L. Wyatt 1461

Chapter 1461: The Second Floor of the Hall of Merit

"Just around the corner?"

Upon hearing Wyatt Barnes' words, Elder Fire retorted, "That's a bit premature to say. These materials can repair about sixty percent of the third layer of the Seven Treasures Exquisite Tower, and that's primarily thanks to the Nuwa Stone fragment. Among them, just the Nuwa Stone fragment alone accounts for forty percent of the repair."

Elder Fire's words were like a bucket of cold water being poured over Wyatt's head, completely extinguishing his inner excitement and agitation.

It turned out that the impressive repair was all due to the Nuwa Stone fragment.

In that moment, the status of the Nuwa Stone fragment in Wyatt's heart soared dramatically.

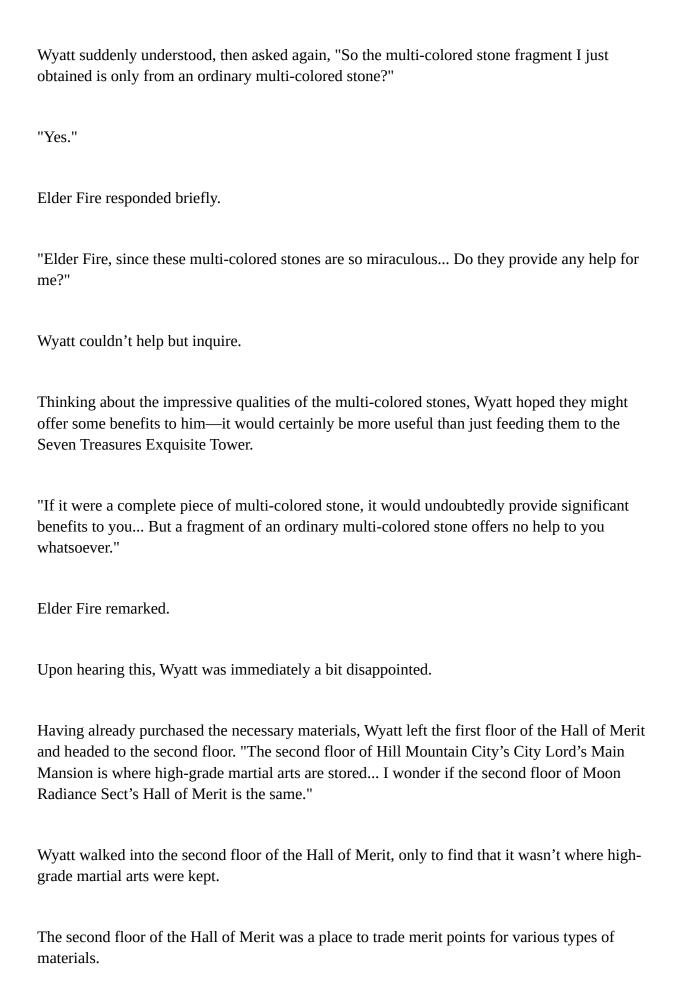
"Elder Fire, I've heard of a legend, saying that the Great Sage Equal to Heaven—Monkey King—was formed from one of the multi-colored stones that fell when Nuwa was repairing the heavens... And you seem to have mentioned before that Monkey King is not an indigenous being of Yanhuang Star but was transformed from one of Nuwa's divine stones. Are these multi-colored stones really so miraculous that they could give rise to a monster like Monkey King?"

Wyatt asked curiously.

"Ordinary multi-colored stones naturally could not birth a monster like the Horse Officer... The particular multi-colored stone that birthed the Horse Officer was the most precious part of the multi-colored stones, known as 'Essence of Five-Colored Stone.' It harnesses heaven and earth's natural power and is imbued with extraordinary spiritual essence, which is why it could create a monster like the Horse Officer."

Elder Fire explained.

"I see."



The materials here included items for refining tools, alchemy materials, components for inscribing Taoist Talismans, and even rare items for engraving Saint Markings.

These materials stored on the second floor of the Hall of Merit were all extremely precious... Ordinary materials wouldn't warrant anyone trading merit points for them within Moon Radiance Sect.

After all, within Moon Radiance Sect, the value of merit points far outweighed that of Holy Stones.

"I wonder if the rare materials stored on the second floor of the Hall of Merit might include those needed to repair the Seven Treasures Exquisite Tower."

Thinking about this, Wyatt felt a surge of anticipation.

Currently, the third layer of the Seven Treasures Exquisite Tower was about seventy percent repaired, leaving only thirty percent to go before it was fully restored.

At the entrance to the second floor of the Hall of Merit sat a counter with an old man behind it. The man appeared to be dozing off, yet exuded an unusual presence.

As Wyatt passed by the counter, he had a strange feeling of being observed.

Instantly alert, Wyatt glanced carefully at the old man, realizing that while the man seemed to be dozing, he was, in fact, sharper than anyone else.

"Leave the storage ring here before entering."

As Wyatt cautiously eyed the old man, the man opened his sleepy eyes and spoke flatly.

Wyatt nodded and promptly took off his storage ring, placing it on the counter.

He understood that the sensation of being observed earlier was likely the result of the old man using powerful spiritual energy to inspect his storage ring, gauging how many rings Wyatt had

on him... Fortunately, the Seven Treasures Exquisite Tower wasn't something the old man's spiritual energy could probe into.

Leaving the storage ring on the counter didn't bother Wyatt.

The ring was bound to him by blood; unless he died, nobody else could access its contents.

Of course, Wyatt wasn't surprised by the rule requiring visitors to hand over their storage rings on the Hall of Merit's second floor.

On this floor, there was evidently no one guarding the materials, with only a few scattered individuals choosing what they needed.

If storage rings weren't handed over, some might silently stash materials within rings to evade merit-point transactions.

After entering the second floor of the Hall of Merit, Wyatt addressed Elder Fire, "Elder Fire, take a look and see if there are any materials here that would be useful for repairing the Seven Treasures Exquisite Tower."

In most cases, Elder Fire wouldn't observe the outside world unless Wyatt initiated communication.

Wyatt appreciated this fact.

At the very least, it ensured Elder Fire didn't infringe on his privacy.

In this regard, Elder Fire was quite considerate.

As Wyatt was the master of the Seven Treasures Exquisite Tower, he could always immediately sense whether Elder Fire was watching the outside world through its power.

Knowing Elder Fire wasn't currently observing, Wyatt reminded him directly.

After a circuit around the second floor of the Hall of Merit, Wyatt found approximately a dozen materials that could be used to repair the Seven Treasures Exquisite Tower. However, these materials combined would only repair about ten percent of the third layer.

"Seems like my luck really broke through back on the first floor."

Wyatt thought to himself, somewhat in awe.

The materials on the second floor of the Hall of Merit all had clear marked prices, and no bargaining was allowed.

The dozen materials Wyatt selected totaled fifteen thousand merit points—ten times the amount he spent on the first floor!

Even Wyatt couldn't help but feel a mix of emotions.

Of course, he knew the comparison was meaningless.

The extraordinarily rare Nuwa Stone fragment from the first floor was included as a free bonus; it hadn't cost him any merit points.

Returning to the counter, Wyatt neat-handedly spent fifteen thousand merit points via his crystal card, putting the storage ring back on and packing up the materials he'd purchased from the second floor.

"Thank you, Elder."

Before proceeding to the third floor of the Hall of Merit, Wyatt expressed his gratitude to the old man behind the counter.

The old man's spiritual power was stronger than anyone Wyatt had encountered before... Of course, this referred only to those who had demonstrated their spiritual power in Wyatt's presence.

For those who hadn't revealed their spiritual power, Wyatt couldn't gauge its strength.

This led Wyatt to speculate the old man might be an Inner Sect Elder.

"I wonder how Elder Easton measures up to him."

Wyatt mused to himself.

Elder Easton was Pete Garcia, the Grand Elder overseeing the Outer Sect area of Moon Radiance Sect—a man Wyatt had met once before.

Since Elder Pete hadn't used his spiritual power to inspect Wyatt, Wyatt was unsure how strong it was.

On that occasion, Wyatt had paid Pete Garcia one four-grade Holy Stone and ten fifth-grade Holy Stones to issue a public statement... This statement tied to the life-and-death duel between Wyatt and Sail Fenning that took place days afterward.

The announcement had caused a stir among many.

Few would have expected Pete Garcia, the Outer Sect Grand Elder, to make such a declaration and pledge to honor Wyatt's gamble in the case of his death.

Many were keen on speculating about Wyatt's relationship with Pete Garcia.

However, no matter how they guessed, they couldn't imagine Wyatt had merely secured Pete's cooperation by paying him eleven Holy Stones.

What truly mattered, though, was the significance behind those eleven Holy Stones.

Within the territories surrounding Moon Radiance Sect and across the entire Nine Sect Alliance region, the Holy Stones predominantly circulating were sixth-grade at most... Sixth-grade Holy Stones could even be mined from seventh-grade stone deposits.

On the other hand, fifth-grade Holy Stones, even when flowing into the Nine Sect Alliance region, were rarely seen, as few would trade them openly.

Instead, they would typically use them for cultivating.

It was common knowledge that higher-grade Holy Stones didn't necessarily increase cultivation speed.

However, higher-grade Holy Stones crucially enabled sustained high-intensity cultivation without disruption or requiring replacement... Many Martial Artists and Taoist Cultivators had missed crucial breakthrough opportunities because of disruptions during cultivation caused by needing to swap out Holy Stones.

Hence, high-grade Holy Stones were deeply coveted by advanced-level Martial Artists and Taoist Cultivators.

With higher cultivation levels, the period of closed-door training was often several years—occasionally decades or even centuries weren't out of the question.

Wyatt had offered Pete Garcia ten fifth-grade Holy Stones and one fourth-grade Holy Stone.

Fifth-grade Holy Stones required at least sixth-flow powers controlling sixth-grade mines to produce; they rarely entered the Nine Sect Alliance's market, though not entirely uncommon.

Fourth-grade Holy Stones, however, were nearly unheard of in this region of the Nine Sect Alliance.

Those required at least a fifth-flow power overseeing fifth-grade mines and were only obtainable in the core areas managed by those forces.

It would be virtually impossible for anyone within the Nine Sect Alliance to possess a fourth-grade Holy Stone unless they ventured into one of those regions.

Alternatively, someone from these core areas may have traveled into the Nine Sect Alliance territory and left some behind.

Wyatt's ability to produce a fourth-grade Holy Stone had undoubtedly piqued Pete Garcia's curiosity about Wyatt's origins. This had been Wyatt's intention all along. It was precisely this curiosity that had led Pete to cooperate so readily. Otherwise, why would a mere Outer Sect disciple gain the favor of Pete Garcia, the esteemed Outer Sect Grand Elder? "There aren't many polite youngsters like you these days." The old man smiled, surprised by Wyatt's proactive expression of thanks. Normally, visitors to the second floor of the Hall of Merit would simply leave after collecting their materials, barely paying attention to the old man. "Little fellow, what is your name?" The old man inquired kindly. Chapter 1462: Exorbitant Taoist Talisman "My name is Wyatt Barnes." Wyatt said with a smile.

Hearing Wyatt's response, the elderly man was momentarily stunned, then quickly looked at Wyatt's waist. When he saw the external disciple token hanging there, his eyes lit up. "You're the external disciple who killed an Earth List expert in the life-and-death duel in the external area yesterday?"

"The elder has heard about it too?"

"You... you are Wyatt Barnes?!"

Wyatt smiled slightly, indirectly admitting it. "Good, good... outstanding Martial Dao talent, and yet so polite. Truly a rare find." The old man showed a kind expression on his face. "You're too kind, elder." Wyatt replied humbly with a smile. "My name is Jerry Garcia. If you have anything you need in the future, feel free to come to me here at the Hall of Merit... if I'm not on duty, you can find me in the Inner Sect. If it's within my ability, I will definitely help." The elder said with a warm smile. "Thank you for your generous offer, Elder Garcia." Wyatt hadn't expected such a promise from the elder, and he hurriedly expressed his gratitude, his heart filled with warmth. After all, he had merely greeted the elder out of politeness. After exchanging another round of pleasantries with the elder, Wyatt left the second level of the Hall of Merit and headed to the third. Arriving at the third level of the Hall of Merit, Wyatt saw that there was a counter at the entrance, similar to the one on the second level. Behind the counter sat two middle-aged men, evidently the managers of the third level of the Hall of Merit.

