great assaulting force when traveling in a straight line. However, when it came to close combat, it was completely useless. Moreover, he had yet to practice the Di class Agility Dou Technique 'Three Thousand Lightning Movement.' Hence, Xiao Yan had mostly relied on his own agility to contend with his opponents.

Even though this was the case, Xiao Yan still did not spend too much strength in defeating the three older students who had just entered the Da Dou Shi class.

During the ten minutes where Xiao Yan was entangled with those three older Inner Academy's students, the other three battlegrounds had also entered into the ending phase of the fight.

There was hardly any difference in Bai Shan's and Leng Bai's strength but it was clear that the Qi Method and Dou Techniques the former practiced were of a much higher grade than the latter. Although it was difficult to distinguish who was better when they started to fight initially, the benefits of a higher Qi Method gradually showed itself once the battle dragged on. The moment when Leng Bai's Dou Qi began to pale, Bai Shan was still filled with Dou Qi. After being entangled like this for another ten minutes, Bai Shan finally shook and pushed back the pale-faced Leng Bai after displaying the powerful attacking Dou Qi he had used when fighting with Xiao Yan in the Qualifying Competition.

The instant that Leng Bai withdrew, a long silver-colored lance broke through the air in a lightning-like manner. Finally, with a 'chi' sound, it stopped just in front of the latter's throat. Immediately, the latter's entire body stiffened as he raised his hands.

Seeing that Leng Bai chose to admit defeat, Bai Shan's throat rolled a little. His rapid breathing caused his chest to swiftly rise and fall. The beads of perspiration that dripped down from his face also indicated that he did not win this battle in a relaxed manner.

Chapter 447: The Fisherman Follows After the Fight Between The Sandpiper and The Mussels

TL: Title means that another enemy lurks behind as two groups fight in order to swoop in and capture/take advantage of the losses in both groups

The long lance that paused in front of Leng Bai was not withdrawn. The corner of Bai Shan's mouth was lifted in a pleased manner when he eyed the somewhat stiff face of his opponent. He turned his head slightly as he lifted his eyes and swept them toward Xiao Yan. When he saw Su Xiao and the three Inner Academy's older students who had fallen to the side, the pride on the corner of his mouth involuntarily gradually dimmed. Some coldness and envy could not help but flash through his eyes. The him, who had a haughty character, really did not like the feeling of being firmly suppressed by someone. At the Outer Academy in the past, he completely deserved being one of the most outstanding people there, receiving the respectful gazes of all the students. This type of treatment was suddenly broken apart after the appearance of Xiao Yan. This caused his chest, which was not very wide, to not feel even the slightest positive feeling toward Xiao Yan.

TL: Chest - Think of it as your tolerance to others

Although he had obtained quite a lot of benefits from following Xiao Yan during this entire journey, his heart firmly thought that this was merely because each of them held what the other required. Xiao Yan wanted nothing more than to borrow his strength to obtain the 'Fire Energy' from the other Inner Academy students to satisfy his desires. In Bai Shan's heart, he had never treated him as a true group leader. It was merely just using each other for what they required.

"However, the greatest victor in this exchange is still him..." Bai Shan's eyes swept over some of the new students. He could see respect and worship toward Xiao Yan from within their eyes. Clearly, the courage and resolution Xiao Yan showed to fight against the older student groups had successfully won their support, which was expressed directly from their hearts.

"These bastards had completely forgotten that without us, Xiao Yan could never achieve this by himself!" Bai Shan clenched his teeth violently. The anger suppressed in his heart for a long time could not help but come gushing out now. As he became increasingly furious in his heart, his gaze suddenly become cold. He held the long lance

tightly in his hand and took a step forward. The long lance smashed horizontally and immediately landed heavily on the chest of Leng Bai, who had already given up fighting and had no defense. The latter's face immediately turned red and a mouthful of fresh blood came spitting out. He hurriedly took a couple of steps back and finally sat down on the ground. After which, he abruptly lifted his head while his eyes were filled with fury.

"What are you looking at? Not satisfied?" Bai Shan coldly laughed when he saw the fury in Leng Bai's eyes. He took a step forward and was just about to once again vent the anger in his heart when a black shadow suddenly flashed past. Xiao Yan's low and deep voice sounded, "He has already admitted defeat, why do you need to continue attacking? Is it glorious to injure a person who is defenseless?"

"Hmph." Xiao Yan's obstruction caused the long lance held in Bai Shan's hand to tremble. He inhaled a deep breath of air and hid the anger within his heart. With a snort, he carried the long lance in his hand, turned around, and charged into the battleground between the new and older students. His long lance carried a 'chi chi' sound, appearing majestic just like a silver-colored giant python.

Xiao Yan frowned as he eyed Bai Shan leaving. He then glanced at the fight on Wu Hao's side, which had also reached the ending phase. Only after seeing that the latter was about to win did Xiao Yan turn his head over and look at the furious face of Leng Bai. He waved his hand and threw over a bottle of healing medicine.

Leng Bai was startled after receiving the medicinal bottle. The fury on his face gradually lessened. He did not return the medicine. Instead, he pulled apart his clothes and poured the ice-cold medicinal liquid onto his wound, where fresh blood was dripping. Only then did he slowly sigh in relief. His finger flicked onto the storage ring and a blue glow was shot toward Xiao Yan.

Xiao Yan extended his hand and grabbed the blue glow. He took a look only to find that it was a pale-blue-colored Fire Crystal Card. The number on the Fire Crystal Card had actually reached eighty-six. Among all the Fire Crystal Cards Xiao Yan had seen during this period of time, this was the highest number he had seen.

Xiao Yan held the Fire Crystal Card and did not act like a saint and return it. This was their group's spoils of victory and was not his own. Therefore, he merely cupped his hands toward Leng Bai to thank him.

