

Chapter 381: The First Day of the Saint Academy Examination

"I am better than you," Si Xingkong said afterwards. "I have practiced with 2400 drops of Vital Essence and greatly increased the speed of our practice with the Dragon's Blood. By my calculations, I can reach the Advanced Stage of the Heaven Realm before the year is out."

Chang Qiqi also nodded his head. Without the Dragon's Blood, it would have taken him three or five years to reach his current Cultivation Realm.

Because of this, he owed thanks to Zhang Ruochen.

If Zhang Ruochen had not brought them to the Underwater Dragon Palace, it would have been impossible for them to gain the Dragon's Blood, and even more impossible for them to attend the exam at Saint Academy.

Thanks to his Dragon's Blood, he had gained the long-cherished opportunity to become a Saint of the Saint Academy.

Everybody was talking and laughing; only Duanmu Xingling remained silent. She seemed to be upset about something.

Zhang Ruochen cast a glance towards Duanmu Xingling and noticed her difference in mood. "Senior sister apprentice Duanmu," he said, "what are you thinking?"

Duanmu Xingling was startled by Zhang Ruochen's words. "It's nothing," she hastily said. "I'm just very happy to see senior sister disciple Luo and Sister Chen again."

"Indeed! Luo Shuihan, Huang Yanchen and Chen Xier will be attending the exam here in Saint Academy to attend the exam," Chang Qiqi said with excitement. "We'll finally be able to reunite!"

Following after Lei Jing, Zhang Ruochen, Si Xingkong, Chang Qiqi and Duanmu Xingling rushed to the Saint Academy.

Crowds of people had gathered outside the Saint Academy all of them internal students of the School of the Martial Market. Their numbers could not be counted at a glance.

Some of them had been waiting here since last night.

Some of the prestigious students rode in on elegant carriages drawn by savage beasts, directly entering the gate of the Saint Academy without needing to queue up. This roused the envy of the other students.

"That's Xu Qing, the God-favored son of the Saint Xu Gentry."

"There goes a Half-Saint from the Saint Xu Gentry; he's a lecturer at the Saint Academy."

"No wonder Xu Qing doesn't have to queue up; he can directly enter the Saint Academy to attend the first round of the exam."

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While others were talking, Zhang Ruochen glanced towards the carriage. He saw a young man in a white embroidered robe sitting in the carriage, a fellow with sharp eyes and a dignified air.

Four brute elephants in golden armour pulled the carriage along, marching forward at a slow, seemingly momentous pace.

Behind the carriage came 36 young warriors, men and women who had all cultivated to the Heaven Realm.

Each of them was brimming with spirit and had Spiritual Blood filled with vigor. Spiritual Qi circulated through 100,000 of the pores in their bodies. They were obviously not common warriors.

36 of these young warriors were also outstanding talents cultivated by the Saint Xu Gentry, sent to attend the Saint Academy's examination along with Xu Qing.

"These Saint families are definitively powerful if they can actually cultivate this many Young Geniuses," Si Xingkong said in a shocked tone. "If this current generation of Saint Xu Gentry students are so outstanding, how terrible will they be dozens of generations from now?"

Lei Jing said, "That is the intrinsic, insurmountable difference between powerful Saint families and other clans. Who knows how many powerful Saint families there are in the entire Eastern Region?"

The appearance of dozens of genius Saint Xu Gentry students outside the Saint Academy truly caused quite a stir. Everyone was talking about it, some with whispers of awe, others with hisses of envy.

The genius students from the South Cloud Commandery stood among the crowd and stared at the Saint Xu Gentry carriages.

Xue Yingrou looked at Xu Qing as he sat in the carriage, a strange look visible in her beautiful eyes. There was no doubt in her mind: only someone like Xu Qing, the God-favored son of a powerful Saint family, would be a match for her.

If she could become a woman like Xu Qing, someday she could stand in that very spot.

In that moment, a sound like a tsunami came from the crowd.

"The God-favored son of the East Region Saint Mansion is here!"

"My god! The East Region Saint Mansion actually sent much more geniuses than the Saint Xu Gentry did."

"The Chens are a Aristocratic Family from the East Region Saint Mansions that date back to the Middle Ages. Their power is leagues above that of the common Saint Families; they truly are one of the top clans."

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Zhang Ruochen was shocked. He thought about Huang Yanchen and Chen Xier; weren't they from the East Region Saint Mansions?

Zhang Ruochen scanned the ranks of East Region Saint Mansion members, looking for Huang Yanchen.

The East Region Saint Mansion contingent was led by three Violet Gold Carriages more than ten meters tall. These vehicles, less carriages and more like three small palaces, slowly lumbered forward.

These three Violet Gold Carriages were each pulled by a fifth level savage beast, a Kylin.

These three Kylin pressed forward bridle to bridle, emitting a powerful savage beast aura that squashed the momentum of the Saint Xu Gentry.

Three talents sat alone in each of the three Violet Gold Carriages, two men and one woman. They were the most outstanding talents in the current generation of Chens.

Though they were not Sainly Beings, their strength was very close to that of Sainly Beings.

Behind the Violet Gold Carriage marched 157 young warriors in the Heaven Realm, talents cultivated by the Chens who had come to attend the Saint Academy exam.

Even after looking for quite a while, Zhang Ruochen did not find Huang Yanchen and Chen Xier. He was a bit surprised.

At that moment, Zhang Ruochen felt the sensation of someone staring at his back. It was Huang Yanchen's aura.

Zhang Ruochen smiled slightly and twirled around to look.

Huang Yanchen, dressed in a silver robe, stood more than 30 meters away in a silver robe, her hair colored a royal blue. She stood there, chest outthrust with pride, holding a white combat sword in her hands.

She raised her chin with pride, a bitter icing air pouring off her body. She seemed to be keeping her distance from the others.

Before Zhang Ruochen could walk over, Duanmu Xingling reached Huang Yanchen and hugged her. "Sister Chen, I missed you so much!" She said excitedly. "Say, why aren't you with the Young Geniuses of the East Region Saint Mansions?"

Chen Xier walked up to them from behind. "We are students of School of the Martial Market in Omen Ridge," she pointed out with a smile. "Since we're going to attend the Saint Academy's examination, we certainly ought to be by your side."

Upon saying those words, she cast a glance towards Zhang Ruochen and provocatively fluttered her eyelashes.

Luo Shuihan, clad in a white veil, walked out of the crowd and stared at Zhang Ruochen. "Junior fellow apprentice Zhang," she said in a cold voice, "I have succeeded with my practice!"

Nobody but Zhang Ruochen knew what Luo Shuihan meant.

Luo Shuihan must have succeeded at practicing the movement of the first Half-Saint's Sacred Glyph technique left by Luo Xu. She had awoken her Sainly Being and gone through a metamorphosis.

Zhang Ruochen was very pleased. "Congratulations, senior sister disciple Luo," he said in a bright tone.

“I must thank you. Without your help, I couldn’t possibly have succeeded.”

Although Luo Shuihan stood right in front of Zhang Ruochen, she was cloaked in clouds of fog that flowed around her. It was like she was standing in a distortion of space and time, obscuring her beauty in people’s eyes.

Without the use of his Skyeeye, even Zhang Ruochen could not perceive her.

She must have succeeded in mastering her Saintly Being.

Chang Qiqi laughed out loud: “Now that we’re all here, today is the day we redeem the name of School of the Martial Market in Omen Ridge. Today’s the day we show up everyone who looks down upon us and thinks that people from a remote area like us can’t do anything. Everyone try your best to pass the exam and become a Saint.”

“Today the first round of the exam will take place; this round is not so strict,” Luo Shuihan said. “With this Saint Academy token of mine, we can directly enter Saint Academy to attend the exam without queuing up. Everyone follow me!”

Luo Shuihan took the first step forward. Zhang Ruochen and the others followed behind him.

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Chapter 382: Stairway to Heaven

The forefather of the Luos, Luo Xu, was a Saint from Saint Academy of very high status.

With his token, Luo Shuihan could go practically anywhere in the Saint Academy.

Very soon, the people of Omen Ridge reached the place for the first round round of the exam, Stairway to Heaven.

Stairway to Heaven was the highest building of Saint Academy, made entirely from snow crystal meteorite. Every piece of it weighed 50,000 kg. There were 99 stairs in total, which rose straight into the clouds, giving people a feeling of expansive magnificence.

At the top of the 99-stair way was a white Holy Temple that emitted white holy light. Seen from afar, it resembled a round moon hanging in the sky with the Holy temple itself at the very center.

Such a wonderful scene could only be seen at the Saint Academy.

It was said that since ancient times, every saint of Saint Academy would leave behind an article to be reserved in the Holy Temple.

At the same time, the Holy Temple worshiped the stone figures of these Saints, which contained their residual Saint Power, ensuring that students of the younger generation would worship them forever.

To worship these figures, they first had to climb the Stairway.

In the Holy Temple atop the Stairway to Heaven, the large quantities of Saint Power gave off a powerful aura, pale streaks that pressed down from above and shackled them like chains.

With every stair step they ascended, the pressure would double.

Only students who could reach the 30th stair were officially counted as passing the first round exam.

When Luo Shuihan, Zhang Ruochen, Huang Yanchen, Duanmu Xingling, Si Xingkong, Chang Qiqi and Chen Xier came to the foot of the Stairway to Heaven, they saw hundreds of people who were ascending and continuing to ascend the Stairway.

On the 30th step of the Stairway stood a giant Jade Tablet nine meters high.

Students who reached the 30th stair needed to carve their names on the Jade Tablet with their fingers to pass the first round exam.

Genius students who ascended to the 30th stair were usually not satisfied with this and kept going up.

Some of them had actually already ascended to 50th stair and were still climbing.

“The higher one’s qualifications are, the higher he can ascend,” Huang Yanchen said. “Therefore, many people who have passed the first round exam choose to keep ascending to prove their superiority.”

“Stairway to Heaven is a very famous historical site even in the Eastern Region. As long as you show your outstanding talent and win over all other warriors here, you immediately become famous worldwide.”

“A man wants to establish his reputation like a tree wants to cast its shadow. Chances like these don’t come often.”

Chang Qiqi rubbed his palms. “Haha!” he said with excitement. “Today seems to be the day I will become famous.”

Besides Chang Qiqi, Si Xingkong, Huang Yanchen and Chen Xier were also very excited; this very rare opportunity was a chance for them to prove their strength and compete with the God-favored sons of the entire Eastern Region.

Nevermind the chance to study at the Saint Academy:

It was also possible that many Half-Saints were standing in the darkness and observing the Stairway to Heaven.

As long as they were outstanding enough, they could be directly enrolled as the students of the Half-Saints.

This had happened in the past examinations of the Saint Academy. So, though it was just the first round exam, they all tried their best to show their strength.

Zhang Ruochen and the others did not ascend the Stairway right away; they were still observing and in the hopes of learning the abilities of the Eastern Region geniuses.

A short moment later, the genius students of the South Cloud Commandery, who had also come to the foot of the Stairway to Heaven, rushed towards the Stairway.

Even for an outstanding inheritor of the Half-Saint Family like Zi Hansha, it would definitely be a great joy for him if he could be enrolled as the student of a Half-Saint.

This reason for this was that the Zi family had only a single ancestor of Half-Saint level, who did not often reveal himself.

If their Half-Saint ancestor accidentally died without leaving a successor, the Zi family would be kicked down into the mortal world and lose their status of Half-Saint family. At the same time, they would suffer at the hands of other Half-Saint families seeking to carve up their property.

If Zi Hansha could become the student of a Half-Saint, his status in the Zi family would rise as well. Hee would definitely be designated to inherit the position of Zi family leader.

Even the status of the Zi family would also possibly increase.

“The Stairway to Heaven...wonderful. Today will be the day I become famous. If I can win the favor of a Half-Saint and become his student, who will dare to disrespect me when I return to the Zi family house? Xue Yingrou, that little b**ch, will surely throw herself at me.”

The more Zi Hansha thought, the more excited he got. After taking a deep breath, he kicked his legs to fly up the stairs and land on the 21th step.

“Boom!”

Zi Hansha’s amazing performance caused quite a stir.

“Who is that man? He skipped straight to the 21st stair; that’s really amazing.”

“There are actually masters like this attending the Saint Academy’s examination?”

Zi Hansha heard the gasps of amazement down below and grew excited. He kept ascending the stairs—the 22nd step, the 23rd step...

Without stopping for a moment, he reached the 30th stair.

Purple light gathered around his fingertip. With three swooshing sounds, he carved the name ‘Zi Hansha’ deeply into the Jade Tablet.

Afterward, he kept ascending.

However, the Saint Power from Holy Temple grew stronger and stronger from the 30th stair onward, which forced Zi Hansha to ascend slower and slower.

It took him 15 minutes to get to the 40th level.

Afterward, his speed decreased even further. It took almost three minutes for him to ascend a single step.

Even so, Zi Hansha’s performance was still top-notch, as there were only 23 genius students who had ascended the 40th stair and above till now.

“Zi Hansha is actually the first Martial Market school master from the South Cloud Commandery. He truly is strong,” Zhang Ruochen thought.

