

Cultivating with Top Enlightenment

Chapter 6: Chapter 6: Martial Saint of Great Yan

Spring comes and goes.

Ning Qi is almost one year old now.

However, with the nourishment of Innate Qi, supplemented by unparalleled medical techniques, his physical development has been rapid, and he is now almost like a three-year-old child.

Ning Qi optimized the Innate Bone Nourishing Skill a few more times.

He finally felt there was no further improvement to be made.

He had reached the limit of what he could currently achieve.

He speculated that at this rate, his root bone would be fully formed by the age of three!

This speed far exceeded the previous estimation of Taoist Longshan.

Don't underestimate the few years' difference, as it's important to know that the earlier it is, the harder it gets. Practicing martial arts at three and at six is not simply a double difference; it could be several times harder.

Every day, he used a special ointment in combination with his exercises.

His root bone was forming faster each day.

Not only that, but his physical growth was accelerating.

A tiny body is never very convenient, and Ning Qi hopes to grow up quickly.

Unable to practice martial arts yet, Ning Qi did not waste time and read books of all kinds daily, increasing his depth.

He possessed maxed-out comprehension, unprecedented, but creation never comes out of thin air.

Take medicine for example.

Even without reference to the writings of predecessors, Ning Qi can constantly try, summarize, and forge a path in medicine, reaching unprecedented heights, but the time spent must be doubled.

In that case, why not stand on the shoulders of the wise men of the past for a better view?

Others may have comprehension not as good as Ning Qi's, but the accumulation over generations is also not to be underestimated, and some ingenious ideas that shine with brilliance are surprising.

The same is true in other fields.

Although he hasn't started practicing martial arts yet.

Ning Qi was already making preparations.

Learning from others, from books, from heaven and earth, from nature.

Gathering the best of all schools to blaze new trails.

This is the correct opening method for maxed-out comprehension.

There are numerous texts from the True Martial Sect, enough for Ning Qi to read for a long time. Sometimes after reading once, the second reading offers different insights, especially some Taoism texts that contain profound principles, benefiting Ning Qi greatly. These are his depths, only needing a key to unlock the treasure.

"If I have the opportunity to browse through the Great Yan records in the future, my foundation would be rich beyond any previous level."

"One day, obtaining the marvelous thoughts of all living beings, how exhilarating that would be, perhaps even the method of longevity would be within reach!"

Thinking about that scene.

Ning Qi himself felt somewhat longing.

He hasn't forgotten that his ultimate goal is longevity.

These days.

His senior brothers and sisters sometimes go down the mountain for training and bring back some fresh knick-knacks or share some experiences with Ning Qi. As Ning Qi exhibited more and more peculiar traits, they subconsciously no longer treated Ning Qi as a child under one year old.

Thanks to this.

Combined with the records in books.

Ning Qi gained a deeper understanding of the dynasty he was in.

"The Great Yan spans thirteen states with vast territories, and just one Qing State is larger than the land of my previous life. The martial sects are numerous but mostly rely on imperial authority, needing permission from it."

"For instance, when Master rebuilt the True Martial Sect, he didn't just win the foundation of True Martial from the master of Divine Sword Mountain by betting but also needed the endorsement of the Governor of Qing State to gain final recognition."

He flipped through the Great Yan Record in his hand, with something akin to amazement in his eyes.

"But the most amazing thing is, the Great Yan has stood for two thousand years, just the lifespan of this dynasty equals nearly half of ancient history in the previous life!"

"This should be related to the long life of martial artists in this world. Celestial Human Realm practitioners have an eight-hundred-year lifespan, and with some life-extending means, might live over a thousand years. As for Martial Saints, they might indeed live for thousands of years!"

"And the establishment of a dynasty often has a direct connection with Martial Saints; a Martial Saint is invincible in the world, and even beings of Celestial Being Perfection are no match in front of a Martial Saint. Setting up a dynasty isn't difficult for Martial Saints; the Great Yan Dynasty was founded by the Great Yan Martial Saint."

A thought arose in Ning Qi's heart, he couldn't help but sigh:

"The Great Yan has lasted two thousand years, I wonder if the Great Yan Martial Saint is still alive?"

The Martial Saint is his goal, but such an existence is extremely rare, sometimes there might only be one in an entire era, elusive as a dragon.

A cheerful voice came from afar:

"They must be alive, otherwise the world would have been in chaos long ago."

Ning Qi looked over.

He saw a figure speeding towards him, taking a few leaps to stand in front of him; the blue Taoist robe was slightly oversized, but it couldn't hide the slender and exquisite body, rising up to the beautiful apricot eyes carrying a smile.

Ye Qinghe first pinched Ning Qi's tender face and then hugged him with a cheeky grin, making it hard for Ning Qi to breathe.

"Jiu, have you missed Third Senior Sister?"

Ning Qi frowned and struggled to jump away.