Feeling their spiritual strength, Wyatt could tell their abilities were far inferior to Jerry Garcia from the second level.

"These two are probably on par with external elders... likely either external elders or inner stewards."

Wyatt vaguely guessed their identity.

"Leave your storage ring here and go in."

One of the middle-aged men glanced at Wyatt and said indifferently.

Wyatt nodded, placed his storage ring down, and walked into the third level of the Hall of Merit.

Upon entering the third level, Wyatt looked around and was slightly moved... because inside the third level, there were three distinctly divided areas, each filled with a multitude of valuable goods.

The three areas were respectively the Pill Medicine area, Spiritual Artifact area, and Taoist Talisman area.

Wyatt first went to the Pill Medicine area, gathering a number of 'Three-Star Healing Pills' and 'Three-Star Sensing Pills.' Additionally, he bought some extremely pricey Four-Star Saint Realm Pills.

The merit points he spent caused him some heartache.

A single Four-Star Saint Realm Pill cost at least ten thousand merit points.

Despite feeling the pain, Wyatt wasn't surprised.

According to what he knew, the best alchemist in the Moon Radiance Sect was only a Three-Star Saint Refiner who could at most craft Three-Star Saint Realm Pills.

The rarer Four-Star Saint Realm Pills were acquired by the Moon Radiance Sect through other means at considerable cost, hence their hefty price tag.

The pile of pills Wyatt purchased amounted to nearly two hundred thousand merit points.

Leaving the Pill Medicine area, Wyatt entered the Spiritual Artifact area, only to find that a majority of the artifacts were Earth-grade and mostly inscribed with 'Saint Markings.'

Of course, the price varied depending on the Saint Markings inscribed.

Spiritual artifacts without Saint Markings were naturally the cheapest.

Artifacts engraved with basic One-Star Saint Markings were slightly more expensive;

Those with better-quality One-Star Saint Markings were even pricier;

And those inscribed with multiple One-Star Saint Markings were yet more expensive.

However, these artifacts paled in comparison to those bearing Two-Star Saint Markings.

Even Two-Star Saint Markings were categorized into varying levels of quality.

Here, Wyatt saw many Earth-grade spiritual artifacts comparable to the 'Gale Hammer' and 'Weighty Sword,' and even artifacts superior to them—bearing two or more Two-Star Saint Markings.

Naturally, their price was also exorbitant.

Some of the pricier ones cost nearly a million merit points.

"Spiritual artifacts really are money pits... Anyway, I have the 'Sunshot Bow' and the 'Weighty Sword' I took from Sail Fenning, so I don't need to buy any additional spiritual artifacts for now."

Wyatt clicked his tongue in disdain and left the Spiritual Artifact area to explore the Taoist Talisman area.

The Taoist Talisman area specialized in selling talismans.

Each type of talisman was accompanied by detailed explanatory text.

"Two-Star Golden Energy Talisman—once activated, it forms a layer of golden energy defense over the user's body for the duration of one quarter-hour. It can withstand attacks from Martial Artists and Taoist Cultivators at the late Entering the Saint Realm stage or below, but can be breached by Martial Artists or Taoist Cultivators at the peak of the Saint Realm stage and above."

Noticing the description of one talisman, Wyatt clicked his tongue in amazement.

With this talisman, even an ordinary person could survive the attacks of late-stage Saint Realm Martial Artists and Taoist Cultivators for a short quarter-hour, remaining completely unharmed.

"This is definitely a treasure."

Wyatt's eyes lit up as he turned to check the price of the Two-Star Golden Energy Talisman.

"Twenty thousand merit points?"

Upon seeing the price, Wyatt's mouth twisted involuntarily. "A single-use talisman costing twenty thousand merit points? They're not selling things—they're robbing people!"

Only now did Wyatt truly understand why people said 'Talisman Makers' were one of the two most money-hoarding professions in the Martial Dao Sacred Land.

The other being 'Saint Marking Inscribers.'

As he browsed through the Taoist Talisman area, one talisman after another appeared before Wyatt's eyes.

Their descriptions entered his vision one by one, leaving Wyatt momentarily dazzled.

"Two-Star Divine Travel Talisman—once activated, it boosts the user's speed to rival that of late-stage Saint Realm Martial Artists or Taoist Cultivators for one quarter-hour."

The Divine Travel Talisman was primarily used as a life-saving measure.

Aside from Two-Star Divine Travel Talismans, the third level of the Hall of Merit also had numerous 'One-Star Divine Travel Talismans,' but only a handful of 'Three-Star Divine Travel Talismans.'

One-Star Divine Travel Talisman—once activated, it boosts the user's speed to rival that of early-stage Saint Realm Martial Artists or Taoist Cultivators for one quarter-hour.

Three-Star Divine Travel Talisman—once activated, it boosts the user's speed to rival that of peak Saint Realm Martial Artists or Taoist Cultivators for one quarter-hour.

"Peak Saint Realm speed?"

Wyatt's eyes gleamed with excitement. "I must buy a few of these talismans for personal safety."

Only, after seeing the price of the Three-Star Divine Travel Talisman, Wyatt seemed as though he had been doused with cold water, his enthusiasm entirely extinguished. "Thir... thirty thousand merit points? This is outright robbery!"

Wyatt couldn't help but mutter a curse.

Despite grumbling, Wyatt picked up a Three-Star Divine Travel Talisman. Even though it hurt, this was undeniably a valuable item.

It might even save his life in a critical moment.

"Another thirty thousand merit points gone... coupled with that pile of Saint Realm Pills, that's fifty thousand merit points."

Wyatt finally felt the sting of 'spending money like water.' For a moment, he even regretted his generous offer yesterday to return half the bet to all those external stewards and disciples.

Of course, that regretful thought was quickly suppressed.

What's done was done.

On second thought, those actions might actually benefit him in some way—at the very least it earned him goodwill in the external area.

"Then there's this Three-Star Golden Energy Talisman, capable of defending against peak Saint Realm Martial Artists and Taoist Cultivators' attacks for a quarter-hour... twenty thousand merit points. Though cheaper than the Three-Star Divine Travel Talisman, it's still ridiculously priced."

Wyatt couldn't help but click his tongue.

Three-Star Taoist Talismans indeed commanded high prices.

Among them, the Golden Energy Talismans, being defensive items, were less expensive than the Divine Travel Talismans.

Not just that—the price difference between the Two-Star Golden Energy Talisman and the Three-Star Divine Travel Talisman was a full ten thousand merit points.

A Two-Star Golden Energy Talisman cost twenty thousand merit points.

A Two-Star Divine Travel Talisman cost thirty thousand merit points.

"One-Star Taoist Talismans are still quite affordable, only costing two or three thousand merit points... but the effects are mediocre. Aside from the One-Star Divine Travel Talisman, which boosts speed to rival early-stage Saint Realm Martial Artists or Taoist Cultivators, the One-

Star Golden Energy Talisman can only defend against attacks from early-stage Saint Realm Martial Artists or Taoist Cultivators."

To Wyatt, those One-Star Taoist Talismans held little value.

Defense talismans, speed talismans—and naturally attack talismans.

The attack talismans came in an assortment of varieties, and Wyatt found himself dazzled by the selection.

But soon, Wyatt confirmed one thing.

That was—the attack talismans were even pricier than the Divine Travel Talismans, with only Two-Star attack talismans available for sale; there weren't any Three-Star ones.

Two-Star attack talismans—once activated, they could unleash an attack comparable to late-stage Saint Realm Martial Artists or Taoist Cultivators.

Martial Artists and Taoist Cultivators below the late stage of the Saint Realm, unless extremely gifted enough to fight across levels, would be gravely injured, if not killed outright, upon being struck by the Two-Star attack talisman.

"The price of a Two-Star attack talisman is the same as a Three-Star Golden Energy Talisman... outrageous."

Wyatt clicked his tongue repeatedly.

Nonetheless, Wyatt took a Two-Star attack talisman, intending to purchase one.

After a short while, Wyatt had chosen items worth a total of seven hundred thousand merit points in the third level of the Hall of Merit.

Fortunately, there was no one else present in the third level, or someone would undoubtedly be left awestruck and envious.

However, when Wyatt brought these items to the entrance of the third level to settle the bill, even the two Inner Sect stewards were left dumbfounded.

"You... you're sure you want to buy all this?"

One of the Inner Sect stewards asked in disbelief.

He had to ask.

Even for Inner Sect disciples, such a level of extravagance was unheard of.

Let alone this young man wearing an external disciple token on his waist—clearly just an external disciple.

"Swipe the card."

Wyatt spoke indifferently, making a seven hundred thousand merit point transaction from the crystal panel. As the points deducted, he couldn't help but feel a pang of heartache.

Upon witnessing seven hundred thousand merit points credited to the account, the two Inner Sect stewards exchanged bewildered glances, each seeing inexplicable shock mirrored in the other's eyes.

Since when were external disciples so... wealthy?

Chapter 1463: Golden Peng's Profound Secrets

The two Inner Sect stewards watched as Wyatt Barnes walked out of the third floor of the Hall of Merit, continuing upward to the fourth floor, his figure gradually vanishing from their view.

"Could he be the final disciple of one of the Inner Sect elders?"

One of the stewards murmured aloud.

For an Outer Sect disciple to possess such an incredible number of merit points, being the last disciple of an Inner Sect elder was the only plausible explanation.

The final disciple is regarded as the last pupil an elder accepts, after which they take no more apprentices.

Final disciples are typically showered with love and privilege, deeply valued by their mentors, who often spare no expense in nurturing them.

"Even if he were the final disciple of an Inner Sect elder, would it be feasible to spend so extravagantly? Seventy thousand merit points—not seven thousand—and he swiped them away without so much as blinking,"

The other steward remarked with a bitter smile.

He was, after all, an Inner Sect steward, a position equivalent in status to an elder of the Outer Sect within the Moon Radiance Sect, yet his entire wealth amounted to less than fifty thousand merit points.

It was one thing not to compare, but when the comparison was made, the disparity was infuriating!

An Outer Sect disciple casually swiping seventy thousand merit points—such extravagance was something neither seen nor even heard of previously.

While the two Inner Sect stewards were still reeling in astonishment at Wyatt's extravagance, he'd already reached the fourth and final floor of the Hall of Merit.

At the entrance to the fourth floor stood a counter, behind which sat a burly, white-robed elder with a white beard.

The elder's frame was imposing, seated there like a motionless beast lying in wait. A single glance at him was enough to evoke a sense of invisible pressure.

When the elder's spiritual energy swept over Wyatt, a profound sense of exposure overcame him.

"Such strong spiritual power! It's comparable to Elder Jerry Garcia."

Wyatt's heart tightened with amazement.

This elderly figure on the fourth floor of the Hall of Merit possessed spiritual power no weaker than the Inner Sect elder Jerry Garcia on the second floor of the hall, clearly indicating his status as yet another Inner Sect elder.

"Are you Wyatt Barnes?"

Just as Wyatt approached the counter and instinctively removed his Storage Ring before the elder could say anything, the burly, white-robed elder spoke up, his tone curious as his gaze carefully scrutinized Wyatt, surprise evident in his eyes.

"Does the elder know me?"

Wyatt was stunned, not expecting to be recognized. Could it be that this elder had also visited the Outer Sect yesterday and witnessed his life-or-death duel with Sail Fenning?

"That old codger Jerry Garcia just contacted me with a Sound Transmission Talisman, saying you'd come to the Hall of Merit, singing your praises to the skies... And now that I see you, I must say you do indeed look striking. As for the rest..."

Before the white-robed elder could continue, a sudden surge of tremendous pressure emanated from him, sweeping outward like a colossal beast baring its fangs and rushing forward to swallow Wyatt whole.

Caught entirely off guard, Wyatt hadn't anticipated the elder suppressing him with such force.

The overwhelming presence bore down on him, instantly making him feel stifled.

However, with his immensely powerful body and unyielding will, Wyatt was not about to succumb to the elder's attempt at intimidation.

Come what may, Wyatt stood firm, unmoved as solid rock and unyielding as a mountain.

Witnessing how his immense aura failed to make the young man in purple retreat even a step, nor so much as change expressions, a flash of astonishment flickered in the elder's eyes.

"Well, it seems Jerry Garcia wasn't exaggerating after all."

The elder's remark carried an evident acknowledgment of Wyatt's resilience.

"Elder Garcia spoke too highly of me. I'm just an ordinary Outer Sect disciple,"

Wyatt responded humbly.

"An ordinary Outer Sect disciple?"