At that very moment, there were fresh gasps of amazement from below.

The 24th genius student had ascended to the 40th step.

They all gasped at this genius student, a startlingly slim beauty with skin like cream and long hair like a golden waterfall. She was the very picture of a fairy, standing silhouetted against the holy light of the Stairway to Heaven.

Zhang Ruochen also cast a glance toward the woman and gave a slight nod. He had to admit that Xue Yingrou's beauty was outstanding. Her delicate and attractive temperament in particular made her very adorable, filling men with the temptation to embrace and love her.

"This woman is tiresome, but her talent is high." Duanmu Xingling said.

"You know her?" Huang Yanchen asked.

Duanmu Xingling grinned and cast a glance at Zhang Ruochen. "I only know of her," she replied with a smile, "but Zhang Ruochen has a very deep relationship with her. He not only saved her life, but also taught her sword techniques..."

Duanmu Xingling would have eagerly kept talking had Zhang Ruochen not interrupted her with two loud coughs.

Huang Yanchen, who grew angry at even trivial matters, was grumpy from the start. Hearing Duanmu Xingling's words, her mind was filled with many aesthetically "romantic" scenarios.

"Hum! Is she beautiful? I don't think so!"

Huang Yanchen clenched her snow-white teeth and stared intently at Zhang Ruochen. Her five fingers clenched and made a crackling sound.

Zhang Ruochen smiled and echoed her words: "Nah. She really isn't very beautiful."

"Hmmm," Huang Yanchen said, a doubtful expression on her face. Suddenly, she started dashing up the Stairway to Heaven.

With the instruction of her mother and the strength of Dragon's Blood, Huang Yanchen had greatly improved her cultivation—she had greatly surpassed her former self.

"Swoosh!"

With just a single movement, Huang Yanchen directly ascended to the 22nd step of the stairway. With a mere four more leaps, she reached the 30th step as if she was flying with wings.

Leaving her name on the Jade Tablet, she instantly ascended to the 31st Stairway and chased after Xue Yingrou.

Men liked to fight for the leading role; women were no different.

Seeing Huang Yanchen chase after Xue Yingrou, Zhang Ruochen felt even more helpless. He glanced over towards Duanmu Xingling. "Senior sister apprentice Duanmu," he said, "You know how temperamental senior sister apprentice Huang can be; why did you set out to irritate her?"

"I merely told her the truth; was that so wrong?" Duanmu said with a giggle. "I didn't tell her about Xue Yingrou kissing you..."

Chang Qiqi looked at Huang Yanchen and her position on the stairway. "How can Junior sister apprentice Huang be so strong?" He asked. "Did she completely refine the Dragon's Blood?"

Huang Yanchen's truly amazing performance seemed to surpass the power of Zi Hansha.

Chang Qiqi had practiced so hard, but had only refined a mere third of the Dragon's Blood. Currently, he was far less powerful than Huang Yanchen.

"Haven't you heard?" Chen Xier said. "Her mother is a Half-Saint who has already helped her completely refine the Dragon's Blood...among other things."

"Not just the Dragon's Blood?"

Chen Xier nodded and continued: "Do you still remember the Half-Saint heart of Di Yi? They handed that heart over to my cousin after it was dug out. In recent months, my cousin has been practicing with the Half-Saint's heart. With the help of my aunt, her cultivation has reached the Advanced Stage of the Heaven Realm and seems to be approaching the Dawn State of the Heaven Realm."

"Ah! How wonderful to have a Half-Saint mother. If I had gained the help of a Half-Saint, I would have refined the Dragon's Blood long ago. If I had had a Half-Saint's heart, I would also have broken through into a new realm long ago." Chang Qiqi said with a deep sigh.

Huang Yanchen truly had made great progress refining the Dragon's Blood. For some reason—maybe because she strove to completely regulate her Genuine Qi—the streaks of golden light pouring off her body gathered into the illusory image of a golden dragon.

"Awoo!"

A loud dragon roar echoed from her body, creating a powerful pressure.

In mere moments, she ascended three stairs in a row, and reached the 42th step right behind Xue Yingrou.

Xue Yingrou was obviously shocked by the powerful pressure she felt behind her. She turned and saw an Iceberg Beauty with long blue hair.

"Awoo!"

Another dragon roar.

The beauty with long blue hair held out one palm. Golden light gathered in the middle of her palm and formed into a dragon claw that attacked Xue Yingrou's shoulder.

"Who are you? What are you doing?" Xue Yingrou said with shock.

Xue Yingrou was also a powerful God-favored daughter with quick reflexes. She darted sideways with a twist of her slender wrist, dodging Huang Yanchen's attack.

"Divine Dragon Moves the Mountain."

Huang Yanchen instantly pursued her and lashed out with both hands. One hand grabbed Xue Yingrou's waist while the other seized Xue Yingrou's neck. Both hands, each curled like two dragon claws, pushed downward and hurled Xue Yingrou down the Stairway to Heaven.

"Bang! Bang!"

The startlingly beautiful Xue Yingrou was hurled down the Stairway to Heaven in a state of sheer misery.

Many of the Young Geniuses regularly fought with each other on the Stairway to Heaven each year during the Saint Academy examination. Most of them were well prepared for this.

None of them, however, expected to see two startling beauties like these fight so fiercely. Before their eyes, one of these beauties was cast down from on high, her image destroyed and reputation discredited. Truly she was in a miserable state!

Chapter 383: Duel with Saint Xu Gentry

Below the Stairway, the gifted students were stupefied. Some were surprised by Huang Yanchen's power, while others showed pity on Xue Yingrou.

Any man would have compassion for a beauty like Xue Yingrou, who was directly thrown down from the Stairway.

"The blue-haired woman just used some martial techniques from the *Divine Dragon Techniques*. Is she a descendant of the Chens or the East Region Saint Mansions?"

An arrogant voice came out from the crowd. That person snorted and said, "Don't you know her? Her mother is the youngest Half-Saint in the Chens. Her name is Huang Yanchen."

The speaker was Xu Qing, the first prodigy of the Saint Xu family.

He wore a white embroidered robe and his hands were clasped behind his back, which was straight like a long spear. He walked from the distance with an awe-inspiring strength. The onlooking students were frightened and drew back to make way for him.

Only a few people remained calm in front of him.

Chen Xier said with a smile, "That man is Xu Qing. In the Saint Xu family, he's favored by a Half-Saint forefather. He also has outstanding talents. It's said that his martial cultivation has reached the Peak of the Dawn State of the Heaven Realm.

"The most important thing is that he met my cousin in the Chens and was startled by her beauty. After that, he visited my cousin many times and sent her many rare treasures. But, regrettably, all of those treasures were thrown out by my cousin.

"But, he continued to send things to my cousin's mansion. Moreover, what he gave her each time was more precious than the previous one. Even though he knew that my cousin was engaged, he didn't give up. Moreover, he intended to take her away from you."

Zhang Ruochen looked calm. Chang Qiqi snorted and said, "Unexpectedly, he attempted to snatch someone else's fiancée. Doesn't he have a clear estimation of himself?"

Chen Xier laughed, saying, "As a descendant of Saint Gentry, he could easily carry off someone's wife, not to mention a fiancée. Senior Brother Chang, Xu Qing can kill you with half a movement."

Chang Qiqi was not convinced and activated the circulation of Genuine Qi within his body. On the surface of his skin, hard golden scales were generated.

After refining Dragon's Blood, Chang Qiqi's body mutated. As long as he mobilized the Genuine Qi, dragon scales would generate to cover his entire body. And then, he would become invulnerable and powerful enough that he could move mountains and drain seas.

Chen Xier showed a little disdain, saying, "The power of Dragon's Blood will be maximized only by practicing the *Divine Dragon Techniques*. Have you ever seen my cousin utilize Dragon's Power? You're too far behind her. Even if you possess the Dragon Scales for protection, how many movements can you withstand?"

"You've also practiced the *Divine Dragon Techniques*, right? Let's have a fight."

Chang Qiqi was enraged by Chen Xier. He sank his legs so that his ligaments and meridians became tense and his power gathered in both hands.

"Are you sure?"

Chen Xier rolled her eyes and was even more disdainful. When she held her 10 scallion-white fingers tightly together, wisps of golden Genuine Qi emitted from inside. Each wisp of Genuine Qi was like a flying dragon.

Zhang Ruochen felt somewhat unpleasant and said coldly, "Today, we've come here to participate in the Saint Academy's examination, rather than watch your competition. If you dare to, please go to the Stairway to Heaven to compete with students from the other Schools of the Martial Market."

After being rebuked by Zhang Ruochen, the haughty Chen Xier immediately contained her Genuine Qi and dared not to challenge Zhang Ruochen.

In the distance, Xu Qing was highly praising Huang Yanchen in a loud and clear voice, "Junior Sister Huang's 'Divine Dragon Removing Mountains' was displayed perfectly. She really deserves to be imparted by the Golden Dragon."

"Golden Dragon? Which one?"

Upon hearing Xu Qing's words, many people were confused.

"The Golden Dragon used to accompany Buddhist Emperor. Junior Sister Huang obtained its Dragon's Blood, so she got its inheritance. After refining the Golden Dragon's blood, her physical quality absolutely reached the top level, even though it can't be compared with the Saintly Being."

"I've also heard of the Golden Dragon. It's said that the Dragon Sarira also emerged with it."

“In the entire Kunlun’s Field, the Golden Dragon Tribe is the most powerful. A drop of Dragon’s Blood is enough to last a lifetime, let alone a Dragon Sarira.”

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Xue Yingrou, who had fallen from above, was just standing up. When she heard Xu Qing praising Huang Yanchen, she was even more jealous of her.

Originally, Xue Yingrou fell in love at first sight with Xu Qing. She wanted to become a daughter-in-law to Saint Gentry by throwing herself at him.

Xu Qing, however, did not like her at all.

Xu Qing had been staring at Huang Yanchen, God’s favored daughter, on the Stairway to Heaven.

“Who on earth is she? Did I offend her? Why has she been against me?”

Xue Yingrou squeezed her fists and clenched her teeth. Her eyes were full of fury, envy, and some killing intent, as if she would tear Huang Yanchen up.

Although Huang Yanchen ignored him, Xu Qing was not angry. He laughed and stretched out his two arms like a great hawk spreading its wings. And then, he rushed to the Stairway to Heaven.

Xu Qing reached the 26th level of the Stairway after taking just a single step.

Xu Qing directly reached the 30th level after the second step. After he signed his name on the Jade Tablet, he immediately rushed up and chased after Huang Yanchen.

Later, 36 gifted students cultivated by Saint Xu Gentry also rushed to the Stairway to Heaven to escort Xu Qing.

“He’s really shameless. Zhang Ruochen, let me teach him a lesson for you,” Chang Qiqi said indifferently.

Before Zhang Ruochen could stop him, Chang Qiqi had rushed to the Stairway to Heaven in a storm of anger.

Previously, Chen Xier had told him, “Xu Qing can kill you with half a movement.” But Chang Qiqi was not convinced. He was outraged and wanted to vent his anger.

Chang Qiqi quickly caught up with a gifted student of Saint Xu Gentry. He grabbed his vest, blocked his Sacred Meridian, and raised him over his head.

“You people of Saint Xu Gentry are shameless.”

Chang Qiqi swore and powerfully threw the student with his arms.

“Bang!”

The student fell from a height of 10 meters and as he landed down on the ground, it slightly shook.

Besides the gifted students of Saint Xu Gentry, those below the Stairway to Heaven were also stupified. It was unbelievable that someone had dared to abuse the people of Saint Xu Gentry so shamelessly.

He really had some nerve.

Saint Xu Gentry had a great influence and many masters, so even the descendants of other Saint Gentries could not easily swear like this.

Was his background stronger than that of Saint Xu Gentry?

Someone noticed that Chang Qiqi was completely covered up by Dragon Scales. They speculated that he must have refined a lot of Dragon's Blood. But it was unlikely that he had refined the Dragon's Blood of a Golden Dragon because no ordinary people could refine a large amount of Dragon's Blood.

How could a common warrior afford such a large amount of Dragon's Blood?

All the people were speculating about Chang Qiqi's identity. Since he dared to challenge Saint Xu Gentry, he had to be a hero.

"Who is this man? Doesn't he fear the retaliation of Saint Xu Gentry?"

"Since he cursed all the people of Saint Xu Gentry, he's absolutely not an average person. Perhaps he belongs to another Saint Gentry that is ready to do battle with Saint Xu Gentry on the Stairway to Heaven."

At that moment, Xue Yingrou scoffed, "Him? You're really overestimating him. He is just a common warrior from Omen Ridge, a deserted place. He obtained Dragon's Blood probably because of his good luck."

"What? A warrior from Omen Ridge? I know that place. It's at the edge of the Eastern Region and is very barren. It didn't even have any human civilization until recently, so it's very poor. For decades, it was very difficult for anyone from there to get admitted to the Saint Academy."

"It's true that unruly people come from the badlands."

"And he dares to curse Saint Xu Gentry like that. Wait and see, he'll surely be beaten miserably."

