

I Don't Want to Get Hurt, So I'll Max Out My Defense

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Chapter 1: Chapter 1 Master, Don't Hit the Face

Immortal Feather Sect.

Mountains surrounded the area, with immortal mist swirling about.

In a cave dwelling, Li Xiaobai lay on the bed with a frown, staring at the panel in front of him.

[Host: Li Xiaobai]

[Attack: 0 (+)]

[Speed: 0 (+)]

[Defense: 0 (+)]

[Attribute Points: 10]

[Skill: None]

[Item: None]

[Shop: Not Opened]

Damn it, this is the epitome of a product with nothing to offer—transmigrators shouldn't be treated like this.

Three days earlier, Li Xiaobai had suddenly transmigrated to this world, becoming an Inner Sect Disciple of the Immortal Feather Sect.

He also received an attribute point system, and after three whole days, he finally figured out how to use it.

The system didn't have the function to increase cultivation level, only to add attribute points.

As long as he took damage, he would gain attribute points.

Overall, it was a system that clearly had a masochistic streak. Yesterday, just as a little test, his master slapped him across the face, and the left side of it was still swollen.

However, the gain was significant, as that one slap immediately added ten attribute points.

Where should I add them?

If I want to be able to take a few hits in the future, I'd better stack them all on defensive power for now to keep myself safe.

[Defensive Power: Mortal Flesh (10/100) Upgradeable.]

He touched his face; although the swelling hadn't gone down, the skin felt noticeably tougher.

He could continue to wander outside.

With his increased defensive power, Li Xiaobai's mood improved significantly, and he hummed a tune as he made his way to another cave dwelling, belonging to Senior Sister Su.

Senior Sister Su was a cultivation fanatic, spending her days with her nose to the grindstone, and it was said that her strength was nearing that of many elders despite her young age.

Plus, she had a fiery temper—like a keg of gunpowder that could ignite at any moment.

Knock knock knock!

"Senior Sister, your little brother is here to see you!"

The door opened, revealing the annoyed face of a woman, clearly displeased just short of having the word written across her forehead.

"Speak quickly if you have something to say!"

Li Xiaobai swallowed, "Ahem, Senior Sister, you look really beautiful today!"

"Heh, you've got good taste, come on in first!"

Women love compliments, and hearing her junior brother's praise made Su Yunbing feel a little bit of happiness.

Once inside, Li Xiaobai glanced around the environment. Senior Sister's boudoir was stark and empty, nothing like a man's. He couldn't help blurting out,

"Senior Sister, why is your cave dwelling so empty? It's like a man's place; Senior Sister Ye's dwelling is much nicer than yours."

Comparing between women, especially with a beauty like Ye Wushuang, was taboo, and the atmosphere in the room grew tense at those words. Li Xiaobai felt the pressure, worrying that if Senior Sister lost control and slapped him, he might be done for.

Fortunately, Su Yunbing managed to keep her emotions in check.

"Junior Brother, although you are now an Inner Sect Disciple, you were only specially recruited, and your strength is far from that of the others. You still need to work harder."

Su Yunbing squeezed out a smile and passed a cup of tea to Li Xiaobai.

"Thank you for the advice, Senior Sister, you should also pay more attention to self-care. If a woman cultivates day and night without rest, her skin will age quickly," Li Xiaobai said seriously.

Crack. The teacup in Su Yunbing's hand was crushed into powder. Li Xiaobai's heart skipped a beat—had he gone too far?

"Junior Brother, did you come today because you have something to say?"

Su Yunbing struggled to control her emotions, feeling off since the moment this junior brother stepped in; she almost lost control of her temper several times, as if she was indeed having an adverse reaction to the new arrival.

"Senior Sister, actually I've made a little mistake, and I'm not sure if I should speak about it," Li Xiaobai said cautiously, eyeing Su Yunbing.

"Go ahead and speak, with my matchless strength and broad-mindedness, I won't hold it against you," she said.

Relieved to see the conversation getting back on track, Su Yunbing let out a sigh. The junior brother was not good with words, but she, as his senior sister, should be more tolerant.

"Actually, I just accidentally knocked over the rouge powder Senior Sister Ye prepared for you..." Li Xiaobai cautiously said.

The temperature in the room suddenly dropped, and Li Xiaobai's heart skipped a beat as he sensed the murderous aura. Indeed, this was no job for the faint-hearted.

Although his eldest senior sister had a tough temperament, she was still very conscious of her appearance. Ye Wushuang was skilled in medicine, and the rouge she made was not only attractive but also had the effect of beautifying and keeping the skin young. She had wheedled and cajoled for a long time before finally getting the other party to agree to help make a batch.

"Senior Sister... can you not hit the face?"

One minute later,

Su Yunbing walked out slowly, holding Li Xiaobai up by one hand and nonchalantly threw him out.

"Junior Brother, it's just a box of rouge, it's nothing. Senior sister forgives you."

...

Li Xiaobai got up from the ground with an expressionless face and touched his right cheek, which was swollen.

Well, good, now both sides of his face were symmetrical.

He checked his attribute panel.

[Attribute Points: 100.]

The senior sister's hits were too fierce, netting him a whopping one hundred attribute points in one go. He still preferred the way his master did it, slapping only once each time. Steady and sustained.