"Senior Sister, you've been drinking again!"

He smelled a strong scent of alcohol, very pungent.

Ye Qinghe giggled and took out a gourd like performing a magic trick, taking a hearty swig, the liquid sliding down her fair neck into the Taoist robe.

"Wine is a rare gem of the world; a woman who doesn't drink is not a good woman. You're still too young to understand, Jiu."

She produced a small wine cup from somewhere and filled it to the brim.

"Want to try?"

Looking at Ye Qinghe's expectant eyes, Ning Qi was filled with black lines.

Getting a one-year-old to drink?

You're something else!

Ye Qinghe tempted him:

"If you take a sip, I'll tell you a secret about the Great Yan Dynasty."

Ning Qi had no choice but to take a sip. This much alcohol had no effect on him, and Ye Qinghe only drank the finest, which wouldn't harm his body, though Ning Qi didn't have much interest in alcohol.

Ye Qinghe clapped her hands and laughed heartily:

"Jiu, you understand me well, unlike Qin Yun and the others, they're no fun at all."

Ning Qi just rolled his eyes.

Ye Qinghe took the Great Yan Record from Ning Qi's hand and pouted:

"There's too much official language on this. It's true that the Great Yan Dynasty has lasted for two thousand years, making it the longest-lived dynasty in history, but there have been many upheavals."

Ning Qi instantly perked up.

"None of those times managed to overthrow the Great Yan?"

Ye Qinghe shook her head:

"No, every time at the critical moment, a Martial Saint from the Great Yan intervened, suppressing all enemies and prolonging the national fortune."

"The Great Yan Martial Saint is still alive? Even after two thousand years without ascending?" Ning Qi's eyes widened.

Ye Qinghe tilted her head back for another swig.

"Actually, I can't say for certain the Great Yan Martial Saint is still around."

"Rumor has it the Martial Saint has reached the pinnacle of the Martial Path and can transcend the world. Every Martial Saint in each era, after a period of brilliance, falls silent, seemingly unable to linger in this world any longer."

"Therefore, the duration of previous dynasties was not particularly exaggerated, mostly lasting a few hundred years, at most a thousand."

"But the Great Yan is an exception."

Ye Qinghe tilted the gourd, watching the last few drops of wine slowly fall, frowning in dissatisfaction but still carefully swallowed them down.

She remarked wistfully:

"Some say the Great Yan Martial Saint is extraordinarily talented and reluctant to ascend due to attachment to imperial authority. They've used some secret technique to avoid the world's oppression, allowing them to stay long, but they can't easily intervene and only appear when the Great Yan faces calamity."

"Others say the Great Yan Martial Saint has already ascended, but he created an earth-shattering secret technique that enables the royal family of the Great Yan to continuously produce Martial Saints, thereby ensuring its long-lasting prosperity. Every Martial Saint of the Great Yan uses this secret technique to train a new Martial Saint before ascending."

"So, the Great Yan surely has a Martial Saint, but whether it's the original one, no one knows, as no one has seen their true form."

Ye Qinghe shrugged slightly.

Ning Qi's eyebrows twitched, speechless for a long time, not expecting the Great Yan Dynasty to have such hidden secrets.

Chapter 7: Chapter 7: Root Bone Accomplished

After a long while.

Ning Qi exhaled lightly, a fighting spirit rising in his eyes.

No matter what secrets the Martial Saint of Great Yan holds, he is confident that given time, surpassing him is no problem at all.

The secrets of Great Yan served as yet another reminder to him.

If someday he achieves the rank of Martial Saint and still sees no hope of immortality, then breaking through the boundaries and ascending to a broader world would be a path where the ceiling is undoubtedly higher.

Ning Qi's thoughts were clearer.

"The Martial Saints of the Great Yan Dynasty are never-ending. Could it be they plan to rule this land indefinitely?"

Ye Qinghe chuckled:

"That's not necessarily the case."

There was no trace of reverence for imperial authority in her eyes; instead, there was a hint of discontent.

Ning Qi could understand.

For two thousand years, martial sects have relied on imperial power, long enough to breed countless conflicts, merely suppressed over time.

All it awaits is a trigger, an earth-shattering moment.

"Senior Sister, while descending the mountain this time, I found traces of the Demon Sect appearing now and then within Qing State. This Demon Sect is not simple and seems related to the previous dynasty."

"Not only that, the attitudes of martial sects across various states are quite ambiguous, and the borders of Great Yan are also stirring restlessly."

"You should know, it's been merely a hundred years since the last Martial Saint of Great Yan acted; unless something was discovered last time, there's no way they'd start probing again so soon."

Ye Qinghe's expression gradually became excited.

"Jiu, do you think there could be internal turmoil in Great Yan, the Martial Saint's life nearing its end? Or maybe a new Martial Saint has yet to emerge?"