"That companion of yours is nothing much. Tell him that I will return that lance attack I received today." Leng Bai lifted his head to lean against the tree trunk as he spoke faintly.

"I'm sorry." Xiao Yan sighed. Bai Shan indeed went a little overboard with regards to this matter. If he had beat up Leng Bai until this manner in combat, no one would say

anything. However, he had given such a heavy blow after the opponent had admitted defeat and lowered his defenses. This did not really follow the rules.

“Although you have borrowed the strength of the new students to defeat our three groups, it will not be possible for you to take the reward and return to the Inner Academy.” Leng Bai’s gaze paused in the battleground between Wu Hao and Xiu Yan. At that place, Xiu Yan had already shown signs of weakness in a hard head on collision between the two of them.

“I know. There are still the two groups called ‘Black White Evil Stopper.’” Xiao Yan shrugged his shoulders and replied.

“Looks like you know quite a lot.” Leng Bai raised his eyebrows when he heard Xiao Yan’s words. He felt a little astonished.

“What I have said earlier are not some boastful words. This so-called ‘Fire Energy Hunting Competition’ is purposefully set up by the Inner Academy. This is because many new students are very haughty when they arrive at the Inner Academy. Therefore, the Inner Academy has designed this Hunting Competition. Its purpose is to allow the older students to oppress the vigor of the new students in the forest. Hence, it is easier said than done if you want to forcefully charge out of this forest.”

“I just don’t want us to be robbed until we have nothing left before we enter the Inner Academy. Moreover, I must say that the so-called methods that you older students used to rub off the vigor of the new students is really repulsive. Perhaps it is because they had once received such treatment in the past that they want to return it to the new students. However, this common practice of one batch passing on to the next really won’t do. Even if we did not retaliate this time around, it is likely that there would be new students who would lead groups to resist.” Xiao Yan spoke slowly. His gaze eyed Wu Hao, who had finally shook Xiu Yan with one palm until the latter took over ten steps back. In his heart, he knew that the victory in the battle there was already determined.

Leng Bai was silent. He also clearly understood that the old students participated in this ‘Fire Energy Hunting Competition’ not only to snatch the ‘Fire Energy.’ There were some who basically participated because they wanted to smooth the shadows in their hearts.

“Alright, the battle can be considered to have ended here.” Xiao Yan exhaled a breath of air. He turned his gaze toward the somewhat chaotic battleground. That place had Xun Er, Hu Jia, and Bai Shan participating, the few older students from the Inner Academy who endured bitterly finally could no longer maintain the stalemate. After relying on a fierce aura to injure a couple of new students, they were completely suppressed.

“Ah, what severe losses... these older students are indeed very strong. The Inner Academy is indeed a good place to hone people.” Xiao Yan’s gaze swept over the open ground and shook his head helplessly. There were less than fifteen of the originally forty or so new students who could still stand after defeating the twelve older students who

had cooperated well with one another. Most of the remaining students had temporarily lost their combat strength, and lay panting on the ground due to their injuries.

At the moment the final older student fell on the ground, a rejoicing cry that contained some pain immediately sounded on the open ground. The ten plus new students, who could still move, could not resist the agitation in their hearts as they emitted joyful laughter. In an instant, a layer of joyful atmosphere spread over the original suffocating atmosphere the ground had previously held.

“Haha, everyone, take a look at your companions first. Rub these healing medicine on them. The remaining people should collect the Fire Crystal Cards from the older students’ hands. Since we have obtained victory, it is only natural that we should begin distributing our spoils.” Xiao Yan lifted his head to eye the excitement-filled faces of the new students and smiled. He slowly took a step forward and took out a large amount of healing medicine from within the storage ring. He placed it on a rock and smiled as he spoke to everyone.

“Yes!” At this moment, everyone basically obeyed Xiao Yan’s orders after this great comeback of theirs. Hence, everyone shouted in unison when they heard his words and immediately did as he ordered. In an instant, the empty ground appeared a little busy once again.

“Are you alright?” Xiao Yan smiled and asked as he saw Xun Er, Hu Jia, and Wu Hao who were walking over toward him.

The three of them nodded. Xun Er and Hu Jia still appeared alright but Wu Hao was panting a little. Clearly, the hard head on fight he had with Xiu Yan earlier had greatly exhausted his Dou Qi and physical strength.

Xiao Yan tapped his hand on his storage ring and a small jade bottle appeared. He tilted it slightly and poured out three ‘Energy Recovery Pills,’ which he handed to the three of them. “These can allow you to quickly recover your Dou Qi. Eat it.”

Xun Er smiled and received the medicinal pill. She did not hesitate even a little as she threw it directly into her mouth.

On the other hand, Hu Jia and Wu Hao hesitated a little before taking one and thanking Xiao Yan softly.

Xiao Yan carelessly smiled, raised his head and could not help but heave a long sigh as he watched the busy clearing. They had finally managed to completely finish off the three groups. Next, as long as they were given a day to rest, they would be able to charge against the so-called ‘Black White Evil Stopper.’

“Tsk tsk, they really do have some ability. They actually managed to swallow those three older student groups.” Two old men on the top of a tree within the vast sea of

trees slowly opened their eyes. They exchanged glances and shook their heads while they spoke with smiles and some amazement.

“The strength of that little fellow called Xiao Yan seems to be quite great. He was actually able to defeat Su Xiao so swiftly. Although he used the special effect of the Sonic Dou Technique, his clear-cut attack and his sharp eyes are something that even some of the older students in the Inner Academy do not possess.” One of the old man praised.

“Ke ke, that’s right. Perhaps after this Hunting Competition is over, we should let that old fellow Hu Gan send us some information regarding this little fellow. I think that with his potential, he might be able to squeeze into the top ten of the ‘Strong Ranking’ after undergoing the Inner Academy’s training.” The other old man nodded his head slightly and spoke with a smile.