No question about it, all points to defensive power. If he didn't, he felt like he would eventually be beaten to death.

[Defensive Level: Mortal Flesh (10/1000) Upgradeable.]

At the same time, a notification sound rang in his mind.

[Skill Comprehension: Hatred Hundred Percent.]

Hatred Hundred Percent: Showing off is a skill, an art even. When you show off, targets will view you with unlimited hostility and attack you fiercely. The better the show, the harsher the beating.

Note: Beating comes with risks, use with caution.

Sheesh!

Seeing this skill, Li Xiaobai gasped. What a powerful skill!

On the surface, it looked like a useless skill, but upon deeper contemplation, it was an incredibly powerful control skill.

Just think, by showing off, you can pull all of your opponent's hatred and have them attack you like crazy. Isn't that basically one hundred percent control?

It's just that his handsome face would have to suffer.

With a new skill in hand, Li Xiaobai decided to go try it out on his master. His old man had a good temper, and he'd only slap once, not too hard.

Inner Sect Disciples each have their own master. Generally, there would be one master for every ten disciples. Li Xiaobai's master was Feng Lingzi, who had a total of seven disciples, all of whom, except for Li Xiaobai, were cultivation fanatics.

The Sect had high hopes for this team and specially created a mountain peak for Feng Lingzi and his disciples to concentrate on teaching and sorting through cultivation materials.

This kind of treatment could be compared to that of True Disciples, which was an extra benefit.

Entering the two-story building, Feng Lingzi liked to nap in the small attic. The guy was a bit lazy. Having been in this world for three days, Li Xiaobai had yet to see him practice for even one day.

It seemed life had been a little too comfortable.

Hehe, let's give him some excitement!

"Master, I'm here!"

"If you're here, then you're here. No need to shout so loud. Did you come to actually cultivate properly this time?" Feng Lingzi's voice came from next to the bookshelf where he was organizing books, looking thoroughly aggrieved.

The Sect competition was approaching, and he had to sort out some materials for his disciples to consult. He normally didn't touch these things much, resulting in a significant workload now.

He casually tossed a booklet to Li Xiaobai.

"I recommend that you cultivate this Primordial Scripture. It's basic but stable, and less likely to cause problems. Take it back and start practicing. Don't embarrass me."

"Master, aren't we cultivators supposed to contend with the heavens? Shouldn't we cultivate more powerful techniques?" Li Xiaobai was taken aback. Although he didn't practice cultivation techniques, he couldn't help but ask. It seemed his master's opinions were different from the others'.

"Contend with the heavens? Do you think heaven cares about you?" Feng Lingzi rolled his eyes, clearly disdainful of the idea of contending with fate.

Although something felt off, it didn't matter. He wasn't here to really cultivate.

He had the System; leveling up was simple, no need for actual cultivation.

Thinking this, Li Xiaobai cleared his throat, preparing to activate his skill.

"Master, your disciple is no mere mortal and cannot be judged by common standards. Since the day of my birth, I have been destined to vie against the great powers of heaven and earth."

"I see myself as a once-in-a-millennium genius, with all the luck converging upon me. Now that you, my esteemed master, with your discerning eyes, have accepted me into the Immortal Sect, this genius seeks to learn the strongest techniques in the world and walk an invincible path!"

Chapter 2: Chapter 2 Hundred Percent Enmity Pull

As soon as his words ended, a strong gust of wind attacked.

Feng Lingzi appeared in front of Li Xiaobai in an instant, and with a solid slap to the head, Li Xiaobai tumbled 720 degrees in place, and then landed face down.

Li Xiaobai was astonished. What just happened? He had no mental preparation at all, and the effect of this skill was just too powerful.

Had he not retracted the skill in time, he felt his head would have been slapped off.

"You call yourself a genius?"

"Not a trace of spiritual energy in your body, you must be living in a dream!"

Feng Lingzi spat in disdain, puffing his beard and glaring. This disciple had joined the sect only a few days ago and was already causing too much worry.

Li Xiaobai dusted off his buttocks, his face dirty with dust, and left.

The recent incident taught him a lesson, skills are good, but they shouldn't be misused.

Using them on ordinary disciples might yield good results, but against a master, one might get slapped to death on the spot.

It seems he needed to be more selective about his targets in the future; he decided not to use this skill on those with higher cultivation for now—it was too terrifying.

At this moment, he had fifty more attribute points in the System, as the slap from his master was harder than yesterday's, and his head had completely swollen up like a pig's.

He poured all the attribute points into defensive power.

[Defense: Mortal Flesh (60/1000) Advancement possible.]

After taking some elixirs for healing, Li Xiaobai decided to have a walk around the sect.

One reason was to familiarize himself with the environment, and the other was to find some suitable people to punch his face in.

A few senior brothers and sisters were too strong, and when they fought, they did so without holding back; he found them a bit too much to handle.

Feng Lingzi and the seven disciples occupied a mountain peak, a privilege given by the Sect Leader. The mountain where he was located was called Misty Peak.

Together, there were only seven of them, master and disciples, no servants, no menial workers.

To interact with others, he had to go down the mountain.

"Eh, isn't that Junior Brother Li?"

"Have you been beaten by master again?"