Ning Qi was somewhat surprised.

Previously, when Fifth Senior Brother returned from his training, he also mentioned finding traces of the Demon Sect. Now Third Senior Sister has discovered it too. It seems the Demon Sect is making quite a commotion.

Listening to Ye Qinghe's speculations, he just shrugged slightly.

"In any case, none of this is something we can involve ourselves in."

He hasn't even started practicing martial arts yet.

Looking at this grand trend of the world, it indeed seems a bit insignificant.

Even if chaos truly erupts, he can only go with the flow. Rather than worrying about this, it's better to seize every moment to improve oneself. With enough strength, everything will happen naturally.

"That's true."

Ye Qinghe muttered a few words.

Suddenly, realizing she was being lectured by a one-year-old child, she couldn't help but pinch Ning Qi's cheeks.

"Clever little brat!"

Ning Qi paid no attention.

He put down the Great Yan Record and turned to another book on miscellaneous feng shui to read.

This made Ye Qinghe feel a bit frustrated, and she couldn't resist scratching her hair in annoyance, saying:

"Sometimes I wonder, Jiu, is there an old monster living inside you?"

Ning Qi paused his motion, continuing to read.

"Ah, stop reading. You need to balance work and rest, Jiu. If you want to work hard, wait until you start practicing martial arts; there'll be plenty of hardship. For now, you should cherish this rare leisurely time."

Ye Qinghe rambled on.

Ning Qi responded:

"Is practicing martial arts really that hard?"

Ye Qinghe perked up:

"Of course, to achieve in martial arts, mere talent isn't enough; you must put in enough effort and spend enough time."

"Take your Eighth Senior Brother, for example. His talent is outstanding even in Great Yan, but guess how long it took him to temper his body."

Ning Qi turned the pages, with flashes of inspiration continually arising in his mind, absorbing the essence into his feng shui system. Even so, he was still able to handle Ye Qinghe.

"Five or six years?"

Ye Qinghe chuckled:

"It seems, Jiu, you haven't realized the difficult life that lies ahead!"

"Let me tell you, from the age of seven to eighteen, a full eleven years! Qin Yun practiced diligently day and night before he completed his body tempering and stepped into the Inner Essence Realm!"

"So long?" This did surprise Ning Qi.

"That's with your Eighth Senior Brother's exceptional talent. For others, it would take even longer. In Great Yan, anyone under thirty is considered part of the younger generation, and those who step into the Inner Essence by twenty are considered unparalleled geniuses."

"Though, Jiu, you're surely a genius, spending ten years on body tempering is still quite normal."

"Now you know, there's plenty of hardship ahead, no rush for the moment. There's a saying, if you're willing to endure hardship, then there is endless hardship to endure. Right? How about Senior Sister taking you out to play? Senior Sister often regrets that the carefree eight years of childhood were too short."

Faced with Ye Qinghe's incessant chatter and hopeful eyes.

Ning Qi gave a light glance and responded.

"Oh."

He didn't think he would need that long.

The world of a genius is something ordinary people can't understand.

Ye Qinghe was instantly exasperated, feeling she had wasted her breath.

Following that.

No matter how she tried to converse, Ning Qi ignored her, fully immersed in his world of comprehension.

Ye Qinghe sighed, lying back on the recliner in the courtyard, and before she knew it, she fell asleep soundly.

Ning Qi glanced at Ye Qinghe, with a slight smile.

Although Third Senior Sister is quite vocal, she's actually afraid he would feel lonely.

However, he didn't feel lonely.

With full-level insight, every moment offers a harvest; a feeling quite exhilarating but one generally beyond others' experience.

...

Time drifted by serenely.

The days spent on True Martial Mountain were rather pleasant. Compared to being bedridden in his past life, unable to move, this life was indeed exceedingly wonderful.

Though his body was small, at least he could walk freely and had a master, senior brothers, and sisters who loved him dearly. This made Ning Qi quite satisfied.

In the blink of an eye.

Two and a half years had passed since the discussion on immortality with Taoist Longshan.

Ning Qi was now three years old.

In the past two and a half years, several senior brothers and sisters showed great care for Ning Qi, bringing him lots of things every time they descended the mountain. Knowing Ning Qi's love for rare books, they also consciously collected them to bring back. In their spare time, they would come to play with Ning Qi.

Master Taoist Longshan also taught patiently without holding back, except he didn't allow Ning Qi to contact martial arts too early; other than that, there was nothing restricted, which made other disciples a bit envious.

Besides.

Ning Qi discovered that his master descended the mountain several times, seemingly chasing the murderer who massacred Snow Plum Manor three years ago, but it didn't seem to go too well.

Taoist Longshan never proactively mentioned the events of that year to Ning Qi, perhaps hoping Ning Qi would live carefree without being blinded by hatred. However, he didn't know that Ning Qi clearly remembered everything that happened that day.