The white-robed elder scoffed, "I have yet to meet any 'ordinary' Outer Sect disciple capable of defeating Sail Fenning, who is ranked on the Earth List—and killing him outright at that... Young man, having talent is a good thing, but being overly humble can rob a youth of their rightful sharpness."

"Thank you for the instruction, Elder."

Wyatt broke into a cold sweat. So this elder found him too modest for someone of his age and talent.

"Enough. Leave the Storage Ring and proceed,"

The elder waved his hand dismissively as he spoke.

"Understood."

Wyatt nodded, set aside the Storage Ring, and entered the fourth floor of the Hall of Merit.

Even before stepping in, he'd already guessed that this final floor of the Hall of Merit likely stored various Saintly manuals of martial arts, given that the previous floors hadn't contained any.

This was precisely the reason he had come—Saintly martial arts manuals.

To be specific, he was seeking a top-grade, human-level Saintly martial arts manual.

His goal had been set long before coming here, so once inside, he didn't waste time selecting.

Even on the fourth floor of the Moon Radiance Sect's Hall of Merit, Saintly manuals at the pinnacle of the human-level were rather rare, numbering only a few... Wyatt's eyes immediately locked onto one in particular, or rather, they fixated on the Holy Simplicity that contained the manual.

Beside the Holy Simplicity, a slip of paper provided details, including the name of the Saintly martial art manual and the techniques it encompassed.

"'Peng soaring through the nine heavens, weight as heavy as a mountain, Golden Cloth Shirt—it's definitely this one. So this is the manual containing these techniques, titled 'Golden Peng's Profound Secrets,'"

Wyatt murmured, reading the description.

Golden Peng's Profound Secrets was the same top-grade, human-level Saintly martial art manual that Sail Fenning had cultivated.

This manual included the defensive technique 'Golden Cloth Shirt,' which was an advanced counterpart to the 'Silver Cloth Shirt,' a technique Wyatt had thoroughly mastered to its highest realm, 'perfection.'

Unless he transitioned to cultivating Golden Cloth Shirt, there would be no further progress to be made.

Moreover, transitioning to Golden Cloth Shirt didn't require starting over; he could directly shift to its third realm, 'expert attainments.'

Its power was on par with Perfect Silver Cloth Shirt at the maximum level.

Before coming to the Hall of Merit, Wyatt had already decided to select this top-grade, human-level Saintly martial art manual containing Golden Cloth Shirt.

In addition to the Golden Cloth Shirt, he was also drawn to 'Weight as Heavy as a Mountain.'

'Weight as Heavy as a Mountain' was a close-combat martial arts technique of tremendous power which Wyatt had experienced firsthand.

Since arriving at the Martial Dao Sacred Land, close-combat techniques had been his weakness, with the only option at his disposal being 'Echo of the Underworld' from the Saintly martial art manual Supreme Falling Star Arrow.

Supreme Falling Star Arrow focused predominantly on long-range attacks.

Thus, compared to 'Weight as Heavy as a Mountain,' Echo of the Underworld fell short.

Golden Peng's Profound Secrets, on the other hand, concentrated entirely on close-combat techniques.

"Sail Fenning's 'Thousand Weight Heavy Blade' is already in my possession... Once I cultivate 'Weight as Heavy as a Mountain,' even at the beginning stages, synergizing it with the Thousand Weight Heavy Blade will unleash power far beyond Echo of the Underworld."

Wyatt understood this well in his heart.

The Thousand Weight Heavy Blade bore a two-star Saint Marking, 'Thousand Weight Saint Marking,' which, when activated, turned the blade as heavy as a mountain without burdening the wielder.

"It's decided."

A flicker of resolve in Wyatt's eyes followed as he reached out and grabbed the Holy Simplicity containing Golden Peng's Profound Secrets.

But the moment his hand made contact, Wyatt's expression shifted without warning. With lightning speed, he snatched the Holy Simplicity away and retreated two steps.

At the same moment, another hand swept toward the same Holy Simplicity, stirring a gust of wind where it had been moments before.

However, that hand was ultimately slower.

Wyatt retrieved the Holy Simplicity first.

"Hmph! An Outer Sect disciple dares to fight with me for Golden Peng's Profound Secrets? Today, until I've borrowed it, you'll have no chance to touch it!"

A sharp snort cut through the air as a young man suddenly appeared mere steps from Wyatt. The man's arrogant gaze swept over Wyatt, his tone dripping with disdain.

He spoke with a condescending air, as though towering above Wyatt.

Finally getting a proper look at the person who had tried to compete for the Holy Simplicity, Wyatt noted that the man was an Inner Sect disciple—a fact evident from the Inner Sect disciple badge hanging from his waist.

Had this Inner Sect disciple politely explained he was in urgent need of Golden Peng's Profound Secrets, Wyatt might have considered allowing him to borrow it first.

But this disciple had directly tried to seize the Holy Simplicity Wyatt already held in his hand, and subsequently addressed him in a commanding manner that bordered on ridicule.

Immediately, Wyatt's expression darkened.

He was never one to yield under pressure but was more receptive to courtesy.

Hence, faced with the insolence of this Inner Sect disciple, Wyatt merely cast a cold glance at him and turned away, heading to another section of the Hall of Merit.

The section he moved toward housed various jade slips containing information of all sorts.

These jade slips encompassed a wide range of knowledge, exactly what Wyatt sought.

Although Wyatt had been at the Martial Dao Sacred Land for over a year, there were still many aspects he did not fully understand.

Through these jade slips, he could deepen his knowledge of the vast and mysterious Martial Dao Sacred Land.

"Ignoring me?"

The Inner Sect disciple froze momentarily upon seeing Wyatt glance at him indifferently before walking off with the Holy Simplicity. But as realization dawned, anger surged within him like wildfire.

Never had he expected to encounter such audacity from an Outer Sect disciple upon his exit from seclusion to borrow the second part of Golden Peng's Profound Secrets at the Hall of Merit.

In the Outer Sect of the Moon Radiance Sect, there were only five individuals on the Earth List whom he concerned himself with.

No other Outer Sect disciple even registered in his eyes.

And he'd met all five of those ranked disciples before, confirming none of them matched this insolent Outer Sect disciple.

Had it not been for the prohibition against combat within the Hall of Merit, he might already have taught the audacious disciple a lesson.

"Kid, everyone must pay the price for their foolish choices... I'll grant you one last chance. Hand over the Holy Simplicity willingly and kneel to apologize to me. Otherwise, after leaving the Hall of Merit, you might find yourself regretting any unpleasant events that unfold!"

The Inner Sect disciple stared at Wyatt's retreating figure, his tone dripping with menace.

Chapter 1464: Blocked

"Idiot!"

Faced with the Inner Sect disciple's repeated provocations and threats, Wyatt Barnes finally couldn't resist turning his head. He swept a faint glance over him and casually spat out two words, his tone unhurried.

Idiot!

As soon as Wyatt spoke, the Inner Sect disciple was dumbfounded.

This guy... called him an idiot?

An Outer Sect disciple dared to call *him* an idiot?

In an instant, the Inner Sect disciple felt his anger surge uncontrollably, filling his chest like a raging fire.

However, by the time he came back to his senses, Wyatt had already selected a few jade slips and was making his way toward the doorway to the fourth floor of the Hall of Merit.

Taking a deep breath, the Inner Sect disciple temporarily suppressed his fury and followed after him.

Soon, he walked past Wyatt and reached the counter first. He picked up his storage ring and left, clearly no longer planning to borrow the "Golden Peng's Profound Secrets."

The white-robed elder behind the counter didn't stop him.

The reason he didn't intervene was simple: the Inner Sect disciple hadn't taken anything from the fourth floor of the Hall of Merit, nor had he touched any of the jade slips containing Saint-grade martial techniques stored inside.

"Elder."

When Wyatt placed the saint slip containing "Golden Peng's Profound Secrets" and a few other jade slips on the counter, he could feel the deadly chill in the gaze of the Inner Sect disciple as he descended the stairs.

Wyatt ignored it completely.

Wyatt Barnes had never been one to fear conflict!

"'Golden Peng's Profound Secrets'? Not bad, a top-grade human-level Saint Realm martial technique."

The elder picked up the saint slip, nodded approvingly, and then looked at the other jade slips. "These jade slips only store ordinary information... However, due to the sheer volume of data inside, each one still costs 1,000 merit points."

"Borrowing the 'Golden Peng's Profound Secrets' once requires 30,000 merit points. You must review it here. Once you've paid the points, you can begin."

The elder addressed Wyatt directly.

"I'll pay for them all at once."

Wyatt pulled out his crystal card, swiped it to deduct over 30,000 merit points, and then stored the informational jade slips. He picked up the saint slip containing the Saint-grade martial technique, "Golden Peng's Profound Secrets," and began studying it.

In just an instant, Wyatt felt an overwhelming flood of detailed information pour into his mind, merging with his consciousness.

The entire "Golden Peng's Profound Secrets" was completely imprinted in his memory.

This was his unique ability.

Ordinary martial artists or Taoist cultivators required five sessions to fully comprehend Saintgrade martial techniques or Taoist techniques.

But Wyatt? He only needed one session—an instant, in fact—to remember everything perfectly.

Initially, Wyatt had planned to delay his borrowing session for fifteen minutes, but he remembered the words the white-robed elder had said earlier and couldn't help but chuckle to himself. "Young people should carry themselves with pride, should they? Then..."

With a thought, Wyatt made a decision.

Moments later, under the astonished gaze of the white-robed elder, Wyatt placed the saint slip back down on the counter. "Elder, I've finished borrowing it."

"F-Finished borrowing it?"

Hearing this, the elder's eyes widened in shock, his expression one of disbelief. "You didn't... perhaps already study it while you were upstairs?"

Most people who borrowed Saint-grade martial techniques would start reviewing them inside the fourth floor of the Hall of Merit itself.

And as soon as a person picked up a saint slip in the Hall of Merit, regardless of whether they ultimately took it out or not, they were required to pay the corresponding borrowing fee. This system was in place to prevent anyone from secretly studying Saint-grade martial techniques without paying the necessary merit points.

As the guardian of the fourth floor of the Hall of Merit, the elder's duties included not only collecting merit points but also monitoring activities within the area.

Like the Inner Sect disciple who had left earlier.

Since that disciple hadn't touched any of the jade slips or saint slips on the fourth floor, the elder had not stopped him when he tried to leave.

Had he touched a saint slip or jade slip, however, the elder would have intercepted him immediately and demanded the corresponding merit points.

In response to the elder's question, Wyatt simply chuckled. "What do you think?"

"You little rascal, scared me for a second! I thought you actually finished reviewing the first stage of 'Golden Peng's Profound Secrets' in an instant... Turns out, you must have studied it while you were upstairs."

The elder shook his head, dismissing the idea.

Clearly, he couldn't fathom the possibility that Wyatt had finished reviewing not only the first stage of "Golden Peng's Profound Secrets," but also all five stages in the blink of an eye. Who knows how his expression would change if he discovered the truth?

And this was precisely what set Wyatt apart from everyone else.

Any Saint-grade martial technique contained within a saint slip could be absorbed by Wyatt in its entirety with just a single glance.

This gave him an unparalleled advantage, something no one else could hope to match.

Like now—as he borrowed all of "Golden Peng's Profound Secrets" for just 30,000 merit points, he no longer had to worry about paying for additional borrowing sessions in the future.

In comparison, ordinary martial artists needing to master "Golden Peng's Profound Secrets" would typically require five borrowing sessions to complete their training, spending a total of 150,000 merit points in the process.



The elder was stunned. "So that's how you see it... If that's what you're counting on, you're gravely mistaken."

"Oh?"

Hearing this, Wyatt showed a hint of confusion.

"The Hall of Merit is located at the boundary between the Inner Sect and Outer Sect territories... To be precise, this place isn't considered Outer Sect territory. Of course, it's not considered Inner Sect territory either—it's an intermediate zone."

The elder explained, "Here, Inner Sect disciples are permitted to target Outer Sect disciples... So long as they don't kill or cripple them, there are hardly any restrictions."

"I see... If that's the case, then I must admit your warning is indeed quite important," Wyatt said thoughtfully, offering his gratitude once more.

Originally, when tension had arisen between himself and the Inner Sect disciple, Wyatt had already prepared to face some form of retaliation.

However, at the time, he believed that the disciple wouldn't dare act against him before he entered the Inner Sect.

And once he became an Inner Sect disciple, Wyatt figured he wouldn't have much to worry about from such an individual.