A female cultivator wearing a green silk dress approached from down the mountain and said with a light smile upon seeing Li Xiaobai's appearance.

Li Xiaobai's eyes widened; this was Misty Peak's second senior sister, Ye Wushuang, skilled in healing arts, always gentle and tender, a stark contrast to Senior Sister Su Yunbing.

Ye Wushuang was a renowned beauty of the Immortal Feather Sect. Now that they had met here, it would be a shame not to make a move and take advantage of his System.

"This was done by Senior Sister, of course, master also had a hand in it, but let's not talk about that."

Mentioning the sad experience, Li Xiaobai felt somewhat depressed.

"You've been diligently practicing every day. How could senior sister and master punish you? Come here, let this senior sister take a look at you."

Ye Wushuang took out her silver needles and medicinal wine, ready to treat him.

Watching Ye Wushuang's actions, Li Xiaobai blurted out.

"Senior Sister, your fingers are so rough, surely it's because you often do acupuncture and don't take care of them!"

Ye Wushuang didn't react much, still holding a sweet smile on her lips, but for some reason, Li Xiaobai felt a bit uneasy.

He wouldn't be able to gain much from Senior Sister Ye. With her good temper, she likely wouldn't hit him.

However, though he thought so, the words that came to his lips changed their flavor.

"Senior Sister, there's an odd smell about you. Other senior sisters smell like fragrant pollen, so why is there a stinky scent on you?"

"Senior Sister, mastering your skills is important, but personal hygiene is important too. You should bath when it's time to bath!"

Li Xiaobai nodded seriously, feeling that he was making a lot of sense.

Yet, he noted that the force of the acupuncture on his head seemed to pause for a moment. Could it be that Senior Sister Ye was getting angry?

"Giggle, it's just the smell of herbs. I just gathered them and haven't removed the scent yet!"

Ye Wushuang laughed cheerily, causing Li Xiaobai's heart to flutter.

With Senior Sister Ye being such a gentle and beautiful woman, it would be best not to offend her. He could foster good relations with her later.

Having made up his mind, Li Xiaobai closed his mouth.

But things weren't as simple as he imagined.

After a few more jabs above his head, Ye Wushuang put away the needles, picked up her small medicine box, and without turning back, she left.

"Junior Brother Li, take good care of yourself."

"Hmm, thank you, Senior Sister."

Li Xiaobai always felt that Senior Sister was not just comforting him—something felt strange. Nevertheless, the swelling on his face did indeed subside quite a bit.

Senior Sister's remedial techniques were spot on, only, she did not seem fond of bathing, which was not a good habit.

Humming a cheerful tune, Li Xiaobai continued his descent down the mountain. Before he had taken two steps, a system prompt arrived.

[Attribute Point +20.]

[Attribute Point +20.]

[...]

The prompts kept coming continuously.

What's going on?

He hadn't been attacked, so where were these attribute points coming from?

He looked around; there was no one else in the vicinity, and Senior Sister Ye had already walked far away.

A tinge of panic stirred within him as he carefully recalled the recent events.

That's right, Ye Wushuang!

Li Xiaobai suddenly remembered the chills he had felt in his heart earlier.

It was said that those proficient in medicine could also employ poison—could it be that Ye Wushuang had meddled with something?

Recalling that delicate face, Li Xiaobai shivered without reason.

The system's continuous tally of attribute points prompted him to frantically search himself, finally discovering an anomaly on his ankle.

A black spot of unremarkable size had appeared on the edge of his ankle.

It truly was Ye Wushuang's doing; to place a needle on the head and manage to transmit the toxin directly to the foot—her technique was too cunning.

Luckily, Senior Sister had only administered a minor punishment and had not left him paralyzed; the system prompts ceased after a while.

Indeed, one must never offend a beautiful woman.

He checked the attribute panel.

[Attribute Point: 100.]

He channeled all the attributes into defense once more. Currently, he was still unaware of the correlation between defensive power and the strength of cultivators in this world—erring on the side of caution was better.

Who was to blame when those around him were too powerful?

Causing him to have no standards for comparison whatsoever.

Meanwhile, the system panel underwent another change.

[Skill acquired: Paralytic Toxin.]

[Continuous damage detected, Paralytic Toxin upgraded: Muscle Flaccidity.]

Muscle Flaccidity: Everyone within a one-meter radius of oneself is in a state of muscle flaccidity; the longer the duration, the more severe the symptoms.

He must thank Ye Wushuang for this skill which granted him an area-effect ability.

Li Xiaobai was quite pleased; this was his first decent offensive skill.

Muscle Flaccidity paired with Hatred Hundred Percent was a perfect combination. If he could withstand attacks in future fights, his adversaries would grow progressively weaker, putting him in an invincible position.

...

At the foot of the mountain,

As Li Xiaobai exited the gate of the mountain, the surrounding disciples couldn't help but halt their steps, observing him with timid gazes.

Whispers circulated.

"Did you see? That person came down from Misty Peak!"

"I saw it, we rarely see him on a normal day, no question—he's another formidable one!"

"Senior Brothers, may I ask what does it mean for someone to be a strong person from Misty Peak? I'm new here and not very knowledgeable!"

"Oh come on, you don't know? Let me tell you, Misty Peak is a mountain developed under the special care of the Sect Leader, housing only seven Inner Sect Disciples. But it's said each disciple of Misty Peak is a cultivation maniac, their strength not inferior to that of True Disciples!"

