

L. Wyatt 1511

Chapter 1511: Nearly Four-Star Assassin 'Vanessa

"The mission that Chidark failed to accomplish before will continue."

Ivan Nether looked at Richard Thai and spoke.

"Alright."

Richard Thai nodded. "This time, you're not considering sending a three-star assassin again, are you?"

"While Chidark wasn't the best among the three-star assassins, he was certainly considered one of the elites. For a mission he failed at and died for, there's no way we'll send another three-star assassin... This time, I plan to have Vanessa handle it!"

Ivan Nether's murky eyes suddenly lit up with sharp brilliance as he spoke resolutely.

Some time ago, he had gone back to the headquarters of the Shadow Mountain black market division to verify Chidark's Soul Bead. It had already shattered, with the exact time of its destruction coinciding with his mission.

The shattering of the Soul Bead signified his death.

"Vanessa?"

Richard Thai's face showed surprise. "As far as I know, Vanessa is considered the top ace of the division, isn't she? Below the Saint Realm, she has never failed a target."

"Exactly. Vanessa is one of the aces of our division within the Nine Sect Alliance territory, a quasi-four-star assassin."

Ivan Nether nodded.

In the Shadow Mountain black market, quasi-four-star assassins generally possess strength at the half-step Saint Realm.

Being assassins, they rarely confront their targets head-on. Whenever they strike, it is always unexpected.

Therefore, quasi-four-star assassins in the Shadow Mountain black market usually possess the ability to kill half-step Saint Realm opponents.

Of course, not all half-step Saint Realm practitioners can be killed.

Some of these half-step Saint Realm experts, due to various reasons, have such formidable strength that they can even rival weaker Saint Realm practitioners.

For such half-step Saint Realm experts, it is quite difficult for quasi-four-star assassins to kill them.

However, within the Nine Sect Alliance territory, such half-step Saint Realm experts are typically absent.

Usually, only in fifth-tier, fourth-tier, or even more powerful factions' younger generations can such half-step Saint Realm experts appear.

If Wyatt Barnes were to reach half-step Saint Realm in the future, he would undoubtedly belong to this category.

His talent and potential are no less than those of the outstanding youths within powerful factions.

"With Vanessa taking on this task, success should be assured."

Richard Thai spoke confidently, indicating his belief in the quasi-four-star assassin Vanessa.

Vanessa, aside from being a quasi-four-star assassin, was also a woman.

This woman was the only female quasi-four-star assassin in the division of the Shadow Mountain black market within the Nine Sect Alliance territory.

Moreover, she was unanimously recognized as the 'number one' among the quasi-four-star assassins in the division.

No one had ever seen Vanessa's true appearance. Even Ivan Nether and Richard Thai had only seen her clad entirely in her black combat attire, her graceful figure concealed beneath.

Despite Vanessa's features being obscured, her devilishly alluring figure alone was enough to make any man salivate.

However, even Richard Thai and Ivan Nether dared not harbor any improper thoughts about Vanessa.

The reason? Vanessa was openly backed by the 'leader' of the Shadow Mountain black market division in the Nine Sect Alliance territory.

As for the relationship between Vanessa and the leader of the Shadow Mountain black market, it was a mystery to all.

Only Vanessa and the division's leader likely knew the answer.

Yet, there were many rumors and speculations about her within the Shadow Mountain black market.

Some said Vanessa was the leader's lover.

Others claimed she was the leader's illegitimate daughter.

There were even whispers suggesting Vanessa was the leader's granddaughter.

No matter the case, Vanessa's origins were a mystery, an enigma that intrigued but eluded resolution.

The main base of the Shadow Mountain black market division in Thames River City, though the primary hub, was not the division's true headquarters.

The division's headquarters sat deep in the northern mountain range of Thames River City, hidden behind layers of illusory formations.

Except for the division's high-ranking members and a few elite assassins who knew how to enter, the other people in the Shadow Mountain black market—let alone unaware of its location—couldn't access it even if they found it.

The illusory formations guarding the division's headquarters were shrouded in mystery, created by a legendary four-star Saint Markings master and a four-star Taoist Talisman master together.

However, this did not mean the Shadow Mountain black market division had such experts stationed.

The two masters were dispatched from the higher divisions of the Shadow Mountain black market merely to set up the formations.

After completing the installation, they departed.

These illusory formations were so formidable that even ordinary Saint Realm practitioners found entering them extremely difficult.

Beyond the layers of formations lay a sprawling valley in the dense mountains, encircled by numerous separate residences.

At first glance, these residences covered the valley like a sprawling field.

Whoosh!

Suddenly, an arrow carrying a Jade Slip pierced through the void and lodged itself into the wooden plaque in front of a residence halfway up the mountainside.

Swoosh!

Almost immediately, a lithe, purple bird materialized out of nowhere,

its beak deftly biting onto the arrow and effortlessly pulling it out of the plaque—an action completed with remarkable ease.

Swoosh!

The purple bird vanished abruptly and reappeared in the backyard of the residence.

Clouds and mist wreathed the backyard, clearly indicating formations were in place.

These formations completely blocked external sightlines.

Yet, inside, the outside world was crystal clear.

Beside a small lake in the misty backyard, a young woman sat, her jade-like feet lightly stirring the water of the lake. Her breathtakingly beautiful face seemed lost in deep thought, leaving one guessing as to what occupied her mind.

"Sister, sister."

Not until the purple bird appeared and started speaking did the young woman snap out of her thoughts, casually taking the arrow from the bird's mouth.

She tossed the arrow away carelessly, keeping only the Jade Slip, as her mental energy extended outward and fused with it.

Moments later, the information contained within the Jade Slip flooded her mind.

"Moon Radiance Sect, Wyatt Barnes, Entering the Saint Realm? A few months ago, he was only at the Small Perfection of the Transcending Mortal Realm... In a place as barren as this, to have such a monstrous talent in Martial Dao?"

The young woman's expression revealed surprise.

"To target someone like this and make me intervene... Are those three-star assassins completely useless?"

At some point, her delicate brows furrowed.

However, once she sorted through the information in her mind, her irritation faded, her brows smoothing out. "Chidark actually failed? Interesting, interesting... Purple, looks like we're headed out."

This last sentence was clearly directed at the purple bird.

"Hehe... Finally, a mission. Sister, let me handle this target—I promise to execute it flawlessly."

Hovering in front of the young woman, the purple bird flapped its wings, speaking with great confidence.

"We'll see about that."

The young woman gave a faint smile. "Based on what I suspect, this Moon Radiance Sect student named Wyatt Barnes likely has someone backing him... That person should be Moon Radiance Sect's three-star Saint Markings master, Trevor Baillie. His techniques rival those of a half-step Saint Realm expert."

"Sister, why don't you take the target, and let me handle Trevor Baillie?"

Upon hearing the young woman's speculation, the purple bird quickly changed its tune, showing no hesitation about confronting someone as powerful as Trevor Baillie.

"Purple, keep rambling and you'll be staying home obediently."

The young woman's brows knitted as she shot the bird a glare, shocking it into silence, not daring to utter another word.

When the young woman entered the house and emerged once more, she was now cloaked entirely in black combat attire.

Her peerlessly beautiful face was wholly veiled, leaving not even a trace visible.

Yet, the allure of her devilish figure still made other women pale in comparison and elicited desire from any man.

A moment later, the young woman disappeared into thin air.

The purple bird disappeared along with her.

Over ten thousand miles west of the headquarters of the Shadow Mountain black market division, there lay an isolated mountain range.

From a distance, this mountain range looked barren and lifeless—a land of desolation.

At this moment, a somewhat disheveled figure was clutching a bead tightly as she hurried deeper into the mountain range.

"Brother, now that the Howard Family is gone, Father is also... You no longer have to endure punishment. I'm coming to rescue you."

The disheveled figure belonged to a young woman.

If Wyatt Barnes were here, he would immediately recognize her as Eliel Howard, the Second Miss of the Howard Family.

Eliel Howard should have perished when the Howard Family was annihilated.

But she was fortunate, as she had been outside at the time and narrowly escaped disaster.

However, despite surviving, her life hadn't been easy. Constantly evading assassins from the Shadow Mountain black market, she had finally fled from Thames River City.

Her current direction was toward the Demonic Ridge of the Shadows, a location passed down through the Howard Family's lineage.

Her purpose was simple: to find her brother.

If the Howard Family patriarch, Valentin Howard, were still alive and aware of Eliel Howard's intentions, he would undoubtedly smile bitterly.

The reason? Eliel Howard's thoughts were simply too naive.

Of course, Eliel wasn't entirely to blame. Even within the Howard Family, very few people knew the specifics about the Demonic Ridge of the Shadows.

The Demonic Ridge of the Shadows was an Abyss—once entered, there was no escape.

Unless someone came out on their own, the only path remaining was death.

Additionally, the bead clutched in Eliel Howard's hand belonged to her brother, Leslie Howard—a Soul Bead she had retrieved from the Howard ancestral shrine after the family's fall.

On that day, she had sneaked into the ancestral shrine, where the majority of the Soul Beads had already shattered, except for the ones belonging to some of the Howard Family's direct descendants who weren't present during the massacre.

Within the Howard Family, only direct descendants were eligible to possess Soul Beads.

Taking both her own and Leslie Howard's Soul Beads, Eliel left Thames River City, heading straight for the Demonic Ridge of the Shadows.

Chapter 1512: Sect Warehouse

Two months passed by in the blink of an eye.

On this day, Wyatt Barnes stepped out from the third floor of the Jewel Tower, feeling refreshed as he exited his room, his face glowing with a brilliant smile.

It was evident that Wyatt was in high spirits.

"I've finally made a breakthrough to the 'late stage of Entering the Saint Realm.'"

Letting out a relieved breath, the radiant smile on Wyatt's face gradually faded, though a trace of it lingered.

In the outside world, two months had passed, whereas within the third floor of the Jewel Tower, ten months had gone by.

During these ten months, aside from training in Saint-grade martial arts techniques, Wyatt had primarily focused on cultivating his strength and had successfully completed his breakthrough, advancing to the late stage of Entering the Saint Realm.

However, after reaching the late stage of Entering the Saint Realm, Wyatt realized he was unable to wield the 'True Energy Weapon Condensation' technique.

Curious about this, Wyatt specifically approached Trevor Baillie and learned that True Energy Weapon Condensation was a free-form technique that allowed one to coalesce True Energy into an independent weapon.

As for the type of weapon, it depended on the practitioner's preference.

You could first form an arrow, then later form a sword—it was entirely at will, without restrictions.

Of course, among the three techniques mastered by Martial Artists who achieve Small Perfection at the Entering the Saint Realm, only the 'True Energy Weapon Condensation' technique was unrestricted.

A True Energy Beast Condensation, once formed, could not change.

To coalesce True Energy into a beast, one could either use the essence blood of a Savage Beast or Sacred Beast, or rely on imagination.

However, True Energy Beasts formed through imagination were far less powerful compared to those formed using essence blood.

The former had only appearance and form, while the latter possessed appearance, form, and power!

So far, all the True Energy Beasts Wyatt had come across were of the former type.

This was due to the inherent difficulty of obtaining essence blood from Savage Beasts or Sacred Beasts.

The essence blood required for True Energy Beasts needed to come from either beasts with advanced bloodlines—such as the Dragonsmith Clan or Romero Tribe—or beasts at Small Perfection of Entering the Saint Realm or higher.

As such, unless one had an extraordinary background and a powerful figure extracting beast essence blood for them, very few could master the True Energy Beast technique using essence blood as a foundation.

"I have already fused with the essence blood of the Five-Clawed Demon Dragon... As long as I break through to Small Perfection of Entering the Saint Realm, I will be able to condense the Five-Clawed Demon Dragon with True Energy!"

This thought filled Wyatt with anticipation.

