



Within the training courtyard, a youth clad in beast fur was wielding a black blunt sword. He stood there, and around him there were nine tall and powerful warriors. These valiant warriors all wore armor and wielded long spears, swords, and sabers, and other weapons in their hands. But none of the weapons had been edged or sharpened.

Six years. Ning, who had trained for six years, was now ten years old. But because in this life, he had been training in accordance with the [Crimsonbright Diagram of the Nine Heavens], he had already reached a height of 1.6 meters tall, just ten centimeters shorter than he had been in his previous life. His appearance was almost identical to how he had looked in his previous life. Perhaps this was what the saying, 'a person's appearance is birthed by their mind'. If one had to find a difference... then the difference was, in his previous life, his face was always sickly pale, while in this life, it was filled with boundless life and energy.

"Same rule as always." Ning stared at the people around him, his gaze even more terrifying than that of monsters. "As long as any of you can strike me, each person will be awarded a beasthead of gold!"

"Grr!"

“Careful, young master!”

“Haha, a beasthead of gold. Brothers, let’s let the young master see how powerful we are.” These brave warriors began to roar. They were the mightiest warriors within the armies of the Ji clan of the West Prefecture; the Ninefang Warriors! For someone to be awarded the title of Ninefang Warrior required their internal energy to have reached the limits of the Houtian level, and also be warriors with significant battle experience.

A beasthead of gold meant ten pounds of gold. Gold coins were used as a form of currency in the countless tribes, and ten pounds of gold, to these powerful warriors, was an extremely attractive offer.

But they didn’t dare to be incautious, because Ning’s power had spread across the army long ago. He had often sparred in the army with some of the elite soldiers... and thus, Ning’s ability had risen rapidly, as these warriors all knew. Even if nine of the most powerful warriors joined forces against him... defeating Ning would still be a hard task. However, it was still possible.

The blunt black sword in hand, Ning stared quietly at the surrounding people.

Actually, ever since he had learned the reputedly most complicated of sword techniques [108 Swords of the Gods and Demons] and mastered it to the point where his father nodded in satisfaction, sparring with the metal puppet had become meaningless. Thus, he was permitted to begin sparring with the large number of soldiers and warriors in their army. While sparring, they always used blunt weapons.

At the same time, his father had given him a strict order: “When sparring with others, you are only allowed to use a single sword! In addition, you are only permitted to use a tenth of your real strength! Only when sparring with your mother and I are you allowed to use the twin swords. Remember, the twin swords are your secret weapon. You are only permitted to use it when you really intend to kill your opponent.”

Thus...

Although Ning’s fame had become widespread across the army and he had been acknowledged as a rare talent, that was just the tip of the iceberg. But of course, when engaging in battle, Ning used all of his available skill in the ‘single sword techniques’ and in the ‘footwork’ techniques.

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The nine warriors surrounded Ning, walking in a circle around him while staring at him as though staring at their prey.

Ning just stood there, as unmoving as a mountain.

“Shua!” One of the nine soldiers surrounding him suddenly charged forward. The bald soldier was wielding a long spear in his hands, and struck out with it like a viper, instantly arriving next to Ning.

Faced with this fierce spear, Ning’s body flickered and he drew near the bald warrior’s body, causing the spear to miss its mark.

Spears were weakest against close quarters combat!

“Chi!” The blunt sword in Ning’s hand sliced out. As the sword flashed towards him, the bald warrior hurriedly used his feet to kick against his long spear, sending it sweeping towards Ning as he himself rolled back into the array of soldiers surrounding Ning.

“Wow, that was dangerous. I almost got ended in one exchange. Brothers, be careful,” the bald warrior quickly called out as he returned to the others.

Ning had already stepped on top of that longspear, staring at the people around him. "It is better if you come all at once. Otherwise, you'll have no chance."

"Let's go."

"Let's do it."

The nine warriors, sensing the disparity in power, didn't launch any more probing attacks. They immediately charged forward at full strength.