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When all the people were discussing him, Chang Qiqi flung away another two gifted students of Saint Xu Gentry and they tumbled down the Stairway to Heaven.

As the power of the Dragon's Blood was activated, his power greatly increased. He looked like a ferocious human-shaped brute dragon, howling with a roar like a dragon.

Standing on the 39th level, Xu Qing looked down with indifference. Then he ordered, "You can't let him sign his name on the Jade Tablet. Break his legs and throw him down the Stairway to Heaven."

If it was not forbidden to slay in the Saint Academy, Xu Qing had probably ordered to kill Chang Qiqi.

Was he not courting death that he dared to curse the people of Saint Xu Gentry?

After receiving Xu Qing's order, those gifted students of Saint Xu Gentry exasperatedly rushed toward Chang Qiqi one after another.

Finally, Chang Qiqi had met his match.

Attacked by a gifted student of Saint Xu Gentry, whose cultivation was at the Mid Stage of the Heaven Realm, Chang Qiqi constantly drew back and was even punched twice. Luckily, he was not injured because of his amazing defensive power.

“Damn.”

Si Xingkong snorted and the Genuine Qi inside his entire body burst out. His arms rattled like the crashing together of metal. His skeleton expanded and pieces of Dragon Scales were generated.

A moment later, Si Xingkong’s arms were seven times thicker. They turned into two three-meter-long Golden Dragon claws with 10 sharp toes, like 10 golden blades.

He directly rushed up the Stairway to Heaven and ran toward Chang Qiqi in an instant. As he swung a claw, the gifted student of Saint Xu Gentry who was fighting with Chang Qiqi was beaten back.

Si Xingkong was initially already stronger than Chang Qiqi. As the power of Dragon’s Blood was activated, his power naturally increased.

Si Xingkong continuously struck three times. The fourth strike hit the gifted student’s chest and left a bloody trace of a dragon’s claw. He was knocked into the sky and tumbled down the Stairway.

“How amazing! As a top 10 young master of Saint Xu Gentry, Xu Zhu was defeated after just a few movements. Who is that guy?”

“Look! His arms turned into dragon claws. Has he also refined a lot of Dragon’s Blood?”

“When did Dragon’s Blood become so worthless?”

“Isn’t that guy a warrior from Omen Ridge? Is Omen Ridge so powerful?”

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It was undeniable that Si Xingkong’s power was really amazing, and even those descendants of Half-Saint families were fearful.

In small places such as Omen Ridge, it was unlikely that a genius with such power could be cultivated.

Chapter 384: A Half-Saint Desires to Accept an Apprentice

Saint Xu Gentry was an old power for over 10,000 years in the Eastern Region, it had a solid foundation. In its history, there were many Saint-level powerhouses. And in its heyday, it could command all of the Eastern Region.

Even though it was worse off now, it still existed as a colossus. There were a lot of young geniuses, whether in its lineal juniors or its adopted hangers-on and disciples.

Xu Zhu, who was just defeated by Si Xingkong, was ranked 10th among the younger generation of Saint Xu Gentry.

A loud scolding arose. “You have guts. It’s unbelievable that there are so many daredevils. If you’ve pissed off our Saint Xu Gentry, you are out of luck.”

Xu Yuanzhi, who ranked fourth among the younger geniuses of Saint Xu Gentry, jumped up from the 27th Stairway and displayed the “Wind Bird Snow Palm”.

It was a Superior Class palm technique of the Spiritual Stage. Xu Yuanzhi had practiced it to the Realm of Success.

As he threw the palm, a snowstorm began to rage.

A current of icing air swept through that seemed to freeze the entire space. Then, it became a Genuine Qi handprint and beat on Si Xingkong’s chest.

Xu Yuanzhi had reached the Advanced Stage of the Heaven Realm, one realm higher than Si Xingkong. Moreover, the exercise that he practiced was the mid-class Ghost Level, *Invincible Skill*. As for the warriors of the four martial realms, it was a really powerful exercise.

If the exercises were more advanced, they would be harder to understand and practice. In case of any carelessness, a cultivator would probably be possessed by the Devil and doomed eternally.

Therefore, even as the descendants of Saint Gentry, most of them only practiced Spiritual Stage exercises in the four martial realms. Only those top-class people chose to practice the Ghost Level exercises.

Most people did not start to practice the Ghost Level exercises or King’s Stage exercises until they had reached the Fish-dragon Realm.

That was to say, Xu Yuanzhi was really something since he could successfully master the *Invincible Skill*, a mid-class exercise at the Ghost Level.

Si Xingkong stood below and suddenly turned his arms to attack Xu Yuanzhi.

“Pow!”

After the strike, both of them fell back. They were well-matched in strength.

He has real skill. But I only used 30 percent of my strength.

Xu Yuanzhi’s body ballooned as if there were gas in his clothes. The Genuine Qi inside constantly surged and his strength immediately increased by 20 percent. And then, he attacked Si Xingkong once again.

It was another movement of the Wind Bird Snow Palm. As a result, his palm hit Si Xingkong’s right dragon claw.

“Whoosh!”

Si Xingkong was overwhelmed by the power of the Icing Cold and almost half of his body was frozen.

Xu Yuanzhi is indeed formidable. He’s much stronger than the top-class people in the Half-saint families. In particular, his Wind Bird Snow Palm has reached the pinnacle of perfection.

All the gifted disciples were amazed that someone who was only a fourth genius of Saint Gentry was already so amazing. Xu Qing was the first master among the young generation of the Saint Xu family. Thus, it was easy to imagine Xu Qing’s martial attainments.

“In terms of their natural gifts, Xu Yuanzhi is superior to Zi Hansha. So, he could be counted as a top-notch powerhouse,” Duanmu Xingling said.

Zhang Ruochen said, “If in the same realm, the Eldest Brother should be able to combat with Xu Yuanzhi. Unfortunately, the Eldest Brother is one realm lower than Xu Yuanzhi now, so he might take a beating.”

Duanmu Xingling asked, “Should we go to assist them now? The Eldest Brother and Senior Brother Chang can not contend against all the junior masters of Saint Xu Gentry.”

Luo Shuihan slightly frowned and said, “I think we’d better wait for a moment. If we also launch attacks, that means we declare war against Saint Xu Gentry. You can’t imagine the background of a Saint Gentry. Moreover, Saint Xu Gentry has a history of 10,000 years, so it has a large fortune and a lot of offspring all around the world. Even our Saint Luo Gentry can’t compare with Saint Xu Gentry.”

Saint Luo Gentry only had a history of 200 years. And although Luo Xu’s power was far beyond that of the Saint of Saint Xu Gentry, in terms of comprehensive strength, they were not at the same level.

Chen Xier said, “Senior Sister Disciple Luo is right. We ought to be cautious. You need to know that each Saint Gentry has many benefit-based relationships through marriage and cooperation, so they are interconnected. Once we declare war on Saint Xu Gentry, the other Saint Gentries will definitely get involved.”

“All the descendants of Saint Gentries are conceited. So, they won’t turn a blind eye if Saint Xu Gentry is suppressed by our Omen Ridge. That’s to say, even if we can defeat the juniors of Saint Xu Gentry, we’ll still need to battle with all Saint Gentries. When that time comes, will we be able to win?”

In every place, the group of top-level people would form a circle of interests. They could compete with each other, but they would not allow the lower people to get promoted.

And when some of the lower people attempted to show themselves, those people would definitely be jointly dealt with.

For example, Lei Jing had been pushed aside by the people of Saint Gentry during those days.

Only those people with unrivaled talent, like Luo Xu, could stand firm in the Saint Academy. Moreover, the title of Saint was conferred on him in defiance of nature when he was being suppressed by Saint Gentry.

...

The Saints’ statutes stood in the Holy Temple at the top of the Stairway to Heaven.

And beside them, the Half-saints sat cross-legged on the ground.

As Saint Academy’s examination was held once every 10 years, many Half-saints were certainly attracted to take a look. They were curious to know who would be God’s favored sons this year.

If some incredible talents appeared, they would take the opportunity to take apprentices to become like themselves.

Although all Half-saints were lecturers of the Saint Academy, most of them belonged to a gentry or suzerain, so they had different relationships of interests.

Only a few Half-saints were utterly isolated.

There was a Half-saint who had a four-meter-high bulky figure, wearing a sackcloth with a bare chest. There was a string of prayer beads hanging around his neck and he sat cross-legged like Maitreya Buddha.

His body was like a hill.

His name was Demi-saint Alan, one of the lecturers of the Saint Academy. He used to practice in the Thousand Buddhas Sect for some time.

Demi-saint Alan laughed and said, "Interesting, it's really interesting. The two disciples of Omen Ridge must have obtained the Dragon's Blood of a Golden Dragon. Their physical qualities have mutated. One has grown dragon scales, while the other has grown dragon claws. If they're carefully taught and some knowledge of the Golden Dragon inside is awakened, their achievements will be limitless."

"So? Demi-saint Alan, are you going to take them as your apprentices?" Demi-saint Lingshu asked while looking with a sideways glance.

Demi-saint Lingshu wore a red robe and carried a Holy Sword on her back. The impression she made was overbearing.

However, she was totally different from Demi-saint Alan. As she sat cross-legged on the ground, she was only the size of a fist with a three-inch-high figure.

One was four meters high, while the other was only three inches high.

"Of course."

Demi-saint Alan said with a smile, "The Golden Dragon has a deep relationship with our Buddhism. The two guys could obtain Golden Dragon's Blood, signifying that they are related to Buddhism naturally. Moreover, the most important thing is that they are so brave that they dare to challenge Saint Xu Gentry. So, it's really interesting.

"However, it's too early to talk about taking apprentices. I have to wait until they pass at least three rounds and officially become Saints. If they fail to pass three rounds, they're unqualified to be my apprentices."

Half-saints were extremely strict in taking apprentices.

Even if Chang Qiqi and Si Xingkong had a deep relationship with Buddhism, they still needed to pass the examination. Only if they passed all the tests would Demi-saint Alan consider to accept them as apprentices.

There was a huge difference between taking apprentices and taking students.

In the Holy Temple, an indifferent voice emanated. “Unexpectedly, the two guys dare to insult our Saint Xu Gentry. I’m afraid that their cultivation will be destroyed in the first round. Demi-saint Alan, I fear that you won’t have the chance to take them as your apprentices.”

The speaker was a Half-saint of Saint Xu Gentry named Demi-saint Sandao.

Demi-saint Lingshu, the three-inch-high red-robed woman said with a smile, “Demi-saint Sandao, I heard that 50 years ago, Lei Jing offended your Saint Xu Gentry and was expelled from the Saint Academy. Originally, Lei Jing swore that he would go back to the Saint Academy with a brilliant prodigy to wipe out the descendants of all the Saint Gentries.

“Now, Lei Jing leads the gifted students of Omen Ridge to the Saint Academy. What’s your opinion on that?”

Demi-saint Sandao snorted and said, “Lei Jing? He’s just an unscrupulous junior. 50 years ago, I didn’t take him seriously. And in the future, I still won’t.

“As for the two geniuses of Omen Ridge, even if they have obtained the Golden Dragon’s Blood, they can be considered first-class geniuses at most. They still can’t compete with the top-level prodigies. The gifted students among the juniors of our Saint Xu Gentry will easily suppress them.”

Demi-saint Lingshu said, “I’ve heard that several prodigies were born in Omen Ridge. Moreover, the female prodigy of Saint Luo Gentry has practiced the Saintly Being. In the entire Eastern Region, how many young students can withstand that?”

“And worse still, I’ve heard that Lei Jing took an apprentice who has the inheritance of Buddhist Emperor. But, I don’t know if that’s true,” Demi-saint Alan said.

Although the news that Zhang Ruochen had defeated Di Yi had not been spread, many big shots of the School of the Martial Market had still gotten wind of that event.

For this reason, so many Half-Saint’s came here today. They wanted to see if Lei Jing had really accepted a great apprentice.

Incredibly, Lei Jing, a notorious rebellious student, had dared to challenge Saint Gentry.

Even the Half-saints had also heard his name.

Demi-saint Sandao remained calm. “The female prodigy of Luo’s family is indeed a Saintly Being. However, she represents Saint Gentry, rather than Omen Ridge. As for Lei Jing’s apprentice, who knows if he is as powerful as Lei Jing boasted?”

“Moreover, this year’s students are more advanced in their overall strength than last year’s. Empress Chi Yao has managed everything for 500 years. Farmers are blessed with propitious winds and rains. Martial Arts is prosperous and Saints come forth in large numbers. Young Geniuses are also more and more plentiful. Even if one more genius appears in Omen Ridge, it would be normal. But unfortunately, no matter how powerful he is, Lei Jing’s disciple is doomed to be suppressed by Xu Qing, a gifted disciple of our Saint Xu Gentry.”

Demi-saint Sandao mentioned Empress Chi Yao, so who dared to argue further with him?

If anyone were to argue further, it would be regarded as being impolite to Empress Chi Yao.

All the Half-saints remained silent and split their Divine Souls. They continued to look toward the Stairway to Heaven and waited to see what would develop next.