“Yes.” The old man who had spoken earlier nodded slightly. He stretched his lazy waist and said, “However, the good luck of these new students is about to end soon. The ‘Black White Evil Stopper’ this year are some sturdy fellows who frequently earn ‘Fire Energy’ within the Fighting Arena. What?”

Before all the words sounded, the old man’s expression changed slightly. A shocked voice was emitted from his mouth. He tilted his head and exchanged glances with the other old man before saying in a shocked voice, “Those five Qis...? Good fellows. It is really unexpected that there is a fisherman who has come to get a bargain while the sandpiper and the mussels fought. They are indeed worthy of being people who muddled among within the Sports Arena. What a cunning tactic.”

Xiao Yan smiled as he eyed the fifteen pale-blue Fire Energy Cards in his hands while standing in the open forested area. His heart let out a long sigh. This was a big acquisition.

Xiao Yan lifted his gaze and swept across the new students whose eyes were fiery hot. He smiled and said, “Next, we can begin to distribute our spoils.”

Just as Xiao Yan’s voice had sounded, a foreign faint laughter was suddenly emitted from within the dense forest without any warning. Finally, the voice slowly reverberated within the the empty ground, causing everyone’s bodies to stiffen.

“Tsk, the new students this year are indeed not ordinary. They were actually able to defeat all the other eight older student groups but this is also quite good. We shall take all of the ‘Fire Energy’ off your hands.”

Xiao Yan’s smile-filled face suddenly stiffened. A coldness flashed over his eyes as he slowly lifted his head and threw his gaze toward a spot in the dense forest. The tree leaves suddenly moved at that spot. Immediately, five figures, whose entire bodies were filled with a fierce Qi, flashed and appeared above the tree trunk, like five human-

shaped Magic Beasts. They looked down toward the people in the open ground from their high vantage point.

Chapter 448: Unforeseen Turn of Events

Seeing the five human figures that appeared on the tree, the faces of everyone on the empty ground suddenly contorted.

The five people standing on the tree were clad entirely in fancily designed black clothing. If one looked at them from a distance, they appeared to be five ink black shadows. The moment the five of them appeared, a ferocious Qi, that was not the slightest bit hidden, seeped out from their bodies. A force, that caused the expressions of Xiao Yan and the others to appear pressured, covered the entire clearing. It caused them to feel an uncomfortable feeling as though they were being stared at by a wild beast within the forest.

“Sha Tie? You actually followed us here?!” After the five figures appeared, the expression of Leng Bai, who had his back leaning against a tree trunk to catch his breath, morphed. This was especially so after his gaze swept across the man in the middle, whose body was as large as a gorilla’s. He could not help but cry out involuntarily.

“We met a couple of new students on the way and also received the information.” That man among the five, whose figure was tall and large to the point that it caused others to feel pressure, replied indifferently. Immediately, his eyes glanced at the injured Su Xiao and the two others before he smiled and said, “Tsk tsk. It’s very unexpected that even the three of you were defeated by these new students. I really don’t know how you trained within the Inner Academy.”

These words, from the man addressed as Sha Tie by Leng Bai, caused the faces of Leng Bai and the two others to become tinged with red. A moment later, he snorted and said, “The new students this year cannot be compared to the past. What is so strange about being defeated?”

“Forget it. I shall not waste my breath with you. I will settle the rest of the matter next. However, you can forget about me returning the ‘Fire Energy’ to you after this whole fiasco is over. This is due to all of you not having the ability to protect your own belongings, so you can’t blame others.” Sha Tie waved his hand as he turned his gaze. It finally landed on Xiao Yan, who was holding his heavy ruler. Surprise flashed across his eyes as he asked, “You’re Xiao Yan? Being able to defeat Su Xiao and the others at such an age. No wonder you were able to gather all the new students together.”

Sha Tie’s voice was filled with strength. As he spoke, it directly shook some of the new students until they covered their ears.

“You should be the Black Demon of the so-called ‘Black White Evil Stopper’?” Xiao Yan exchanged gazes with Sha Tie as he replied in a deep voice. When he spoke, his gaze slowly swept across the five black shadows. His heart gradually sunk. He realized that each of them basically had strengths similar to Leng Bai’s. The man called Tie Sha was even more frightening. If Xiao Yan had probed correctly, that fellow was likely to be a strong person at the peak of the Da Dou Shi class!

“You can call us the ‘Black Demon’ Group. I am the group leader, Tie Sha.” Tie Sha parted his mouth and smiled. His white teeth emitted the dense coldness of a wild beast baring its fangs. He looked directly at Xiao Yan and said, “Let me tell you all some good news. The matter of new students robbing the older students of their ‘Fire Energy’ these few days has already been transmitted to the Inner Academy. Currently, you, Xiao Yan, already have quite the reputation within the Inner Academy before you have even entered it. There are already an unknown number of Inner Academy students who ran over here, waiting for you all to leave. If you all really walk out of the forest while carrying so much ‘Fire Energy,’ you and this batch of new students, would really become infamous within the Inner Academy.”

Xiao Yan remained silent and did not respond to Tie Sha’s words.

“Of course, as one of the last two groups in this year’s ‘Fire Energy Hunting Competition,’ our duty is to strike down all the thorn-like new students who appear. Hence, if you want to smoothly walk out, it is still possible. Hand over your Fire Crystal Cards and I assure you that I will not be forceful. What do you say?” Tie Sha smiled as he spoke to Xiao Yan.

“There are no other choices?” Xiao Yan slowly sighed as he asked indifferently.

“Yes, this is the only one.” Sha Tie shook his head with a smile. His gaze swept one round over the new students below and said, “If you are still able to gather forty new students with their full combat strength, just our Black Demon Group alone would really have difficulty swallowing all of you. Unfortunately, however, after the exhaustion from combating Su Xiao and the rest earlier, it is basically a given that this new student group of yours doesn’t pose any threat to us. As long as I defeat the few of you, a full period can be placed on this year’s ‘Fire Energy Hunting Competition.’”