"I know that about half a year ago, Misty Peak's fourth disciple, Yang Chen, got into a conflict with the third Elder's True Disciple. He initiated a duel on the fighting platform and inflicted severe injuries on the opponent, rumored to have been a one-hit KO!"

"That strong?"

"So I'm telling you, if you see a disciple coming down from Misty Peak whom you have never seen before, be cautious. They could be a cultivation prodigy emerging from extended seclusion!"

"Moreover, with the grand ceremony approaching, people from Misty Peak coming down at this time are likely probing the True Disciples' strength. There might be another fierce battle on our hands. At times like this, we better not join the crowd, lest we get caught in the crossfire."

Chapter 3: Chapter 3 The Fourth Senior Brother is Somewhat Handsome

Seeing Li Xiaobai coming down, the surrounding disciples immediately scattered like birds and beasts, clearly not wishing to interact any more than necessary.

Li Xiaobai touched his nose with a slightly embarrassed expression.

It seemed these fellow sect brothers were particularly supportive of Misty Peak, a pity he was just a newcomer, a mere rookie, far from the secluded expert they spoke of.

"Yo, isn't this a disciple from Misty Peak? A fresh face, eh? What's the matter, can't sit still with the sect competition approaching?"

A young man holding a feather fan parted the crowd and walked out.

"It's Lin Feng, an Inner Sect Disciple!"

"It's said his brother Lin Mang is Elder Sun's True Disciple, which is quite impressive!"

Seeing that a disciple recognized him, Lin Feng grew even more arrogant, gently waving his feather fan with a smile on his face, full of style.

Li Xiaobai looked confused; sect competition?

Feng Lingzi never mentioned anything about it!

He had a bad feeling in his heart.

"Listen well, everyone, all Misty Peak disciples are a bunch of nepotists, relying on their good relationship with the Sect Leader to blatantly monopolize resources."

"This time in the competition my big brother will surely reach the top ten, claiming the qualification to train at the Holy Demon Sect and then step by step walk over those from Misty Peak, showing the Sect Leader their true colors."

Lin Feng stood tall and proud, speaking indifferently as an imposing aura filled the area, leaving Li Xiaobai utterly confused.

"If your brother is so mighty that he can make it into the top ten... but what does that have to do with you?"

Scratching his head, Li Xiaobai wore a face of bewilderment.

The watching crowd was also stunned. Yeah, your big brother's strength has what to do with you?

"I..."

Lin Feng choked, at a loss for words.

"Haha, well said junior brother, some petty people enjoy nothing more than running their mouths. You're called Lin Feng, right? Stop your nonsensical babbling. If you really have the skill, let's have a go at it!"

The crowd parted once more, and another young man came forward, also in white garments and lightly waving a feather fan, yet his fan movements were thousands of times more graceful than Lin Feng's.

Compared to this handsome man, Lin Feng looked like a bumpkin.

Li Xiaobai recognized this person; it was his senior brother from Misty Peak, named Yang Chen, whom he had met when he first joined the sect.

"We'll just wait and see!"

"See what? What's there to look at? Why are you all crowding here? Don't you need to cultivate?"

The crowd sneered, and Lin Feng slunk away in defeat.

"Junior brother, how come you've come down the mountain?"

Yang Chen approached with a chuckle, not taking Lin Feng's words to heart in the slightest.

"Senior brother, I just came down the mountain for a stroll, to relax a bit," Li Xiaobai said.

"Relax?"

Upon hearing this, Yang Chen's brows shot up in an instant, his face stern: "After death, there is plenty of time to relax. What we have to do is cultivate, from morning to night, continuously."

"The sect competition is almost upon us; you can't bring shame upon Misty Peak!"

Great, another cultivation fanatic.

Li Xiaobai was speechless, just about to say something, but then he noticed the scenery around him blur, and before he knew it, he was thrown into the cave dwelling.

[Attribute Points +10.]

"Junior brother, these Spirit Stones are for you. The competition is tomorrow, diligently cultivate, and do not disgrace our Misty Peak,"

Yang Chen's voice drifted from far away.

Senior brother Yang was really... warm-hearted. He had barely descended the mountain once, and before even leaving the sect, he found himself sent back. What kind of nonsense was this?

Sorting through his thoughts, Li Xiaobai discovered several important pieces of information.

Tomorrow was the Sect competition, and the sect would select ten outstanding disciples through this competition to train in the Holy Demon Sect.

The Holy Demon Sect was a prestigious Great Sect, and it was said that its Sect Leader was a powerful individual who had survived a Heavenly Tribulation. If one could train in a Great Sect, the benefits would certainly be plentiful.

However, he was just a weakling, having allocated all his Attribute Points to defense; if it really came to a fight, he would only be beaten up.

Picking up a small bag of Spirit Stones from the ground, he touched the most commonly used and most basic cultivation resource. The moment his fingers touched the Spirit Stones, the System notification sounded once more.

[Host has obtained Spirit Stones, System Mall is now open.]

[Currency: Ten Lower Grade Spirit Stones.]

Li Xiaobai's face lit up with joy; the mall had actually opened, and the currency for the System Mall was Spirit Stones.