Ning Qi wasn't in a hurry.

He needed time to grow.

When the time comes, he would handle it himself.

Over these three years, he has shown enough wisdom, making Taoist Longshan and Luo Wentian anticipate how amazing Ning Qi would be after stepping into the Martial Path.

They have estimated more than once the time when Ning Qi's root bone would form.

They mostly believed it could form by the age of six.

But what they didn't know was, the changes within Ning Qi's body grew more significant each day.

One morning.

Ning Qi awoke.

His expression was expectant, yet calm, everything was within his expectations.

As usual, he circulated the Innate Bone Nourishing Skill, the residual traces of extremely subtle Innate Qi within him accompanying the last cycle, completely dispersed throughout his body, and seemingly a mysterious force from between heaven and earth poured into his body.

In an instant.

Ning Qi's body trembled slightly, an unprecedented sense of fulfillment arose in his heart as if something missing within him was finally complete, he even vaguely felt a deeper connection to the world than ever before.

There was no world-shattering anomaly; Ning Qi opened his eyes, a look of delight appearing.

Two and a half years, nine hundred days and nights of diligent practice.

The root bone, finally fully formed!

Chapter 8: Chapter 8: Simply a Monster

"The Innate Bone Nourishing Skill is indeed powerful; find a suitable opportunity to give it to Master in the future."

Ning Qi had no intention to withhold it.

Taoist Longshan was like a mountain of gratitude to him. If he had the ability, he would definitely repay him. If the True Martial Sect acquired this Innate Bone Nourishing Skill, its foundation would undoubtedly become more profound in the future. If a suitable disciple is found, future prodigies will emerge continuously, and prosperity is just a matter of time.

For Taoist Longshan, revitalizing the True Martial Sect was his greatest desire.

"However, cultivating the Innate Bone Nourishing Skill is not a simple task. It requires not only a sufficiently strong Innate Origin but also enough comprehension."

"When the time comes, I will spare some time to revise the Innate Bone Nourishing Skill, striving to lower its difficulty of understanding."

There's no other way.

The Dharma Methods that Ning Qi created were all tailor-made for himself. That he could understand them did not mean others could.

Not everyone is born knowledgeable like Ning Qi.

A child of a few years wanting to learn such Secret Techniques is very difficult.

Not to mention the Innate Fetal Breathing Skill, which is almost impossible.

Ning Qi's mind was filled with various thoughts. He stretched lazily, and his young body surprisingly emitted a sound like the crackling of his muscles and bones.

He looked into the distance and walked forward a few steps.

A sturdy figure in a gray robe strode forward, carrying a bunch of medicinal herbs.

Second Senior Brother Xiong Shi.

As his name suggests, he was as robust as a bear. Sometimes Ning Qi thought that his Second Senior Brother didn't seem like a Taoist but rather like a butcher.

"Jiu, Senior Brother is busy today, so I came to deliver these to you."

A deep voice sounded, Xiong Shi scratched his head and then looked a bit surprised.

"Jiu, how did you know I was coming?"

Ning Qi laughed and said:

"Second Senior Brother, your movements are so loud that even if I were inside, I would be able to hear them."

Xiong Shi placed the medicinal herbs aside and said, "Don't try to fool me; Second Senior Brother may look strong, but the Spirit Turtle Step I cultivate is the most agile. Not even someone of the Inner Essence Realm can hear my footsteps."

He had a silly grin as if seeing through Ning Qi's trick.

But Ning Qi was not lying.

At the moment his Root Bone formed, he connected with the world and detected Xiong Shi's presence. However, that connection now began to weaken, as if waiting silently within him for a special moment to be triggered.

"I wasn't lying to you. Ever since I woke up this morning, I've felt incredibly comfortable inside. Just now, I really heard your footsteps."

Ning Qi 'panicked.'

Xiong Shi laughed silently, ready to soothe his little Junior Brother.

But soon, as if realizing something, a look of disbelief flashed in his eyes.

Xiong Shi extended his hand onto Ning Qi's shoulder.

The next moment.

As if electrified, he withdrew his hand, his face showing a ghostly expression.

Taking a couple of deep breaths, he reached out again to probe Ning Qi's shoulder, his face even more shocked, then transformed into visible joy.

"Jiu, has your Root Bone formed?!"

Ning Qi laughed inwardly, appearing excited on his face.

"Senior Brother, are you saying I can start practicing martial arts?"

After all, he was only three years old, and he needed a suitable opportunity to reveal the formation of his Root Bone. He didn't expect Second Senior Brother to deliver the opportunity so quickly.

Xiong Shi was filled with excitement, nodding repeatedly, but then quickly added:

"No, no, we must have Master take a look, lest I've made a mistake and get excited for nothing."

He took deep breaths, suppressing his inner shock and joy.

What happened before him was beyond his understanding.