Xiao Yan narrowed his eyes. The hand, which he used to hold the Heavy Xuan Ruler, slowly tightened. By his side, Xun Er, Hu Jia, and Wu Hao took a step forward. Following closely behind Xiao Yan, those ten plus scattered new students whose breathing was a little weak, clenched their teeth and swarmed toward Xiao Yan after a brief moment of hesitation. This moment did not allow them to withdraw. After all, they would not think that this Sha Tie, whose appearance was not that of the kind type, would let them off with the ‘Fire Energy’ in their hands if Xiao Yan and the others were defeated.

Since they could not avoid the hassle, then they might as well go all out!

“Why? Do you want to fight to your deaths just to retaliate?” Tie Sha lifted his eyebrows upon seeing their actions. A dense cold smile surfaced on his rough face, “Looks like you are all still holding some hope in your strength. Hee hee, just as well. We have not attacked anyone for nearly three days within this damn forest. Our bones have started to become itchy.”

“Wait!”

Just as Sha Tie was twisting his fist, a cry suddenly sounded. The former’s eyebrows knit slightly together as his gaze followed the voice and looked over, only to find a handsome young man wearing white clothes. His gaze swept over the face of the young man and felt that it was a little familiar.

“Big Brother Sha Tie. Do you still remember me? We met last time when you came out on leave with my older cousin Bai Feng.” Bai Shan held the long lance in his hand as he cupped his hands toward Tie Shan and spoke with a smile.

“Bai Feng? You... are Bai Shan?” Sha Tie was startled when he heard Bai Feng’s name. Fear flashed across his eyes. Immediately, his gaze paused on Bai Shan’s face as he finally remembered before speaking in the manner of someone just having come to realize something.

“Haha, that’s right.” Bai Shan smiled as he replied. He finally sighed in relief when he heard Sha Tie speak his name.

“You are also part of this batch of new students?” Sha Tie glanced at Bai Shan’s position. He appeared to have understood something as he spoke with deeper meaning.

“Yes.” Bai Shan smiled awkwardly and nodded. He rotated his eyeballs and said, “Big Brother Tie Shan, I wonder if on the account of my elder cousin brother you can...”

“On account of Bai Feng’s face, I can naturally let you leave. I do have some relations with him. Naturally, I will not attack you.” Sha Tie waved his hand and smiled as he replied before Bai Shan finished his sentence.

“Uh...” Bai Shan was somewhat dull when he was interrupted by Tie Sha. He could not help but feel a little hesitant after hearing the words that the latter spoke. The corner of his gaze drifted over to Xiao Yan and the rest. He was just thinking of saying something when he coincidentally saw a little coldness in Sha Tie’s brows. His heart immediately became afraid.

“Bai Shan, you just need to take care of yourself no matter what happens. Although I am the group leader of the Black Demon Group, I must also be responsible for my companions. I have already given Bai Feng enough face by letting you go. You must

also take a step back.” Sha Tie slowly said. The warning tone in his voice was extremely obvious.

Bai Shan’s expression changed slightly when he heard this. He immediately recovered swiftly and nodded.

“Alright, you should quickly leave this place. You need not bother about any other matters.” Tie Sha waved his hands toward Bai Shan and commanded.

Bai Shan hesitated a little when he heard this.

“Bai Shan, you want to be a deserter and flee?” Hu Jia, who had been watching coldly on the sidelines, immediately frowned deeply as she coldly shouted when she saw Bai Shan’s hesitation.

“I am considered a deserter just because I do not fight the enemy with all of you? Do you really think that we are a group? Between us was just a mutual interaction where we would receive what we needed. Moreover, the greatest victor of this transaction is still Xiao Yan. The few of us fought to the death and became so exhausted, but he has taken all the good things.” Bai Shan immediately became furious when he heard Hu Jia cold cry. He could no longer resist the jealousy and unwillingness within his heart.

“You...” Hu Jia also became furious at Bai Shan’s retort. “Without Xiao Yan’s leadership, could you have reached this point? With just you alone, you would be defeated by any older student group that you met. Would you have been able to stand where you are now with nearly a hundred ‘Fire Energy’ without his leadership?”

“There is no need to say any more. Since he wants to go, just let him go. From the start, this group of ours was temporarily formed. There is no binding strength. Everyone is free to leave. We may not lose even without him.” Xiao Yan, who was beside Hu Jia, pulled her back and spoke faintly. He had already known that Bai Shan was extremely dissatisfied with him. He would sooner or later be a scourge if he was forced to stay in the group. Now that he wanted to leave by himself, it would eliminate the trouble for Xiao Yan to be on guard against him.

“Hmph.” Hu Jia snorted. She coldly eyed Bai Shan and could not help but feel some disgust in her heart. Why did she not see that this fellow as such a person in the past? The type of people she despised the most were the kind of people who would flee at the last moment and abandon their companions due to fear whenever a strong enemy approached. Compared to Bai Shan, Hu Jia suddenly felt that Xiao Yan was a lot more pleasing to the eye. At the very least, the latter would not abandon his companions in a crisis.

Wu Hao raised his head slightly. There was some disdain contained within those eyes that he used to look at Bai Shan.

“Alright, you can all follow him. This young master shall not accompany you.” The eyes of those new students similarly shot out a look of disdain. It caused Bai Shan’s face to twitch slightly. He stared ruthlessly at Xiao Yan before waving his hand. His body leaped and flashed onto a tree branch before finally entering the forest and disappearing.

Xiao Yan indifferently raised his head as he eyed the forest where Bai Shan had disappeared into. His gaze looked directly at Tie Sha. Although Bai Shan leaving did cause their fighting strength to be severely impacted, it was still impossible for him to simply hand over the ‘Fire Energy.’