Chapter 385: The Battle Escalates

The fight between Xu Yuanzhi and Si Xingkong grew extremely fierce. No one thought that a student of Omen Ridge could struggle against the fourth-ranked master among the Saint Xu Gentry juniors for so long.

“The Omen Ridge student seems to have only reached the Mid Stage of the Heaven Realm,” an outstanding individual from the East Region Saint Mansions observed. “He is withstanding Xu Yuanzhi with physical qualities, rather than profound cultivation.”

Thanks to reaching the Dawn State of the Heaven Realm, this person had gained insight into Si Xingkong’s own realm.

“If memory serves me, Xu Yuanzhi has reached the Advanced Stage of the Heaven Realm. Is the Omen Ridge student superior to Xu Yuanzhi in terms of physical quality?”

The outstanding individual from the East Region Saint Mansions shook his head. “Not necessarily,” he said. “Xu Yuanzhi hasn’t yet used his full strength during this duel. However, the student of Omen Ridge has been pushed to the limit; he’ll be defeated any moment now.”

On the Stairway to Heaven, the the gifted students of the Saint Xu Gentry assaulted Si Xingkong and Chang Qiqi more fiercely.

Seven or eight gifted students launched their attacks at the same time, besieging Si Xingkong and Chang Qiqi. The students strongly pressured the two with all kinds of martial techniques, including Celestial Bodyshield Genuine Qi and the Light of Thunderbolt.

Even after they had refined Dragon Blood and attained ample strength, their opponents were still not weak; they were students of the Saint Gentry, after all.

“Xu Yuanzhi; if you can’t defeat him, I’ll disable him for you,” A dark-hued female student of the Saint Xu Gentry said coldly.

Her name was Xu Su. She had strong power thanks to reaching the Advanced Stage of the Heaven Realm. She ranked fifth among the juniors of Saint Xu Gentry, a little bit lower than Xu Yuanzhi.

Xu Yuanzhi laughed grimly. “He’s just a hillbilly from a backwater. Who says I can’t defeat him? I was just using him to practice my palm techniques. If I display my full strength, I’ll disable him with just three moves.”

This was why Xu Yuanzhi fought with Si Xingkong for so long; he wanted to display his strength before all the people present.

He rarely got the chance to fight on the Stairway to Heaven. Only in the Saint Academy examination could he have such an opportunity to stand in the limelight.

Perhaps even those at the Half-Saint level would become invested in this battle.

“Such nonsense. Who said prodigies can’t be born in a backwater like Omen Ridge?”

Duanmu Xingling rushed up the Stairway to Heaven. She mobilized the Genuine Qi and released the golden Dragon force within. Two small dragon horns grew on each side of her forehead.

“PHHT!”

Golden lightning arced between the two horns, pouring forth and surging through her entire body. Lightning gathered in her palm.

BAM!

BAM!

She threw her palms outwards. Two students of the Saint Xu Gentry were blasted back down the Stairway, spitting blood from their mouths.

Duanmu Xingling shook out her arms, and condensed the golden lightning into a long lightning sword. She swung her sword toward the void space, piercing through the Celestial Bodyshields of three gifted students at the same time.

“Cloud-Churning and Rain-Making.”

“Vigorous Qi of Nine Serenities.”

“Overbearing Fist Strength.”

Three students immediately unleashed their martial techniques. Some threw palms and some swung fists. None of them, though, could withstand Duanmu Xingling’s Sword Breath. They tumbled down the Stairway like gourds bouncing on the ground.

Because her Sword Breath contained ice power, these three students were coated in a layer of white ice crystals.

Warriors weren’t allowed to carry weapons on the the Stairway to Heaven. However, if one reached the Peak of Sword Following the Heart, they could use Celestial Bodyshield Genuine Qi to condense a sword.

Duanmu Xingling condensed an enormously powerful Genuine Qi sword, containing both the lightning of Thunder Dragon and the force of Icing Cold. No ordinary student could withstand such congealed power.

“Has another Omen Ridge powerhouse appeared?”

“Omen Ridge is just a barren wilderness. How can it give birth to so many powerhouses?”

...

Duanmu Xingling’s performance shocked the audience; many couldn’t believe their eyes.

At the same time, Duanmu Xingling's recent comments had displeased and offended nearly all the attending Sage Gentries and descendants of Half-Saint families.

A descendant of one Half-Saint family snorted. "How dare these Omen Ridge students act so haughtily while displaying their slight skills before us?" he said.

"I hope that the Saint Xu Gentry is strong enough to crack down on these inexperienced, greenhorn hillbillies," Another Half-Saint family descendant said coldly as they flexed some of their finger joints. "I don't feel inclined to intervene myself."

Zhang Ruochen had long known that Duanmu Xingling loved throwing the world into chaos and had a knack for stirring up trouble. This time, though, she had surpassed all expectations and dared to involve all the Half-saint families and Saint Gentries.

How will this all end?

Everything had gone out of control. The gifted students of Saint Xu Gentry were very angry. Additionally, those Saint Gentries and descendants of Half-Saint families were also eager for a fight to chastise the students of Omen Ridge.

"Have you discovered whether Duanmu Xingling's power is much stronger than Eldest Brother's? Chen Xi'er asked. "Does she hide her actual strength most days? Is she displaying her truth strength today?"

Duanmu Xingling's power was so strong that five geniuses of the Saint Xu Gentry had been defeated in an instant.

Zhang Ruochen long suspected that Duanmu Xingling had an extraordinary identity she concealed by hiding her cultivation. "Perhaps," he said furtively, "she hasn't displayed her actual strength. What is she trying to do?"

Zhang Ruochen had always assumed that Duanmu Xingling was more than a brainless woman with shapely breasts. Her provocation of the Saint Gentries and Half-Saint families was too effective to be anything but deliberate.

As the Saint Maiden of the Moon Worship Demonic Sect, Duanmu Xingling definitely wasn't entering the Saint Academy to become a common Saint.

Instead, she wanted to become a disciple to a Half-Saint or even a fully minted Saint.

This was the only way she could become a high-level member of the School of the Martial Market and Martial Market Bank.

Originally, she had chosen to deceive the public by practicing at the Martial Market School of Omen Ridge, lest the School of the Martial Market discover her real identity.

Who would have thought that the Saintess of Moon Worship Demonic Sect had been training in Omen Ridge for so many years?

If she had originally entered the School of the Martial Market of East Region Saint City, the huge Intelligence System in the Martial Market Bank headquarters would have discovered her true identity early on.

After practicing for a long period of time, the School of the Martial Market would grow less suspicious of her, making it more difficult for people to discover her real identity.

Today, however, was different.

Today, she needed to show she had a sufficiently high aptitude in order to be noticed by the high-level figures.

The bigger the sensation, the more high-level figures of the Saint Academy would pay attention.

Therefore, upon taking action, she immediately declared war on all the Half-saint families and Saint Gentries.

Of course, Zhang Ruochen, Huang Yanchen, Luo Shuihan and Duanmu Xingling's other team members were roped into this mess due to her behavior. The Half-saint families and Saint Gentries found them all equally offensive.

As the Saintess of a demonic sect, she had no other recourse.

The shame and unease she had felt over her plan had caused her worried look earlier that morning. Despite that, she said nothing when Zhang Ruochen asked whether something was on her mind.

"Such boldness! I would witness your abilities myself to understand why you dare set yourself against our Saint Xu Gentry!"

Xu Su, fifth-ranked among the young powerhouses of Saint Xu Gentry, glared down at Duanmu Xingling from her place on the 37th step. She immediately swooped straight down and simultaneously threw out her palms.

Two wisps of Genuine Qi burst from her palms and turned into a pair of phantasmal pythons. They bared their fangs to bite down Duanmu Xingling.

Duanmu Xingling, reluctant to show any weakness, brandished her combat sword of Genuine Qi and displayed a sword technique.

"Broken Moon."

Duanmu Xingling raised her arms and channeled Genuine Qi into sword. With a sudden stroke, she chopped the two pythons into pieces.

Xu Su's handprints suddenly became formless and powerless.

In the blink of an eye, Duanmu Xingling darted in and stabbed at Xu Su's left rib.

Xu Su displayed profound martial arts of her own. She turned into a residual shadow and moved at an angle to avoid Duanmu Xingling's sword stroke.

The two people engaged each other in a dog fight. Duanmu Xingling subtly gained the upper hand, suppressing Xu Su and forcing her to constantly retreat.

In the other direction, the battle between Xu Yuanzhi and Si Xingkong flared incandescent.

Rather than concealing his cultivation, Xu Yuanzhi abruptly launched a series of attacks, displayed three increasingly fiercer palm techniques that hit Si Xingkong like three overlapping ocean waves.

BAM!

The palm's power broke Si Xingkong's Celestial Bodyshield. Struck in the chest, he was forced nine steps back.

Thanks to the protection of Dragon's Blood, he suffered a minor injury, but nothing major.

Huang Yanchen, who had already climbed to the 47th Step, had a perfect vantage point to see the chaos below. More than ten gifted students of Saint Xu Gentry were besieging Duanmu Xingling, Si Xingkong and Chang Qiqi.

With a solemn look on her face, she turned back to jump down. "You're disgracing the name of the Saint Xu Gentry by bullying others with your superior numbers. As a student of Omen Ridge, today I want to personally witness the difference in power between my school and the Saint Xu Gentry."

Huang Yanchen waved her arms and conjured a wind-blade more than seven meters long. She slashed at the gifted students of the Saint Xu Gentry.

After Huang Yanchen's participation, the fight between Saint Xu Gentry and Omen Ridge intensified once again. The current situation was out of control.

Zhang Ruochen forced a smile onto his face and glanced at Luo Shuihan. "I suppose this fight was inevitable this day," he said.

Luo Shuihan, feeling helpless, sighed gently.

Neither Zhang Ruochen nor Luo Shuihan hoped this battle would go so far. After all, the Saint Gentry were influential and powerful, and their fame was widespread. At the moment, they could not predict the outcome of this battle. Supposing they won today, all the attendees would think that the Saint Xu Gentry was unworthy of their name. How would the Saint Xu Gentry be able to endure after that?

With their current strength, offending the Saint Gentry so severely was a useless endeavor.

And yet, as they watched the how the conflict escalated, they found they could not bear to watch Si Xingkong, Duanmu Xingling, and others fight the whole Saint Xu Gentry. They had to join the fight.

Chapter 386: The Buddha Emperor's Descendant

Luo Shuihan took a step forward and channeled power into his legs. He leapt, soared, and fell onto the Stairway to Heaven.

"Boom... "

Glowing blue Genuine Qi burst forth as he landed and rushed in all directions.

Both sides were separated from each other by this strong power.

"Everybody stop!" Luo Shuihan exclaimed.

The gifted students of the Saint Xu Gentry, frightened by Luo Shuihan's strength, stopped attacking.

Xu Yuanzhi recognized Luo Shuihan and knew she was the Saintly Being of the Saint Luo Gentry. "Miss Luo," he said, daring not to offend her, "please don't interfere in this matter. Our Saint Xu Gentry must teach these unscrupulous hillbillies a lesson."

"Who are you calling hillbillies?"

Chang Qiqi's face turned red. He clenched his fists and prepared to throw himself into a desperate fight with Xu Yuanzhi.

"Warriors from the distant and savage Omen Ridge lack experience and knowledge," Xu Yuanzhi said with an apathetic laugh. "They are as complacent as frogs in a well. What else can you call them but hillbillies?"

Upon hearing this, Luo Shuihan frowned slightly.

Chang Qiqi had launched the first attack that started this all. Since Omen Ridge was to blame for the conflict, Luo Shuihan sought to help resolve this conflict.

After all, there was no good reason for Chang Qiqi to offend the Saint Gentry, considering his cultivation and background.

As she listened to Xu Yuanzhi's words, Luo Shuihan understood that the most fundamental point of conflict between the two sides was over who launched the first attack, but the conflict between the Saint and humble families. Their quarrel could not be resolved so easily.

"I'm also from the School of the Martial Market of Omen Ridge," Luo Shuihan said. "Do you think that I'm such a narrow-minded person?"

"Miss Luo is also a student of Omen Ridge?" Xu Yuanzhi said, slightly shocked.

Although he had heard of a Saintly Being that came from Saint Luo Gentry, he did not know this Saintly Being had previously trained in the Martial Market School of Omen Ridge.

"Today is the date of the Saint Academy's examination," Luo Shuihan said. "It is pointless to escalate our conflicts; why can't you turn your hostility into friendship?"

The gifted students of Saint Xu Gentry hesitated for a while, Xu Yuanzhi and Xu Su among them. After all, Luo Shuihan was a Saintly Being. Even if they joined forces, they could not defeat her.

It would be best for them to resolve this conflict.

However, one of them was unwilling.

Xu Qing, one of the top young masters of the Saint Xu Gentry, strolled down from above and stood on the 39th level Stairway. "No wonder students of Omen Ridge are so arrogant," he said indifferently. "There's a Saintly Being behind them. Miss Luo, you've also heard the words they spoke moments before, words that brought great shame to our Saint Xu Gentry. If they aren't destroyed today, how will our Saint Xu Gentry bear this humiliation?"