Now, after hearing the elder's clarification, Wyatt realized he had been mistaken. Apparently, the Hall of Merit's location fell outside the rules protecting Outer Sect disciples.

"Early Saint Realm, is it?"

Still, upon learning that the disciple was merely in the early stages of the Saint Realm, Wyatt remained unfazed.

Wyatt descended from the fourth floor of the Hall of Merit and passed through the third floor shortly after.

Just as he was about to continue downward, one of the Inner Sect stewards at the counter on the third floor called out to him, "You're Wyatt Barnes, right?"

Curiosity sparkled in the steward's eyes.

His companion beside him appeared equally intrigued.

Clearly, they had already guessed Wyatt's identity but needed confirmation.

"I am," Wyatt replied, nodding lightly. Under their enlightened expressions, he proceeded to leave the third floor and continued downward.

"So it was really Wyatt Barnes. No wonder he's so extravagant."

"Yeah. Didn't hesitate to spend tens of thousands of merit points in one go... I heard he netted three million merit points yesterday. Today, he generously returned half to those Outer Sect disciples who had helped him rake in the points."

Lost in their musings, the two stewards couldn't help but sigh in amazement.

"Elder Garcia."

As Wyatt passed by the second floor of the Hall of Merit, he greeted an elder who had already opened his eyes to gaze at him with a smile. Receiving a slight nod in return, Wyatt then proceeded toward the first floor.

Arriving at the first floor, Wyatt felt as though he had stepped into a bustling marketplace.

Numerous Inner Sect disciples were shouting and advertising their wares.

"Some of these stalls weren't here before..."

Wyatt scanned the Hall of Merit's first floor and noticed several new vendor stalls that hadn't been there earlier.

Calling out to Elder Fire, Wyatt began browsing around the first floor once more.

Unfortunately, he didn't come across any materials needed to repair the Jewel Tower.

"Looks like my streak of good luck has run out," Wyatt murmured with a wry smile as he turned to leave the Hall of Merit.

Before he could walk far, Wyatt stopped in his tracks. He had noticed someone approaching—someone hostile.

With just one glance, Wyatt instantly recognized him as the arrogant Inner Sect disciple he had encountered on the fourth floor.

After leaving the Hall of Merit, the man had obviously been waiting here for him.

"I thought you'd be too afraid to come out," the Inner Sect disciple sneered as he approached Wyatt.

From his tone, it was clear he had been waiting for a while.

"Too afraid to come out? Do you honestly think you're intimidating enough to keep me in there?"

In the face of the disciple's sneer, Wyatt fired back with a mocking laugh, his words dripping with scorn.

Chapter 1465: He is Wyatt Barnes!

The Inner Sect disciple originally thought that the Outer Sect disciple before him would show a panicked and helpless expression upon realizing he was being blocked.

Who would have thought the other party not only did not panic but instead defied him fearlessly and matched words with him.

For some reason, at that moment, a trace of apprehension arose in his heart.

Could it be that this Outer Sect disciple had someone backing him?

Otherwise, how could he dare to talk back to him, an Inner Sect disciple, this boldly?

Was he not afraid of being taught a lesson that would leave him bedridden for months?

By now, many people had noticed the standoff between Wyatt Barnes and the other person, gathering to watch the spectacle unfold.

Even those on the first floor of the Hall of Merit, including the Inner Sect disciples who had stalls set up, abandoned their booths to join the crowd... For them, watching a commotion was far better than sitting guard at their stalls all day.

What's more, once something exciting happened outside, it was impossible for anyone to bother with their booths.

Because everyone would be drawn to where the action was happening.

"That's Nanny Wood!"

Someone recognized the Inner Sect disciple confronting Wyatt and teased, "Nanny Wood, you, a dignified Inner Sect disciple, picking a fight with an Outer Sect disciple? Aren't you embarrassed?"

Upon hearing this, Nanny Wood's face turned red and then pale.

"Oh? It's him!"

Just then, the owners of several stalls that Wyatt had previously visited also recognized him—several Inner Sect disciples.

They had a deep impression of Wyatt.

Because Wyatt had haggled their prices down all the way to their bottom line.

Quickly, more and more spectators gathered, forming an almost complete circle.

Nanny Wood hadn't expected the situation to blow up like this. It had now entirely spun out of his control, leaving him in an awkward and indecisive position.

"Who is your master?"

Taking a deep breath, he used True Energy to transmit his voice to Wyatt, his tone softening ever so slightly.

"Asking about my master?"

Hearing Nanny Wood's True Energy transmission, Wyatt easily saw through his intentions and immediately chuckled mockingly, "What's the matter? Are you worried that my master might be one of the Sect's high-ranking elders whom you can't afford to offend?"

Nanny Wood had used True Energy to transmit his question, but Wyatt responded aloud for all to hear.

In an instant, everyone present cast peculiar looks at Nanny Wood.

"You block someone first and only then wonder about their backing... Isn't that a bit too late?"

Several Inner Sect disciples couldn't help but laugh.

"Haha! Nanny Wood, are you scared? If you're afraid, just make way for this junior brother and stop blocking him from returning to the Outer Sect."

Many Inner Sect disciples who weren't on good terms with Nanny Wood also chimed in, mocking him.

"Tsk tsk... A dignified Inner Sect disciple getting cowed by an Outer Sect disciple. What a disgrace!"

The taunting grew louder and more numerous.

Nanny Wood's face grew red and pale by turns, his heart seething with shame and anger. His gaze turned once again to Wyatt, his eyes glinting with malice. "It doesn't matter who stands behind you. If you don't respect your senior, as your senior brother, it's my duty to teach you how to behave!"

His words sounded righteous and upright, attempting to reframe his actions of blocking Wyatt as a matter of principle.

"Disrespecting seniors?"

Hearing Nanny Wood's words, Wyatt laughed. "What a hefty accusation! Do you think that by uttering such nonsense, even if I do have someone backing me, they won't act because it appears you're in the right?"

"You!!"

Nanny Wood didn't expect his intentions to be so easily exposed with just a few words. Anger and embarrassment surged uncontrollably within him.

He could discern that the gazes of the surrounding crowd had grown increasingly odd as they looked at him.

"You don't need to overthink it... Let me tell you plainly—nobody is standing behind me. There's no need for you to keep guessing. If you want to make a move, then go ahead. If you don't dare, get lost. I still need to return to train; I don't have time to waste here with you."

Wyatt spoke with calm detachment, but by the end, his tone carried a hint of impatience.

"Haha! Nanny Wood, are you really backing off now?"

"This junior brother already said he has no one backing him; don't tell me you still don't dare make a move?"

"How boring! I thought there'd be a great fight, but Nanny Wood is such a coward."

Many Inner Sect disciples, ever eager for chaos, mocked him, shaking their heads at the anticlimax.

The jeers drilled into Nanny Wood's ears, causing his face to flush crimson as rage boiled uncontrollably within him. He glared at Wyatt venomously. "Today, I'll teach you, as an Outer Sect junior brother, how to show proper respect to your senior!"

Wyatt exposing him multiple times had finally pushed Nanny Wood into a full-blown fury, nearly robbing him of all reason.

"Teach me? That will depend on whether you're capable of it."

Facing the now-aggressive Nanny Wood, Wyatt's lips curled into a derisive cold smile as he spoke.

"You're asking for death!"

Nanny Wood roared violently before finally making his move. His figure flashed like thunder, closing the distance to Wyatt in mere moments.

Swoosh!

With a wave of his hand, a seven-foot spear emerged. With a sudden flick, it lashed toward Wyatt like a terrifying whip.

The spear tore through the air, its shadow multiplying to fill the space, like venomous serpents lunging toward Wyatt all at once.

As an Inner Sect disciple with a cultivation level in the early stages of Entering the Saint Realm, Nanny Wood's strength was undeniably formidable.

At the very least, he was no weaker than Sail Fenning was before the Thousand Pounds Saint Inscription on his heavy sword had been activated.

However, as the overwhelming spear shadows approached, Wyatt remained motionless like a mountain, standing still and steady, apparently willing to leave himself fully exposed before Nanny Wood's assault.

As the Inner Sect disciples watching the scene held their breaths in suspense, hearts tightening with anxiety, Wyatt finally moved.

In his hand, a heavy sword appeared out of nowhere. The moment it fell into his grasp, his True Energy surged into the sword, imbuing it with an enigmatic and unfathomable aura, transforming it into what felt like a mountain-crushing hammer in mere moments.

"Heaviness like Mount Tai!"

Chanting silently in his heart, Wyatt raised the heavy sword, its blade trembling with sheer power, and swung it, meeting Nanny Wood's spear shadows head-on.

The heavy sword moved like wind and thunder, cutting through the air. Wherever it passed, it seemed as if mountains were toppling, distorting the void with resounding thunderclaps.

The winds roared relentlessly, their sheer force rippling across the surroundings in all directions.

"That's the Thousand Pounds Saint Inscription!"

An Inner Sect disciple gasped in recognition, clearly identifying the activated Saint Inscription engraved on Wyatt's sword.

At these words, Nanny Wood's expression faltered slightly, realizing that this Outer Sect disciple might indeed have an extraordinary background.

Are you kidding me!

That was a Two-Star Saint Inscription—the 'Thousand Pounds Saint Inscription'!

A Saint Tool inscribed with that was openly sold in the Hall of Merit for no less than 200,000 merit points.

How could someone who could wield such a weapon be an ordinary Outer Sect disciple?

Impossible!

At that moment, regret crept into Nanny Wood's heart.

Yet, now that he had struck with his full force, it was already too late to pull back.

Soon, however, he discovered that whether or not he wanted to withdraw didn't matter—he wouldn't be able to harm his opponent anyway.

As Wyatt's sweeping, mountain-like heavy sword clashed with Nanny Wood's charging spear, the void itself seemed to shatter in an instant.

BOOM!!

A wave of energy erupted violently from the clash, churning into a miniature shockwave that hurled vicious winds in all directions.

The fierce winds flapped the robes of the onlooking Inner Sect disciples but did not distract their focused gazes from the unfolding showdown.

As the void seemed on the verge of rupturing, under everyone's wide-eyed stares, Wyatt, wielding the heavy sword with a powerful sweep, staggered back three steps.

On the other hand, Nanny Wood was far worse off. His spear had snapped and been flung away, and his hand that had gripped the weapon was now a bloody mess.

Not only that, but positioned at the very center of the clash, Nanny Wood had borne the brunt of its raw force, sending his entire body hurtling through the air to land on the ground more than ten meters away in complete disarray.

"This Heaviness like Mount Tai, when paired with the Thousand Pounds Saint Inscription, is truly exhilarating!"

Despite the waves of energy churning within his body, Wyatt's eyes sparkled with excitement.

He hadn't yet begun properly training the auxiliary offensive techniques of the "Golden Peng's Profound Secrets," including the move Heaviness like Mount Tai. Yet, even when casually executed alongside the Thousand Pounds Saint Inscription, it produced unexpectedly stunning results.

The sword's mountain-like sweep seemed to demand all obstacles bow before its dominance.

That sense of overwhelming power, of unrelenting might, coursing through him—it made every cell in Wyatt's body boil with adrenaline.

In this moment, a fervent joy welled up within him, as if he could burst into hysterical laughter at any time.

"Inner Sect senior brother?"

With a cold glance at the lifeless figure of Nanny Wood sprawled on the ground, Wyatt smirked frostily. Retrieving the Thousand Pounds Heavy Sword, he turned and strode indifferently toward the Outer Sect's direction amidst the astonished stares of the surrounding disciples.

Listening to the biting sarcasm in Wyatt's departing chuckle, Nanny Wood was so enraged that his blood pressure surged violently, exacerbating his injuries and causing him to faint outright.

It wasn't until Wyatt's silhouette fully disappeared from sight that the surrounding Inner Sect disciples snapped out of their stupor. Turning to one another, they exchanged looks of mutual disbelief.

"Since when did the Outer Sect produce such a figure?"

"For an Outer Sect disciple to defeat Nanny Wood so effortlessly... In the entire Outer Sect, only four people could manage that—and they're all top-ranked Earth List elites at the peak of the Transcending Mortal Realm."

"You're wrong. It's four, not five. Sail Fenning died yesterday."

"No, I was right! Sail Fenning is dead, but someone has taken his place... Don't forget, after killing Sail Fenning, that newly-risen monster in the Outer Sect replaced his position, including his Earth List ranking."

"That monster... goes by the name Wyatt Barnes."