The wind howled. Sabers flashed. The shadows of swords agilely danced about. Spears hissed through the air like dragons. Sticks smashed down like ferocious tigers. Attacks came from every direction towards Ning, while Ning just stood there, just occasionally taking a step back or turning. These seemingly minute movements resulted in many of the warriors' attacks missing.

The clanging sounds of weapons bashing against each other could be heard like thunderclaps. Clearly, these blows carried great force.

Occasionally, the sound was just a whisper-soft snick.

“Ninefang Warriors really live up to their name. These nine have really good teamwork. If it was just five or six of them... I would be able to beat them in an instant. But the nine working together have put me at a complete disadvantage.” Ning found it very difficult to deal with the storm of attacks from these nine warriors. After all, he only had one sword. Under this sort of pressure, he was forced to use his sword techniques and his footwork techniques to their utmost.

“Hu!”

“Hu!”

The sword howled.

Ning suddenly felt intoxicated. Right at this moment, his body and his sword seemed to be in perfect harmony, and he seemed to even somehow feel the ‘body’ of the sword itself, and even the wind which blew past the sword at high speed.

“Chi!” The blunt black sword gently chopped against a cavalry saber. It trembled, but then with a twist, it pushed the enemy’s blade to the side and out of the enemy’s control. And then, the tip of the sword went forward, stabbing into the warrior’s chest. The warrior felt the pressure against his chest, and he immediately retreated two steps, then sat down.

“Hu.” The blunt black sword slashed through a curved pattern in the air, easily avoiding the opponent’s blocking long spear, then slapping with the flat against the bald warrior’s face. With a bang, one of the man’s tooth went flying and was knocked away.

Time seemed to pass as slowly as a leaf falling down in the autumn wind.

Ning’s sword had suddenly become extremely nimble, and the movements of his sword were careful and minute, able to change in a flash. In a life and death battle... a momentary advantage was enough to change the outcome of a battle into a victory. Thus, although Ning had previously found it very hard to resist those nine warriors, he now, in the blink of an eye, was able to knock them all down.

“Congratulations, young master.”

“Congratulations, young master, on your swordplay reaching the ‘advanced’ stage, ‘one with the sword’.”

The warriors were both shocked and excited. All of them congratulated him.

A youth who was merely ten years old was able to reach the ‘advanced’ stage of swordplay, and become ‘one with the sword’. This was more incredible than even the accomplishments of his father, the ‘Raindrop Sword’, Ji Yichuan.

“Hahaha...” Ning was extremely excited as well. Six years. Six years of constantly training with the sword. Every day, aside from the time he spent training his archery skills outside the city at dawn, he spent virtually all of his time training with the sword. Sometimes he would train with his father, while sometimes he would train with his father’s disciples. Sometimes, he would spar against the army soldiers.

The sword had long ago imprinted itself into his bones.

After training with the sword for ten million times, his accuracy with the sword had reached a terrifying level a long time ago.



And, with his ability to split his mind, his sword techniques became all the more elusive and unpredictable.

He had the body of a Fiendgod, and in terms of Ki Refining, he had already reached the peak of the Houtian stage in internal energy. This caused his sword attacks to be unstoppable.

And finally, today!

All of these accumulated experiences had formed a cohesive whole, and he entered the 'advanced' stage of swordplay, 'one with the sword'!

“Everyone, today you have helped me to make a breakthrough. Although I don't have much, I am giving each of you a beasthead of gold. Don't try to refuse.” Ning laughed loudly.

The nine warriors exchanged glances, then said in unison, “Thank you, young master!”

If they had simply lost, they wouldn't have accepted it. After all, these Ninefang Warriors had their own pride and dignity. But for young master Ning to reach the 'one with the sword' level was a major, joyous occasion. Such a joyous occasion... it was only fair and proper that they, too, receive some gifts.

"Nine of them."

The distant Spring Grass and Autumn Leaf, his two maids, hurriedly ran over with stone platters. Atop the stone platters were nine beastheads of gold. They were all the highest quality gold! The nine warriors laughed as they accepted it, while at the same time, feeling moved... young master Ning truly was powerful. But they had all seen with their own eyes how hard Ning had worked over these years.