“I have already said earlier that that companion of yours cannot make it.” Bai Leng’s voice which contained some disdain slowly sounded from the side.

Xiao Yan shrugged his shoulders but did not express any opinions.

“Just admit defeat. Tie Shan’s group is not something that we can compare with. Moreover, your companion has already left. The originally low chances of victory suffered a huge loss.” Leng Bai sighed.

Although Xiao Yan knew that Leng Bai’s words were the true, he did not ease up even a little. He smiled as his gaze looked directly at Tie Shan. A long while later, a calm voice caused the somewhat cold hearts of the new students present, from the result of a strong enemy appearing, to once again become filled with a fire and fighting intent.

“Since I have already gathered everyone together, we should naturally bring them to successfully charge out. No matter how strong the opponent is, I, Xiao Yan, will not take a step back. Therefore...”

“Let’s Fight!”

Chapter 449: Fighting with the Black Demon Group

Xiao Yan’s calm voice reverberated slightly within the forest clearing but it managed to cause the heated blood of the new students standing behind him to boil. Their fighting intent surged out into their chests. Regardless of whether they succeeded or failed, as long as they went all out and tried, they would at least have a clear conscience. They did not have much ‘Fire Energy’ in their hands and it was nothing even if it was snatched away. Moreover, one could not kill in this Hunting Competition. At the very worst, they would be thrashed into the ground, meaning they would not suffer much.

As they thought in this manner within their hearts, the fifteen new students, whose breaths were heavy also raised their heads. They fiercely stared at Sha Tie and the other four people on top of the trees, no longer having even the slightest hints of fear in their hearts.

“Hee hee, you’ve got backbone. Since this is the case, let my Black Demon Group try and see just which part of this new student group of yours, which has shaken the entire Inner Academy, is extraordinary!” Surprise flashed across Sha Tie’s eyes as he eyed Xiao Yan, who actually did not have the slightest bit of fear when facing a strong group and even managed to muster up the courage in other people’s heart. He nodded slightly. Although Xiao Yan’s resistance would bring some him trouble, he, who had muddled in the Inner Academy Fighting Arena all year long, felt admiration for these kinds of headstrong people deep in his heart. At the very least, the act of Bai Shan abandoning his companion and leaving earlier disgusted him. Of course, he would only store these words within his heart and would not speak them aloud.

As Sha Tie’s words sounded. Five powerful forces erupted out of the bodies of the five people and shrouded the area. The intense pressure caused the hearts of the new students, which was just filled with fighting intent, to sink slightly.

Xiao Yan exhaled a deep breath of air as he sensed the force that had crashed down. He turned his head and said in a deep voice to everyone, “All of you be careful. I will handle Sha Tie.”

“Xiao Yan ge-ge, I’m afraid that that Tie Sha already has one foot in the Dou Ling class. The chances of victory in a normal fight are not very great. However, if you want to raise your strength forcefully just like you did in the Qualifying Competition, the damage to your body would really be a little too great.” Xun Er’s eyebrows were nearly vertical as she spoke in a worried manner. She clearly understood just how serious the injury that Xiao Yan received to his body after he had raised his strength to the point where he could contend with a strong Dou Ling. If he had not luckily and coincidentally raised his strength that day, it was likely that he would need around half a month’s time to return to peak condition.

“Ke ke, no problem. I will try my best not to forcefully raise my strength. I am still able to fight him by relying on other things.” Xiao Yan waved his hand. He also clearly understood that while the ‘Sky Fire Three Mysterious Change’ may be able to let him raise his strength to the point where he could contend with a strong Dou Ling for a short period of time, the instantaneous wild energy that erupted from the ‘Heavenly Flame’ did indeed cause quite a great amount of damage to the interior of his body. Therefore, he would naturally not touch it if he didn’t need to use it. Moreover, even if he did not use the ‘Sky Fire Three Mysterious Change,’ he believed that he would not be defeated by Sha Tie hands within a few exchanges.

“In any case, you should still be a little more careful.” Xun Er could only nod her head when she saw Xiao Yan’s insistence. Her gaze turned toward the five people on the tree and said softly, “Hu Jia and Wu Hao are already weakened from the previous fight. I’m afraid that they can only merely handle one person each. Moreover, it is difficult to say just who will win. I am also able to block one person. However, the other party still has one person.”

Hu Jia and Wu Hao could only helplessly nod their heads when they heard Xun Er's words. After all, what she said was the truth.

"I'm a little better, but it is likely that Wu Hao does not have much Dou Qi left after undergoing the head on fight with Xiu Yan earlier. Although Xiao Yan's medicinal pill did provide some assistance, it is definitely impossible to completely recover within this short amount of time. Moreover, our few opponents this time around are not weaker than Xiu Yan." Hu Jia sighed.

"You should not be too worried. He will not be able to defeat me for at least ten minutes." Wu Hao said in a low voice "Instead, it looks like we can only first let the new students block the last person of the other group."

"You can be rest assured. Although there isn't much Dou Qi left within us, we do have quite a number of people. That fellow won't be able to finish us off within a short period of time. As long as Senior Xiao Yan or any of you finish off your opponent, we would be able to gain the advantage in this battle," One of the new students laughed and took the lead to open his mouth to speak when he heard the conversation of Xun Er's group.

"That's right. We can temporarily block him. However, the decisive factor of the final victory of the fight lies in Senior Xiao Yan's and your hands. With our current conditions, I'm afraid that we will really have difficulty beating a five or six star Da Dou Shi. After all, our strengths are merely around eight or nine star Dou Shis." Some of the new students also laughed and went along with what was being said.

"Yes." Xiao Yan nodded slight. He continued with a smile, "Since that is the case, I will have to ask you all. As long as you can block the extra person of the other party, we will do our best to defeat our opponent and extend our hand to help you out."