•••

The murmuring discussion among the Outer Sect disciples stirred with astonishment. The scene they had just witnessed was utterly shocking.

"Do you think... That Outer Sect disciple just now might have been Wyatt Barnes?"

Suddenly, someone voiced their suspicion.

"Now that you mention it, it really could be... That heavy sword the Outer Sect disciple wielded earlier looked very similar to the one Sail Fenning used before, and it also bore the Thousand Pounds Saint Inscription."

Prompted by this reminder, many Inner Sect disciples brewed a realization.

And in the end, they nearly reached a unanimous conclusion.

The Outer Sect disciple from before was none other than the newly-risen monster of the Outer Sect—Wyatt Barnes!

Chapter 1466: Earthly Paradise

After confirming that the Outer Sect disciple just now was Wyatt Barnes, the expressions of shock on the faces of the Inner Sect disciples grew even deeper.

"I've only heard about how powerful Wyatt Barnes is, but I didn't expect him to be this overwhelming... Though he relied on the Thousand Weight Heavy Sword to defeat Nanny Wood, it does nothing to overshadow his own strength."

Several Inner Sect disciples sighed in amazement.

"There are no false reputations under great names... Wyatt Barnes is even more monstrous than the rumors say."

Another Inner Sect disciple remarked.

"I've heard that Wyatt Barnes is currently only a Martial Artist at the Small Perfection stage of the Transcending Mortal Realm... If he's already so monstrous at Small Perfection, how terrifying will he be after breaking through to the Great Perfection stage, or even Entering the Saint Realm?"

Someone recalled Wyatt Barnes's current cultivation level and couldn't help but exclaim in astonishment.

Instantly, the atmosphere became dead silent.

Only now did it dawn on them—they had all overlooked one critical point.

At this very moment, Wyatt Barnes was still just a Martial Artist at the Small Perfection stage of the Transcending Mortal Realm.

"To be at the Small Perfection stage and kill Sail Fenning, ranked ninety-ninth on the Earth List, thereby taking his spot... Entering the Earth List with such a cultivation level! In the history of the Nine Sect Alliance, has there ever been such a monstrous talent?"

An Inner Sect disciple asked.

"Wyatt Barnes is destined to rewrite the history of the Nine Sect Alliance's Earth List."

The Inner Sect disciples lit up with excitement. "Wyatt Barnes is one of Moon Radiance Sect's disciples, which is a tremendous honor for our entire sect!"

"I've heard that in yesterday's battle against Sail Fenning, Wyatt Barnes earned a whopping three million merit points."

"I've heard that too. However, it seems he returned half of it to most people today... Even so, he still has over 1.5 million merit points in his hands."

"One and a half million merit points... That wealth rivals even our Inner Sect Elders, doesn't it?"

•••

The mention of Wyatt Barnes's wealth drew envy from many Inner Sect disciples.

"He's Wyatt Barnes? The 'wealthy tycoon' with over 1.5 million merit points?"

The Inner Sect disciples who had previously dealt with Wyatt Barnes started recalling the scene where he endlessly haggled with them, leaving them furious and speechless.

At the same time, their gazes showed traces of grievance.

How could a 'tycoon' with over a million merit points haggle so fiercely over items worth a few thousand merit points?

He had even bargained the originally priced items of several thousand merit points down to mere hundreds!

These Inner Sect disciples, feeling aggrieved, were completely unaware of Wyatt Barnes's thoughts.

After infuriating Nanny Wood until she fainted, Wyatt Barnes had returned to the Outer Sect area and retired to his independent courtyard.

Upon entering his room, the first thing Wyatt did was enter the Jewel Tower, handing over a pile of materials to Elder Fire, then heading to the second floor of the Jewel Tower to review the Jade Slips he had purchased from the fourth floor of the Hall of Merit.

Those Jade Slips contained a wealth of information that piqued his interest.

As Elder Fire busied himself repairing the third floor of the Jewel Tower, Wyatt Barnes immersed himself completely in the vast knowledge contained within the handful of Jade Slips.

To be precise, he was completely absorbed in the information recorded within those Jade Slips.

The Jade Slips covered various topics.

They detailed aspects of Saint Refiners' Artifact Refinement and Alchemy, Taoist Talisman Inscription Drawing, Saint Markings Inscription... and countless other subjects that dazzled and overwhelmed the mind.

At first, Wyatt focused primarily on content related to Saint Markings.

Although he held a heavy sword inscribed with the two-star Saint Marking 'Thousand Weight Saint Marking,' and could see its design, he could only conclude that the Saint markings of the Martial Dao Sacred Land were akin to the Inscription markings of the Cloud Skies Continent.

Beyond that connection, he knew virtually nothing else.

However, through the information recorded in the Jade Slips in his possession, Wyatt Barnes began to gain a deeper understanding of Saint Markings.

"So there are so many similarities between Saint Markings and Inscription markings!"

"If a suitable point of convergence is found, the two are hardly different at all... It's even possible to upgrade Inscription markings to Saint Markings."

"Perhaps, even if the other memories of the Martial Emperor of Reincarnation hold little meaning for me right now, the memory related to Inscription markings could serve as a tremendous resource for me in the Martial Dao Sacred Land! Saint Refiner masters are synonymous with immense wealth."

After delving deeper into Saint Markings, Wyatt Barnes realized that as long as he committed himself to researching them, he stood a chance at identifying their connection points with Inscription markings.

Once he achieved that, the Inscription-related memories of the Martial Emperor of Reincarnation could come into play.

Wyatt Barnes could very well become a Saint Markings master in the Martial Dao Sacred Land.

Saint Markings were exceptionally valuable in the Martial Dao Sacred Land because of their durability.

Unlike Taoist Talismans, which were generally single-use, Saint Markings were inscribed on sacred artifacts, remaining effective as long as the artifact itself remained intact.

This permanence made Saint Markings particularly precious.

Take for example the Thousand Weight Heavy Sword he possessed—it was inscribed with a two-star Saint Marking and had a market value of over two hundred thousand merit points... On the other hand, a two-star Taoist Talisman typically sold for only a few thousand merit points.

The exception was two-star attack Taoist Talismans.

Once activated, a two-star attack Talisman could unleash a late-stage Entering the Saint Realm attack, with astonishing destructive power.

After further familiarizing himself with Saint Markings, Wyatt Barnes turned to learn about Saint Refiners' Artifact and Alchemical Refinement... but he quickly realized these pursuits would likely be impossible for him.

The reason behind this was that Saint Refiners in the Martial Dao Sacred Land required a body entirely attuned to fire attributes.

Only this way could they manipulate the flames essential for Artifact Refinement and Alchemy.

This was a stark contrast to the Cloud Skies Continent.

In the Cloud Skies Continent, anyone with sufficient cultivation and talent as an alchemist or Artifact Refiner could use Origin Force to produce flame required for these processes.

"Truly, different temples chant different scriptures..."

Wyatt murmured to himself.

Even so, this revelation didn't dishearten him.

Because in the Martial Dao Sacred Land, Saint Refiners—whether alchemists or Artifact Refiners—were far from scarce.

What was scarce were Saint Markings masters and Taoist Talisman masters.

In the Martial Dao Sacred Land, aside from Martial Dao dominance, importance was placed on Saint Markings mastery and Taoist Talisman mastery.

"I'll have to ask Elder Jerry Garcia later where I can learn about Saint Markings... Once I grasp the essence of Saint Markings, connecting them to Inscription markings will only be a matter of time."

Captivated by this thought, Wyatt Barnes felt incredibly exhilarated.

A Saint Markings master!

Wyatt Barnes possessed both the potential and talent to become such a master.

Moreover, he could become far more than just an ordinary Saint Markings master.

With the help of the Martial Emperor of Reincarnation's memories, once Saint Markings and Inscription markings converged, he could even aim for the title of 'Saint Markings Grandmaster.'

Though there is only a one-word difference between 'Saint Markings master' and 'Saint Markings Grandmaster,' the disparity between the two would be like heaven and earth!

Among a thousand Saint Markings masters, not even one might eventually reach the rank of Saint Markings Grandmaster.

After browsing and gathering a general understanding of the remaining information contained in the Jade Slips, Wyatt Barnes focused back on cultivation and started by upgrading the defensive technique 'Silver Cloth Shirt' into 'Golden Cloth Shirt.'

As an advanced version of Silver Cloth Shirt, Golden Cloth Shirt shared similarities in its cultivation approach.

Thus, it didn't take long for Wyatt Barnes to master Golden Cloth Shirt, reaching its third stage, 'Distinguished Proficiency.'

When executing Golden Cloth Shirt now, Wyatt Barnes's body shimmered with golden light as though clad in a layer of golden armor.

After mastering Golden Cloth Shirt, Wyatt Barnes devoted his attention fully to the Saint-grade martial art 'Golden Peng's Profound Secrets,' focusing on its attack technique 'Mountain-like Heaviness.'

It was a powerful technique designed to pair with his Thousand Weight Heavy Sword.

Today, despite not having fully reached the first stage of Mountain-like Heaviness, Wyatt Barnes used it alongside the Thousand Weight Heavy Sword and managed to blast away the Inner Sect disciple, Nanny Wood.

Strength met strength; force countered force!

The thrilling, blood-pumping sensation left Wyatt Barnes filled with exhilaration!

Of course, while pursuing mastery of Saint-grade martial techniques, Wyatt Barnes also pushed forward the cultivation of his martial arts foundation.

His immediate goal was to advance his cultivation to the Great Perfection stage of the Transcending Mortal Realm as soon as possible.

At that point, his strength would take a meteoric leap forward!

His Saint Veins would also reach their full potential!

In the Martial Dao Sacred Land, Mansion of Azure Clouds.

A massive floating island suspended in midair had no visible supports. Shrouded in mist, it resembled a paradise on earth.

Atop this floating island stood an extraordinarily grand palace.

The palace was vast, occupying an area far larger than the capital city of any mortal kingdom.

Behind the palace lay a sprawling 'back garden' akin to a prairie, populated by gentle exotic beasts roaming freely, giving the garden an animated, lively atmosphere.

Within one corner of the back garden stood a spacious pavilion.

The pavilion also floated, suspended above a large lake teeming with fish.

At the pavilion, a pair of young lovers—youthful and radiant like celestial beings—sat facing each other at a stone table.

The table was adorned with an array of delicious dishes that would stir anyone's appetite at a mere glance.

But at this moment, the young man and woman appeared distracted.

To be more precise, the young woman seemed lost in thought.

"Natalie, you're thinking about Wyatt again, aren't you?"

A handsome, refined young man—bearing an uncanny resemblance to Wyatt Barnes—gazed at her tenderly and asked in a soft voice.

"Brother Lanni, after all these years, why hasn't Wyatt returned? Could something have happened to him?"

The young woman—Christina Lee, Wyatt Barnes's mother—voiced her fears with worry in her tone.

Chapter 1467: The Elder of Destiny

"Don't worry. As long as Wyatt has the ability to open the jade box I left for him, he will naturally come to the Martial Dao Sacred Land... I have already left him a detailed address, instructing him to find 'Old Ku' there."



"Are you talking about that Old Destiny who is said to know astronomy above and geography below, renowned for being able to divine fate?"

Christina had been in the Mansion of Azure Clouds for quite some time and had heard rumors of a mysterious Old Destiny in the Martial Dao Sacred Land—someone capable of divining fate but notoriously difficult to approach, only helping those he found pleasing.

Otherwise, no matter how powerful the background of someone seeking him, he would ignore them.

"The very same."

Lanni nodded.

"I heard he's not just eccentric but also only divines for people he likes. Moreover, even for individuals he finds pleasing, he usually only performs divination for the person themselves... How did he agree to divine for Wyatt?"

Christina asked, puzzled.

"I don't know why either... Initially, I didn't even recognize him. It was he who approached me proactively."

Lanni looked equally baffled as he recounted.

"He approached you on his own initiative?"

Christina froze. Although her husband was the House Master of the Mansion of Azure Clouds, she didn't believe that was enough to prompt Old Destiny to curry favor.

She had heard a rumor that the leader of a force comparable to the Mansion of Azure Clouds had tried to seek a divination from Old Destiny, only to be refused.

Thus, she didn't think it had anything to do with her husband's status. There had to be some underlying reason.

"I thought it was strange too. But, he mentioned 'destiny mustn't be divulged'... And after I confirmed his identity and asked him to divine for Wyatt, he did not refuse; he simply agreed outright."