Ning Qi was only three years old!

By the True Martial Emperor, he had lived for decades and had never heard of anyone whose Root Bone formed so early; it was simply incredible.

It's known that the Eighth Junior Brother, who is known as an unparalleled talent, only formed his Root Bone at the age of seven.

Forming Root Bone at the age of three is simply monstrous!

Xiong Shi could no longer speak.

He picked up Ning Qi and placed him on his shoulder, then set off with the Spirit Turtle Step towards the Bright Martial Pavilion.

On the way, they attracted countless curious glances.

The Outer Sect disciples and Inner Sect disciples' greetings were all ignored by Xiong Shi.

Inside the Bright Martial Pavilion.

Taoist Longshan and Luo Wentian sat opposite each other.

"Wentian, in a few days, I might need to enter seclusion for some time. During that time, the matters within the sect will be your responsibility," Taoist Longshan instructed.

Luo Wentian nodded, his eyes filled with joy.

"Master, are you going to advance to the Celestial Human Realm?"

He looked at Taoist Longshan with some anticipation. The Celestial Human Realm, looking at the whole world, is an unparalleled master. If Taoist Longshan could step into the Celestial Being realm, the True Martial Sect could become a dominating force in Qing State, truly gaining deep foundations and having a few hundred years to develop and grow stronger.

Taoist Longshan shook his head slightly:

"It's just a bit of Spiritual Light; it's uncertain. To step firmly into the Celestial Human Realm, it might still take a few years."

Luo Wentian admired and said:

"With Master's unparalleled talent, stepping into the Celestial Being realm is just a matter of time!"

A Celestial Being has an eight-hundred-year lifespan; it's already an outstanding talent to step into the Celestial Human Realm within a hundred years. Taoist Longshan was only in his eighties.

Taoist Longshan's talent is indeed quite remarkable; otherwise, he wouldn't have been qualified to receive the True Martial legacy and rebuild the True Martial Sect by himself.

He smiled slightly, with confidence in his eyes.

The master and the disciple discussed many matters within the sect. Taoist Longshan asked Luo Wentian to start preparations and to consider recruiting a batch of Outer Sect disciples. Even some older True Disciples could start taking disciples.

As they spoke, their gaze suddenly turned towards the outside of the pavilion.

Only to see Xiong Shi panting heavily as he rushed in.

Taoist Longshan frowned, initially wanting to reprimand him, but upon seeing the figure on Xiong Shi's shoulder, his expression softened and merely said:

"Why so flustered? Maintain your composure!"

Luo Wentian laughed, smoothing things over:

"Second Senior Brother, Master was just saying that we should start selecting disciples. In the future, we must always be mindful of our behavior, so we don't mislead the disciples."

Xiong Shi set Ning Qi down and apologized to Master and the Senior Brother.

Taking a deep breath, he said:

"Master, it's not that I'm reckless, but there's something that requires your decision."

"It's about Jiu."

With these words, Taoist Longshan's expression became serious.

Luo Wentian was also a bit surprised.

Could it be that the little Junior Brother had gotten into trouble? But the little Junior Brother had always been clever, knew boundaries, and understood reason. It shouldn't be the case.

"What is it?" Taoist Longshan asked.

"You'll know with a probe."

Xiong Shi lightly nudged Ning Qi.

Ning Qi respectfully came forward to salute.

Taoist Longshan looked kindly at Ning Qi, who appeared like a child of five or six, and his heart inexplicably skipped a beat, stirring a certain suspicion. He smiled and extended his right hand, resting it on Ning Qi's head.

In the next instant.

Taoist Longshan's body stiffened, and although his face remained calm, his heart surged with turbulent waves.

He stared dumbfoundedly at his young disciple, almost doubting whether his senses were mistaken.

But the Primordial Core within him had already shown its divinity, making it absolutely impossible for him to be wrong.

Luo Wentian, seeing his Master not removing his hand for a long time, felt a slight tension and asked with concern:

"Master, little Junior Brother, he..."

"His Root Bone has formed," Taoist Longshan said softly.

Chapter 9: Chapter 9 True Martial Nine Stances

Inside the Bright Martial Pavilion.

Silence reigned.

Three pairs of eyes were all fixed on Ning Qi, filled with incredulity.

Luo Wentian finally understood why Xiong Shi was so reckless, and why his master had not moved his palm yet.

Little junior brother's root bone has formed!

His breath suddenly became rapid.

"Little junior brother is only three years old!"

He was the true martial sect's senior brother, already somewhat being groomed as a successor by Taoist Longshan. His wish was also to revive True Martial, and now, knowing that Ning Qi's root bone had formed at just three years old, his shock turned into immense joy!

Luo Wentian rubbed his hands excitedly.

Xiong Shi subconsciously puffed up his chest with a chuckle, now you know why I was in such a hurry, right?