"Yes!" The fifteen new students on the empty ground cried out in unison. Fifteen forces belonging to eight or nine star Dou Shis spread out from within their bodies and created a considerable force.

"Do your best! Senior Xiao Yan, defeat them!" Quite a number of new students on both sides, who had lost the fighting strength, also supported their bodies with great difficulty as they got up and cried out loud, cheering on Xiao Yan's group.

A smile was lifted on Xiao Yan face when he saw that their morale was high. He held the Heavy Xuan Ruler with his hand and exchanged glances with Xun Er and the other two. Immediately, four human figures abruptly shot out in four different directions.

"I will handle Xiao Yan. Each of you will face one of the remaining three. The extra one will finish off those new students. After that swiftly change targets to assist the others." Sha Tie waved his hand and shouted in a low voice as the four people spread out and pulled back.

“Yes!” Four low and deep voices sounded out in an orderly manner. As the voices sounded, five human figures pressed gently off of the tree branches and immediately turned into black shadows. They descended like bats who were hunting for their prey in the dark night and within two breaths, appeared in front of Xiao Yan and the three others who had spread out and pulled back. The additional person was like a meteorite as he directly charged toward the fifteen man new student group. Powerful Dou Qi immediately exploded out in all directions.

Xiao Yan’s feet stomped heavily against the ground. His body, which was charging forward suddenly halted. His gaze narrowed as he eyed Sha Tie, who had appeared in front of him. The faint domineering aura that was emitted from the other party’s tall, strong and somewhat different body stature caused Xiao Yan’s brows to frown tightly. This fellow was indeed a strong opponent.

“The fight is about to begin. I will not look down on you regardless of any reasons. This is because once one possesses this kind of mentality, one would usually be unable to earn any ‘Fire Energy’ within the Inner Academy Fighting Arena.” Sha Tie twisted his neck slightly. A somewhat dark-golden-colored Dou Qi slowly seeped out from within his body. Finally, it surrounded him until he appeared like he was sculpted from metal, causing his appearance to appear extremely domineering.

“Gold Dou Qi? This fellow actually practices a Dou Qi of this affinity?” Xiao Yan’s eyebrows twitched when he saw the dark-golden Dou Qi on the surface of Sha Tie’s body. This kind of Dou Qi was extremely rare. However, its attacking and defensive strength was extremely strong. If it were not for people who practiced this Dou Qi to have such slow reaction times, it was likely that he would really be an opponent that would cause people an extremely great headache.

Sha Tie’s hand did not hold any weapons. Clearly, he was a strong person who belonged to the kind that used close ranged combat.

Xiao Yan’s expression became slightly more relaxed after identifying his opponent’s attacking method. Coincidentally, he also belonged to this style. If they were to fight in this manner, it would allow all him to unleash the fighting techniques that he specialized in to their maximum potentials.

Xiao Yan inserted the Heavy Xuan Ruler in his hand into the ground and sensed that after the heavy ruler had left his hand, powerful Dou Qi surged and flowed turbulently in his body. He slowly let out a long breath as green-colored Dou Qi rose from within his body. When the Dou Qi occasionally writhed, a faint fire seeding would flash and appear. However, after the fire seedling appeared, it disappeared with a flash. Therefore, it was extremely difficult to discover it under the cover of the green-colored Dou Qi.

“Six star Da Dou Shi? No wonder you could best Su Xiao. With this kind of strength, you are comparable to the older students who have been in the Inner Academy for a year.”

As he felt the force emitted from within Xiao Yan's body, Sha Tie suddenly came to a realization and immediately spoke.

"However, with just this level, there would still be quite some difficulty if you wanted to defeat me." Sha Tie parted his mouth and smiled toward Xiao Yan. His hands gently collided together and actually emitted the clear sound of metal striking metal.

"We won't know until we try, will we?" Xiao Yan smiled indifferently. His feet slowly rubbed against the ground while his body was slightly quiet. Immediately, he became like a taut bow as his body suddenly tensed up. Following this movement, his feet slammed against the ground and a green-colored Dou Qi surged out from his feet. As a clear energy explosion sounded, Xiao Yan's body turned into a blurry black shadow. In an instant, he closed in on Sha Tie.

Seeing that Xiao Yan actually adopted a close range hand to hand combat, a cold smile was lifted onto Sha Tie's face. His large fist tightened as he drew his hand back and threw his elbow out. Dark-golden-colored Dou Qi swiftly agglomerated. Finally, it violently smashed down against the black shadow, which had already appeared beside him in a lightning-like manner. The wind that his elbow carried directly cut through the air. A shapeless force shook and caused two deep scars that were two inches deep on a ground a couple of feet away.

Xiao Yan's face did not change as he sensed the sharp rushing wind sound transmitted from above his head. His hand suddenly rose and a green-colored energy layer was swiftly converged to cover his fist. Finally, he collided head on with Sha Tie's elbow.

"Bang!"

A low and deep muffled sound rang out from the epicenter of the contact. The powerful force that swarmed down from his fist pressed Xiao Yan down a little. However, his expression still remained indifferent. His left hand was extended out in a lightning-like manner and suddenly stopped when it was about a foot from Sha Tie's chest. Immediately, a shapeless force gushed out in all directions.

Fire Palm!

This was a Dou Technique which Xiao Yan had learned a couple of years ago. With his current strength, the force that gushed out when he used this 'Fire Palm' was already sufficient to jolt a Da Dou Shi until the latter was injured. It was unlike the past where he could only blow a person until they staggered.

The shapeless force exploded into Sha Tie's chest. Immediately, the latter swayed his body a little, and he actually took two steps back from the force of the explosion.

"All sorts of bizarre Dou Techniques emerging endlessly. Xiao Yan, you really cause me to feel greater anticipation. However, all of these unorthodox attacks do not have much

actual use against me. Hence, you should reveal your true ability.” Sha Tie patted his chest and a clanging sound was emitted while he laughed coldly.