He clicked on the panel to check the items in the mall, which were dazzlingly assorted into four categories: Equipment Items, Mounts, Talismans, and Elixirs.

Unbeknownst to him until he checked, among the mounts were actually Maseratis, Lamborghinis, and even armored vehicles, and to his greater astonishment, even robot Gundam models.

But after a glance at the prices, Li Xiaobai fell into despair. The prices for the mounts were insanely high, easily in the tens of thousands, and they were priced in Upper Grade or even Peerless Spirit Stones.

The cheapest Flying Broom also required a whopping thousand Lower Grade Spirit Stones.

It seemed they were out of his reach for the time being.

[Minor Swift Travel Talisman, Explosive Talisman, Vajra Talisman]: Ten Lower Grade Spirit Stones.

[Refined Waste Poison]: One Lower Grade Spirit Stone.

[Revitalizing Pill, Power Pill]: Ten Lower Grade Spirit Stones.

After scanning the selection, Li Xiaobai realized the only things he could truly afford were a few basic pieces of equipment.

[Somewhat Careful Helmet]: Wearing it slightly enhances defensive power. (Ten Lower Grade Spirit Stones.)

[Bronze Sword]: Using it slightly increases attack power. (Ten Lower Grade Spirit Stones.)

[Bronze Boots]: Wearing them slightly increases speed. (Ten Lower Grade Spirit Stones.)

Without a second thought, he chose the helmet, which perfectly complemented his skill of being 100% likely to get smacked in the face. With it on, he wasn't afraid of getting slapped anymore.

Choose to purchase!

In front of him, starlight twinkled and coalesced into a filthy helmet. It looked rather shabby and rough, indeed quite hasty.

He tapped it, and it was quite hard. Putting it on his head, Li Xiaobai felt his constitution grow much stronger, just as described; the helmet had an amplifying effect on him.

Great, for tomorrow's competition, there was no need to worry about getting slapped in the face.

...

At the same time, at the Immortal Feather Sect, in the grand hall of the sect

Several Elders were arguing fervently.

"Sect Leader, this is absolutely unacceptable. The spots for advanced training in the Holy Demon Sect are extremely precious; how can you allocate four of them directly to Misty Peak? I disagree!"

"I disagree too. By doing this, Sect Leader, where does that leave the True Disciples?"

"Even if you want to favor them, you should follow the rules. In my opinion, at most you give Misty Peak one spot, no more!"

"Right, Feng Lingzi, either your Misty Peak directly appoints a Disciple, or you join the competition fair and square, and let strength speak for itself!"

The many Elders were quite dissatisfied, as all of them had disciples. The Sect Leader actually favored Misty Peak so much that he intended to let four of its disciples directly train in the Holy Demon Sect.

"Well... I have no objections. Actually, the Sect Leader also has good intentions... you should understand."

Feng Lingzi sighed, these Elders really were obfuscating the issue. The Sect Leader's move was actually a disguised reduction of the spots for Misty Peak's disciples to take advanced training. If it really came down to strength, he feared that, except for the newly accepted lad, the rest could make it into the top ten.

"Alright, if that's the case, then everything will be decided by the disciples' strength. But let me make it clear, whatever the outcome, you must accept it, and there must be no troublemaking."

The Sect Leader was also helpless; good intentions misconstrued as ill intentions. But he couldn't really blame these Elders; not many knew of Misty Peak disciples' true strength since they seldom left their peak.

He just hoped that the Elders wouldn't have regrets when the time came...

Chapter 4: Chapter 4 The Competition Begins

On the clear morning of the next day,

Li Xiaobai sat anxiously on his bed, scrutinizing the system panel before his eyes.

[Host: Li Xiaobai.]

[Strength: 0 (+).]

[Speed: 0 (+).]

[Defense: Mortal Flesh (170/1000) eligible for the next stage advancement.]

[Attribute Points: 0]

[Skills: Hatred Hundred Percent, Muscle Flaccidity.]

[Item: Somewhat Careful Helmet]

[Shop: Opened.]

Today was the day of the grand competition; he wasn't sure if his Mortal Flesh realm could withstand it.

He hoped he wouldn't be eliminated in the first round. After all, he was a disciple of Misty Peak; he couldn't afford to lose too much face.

"Knock, knock, knock!"

The door was knocked upon; it was Senior Sister Su Yunbing's voice outside.

"Junior Brother Li, the competition is about to start. Get ready! Today, we of Misty Peak are going to sweep the top ten!"

Li Xiaobai's face turned bitter as he put on the helmet.

Opening the door, he saw six people standing neatly outside, four men and two women, seemingly well-prepared early on.

"Greetings to my senior brothers and sisters." He bowed respectfully.

"What in the world are you wearing on your head? It's so ugly," Su Yunbing said, full of disdain.

"Ah..."

Li Xiaobai was embarrassed; the helmet indeed didn't look very appealing.

"Master is nowhere to be seen today, so as your senior, I'll lead the team. Let's set off immediately to seize the first place in the competition and head to the Holy Demon Sect together. Should anyone cause us to fall behind, don't blame me for turning heartless!"

Today, Su Yunbing was dressed in a fiery red outfit, radiating a murderous vibe.

"Ride on my flying sword. When we're out, we must show off our stature!"