"Why do you have to be so heartless and cruel?" Luo Shuihan asked. "Is there no other solution?"

Xu Qing folded his hands behind his back. "Of course," he said with a smile. "Our Saint Xu Gentry has a long history spanning 10,000 years. There's no need for us to exterminate them. As long as Zhang Ruochen comes out and kneels before all the students of our Saint Xu Gentry in apology, I'll forgive these three people and pursue the matter no farther."

Xu Qing had fallen in love with Huang Yanchen at first sight. He had secretly inquired about Huang Yanchen and knew that she had trained at the Martial Market School of Omen Ridge.

What's more, Huang Yanchen had a fiance named Zhang Ruochen, also a student of the Martial Market School of Omen Ridge.

He put forward this condition because he wanted Zhang Ruochen become a laughing stock before all students of Eastern Region. Subsequently, Zhang Ruochen would lack the face needed to marry Huang Yanchen.

Xu Qing looked Si Xingkong and Chang Qiqi up and down; which one of them, he wondered, was Zhang Ruochen?

In the end, Xu Qing fixed his eyes on Si Xingkong. Whether in temperament or cultivation, Si Xingkong greatly surpassed Chang Qiqi.

Perhaps he was Zhang Ruochen.

Huang Yanchen snorted. "Why should Zhang Ruochen be the one to kneel down and apologize?" she asked. "Don't you know that Zhang Ruochen is my fiance? How much are you willing to sacrifice to gain his apology?"

The look on Xu Qing's face changed. "As long as he kneels down," he said, "I will be satisfied."

While they were arguing, Zhang Ruochen had already walked up the Stairway to Heaven and stepped up next to Huang Yanchen. "What If I refuse to kneel down and apologize?" he said, looking at Xu Qing.

"You! You're Zhang Ruochen? You're a little different than what I imagined."

Xu Qing shifted his eyes and stared at Zhang Ruochen, not bothering to conceal his enmity at all.

"How do you know my name, I wonder?" Zhang Ruochen said.

"It's said that you've obtained the Dragon Sarira and become the Buddha Emperor's descendant," Xu Qing said. "Is that true or false?"

The Saint Xu Gentry had established itself over a long history of 10,000 years. If there was any signs of trouble in any part of the Eastern Region, the Saint Xu Gentry would be immediately informed.

As the top figure among the young generation of Saint Xu Gentry, Xu Qing had naturally heard of Zhang Ruochen.

"True? False? Who can say?" Zhang Ruochen responded in a calm voice.

"Haha! Since you won't tell me, I'll learn the answer myself. I'd like to see how strong of a Buddha Emperor's descendant you are."

From head to toe, Xu Qing's muscles and bones crackled and snapped. Every inch of his flesh and blood turned silver, making him look like an iron man. In a flash, he rushed up to Zhang Ruochen and threw a punch.

Xu Qing practiced the *Hinayana Vajra Martial Code*, which was a Superior Class Ghost Level Exerciss. Moreover, he had activated his Sacred Mark. As long as he channeled Genuine Qi with all his strength, his body would turn into silver and iron alloy. Meanwhile, he would grow strong enough to tear apart brute elephants with his bare hands.

"Swoosh!"

Zhang Ruochen stepped sideways and dodged Xu Qing's punch.

"Thousand-hand King-Kong."

Xu Qing's martial accomplishments had reached the apex of perfection. When Zhang Ruochen moved sideways, Xu Qing abruptly turned his body and threw another punch towards Zhang Ruochen's chest.

Suddenly, Xu Qing resembled a thousand-arm and thousand-handed God of War. Though he threw a single punch, there seemed to be countless fists coming from all directions.

"Nine-folds of the Elephant Power."

Zhang Ruochen threw out 9 handprint strikes in a row, clashing with Xu Qing's strikes using a ninefold palm power.

With a bang, they were both blasted back at the same time.

All Zhang Ruochen felt was an ache running through his arm. Blood trickled from his palm. His arms had nearly dislocated.

"He is a worthy descendant of the Saint Gentry. Even if Xu Qing doesn't qualify as a Saintly Being, he isn't that far off from their level by my estimation."

Zhang Ruochen immediately channeled Blue Genuine Qi through his body. The pain in his arm instantly vanished, while the beads of blood on his palm were refined into blood fog and absorbed back into his body.

The opponent had reached the peak of the Dawn State of the Heaven Realm, two realms higher than Zhang Ruochen. The victory Zhang Ruochen desired would not be easy.

Zhang Ruochen may have been surprised, Xu Qing was even more shocked. Zhang Ruochen had withstood a punch he threw with all his strength. In turn, the force of Zhang Ruochen's palm power had rendered Xu Qing's arms numb.

After all, the exercises practiced by Xu Qing were powerful from the start. Due to its amazing defensive power, he always held all the trump cards in hand-to-hand combat.

He had heard that Zhang Ruochen excelled in sword technique rather than palm technique. They said that Zhang Ruochen had mastered Heart Integrated into Sword, but he was not certain how authentic this information was.

On the Stairway to Heaven, warriors were not allowed to carry any weapons. So, Zhang Ruochen could not use his sword techniques.

With this advantage, he should have been able to take Zhang Ruochen down easily.

Although his punch was not effective, Xu Qing ascertained Zhang Ruochen's actual condition.

"You just used the Dragon and Elephant Prajna Palm of the Thousand Buddhas Sect. You really obtained Dragon Sarira and became the Buddha Emperor's descendant. No wonder you became so powerful at such a young age," Xu Qing said.

"Because I used Dragon and Elephant Prajna Palm, that makes me the Buddha Emperor's descendant? If I used martial techniques from the Taiji Doctrine, would that make me the Taoist Emperor's descendant?"

Everything about Zhang Ruochen became clear to Xu Qing. Xu Qing felt the urge to tell everybody present that Zhang Ruochen had obtained Dragon Sarira, a peerless treasure.

Just imagine: who would not want to get such a treasure like the Dragon Sarira?

Forget the young students; even the Half-Saints' desires would be aroused.

Xu Qing attacked Zhang Ruochen again, this time with the "King Kong Exorcism". Flames burned all around his body like a cloud of blazing fire. He swooped down and swung with his fists at the same time.

Zhang Ruochen did not dodge this time, but instead struck with a lightning-quick little finger.

"Lesser Marsh Tranquility Meridian Sword Wave."

In an instant, Spiritual Qi seem to flow forth from the surrounding substances of Heaven and Earth. All the Qi condensed around Zhang Ruochen's fingertip, turning into a powerful, sharp and overbearing sword wave.

The sword wave expanded like a shining comet scorching a trailer across the sky and slammed into Xu Qing's body with a loud 'wham'.

Xu Qing crossed his hands to protect his chest.

BAM!

Under the impact of the sword wave, Xu Qing sparkled with light and flew backward about 33 meters.

"Ten Meridian Sword Wave."

"You...really practiced martial techniques from the Taiji Doctrine."

Xu Qing was astonished. No one, not even disciples of the Taiji Doctrine, could practice Ten Meridian Sword Wave so easily.

Though the Ten Meridian Sword Wave was only a Spiritual-stage Superior-class martial technique, the person who successfully mastered it would possess power equivalent to the Ghost-level Inferior-class martial technique.

Judging by the power just displayed by Zhang Ruochen, he had evidently succeeded at mastering this technique.

“Xu Qing has finally met his match. I never expected Omen Ridge to give birth to such an outstanding talent.”

In the eyes of the public, Luo Shuihan, a person who achieved the status of Saintly Being, was more powerful.

After all, Luo Shuihan was favored by the Saint Luo Gentry. Despite training at the Omen Ridge since childhood, Saint Luo Gentry had also provided her some resources for practice.

Therefore, no one was surprised by Luo Shuihan’s powerful strength.

What was really surprising was how a person like Zhang Ruochen, who was not from Saint Gentry, had accomplished so much in the present day.

“Is it true that he really obtained the Dragon Sarira?”

A descendant of Saint Gentry spoke up: “I heard from a senior that the Dragon Sarira came into the world a few days ago. They say that it was obtained by a young man named Zhang Ruochen. However, Omen Ridge is a remote area I have scant information on; I’m not sure whether this incident is rumor or a real event.”

“If it’s real, it must be quite amazing. Back in the day, the Buddhist Emperor was one of the most powerful figure in the whole Kunlun’s Field. If one obtained his Sarira, he would have a skyrocketing rise.”

“Zhang Ruochen is less than 20 years old. Without the Sarira, I refuse to believe he could train himself up to this realm.”

...

Upon hearing the public discussion, Xue Yingrou was a little stupefied. In that instant, she knew that Zhang Ruochen’s true identity was none other than the “Buddha Emperor’s descendant”.

Assuming he wasn’t killed as a novice, it would be child’s play for Zhang Ruochen attain this holy title.

Chapter 387: The Inheritance of the Feather Saint, Heart Integrated into Sword

“Sun Meridian Ripple!”

“Tranquility Pulse Sword Wave.”

“Medium Pulse Breaking Sword Wave.”

Zhang Ruochen struck out three fingers at the same time, gathering three strokes of power. His left thumb, index finger and middle finger felt like they were on fire. With a blast, three Sword Waves struck out simultaneously.

Burning like the scorching sun and smelter, three strokes of giant scorching Sword Breath attacked toward Xu Qing.

“Phht!”

Xu Qing stood firmly and immediately channeling the technique of “Hinayana Vajra Martial Code”. The Genuine Qi in his body was released. He drew a circle in the air with his finger. Silver liquid metal drops immediately appeared in front of him.

The liquid metal drops concentrated together, forming three silver metal combat swords, which were deadly sharp and resembled the combat sword of Genuine Martial Arms.

Only warriors who had a physical quality of Metal nature and achieved a higher realm in martial arts could condense a metal weapon with his own Genuine Qi. At the same time, the warrior could also swallow metal directly and digest it with his stomach, and the metal would integrate into his body.

Xu Qing had such physical quality. Under the strengthening of Hinayana Vajra Martial Code, he had reached the realm of Forming Soldiers with Qi and Fusing Soldiers with Qi.

While Xu Qing was turning his fingers, three combat swords kept turning as well, emitting fierce and forceful Sword Breath. It flew towards three Sword Waves.

“Bam!”

“Bam!”

“Bam!”

There were three loud bangs.

The three metal combat swords condensed by Xu Qing collided with three Sword Waves. They decomposed immediately and turned into streaks of Genuine Qi fog, disappearing into the sky.

“So what if you are the Buddha Emperor’s descendant. I also have the inheritance of Feather Saint; and I may not lose to you.”

“Fiery Wings.”

Xu Qing lowered his arms and bent his back forward. Two humps grew near his spine, becoming bigger and bigger.

With a swooshing sound, they broke out, turning into two flaming wings.

After spreading out, the wingspan was at least nine meters wide.

Xu Qing flew up and hovered nine meters above ground.

Every piece of his feather was as sharp as the blade of a knife. Under Xu Qing’s control, the flaming wings flapped quickly, and the feathers turned into flying flame knives.

“Whir!”

Tens of thousands of flying knives dashed down like a pouring rain.

"I heard long ago that Xu Qing had entered the Holy Land of Saint Xu Gentry, Sacred Valley, to practice and seek for the inheritance of the ancestors. I didn't expect that he actually got the inheritance of the Feather Saint."

"In the history of Saint Xu Gentry, there were 47 saints. Feather Saint was one of the most powerful Saints. Xu Qing actually got his inheritance, no wonder he looked down upon the Saintly Beings."

"Xu Qing can really compete with a Saintly Being if both of them are in the same realm."

...

Xu Qing triggered the Fiery Wings, and he got a burst in momentum. The entire Stairway to Heaven seemed to be centralized on him. He was like magical flaming phoenix of the legends, flapping its wings in front of the sun, instantly overwhelming all those students who were ready to ascend the Stairway.

While everyone thought that Zhang Ruochen would definitely lose, he condensed combat swords with Blue Genuine Qi. Tens of thousands of sword shadows flew around him.

Knife light and sword shadow clashed together, letting out cracking sounds.

Two forces clashed against each other continually. The distance between Zhang Ruochen and Xu Qing was getting closer and closer. Finally, when they were only five steps apart, both of them used their unique techniques.

Xu Qing swooped down. The wings on his back were like two giant knives as they slashed toward Zhang Ruochen.

Before he could fully swing his wings, a heat wave dashed down first.

Zhang Ruochen stayed cool and pulled a piece of hair from his head. He chopped over with it and broke open Xu Qing's Celestial Bodyshield. With a ripping sound, it chopped off a big chunk of flesh from Xu Qing's left flaming wing.

Xu Qing's wings were activated by his own Spiritual Blood, which belonged to his body.

A piece of muscle was chopped off the wing, and he felt severe pain. He groaned and kept walking backward. His face turned pale.

His wing was chopped off, which meant that his array was broken.

The genius students down below were all surprised, they couldn't believe what just happened.

"How is it possible that Zhang Ruochen only used one piece of hair to break Xu Qing's Fiery Wings?"