Xiao Yan slowly sighed as he eyed Sha Tie, who appeared as though nothing had happened. His expression gradually became serious as his hands rotated slightly. A moment later, a noble green-colored flame soared...

The moment the green-colored flames rose from Xiao Yan’s palm, the eyes of the two old men in the vast sea of trees, who appeared to be watching a show, were opened. In their shock, they cried out involuntarily, “Heavenly Flame?”

Chapter 450 - Race Against Time

Sha Tie’s eyes stared intently at the green-colored flame that rose from Xiao Yan’s palm. The instant that the flame had materialized, he clearly sensed that the temperature between the trees rose by a lot. His expression immediately became more serious as he looked at Xiao Yan with some astonishment and asked, “You are an alchemist?”

In the Dou Qi continent, there were only two possibilities for one to be able to summon out an Essence Flame. One was the Fire Seed that an alchemist had obtained from the various different kinds of fire affinity Magical Beasts, which he would then refine for his own use.

The other possibility was that a he was a strong person who practiced a fire affinity Dou Qi. However, if one wanted to rely just on Dou Qi to agglomerate an Essence Flame, one must at least be at the Dou Wang class before they could begin to think about succeeding. Of course, nothing was absolute. There were also some people who practiced Dou Qi of the fire affinity and were not alchemists but were able to obtain some strange flames for their own use. Similarly, however, the requirement placed on the level of one’s strength was extremely harsh. Seeing the current Xiao Yan, it was clear that he had not met the requirements of the latter possibilities. Hence, Sha Tie had immediately chose to voice the first possibility.

Xiao Yan did not reply Sha Tie’s astonished words. The green-colored flame spread out from his hand, and swiftly wrapped both his hands within it. He lifted his head slightly and a green-colored light occasionally flared in his dark black pupils.

“Bang!”

Xiao Yan’s feet once again stomped against the ground. He could hear a clear muffled sound as his body turned into a pale-green-colored blur which carried an extremely high temperature, and shot explosively toward Sha Tie.

The blazing air that pounced toward his face caused Tie Sha’s brows to furrow slightly. Although he could not determine what type of flame Xiao Yan had summoned, he could

vaguely guess that the strength of this flame was definitely not weak from the sharp rise in the temperature of his surroundings.

Sha Tie's iron pagoda like body stood in the same spot. He did not choose to dodge. The golden Dou Qi bestowed upon him gave him a great attacking and defensive strength but it deprived him of agility. He knew that even if he wanted to dodge, he would definitely be unable to escape Xiao Yan's attack. Since this was the case, why should he bother doing something so futile and instead risk exposing a weakness in the process?

The hot air became increasingly closer. Sha Tie emitted a stern cry from his mouth and dark-golden-colored Dou Qi abruptly surged out from within his body. The golden light shot out and finally absorbed Xiao Yan into it. At a glance, it appeared as though he was a person molded entirely from gold.

The heated atmosphere was only reduced a little after the Dou Qi Armor appeared. Sha Tie's enormous gold-like fist was slowly tightened. Finally, it was thrown out without any fancy moves or skill.

Although Sha Tie's fist did not have any variety in his move, the terrifying strength contained in it directly caused the air around Xiao Yan to be saturated with it. At this moment, absolute strength embraced everything.

Xiao Yan's face tensed. The Dou Crystal within the vortex of his body repeatedly trembled. Wave after wave of powerful Dou Qi was spat out. Finally, it swiftly circulated within his Qi Paths, allowing Xiao Yan to be filled with fighting strength.

Green-colored flames swiftly enshrouded his fist before it suddenly struck out. It heavily collided with Sha Tie's fist in an impartial manner. In an instant, a powerful ripple spread out from the middle of the two of them, shaking and splitting the few large trees near the two of them, forming a couple of crack lines. The trees became shaky and unstable.

The ferocious force being transmitted from their fists caused Xiao Yan to swiftly take two steps back. On the other hand, Sha Tie's body merely trembled a couple of times. It appeared that in terms of a competition of pure strength, Xiao Yan was still a little weaker than Sha Tie.

Of course, Xiao Yan may have been shaken until he took two steps back but Sha Tie also felt a little uncomfortable. The green-colored flame on Xiao Yan's fist caused him to suffer greatly. In the collision earlier, his fist would have likely been roasted until it swelled up by a couple of layers had it not been for his Dou Qi Armor isolating it. Even though this was the case, Sha Tie's fist still had a faint searing pain.

Sha Tie's gaze obscurely swept over the green-colored flame in Xiao Yan's hand. Shock flashed through his heart. It was not that he had never seen the flame of an alchemist. He had even fought with some of the students from the Alchemist

Department in the Fighting Arena but the flames that those students summoned could not breach his Dou Qi Armor and cause him to even feel a little injured. However, that strange green-colored flame on Xiao Yan's hand today had this kind of frightening unique ability. This caused Sha Tie to involuntarily feel a solemn feeling within his heart.

The moment the thought in Sha Tie's heart was swiftly spinning, Xiao Yan had once again pounced toward him. This time, however, he gave up on having head on collisions. Instead, he began to use the advantage of his agility and repeatedly flashed around Sha Tie's body like a ghost. His fists frequently carried a green-colored flame as they were thrown out, carrying a 'Qiang Qiang' sound of metal clashing within the empty forest.

Sha Tie did not have too great of a response toward Xiao Yan's nearly continuous attacks. He dodged those that he could, and forcefully resisted those that he could not. Occasionally, he would wave his heavy fist and the feeling of an increasingly heavy force on it caused Xiao Yan to have no choice but to pull back to dodge it.

The moment Xiao Yan and Tie Sha's fight was becoming increasingly fierce, the other few battlegrounds had also slowly entered into a white-hot phase.