Both of them looked at Taoist Longshan.

"Master, there's no mistake, right..."

Taoist Longshan ignored them, only looking at Ning Qi kindly.

"Jiu, have you felt anything unusual lately?"

Ning Qi replied:

"Disciple feels like my body has been itching and tingling recently, especially at night when the feeling is intense. This morning, it seemed there was more connection with heaven and earth, but the feeling disappeared quickly."

He temporarily concealed the matter of the Innate Bone Nourishing Skill, planning to find a suitable opportunity to speak to Taoist Longshan after starting martial arts training.

Taoist Longshan slightly reprimanded:

"Why didn't you tell master about these situations earlier?"

Then, his eyes showed amazement.

"The innate root bone, at perfection, indeed creates some connection with the world. It will restart again in the future, aiding you to reach the peak of the Martial Path. Originally, I thought you would need until six years old to form your root bone, but not this fast. I was wrong, Jiu, you can start training martial arts now!"

Ning Qi was overjoyed; he respectfully bowed down:

"Please teach me, Master!"

After many efforts and painstakingly creating such an unparalleled secret technique like the Innate Bone Nourishing Skill, wasn't it just to be able to train martial arts earlier? Now, the goal is finally about to be achieved.

Taoist Longshan stroked his beard and laughed, Luo Wentian and Xiong Shi also smiled joyfully.

They saw the promising future of the True Martial Sect in Ning Qi.

"Tell Qinghe and others about this when you get a chance, but don't mention it to others for now."

Luo Wentian and Xiong Shi both nodded respectfully.

"Jiu, follow me."

Taoist Longshan had no intention to continue discussing matters with Luo Wentian; he only wanted to see Ning Qi's performance on the Martial Path now.

Luo Wentian and Xiong Shi, hearts like cats being scratched, exchanged glances and followed up.

Behind the Bright Martial Pavilion.

There was a medium-sized Martial Arts Arena, a place where neither Outer Sect nor Inner Sect disciples could tread.

Taoist Longshan stood with his hands behind his back.

"Jiu, are you completely familiar with the initial realms of the Martial Path?"

Ning Qi nodded:

"The beginning of the Martial Path is the Body Tempering Eight Realms: Refining Skin, Refined Flesh, Refining Tendons, Bone Refining, Refining Organ, Marrow Refining, Blood Refining, Refining Spirit!"

"Once Blood Refining is complete, one can be free of all diseases. If furthermore united by the Divine Intent, Inner Strength would arise, stepping into the Inner Essence Realm."

Taoist Longshan's Taoist Robe moved without the wind, a grandmaster's demeanor naturally manifested.

"The Martial Path is arduous; each step needs to be grounded, possibly lingering in one realm for decades. Although you have decent talent, you also need to work diligently; otherwise, the Martial Path is hard to achieve."

Ning Qi replied with a firm tone:

"Disciple will remember!"

Taoist Longshan smiled, feeling sentimental, recalling the scene when half-year-old Ning Qi asked him about the possibility of longevity through the Martial Path—it was clear this little disciple's mind was far more mature than ordinary people, probably determined to climb to the pinnacle of the Martial Path since then.

"The Body Tempering Realm is the beginning of the Martial Path and also its vital point. A strong foundation will lead to vigorous advancement later. To temper the body, Stance Skill is needed!"

Ning Qi's eyes were extremely bright.

Interestingly, there was no surprise.

These three years, although unable to practice martial arts, he contemplated if he could forge a new Martial Path untraveled by predecessors, but he eventually gave up, not because it was impossible but because it required too much time and was not worthwhile.

Even so, he had several ideas.

Using Stance Skill to temper the body was one of them.

"In the world, there are top, middle, and low tiers of Stance Skills; the superior the skill, the more solid the foundation it establishes."

"And my True Martial Sect has nine superior Stance Skills!"

"These are the True Martial Nine Stances!"

At this point.

Taoist Longshan's eyes showed a hint of pride, and Luo Wentian and Xiong Shi unconsciously puffed their chests; outsiders were unaware of True Martial's foundation, only they as True Disciples knew.

"The dragon has nine sons, each different."

"The True Martial Nine Stances correspond to the dragon's nine sons: Qiu Niu, Vengeance, Chaofeng, Pulao, Suanni, Ba Xia, Bian, Fuxi, Chiwen."

"Your eight senior brothers and sisters have already chosen eight of the stances. Jiu, you can practice the Bian Stance."

He looked gratified.

The reason he accepted nine True Inheritors was precisely for these True Martial Nine Stances.

Each time he took a disciple, he would see which Stance Skill suited the disciple, although some disciples were suitable for multiple Stance Skills, like Qin Yun and Ning Qi, but he always let them choose non-overlapping Stance Skills.

Ning Qi asked:

"May I ask Master what the True Martial Nine Stances signify?"