Yang Chen laughed heartily, flicked his wrist, and shot out a small sword. It grew rapidly with the wind, turning into a large sword over ten meters long, floating in the air and darkening the skies.

Li Xiaobai looked on with envy; the mount in the shop seemed similar, but unfortunately, he couldn't afford it yet.

Climbing onto the Immortal Sword, the scenery changed rapidly around him. Looking down at the dense crowd below, Li Xiaobai felt infinitely wistful. It was truly a method of the immortals; someday, he would have to get such a mount for himself.

Compared to his senior brother, traveling on foot seemed quite embarrassing.

...

As they approached the arena, Yang Chen deliberately slowed down the speed of the Immortal Sword, aiming to dampen the disciples' spirit a bit initially.

This manner of making an entrance was even more imposing than that of an Elder.

Seeing the displeased expressions on the Elders' faces, Li Xiaobai's heart skipped beats; his senior brother's actions were practically drawing infinite hatred!

Wouldn't he become a target for vengeance later on?

However, reality proved that his imagination was limited by his own strength. Su Yunbing didn't wait for the Immortal Sword to land and leaped from high in the sky.

"The top seven spots in today's competition are reserved for us of Misty Peak!"

Her voice spread to every corner of the arena, and the disciples heard her loud and clear; their expressions were complex with envy, despondency, and a mix of grudge and anger.

"Heh, the disciples of Misty Peak are quite confident. Young people are indeed full of vitality!"

"The vitality is indeed not bad, but it's a pity that a full bottle of water doesn't make much noise, while it's only the half-filled bottles that sway noisily, heh heh."

"Elder Chen, I heard that your protege Feng Wuxie has recently made another breakthrough?"

"Nothing but a Half-Step Golden Core, not worth mentioning. What about you, Elder Sun, I heard one of your disciples has perfected the Subdue Demon Cudgel Technique?"

"Not worth mentioning, not worth mentioning!"

Witnessing the scene below, the Elders conversed among themselves, unperturbed by Su Yunbing's bold claim.

But their indifference didn't mean the disciples were not affected; Yang Chen and Su Yunbing's grand gestures almost maxed out the hatred from all the disciples present.

Some disciples who were originally at a disadvantage seemed to instantly find a target, their gazes towards the disciples of Misty Peak becoming filled with a newfound fighting spirit.

Li Xiaobai's heart cried out in distress. Damn it, weren't they practically boosting the opponent's combat effectiveness?

All disciples had gathered; the Sect Leader floated over and slowly descended onto the central arena, his aura otherworldly, exuding the demeanor of a true master without a word.

"Damn, the Sect Leader is showing off more than I am," Yang Chen muttered under his breath.

"Dear ones, you are the pillars of our Sect. Today's competition is aimed at selecting talent and encouraging everyone to diligently pursue the path of cultivation. The top ten winners will be granted the opportunity to study at the Holy Demon Sect, and the Sect will tilt resources in their favor. Now, let me explain the rules."

"We have a total of one hundred and eight arenas, divided into eleven groups. Shortly, everyone will draw lots according to the sequence. Those who draw the same number will face each other as opponents. Understood?"

"Understood!"

"Very well, spar and exchange moves, but stop upon contact, and do not injure each other's lives—begin!"

A gigantic raffle box appeared out of nowhere, starting to distribute numbered plaques to the disciples.

Li Xiaobai nervously looked at the number in his hand—group three, arena seventeen, the first match.

This match is kind of early, doesn't that mean it's almost my turn?

"Junior brother, don't be nervous. After you participate, you'll find that the grand competition is actually very simple. You can easily rank in the top ten without feeling too much pressure."

These words were spoken by Fifth Senior Brother Ling Feng, who was usually so cool, and unexpectedly, such a showoff.

"Senior Sister has tampered with those numbered plaques, so none of us brothers are in the same group. You can rest assured."

Sixth Senior Brother Liu Jinshui also said cheerfully. He was a fatty, and they say a fatty has a broad heart and a large frame—this saying truly wasn't wrong at all.

Is that what we're worried about?

We're worried we won't even pass the first round...

Li Xiaobai didn't want to chat with these guys who were not on the same channel as himself anymore; he always felt that they were showing off stealthily.

...

Carrying his numbered plaque, he found arena seventeen. At the moment, disciples were already positioned on the stage, and the referee began to read the safety notices.

Both parties bowed with clasped hands.

"I am Chen Tao, an Inner Sect Disciple, ranked two hundred and seventy-one on the leaderboard. Please advise!"

"I am Li Xiaobai, an Inner Sect Disciple without a ranking. Please advise!"

"Look, the helmet that guy on the stage is wearing is so ugly!"

"I just saw him; he's from Misty Peak!"

"Senior Brother Chen, he's from Misty Peak. Beat the hell out of him!"

"..."

Before anything substantial happened on the stage, the disciples below had already erupted; the remarks made earlier by Su Yunbing had left them losing face.

Misty Peak actually intended to monopolize the top seven, completely disregarding them as disciples, and it was indeed a grievance they couldn't swallow.

"Junior Brother Li, you must be the recently accepted disciple of Misty Peak. While the flattering words were nice, it's unfortunate that you encountered me. Don't worry, I won't make you lose too badly."