Lanni said, "He claimed Wyatt is a person of great blessings, destined to surpass me in achievement! He even said it's lucky I didn't bring Wyatt directly to the Martial Dao Sacred Land, or Wyatt would have missed out on a major opportunity."

"What major opportunity?"

Christina asked curiously.

"I asked him the same question, but he said he didn't know."

Lanni replied with a wry smile.

"Again with the 'destiny mustn't be divulged'?"

Christina frowned slightly, "Brother Lanni, could it be that the Old Destiny you met was a fraud?"

"Regarding Wyatt's great opportunity, he didn't say 'destiny mustn't be divulged.' Instead, he said even he couldn't divine its details, only that it's a great opportunity... According to him, the opportunity Wyatt will receive has transcended his calculation abilities."

Lanni spoke with no small amount of joy, naturally thrilled at the prospect of his son experiencing such remarkable destiny.

If not for his desire for Wyatt to succeed, he wouldn't have left his son on the Cloud Skies Continent back then.

Looking back now, it seemed his decision was correct.

If he had taken his son to the Martial Dao Sacred Land then, Wyatt would undoubtedly have missed out on that great opportunity.

"As for the Old Destiny's identity, I thoroughly verified it. He's absolutely the real deal."

This, Lanni asserted with conviction.

"If he really is the genuine Old Destiny, then what he said must be true... For Old Destiny to be unable to divine details of a great opportunity, Wyatt's serendipity on the Cloud Skies Continent is surely extraordinary."

For the first time, Christina's face showed a rare smile.

"Haha! My son Wyatt Barnes is destined to be a person of deep fortune! Like father, like son."

Lanni laughed heartily.

"You still have the audacity to boast about your fortune? Every time I recall that incident you mentioned, I still can't help but break into a cold sweat for you... If not for that Demon Cultivator's soul being shattered, you might still lack full control over your body."

Christina said sharply.

Lanni chuckled awkwardly, rendered speechless in the face of her remark.

"How's Valentina and our two future daughters-in-law?"

Thinking of the three women who traveled with them, Christina asked.

"Of the three, while Valentina's aptitude is a bit lacking, Irene and Helen Sinclair's talents are exceptional... Within a year at most, Irene and Helen will undoubtedly experience breakthroughs in their cultivation."

Lanni said with a smile.

"Good to hear." The mention of Irene and Helen brought a radiant smile to Christina—it warmed her heart to think of her two future daughters-in-law, who were not only of good character but also completely devoted to her son. Throughout the years, their feelings for him had remained steadfast. In this regard, they resembled her, which was very rare. "Natalie, as far as I know, these two daughters-in-law have yet to gain Wyatt's approval, have they? But about the other two daughters-in-law I've never met, shouldn't I send people to bring them to the Mansion of Azure Clouds?" Lanni asked. "Keer and Jovie, let them stay on the Cloud Skies Continent with Wyatt... If you try to whisk away all four daughters-in-law, Wyatt would surely despise you as a dad." At the mention of the other two potential daughters-in-law, Christina's smile was unstoppable. You can imagine. Were Wyatt here, overhearing his parents' conversation, he'd undoubtedly be thoroughly stunned. Old Destiny? Claiming he possessed a magnificent, yet untraceable opportunity? An opportunity he would miss if he had followed his father to the Martial Dao Sacred Land?

Wasn't that referring to the 'Jewel Tower'?

After all, if Wyatt had followed his father to the Martial Dao Sacred Land early on, he certainly wouldn't have ventured to the offshore Holy Island, nor encountered the Jewel Tower.

In the vastness of fate, everything has a purpose.

Lanni and Christina could never have known their son had already arrived in the Martial Dao Sacred Land over a year ago.

Due to the damaged sound-transmitting jade piece within the Jewel Box, Wyatt had no way of knowing where to meet his father's arranged contact.

Nor could they predict they'd soon be grandparents.

Just as Lanni and Christina were oblivious to this, Wyatt was also unaware his father was the House Master of the immensely powerful Azure Clouds Mansion—a force far surpassing Karina Hanson's backing in the Blue Waves Hanson Mansion.

At that moment, Wyatt was peacefully residing in the Outer Sect of Moon Radiance Sect, inside his private courtyard, within the second floor of the Jewel Tower.

"Three months of cultivation, and my strength has further improved, bringing me closer to 'Transcending Mortal Realm Perfection.'"

After three months within the Jewel Tower's second floor, Wyatt felt satisfied with his results. "Besides that, the Saint-level martial art technique 'Golden Cloth Shirt' has smoothly progressed to the fourth stage, 'Masterful Precision.'"

"Also, the Saint-level martial art technique 'As Heavy as a Mountain' has successfully advanced to the first stage, 'Initiation.'"

Those three months had been tremendously productive.

While his cultivation of the Saint-class 'Golden Peng's Profound Secrets' martial arts technique progressed, Wyatt did not neglect his training of the 'Supreme Falling Star Arrow.'

However, of the techniques within 'Supreme Falling Star Arrow,' Wyatt primarily focused on refining 'Meteor Smash' and 'Arrow-Guided Movement.' These two techniques reached a satisfactory threshold, yet pushing them further required prolonged dedication.

Squeezing in time amidst three months of cultivation yielded progress, but nothing overly dramatic.

Conversely, the rapid improvement in 'Golden Cloth Shirt' was thanks to Wyatt's abnormally powerful physique, which accelerated the pace of his mastery over the technique.

Three months within the Jewel Tower's second layer equated to merely a month's time outside.

One month later, Wyatt stepped out of his room for some fresh air.

As he opened his door, a challenge letter came fluttering down. "Someone sent me a challenge letter?"

Wyatt frowned slightly but still grabbed the letter casually.

After opening it, the letter turned out to be a generic battle challenge.

The challenger was named 'Center Montes.'

"Center Montes? Isn't he ranked third among the Outer Sect disciples? His position on the 'Earth List' is significantly higher than Sail Fenning... He's ranked sixty-sixth, a Transcending Mortal Realm peak-tier expert."

Having spent considerable time in the Moon Radiance Sect's Outer Region, Wyatt had learned about the other Earth List-ranked disciples in the Outer Sect, particularly the four individuals listed there.

Thus, upon reading 'Center Montes,' Wyatt immediately recognized the name.

"It's not a Life and Death Duel challenge letter, so it doesn't seem to be tied to Evander Mullins's faction."

Wyatt speculated inwardly, "Perhaps he's heard of my victory against Chill Fenning and simply seeks to spar and test my abilities."

Thinking this, Wyatt's expression relaxed.

After stamping his fingerprint on the challenge letter, Wyatt left his courtyard.

As soon as he stepped outside, Wyatt noticed numerous gazes shooting toward him from the distance, faces filled with anticipation, as if waiting for something.

"Looks like many people already know Center Montes issued me a challenge letter."

Wyatt mused.

Without hesitation, Wyatt publicly announced his acceptance of Center Montes's challenge, letting Center Montes choose a time for their duel.

Chapter 1468: Elder Easton's Invitation

And Center Montes quickly responded: Ten days later, a battle at the Martial Arts Performance Field.

"Ten days? He needs that much preparation?"

Upon learning of Center Montes's response, Wyatt Barnes frowned deeply.

Actually, Wyatt wasn't the only one puzzled by this. Even the crowd of outer sect disciples waiting to watch the excitement felt baffled.

"Senior Brother Center Montes is waiting ten days to face Senior Brother Wyatt Barnes? Isn't that overly long?" "Perhaps Senior Brother Center Montes's martial arts techniques are nearing a breakthrough." "Could be." "Seems like Senior Brother Center Montes is quite wary of Senior Brother Wyatt Barnes, sending out the challenge letter yet dragging the duel for so long." "Honestly, it's not surprising. Back when Senior Brother Wyatt Barnes killed Sail Fenning, it all happened in just the blink of an eye... Senior Brother Wyatt's strength is unquestionably on par with Senior Brother Center Montes." "That's true! Even for Senior Brother Center Montes, it would be nearly impossible to kill Sail Fenning in a decisive Life and Death Duel like that." ... At this point, the outer sect disciples' admiration for Wyatt Barnes had reached near-blind reverence. Although Center Montes ranked sixty-sixth on the Earth Ranking and was the third strongest outer sect disciple of Moon Radiance Sect, in their view regarding the upcoming battle between Center Montes and Wyatt Barnes, they overwhelmingly favored Wyatt. Not just because Wyatt had killed Sail Fenning a month earlier, but also because Wyatt had defeated an inner sect disciple, and did so in a single move. That particular battle had greatly brought pride to the outer sect disciples. Outer sect disciples defeating inner sect disciples—what an immense honor! "You guys are so confident in me?"

When Wyatt heard about the unwavering confidence the outer sect disciples had in him, he couldn't help but chuckle wryly. He had planned to set up another betting match.

But now, it seemed that even if he established a gambling scheme, no one would dare to place bets against him.

Of course, Wyatt also understood that during routine sparring matches, it was uncommon for a betting pool to be established. Even if someone set up a bet, it wouldn't attract many participants.

The reason was simple: sparring matches don't involve life-threatening stakes and could be manipulated secretly—letting each other win deliberately.

The subjects of the sparring could easily collaborate with the betting bookmakers to rake in large sums.

Naturally, nobody would be foolish enough to bet on such arrangements.

"Both Nanny Wood and Baer Bear are still in closed-door training?"

When Wyatt sought out Nanny and Baer, he found that both were still in secluded cultivation, "The last time I had the Life and Death Duel with Sail Fenning, they weren't around either... Could it be that they've been in seclusion since then, without emerging at all?"

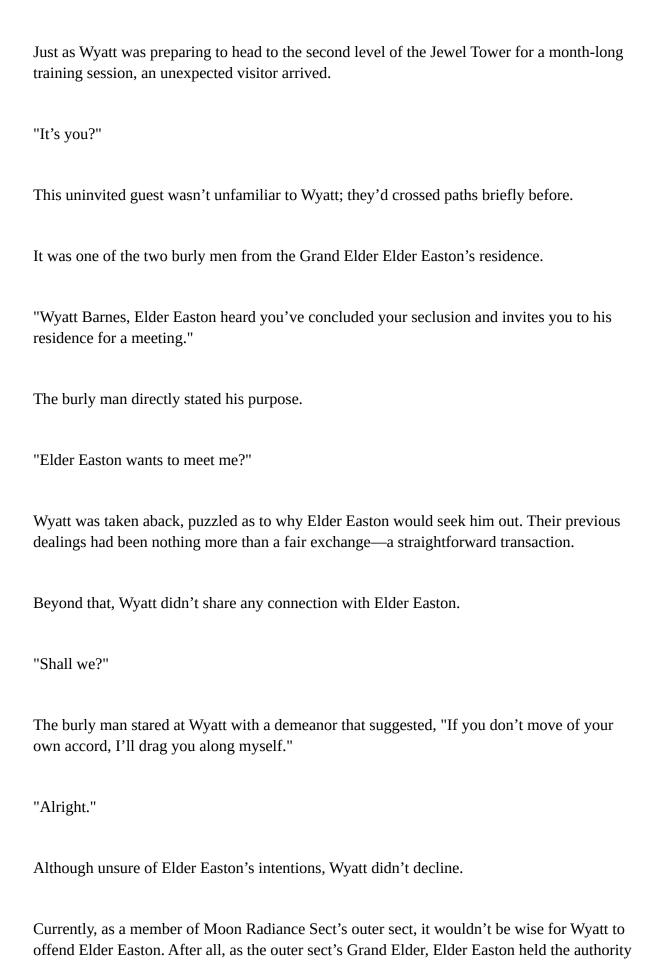
Wyatt had sought Nanny and Baer primarily to return the merit points his mentor, Tabo Garcia, had entrusted him to safeguard.

He planned to give each of them fifty thousand.

The hundred thousand merit points gifted by Tabo Garcia were intended entirely for the two of them.

After all, Wyatt now had little need for that many merit points.

But, since both were in seclusion, Wyatt had no choice but to wait for another opportunity.



to deal with him effortlessly.





Wyatt stated dismissively. "You would be gravely mistaken to think that way... Though I don't understand why Center Montes issued a regular challenge instead of a Life and Death Duel, I am certain his motivations are anything but straightforward." Elder Easton explained. "Not straightforward? I don't know him—how could he have a grudge against me?" Wyatt chuckled and shook his head. "There's no personal animosity between you and him, but how about between you and his uncle?" Elder Easton looked piercingly at Wyatt. "His uncle? Who?" Wyatt's expression registered confusion. "Evander Mullins!" In the face of Wyatt's puzzled gaze, Elder Easton uttered a name that shocked Wyatt deeply, "Evander Mullins? Are you certain about this?"