His True Energy Beast technique was mastered using the Five-Clawed Demon Dragon's essence blood. Its incredible strength would be enough to crush over ninety-nine percent of his peers' True Energy Beasts, whether Martial Artists or Taoists of the same level.

Defeating opponents above his level would not be impossible.

"Hmm?"

Not long after leaving the Jewel Tower, Wyatt noticed that, with a simple thought, he could condense his True Energy into a sword—a gigantic blade that hovered in the air before him.

With just a thought, the massive sword streaked across the sky, creating sharp swishing sounds as it cut through the air.

"It seems True Energy Weapon Condensation cannot be executed inside the Jewel Tower."

Wyatt exhaled in relief.

Earlier, he had worried about being unable to perform True Energy Weapon Condensation. That would have severely reduced his advantage in combat against Martial Artists and Taoists at the late stage of Entering the Saint Realm and above.

"True Energy Weapon Condensation?!"

Just as Wyatt became engrossed, commanding various weapons he formed out of True Energy to dance through the air as if addicted, a voice filled with astonishment came from outside.

Recognizing the voice immediately, Wyatt knew it was Trevor Baillie.

"Senior Brother."

With a single thought, Wyatt dispersed the ten-meter-long spear constructed with True Energy before looking at Trevor, greeting him with a smile.

Strangely, Trevor didn't respond.

His eyes locked onto Wyatt as if he were seeing him for the first time.

Although Trevor knew Wyatt had broken through to 'Entering the Saint Realm,' he had assumed Wyatt was merely still at the 'early stage.'

Little did he expect that during these two months of Wyatt's return to the Sect, he would be hit with this 'surprise.'

Rather than calling it a surprise, it was more like a shock.

Less than half a year ago, Wyatt had merely been a Martial Artist at Small Perfection of the Transcending Mortal Realm, and now, he was already at the late stage of Entering the Saint Realm.

In the past, Trevor wouldn't have believed in the existence of such a monstrous talent, not even if he were beaten to death.

"Senior Brother, did you come looking for me for something?"

Seeing Trevor staring blankly at him, Wyatt naturally understood what was on his mind. However, he was more curious as to why Trevor had sought him out.

If it wasn't something important, Trevor wouldn't have arrived so coincidentally.

It was then that Trevor regained his senses, but he didn't immediately respond to Wyatt. Instead, he scanned Wyatt from head to toe, holding back for a long time before uttering two words, "Freak!"

Although it wasn't the first time Wyatt had heard someone call him this, seeing Trevor, a respected Inner Sect Elder of the Moon Radiance Sect, call him the same made Wyatt chuckle wryly.

"Junior Brother, how on earth did you cultivate? It's been less than six months, and you've managed to break through to the late stage of Entering the Saint Realm and master the True Energy Weapon Condensation technique."

Trevor couldn't help but ask despite knowing it was likely one of Wyatt's 'secrets.' Of course, he had mentally prepared himself for Wyatt's unwillingness to answer—even geniuses had their own secrets. His inquiry was a reflex, not a demand.

"Senior Brother, in less than half a year, breaking through from Small Perfection of the Transcending Mortal Realm to the late stage of Entering the Saint Realm... would you believe me?"

Instead of replying directly, Wyatt responded with a playful question.

"Previously, of course I wouldn't believe it. But now, with the facts right in front of me, how can I not?"

Trevor replied with a bitter smile.

"And what if I claimed I understood secret techniques to conceal my cultivation, preventing anyone from detecting it with mental inquiry techniques?"

Wyatt smiled as he asked.

"This..."

Trevor was momentarily stunned.

Although the thought had crossed his mind, he had never heard of such secret techniques before.

"I see."

Trevor breathed a sigh of relief.

While the secret technique explanation was shocking, it was far less unbelievable than Wyatt advancing from Small Perfection in the Transcending Mortal Realm to the late stage of Entering the Saint Realm within half a year.

Compared side by side, this explanation was much easier to accept.

Seeing that Trevor believed his explanation, Wyatt sighed inwardly with relief.

At this moment, though, a faint sense of guilt arose within him.

Trevor genuinely cared about him, and yet he deceived him.

Of course, Wyatt knew why he had to do this.

The Jewel Tower was his greatest secret. If it were ever exposed, he would be doomed!

Wyatt knew Trevor well enough to trust his discretion if Trevor somehow learned the truth.

However, secrets couldn't always be safely kept—even unwilling revelation didn't guarantee silence.

For instance, there were spiritual techniques specifically designed to intrude upon souls and uncover every thought like an open book. Techniques like these were nearly impossible to defend against.

Considering this, Wyatt chose to keep the truth hidden.

He believed this approach was for Trevor's benefit as well.

"Junior Brother, I've been coming by your place for half a month. Each time, you were shut away, so I didn't disturb you."

Trevor said.

"You've been coming for half a month?"

Wyatt asked, surprised. "Senior Brother, is there something urgent?"

"Indeed."

Trevor nodded. "A great opportunity has come your way. You've always shown interest in rare and unusual materials... this time, you'll have a chance to directly access the Sect's 'Warehouse.' With my backing, I'm certain you'll be able to select whatever materials you desire from within."

Trevor had heard of Wyatt's exploits acquiring unusual materials in Thames River City.

Upon hearing this, Trevor had fixated on the Moon Radiance Sect's Warehouse.

Unfortunately, despite being a prominent Inner Sect Elder, Trevor rarely had the legitimacy to access the Warehouse.

The Warehouse was strictly opened for exceptional young disciples.

Even the Sect Leader rarely engaged with it.

"The Sect Warehouse?"

Wyatt asked in confusion, "What is that?"

"The Sect Warehouse is a repository of rare and arcane treasures... items accumulated by the Sect across generations. Some are undoubtedly unassuming treasures waiting to be discovered."

Trevor explained, "However, it's typically restricted to outstanding Inner Sect disciples and only opens once a year."

"So, it's close to opening this year?"

Wyatt asked, piqued by Trevor's explanation. He realized the Warehouse might be an unexplored 'goldmine.'

"Yes."

Trevor nodded, "In half a month, the Sect will conduct a 'Hunting Event' involving disciples under forty from the Inner Sect... whoever ranks at the top will gain access to the Sect Warehouse, where they can choose items they desire."

Chapter 1513: Vice Sect Leader 'Willy Chapman

"Under forty years old, Inner Sect disciples?"

Hearing Trevor Baillie's words, Wyatt Barnes smiled faintly, his expression calm and collected, without the slightest hint of pressure.

With his current strength, not to mention the Inner Sect disciples under forty years old in the Moon Radiance Sect, even those exceptional ones within the top tier of the Inner Sect, he had no fear at all.

At present, his strength couldn't guarantee defeating those at "Entering the Saint Realm, Large Perfection," but as for those at "Entering the Saint Realm, Small Perfection," unless their talent was particularly monstrous, they shouldn't pose a threat to him.

Therefore, in his eyes, the Moon Radiance Sect's annual "Hunting Assessment" was merely a formality.

"Indeed."

Trevor Baillie nodded and then chuckled, "This year's Hunting Assessment is merely a formality for you, Junior Brother... With your strength, claiming first place in the Hunting Assessment will be as easy as flipping your hand."

Trevor Baillie's words carried unwavering confidence in Wyatt Barnes.

With Wyatt's cultivation at the late stage of Entering the Saint Realm, there was no one under forty years old in the Moon Radiance Sect's Inner Sect who could compare.

In fact, achieving the mid-stage of Entering the Saint Realm among the Inner Sect disciples under forty was already considered extraordinary talent.

Wyatt's accomplishments far surpassed theirs.

"I've already taken the liberty of signing you up. Ten days from now, we'll set off for the location of the 'Hunting Assessment'... I'll be accompanying you then."

Trevor Baillie said.

"Senior Brother, you're coming along too?"

Wyatt was a bit surprised.

"Indeed, I've requested the Sect Leader to assign me the role of 'Inspector' to prevent anyone from cheating during the Hunting Assessment."

Trevor Baillie chuckled.

"Isn't the Sect Leader worried that you might assist me in cheating?"

Wyatt laughed as well, jokingly.

"With your cultivation, would you even need my help to cheat? Plus, even if I did aid you in cheating, the Sect Leader wouldn't say a word."

Trevor Baillie spoke with undeniable confidence.

Among the Inner Sect Elders of the Moon Radiance Sect, perhaps only he had the confidence to utter such words.

Not to mention other Inner Sect Elders, even the Vice Sect Leaders might not have the audacity to say such a thing.

Wyatt, however, was not surprised.

His Senior Brother wasn't merely an Inner Sect Elder of the Moon Radiance Sect; he was also the only Tri-Star Saint Markings Master in the Moon Radiance Sect, whose status surpassed even the Vice Sect Leaders.

Even the Saint Realm experts, including the Sect Leader, had to give his Senior Brother due respect.

For Wyatt, ten days outside were equivalent to fifty days inside the third level of the Jewel Tower.

Fifty days were more than sufficient for him to accomplish many things.

"Currently, the Golden Cloth Shirt has been cultivated to its highest level, and the key techniques within the 'Supreme Falling Star Arrow' have been cultivated to the fourth realm. The fifth realm—its peak perfection—is now just one step away."

Wyatt muttered to himself, "Additionally, the attack technique 'Heavy as a Mountain' from the 'Golden Peng's Profound Secrets' has also seen significant progress."

"During these fifty days, I will focus on cultivating the 'Meteor Strike' and 'Follow the Arrow' techniques from 'Supreme Falling Star Arrow'... Once both are cultivated to their peak perfection, I'll work on advancing 'Meteor Shower.'"

The Meteor Shower technique was another attack technique within the 'Supreme Falling Star Arrow.' It also served as the foundation for the technique's ultimate move—'Supreme Star Arrow Bell.'

Only by advancing Meteor Shower to its peak perfection could he use it as a base to begin cultivating Supreme Star Arrow Bell.

Among defensive techniques, the strength of Supreme Star Arrow Bell far surpassed that of the Golden Cloth Shirt.

The Golden Cloth Shirt was on par with Meteor Shower, while the Supreme Star Arrow Bell could rival defensive techniques within Earth-Rank Saint Martial Arts.

Earth-Rank Saint Martial Arts could only be cultivated by those beyond the Saint Realm.

For this reason, Wyatt had always anticipated the Supreme Star Arrow Bell and had never slacked in his cultivation of Meteor Shower.

At present, his Meteor Shower was just a step away from advancing to the fourth realm.

"Since Elder Fire helped raise my cultivation to the mid-stage of Entering the Saint Realm, I've felt that cultivating Saint Martial Arts techniques has become significantly easier... That feeling is akin to having an epiphany. Challenges I struggled with before now seem easy to comprehend."

This was something Wyatt had noticed early on.

He had even asked Elder Fire about it, but Elder Fire's response consisted of only four words:

Solar Physique!

Regarding the Solar Physique, Wyatt remained largely ignorant, knowing only that Elder Fire had told him his current body was that of the Solar Physique.

As for what made the Solar Physique unique, Elder Fire didn't elaborate, instead urging him to discover its secrets on his own.

So far, he had merely uncovered the ability to train Saint Martial Arts techniques more efficiently.

Yet this single trait alone was enough to astonish and excite Wyatt.

"According to Elder Fire, the Solar Physique holds many more secrets... I wonder how many surprises await me in the future."

At this thought, an uncontrollable excitement stirred in Wyatt's heart.

Fifty days might not be short, but it wasn't long either.

Through Wyatt's diligent cultivation, the fifty days swiftly passed.

He successfully cultivated 'Meteor Strike' and 'Follow the Arrow' to their peak perfection.

Additionally, 'Meteor Shower' advanced to the fourth realm, leaving it just one step away from its peak.

Once he reached the next stage, he would be able to officially begin cultivating 'Supreme Star Arrow Bell.'