"Fiery Wings are as hard as gold and iron. They have the protection of Feather Saint's breath and the support of Xu Qing's power. Even a common Genuine Martial Arms can't hurt them at all."

An outstanding talent from East Region Saint Mansions smirked, "Why can't it be possible? Although Zhang Ruochen looked like he is just holding a piece of hair, he actually applied the power of Sword Comprehension, which was in the realm of Heart Integrated into Sword. As long as he reaches that realm, a piece of hair is sharper than a real sword. The power of Sword Comprehension is like the power of Holy Road, which is terrifying."

“Heart Integrated into Sword? The legend says that only Half-Saint can reach that realm. How can a young student do that?”

In the mind of warriors who practiced sword in the world, the realm of Heart Integrated into Sword was like the realm of half saint to others. It was as unreachable as summits and as deep as the oceans. People could only look from afar in marvel.

The outstanding talent from the East Region Saint Mansions said, “That’s not necessarily the case. As long as your talent, comprehension ability, and Spiritual Power are high enough, even if you don’t reach Half-Saint realm, it is possible to reach Heart Integrated into Sword. It is said that many saints in the Saint Academy are in the Fish-dragon Realm and have reached the Heart Integrated into Sword. There are very few saints from the Heaven Realm who practiced the Heart Integrated into Sword.”

“I have heard long ago that Zhang Ruochen has reached the Heart Integrated into Sword. Originally, I didn’t believe it. However today is an attest to that, he actually reached the realm. Now even I feel like going a few rounds against him.”

The talent from East Region Saint Mansions was called Chen Yi. He was tall and handsome. His eyes were full of infinite charm. A slight smile would fascinate the female students around him, turning them into his pets.

There were countless masters among the younger generation in the East Region Saint Mansions. There were everywhere in the world. Some were studying in School of the Martial Market; many others joined the Taiji Doctrine, Thousand Buddhas Sect, Confucianism and Taoism. Among those who joined the School of the Martial Market, there were three out-of-the-world pinnacle masters.

Chen Yi was one of them. The other two were called Chen Tianshu and Chen Jiu’er.

Huang Yanchen and Chen Xier could be also considered as men from East Region Saint Mansions. After getting Dragon’s Blood, their physical quality had greatly improved. However, compared with those three people, they were still somewhat inferior.

The power of Heart Integrated into Sword applied by Zhang Ruochen not only startled the young students, but the Half-Saints in the Holy Temple were also surprised.

Demi-saint Lingshu, who was only three inches tall in her red clothes suddenly stood up and said, “Impressive. He can reach Heart Integrated into Sword in the Heaven Realm, I want to take him as my disciple.”

Demi-saint Alan laughed loudly and said, “I see that he is naturally related to Buddhism. His Dragon and Elephant Prajna Palm have already been practiced into a certain level. He should be my disciple.”

“It’s only the first round of the exam and you both are already fighting for a disciple? It’s still unknown that whether Zhang Ruochen can pass the three round of the exam,” Demi-saint Sandao said it in a strange manner.

Demi-saint Lingshu showed cold eyes. She said, “As long as your Saint Xu Gentry doesn’t get in the way, with his talent of practicing the Heart Integrated into Sword, it’s a piece of cake for him to pass the third round of the exam.”

“Hehe! All I’m saying is that he hasn’t passed the first round of the exam yet. As for the hardest third round of the exam, it is full of uncertainty. In the history of Saint Academy, some warriors who were also Saintly Being couldn’t pass the exam because of bad luck,” Demi-saint Sandao smiled.

Demi-saint Lingshu thought very highly of Zhang Ruochen. She believed that he would have a very bright future. So she challenged Demi-saint Sandao and said coldly, “We shall see about that.”

...

When Zhang Ruochen was fighting with Red Wish Emissary, he had exposed his realm of Heart Integrated into Sword. So he will not try to hide it again. He got to strike back when the moment was right.

Although countered, Xu Qing’s Qi did not suffer any major blow. He took retracted his Fiery Wings and immediately recovered.

Xu Qing hummed coldly, “So this is the realm of Heart Integrated into Sword. The only disadvantage I’m having now is the inability to use any weapon in this Stairway to Heaven. Otherwise, my giant dragon knife will be enough to hold back your sword.”

Zhang Ruochen used two fingers, holding a piece of hair. He said, “Do you wish to continue?”

“Why not? No matter how powerful you are, how can two fists match with four arms?”

Xu Qing passed a message with his eyes, and the talented students of Saint Xu Gentry all gathered around him. They stood on the 29th Stairway, forming a human wall. They stopped Zhang Ruochen and others from ascending the 30th Stairway.

Even those students who were beaten and fall from the Stairway to Heaven climbed up again. There were more than 30 of them. Everyone was a top master.

Except for Xu Qing, two more person’s cultivation was also in the Dawn State of the Heaven Realm. Their strength was just slightly weaker than Xu Qing’s. They were also heavily favored and exclusively cultivated by Saint Xu Gentry.

There were also Xu Yuanzhi and Xu Su who ranked the fourth and fifth respectively. They were also masters who reached the Advanced Stage of the Heaven Realm. They had practiced Martial Soul and could regulate Spiritual Qi in heaven and on earth. They had the strength to compete with the warrior in the Completion of Heaven Realm.

Having a history of 10,000 years, Saint Xu Gentry indeed had many masters. Any talented master would be a dominator if they went to the Omen Ridge.

“It seems that Saint Xu Gentry decides to suppress the students of the Omen Ridge and won’t let any of them pass the first round of the exam.”

“Zhang Ruochen is indeed very powerful. It’s a pity that Saint Xu Gentry has many masters. Is it even possible that he can overcome such overwhelming odds?”

“That’s not necessarily the case. The Saintly Being from the Luo family is on the side of the Omen Ridge. If she cooperates with Zhang Ruochen, it would be almost impossible for Saint Xu Gentry to hold them back.”

...

When the students were talking, Luo Shuihan stood up as expected.

Golden light shone from her eyes. A stroke of sacred power gushed out of her body and drew the talented students of Saint Xu Gentry into the golden light.

Under the suppression of the Saintly Being, only a few of talented students of Saint Xu Gentry could stay calm. The rest of them shuddered and sweated. They felt like mountains were crashing down on their bodies.

That was the force that only possessed by the Saintly Being. It was enough to suppress the defending warriors.

Luo Shuihan said, “Xu Qing, if I strike, can your Saint Xu Gentry hold me back?”

Xu Qing hesitated. He could tell from the power and aura that was just emitted from Luo Shuihan that her cultivation had reached the Advanced Stage of the Heaven Realm.

Although he had the advantage in the realm, his opponent was after all, still a Saintly Being. After his Fiery Wings were chopped off, he was not confident that he could deal with Luo Shuihan.

There were only a few Saintly Beings in the entire Eastern Region.

While he was hesitating, Demi-saint Sandao’s voice passed into his ears, “We have to kill Zhang Ruochen at any cost. I have already alarmed the other three inheritors of powerful saint families. They will help you.”

...

Chapter 388: Bu Qianfan

Hearing the sound from Demi-saint Sandao, Xu Qing suddenly felt relieved. He became more confident and laughed, “Since Miss Luo wants to get involved in this, why don’t we join you? I’m also curious about how powerful a Saintly Being is.”

Under the hint of Xu Qing, the masters of Saint Xu Gentry who ranked second and third charged at the same time. They simultaneously attacked toward Luo Shuihan from two sides.

Both of them were in the Dawn State of the Heaven Realm. They both had great talent and their strength were just slightly weaker than Xu Qing’s.

Luo Shuihan struck out both hands at the same time, which clashed together with the other two masters with a bang. A circle of Genuine Qi ripple emitted from the palms of the three people and flooded in every direction.

Under the impact, even Chang Qiqi and Si Xingkong were forcefully pushed backward.

The three people immediately stepped back after the exchange.

“Bang Bang!”

A moment later, two masters from Saint Xu Gentry fiercely attacked again from two directions. One had the physical quality of ice nature and the other had the physical quality of fire nature.

Under the fierce attack, Luo Shuihan didn't break a single sweat. She applied the bodily movement and countered the attack. She nullified the attack of the two masters.

“Break!”

Luo Shuihan stretched out her arm. She clenched her fingers and made a fist, striking out the fist into the void space.

The fist contained indescribable mysterious norms. It seemed to be accorded with the law of heaven and earth, giving people a most mysterious feeling.

Luo Shuihan had comprehended the great truth by perceiving this fist and practiced into a Saintly Being.

Once the fist struck out, space itself it seemed to shake. The person who attacked her from the left side suddenly got injured. Trace of blood spilled from the corner of his mouth, and he retreated.

The other one who attacked Luo Shuihan was beaten away by Luo Shuihan's left hand.

The two top masters of Saint Xu Gentry were defeated by a Saintly Being of the Luos. They could not withstand him at all.

On the other side, Zhang Ruochen kept on pressing the attack against Xu Qing, who was forced to move backward. Signs of danger appeared everywhere. Xu Qing seemed like he would be defeated anytime.

Si Xingkong, Huang Yanchen, Duanmu Xingling, Chang Qiqi and Chen Xier struck out one after another. They obliterated the talented students of Saint Xu Gentry. A dozen of them had already fallen from the Stairway to Heaven.

“My god! They are all the elites of powerful saint family, and now they are actually suppressed by a few students of the Omen Ridge.”

“Saint Xu Gentry was too unlucky to encounter such powerhouses.”

...

“He is so powerful ... and he has already reached the realm the Heart Integrated into Sword ...”

Xue Yingrou stared at Zhang Ruochen who was fighting with Xu Qing. She had mixed feelings. If she knew long ago that Zhang Ruochen had such an amazing talent, even if he was not an inheritor of a powerful Saint family, she should have followed him.

There were very few such figures among the younger generation of Kunlun's Field. If he made it into the Saint Academy, he would definitely be the focus of the whole academy.

At this moment, a wild-looking man with a bristly unshaven chin walked out among the students. He squinted his eyes and stared at Zhang Ruochen who was standing on the Stairway to Heaven. He said coldly, "Zhang Ruochen? Is he the one who defeated Di Yi?"

A student who was standing by the side asked, "Who is Di Yi? Is he powerful?"

The wild man showed sharp and cold expression in his eyes. He replied with two words as though he spoke through his clenched teeth, "Di Yi."

Popping sounds came from his ten fingers. He firmly walked towards the Stairway to Heaven. He said, "After I defeat Zhang Ruochen, I will definitely have a fight with Di Yi."

"Who is this man? How can he be so arrogant?"

Many people heard the wild man's words. They sneered. He wanted to defeat Zhang Ruochen. Who did he think he was?

The spectators might felt nothing if the wild man appeared before the fight took place. However, everyone had witnessed with their own eyes how Zhang Ruochen had overwhelmed Xu Qing and with the Heart Integrated into Sword.

Who did you think you were? You wanted to defeat Zhang Ruochen?

"He is ... He is Bu Qianfan of Saint Bu Gentry ... He was once at the top of the Earth Board for three years. It is said that he has reached the level of the final stage of seven and a half."

"Some time ago, I heard that he was defeated by a mystical person of the black market with three strikes of the sword, and then he went to the Death Primitive World."

"What? He actually dared to go the Death Primitive World? Everyone says that the place is very dangerous. Very few people could survive for more than three days in there."

The outstanding talent of East Region Saint Mansions, Chen Yi, seemed to know Bu Qianfan a little. He said, "But he managed stay in the Death Primitive World for two months. When he got out, his cultivation improved significantly."

Another outstanding talent of East Region Saint Mansions, Chen Tianshu, said, "The mysterious master of the black market who defeats Bu Qianfan is the young master of First-Class Hall, Di Yi. It is said that Bu Qianfan's strength is not any less than Di Yi's. However, Bu Qianfan has flaws in his mind which were exploited by Di Yi. He damaged his Martial Arts Heart first; therefore he was able to defeat Bu Qianfan with only three strikes of the sword."

"Bu Qianfan went to the Death Primitive World just to strengthen his Martial Arts Heart to remedy this defect. He actually stayed there for two months. An ordinary person wouldn't have had such a strong will power. He possibly has fixed the flaw of the Martial Arts Heart."

Chen Yi said, "If it is really so, with Bu Qianfan's current strength, he must have made great progress."

Chen Tianshu smiled, "Bu Qianfan must have heard the news that Zhang Ruochen has defeated Di Yi, so he comes here to fight Zhang Ruochen. He can regain his confidence only by defeating Zhang Ruochen and becoming the best in Martial Arts among the new generation."

“Although Bu Qianfan has great talent, he is after all, only in his 20s like Zhang Ruochen. He is half a generation younger than Xu Qing and us. He was in the Earth Realm half year ago. I think his cultivation is only in the Mid Stage of the Heaven Realm at most,” Chen Yi said.

Three outstanding talents of East Region Saint Mansions, Xu Qing, Zi Hansha and others were all close to or over 30 years old. Bu Qianfan and Zhang Ruochen could only be regarded as juniors to them.

“With their final seventh stage talent, it’s already amazing that they have reached the Mid Stage of the Heaven Realm. If they reach another realm, elders like us will soon be left in the dust,” Chen Tianshu smiled.