"Congratulations, young master. Felicitations, young master." After the nine warriors left, Spring Grass and Autumn Leaf allowed their faces to be covered with joy and celebration.

Six years had passed, and the two maids were now twenty years old. This was the most bewitching age for a woman. Maids such as these would usually be their master's women, which is why they had long ago in their hearts decided to consider Ning as their world, as their god. To see their young master become so powerful, they naturally were extremely happy.

“Hahaha...” Ning laughed as well.

Anyone would be excited. After all, he had trained bitterly since he was young. How could he not be excited upon succeeding?

Only after training with the sword for two years had his father decided that his ‘body’ and his ‘mind’ were prepared to learn sword techniques. Only then had he been taught the [108 Swords of the Gods and Demons] technique.

After another year, when he mastered the first level, his father permitted him to spar with others.

After three more years, culminating in this day today, he had finally reached the second level, the ‘advanced’ level, becoming ‘one with the sword’.

“Spring Grass, Autumn Leaf, come with me,” Ning called out. What he wanted to do the most right now was to go see his parents.

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Deep in the mountain ranges, there was a series of furious howls.

There was a large number of black armored riders, and these armored riders all had extremely thick armor, all covered with spikes as well. Their mounts were tall and powerful furry beasts with a single horn. These furry beasts had two curved, fierce looking fangs which flashed with cold light. Their four hooves were thick and sturdy. When they ran, the earth itself shook.

The hundred black armored riders all gave off the aura of powerful experts.

“Huh?” The black armored riders all turned to stare at a place nearby. They saw a distant mountain quickly begin to turn red, and then begin to transform into scorching hot lava. A large amount of lava began to pour out from somewhere in the mountain, and faintly, a human figure could be seen walking on top of the lava, his entire body covered with flames. He walked straight towards them.

Hu.

With a single step, he leaped to the ground. He was bringing with him a ferocious scaled beast that was blackish-brown in color. Behind him, there

was also a four-hooved beast that was walking as well. Quickly, the human figure flew out from the middle of the lava, revealing his face... it was a face belonging to an old man, with fiery red hair and a small scarlet snake hanging from his ear. The four-hooved beast also walked to the viper elder's side, seeming extremely obedient.

"Master." The hundred black armored riders called out respectfully.

The viper elder laughed loudly. "We came hunting, but I didn't expect that we would run into an Armored Wurm. My luck isn't bad. This Armored Wurm is very close to becoming a Xiantian lifeform. When I get home, I need to spend some time raising it."

"Master, master!" a voice suddenly rang out from the skies.

Ji Lee raised his head.

In mid-air, an enormous flying beast with blue feathered wings could be seen, with a man wearing an exquisite beast pelt seated atop it. After the flying beast landed at high speed, the rider immediately jumped off and landed on the ground, then came to one knee. "Master, there's news from the Prefecture."

“Speak.” Lee frowned.

“Yichuan’s son, Ning, has entered the ‘one with the sword’ stage today,” the man said respectfully.

Lee stared at him, the fire surrounding his body blazing hotter. He was so angry that his entire body began to shake. Suddenly, he smashed that Armored Wurm he had captured into the distant mountain cliff. The heavy monstrous beast, at least ten thousand pounds in weight, turned into a blur. With a bang, it smashed against the distant mountain cliff, and on it appeared an enormous crevice which was now surrounded by hundred-meter long cracks. The Armored Wurm lay there in the crevice, blood pouring from its head, and its scales shattered. It had been smashed to death.

“Return to the West Prefecture City!” Lee ground his teeth for a long time before finally shouting out this order.

“Yes,” the hundred black armored riders said in unison. Although they felt that throwing away the corpse of the Armored Wurm was a huge waste, their master, Ji Lee, was currently in a royal rage. Naturally, no one dared to contradict him.

Rumble rumble.

Lee, riding his four-hooved monstrous beast, was followed by his hundred black armored riders. They left the deep, mysterious mountain forest and quickly disappeared, only leaving behind that Armored Wurm in that crevice in the mountainside, its blood still dripping down the cliff.