As 'Meteor Shower' reached the fourth level, the fifty days inside the third level of the Jewel Tower were coming to an end.

At this point, Wyatt departed from the Jewel Tower.

Outside, it was deep into the night. By the next day, it was time to set off for the Moon Radiance Sect's 'Hunting Assessment.'

That evening, Wyatt didn't return to the Jewel Tower. Instead, he rested in his room, sitting cross-legged on the bed to meditate.

Meanwhile, his thoughts were already far away.

"Once my cultivation breakthrough reaches 'Transcending Mortal Realm, Small Perfection,' I will return to Crescent Island."

Wyatt thought to himself.

He was confident that with the help of the Jewel Tower, achieving the breakthrough to 'Transcending Mortal Realm, Small Perfection' would take no more than three months.

Of course, the three months referred to the time outside.

In the Jewel Tower's third level, those three outside months would amount to fifteen months inside—over a year.

"My children will be born soon."

At this thought, an overwhelming excitement surged in Wyatt's heart, far stronger than the thrill of his own cultivation breakthroughs.

The arrival of his twin children would mark his journey into fatherhood!

This was something his past life couldn't have envisioned.

In a previous life, he had been a mercenary, walking in darkness, his life constantly teetering on the edge of a blade. He never knew what the next moment held.

As a result, his past self never dared to dream of marriage or children.

Yet now, in this life, his children were about to enter the world.

And there would be two of them.

On this note, Wyatt felt a longing so strong that he wished he could return to Crescent Island immediately.

Early the next day, Wyatt met up with Trevor Baillie, and together they departed to join the "main group."

This year's "Hunting Assessment" was hosted personally by one of Moon Radiance Sect's Vice Sect Leaders. Alongside the Vice Sect Leader were three Inner Sect Elders designated as "Inspectors," with Trevor Baillie being one of them.

Given Trevor's status, he could easily have hosted the Hunting Assessment himself with just a word.

However, he disliked taking charge and preferred the leisure of being an Inspector instead.

"Elder Baillie."

As soon as they joined the "main group," Wyatt saw a burly elder striding toward them, enthusiastically greeting Trevor Baillie.

This burly elder had an imposing figure, like a mountain. As he moved forward, it felt as though the mountain itself was advancing, creating an invisible pressure that weighed down on others.

"Vice Sect Leader Chapman."

Trevor Baillie acknowledged the elder, his tone revealing the man's identity.

It was Willy Chapman, one of Moon Radiance Sect's Vice Sect Leaders and the host for this year's Hunting Assessment.

"This must be Elder Baillie's Junior Brother, Wyatt Barnes, correct?"

Willy Chapman soon directed his gaze toward Wyatt, smiling as he spoke.

"Vice Sect Leader."

Wyatt quickly responded to Willy Chapman, though an inexplicable discomfort arose within him.

Despite Willy Chapman's harmless demeanor with no visible animosity, Wyatt couldn't shake the uneasy feeling he got from him.

He even vaguely sensed hostility from Willy Chapman.

Of course, this "hostility" was so faint it made him question whether he was imagining it.

Based on logic, this should be the first time he had encountered Willy Chapman, and the man shouldn't harbor any ill will toward him.

"Junior Brother, this Willy Chapman is the master of that Outer Sect disciple, Center Montes, whom you previously defeated."

At that moment, Trevor Baillie's True Energy transmission reached Wyatt's ears, promptly dispelling his doubts. Wyatt realized he hadn't been mistaken.

"So this is Center Montes' master."

Wyatt finally understood.

If Willy Chapman was indeed Center Montes' master, it made sense for him to harbor some resentment.

Center Montes was Evander Mullins' nephew and had previously been defeated by Wyatt. Wyatt had even "forced" him to swear a Thunder Punishment oath never to act against him again.

As Wyatt's gaze shifted past Willy Chapman to the people gathered behind him, he noticed Center Montes among the crowd.

"Center Montes has become an Inner Sect disciple as well?"

Wyatt was momentarily taken aback.

He wasn't surprised by Center Montes' induction into the Inner Sect.

With Willy Chapman as his master, a Vice Sect Leader of Moon Radiance Sect, promoting Center Montes to the Inner Sect would be a trivial matter.

What startled Wyatt was that upon activating his "Heavenly Eye," he saw at a glance that Center Montes had already reached the early stage of Entering the Saint Realm in cultivation.

Chapter 1514: Tabo Garcia's Crisis

When Wyatt Barnes probed Center Montes' cultivation level, Center Montes was also observing Wyatt, his gaze particularly complex.

The reason he could break through to the 'Saint Realm' so quickly was, to a certain degree, because of Wyatt Barnes.

The reason it was because of Wyatt Barnes was due to hearing about Wyatt breaking through to the 'Saint Realm' three months ago. This dealt him a huge blow and added significant pressure to him.

As the saying goes, 'Pressure creates motivation,' and under this invisible pressure, Center Montes had successfully broken through to the 'Saint Realm' a month ago.

After breaking through to the Saint Realm, he officially joined the ranks of Vice Sect Leader Willy Chapman's disciples.

It was then that the group of outer sect disciples realized that Center Montes wasn't secretly accepted as Evander Mullins' disciple, but was, in fact, a direct disciple of Vice Sect Leader Willy Chapman.

However, having already been shocked by Wyatt Barnes earlier, they had developed some immunity, and this revelation didn't astonish them too much.

After all, Wyatt Barnes had become Elder Trevor Baillie's direct 'Junior Brother'!

Who was Elder Trevor Baillie?

The unanimously acknowledged number one Inner Sect Elder of the Moon Radiance Sect!

His status was so high that it overshadowed even several Vice Sect Leaders.

What's more, even the Saint Realm powerhouses, including the Sect Leader of the Moon Radiance Sect, treated Elder Trevor Baillie with great respect, acknowledging him as an equal.

The moment Wyatt Barnes was recognized as Elder Trevor Baillie's 'Junior Brother,' his seniority within the Moon Radiance Sect was inadvertently elevated.

Even Center Montes' master, Vice Sect Leader Willy Chapman, had to respectfully address Wyatt Barnes as 'Junior Brother' for Elder Trevor Baillie's sake.

"I can only hope that my uncle truly gives up his enmity toward Wyatt Barnes and isn't merely appeasing me," Center Montes thought to himself.

Back then, when he first heard of Trevor Baillie acknowledging Wyatt Barnes as a 'Junior Brother,' his last shred of resentment toward Wyatt vanished completely.

As for what happened in the past, he had thoroughly let go and no longer dwelled on it.

Because he knew that holding on to it would only trouble himself in the end.

This time, it was precisely because of Wyatt Barnes that he broke through to the 'Saint Realm' much faster than anticipated, and deep down, Center Montes held a shred of gratitude toward Wyatt.

"Center Montes, congratulations."

Wyatt Barnes took the initiative to convey his congratulations to Center Montes through sound transmission imbued with True Energy.

Upon hearing Wyatt's words, Center Montes froze in place.

That word of 'Congratulations' from Wyatt Barnes clearly held deeper meaning, and the only thing it could pertain to was his breakthrough to the 'Saint Realm.'

Yet, as far as he knew, only he and his master were aware of his breakthrough to the 'Saint Realm.'

He hadn't disclosed his current level of cultivation to anyone else.

Now, Wyatt Barnes had seen through him in a single glance, leaving him with the unsettling sensation of having no secrets in front of Wyatt.

"You... figured it out?"

Center Montes took a deep breath and couldn't help but ask through sound transmission.

To this, Wyatt Barnes didn't respond verbally, merely smiling, a mysterious and enigmatic smile in Center Montes' eyes.

At this moment, Wyatt Barnes' level of danger in Center Montes' mind rose several notches.

Soon, the other two Inner Sect Elders, serving as inspectors for this 'Hunting Assessment,' proactively approached Trevor Baillie to greet him, their attitudes overwhelmingly enthusiastic.

"Elder Trevor."

At this point, Center Montes and other inner sect disciples bowed respectfully to Trevor Baillie as well.

"Junior Brother Wyatt."

The two Inner Sect Elders quickly turned their attention to Wyatt Barnes, initiating a greeting.

This scene caused envy, jealousy, and resentment to flash across the faces of the group of Inner Sect disciples. Yet, they could only acquiesce, for Wyatt Barnes didn't merely possess extraordinary talent in Martial Dao but was also blessed with uncanny fortune.

Having Trevor Baillie as his 'Senior Brother,' Wyatt could practically roam unchallenged within the Moon Radiance Sect!

"Let us depart."

As Trevor Baillie gave the word, Willy Chapman issued orders, and the group grandly marched out of the Moon Radiance Sect's mountain gates.

After leaving the mountain gates, the group ascended into the air, heading toward the location of the 'Hunting Assessment.'

Shortly after the group had departed, within the inner sect area of the Moon Radiance Sect, a spacious mansion stood.

Evander Mullins sat by the stone table in the courtyard, lightly tapping on its surface with his fingers. "By now, Wyatt Barnes must have set out for the 'Hunting Assessment,' wouldn't he?"

"This is a golden opportunity... let's hope the Shadow Mountain Black Market doesn't disappoint me again this time."

As Evander muttered these words, a sharp, murderous light flickered in his eyes.

"Moreover, there's that 'Tabo Garcia'... So many years have passed, and it's time I settle things with him once and for all. I once thought letting him live wouldn't stir up much trouble, but who could've expected him to take on someone as monstrous as Wyatt Barnes as his disciple!"

Killing intent flared visibly in Evander's gaze. Moments later, he rose to his feet, ready to leave.

"Master!"

At that moment, a figure approached him directly—it was Kai Simmons.

Kai carried a tray in his hands with a bowl of broth atop it. "Master, I've made this Jade Cleansing Broth for you. Please drink it while it's hot."

"You're thoughtful. Unlike that waste of a disciple, Quentin Campbell, who has never once made me a bowl of broth," Evander remarked, clearly satisfied with Kai Simmons.

From the moment Kai entered his tutelage, not only had he cultivated diligently, but every few days, he would personally cook for him, making a bowl of broth each time without repeating the recipe.

After finishing the bowl of broth from Kai Simmons, a sudden idea struck Evander Mullins.

"Kai Simmons, you're coming with me on a trip."

Evander addressed Kai Simmons.

"Yes, Master."

Kai didn't question where Evander was taking him and agreed immediately.

"Aren't you curious where I'm taking you?"

Evander asked.

"Wherever Master wishes to take me, I shall follow. Even if it's to a mountain of blades or a volcano, I wouldn't so much as frown."

Kai responded resolutely.

"Haha... Excellent! Excellent! The gravest mistake I made in life was taking Quentin Campbell as a disciple; the wisest decision was accepting you as my pupil,"

Evander laughed heartily, clearly pleased with Kai's answer.

"Come! I'll take you back to Hill Mountain City."

With that, Evander strode out the door.

Hill Mountain City!

Upon hearing Evander's words, Kai Simmons' heart trembled.

He vaguely sensed Evander's intention for this trip.

And he knew this all tied closely to Wyatt Barnes' 'rise.'

But after taking a deep breath, Kai still followed Evander.

Some time ago, news about Wyatt Barnes becoming the Junior Brother of the Moon Radiance Sect's Inner Sect Elder 'Trevor Baillie' had reached Hill Mountain City's city lord's mansion.

It left Hill Mountain City's City Lord 'Tabo Garcia' stunned for half a day before he finally regained his composure.

"He... was acknowledged as Elder Trevor Baillie's Junior Brother?"

Tabo Garcia was filled with both shock and delight.

By the end of it, a jubilant smile spread across his face, and tears of joy even streamed down his cheeks.

They were tears of happiness.

As an outer sect steward appointed by the Moon Radiance Sect, Tabo García himself was once a disciple of the sect and naturally understood who Elder Trevor Baillie was.

To him, Trevor Baillie was a lofty, insurmountable mountain—an existence he had to look up to.