Chen Tao laughed lightly, not taking Li Xiaobai seriously at all.

He didn't feel any spiritual energy fluctuations from his opponent, which indicated that the other had not begun cultivating and was probably just here to experience life.

But Li Xiaobai's words choked him.

"Ranked two hundred and twenty-seven?"

"Is such a backward ranking even worthy to contend with me?"

"I would advise Senior Brother not to bite off more than he can chew."

Li Xiaobai maintained a show-off state at all times, only if the opponent got close would he have a chance to take him down.

"Arrogant!"

Enraged, Chen Tao drew the sword strapped to his waist, dancing it through the air.

Sword lights flashed crisscrossing on the stage in an instant. Chen Tao used a Lower Grade Spiritual Artifact, specially prepared for him by his master for the grand competition.

Combined with his sword technique, it could unleash formidable power.

"It's the Xingye Sword Technique, Chen Tao has actually mastered this technique! This was left by the Sword Saint back in the day, rumored to be able to split mountains and part seas when fully mastered!"

The surrounding disciples exclaimed, recognizing Chen Tao's sword technique.

Li Xiaobai watched, completely bewildered. He didn't understand any sword techniques, but a streak of Sword Qi from the stage had just swept over him because he was too close.

[Attribute Points +2.]

+2 Attribute Points? What the hell is this? Is his Sword Qi that weak?

"Hehe, mastering this technique cost me countless efforts, you, can step down now!"

"Xingye Sword Technique, Star Morphing!"

Chen Tao's figure blurred in the center of the ring, disappearing from the stage. Gusts of wind howled as sword marks unfurled across the stage.

"Chen Tao has actually reached this step, the pinnacle movement technique paired with the Xingye Sword, achieving true formlessness and invisibility!"

"And look at the sword marks and footwork on the stage, they match perfectly. Senior Brother Chen can already control the sword technique at will; this level of skill is not far behind Sword and Man as One at all!"

More disciples commented from the sidelines.

Li Xiaobai was still at a loss, what in the world—Sword and Man as One, formlessness and invisibility?

Chen Tao's Sword Qi brushed against him again just now.

[Attribute Points +5.]

There's no pain or itch on my body; is this Sword Qi really that powerful?

Or does this Sword Qi conceal a lethal threat that I have not sensed yet?

Chapter 5: Chapter 5: Senior Brother, Can't You See the Strength Gap?

...

No more hesitations, just start mocking!

Hatred Hundred Percent!

"You rodents, always skulking about, I am a disciple of Misty Peak, a cultivation prodigy that comes once in a thousand years, your sword techniques are trivial matters to me!"

Li Xiaobai said indifferently.

Chen Tao moved too fast, his eyes could not keep up with the opponent's motions, let alone dodge them, so he could only continue mocking to lure the opponent into close combat.

Hopefully the helmet can hold up a bit longer.

"What nonsense, this Li Xiaobai is truly a disciple of Misty Peak, his arrogance is just like they were all cast from the same mold!"

"Too arrogant!"

"Senior Brother Chen, finish him off quickly and let this kid have a taste of reality!"

The audience below was also furious, Li Xiaobai didn't even have a ranking yet he dares to be so presumptuous, it really made people angry.

"Junior brother, you're quite good at talking big, let your senior brother beat you into a cripple first, then we'll see if Misty Peak can still be as insolent!"

Chen Tao's whisper reached his ears, it was clear he was very angry, his mockery was effective.

"Muscle Flaccidity!"

Li Xiaobai's face showed joy, this chance that came knocking at the door must be seized, Chen Tao was right beside him, as long as he could stall for time, victory would be his.

The Sword Qi crisscrossed, sending sparks flying above his head.

His clothing was slashed with sword marks, and strands of blood flitted out, but fortunately his defensive power was sufficient, it was just a superficial wound.

[Attribute Points +5...]

[Attribute Points +5...]

No question about it, just keep adding to defense, the longer he could hold out, the greater his chances of winning became.

"Senior brother, you're weak."

Li Xiaobai simply closed his eyes, since he couldn't see the opponent anyway, it might be better not to look, and this act of closing his eyes was even more mocking than words.

Chen Tao's temples bulged with veins as Sword Qi swept across the arena, densely enveloping Li Xiaobai.

But soon, he realized something was amiss; his body's strength was rapidly draining away. His Dantian was still filled with Spiritual Energy, but he felt like he was about to collapse.

Suppressing the anger in his heart, he quickly distanced himself, retreating explosively to the other side of the arena, his eyes wide and vigilant as if facing a great enemy.

The audience below was confused; just moments ago the situation was greatly in his favor, so why did Chen Tao suddenly withdraw from the fight?

"What's going on? Why did Chen Tao retreat, did anyone understand what happened?"

"That commentator just now, come out and explain!"

"Hehe, didn't you understand? In this fight, Senior Brother Chen has already won. The disciple from Misty Peak is all show with no substance, utterly defenseless against Senior Brother Chen's sword technique. Senior Brother Chen is kind-hearted, he wants to teach him that there are always people better than oneself, and one should not be too arrogant."

"After cultivating for so many years, can't you even see the gap in their strength?"

"So that's it, you see how relaxed Senior Brother Chen looks, indeed it so!"

"Senior Brother Chen is mighty!"