Taoist Longshan's voice carried a hint of longing:

"Among the True Martial Nine Stances, there's no hierarchy. Rumor has it, during the heyday of the True Martial Sect, those who excelled in the True Martial Nine Stances became the True Martial Nine Sons, and if the True Martial Nine Sons were celestial beings, they could battle the Martial Saints!"

Ning Qi's breath slightly stalled.

He now knew what kind of existences the Martial Saints were; they were unrivaled powerhouses dominating an era. Unless other Martial Saints were born in the same era, they would have no rivals.

Previously, the True Martial Nine Sons could battle Martial Saints.

What a powerful Dharma Method this must be.

Doesn't this imply that every generation of the True Martial Sect had Martial Saint level combat ability?

It's hard to imagine how such a powerful True Martial Sect could decline and fall to ruin.

However, Ning Qi speculated that to battle Martial Saints, the True Martial Nine Stances might only be the foundation; there should be even more profound secret techniques and Dharma Methods involved.

It's no wonder that when his master carried him up the mountain in the early days, the eighth senior brother yelled that the True Martial Nine Sons had finally assembled.

Ning Qi had a smile on his face and solemnly said:

"Please teach me the Bian Stance, Master!"

"Good, you watch closely."

After saying this, Taoist Longshan's expression became serious.

His legs spread apart, and his aura suddenly changed, like a fierce tiger in the mountains—no, a hundred times more terrifying than a fierce tiger!

Then he moved; although the actions were slow, they were imbued with a kind of mystical rhythm.

"The Stance Skill can be dynamic or static, the external form being secondary; the essence lies within, breathing and exhaling to gain its Divine Intent..."

"Visualize the Bian, breathe like thunder..."

Taoist Longshan's voice was steady, speaking slowly.

While demonstrating the moves, he mentioned various precautions.

For an ordinary person, it would be dazzling to watch.

Superior Stance Skills naturally lay a good foundation, but they are equally challenging to master.

Ning Qi watched intently, feeling as though the world was peeling away before his eyes.

Taoist Longshan's moves were reflected in his pupils; he saw the essence beyond the superficial, the movements like skin rippling, the breathing rhythm altering causing the internal energy to surge, the Divine Intent of Bian emerging from within... Along with Taoist Longshan's demonstration, the mystical aspects of the Bian Stance had already unfolded before Ning Qi's eyes.

"This superior Stance Skill seems quite simple?" Ning Qi thought.

Chapter 10: Chapter 10: Hope for Revival

As Taoist Longshan slowly explained, Ning Qi's mind was instantly flooded with countless flashes of insight, achieving enlightenment as if one thought brought a hundred understandings. Not only that, some insights he had pondered himself previously also fused together at this moment.

It is only after engaging with the Martial Path that one understands what this truly is; the difficulty pales in comparison to creating from scratch.

But this is only the case for Ning Qi.

For instance, at this moment, Luo Wentian and Xiong Shi both have expressions of awe and reverence in their eyes.

They primarily cultivate one stance, dabbling in the others, but none as proficiently as their main stance. Only top experts like Taoist Longshan, who approach the Celestial Being level, could strike the essence of other stance skills with such clarity.

"Master may not be far from reaching the Celestial Being Realm."

Both disciples felt admiration in their hearts.

Taoist Longshan slowly halted his steps and unusually asked seriously:

"Ning Qi, did you understand it?"

Ning Qi nodded respectfully:

"Disciple understood."

Taoist Longshan remained expressionless, standing to the side.

"You try."

Luo Wentian and Xiong Shi exchanged looks, seeing the amused smile in each other's eyes, thinking back to when they first encountered the stance skill, they were just as confident, feeling they completely understood.

But the stance skill specializes in curbing a genius's arrogance.

Even a lower grade stance skill requires coordination with the Breathing Technique. Each move and form has its subtleties. Merely imitating the movements isn't effective at all, let alone for superior stance skills like the True Martial Nine Stances, which even require gradually comprehending the Divine Intent of the stance.

Back then, which one of us didn't have our arrogance honed by the Master in this way, even the most talented Qin Yun only performed slightly better.

They knew it was their Master's way of polishing their junior apprentice's temperament, to make him realize that martial training is not easy.

"Even though Junior Apprentice is always clever, before a superior stance skill, he will also need to bow."

It's going to be a good show.

Ning Qi naturally wasn't aware of this intention from Taoist Longshan.

He was recalling every move of Taoist Longshan in his mind, gaining a deeper understanding.

"Please guide me, Master."

Following Ning Qi's words, he spread his legs, and the momentum changed.

Before Luo Wentian and Xiong Shi could react, Taoist Longshan's eyes were already shaken, showing some uncertainty.

"Is this... initiating stance?!"

He had deliberately not mentioned this crucial point just now, yet Ning Qi understood it instinctively?

Without waiting for further thought.