Back in the day, even breathing too loud in Trevor Baillie's presence terrified him, lest he provoke the Elder's displeasure.

And now, upon learning his disciple 'Wyatt Barnes' was acknowledged as Trevor Baillie's 'Junior Brother,' how could he not rejoice?

"He broke through to Saint Realm?"

After a while, Tabo Garcia received another piece of news from the Moon Radiance Sect.

This news claimed that Wyatt Barnes had already broken through to the 'Saint Realm.'

"No wonder Elder Trevor Baillie would acknowledge him as his Junior Brother... He must have seen the extraordinary talent in him long ago. How laughable that I once wished to take him as a disciple and have him call me 'Master!' Laughable! Utterly laughable!"

Muttering to himself, Tabo Garcia's face bore a self-mocking expression.

Still, above all, he was filled with joy for Wyatt Barnes.

"With Elder Trevor Baillie as his 'pillar,' Evander Mullins shouldn't dare act recklessly... As for Linus Cloud and Baer Bear, with Wyatt's care, they should also remain safe and sound."

Thinking this, Tabo Garcia let out a sigh of relief.

In the ensuing days, Tabo Garcia's mood was uplifted; he felt as though years of gloom weighing on his heart had been lifted significantly.

Of course, such peaceful days didn't last long.

"Tabo Garcia!!"

With a thunderous voice echoing above the city lord's mansion in Hill Mountain City, Tabo Garcia, deep in cultivation, felt his expression shift drastically.

This voice was one he knew all too well—so familiar that it was impossible to ever forget.

"Evander Mullins!"

Taking a deep breath, Tabo Garcia's face darkened considerably; he never expected his cruel former master, Evander Mullins, to come looking for him at this time.

Still, he vaguely realized that Evander's sudden arrival was most likely related to Wyatt Barnes.

Perhaps, Wyatt had pressured him.

Considering this, Tabo Garcia's expression softened slightly, and a smirk tinged with satisfaction crept onto his lips. "Evander Mullins, are you afraid now?"

When Tabo Garcia stepped out of his room, ascending to the skies, he found that Evander wasn't alone. Another figure stood by him, a person Tabo Garcia knew all too well.

"Kai Simmons."

Staring at Kai Simmons, who stood in the air beside Evander, Tabo Garcia felt his heart tremble inexplicably.

Kai Simmons was once the disciple Tabo Garcia had valued most, possessing exceptional talent—a genius far beyond any Hill Mountain City had seen before Wyatt Barnes.

Because of this, Tabo Garcia had poured much effort into nurturing him.

Yet the end result was merely crafting "clothing" for Evander Mullins.

Now, seeing Kai Simmons standing tall, he realized Kai must have already broken through to the 'Saint Realm.' Otherwise, he wouldn't be able to ignore the anti-flight formation covering Hill Mountain City.

The anti-flight formation restricted all Taoist Cultivators and Martial Artists below the 'Saint Realm.'

Only those above the Saint Realm could traverse the skies freely.

Chapter 1515: Sudden Changes

The crisis Tabo Garcia faced, Wyatt Barnes naturally couldn't possibly be aware of.

He would never have imagined that after he repeatedly showed his prominence and gained fame, Evander Mullins would become desperate and attempt to kill his mentor, Tabo Garcia.

Wyatt Barnes was currently with Trevor Baillie, following a group from the Moon Radiance Sect to a perilous mountainous area, where the 'hunting assessment' was taking place.

Looking from afar, the vast expanse of towering hills left people gobsmacked.

"This expanse of lofty mountains will be your 'stage'... Inside, you are free to hunt the Savage Beasts! However, after killing them, it's best to leave a mark on their bodies for score verification."

Moon Radiance Sect's Vice Sect Leader, 'Willy Chapman' said to a group of inner sect disciples, including Wyatt Barnes.

Hearing Willy Chapman's words, Wyatt Barnes and the others nodded.

"It seems we can't simply destroy the bodies of the Savage Beasts... Once they are destroyed, it's impossible to prove I killed them or what beasts I hunted."

Wyatt mused.

While on the way, he had learned the rules of this 'hunting assessment'.

In the hunting assessment, the scoring varied based on the strength of the Savage Beast hunted.

"These Jade Slips, one for each of you... If you encounter an accident, crush them. At that moment, I and three inner sect elders will arrive immediately by your side."

Willy Chapman raised his hand, producing dozens of Jade Slips, which he handed over to Wyatt Barnes and the others.

"However, I must remind you... Crushing the Jade Slip means your assessment ends, even if the time is not up."

Willy Chapman's meaning was clear; unless in danger, it was best not to crush the Jade Slip.

Besides Wyatt, who was examining the Jade Slip in his hand with interest, the group of inner sect disciples, including Center Montes, nodded in realization.

"Saint Marking?"

At this point, Wyatt also discovered that his Jade Slip bore a Saint Marking.

This particular Saint Marking was unique—it wasn't an attack marking nor an auxiliary one; at least, he had never encountered such a marking.

"Senior Brother, did you engrave the Saint Marking on this Jade Slip?"

Wyatt transmitted his True Energy to inquire Trevor Baillie, unable to recognize the Saint Marking but noticing it bore Trevor's mark.

Words have traces, and so do Saint Markings.

"Yes."

Trevor Baillie replied, "Junior Brother, don't underestimate these Jade Slips' Saint Markings; they are 'Three-star Saint Markings'!"

Three-star Saint Marking?

Wyatt was surprised upon hearing this.

"However, although they are three-star markings, their purpose is merely 'to alert', and their cost is extremely low, even less than two-star markings."

Trevor further explained.

Wyatt understood.

"Though cheap and simple to engrave, they remain three-star markings... Even the domain of a half-step Saint Realm expert cannot restrict the alerting function. Of course, it's a different case if it's a full Saint Realm expert."

Trevor continued.

"Can they alert through a half-step Saint's domain?"

Wyatt was astonished, no longer daring to look down on the Saint Marking on the Jade Slip.

"Alright, you all may go down... The three inspectors and I will be rotating through various locations for support. If you encounter danger, crush the Jade Slip, and we will arrive to rescue you."

Moon Radiance Sect's Vice Sect Leader 'Willy Chapman' straightforwardly announced, without further ado.

He had already explained the detailed rules of the hunting assessment along the way.

Swish! Swish! Swish!

...

As Willy Chapman finished speaking, the group of inner sect disciples descended into the lush, verdant mountains, vanishing swiftly, as if stones dropped into the ocean without causing a ripple.

Wyatt nodded at Trevor before he descended, joining the emerald hills himself.

"Elder Baillie, of those participating in the hunting assessment this time, the one I think will definitely secure 'first place' is Junior Brother Barnes... would you agree?"

After Wyatt and the other inner sect disciples entered the mountains, Willy Chapman smiled and glanced at Trevor Baillie, squinting as he asked.

Of course, he asked on purpose.

However, in the next moment, upon hearing Trevor Baillie's response, he was utterly dumbfounded.

"It's not about 'should', but 'will'! My Junior Brother will definitively achieve 'first' in this hunting assessment."

That was Trevor Baillie's response.

Trevor Baillie's response left not only Willy Chapman but also the other two inner sect elders tongue-tied, feeling Trevor's great confidence in Wyatt Barnes seemed overly blind.

Although they had to admit, Wyatt Barnes had great talent.

Yet, great talent doesn't necessarily equate to strong power!

In their view, Wyatt Barnes had such a short time from achieving Small Perfection in the Transcending Mortal Realm to 'Entering the Saint Realm', thus his foundation must be unstable, even less than the majority of the inner sect disciples present.

Of course, that's because they didn't know Wyatt Barnes' 'secret'.

If they knew Wyatt possessed the 'Jewel Tower', such a heaven-defying immortal treasure, they wouldn't think so.

While Wyatt was within the mountains, slaughtering the Savage Beasts, in the distant Hill Mountain City, within the Main Mansion, a different scene unfolded.

High in the sky, the City Lord of Hill Mountain City 'Tabo Garcia' looked at Kai Simmons, his expression complex, yet ultimately saying nothing more.

In his view, Kai Simmons's choice made sense.

In this world where one respects power, people cultivate painstakingly and strive hard, all for better survival, aren't they?

Kai Simmons sought survival, thus pledging to Evander Mullins, and to be honest, Tabo Garcia didn't blame Kai Simmons.

Kai Simmons had survival instincts, without fault.

Yet, witnessing Evander's eyes flashing with killing intent, his heart was chilled to the bone, realizing Evander came this time with malicious intent, even wanting to take his life.

It wasn't surprising that Evander wanted his life.

But Evander bringing Kai Simmons along froze his heart further.

Evander intended to flaunt his might by having Kai Simmons show up before killing him.

In front of his former student, trample on his dignity before erasing his existence.

"Tabo Garcia, I really have to thank you for bringing me such an excellent student."

True to prediction, Evander Mullins looked at Tabo, smiling as he spoke.

"Evander Mullins, cut the pretense... you are here to kill me, aren't you? Wyatt Barnes's presence is like a thorn in your side, isn't it?"

Tabo swept a calm glance at Evander, unabashedly speaking, "Even if I die today, I have no regrets... Wyatt Barnes is destined to be your lifelong nightmare, Evander. Of course, that's only if you live long enough."

"Hahahaha..."

By the end, Tabo burst into laughter, laughing with abandon, laughing with joy.

"Tabo!"

Evander's face twisted with rage, growling deeply.

He never imagined that even now, Tabo dared taunt him, and clearly, was fearless of death.

"You wish to anger me for a quick death?"

Quickly, the realization dawned on Evander's mind, coldly asking.

"Evander Mullins, your imagination is as rich as ever."

Tabo said mildly, face serene as he seemed to transcend life and death.

"Hmph! Seems I guessed right? You wish for a quick death, but I won't let you have it!"

Evander sneered coldly, "Today, though destined to die, you won't pass easily... I'll have you witness with your eyes, every inch of flesh peeled from your body!"

Hearing this, despite having transcended life and death, Tabo felt a chill.

"Evander, my death is merely the beginning... the start of your 'nightmare'!"

Tabo continued laughing, laughing with abandon, laughing happily.

In all these years, facing Evander, he had never been so jubilant, so content.

Through the years, living like a corpse, wasn't it all due to an unwavering resolve?

Now, his disciple Wyatt Barnes had risen strongly, making Evander's presence as piercing as a thorn; suddenly, he felt it had all been worthwhile.

Because he had received a bountiful reward!

In his eyes, Wyatt Barnes was the best 'gift' bestowed by destiny.

With Wyatt Barnes, was there worry his vengeance would remain unfulfilled?

Although he had less than a year with Wyatt, he knew his character thoroughly.

If he were to die, Wyatt wouldn't spare Evander Mullins.

"Courting death!"

Evander erupted with fury, True Energy surging, his robe billowed fiercely without wind.

Just as Evander's aura surged, ready to take action, his face changed drastically, recognizing the threat, quickly raising his hand and striking to the side.

Boom!!

With a deafening crash, a figure was sent flying by Evander's strike, propelled like an arrow.

And that person who flew wasn't someone else, it was 'Kai Simmons'.

Accurately, after inserting a 'needle' into Evander's body, it was Kai who was struck away by Evander.

"Kai!"

Seeing Evander's body tremble violently, his face turning a deathly shade, if Tabo didn't know what happened, he would have lived in vain all these years.

That's when he realized.

It turned out, Kai never betrayed him, Kai's heart remained loyal to him.

Kai, he wasn't afraid of death.

He waited for an opportunity for revenge.

At that moment, Tabo held no more hesitations, flying out and catching Kai.

"Master, if only a few more months, I could have killed him for you! It's such a pity..."

Kai coughed blood profusely, his face bleak.

"You treacherous disciple, when did you poison me?"

From a distance, Evander roared near maniacally at Kai.