Elder Easton elaborated, "You hail from Hill Mountain City's Main Mansion and are the apprentice of its City Lord, Tabo Garcia... That being the case, Evander Mullins surely wouldn't let this slide. Hence, I called you here to warn you—be extremely cautious of Center Montes."

"Center Montes is Evander Mullins's nephew?"

"It's no secret among the inner circle of our sect's higher-ups."

Wyatt nodded solemnly and then stood to express his gratitude to Elder Easton, "Thank you, Elder, for the warning."

"Haha... If you truly want to show gratitude, how about giving me a fourth-grade Holy Stone?"

Elder Easton laughed heartily, a glint of cunning flickered in his eyes.

"That's only reasonable."

Wyatt was neither stingy nor hesitant. With a simple gesture, he produced two fourth-grade Holy Stones along with ten fifth-grade Holy Stones and placed them in front of Elder Easton.

"Tsk tsk... You're quite something. Could it be that you're a disciple of some fifth-tier power, out here gaining practical experience, temporarily joining our Moon Radiance Sect?"

After pocketing the Holy Stones, Elder Easton smilingly inquired.

Wyatt, facing Elder Easton's probing question, only responded with a faint smile, refusing to provide an answer.

In Elder Easton's presence, maintaining an air of mystery felt advantageous—this intrigue could serve as the foundation of their dynamic, ensuring Elder Easton didn't underestimate him.

"Elder Easton, if there's nothing else, I'll take my leave."

Wyatt addressed Elder Easton briefly before departing.

As he left, Wyatt's expression darkened, "I initially thought Center Montes issued a normal challenge, but it turns out he's Evander Mullins's nephew... Evander Mullins's nephew sending me a routine challenge letter—this is absolutely not as simple as it seems!"

That much was obvious to Wyatt after learning Center Montes's 'identity.'

"Quentin Campbell never mentioned this to me..."

Suddenly, Wyatt thought of Quentin Campbell and couldn't help but furrow his brows. His first assumption was that Quentin had intentionally withheld this information, but he quickly reconsidered, "Perhaps Quentin himself isn't aware of this."

"Still, Evander Mullins has a nephew, and his nephew is backed by a Vice Sect Leader... Why would Evander continue to fear or even curry favor with that inner sect elder, Abu Dunn? Abu Dunn's standing within the sect's inner tier can't possibly rival that of a Vice Sect Leader, right?"

Wyatt couldn't puzzle this out at all.

If Wyatt had known that Abu Dunn's true support came from one of Moon Radiance Sect's few Saint Realm cultivators, his confusion would have disappeared immediately.

After all, with such backing, even the Vice Sect Leaders generally dared not cross Abu Dunn.

However, as that connection was privy only to the sect's highest decision-making echelons, not even outer sect or inner sect elders, let alone disciples, were aware of it.

Let alone outer stewards or even inner sect disciples and outer sect disciples.

Ten days equated to a month of cultivation on the Jewel Tower's second floor.

For the entire month, Wyatt focused solely on training on the second floor of the Jewel Tower... When the time came, he finally left the Jewel Tower, stepped out of his courtyard, and headed toward the expansive Martial Arts Performance Field in Moon Radiance Sect's outer sect.

Upon arrival, Wyatt encountered a lively, bustling crowd.

Not only had nearly all non-secluded outer sect disciples gathered, but many inner sect disciples were also present, far more than the previous month during Wyatt's duel with Sail Fenning.

During that event, only a dozen or so inner sect disciples had come.

This time, however, over a hundred inner sect disciples had gathered.

Some of them were present due to witnessing Wyatt's defeat of inner sect disciple Nanny Wood outside the Hall of Merit a month prior; others had come to the Martial Arts Performance Field after seeing Wyatt kill Earth Ranking powerhouse Sail Fenning.

The remaining attendees were drawn by curiosity and reputation, all eager to witness Wyatt's skills firsthand.

Chapter 1469: No Respect for Elders or Youngers

"Senior Brother Center Montes is here!"

A sharp-eyed outer sect disciple cried out in surprise.

His exclamation quickly drew the attention of everyone present.

Under the gaze of the crowd, a tall and imposing young man with an alluring yet sinister charm strode forth, his steps like those of a dragon and tiger. His flowing green robes accentuated his elegance and unrestrained poise.

"Senior Brother Montes."

Many female outer sect disciples' eyes sparkled, resembling starved wolves that had just spotted their prey.

In the outer sect, quite a number of female disciples regarded Center Montes as their "dream lover."

Yet some female disciples furrowed their brows and said, "Compared to Senior Brother Montes, I still prefer Senior Brother Wyatt Barnes... Senior Brother Barnes' handsomeness has an aura of masculine strength, whereas Senior Brother Montes' is more feminine and delicate."

"Exactly! Besides, I think Senior Brother Barnes is far more handsome... I even dreamed about him yesterday."

"I dreamt about Senior Brother Barnes a few days ago too. In my dream, he brought a grand bridal procession to marry me."

"Marry you? Don't dream too big! A monstrous genius like Senior Brother Barnes wouldn't bother with someone as plain as you."

"Hah! You speak as though Senior Brother Barnes would take notice of you."

•••

Undoubtedly, those female disciples favoring Wyatt Barnes were larger in number and easily drowned out the voices of those adoring Center Montes.

Although Wyatt Barnes had only joined the Moon Radiance Sect three months ago, his few displays of skill had astonished the entire outer sect.

In the history of the Moon Radiance Sect's outer sect, there was never a talent as extraordinary as Wyatt Barnes.

"Hm! Different strokes for different folks. I personally prefer Senior Brother Montes."

A female disciple from the outer sect huffed in dissatisfaction.

For a moment, a group of outer sect female disciples began squabbling again.

In the end, sheer numbers won out, as those who admired Wyatt Barnes overwhelmed the voices of Center Montes' admirers.

"Hmpf!"

The rivalry among the outer sect female disciples didn't deeply concern Center Montes, yet he still caught every word.

Privately, he scoffed coldly, his eyes flashing with a trace of malice, "Wyatt Barnes, after today, you'll become nothing but a cripple!"

"We'll see who dares admire you after that."

Center Montes' heart twisted in jealousy.

While he had never truly taken the female disciples of the outer sect seriously, regardless of their expression of admiration toward him, he had simply relished the feeling. He never reciprocated.

Now, seeing the majority of the outer sect female disciples leaning toward Wyatt Barnes, he couldn't suppress the jealousy rising within him.

It was as though Wyatt Barnes had stolen something that originally belonged to him.

"Senior Brother Barnes is here!"

With an excited shout reverberating across the field, every gaze that previously remained fixed on Center Montes shifted entirely to the approaching purple-clad figure walking toward the Martial Arts Performance Field.

A tall, strikingly handsome young man dressed in purple robes slowly stepped forward. His sword-like brows radiated heroism, accompanied by a brilliant and uplifting smile. Compared to Center Montes' sinister allure, he was an absolute contrast.

Looking at Center Montes' face stirred feelings of oppression.

Looking at Wyatt Barnes' face, though, conveyed a breeze of serenity.

"That's Wyatt Barnes? Only thirty-five years old... so young!"

Among the inner sect disciples watching the commotion, there were some with considerable cultivation, boldly employing "spiritual arts" to probe Wyatt Barnes and promptly discerning his age — thirty-five years old.

Feeling the probing spiritual waves sweep toward him, Wyatt's brow furrowed slightly before quickly relaxing, seemingly indifferent.

At this moment, even had he taken offense, there wasn't much he could do.

The number of inner sect disciples using spiritual arts to investigate him was no fewer than twenty. Was he supposed to go around chastising each of them? At the moment, he didn't possess such power.

However, among the outer sect disciples present, his age wasn't a secret, as they had learned about it three months ago —

During the Moon Radiance Sect's "entrance exam," Wyatt Barnes' age had been probed by the outer sect steward using spiritual arts.

"Wyatt Barnes!"

Seeing the focus of the crowd shift entirely from himself to Wyatt Barnes upon his arrival, Center Montes' face darkened immediately.

Though very few people from the outer sect were aware that Center Montes was a direct disciple of the sect's Vice Sect Leader, Center Montes was still ranked third among the Moon Radiance Sect's outer sect disciples and was sixty-sixth on the Earth List as a Transcending Mortal Realm peak powerhouse...

Yet today, someone who had only joined the sect for three months was stealing the spotlight! How could he possibly endure this?

A newcomer overshadowing him, someone with five years in the sect, was a blatant trampling of his dignity — a fierce, merciless trampling!

"So, you're Wyatt Barnes, the so-called 'genius'?"

When Center Montes turned to address Wyatt Barnes, wearing a "friendly" smile, the darkness clouding his face vanished entirely, replaced by apparent cordiality.

But this "friendly" smile on his sinisterly charming face still had a peculiar quality to it.

"And you must be Center Montes?"

Wyatt Barnes looked at Center Montes indifferently. "Don't you think calling me 'Junior Brother' is premature? In the Martial Dao world, the powerful are revered. If you don't surpass me, calling me 'Junior Brother' seems awfully out of place, don't you think?"

Having learned about Center Montes' "identity," Wyatt Barnes knew of his hostile intentions.

So, even during their first encounter, Wyatt Barnes showed no courtesy whatsoever.

After all, his enmity with Evander Mullins was already one of mutual destruction.

And Center Montes, as Evander Mullins' nephew and ally, undoubtedly wished for his demise as well.

Faced with Center Montes' feigned friendliness, Wyatt Barnes found it utterly repulsive.

Whoa!

Wyatt Barnes' sharp retort sparked an uproar among the outer sect disciples.

None of them anticipated such palpable tension the moment Wyatt Barnes and Center Montes met. Some began suspecting pre-existing antagonism between the two.

Even Center Montes hadn't anticipated Wyatt Barnes' recklessness. A cold glint flashed briefly through his eyes.

The glint disappeared as swiftly as it came.

But Wyatt Barnes caught it nonetheless.

"I spoke too hastily; I apologize."

Unexpectedly, Center Montes didn't lose his temper and instead smiled warmly, apologizing to Wyatt Barnes, showcasing considerable restraint.

"See! That's why I admire Senior Brother Montes—he's so composed... unlike your Senior Brother Wyatt Barnes, who's hostile and petty, utterly unmanly!"

A female disciple loyal to Center Montes exclaimed.

"Petty? Bah! Senior Brother Barnes simply has character, ever heard of that? Moreover, Senior Brother Barnes clearly has the confidence to defeat your Senior Brother Montes, enough to qualify as his 'senior'!"

The supporters of Wyatt Barnes fired back, unwilling to concede.

Wyatt Barnes narrowed his eyes, his lips curling into a subtle, mocking smile.

If he hadn't already uncovered Center Montes' "identity," he might've been deceived by this facade of warm friendliness.

At this moment, his vigilance heightened even further.

Center Montes enduring insult and acting submissive was a clear ploy to trick him into lowering his guard before delivering a decisive strike.

"If that's his intention, let him come—it makes no difference. I, Wyatt Barnes, am not some soft persimmon waiting to be crushed!"

Wyatt Barnes mused to himself.

Meanwhile, Wyatt Barnes cast a casual glance at Center Montes before walking directly into the central area of the Martial Arts Performance Field. Turning back, his gaze locked onto Center Montes. "Let's begin. I don't have all day—defeating you is merely a momentary distraction before I return to cultivate."

"Defeat me?"

Center Montes smirked slightly. "It seems you hold utter confidence in your own abilities."

"And you're not confident? If that's the case, we can skip this duel. Just surrender, and save us all some time."

Wyatt Barnes replied indifferently.

Hearing this, although Center Montes restrained his fury, his expression stiffened, and he snapped curtly, "Your sharp tongue, Wyatt Barnes, precedes you. Seeing it firsthand today, I can confirm—reputation well-earned!"

"Sharp tongue?"

Wyatt Barnes chuckled, his words dripping with sarcasm. "Since you find my tongue so sharp, perhaps it's pointless for you to keep talking. Why don't you strike outright? Wouldn't that be much simpler?"

"Hmph! Did you truly think killing Sail Fenning and defeating an Entering Saint Realm inner sect disciple makes you invincible in the outer sect?"

Center Montes finally unleashed his pent-up rage. "Even though you rank 99th on the Earth List, in my eyes, you're still trash!"