Perhaps it was because they had already fought once earlier but the Dou Qi which was spread over the surface of Hu Jia's and Wu Hao's body started to become a little dim after nearly six to seven minutes of battle. Hu Jia was a little better but Wu Hao's strength, speed, dodging ability, etc. had already greatly declined because of his weakening Dou Qi which resulted in him beginning to be suppressed into a disadvantageous position by his opponent from the 'Black Demon Group.'

If it was not because of the killing aura within Wu Hao's attacks being too strong and that the member of the 'Black Demon Group' was a little afraid of being seriously injured, it was likely that Wu Hao's fight would have been even more difficult.

Compared with these two people who were each in a somewhat disadvantaged situation, Xun Er was the complete opposite. Golden light shot out explosively from her palms. Her body was as elegant as a wisp of light smoke while her attacking speed was so fast that it brought about numerous afterimages. Perhaps it was because she clearly understood that Wu Hao and Hu Jia could not last long. Therefore, she did not have any thoughts of preserving her strength. Occasionally, she would display powerful Dou Techniques, forcing her opponent back until the latter was in tough spots. If it were not because of his rich combat experience, it was likely that this unlucky member of the 'Black Demon Group' would be the first to be defeated.

Outside of these three battlegrounds, there was the most chaotic battleground. That was the one where fifteen new students were fighting with the final 'Black Demon Group' member. Although there were a great number of new students, the fifteen of them all had a varying amount of injuries due to their fight with the three groups lead by

Su Xiao earlier. It was naturally impossible for them to obtain victory now that they met a strong person whose strength was around the five star Da Dou Shi level.

Hence, in merely less than ten minutes, five of the fifteen new students were already injured by that 'Black Demon Group' member and had withdrawn. The remaining ten could only rely on their cooperation with one another to barely hang on. However, it was clear that the cooperation between them was not very good. Hence, every two to three minutes, their opponent would find an opening and injure one of them until they temporarily lost the ability to continue fighting.

In five battlegrounds on this empty land, Hu Jia's, Wu Hao's, and the new students' ones were all in an unfavorable situation. By relying on his 'Heavenly Flame,' Xiao Yan was able to contend with Sha Tie for a while. However, if he did not use a decisive attack, it was clearly impossible for him to obtain victory. Hence, among the five battlegrounds, only Xun Er was in a complete advantage.

In the current battlefield, whichever side could first free up an extra pair of hands was crucial. As long as there was someone who could defeat their opponent half a minute earlier than the others, this battle would perhaps swiftly point the victory indicator to that side!

Everyone present in the battlefield, including all those new students who were not participating, understood this point. Hence, their gazes were all firmly staring at the battleground of Wu Hao and Xun Er. This was because these two places would be the two battlegrounds where they would be the first to obtain victory or the first to lose.

The blood-colored Dou Qi spreading all over Wu Hao's body was growing increasingly dim. Clearly, Wu Hao's Dou Qi had already begun to enter into the stage where it was about to burn out. When he fought with Xiu Yan earlier, he had exhausted all his strength. Now he needed to undergo this kind of high cost battle. He was about to be unable to hold on even though he had consumed Xiao Yan's 'Energy Recovery Pill' a moment ago.

The blood-colored heavy sword in his hand violently hacked at the opponent. However, his current degree of strength and speed allowed the opponent to easily dodge it. The latter's body flashed and appeared on Wu Hao's left side. The knife in his hand carried a sharp force as it hacked at Wu Hao's wrist. Immediately, Wu Hao's blood-colored sword left his hand. The 'Black Demon Group' member let out a pleased cold laughter. Dou Qi shrouded his hands and he immediately struck heavily at Wu Hao's chest. Seeing this momentum, it was likely that Wu Hao would be the first to be defeated if he were to be struck.

Under the focus of everyone, his fist became increasingly close to Wu Hao. However, just as his fist was about to land on Wu Hao's body, the somewhat grayish-dark-faced Wu Hao suddenly widened his eyes. Two blood lines flowed out of his nose. A rich killing aura surged out of his body as though he had suddenly got his second wind just

before falling. A low and deep roar sounded from his throat. The originally dark and pale-blood-colored Dou Qi once again became bright red. He tightened his fist and suddenly threw it out fiercely.

“Bang!”

As both fists made contact, a muffled sound reverberated unceasingly on the open ground. Wu Hao’s shoulders trembled intensely while that member of the ‘Black Demon Group’ let out a muffled groan. A thread of blood flowed down from the corner of the latter’s mouth. He took a couple of continuous step back while sliding against the ground before he managed to stabilize his body. Lifting his head, he looked at Wu Hao’s much paler face with a mixture of shock and fury. Clearly, Wu Hao had displayed a certain Secret Technique that would overdraw his strength in order for such a strength to erupt instantaneously earlier.

However, seeing the color on Wu Hao’s face, it appeared that the current him could no longer use this kind of Secret Technique to overdraw his strength for a second time.

“Hmph!” That member of the ‘Black Demon Group’ saw that Wu Hao had already run out of steam and immediately let out a snort. He forcefully suppressed the injuries within his body as his body turned into a black shadow which once again shot toward Wu Hao.

“Bang!”

Just as he was merely around five meters from Wu Hao, a black shadow suddenly shot over. That member of the ‘Black Demon Group’ was alarmed. His forward charging body paused and immediately began to hurriedly take two step back.

As he was pulling back, the black shadow heavily landed on the ground. The expression of that member of the ‘Black Demon Group’ changed. This black shadow was actually the person who had been fighting against Xun Er moments earlier.

An aghast expression flashed across his heart. He hurriedly turned his head to take a look, only to see a green-clothed young lady standing indifferently beside Wu Hao. Golden light shrouded her palm, piercing his eyes until they were a little strained.

“Crap...”