He found, that after the 'needle's' penetration, poison spread through his body.

Chapter 1516: Kai Simmons dies, Ryan Tide appears!

At this moment, Evander Mullins realized that Kai Simmons had been laying the groundwork for a long time.

The poison in his body was definitely not something formed overnight.

"Evander, how was the stew I made? Quite tasty, wasn't it? Hahaha... cough cough... cough..."

Held by Evander Mullins, Kai Simmons cast a cold gaze at him and laughed, but as his laughter continued, his face turned even paler, accompanied by a few violent coughs, expelling mouthfuls of dark blood.

At the same time, the vitality in Kai Simmons began to wither, clearly teetering on the brink of death.

"The stew? So that's it... So that's how it is... It seems that from the very beginning, you never truly intended to take me as your master! I dare say I've treated you well, yet in the end, you dare to harm me... Unworthy disciple! Unworthy disciple!!"

Evander Mullins understood everything. His greenish face darkened further, to the point where it seemed like water could drip from it.

"Truly intended?"

Upon hearing this, Kai Simmons sneered bitterly with emotion, "In my entire life, I've acknowledged only one master, and it is certainly not you, Evander Mullins! Laughable, truly laughable—you actually thought you could win my loyalty... If not for enduring humiliation and awaiting the chance to avenge my master, how would I ever pretend to submit to you?"

"It's a pity... just a little more time... If I'd had another few months, I was confident I could make the poison erupt and kill you outright!"

Kai Simmons expressed regret as he spoke.

Evander Mullins was a peak Saint Realm cultivator, capable of resisting ordinary poisons entirely.

Thus, Kai Simmons resorted to using a slow-acting poison, a rare toxin he had discovered years ago on the Mortal Continent. Not only was it colorless and tasteless, but it was also entirely undetectable.

In truth, however, that toxin was typically innocuous.

Only when combined with a specific substance did it exhibit lethal potency.

The needle that Kai Simmons had just unexpectedly stabbed into Evander Mullins carried that activating substance, effectively unleashing the hidden poison and rendering Evander Mullins completely affected.

"Master, quickly leave! While Evander Mullins must focus entirely on detoxifying himself and dares not make a reckless move, now is your chance to escape..."

Kai Simmons turned to Evander Mullins and urged.

He knew his own concoctions well.

Evander Mullins now had only the power to protect himself. Should he move, the poison would invade his vitals, and not even a celestial deity could save him.

And Evander Mullins needed at least one or two hours to suppress the poison within.

One or two hours would be all his master, Tabo Garcia, needed to elude Evander Mullins' pursuit.

"Kai Simmons!"

Tabo Garcia's eyes brimmed with tears, his face full of intense emotion.

Men rarely cry, unless they are heartsick!

Learning that Kai had not truly betrayed him swept away the despair Tabo had felt, leaving only relief that his faith in this disciple had been rightly placed.

This disciple, who had followed him from the very beginning, always considered him his one and only master.

"Master, leave quickly!"

Yet Kai Simmons knew now was not the time for sentimentality and hurriedly urged once more.

"Didn't you say he's poisoned? I'll kill him now!"

Tabo Garcia showed no intent to flee. His gaze sharpened with a chilling glint as he fixed his eyes on Evander Mullins, who was focusing on purging the poison.

"Master, he merely can't move freely, but he's still capable of self-defense... Go! Leave now!!"

Kai Simmons pressed again fervently, coughing up even more blood in his excitement, further worsening his own injuries.

"Alright! I'll leave!!"

Though unwilling, Tabo Garcia knew Kai Simmons wouldn't deceive him. Clenching his teeth, he prepared to drag Kai away.

However, at that very moment.

"Hahahaha..."

Suddenly, a robust laughter filled the air, overwhelming and full of arrogance.

Upon hearing this hearty laughter, both Tabo Garcia and Kai Simmons' expressions changed swiftly.

In the distance, Evander Mullins stood mid-air, laughing loudly, and his face showed no signs of the greenish hue.

Evander Mullins now appeared radiant, far from resembling a poisoned man.

"Impossible! This is impossible!!"

Seeing this, Kai Simmons trembled violently, shaking his head repeatedly in disbelief, his face pale with shock.

"Nothing is impossible!"

Evander Mullins sneered, "I happen to specialize in refining medicines as a Saint Refiner, and although I've neglected my craft for years, in my youth, I consumed the flesh and blood of a 'Thousand Poison Beast'... Since that day, my body, while not immune to all poisons, developed an extraordinary resistance to toxins."

"Your concoction is indeed clever and well-concealed. But against me, it posed little threat."

Each word from Evander Mullins seemed to strike the very core of Kai Simmons' being, leaving him increasingly pale and filling his gaze with despair.

"Since your bond as master and disciple is strong, I'll send both of you to the afterlife together!"

Evander Mullins' gaze turned ice-cold. His body swirled like a hurricane and appeared near Tabo Garcia and Kai Simmons in an instant.

"Master, if there's a next life, I'll still choose to be your disciple!"

Suddenly, Kai Simmons roared defiantly, using the last shred of energy in his body to charge away from Tabo Garcia and toward Evander Mullins.

With his final ounce of strength, he sought to protect his master!

He could die without regrets!

"A mantis trying to stop a chariot!"

Evander Mullins sneered, raising his hand. Vast and surging energy instantly turned Kai Simmons into a mist of blood scattering through the air.

The blood mist sprayed heavily, sparing Evander Mullins entirely but covering Tabo Garcia's face.

As the primal scent of blood reached his nose, Tabo Garcia felt his heart turn to ice, and his soul trembled wildly in agony. "Kai Simmons, Kai Simmons..."

"Evander Mullins, prepare to die!"

Suddenly, Tabo Garcia roared in fury, letting loose all the True Energy within his Qi Sea, fully intent on fighting Evander Mullins to the death.

But with nothing more than a giant blade formed from Evander Mullins' True Energy, he easily dismantled Tabo Garcia's violent attack.

"Tabo Garcia, when you were younger, you might have been a match for me... but now, you're nothing more than an insect!"

Evander Mullins stared at Tabo Garcia coldly, his tone disdainful and condescending.

"Indeed, I can't compare to you in strength... but the disciple I mentored far surpasses any you've ever trained, Evander Mullins."

On the brink of death, Tabo Garcia began to smile again, as a particular image flashed in his mind—a young man clad perpetually in violet robes, his 'hope.'

Wyatt Barnes!

"Tabo Garcia, I've said before—I won't let you die quickly or painlessly... I will torment you until you're left with only your last breath!"

Hearing Tabo Garcia's words, Evander Mullins' gaze turned even colder. He began walking toward Tabo Garcia one deliberate step at a time, resembling a hunter closing in on his prey.

Each step he took felt like a giant hammer slamming into Tabo Garcia's chest.

In an instant, Evander Mullins suddenly extended his hand, grasping for Tabo Garcia at lightning speed.

But, at this life-or-death juncture, a swift streak of sword light suddenly pierced the void, passing between Evander Mullins and Tabo Garcia, forcing Evander Mullins to withdraw his hand in alarm.

"Who?!"

Realizing the danger of the sword light, Evander Mullins' expression dramatically shifted.

"Hahaha... Elder Mullins, it seems we haven't seen each other for several years, have we?"

At this moment, a burst of laughter accompanied the arrival of a robust figure—a middle-aged man with a sturdy build.

The middle-aged man, clad in flowing gray robes, held a sword in hand.

"You're... Ryan Tide?"

Narrowing his eyes, Evander Mullins scrutinized the man before him and asked in a low voice.

"It seems Elder Mullins still remembers me."

Ryan Tide smiled.

"Hmph! Ryan Tide, I didn't expect you, too, to have broken through to peak Saint Realm after all these years... But if you think you alone can stop me, you're sorely mistaken."

Evander Mullins snorted disdainfully.

The man before him was vaguely familiar, an Inner Sect Steward of the Moon Radiance Sect.

What he hadn't expected was encountering him here.

For Ryan Tide to conceal himself completely within the hundred-meter radius of Evander's domain without detection, his cultivation level was evident—he must also have reached peak Saint Realm.

Even so, Evander Mullins did not fear him.

A martial artist who had only recently attained peak Saint Realm was beneath his notice.

"Whether I can stop Elder Mullins or not... we'll have to test that to find out."

Ryan Tide responded with an understated smile, his calm demeanor suggesting he did not regard Evander Mullins highly.

"Steward Tide?"

At this juncture, Tabo Garcia regained his composure, staring at the sturdy figure before him in disbelief. He hadn't expected Ryan Tide to appear now and seemingly shield him.

Ryan Tide was considered the youngest Inner Sect Steward in Moon Radiance Sect history.

Beyond that, he was a sword cultivator.

However, due to his reclusive nature and few interactions with others, his reputation had remained obscure.

Based on Evander Mullins' comment, it seemed Ryan Tide had grown into a peak Saint Realm powerhouse?

"Good, very good!"

Hearing Ryan Tide's words, Evander Mullins laughed angrily, "Ryan Tide, I'm quite curious... Why are you protecting him? As far as I know, you two have no relations at all."

"Elder Mullins, there's no need for probing. I'm protecting him merely because someone asked me to."

Ryan Tide replied nonchalantly.

"To compel you to help him... Is that person Elder Baillie?"

At this thought, Evander Mullins' expression changed, with a trace of apprehension flashing in his eyes.

Ryan Tide, however, gave no response, simply gazing quietly at him.

In that instant, Evander Mullins nearly confirmed his suspicions.

"Hmph!"

After his expression fluctuated for a moment, Evander Mullins clenched his teeth and finally chose to leave.

Still, before departing, he didn't forget to leave behind a threat, "Ryan Tide, this feud between us is settled!"

His decision to leave came after thorough consideration.

Initially, his intent on killing Tabo Garcia was done in secrecy.

For this purpose, his True Energy encompassed a hundred-meter area, concealing his presence entirely.

He understood well that should his identity as Tabo Garcia's killer be revealed, it would infuriate Elder Baillie—not because Elder Baillie cared about Tabo's fate, but because he cared about Wyatt Barnes' sentiments.

However, as long as no one knew he was the murderer, he feared nothing.

Even if Wyatt Barnes suspected him, without concrete evidence, Evander Mullins had no concern that Elder Baillie would act against him.

Chapter 1517: The Gorilla

However, Ryan Tide's appearance forced him to abandon his plan.

Ryan Tide was clearly sent by Trevor Baillie to protect Hill Mountain City's City Lord, Tabo Garcia.

While he was confident he could defeat Ryan Tide, he wasn't certain about killing him. After all, both were at Entering the Saint Realm's peak stage. Unless the disparity in power was vast, no one could guarantee they'd definitively kill the other.

Moreover, even if he managed to kill Ryan Tide, once Trevor Baillie returned and found out, suspicion would undoubtedly fall on him.

The list of people capable of killing Ryan Tide within the area surrounding Moon Radiance Sect was few, making it easy to associate him with the act.

Killing Ryan Tide was entirely different from killing Tabo Garcia.

Tabo Garcia—anyone at Entering the Saint Realm's late stage or above could easily kill him.

"Thank you, Steward Ryan."

Seeing Evander Mullins leave just like that, Tabo Garcia breathed a sigh of relief, immediately expressing his gratitude to Ryan Tide.

"No need for thanks. I'm merely following orders."

Ryan Tide responded indifferently, and as soon as he spoke, he departed.

Of course, he didn't actually leave but instead concealed himself nearby, covertly protecting Tabo Garcia.

Meanwhile, on another front, after Evander Mullins left, the more he thought about it, the angrier he became. "Damn it! Trevor Baillie, that meddling old geezer!"

At that moment, a sense of helplessness surged in Evander Mullins' heart, as if every move he made on the proverbial chessboard was foreseen and countered by Trevor Baillie. It left him utterly frustrated.