As he was talking, Bu Qianfan had ascended the Stairway to Heaven. He stared at Xu Qing and shouted, “Go away, Zhang Ruochen is my opponent.”

Bu Qianfan’s voice was plain and common when audience heard it, but in Xu Qing’s ears, it was as loud as thunder. His brain went dark and he retreated continuously.

The martial technique applied by Bu Qianfan was in the Inferior Class Ghost Level, which was called Sound of Thunder and Brahma. He had practiced this martial technique into the succeed realm. His battle roar could easily rout 100,000 soldiers.

Although Bu Qianfan had just practiced into Small Success Realm, he had already reached a certain degree. Even if Xu Qing was caught off guard, he was also suppressed.

Xu Qing had powerful physical quality. He reacted quickly and said, “Bu Qianfan, this is Saint Academy, not the battalion of Ministry of War. You’d better be nice to me. Moreover, our opponents are Zhang Ruochen.”

“I said that, Zhang Ruochen is my opponent. You can back down now!” Bu Qianfan said impolitely.

Xu Qing’s face turned gloomy and he was angry. If he had no internal injury after fighting with Zhang Ruochen, he would teach this junior Bu Qianfan a lesson.

“All right. I will let you fight with Zhang Ruochen first and see how you are going to deal with him.”

Xu Qing did not flaunt his superiority and went back to the side.

At this moment, other talented students of Saint Xu Gentry were all beaten down from the Stairway to Heaven by Luo Shuihan and others. Everyone was badly bruised and looked miserable.

Xu Qing was not in the mood to deal with them. He swallowed a healing pill. While he was healing, he was observing confrontation between Zhang Ruochen and Bu Qianfan.

Zhang Ruochen could become an inheritor of a powerful Saint family, he was not only talented but also very smart.

Xu Qing knew clearly that he underestimated his enemy, that’s why he was on the losing side when fighting Zhang Ruochen.

Now he wanted to observe Zhang Ruochen’s martial arts and movements to find out Zhang Ruochen’s flaws. To know one’s strength is the key to ensure victory.

“He turns out to be Bu Qianfan.”

Zhang Ruochen had heard of Bu Qianfan’s name long ago. The identity of top one on the Earth Board had been possibly known to all in the Eastern Region.

In the past two or three years, the top God’s favored sons of the Eastern Region should be Zhang Ruochen, Di Yi, and Bu Qianfan; then there were also Luo Shuihan who had practiced into a Saintly Being and Saintess of heresy with mythical identity.

There were only five people.

Any of them had the talent to become a saint.

They were almost the same age, around 20 years old. Moreover, their martial cultivation were almost the same. Even if their strength varied, they were regarded as at the same level.

Bu Qianfan was not a student of the School of the Martial Market, but a talent cultivated by Ministry of War of the imperial court. He came to Saint Academy only to fight Zhang Ruochen.

“Did you defeat Di Yi?”

Bu Qianfan stood on the Stairway and observed Zhang Ruochen, and gave the latter a bone-chilling stare.

This expression could only be seen in the eyes of a soldier who had slain countless enemies. Even if he did not deliberately regulate his Genuine Qi, he could intimidate the ordinary warriors, making them tremble with fear and kneel before him.

Zhang Ruochen was also observing Bu Qianfan. The profile of a famous person like Bu Qianfan had been recorded long ago on the Earth Board. You only needed to buy a copy of Earth Board to know everything about him.

Bu Qianfan had just reached 20 years old. He was at the same age as Zhang Ruochen. But his face was covered with beard, which made him look very old and somber. He seemed to be 35 or 36 years old.

Especially his eyes. They were like steel and iron, containing an unyielding will.

Zhang Ruochen looked at him very calmly. He said, “That’s right. Di Yi and I had a fight before. I was lucky to win.”

“Being able to defeat Di Yi requires more than just luck.”

Bu Qianfan’s eyes were sharp and cold. He said, “I give you an hour to recover your Genuine Qi. After that, you have to fight me.”

Zhang Ruochen smiled, “I don’t want to fight with you. Moreover, Stairway to Heaven is a place for the exam of Saint Academy. You are from the Ministry of War and can’t be here.”

Bu Qianfan wore the armor of Ministry of War.

“You don’t think I’m qualified to fight you because I’m defeated by Di Yi with three strikes of sword?”

Bu Qianfan's eyes were sharp and cold. He said, "I'm in the Yellow Realm and have once reached the Ultimate Realm. Am I qualified to fight with you?"

Anyone who reached the Ultimate Realm would keep it a secret. On the contrary, Bu Qianfan did not care at all and told Zhang Ruochen about it.

Was he stupid?

How could he be stupid if he managed to survive in the Death Primitive World for whole two months?

In the end, Bu Qianfan was fearless. Being lionhearted was the behavior of the most orthodox military. He was upright, outspoken, and seemed to have the power to root out all evils in the world.

Chapter 389: Suppress the Army and Destroy its Prestige

"Ultimate Realm?"

"Bu Qianfan has once reached the legendary highest realm?"

"That can't be true! Only a few people have done it since the ancient times."

...

A tossed stone raises a thousand ripples. Students on the Stairway to Heaven were all shocked. Many of them were staring at Bu Qianfan.

Bu Qianfan remained stone cold, as he stared at Zhang Ruochen.

Zhang Ruochen was not surprised at all. He had reached the Ultimate Realm three times. Hence, the Ultimate Realm was not so hard to reach as people imagined. At least, it is possible to be achieved by humans.

Zhang Ruochen said, "You are possibly misunderstood. You don't need to prove your strength. I don't want to fight with you since the person you want to defeat is Di Yi, not me."

Bu Qianfan frowned, and he clenched his fists with anger. A stroke of Qi billow gushed out of his body. He said, "If that is the case, then forgive me if I offend you!"

Within an instant, he leaped three steps forward and chopped toward Zhang Ruochen's neck with his hand.

It was the broadsword technique of Army Suppressing and Prestige Destroying.

The martial technique of Ghost Level Inferior Class contained the most fierce and direct movement of the broadsword technique, chop, stab, twining head ... It could simplify all complicated moves into only three moves.

It seemed that there were only three moves, but every move contained the quintessence of the broadsword technique: taking someone's life within one move.

In the army, only an officer who was the Commander-in-Chief was qualified to practice the broadsword technique of Army Suppressing and Prestige Destroying. If he wanted to succeed in practicing it, he had to practice it on the battle field. Only after he killed tens of thousands of people would he have a chance in successfully mastering the technique.

The first move that Bu Qianfan applied was the Knife of Army Suppressing. He swung his arm as if it was a broadsword, and it formed half-moon of knife light in front of his arm.

“Swish!”

Before Bu Qianfan finished his motion, Zhang Ruochen had already felt the murderous intent, sharpness, and hostility the strike contained, as if it could eliminate every enemy who was in its way.

Zhang Ruochen had to fight back. He pressed together with his forefinger and middle finger. He used his hand as a sword to apply one move of Nine Yang Sword—Pull Chestnut out of Fire.

Sword Comprehension and Genuine Qi condensed on his two fingertips, which thrust quickly toward the side tip of Bu Qianfan’s palm.

“Pow!”

There was the clashing sound of knife and sword. Both of them fought recklessly.

Bu Qianfan had sharp eyes and acted quickly. All his power surged, which drove the arm to rotate. He immediately applied the second move of the broadsword technique.

“Dispiriting Knife Technique.”

The second attack seemed to be even more terrifying than the first. Its power and momentum was astonishing. It could be seen with bare eyes that there was a shadow of broadsword above Bu Qianfan’s arm. It followed the track of his arm movement and chopped toward Zhang Ruochen’s waist.

“Moonglade Knife Technique.”

Zhang Ruochen applied one sword technique of Nine Yang Sword again and held back Bu Qianfan’s second attack once again.

“Regicide Knife Technique.”

Without hesitation, Bu Qianfan applied the third movement of the broadsword technique of Army Suppressing and Prestige Destroying, which was the most powerful one.

Faintly, it could be seen that there was a giant man in armor who was standing behind him. He swung his sword toward Zhang Ruochen’s head.

Boom!

It looked like a knife and tens of thousands of knives as well. All of them sliced down at the same time.

Three knives chopped in a row, and their power continued to increase.

Facing the overwhelming knife energy, Zhang Ruochen looked serious as well. He moved one step backward to decrease the pressure of the broadsword technique.

He mobilized the power of Sword Comprehension and applied the realm of Heart Integrated into Sword. He held his hands together, and his whole body became a sword and stabbed toward Bu Qianfan.

“Pow!”

Bu Qianfan flew backward and fell back to more than 16 meters away. His arms were trembling. There was a drop of blood dripping from his sleeve.

Zhang Ruochen retreated three steps. His ten fingers were hurt and numb as if he he just tried to punch an iron mountain.

“Amazing. He could actually hold on three moves of my broadsword technique of Army Suppressing and Prestige Destroying. No wonder he could defeat Di Yi.”

Bu Qianfan was serious. There was a layer of Genuine Qi aura floating on his arm. Suddenly, the blood which had dropped out turned into Spiritual Blood was sucked into his nose and mouth.

Zhang Ruochen said, “You are also powerful. I have used all my strength!”

Bu Qianfan showed a smile in his eyes. He said, “All of your strength? I don’t think so! I have checked on your profile. When you were in the Black Realm, your Spiritual Power was over 30th level.”

“I practice the broadsword technique of Army Suppressing and Prestige Destroying, which emphasis mostly on the momentum. Once the broadsword technique strikes out, it has to destroy the warrior’s spirit. Even if a warrior in the Fish-dragon Realm, he can’t be completely stationed, but you remained untouched from the beginning to the end.”

“So I guessing that your Spiritual Power has reached the 40th level. You deserve to be called a master of Spiritual Power. If you attack by applying the Spiritual Power, your strength should be more than this.”

Zhang Ruochen said, “40th level of Spiritual Power? You’ve been exaggerating.”

Bu Qianfan seemed to be very confident. He continued, “If your Spiritual Power is not strong enough to a certain degree, how can you hold back the power of Di Yi’s Demon’s Heart? Even with your sword technique realm of Heart Integrated into Sword, you can’t defeat Di Yi if you are both in the same realm.”

Bu Qianfan then added, “Even if you have the Spiritual Power as the final resolution, you are not necessarily invincible when both of you are in the same realm. I also have a final resolution. If you and I are engaged in a life-and-death struggle, my chance to survive is bigger than you, because you have a weakness that you don’t even realize it yourself.”

Zhang Ruochen replied: “What weakness?”

“Fighting experience, the fighting experience in the hovering of life and death.”

Bu Qianfan said, “I grew up on the battle field and have experienced various wars for no less than ten thousand times. Among them, there were several hundred times that I was on the verge of death, struggling to be alive, crawling in between life and death and going through trials and tribulations on the blood-soaked battlefields.”

“The number of wars I have experienced is more than ten times you have experienced. Every time, some will stand and some will fall. Even if Di Yi defeated me last time, he couldn’t kill me and could only watch me leave.”

Zhang Ruochen became serious because Bu Qianfan was telling the truth. Compared with him, Zhang Ruochen’s fighting experience and the amount of going through trials and tribulations were indeed not enough.

Of course, if it was really a fight between life and death, Zhang Ruochen did not think that he was the one that going to die, because Zhang Ruochen had an indomitable faith.

Zhang Ruochen said, “I’m very curious of why you lost to Di Yi. Were there any flaws in your Martial Arts?”

Bu Qianfan was silent for a moment. He seemed to be recalling something. Afterward, he shook his head and turned around, walking down the Stairway to Heaven. He said, “Zhang Ruochen, if you want to know the answer, come and find me in the big battalion of Ministry of War. If you want to compensate for your weakness, you must come.”

Zhang Ruochen stared at Bu Qianfan’s shadow. He smiled and said, “What an interesting man.”

Bu Qianfan was not a Saintly Being, but he had lots of experience on the battlefield. He had reached the Ultimate Realm, so he had the strength to fight against a Saintly Being.

Although he was not a Saintly Being, he stayed at the top of the Earth Board for three years. He really had something that others did not.

Zhang Ruochen stared at Xu Qing who was not far away. He asked, “Do you still want to fight?”

Xu Qing’s condition of injury had totally healed. With the regulation of the Genuine Qi, both of his hands immediately turned into silver metals. He said with a smile, “Zhang Ruochen, we don’t need to continue the fight. We can have another competition.”

“What kind of other competition?” Zhang Ruochen said.

Xu Qing pointed at Stairway to Heaven. He said, “Let’s see who can climb higher. If you can win, the previous grudge between us would be forgotten once and for all. If you lose, you have to kneel in front of the gate of Saint Xu Gentry for three days as an apology to us. Kneel before a Saint is not disgraceful, is it?”

“As simple as that?” Zhang Ruochen was a bit unconvinced.

There was suppression of gods on the Stairway to Heaven. The higher one’s cultivation was, the more powerful the suppression one will encounter.

Only when one’s talent is greater, his Spiritual Power will be more powerful. The warriors who had more powerful Martial Soul could climb higher up the stairway.