After a brief silence, the disciples below once again cheered in unison. They never thought Chen Tao, who was modest in appearance, would have such a good character; truly an outstanding disciple among the younger generation.

But Chen Tao had no interest in the thoughts of the crowd below; at this moment, he was sweating profusely, his calves were cramping, and his limbs were weak.

If he had not retreated from the fight in time, he probably would have fallen by now.

Damn, what kind of sinister Cultivation Technique is this that even brief contact can weaken him so drastically, and also inexplicably enrage him; could it be poison?

The Sect didn't shy away from using poison, but because they typically prided themselves on being righteous, they looked down on the use of poison. This disciple from Misty Peak was actually so treacherous.

"Kid, nice moves, if I hadn't noticed your tricks in time, I might have really fallen into your hands."

Chen Tao's face was somewhat fierce.

Li Xiaobai's expression remained calm, though he was somewhat nervous inside.

The other party had actually moved away on his own and hadn't completely lost his ability to resist.

He had to find a way to cause continuous damage with Muscle Flaccidity, it was still necessary to keep mocking.

"Senior Brother Chen, your strength is mediocre, you're no match for me, step down."

...

"The disciples of Misty Peak are invincible. I didn't want you to lose too badly, which is why I haven't made a move. Can Senior Brother not see the gap in our strength?"

Li Xiaobai stood with his hands behind his back, looking up at the sky at a forty-five-degree angle, speaking indifferently.

As soon as these words came out, the arena fell silent for a moment before the disciples below erupted into a cacophony of curses.

"Damn it, that's just shameless. You can't even touch the hem of his garment, yet you dare to spout such nonsense!"

"Naive child, Senior Brother Chen, quickly take him down! Such a person isn't worth your mercy!"

"Misty Peak is full of arrogant fools!"

"Knock him off the stage!"

Chen Tao's face darkened, his heart ablaze with anger.

In his view, Li Xiaobai's Muscle Flaccidity was a kind of poison. Through these despicable tricks, he had taken some small advantages and had become delusional.

He had a bottle of Detoxification Pill, obtained during his early travels, refined by an Elixir Master. He had no opportunity to use it until now.

He tilted his head back and swallowed two Detoxification Pills. This elixir could cure all strange poisons; a mundane poison pill that merely caused weakness was nothing at all.

"Arrogant fool, you are ignorant of the immensity of heaven and earth. Xingye Sword Technique, Star Morphing!"

Chen Tao's stance firmed as he forcibly circulated the spiritual energy within his body; his figure suddenly vanished from the stage.

In the blink of an eye, the sword qi turned into a giant net that slowly enshrouded Li Xiaobai.

Feeling the tightening sword net closing in, Li Xiaobai's heart filled with joy. Once again, he activated Muscle Flaccidity, and the attribute values on his system interface oscillated continuously.

Although Chen Tao's attacks only added five attribute points each time, the advantage lay in the speed of his attacks and the numerous quantities of sword qi.

In just a short time, the attribute points easily broke a hundred.

He added them all to his defense, making Chen Tao's sword qi incapable of harming him in the slightest.

[Ding! Skill Comprehended: Sword Qi.]

[Ding! Continuous damage detected, Sword Qi upgraded: Rainbow Penetrating Sword.]

Rainbow Penetrating Sword: Unsheath the sword, and strike down your opponent with invisible sword Qi.

At the same time, the fluctuation of the attribute points on the system interface grew smaller, clearly showing that Muscle Flaccidity was taking effect, and Chen Tao was exhausted.

[Attribute Points +1...]

Chen Tao's figure reappeared, his body in a state of extreme weakness.

With a clang, the longsword dropped from his hand, and he collapsed to the ground, sprawled out.

From beginning to end, he couldn't understand how Li Xiaobai had defeated him. He was clueless about the poison technique his opponent had used and when it was deployed—it was too mysterious.

"Senior Brother Chen, I told you that you were no match for me, yet you wouldn't believe it."

Li Xiaobai, nonchalant as ever, picked up Chen Tao and threw him off the ring.

"This round, Li Xiaobai wins!"

Below the stage, there was dead silence; no cheers or applause, everyone was petrified, their mouths agape in disbelief.

What had happened on the stage exceeded their comprehension. If it weren't for the referees watching over the match on the stage, they would have suspected they were watching a play.

The defeat had come too suddenly, without the slightest warning.

At that moment, Chen Tao's eyes were devoid of spirit, carried away by people, his body limp to the point of severity, and without a few days of recuperation, he wouldn't recover.

"Hehe, thank you all for coming. I am Li Xiaobai of Misty Peak, and I speak for myself."

Li Xiaobai, cheerful as could be, walked through the crowd. Having won the first round of the competition, he felt prestigious, at least having made it through one round without disgracing Misty Peak.

System interface:

[Defense: Mortal Flesh (325/1000) Upgradeable.]

[Skill: Sword Qi Mastery.]

Having comprehended another skill, Li Xiaobai's mood was buoyant, ready to meet up with the senior sisters.

Suddenly, someone patted him on the shoulder. Turning back, he saw it was Lin Feng, the Inner Sect Disciple who had caused trouble before.

"Junior Brother, quite cocky, aren't we?"

"Senior Brother, what guidance do you have to offer?"