"Hopefully, the Shadow Mountain black market folks will seize this 'hunting assessment' opportunity and kill Wyatt Barnes! Once Wyatt Barnes is dead, Trevor Baillie won't possibly target me again."

Evander Mullins thought to himself.

"Additionally, from this day forward, anyone who becomes my disciple must take a Thunder Punishment oath promising lifelong loyalty to me. If they refuse to swear, no matter how high their talent, I, Evander Mullins, won't accept them."

Thinking about Kai Simmons, whom he had just killed, and recalling Quentin Campbell, another prior traitorous disciple he had slain, Evander Mullins was overcome with irritation.

He truly felt as if he was cursed; two consecutive direct disciples had ultimately betrayed him.

Thus, he made up his mind.

Anyone aspiring to become his disciple must first swear allegiance through the Thunder Punishment oath.

While Evander Mullins gloomily returned to Moon Radiance Sect, Wyatt Barnes was deep within the rugged forests, slaying innumerable Savage Beasts.

Although he had killed plenty of Savage Beasts, his robes remained spotless, as if this hunt was no challenge for him whatsoever.

Truth be told, it really wasn't a challenge.

Not mentioning his ability to defeat enemies across realms, Wyatt's current strength at Entering the Saint Realm's late stage alone meant that within these dense forests, there were virtually no Savage Beasts capable of rivaling him in cultivation.

"Even here, the number of Savage Beasts at Entering the Saint Realm's late stage must be few."

Wyatt thought to himself.

Along his journey, he had already killed dozens of Savage Beasts at Entering the Saint Realm's mid-stage.

Those counted as the majority, while weaker Savage Beasts at Entering the Saint Realm's initial stage had numbered in the hundreds.

Perhaps having perceived Wyatt's thoughts, his progress forward was interrupted by a deafening beastly roar.

The roar wasn't just sound—it rang out like crackling thunder, seemingly intent on tearing through Wyatt's eardrums.

"Is this a Savage Beast at Entering the Saint Realm's late stage?"

Upon hearing the roar, Wyatt's heart skipped a beat.

Soon, a colossal creature the size of a small mountain appeared, charging toward him with thunderous momentum. The ground trembled with each step it took, as though an earthquake had been triggered.

Wherever the beast passed, towering trees collapsed one after another, and the soil bore enormous footprints like gaping craters.

"Come at me!"

Faced with the oncoming late-stage Savage Beast, Wyatt Barnes not only showed no fear but instead advanced to meet it head-on.

In an instant, True Energy surged within Wyatt, materializing in the void as a giant hammer, which then descended like a meteor, smashing toward the Savage Beast—an ape-like creature reminiscent of an oversized gorilla.

"Roar!!"

The Savage Beast unleashed another terrifying roar, opening its blood-red maw wide.

The soundwaves formed visible ripples in the air, breaking apart Wyatt's hammer as if it had struck cotton. First, the hammer pushed forward, then it was compressed, and finally, it shattered entirely.

"What astonishing soundwave attacks!"

Wyatt Barnes was taken aback, utterly stunned that his True Energy weapon—a hammer capable of crushing mid-stage Savage Beasts—had been obliterated by a single roar from this late-stage Savage Beast.

"Impressive! I didn't expect you to be this strong. Very well, I'll play with you properly."

Rather than recoiling, Wyatt's eyes gleamed with excitement. He withdrew a hefty greatsword—the Thousand-Pound Sword—and prepared for battle.

"Roar!!"

With another explosive roar, the Savage Beast raised its massive fists, akin to boulders, and swung them toward Wyatt with deafening gale-like force.

"Come at me!"

Wyatt let out a hearty laugh, raised his Thousand-Pound Sword, and struck decisively toward the Savage Beast's fists, his posture commanding and unyielding.

"Heavy as a Mountain!"

Wyatt shouted the name of his technique with fervor. The colossal greatsword fell with a thunderous force akin to a mountain collapsing, smashing straight into the beast's massive fists.

BANG!!

BANG!!

Amid two thunderous strikes, Wyatt's Thousand-Pound Sword collided fiercely with the beast's fists.

The clash of True Energy caused a series of airwaves to rush outward in concentric circles of rampant, pressure-driven turbulence.

The shockwaves roared, producing ear-splitting sonic booms as fierce winds tore through the surroundings, uprooting trees and scattering debris like an overpowering hurricane.

"Roar!!"

The Savage Beast roared and stumbled back a step. When it faced Wyatt again, its enormous bloodshot eyes carried hints of fear along with their hostile red gleam.

Although the Savage Beast lacked the intelligence of Sacred Beasts, its harsh environment had honed instinctive survival skills.

Wyatt Barnes had officially been classified as a formidable adversary.

Just when Wyatt thought he had intimidated the beast into retreating, an unforeseen development arose.

BAM! BAM! BAM!

Accompanied by drum-like sounds as loud as booming thunder, the Savage Beast began pounding its chest, mimicking its gorilla-like appearance and adding an indescribable ferocity.

The difference? This beast's frame dwarfed any ordinary gorilla.

"Is it losing its mind?"

Wyatt wondered, watching as the Savage Beast increased its fevered chest-beating. Then, something astounding occurred.

A dense thread of blood-red mist emanated from the beast's chest, intertwining with its entire body and seeping into its every pore.

As the mist expanded, the creature seemed to be veiled entirely in a blood-red energy. Embedded within the energy were faint streaks of scarlet lightning, flickering ominously.

"What is this?"

Wyatt's eyes widened in surprise, struggling to comprehend the shocking transformation.

"Could this be the 'crazed transformation'?"

A theory popped into Wyatt's mind, reminding him of a Demon Beast known as the Berserk Tatterfur Mouse Clan—a species notorious for their ability to undergo crazed transformations that boosted their powers to terrifying levels.

"Roar!!"

Wrapped in its blood-red aura, the Savage Beast now resembled an Undefeated War God, unleashing another deafening roar that shattered the air around them with percussive force.

"Its strength has clearly intensified!"

Even Wyatt felt some ear discomfort, realizing that this soundwave attack had far exceeded the previous one in power.

Inhaling deeply, Wyatt chose not to hesitate. True Energy surged into his Thousand-Pound Sword as he activated its embedded Two-Star Saint Marking—'Thousand-Pound Saint Marking.' The moment the crazed Savage Beast struck with both fists again, Wyatt launched himself forward.

"Heavy as a Mountain!"

The same technique, now enhanced by the Saint Marking, unleashed an even greater force.

Yet, the powered-up strike was effortlessly deflected by the beast's fists; the impact reverberated through Wyatt's hands, leaving him with throbbing palms and faint blood marks at his knuckles.

Though the wounds didn't bleed, Wyatt couldn't help but feel utterly stunned.

His body wasn't comparable to an ordinary human physique.

Even members of Martial Dao Sacred Land's Dragonsmith Clan in the same realm—such as the Five-Clawed Divine Dragon—couldn't compete with his physical resilience.

And yet, his hands had been injured in the collision.

"Roar!!"

With Wyatt's greatsword knocked aside, the Savage Beast's remaining punch slammed into the empty space. However, its reflexes were swift, and soon it swung again, aiming its gigantic fists back at Wyatt as if intent on pulverizing him.

"Now I'm done playing!"

Wyatt's expression shifted; the True Energy in his energy center roared into motion through his ninety-nine Saint Veins. At the same time, he stowed away the Thousand-Pound Sword, clenched his fists, and charged—this time facing the beast directly in melee combat.

To an observer, it would be foolishness incarnate—Wyatt choosing hand-to-hand combat against a crazed beast that overpowered him even when he wielded a sword.

What they wouldn't know, however, is that Wyatt had now infused his punches with the staggering strength of his physical body.

Combining his unparalleled physical prowess and amplified True Energy, Wyatt unleashed devastating force against the beast's blood-infused fists.

Chapter 1518: Vanessa's Abnormality

BANG!!

A loud explosion erupted first, shaking the void so much it seemed to distort slightly, radiating out clear ripples.

BANG!!

Another deafening roar echoed, shaking the heavens and the earth, even birds hundreds of meters away scattered in fright.

Meanwhile, two clouds of blood mist burst into the air, akin to a small shower of blood.

It turned out the brute-force fists of the berserk Savage Beast had been shattered by Wyatt Barnes' steel fists!

"Awoooo!!!"

Having lost both its iron fists, the Savage Beast let out a heart-wrenching scream. Driven by survival instinct, it immediately turned around to flee.

At this moment, Wyatt Barnes appeared to be nothing less than a demon to the Savage Beast.

Now, all it wanted was to escape Wyatt Barnes as far as possible.

"This feeling of pure head-on brute force, definitely exhilarating and satisfying."

Looking at his fists, now seemingly covered by golden gauntlets, Wyatt grinned broadly, his smile full of satisfaction.

Just moments before his fists and the Savage Beast's iron fists collided, he had promptly unleashed the enhanced 'Golden Cloth Shirt,' cultivated to the highest degree, further strengthening his physical prowess.

Because of this, it had been effortless to obliterate the berserk Saint Realm late-stage Savage Beast's fists.

"In this hunting examination, the points for a Saint Realm late-stage Savage Beast will surely be higher than those for a Saint Realm mid-stage Savage Beast."

Wyatt had no doubt about this.

With a swift motion, he retrieved the Sun Piercing Bow and swiftly launched an arrow infused with the 'Piercing Saint Markings.' The arrow of True Energy easily penetrated the fleeing Savage Beast, killing it.

To him, the Savage Beast was merely points.

BOOM!

The colossal body of the Savage Beast crashed heavily to the ground. Wyatt caught up swiftly and marked the body with his name, ensuring it was identified as his kill.

Once the name was marked, he didn't worry about someone else fraudulently claiming the kill.

The sequence of marks left could be inferred from the drying state of the bloodstains.

Yet, as Wyatt was busy marking his name on the Savage Beast's body, he wasn't aware of a jet-black silhouette concealed amidst the branches of a nearby tree.

"There's something on him, it seems..."

The figure, elegantly curved, was unmistakably a woman with a mesmerizing figure.

At this moment, her exposed autumn-like eyes shimmered with excitement.

"Found him! Finally found him!"

Not only did her eyes glimmer with excitement, but her heart also surged with emotion, as though Wyatt Barnes was her old acquaintance, perhaps even an old flame.

"Is he Wyatt Barnes?"

The stunningly curvaceous woman cloaked entirely in a black combat outfit soon murmured softly to herself.

Perched on her shoulder was a seemingly innocuous purple bird.

Though the purple bird appeared serene, the luminous glint in its eyes as it stared at Wyatt indicated otherwise—it was far from calm.

This woman was none other than Vanessa, a near four-star assassin of Shadow Mountain's Black Market!

"He definitely knows her, without a doubt... Moreover, their relationship is extraordinary. Otherwise, there wouldn't be such a strong trace of her energy on him."

Vanessa had just steadied her emotions, but upon sensing Wyatt's faint yet distinct aura, she confidently made her conclusion.

Simultaneously, her figure moved, and she floated midair in front of Wyatt, calmly examining him like he was an intriguing puzzle.

"Who are you?!"

Wyatt, naturally noticing the appearance of another person, immediately reacted, his expression shifting drastically.

"Shadow Mountain, Vanessa."

Vanessa hovered in mid-air as she coolly replied.

If other assassins from Shadow Mountain's Black Market heard Vanessa speak, they would be utterly shocked. She was infamous for never wasting words, let alone revealing her identity.

It was widely known that Shadow Mountain's assassins swore oaths of Thunder Punishment under the celestial Tribulation, vowing never to reveal their identities or origins.

If other Black Market assassins witnessed Vanessa expose her identity without the celestial Thunder Punishment slaughtering her in turn, their shock would be boundless.

Such an exemption could only mean one thing—Vanessa hadn't sworn the Thunder Punishment Oath!

Not having sworn the oath effectively meant she wasn't truly a Black Market assassin.