Xu Qing should know it clearly. His greatest advantage was that his cultivation was deeper than Zhang Ruochen’s.

In this case, why did he give up his own advantage and fight against Zhang Ruochen in a tougher condition?

Although Zhang Ruochen thought that Xu Qing must have had a plan, he did not back out and directly agreed instead.

Xu Qing rushed out first and reached the 40th level Stairway without much effort, and he continued to climb up very quickly.

Zhang Ruochen rushed to the 30th Stairway first. He ascended to the 31st, 32nd Stairway after leaving his name on the Jade Tablet....

A moment later, Zhang Ruochen had already been on the 40th Stairway.

At this moment, the invisible pressure became very overwhelming. There seemed to be 40 times of normal gravity on crushing down on Zhang Ruochen's body, which not only squeezed on Zhang Ruochen's body, but also on Zhang Ruochen's Martial Soul.

An ordinary warrior would have been crushed to the ground long ago.

Zhang Ruochen raised his head. There were 57 warriors who had ascended the 40th level. Before that there were several students of Omen Ridge fought with the students of Saint Xu Gentry, there were also other warriors who had ascended the Stairway to Heaven, going up one step by one step.

There was a powerful warrior who had already reached the 65th Stairway.

He was the inheritor of the Powerful Saint Family. He wore a metal vest and exposed his bronze-colored arms. It made him seem to be particularly mighty.

There were three people who had ascended the 60th Stairway. The other two were also inheritors of the Powerful Saint Family.

18 warriors had climbed to the 50th Stairway.

Zi Hansha who had been climbing the Stairway to Heaven before that had reached the 54th Stairway.

But his potential seemed to have been exhausted. He stood on the Stairway, trying hard to hold on. The sweat broke out all over his body and his body bent. He could not set his feet on the 55th Stairway no matter how hard he tried.

"Pfft!"

Zi Hansha made a move forcibly and wanted to ascend the 55th Stairway. He was hit by an invisible power and flew out. She rolled down with blood spitting out of her mouth.

She fell to the 40th Stairway and regained her posture. Then she got up and saw Zhang Ruochen who was not far away.

"Darn. Zhang Ruochen is actually so powerful. I must not lose to him."

Zi Hansha certainly had seen the fight between Zhang Ruochen and Xu Qing and Bu Qianfan. Now seeing that Zhang Ruochen was right in front of him, he was frustrated.

So he clenched his teeth and tried again. He closely followed Zhang Ruochen and climbed up again.

(To be continued...)

Chapter 390: The Battlefield

Xu Qing reached the 45th Stairway at an extremely high speed.

Gradually, though, he slowed down. He could only climb one step after every other breath.

When he reached the 50th step after expanding tremendous effort, he glanced back and found Zhang Ruochen was right behind him on the 48th step.

At this moment, Xu Qing looked up and in his eyes, unnoticed to most of those present, was a hint of a sinister smile.

The three descendants from the Saint Gentries who were already on the 60th step all felt something, and they turned around at the same time. Their eyes met Xu Qing's, and they all nodded.

But of course, Zhang Ruochen saw it all. He thought to himself, "There's indeed a trick, just as I expected. Do they want to deal with me together?"

But Zhang Ruochen was not afraid. Instead, he was in battle mode. He ran the Scripture of Emperor Ming's Empyrean with all his strength and madly absorbed the Divine Dragon Strength from the Dragon Pearl.

Originally, his realm had reached the Peak of the Mid Stage of the Heaven Realm. Under the pressure given by these people, he wanted to use this chance to breakthrough the Advanced Stage of the Heaven Realm.

Just like Bu Qianfan had said, Zhang Ruochen lacked in the experience of the life-and-death situations.

Only by experiencing the brink of death could he stimulate his potential and breakthrough the realms with more ease.

The moment Zhang Ruochen reached the 50th step, the three descendants dashed down at the same time to attack Zhang Ruochen.

"Thousand-hand King-kong!"

Xu Qing, who was standing to Zhang Ruochen's left, also punched hard towards Zhang Ruochen's head.

No one could expect that the situation would have a drastic turn. Four descendants from Saint Gentries attacked Zhang Ruochen at the same time.

On the 50th step, warriors needed to bear huge pressure, so they were much less agile than before. It was almost impossible to avoid each other's attack.

If Zhang Ruochen was hit, he would be lucky if he was just disabled.

The students under the Stairway to Heaven were all very worried about Zhang Ruochen. They imagined the scene of Zhang Ruochen falling down from the Stairway to Heaven the next second.

They just did not know whether he could at least preserve his life.

Facing this, Zhang Ruochen, however, was unusually calm. He stretched out his two arms and punched out ten Sword Waves at the same time towards the three people coming from above.

The three descendants immediately turned away. They were forced back up to the Stairway.

Although Zhang Ruochen blocked one side of the attack, he could not escape from the other side's.

"Pfft!"

A strong shockwave from a punch came from the left.

Xu Qing's punch penetrated Zhang Ruochen's Celestial Bodyshield and hit hard on his shoulder. Zhang Ruochen was blown off far away.

But, the moment Xu Qing's punch hit, golden splendor came out of Zhang Ruochen's body and formed a halo which blocked the power of that punch.

Zhang Ruochen, therefore, only felt a little pain in the shoulder without being severely wounded.

It was the power of the Dragon Pearl that blocked Xu Qing's attack.

"What's this? The descendants from the Saint Gentries are dealing with me as well?"

Zhang Ruochen stared at the three people above with a wave of anger.

The reason why he fought with Saint Xu Gentry was that Chang Qiqi and Duanmu Xingling were such trouble-makers. Zhang Ruochen actually felt that he was in the wrong.

But what was happening now? All the Saint families were joining hands to persecute the students from Omen Ridge. They even wanted him dead.

This was too much even for the gentlest of person. He was fired up inside and wanted to go on a rampage.

Standing on the 53rd step, the descendant from Saint Shen Gentry said coldly, "We don't want to do this, but you guys are too arrogant."

The big fellow's name was Shen Yuntong. He was also at the Peak of the Dawn State of the Heaven Realm and was as strong as Xu Qing.

"Why do you waste your time talking to him? Kill him first!" said the descendant from Saint Xi Gentry.

The descendant from Saint Xi Gentry was a plump and pretty lady. She had cold eyes and fair hands. Each of her fingers was as sharp as a Finger Sword.

There was another man from the Saint Zuo Gentry.

And there was also Saint Xu Gentry, which made up a total four great saints of the Saint Gentries.

The four Saint Gentries were always close, and they often arrange marriages with one another. In other words, they were tarred with the same brush.

Their joint power was very influential in the whole Eastern Region.

“Take this.”

“Swoosh!”

The descendant from Saint Xi Gentry turned into a shadow. Suddenly, twelve beautiful shadows appeared on the Stairway to Heaven which besieged Zhang Ruochen in the center and kept striking their finger technique.

Zhang Ruochen also kept blocking her attack.

On the other direction, the descendant from Saint Shen Gentry performed a palm technique and created a gigantic vigor.

A savage beast howled.

A seven-meter long huge Genuine Qi handprint flew out of Shen Yuntong’s palm and went right to Zhang Ruochen.

Shen Yuntong was born with Natural Divine Power. It was said that he could lift up a 1500 kg copper cauldron when he was only three years old. His physical quality was extremely strong.

Even one with a skin of iron would be bashed into a sludge this attack.

Xu Qing stared at Zuo Fenggu, the descendant from the Saint Zuo Gentry, and said, “Brother Zuo, Zhang Ruochen’s Spiritual Power is very strong. I hope you can suppress him in the Spiritual Power field.”

The forefather of the Saint Zuo Gentry was a Psychic Sage.

Zuo Fenggu was also a born genius of Spiritual Power. Under the cultivation of the Psychic Sage, he reached the fortieth level in Spiritual Power and became a Spiritual Power master at the age of 34.

Although Zuo Fenggu was 34 years old, he looked like he was still in his early twenties. He was tall, slim, and wore an alchemist robe which gave him a sharp look.

“How old is Zhang Ruochen? Do you really believe what Bu Qianfan said, that his Spiritual Power had reached the fortieth level?”

Zuo Fenggu smiled and slightly shook his head.

As a Spiritual Power master, Zuo Fenggu knew too well that, to reach the fortieth level in Spiritual Power was no easy feat.

Even for him, a Spiritual Power genius with a strict Psychic Sage as a mentor, he conquered a lot of difficulties to accomplish what he had now.

Zhang Ruochen was much younger than him. So there was no way for him to reach the fortieth level in Spiritual Power.

Xu Qing dared not to be arrogant in front of Zuo Fenggu. After all, Zuo Fenggu was much stronger than him. So he smiled obsequiously and said, "Brother Zuo, if Zhang Ruochen's Spiritual Power really reached the fortieth level, you won't be too lonely in the Saint Academy's examination this time. At least there is an opponent for you."

Zuo Fenggu snickered and said, "He is hardly worth mentioning. You guys can deal with him first. I'll help you if you fail."

"Alright," replied Xu Qing.

Actually, any one of the descendants was not weaker than Zhang Ruochen. If any of the two worked together, they could definitely defeat Zhang Ruochen.

Now, Zhang Ruochen could only passively block the attack from Shen Yuntong and the descendant from Saint Xi Gentry. He would have been badly wounded without the Dragon Pearl.

"Broken Cloud Halberd!"

The descendant from Saint Xi Gentry stretched out a slender and white finger and pointed it out quickly. She struck on Zhang Ruochen's forehead between the eyebrows, wanting to break Zhang Ruochen's Qi sea and disable Zhang Ruochen's cultivation.

But she didn't know that Zhang Ruochen's Qi sea was protected by the illusory image of gods. Even a warrior in the Fish-dragon Realm could not break it up.

"SWISH!"

A ball of green light came out of Zhang Ruochen's forehead, blowing the descendant from Saint Xi Gentry away.

Even so, the last strike also wounded Zhang Ruochen. His Genuine Qi became rather messy, which kept lashing at his meridians.

"In this case, I'll break through to the Advanced Stage of the Heaven Realm!"

On the one hand, Zhang Ruochen blocked the attack from Shen Yuntong. On the other hand, he ran his exercises to break through the realm. Suddenly, he felt a punch was coming to him from the back.

Another person was attacking him now.

"Die, Zhang Ruochen!"

Standing on the 48th step, Zi Hansha ran his Genuine Qi and gathered his power. Then, he punched towards Zhang Ruochen's head from the back.

Although Zi Hansha was not as talented as the descendants from the Saint Gentries, he had deep cultivation and was in the Dawn State of the Heaven Realm.

If they fought alone, Zhang Ruochen would have enough confidence. But now, Zhang Ruochen was already fighting with three descendants from the Saint Gentries. The sneak attack from the back came at the worst time possible.

“Go to hell!”

Zhang Ruochen roared and forced himself to turn around. He struck 81 handprints in a roll and performed Nine-folds of the Elephant Power nine times directly on Zi Hansha, which penetrated the defense created by Zi Hansha’s amulet treasure.

The handprints poured down on Zi Hansha like raindrops.

“Bang! Bang! Bang!”

Zi Hansha’s organs were smashed, and his chest collapsed indirectly. He flew out backward like a kite with a broken string.

With a loud noise, Zi Hansha fell to the ground hard from the Stairway to Heaven with blood all over him.

Clearly, with such heavy wounds, he could not climb up from the ground. No one even knew whether he could attend the second round of the Saint Academy’s examination.

Although Zhang Ruochen struck Zi Hansha off, he was attacked by Shen Yuntong, Xu Qing and the descendant from Saint Xi Gentry. He was struck over 20 times on the back which even broke the Dragon Pearl’s defense. Zhang Ruochen’s Spiritual Blood was rolling under the violent attack. He fell to the 44th step.

“Pufft!”

Zhang Ruochen was forced to kneel on the ground, and he spat out a mouthful of blood which stained the Stairway.

“Shame on the descendant from Saint Xu Gentry! He knew he was no match for Zhang Ruochen, so he jointed hands with other Saint Gentries!”

Seeing Zhang Ruochen getting wounded, Huang Yanchen was extremely angry. She hurried up to the 40th step and wanted to help Zhang Ruochen out.

“Junior sister apprentice Huang, this battle is between the Saint Gentries and the students from the Omen Ridge. You shouldn’t interfere.” A genius from Saint Xi Gentry walked up and stopped Huang Yanchen.

“Get out of my way,” said Huang Yanchen in a low tone.

The genius replied calmly, “I’m warning you for your own good. I’m not afraid if you want to fight.”

Meanwhile, other masters also stood out and stopped Luo Shuihan, Duanmu Xingling, Si Xingkong and so on. Among these masters, there were people from the Half-Saint families and the Saint Gentries.

Although they were not as strong as the direct descendants from the Saint Gentries, they had more people.

Suddenly, the Stairway to Heaven turned into a battlefield, which was greatly disadvantageous to the students from the Omen Ridge.

Meanwhile, this was also a battle between the juniors of the divine families and the juniors of the humble families. But there was a huge gap between them. The juniors of the divine families were far too powerful.