Ning Qi had already started moving.

He exhaled and focused, his demeanor solemn, beginning with the first move 'Bian Mountain Sitting,' although slightly awkward, there were no mistakes at all, from the outside to the inside.

Bian is akin to a tiger, but mightier and fiercer.

At this moment, Ning Qi was like a young Bian, dominating the scene.

After the Martial Arts Arena, the sound of the wind from his punches and kicks slightly rose, and white mist started to steam from Ning Qi's body, due to sweat evaporation, his skin turned red like a shrimp, the raised skin membrane throbbed, evidently beginning to refine.

This is the first stage, Refining Skin.

Earlier, Taoist Longshan had not begun explaining how to use the stance skill to temper the body, yet Ning Qi understood instinctively.

He knew the first stage is Refining Skin, thus he mobilized the 'qi' brought by the stance skill between the skin membranes, which was simple for him, because both the Innate Fetal Breathing Skill and Innate Bone Nourishing Skill had experience in utilizing 'qi'.

Luo Wentian and Xiong Shi widened their eyes, faces full of disbelief.

The two initially crossed their arms, ready to watch their junior apprentice's 'great show.'

But unexpectedly.

This truly is a great show!

The two were dumbfounded.

Shortly after, able to perform the stance skill correctly, subsequently starting the Refining Skin, what kind of prodigy is this!

Thinking back to their own starting days... better not to mention.

Comparing themselves to Ning Qi, they felt they were no geniuses at all.

Had it not been for the understanding of their Master's personality, they might have imagined whether their Master had given the junior apprentice some preferential treatment.

Both sneaked a glance at Taoist Longshan.

Observing Taoist Longshan still expressionless, but Luo Wentian knew the Master's heart might not be calm, seeing the beard tremble slightly.

In fact.

Taoist Longshan's heart was indeed not calm.

He himself was a genius, and his disciples were equally geniuses; having lived for over eighty years, what kind of genius hadn't he seen?

But such an exaggerated Ning Qi was the first.

Simply watching his demonstrations of the stance skill was enough to grasp the key points completely, even using the intentionally omitted aspects, now beginning to spontaneously refine the skin.

What else could this be but prodigious?

Taoist Longshan suddenly had a thought, if his young disciple had obtained the True Martial heritage, he might have already been a Celestial Being in less than eighty years, and perhaps even reached the Martial Saint Realm!

A fierce excitement flooded his mind.

Unexpectedly, the chance encounter of collecting this young disciple brought such astonishment.

The three were all shocked.

Yet, Ning Qi was completely absorbed in his own world.

With each practice of the Bian Stance, gleaning insights, countless flashes of light burst in his mind, making it irresistible, for his personal practice far exceeded mere observation.

"So this is the Martial Path world, tempering the skin membrane?"

He could sense the change within his body.

Also, he marveled at the wisdom of predecessors; generations of effort ultimately summarized such a Martial Path Dharma Method, elevating physical strength to an inconceivable realm. If it were up to him, he might spend years creating such a Martial Path.

Standing on the shoulders of past giants, there's no need to waste time here.

Understanding is not enough; the body must follow through with practice.

Luckily, the Innate Bone Nourishing Skill gave him an exceptionally solid foundation.

At first still somewhat awkward.

The second run was impressively skilled.

The third was flowing seamlessly.

After a few more, he even began to touch on the Divine Intent of the Bian.

The trio, including Taoist Longshan, were completely silent, subconsciously slowing their breathing, as if frozen.

Ning Qi felt reinvigorated, yet respectfully stopped.

He feared his display might frighten his Master and the senior brothers; feeling he could easily grasp the Divine Intent of Bian with a few more rounds, but better to train privately, confident as he was.

"Master."

Ning Qi stopped, respectfully awaiting guidance.

Taoist Longshan's body trembled, slowly squeezing out a smile:

"Well done, considered stronger than your rather useless senior brothers and sisters."

Luo Wentian and Xiong Shi staggered, covering their faces in shame.

This praise was truly unworthy.

Taoist Longshan intended to point out a few faults, but upon reflection, couldn't find a single flaw, feeling mildly resentful; such a prodigy also presents challenges.

He could only address Ning Qi's knowledge gaps.

"Hmm... afterwards, diligently practice the stance skill, begin body tempering. By the way, body tempering should be matched with medicinal baths to quicken body transformation, practiced daily with persistence, but not too aggressively, to avoid depleting the essence."

"Disciple will remember."

Ning Qi respectfully bowed.

Taoist Longshan slowly nodded, already anticipating his young disciple completing body tempering sooner.

Possibly within five years!

By then, Ning Qi would only be eight years old.

An eight-year-old at the Inner Essence Realm, just the thought made Taoist Longshan feel dreamy, as ordinary people barely commence body tempering at eight.

True Martial Sect, its revival seemed hopeful!