Even so, Vanessa undeniably bore the identity of a Black Market assassin.

The implications were clear—someone influential had bypassed protocol, allowing Vanessa to assume the role without taking the oath.

Such authority would be rare, reserved for those wielding considerable power within Shadow Mountain's hierarchy.

Within the Nine Sects Alliance region's Shadow Mountain division, only its leader could disrupt the rules in such a way.

"Shadow Mountain?"

Upon hearing the melodious female voice, Wyatt's expression shifted again, unperturbed by the fact she was female.

Judging by the graceful curves of her silhouette, it was evident she was a woman—a strikingly alluring one.

From the very first glance, Wyatt instinctively felt an urge to unveil her hidden face. Not that he was being a scoundrel, but such was his natural reaction as a man.

The woman's figure was perfect, so perfect it could captivate anyone.

Not even his two fiancées could compare!

However, upon hearing her reveal her identity, Wyatt's expression turned grim once more.

Shadow Mountain's Black Market had returned.

Before this, his senior Trevor Baillie had informed him about the Black Market assassins' protocols—should an assassin fail, the task would either be canceled or assigned to a stronger assassin.

This meant the assassin before him was far more powerful than the preceding Black Robed Assassin!

The Black Robed Assassin had been a top-tier practitioner of Saint Realm's pinnacle.

Had he not been a Demon Cultivator, Wyatt wouldn't have stood a chance.

But now, this alluring, melodious presence was even more formidable than the Black Robed Assassin before... a surge of helplessness swept through Wyatt's heart.

Although his powers had burgeoned, his cultivation reaching Saint Realm later stages, at maximum effort he could only hope to defeat enemies beyond his realm or fight mid-level Saint Realm experts.

But against prowess equivalent to that prior Black Robed foe without being a Demon Cultivator, Wyatt stood no chance.

And this woman, with her fiery curves and youthful, captivating voice, was undeniably stronger than that Black Robed Assassin. How could he compete?

"Let her be a Demon Cultivator, let her be..."

Wyatt silently prayed, knowing only then might he escape with his life.

Simultaneously, Wyatt extracted a Jade Slip and crushed it instantly.

The Jade Slip had been entrusted to him by Moon Radiance Sect's Vice Leader, Willy Chapman, allowing him to signal danger when needed.

As Wyatt shattered the Jade Slip, a flash of light streaked upward.

Yet, before it could escape the dense forest canopy, an unseen force obliterated it entirely, failing to act as an alarm.

SWOOSH!

Witnessing this, Wyatt's expression changed dramatically, his gaze now locked upon the woman in black combat attire before him. His voice trembled as he asked, "You... you're a Saint Realm expert?"

Earlier, Trevor Baillie had told him that even an expert approaching Saint Realm couldn't stop the Jade Slip's alarm.

"If I wasn't a Saint Realm expert, do you think I could intercept your Jade Slip, engraved with three-star Saint Markings?"

The woman replied again, her melodious voice entering Wyatt's ears like a death sentence.

"She doesn't seem to be a Demon Cultivator..."

Though Wyatt couldn't determine how precisely she'd intercepted, he sensed she had acted, either directly or through her domain.

Nonetheless, his Storage Ring's Demon Sealing Monument had shown no reaction.

If the Monument remained silent, it undoubtedly meant she wasn't a Demon Cultivator, rendering it useless.

"Not a Demon Cultivator... Not a Demon Cultivator...What now?"

At this moment, anxiety overwhelmed Wyatt. Against a Saint Realm expert who wasn't a Demon Cultivator, how could he resist?

Still, despite his inner turmoil, Wyatt wasn't one to surrender without a fight. His grip tightened around the Sun Piercing Bow, ready to act.

"Oh?"

Suddenly, Vanessa uttered a soft sound of discovery, her gaze fixed upon Wyatt's hands. "That bow of yours doesn't seem like an ordinary Saint artifact."

With a subtle motion, Wyatt found his entire body bound by invisible force, unable to move as Vanessa effortlessly took the Sun Piercing Bow from his grasp.

"This material..."

Vanessa's eyes brightened in astonishment. She turned her gaze back to Wyatt and asked, "Where did you get this bow?"

"Found it!"

Realizing that no matter how he struggled, the invisible force restrained him entirely, Wyatt responded with annoyance to her question.

He couldn't overlook a glaring inconsistency.

If Vanessa were truly a Shadow Mountain assassin, why hadn't she slaughtered him immediately and wasted no words, nor exuded killing intent?

Unbeknownst to Wyatt, there wasn't just confusion on his end—even if Shadow Mountain's division leader were present, they would be equally dumbfounded, finding Vanessa's current behavior unrecognizable.

"What's the matter? Do you think I'd covet your belongings?"

Vanessa chuckled lightly. While lifting her hand, she not only freed Wyatt from the binding force but also returned the Sun Piercing Bow to him.

This left Wyatt all the more perplexed. "You claim to be an assassin sent by Shadow Mountain... shouldn't you be here to kill me?"

"I am here to kill you."

Vanessa nodded slightly.

Her words triggered an instinctive tension in Wyatt's heart. He asked warily, "Then why haven't you acted? With your strength, killing me would be a piece of cake."

Chapter 1519: Exactly the Same

"Killing you would be easy, but now I find you intriguing... Rest assured, after today, Shadow Mountain Black Market will revoke the kill order against you."

Hearing Wyatt Barnes's words, Vanessa responded unhurriedly, momentarily leaving Wyatt puzzled.

Could it be that my charm is really this irresistible, and I've actually caught her eye?

Thinking about this, Wyatt felt a chill down his spine.

Though the woman before him had an impressive figure, who could tell what her concealed face actually looked like?

Perhaps she's an ugly wretch?

However, in the next moment, Wyatt froze.

Because, without any warning, Vanessa reached up and removed the cover from her face, revealing her true appearance.

A cascade of black, silky hair fell like a waterfall, and her autumnal eyes resembled two brightest stars in the night sky. Her petite nose was slightly raised, her lips rosy, and the perfect contours of her face sketched out a beauty that could topple nations.

On that exquisitely crafted countenance, it was nearly impossible to find even the slightest imperfection; everything about her was flawless.

Yet, upon seeing Vanessa's peerless beauty, Wyatt's expression turned as if he had seen a ghost. He stood frozen, dumbfounded, saying, "You... You..."

Vanessa noticed the astonished look on Wyatt's face, and a fleeting gleam of realization flickered deep within her autumnal eyes.

It seemed everything was just as she had suspected.

He was indeed closely connected to the person she had been searching for, so much so that an unmistakably dense aura belonging to that individual surrounded him.

At this moment, no one could grasp Wyatt's feelings.

Wyatt's emotions surged uncontrollably; he couldn't calm himself. As he looked at Vanessa, his gaze, at times filled with astonishment, at times filled with longing, at times filled with tenderness, grew increasingly complex.

And the reason Wyatt felt this way was because Vanessa's face wasn't unfamiliar to him.

Indeed, the face he remembered—so similar to the one before him—had merely had a touch of youthful innocence.

Yes, the peerless beauty standing in front of Wyatt now, Vanessa, was the spitting image of Wyatt's fiancée, Keer.

Every feature, every detail matched perfectly without any difference.

However, despite the uncanny resemblance, Wyatt never considered the possibility that Vanessa might actually be Keer.

For the aura emanating from Vanessa was entirely distinct from Keer's.

Keer's aura was gentle and as warm as jade, while Vanessa carried a faint chill, an unapproachable demeanor that pushed others away.

At this moment, Wyatt briefly entertained the notion that Keer and the woman before him might be twin sisters.

But just as quickly, he dismissed the idea.

Because such a thing was almost impossible!

Vanessa was an assassin from the Shadow Mountain Black Market and a Saint Realm expert.

Keer, however, hailed from the mundane region of the Human Land, having journeyed with Wyatt from Clearwind Town. There was absolutely no way she could be connected to Vanessa.

Moreover, when Wyatt first met Keer, she was preparing to sell herself to bury her mother.

Keer had never mentioned to Wyatt that her mother wasn't her biological mother.

"Speak plainly. What exactly do you want?"

Suppressing the myriad doubts in his heart, Wyatt asked grimly.

The Vanessa standing before him was from the Shadow Mountain Black Market, yet her words seemed to imply not only would she spare him, but she would also ensure the kill order against him was rescinded.

This made Wyatt sense that something was amiss.

Logically, he had no connection to her at all—there was no reason for her to act this way.

If something out of the ordinary happens, there's bound to be a hidden reason!

That was something Wyatt firmly believed.

"What? A grown man like you, afraid of a little woman like me?"

A perfect curve formed on Vanessa's lips as she smiled faintly and asked.

Vanessa's beauty, paired with her devilish figure, would stir the desire of any man. But Wyatt, instead of feeling desire, was filled with alarm.

"I don't believe you would abandon the thoughts of killing me without reason, let alone plan on having the Shadow Mountain Black Market revoke the assignment."

Wyatt stated.

"Without reason? Naturally, that's impossible!"

Vanessa replied flatly, "Before meeting you, anyone marked by me, Vanessa, never escaped alive... You are the first."

"Should I feel honored then?"

Wyatt smiled self-deprecatingly before asking, "Tell me, what reason has compelled you not only to spare me but to help me?"

"Reason? If I said it's simply because I find you pleasing to the eye, would you believe it?"

Vanessa chuckled.

Her words sent a shiver of unease through Wyatt's heart.

Who knew if the young-looking woman before him wasn't actually some ancient hag who had lived for centuries? Perhaps her age surpassed his grandmother's grandmother.

If Vanessa knew what Wyatt was thinking, she'd have slapped him to death on the spot!

"I believe we'll meet again."

After taking a long, deep look at Wyatt, and just as he was about to respond, Vanessa abruptly vanished—disappearing entirely from Wyatt's view.

"Who exactly is she?"

Deep confusion bubbled in Wyatt's heart.

"A Shadow Mountain Black Market assassin, someone who looks exactly like Keer, originally here to kill me, yet suddenly changed her mind and plans to help me by revoking the kill order..."

Wyatt's thoughts were starting to clear.

He was not foolish enough to believe she spared him simply because she found him pleasing to the eye.

Being a Shadow Mountain Black Market assassin meant being cold-blooded, incapable of refraining for such a ridiculous reason.

"The only reason I can imagine is Keer! But even if she does have some connection to Keer, how would she know what Keer and I mean to each other? Could it be she's been secretly following us all along?"

"If she's been hiding in the shadows, wouldn't that mean she was guarding Keer? Then why follow me? And even if she was following me, why reveal herself to me now?"

Thinking about it from various angles, Wyatt still couldn't make sense of it.

"I'll just have to ask Keer when I return... But Keer has told me everything about herself before, and she never mentioned having any living relatives."

Unable to unravel the mystery, Wyatt shifted his focus back to the 'Hunting Assessment.'

As time passed, the Hunting Assessment came to an end.

Wyatt, of course, secured the position of 'First Place.'

"How could Wyatt's points be so high! He's scored ten times more than the second place... Even if he killed every Savage Beast he encountered, his score couldn't be this high, right?"

While many Inner Sect disciples didn't dispute Wyatt's first-place finish in the Hunting Assessment—they had long heard of his monstrous talent—the sheer magnitude of his score sparked skepticism among them, leaving them doubtful of its legitimacy.

Despite their doubt, Wyatt faced the crowd with a calm expression, unfazed.

"Wyatt's score is so high because he killed a late-stage Saint Realm Savage Beast, the 'Raging Giant Ape'!"

Suddenly, one of the Inner Sect elders, who had been watching Wyatt with a complex expression, couldn't help but explain upon hearing the muttering of the Inner Sect disciples.

Upon hearing this, yet another Inner Sect elder sighed in resignation, evidently aware of the truth.

Trevor Baillie remained composed as if unsurprised.