"Since you're eager for me to make a move, I'll happily oblige!"

Center Montes' cold sneer preceded a swift, decisive action.

With the flick of his hand, a thin three-foot-long blade appeared, resembling a willow branch. Though slender, it remained perfectly sturdy in Center Montes' grip.

Infused with True Energy, the blade emitted a sharp and oppressive aura.

This aura was far superior to that of an ordinary slender blade.

"Saint Markings?"

Wyatt Barnes' gaze sharpened instantly, recognizing the faint energy emanations from Center Montes' weapon; it was no ordinary artifact—it bore engraved Saint Markings of power.

"Wyatt Barnes, soon you'll see... regardless of your triumphs over Sail Fenning, in my eyes, you're still nothing!"

Center Montes' hand trembled slightly, his blade bending like a serpentine coil, showcasing remarkable flexibility.

"Sharp tongue, indeed—yours isn't lacking either."

Wyatt Barnes smirked coldly, delivering another jab.

"Courting death!"

Center Montes' eyes grew frosty as his blade straightened once more.

A moment later, his form blurred, transforming into a gust of wind as his weapon released a piercing whistle, charging straight for Wyatt Barnes.

Chapter 1470: Three-Star Saint Markings

The Lightning Sword Technique!

This is the single-target offensive move within the top-grade human-tier martial arts training of Center Montes, mastered to the fourth realm: "Skillful Command."

Now, as he employed the movement technique 'Straight Step,' he quickly closed the distance to Wyatt Barnes in the blink of an eye.

Whoosh!

The blade in his hand, slender like willow branches and three feet long, shot straight at Wyatt like a sharp spike.

The Lightning Sword Technique!

This strike was incredibly swift, causing even the surrounding air to emit a piercing whistle.

The whistling sound seemed to pierce through everything, making the faces of the onlookers grow tense.

Of course, some of the weaker Outer Sect disciples were completely unable to catch this whistling sound in time.

Heavy as a Mountain!

In response to Center Montes' attack, Wyatt calmly drew the Thousand Weight Heavy Sword and activated the 'Thousand Weight Saint Markings' on its surface.

With one sweep of the sword, it was as if he were swinging a mountain, smashing it straight toward Center Montes' piercing sword.

"So reckless!"

Seeing this, Center Montes sneered coldly. The True Energy on his sword pulsed, appearing as leaping green electric snakes, exuding a suffocating pressure.

As this aura emerged, Wyatt's face grew solemn.

The aura gave him an overwhelming sense of indomitability.

It was as if Center Montes' sword had undergone a monumental transformation, becoming utterly unstoppable at that moment.

BOOM!!

The Thousand Weight Heavy Sword sliced through the air, creating thunderous roars, meeting Center Montes' 'Lightning Sword Technique' head-on.

Center Montes' Lightning Sword Technique stayed true to the straight path of the character' (straight), without any intention of turning or dodging, piercing directly toward Wyatt's horizontally swinging Thousand Weight Heavy Sword.

Faced with the mountain-like sweep of the heavy sword, there was no trace of fear!

Finally, Center Montes' blade collided with Wyatt's Thousand Weight Heavy Sword.

At the corner of Wyatt's mouth, a cold smile appeared. He believed his strike would send both Center Montes and his blade flying.

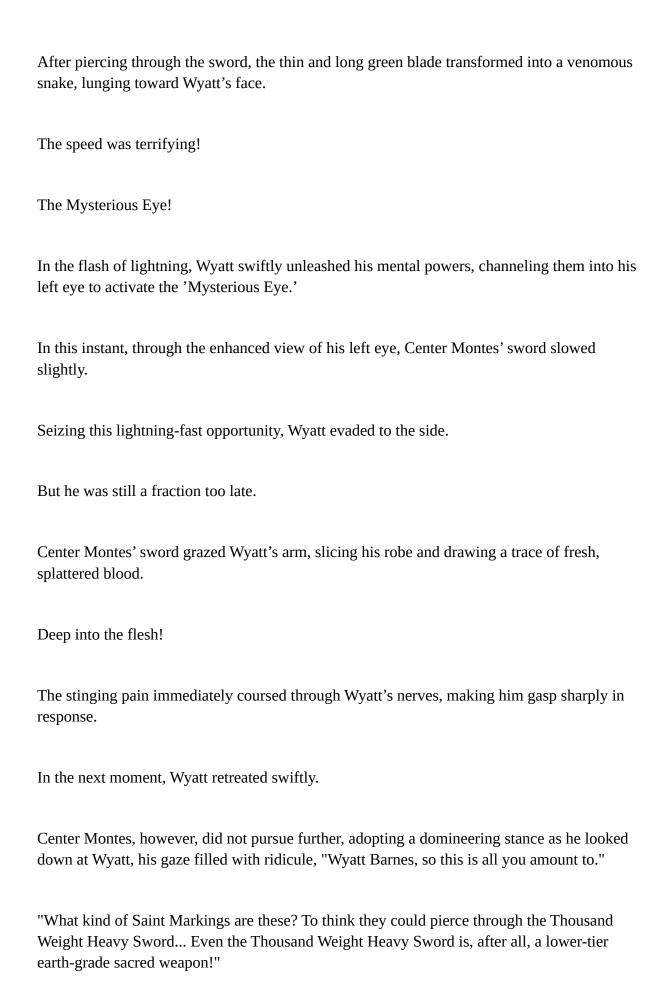
But then, disaster struck!

An appalling scene unfolded before Wyatt's eyes.

The horrifying sight froze the cold smile on his lips instantly.

Wyatt's expression filled with shock.

Center Montes' sword seemed truly indomitable. As Wyatt swung the Thousand Weight Heavy Sword, it pierced through the True Energy shrouding the sword and penetrated the Thousand Weight Heavy Sword itself.



Recalling the scene just now, Wyatt felt a chill in his heart, glancing at Center Montes' sword with newfound apprehension.

That strike not only defied the Thousand Weight Heavy Sword's impact but even pierced through his True Energy and the blade itself, aiming directly at him.

The sight of the hole on the Thousand Weight Heavy Sword's blade was unsettling in the extreme.

"The Thousand Weight Heavy Sword was pierced through entirely! Could it possibly be the 'Penetration Glyph'?"

An Inner Sect disciple gasped and exclaimed in shock.

The Penetration Glyph!

The mere mention of this caused an uproar in the crowd.

"Is Center Montes' sword engraved with the three-star Saint Markings, 'Penetration Glyph'?"

"To my knowledge, not even the Hall of Merit contains many weapons engraved with three-star Saint Markings... They only occasionally appear. When they do, Inner Sect elders sweep them away instantly."

"Within the sect, only the higher-ups above Inner Sect elders have the financial capacity to purchase weapons with three-star Saint Markings!"

"Weapons engraved with three-star Saint Markings start at a million merit points."

...

The crowd of spectators voiced their astonishment, their gazes toward Center Montes filled with shock.

"Hmm. That sword looks familiar..."

At some point, an Inner Sect disciple stared at the weapon in Center Montes' hand, brows furrowed in recollection.

Moments later, his eyes lit up, and he exclaimed, "I remember now! This is the sword of our Inner Sect elder, Evander Mullins. I once had the honor of watching Elder Mullins use this sword... In the Moon Radiance Sect, sacred weapons engraved with three-star Saint Markings never repeat. Clearly, the sword in Center Montes' hand is Elder Mullins'!"

"Elder Mullins' sword? I've never heard of Center Montes having any connection to Elder Mullins... How does he have Elder Mullins' sword?"

Many Inner Sect disciples looked at Center Montes in astonishment.

"Perhaps Center Montes is the secret personal disciple of Elder Mullins? To my knowledge, the sect's high-ranking figures often secretly recruit talented disciples from the Outer Sect and only reveal their identities once these disciples enter the Inner Sect."

One Inner Sect disciple remarked.

"I've heard of this too. It seems that Center Montes is likely Elder Mullins' secretly trained disciple."

Another Inner Sect disciple chimed in.

"Evander Mullins?"

Among the crowd of onlookers, many had their eyes light up upon hearing the name.

"Elder Evander Mullins has made his move, finally? It's a pity this isn't a life-and-death duel."

Hidden among the crowd, Outer Sect elder Holden Yellow sneered, "Even though this isn't a fight to the death, with the grudge between Elder Mullins and Hill Mountain City's City Lord, Tabo Garcia, Elder Mullins surely won't let Wyatt Barnes off lightly."

The animosity between Evander Mullins and Tabo Garcia was no secret in the Moon Radiance Sect.

Thus, upon learning that Wyatt Barnes came from Hill Mountain City, Holden Yellow had been anticipating Wyatt's misfortune.

Holden Yellow was the same elder who had lost over three hundred thousand merit points to Wyatt Barnes a little over a month ago.

Over the past month, Holden Yellow had kept a close watch on Wyatt Barnes, ready to ambush him the moment he left the sect's premises.

Yet Wyatt had shown no willingness to leave the sect or go out for training.

"Elder Mullins?"

Outer Sect steward Vein Weber also chuckled, "With someone from Elder Mullins' faction making a move, this Wyatt Barnes is either doomed or disabled! Given Center Montes' position in the Outer Sect, even if he ruins Wyatt Barnes, he will only face minor punishment."

Although Wyatt Barnes was a prodigious Martial Artist, in a ruined state, his value to the Moon Radiance Sect would vanish entirely.

On the other hand, Center Montes had significant value.

Thus, the Moon Radiance Sect would not cripple Center Montes.

Of course, should Center Montes dare to kill Wyatt Barnes, he wouldn't escape execution.

This was due to the sect's rules: If murder were to go unpunished, the Moon Radiance Sect's authority would crumble, leaving its rules unenforced in the future.

"Wyatt Barnes..."

Mandy Wood was also present, her gaze filled with anticipation.

Wyatt Barnes hailed from Hill Mountain City, sharing animosity with Evander Mullins, an Inner Sect elder—a feud Mandy had heard much about during her three months at Moon Radiance Sect.

Now, Mandy greatly desired Wyatt Barnes to be crippled, simplifying her quest to kill him.

"Three-star Saint Markings, 'Penetration Glyph'? Evander Mullins' sword?"

Wyatt's face darkened, realizing that Mullins had lent his sword to Center Montes for the sole purpose of dealing with him.

However, the sheer power of the three-star Saint Markings still left Wyatt both shocked and awestruck.

Last time Wyatt visited the Hall of Merit, he hadn't seen any weapons engraved with three-star Saint Markings; otherwise, he'd have certainly purchased one.

Straight Step!

The Lightning Sword Technique!

Hearing the Inner Sect disciples reveal the origins of his sword, Center Montes wasted no time launching another strike.

This time, his target was Wyatt's right arm holding the Thousand Weight Heavy Sword, as though aiming to sever it with one blow.

Confronted with Center Montes' ruthlessness, Wyatt's face turned utterly grim.

In the next moment, he directly activated the 'Mysterious Eye.'

A continuous stream of mental power gathered in Wyatt's left eye, forming a tiny vortex at its center.

The vortex spun faster and faster until it reached seemingly its limit.

At this point, Wyatt had no choice but to employ the 'Mysterious Eye.'

As someone ranked "number three" in the Outer Sect, Center Montes' innate strength was already remarkable. Adding a sword engraved with three-star Saint Markings, 'Penetration Glyph,' left Wyatt entirely overwhelmed.

With the Mysterious Eye activated, spatial displacement!

In an instant, Center Montes' sword veered off course, bypassing Wyatt's right arm.

Just as Wyatt breathed a sigh of relief, he noticed Center Montes' gaze had a look of realization, but without any hint of panic.

It was as though he had anticipated this all along.

"He already knew?"

Wyatt's heart sank, cultivating a sense of unease.

"Wyatt Barnes, Sail Fenning must have fallen to this 'mental technique' of yours, right? Your mental technique is indeed extraordinary, able to divert my fully powered Lightning Sword Technique... But now, it ends."

Center Montes' True Energy transmission stabbed into Wyatt's ears, confirming his ominous premonition.

Next, Wyatt noticed Center Montes' other hand holding a small yellow sheet, densely adorned with intricate patterns.
"A Taoist Talisman!"
The moment the spectators recognized the Taoist Talisman, so did Wyatt.
The Taoist Talisman swiftly shot toward Wyatt.
"Command!"
Sweeping past Wyatt's side with momentum, Center Montes fixed his fierce gaze on Wyatt and suddenly shouted aloud.