The Vice Sect Leader of Moon Radiance Sect, Willy Chapman, cast a complicated gaze at Wyatt, his expression flickering unpredictably, leaving his thoughts enigmatic.

"The Raging Giant Ape?"

The words of the Inner Sect elder stunned the group of Inner Sect disciples, leaving them entirely flabbergasted.

The Raging Giant Ape wasn't unfamiliar to them.

It was a renowned late-stage Saint Realm Savage Beast known for its absolute savagery—far surpassing others at the same level. Within the ranks of late-stage Saint Realm Savage Beasts, it bore the infamous title of the 'Slayer.'

Yet such a beast had been slain by Wyatt?

Swish! Swish! Swish!

...

In an instant, the disciples' gazes uniformly fixated on Wyatt.

Shock, disbelief, suspicion, and amazement colored their faces.

Regardless of their emotions, Wyatt had become the center of attention.

"Because the Raging Giant Ape was killed after going berserk, the score for defeating it doubled... And it's because of this that Wyatt's score was so far ahead of yours! The score for a late-stage Saint Realm Savage Beast—once doubled—shouldn't require me to spell out the difference,"

another Inner Sect elder explained.

This understanding put the group of disciples at ease despite lingering complexities in their emotions, as no further objections arose.

Thus, Moon Radiance Sect's annual Hunting Assessment concluded, with Wyatt successfully claiming the coveted title of 'First Place' and earning the right to enter the Sect Warehouse.

The Sect Warehouse, while mostly filled with dust-covered items unremarkable to the ordinary eye, still contained a number of treasures.

Of course, a majority comprised mere scraps and trash!

Even so, Wyatt harbored great anticipation for the Sect Warehouse, firmly believing he might uncover something extraordinary.

Returning to Moon Radiance Sect, the group of Inner Sect disciples cast Wyatt complex glances along the way.

Each of them—whether they had entered the sect five years ago or longer—no one could compare to Wyatt, who had only joined Moon Radiance Sect this year. This disparity made their hearts undeniably uneasy.

"Uncle, I hope you truly abandon any thoughts of opposing him... Otherwise, you'd only be digging your own grave!"

Center Montes also directed his gaze toward Wyatt, more complex than that of any other Inner Sect disciple.

From the beginning, Center watched Wyatt's meteoric rise—a speed of progress so astonishing it left him trailing far behind.

Among them, Trevor Baillie and Willy Chapman, as well as the upper echelons of Moon Radiance Sect, remained unaware.

Trailing not far behind them, a slender shadow quietly followed. It belonged to a graceful woman.

On the woman's shoulder perched a small purple bird, fast asleep.

Chapter 1520: Amelia Tyler Thunder Peng

"Following him should lead us to that little girl."

The woman trailing behind the group from the Moon Radiance Sect was none other than Vanessa, the assassin of the Shadow Mountain black market. At this moment, she was gazing intently at Wyatt Barnes, muttering under her breath.

"Purple, I'll head back for a bit. You keep a close eye on him and don't let him leave your sight."

Vanessa addressed the purple bird perched on her shoulder.

"Got it, Sis."

The purple bird replied listlessly, "How boring. I thought I'd get to stretch my wings properly on this outing."

"If you want to stretch your wings, pick anyone among them to mess with. But try to avoid touching his close associates."

Vanessa glanced at the group of figures ahead and spoke indifferently.

Hearing this, the purple bird instantly perked up, as if injected with adrenaline. In an instant, it radiated energy and said eagerly, "Sis, hurry up and go back!"

The current purple bird seemed nothing like its earlier self—it practically looked like a whole different "bird."

Vanessa shook her head, said nothing more, and disappeared into thin air.

In the blink of an eye, she had fled to a distant place, heading toward the Shadow Mountain black market's main base.

After Vanessa vanished, the purple bird's eyes flashed with brilliance. It suddenly flapped its wings, transforming into a streak of purple lightning that shot toward the Moon Radiance Sect group.

Whoosh!

A piercing whistle of wind sent the Moon Radiance Sect group into high alert.

"What's that?!"

In an instant, the group felt an enormous dark shadow, akin to storm clouds pressing down on a city, engulf their heads, blocking out the sunlight that should have shone upon them.

When they looked up, they were shocked.

A gargantuan purple bird hovered in the sky, its razor-sharp eyes fixed firmly on the group.

The purple bird's wings spread wide, resembling looming clouds, exuding an overwhelming pressure.

As Trevor Baillie, Willy Chapman, and two other inner sect elders of the Moon Radiance Sect braced themselves for danger, Wyatt Barnes and the rest of the inner sect disciples grew visibly horrified.

A voice carried directly into Wyatt's ears.

"Kid, is there anyone in your group you particularly dislike?"

This was the content of the transmitted voice.

"Who are you?!"

Wyatt heard the female voice but glanced around, unable to determine the source of the True Energy transmission.

"You're really dense. Just look up, and you'll see me!"

Again, the voice reached him. Wyatt froze in disbelief before snapping out of it several moments later. "You... you're that big bird?"

"Big bird, small bird—what terrible names... Listen up! This lady is the supreme Sacred Beast, Amelia Tyler the Thunder Roc. I'm not just some 'big bird'!"

The purple bird transmitted again, its tone filled with indignation.

Amelia Tyler the Thunder Roc?

Wyatt froze upon hearing its words. He carefully observed the bird and discovered it did resemble the Giant Roc but with distinct differences—most notably, a golden horn atop its head.

"If she hadn't stated it herself, I wouldn't have realized she's a female bird."

Wyatt thought to himself.

"Kid, this lady asked you a question. Is there anyone in your group you particularly dislike?"

Amelia Tyler the Thunder Roc pressed again.

Although Wyatt didn't know why she was asking, he instinctively cast his gaze toward Willy Chapman, the Moon Radiance Sect's vice sect leader. Even he couldn't fully explain why.

Perhaps it was the persistent hostility Willy exuded toward him that annoyed him deeply.

"Your Excellency must be a Sacred Beast. May I ask why you block our path?"

Willy stepped forward slightly, cupping his hands in polite acknowledgment as he addressed the purple bird.

Though Willy couldn't identify the bird outright, the aura faintly emanating from it filled him with oppressive dread.

A sensation capable of suppressing someone like him, who had reached the "half-step Saint Realm," could only originate from an entity that had already entered the "Saint Realm."

Willy surmised the bird was a Sacred Beast based on its aura, as Sacred Beasts and Savage Beasts carried vastly different energy signatures.

The intelligent gleam in the bird's eyes further confirmed it wasn't the mindless type of Savage Beast.

"Just bored, can't I?"

The purple bird, Amelia Tyler the Thunder Roc, lazily spoke, her voice human-like.

For a moment, Willy's face twitched visibly.

What kind of reason was that?

Trevor Baillie, alongside the other two inner sect elders and the inner sect disciples except Wyatt Barnes, were utterly dumbfounded.

While Wyatt wasn't shocked, his lips twitched upon hearing Amelia's words.

As he noticed the bird's gaze locked onto Willy, Wyatt realized Willy was about to be in trouble...

At that moment, Wyatt couldn't help but wonder if he'd inadvertently set Willy up just moments ago.

Before Wyatt could process his thoughts, Amelia Tyler the Thunder Roc's wings suddenly quivered.

Crash! Crash!

Two waves of purple ripples radiated out from her wings.

Wherever the purple ripples passed, the surrounding void seemed to freeze.

Meanwhile, except for Willy, the rest of the Moon Radiance Sect group, including Wyatt and Trevor, were blasted backward by the purple waves, retreating over a hundred meters in an instant.

When they regained their senses, only Amelia and Willy remained visible in the distance.

"It's you. You'll join me for some exercise."

Amelia hovered mid-air, leisurely eyeing Willy as she spoke.

Willy's vision went black upon hearing her words, nearly fainting on the spot.

If earlier he'd only suspected Amelia was a Saint Realm-level Sacred Beast, her display of power left him certain beyond any doubt.

A Saint Realm Sacred Beast wanted him for exercise?

Wouldn't that disassemble every single one of his bones?

"Senior, I am Willy Chapman, vice sect leader of the Moon Radiance Sect. If I have somehow offended you, please inform me, and I will sincerely apologize."

Willy's face wrinkled with misery as he addressed Amelia, his voice trembling slightly.

At that moment, he silently prayed that Amelia might spare him for the sake of the Moon Radiance Sect's reputation.

However, her next words made Willy's face turn even paler.

"Moon Radiance Sect? Never heard of it. As for you, you haven't offended me. I simply want you to join me for some exercise... Rest assured, I won't kill you."

Amelia shook her head and spoke calmly.

As soon as her last word dropped, she transformed into a purple whirlwind, sweeping directly toward Willy.

From afar, all Wyatt and the inner sect disciples of the Moon Radiance Sect could see was the whirlwind sweeping past, followed by Willy vanishing entirely as though he had disappeared into thin air.

Of course, Wyatt was clear: Willy hadn't actually disappeared.

Rather, he was moving so fast that none could see him.

"A Saint Realm Sacred Beast."

At this point, Trevor and the two other inner sect elders wore bitter smiles.

They could faintly discern rapid movements ahead—Willy's pitiful state made them reluctant to keep watching.

Of course, none dared offer any assistance.

If the Saint Realm Sacred Beast targeted them for exercise as well, wouldn't it be a completely senseless death?

At that moment, even Trevor felt fortunate the Saint Beast had chosen Willy and not himself.

If it were him, wouldn't his old bones be broken apart entirely?

Trevor merely assumed the Saint Beast's choice of Willy was random.

If he knew Amelia Tyler the Thunder Roc had picked Willy because of Wyatt's glance, one wonders what kind of expression he'd wear.

"A Saint Realm Sacred Beast?"

Sometime after, Wyatt's expression also grew grave, only now realizing Amelia was indeed a Saint Realm Sacred Beast.

Recalling her earlier telepathic exchange, his heart brimmed with confusion.

Why would she ask him if he disliked someone?

And just because he instinctively glanced at Willy, Willy ended up unlucky?

It felt as though Amelia was avenging him in some peculiar way.

Wyatt swore he'd never encountered Amelia before today. In fact, it was his first time in life meeting such a Sacred Beast—much less one at the Saint Realm level.

"What kind of luck did I have today? In just one day, I've encountered two 'Saint Realm' figures... Could there be some connection between them?"

Even Wyatt didn't know why, but he began associating Amelia and Vanessa of the Shadow Mountain black market together.

"What a letdown! You're not worth my time... Forget it, I won't mess with you anymore. I'll follow you to that Moon Radiance Sect and find the strongest person there to spar with—that should at least be fun."

Soon after, Wyatt and the others heard Amelia's voice carry over.

Moments later, both Amelia and Willy reappeared together.

Amelia was as radiant as before, unchanged, but Willy looked as though he'd been thoroughly tormented. His body was bruised and battered, his robes torn in multiple places.

Willy now had to force himself to stay upright, his body trembling softly as though he might collapse at any moment.

Despite his miserable state, Willy exhaled audibly in relief.

"Master!"

At this point, Center Montes hurried forward to support Willy. His gaze at Amelia was filled with evident fear.

"Let's go. I'm coming with you to the Moon Radiance Sect."

As the group reeled from Amelia's announcement, she abruptly transformed, turning into a sixteen- or seventeen-year-old young girl clad in purple. Her youthful yet delicate features exuded innocence, resembling the tender beauty of porcelain.

She was undoubtedly a blossoming beauty.

Yet none of them paid attention to her transformed appearance—all had been thoroughly intimidated by her earlier dominance.

She had appeared out of nowhere, immediately demanded someone exercise with her...

And it was their sect's vice sect leader Willy who ended up unlucky.

If Wyatt hadn't witnessed it himself, he'd find it hard to associate the purple-clad girl before him with the thunderous purple Roc from earlier.