

Myriad 231

Chapter 231: It's Good To Be Prudent (2)

"Yunhui, since you've said all that, I'll be frank as well." Liu Hong solemnly said, "Firstly, you need to know that your Zheng Family can't take this data out of the academy unless you want to get into a war with the academy."

Zheng Yunhui said nothing.

"Secondly, the Myriad Race Cult can't get it. Otherwise, both you and Su Yu would need to die to atone for the crime. Thirdly, in the academy, only two factions can get the data without suffering too much of a trouble. The principal and us."

Liu Hong smiled, "The principal will naturally be fine with the data. As for us, we have already been their enemies for so many years. One more conflict won't mean much to us. Also, Hong Tan can't even blame us since the data has been leaked by his own people."

Liu Hong's smile grew wider, "In truth, you only have one choice. If you choose the principal, I'm afraid you won't get anything."

Zheng Yunhui frowned, "You're right. But you're not the only person in the single character faction."

"Yes. But if we don't offer you a good price or refuse to buy it, you can only keep the data for yourself. If you dare to sell it to someone who shouldn't get the data, we will expose you."

Zheng Yunhui was getting upset, "Are you trying to reduce the price? Dream on!"

Suddenly, he seemed to have thought of something. He immediately changed his mind, "Fuck off. I'm not selling anymore. I'll sell it to the Xia Family. I'll sell it to Marquis Xia. He is a businessman. And with the Xia Trade Company around, there is no need for me to deal with you guys."

The more Zheng Yunhui spoke, the more excited he became, "Yes. I'll be selling it to the Xia Family. Feel free to expose them. Do you think Great Xia belongs to you guys?"

Liu Hong was feeling very helpless. He had not forgotten about the Xia Family. He had merely been selectively ignoring their existence. Unfortunately for him, Zheng Yunhui was really smarter than he thought.

He could only say, "Sure. Even with the Xia Family around, I want to ask you something. Are you sure you can get the data? From your words, you are probably having a bet with Su Yu. What if you lose? You will pay a high price for that, right?"

"Me? Losing?" Zheng Yunhui was amused, "Yes. Su Yu isn't weak. I'm sure he has already entered the fourth-stage Great Strength Realm. And he might have even formed four Divine Characters. But so what?"

Liu Hong smiled, "That might not be the extent of what he's capable of. Yunhui, is the price of losing something you can even afford? Also, if you refuse to sell to me, I can always spoil the match. You won't be able to get anything."

"Are you threatening me?"

"No. I'm only telling the truth." Liu Hong smiled, "Sell it to me and I'll give you a price you're happy with. I can also help you win so you won't end up losing. You will come to thank me."

"How much are you offering?"

"5,000 merit points."

"Fuck off."

Zheng Yunhui cursed at Liu Hong. Was Liu Hong taking him for a fool? 5,000 merit points? Dream on!

Liu Hong smiled, "That's already a very good price. Yunhui, you won't be able to digest a higher price."

"Keep dreaming."

"I'll add a Mountainsea willpower text on top of that."

"No."

"Give me a new price, then. 50,000 merit points are too expensive."

Zheng Yunhui coldly said, "Even if you can't pay 50,000 merit points, I won't accept anything lower than 40,000 merit points. Otherwise, I would rather not sell it. Feel free to fuck off if you can't afford it. Do you think our Zheng Family is so desperate for money? You guys are the ones desperate for the data."

"That's too expensive. I'll offer 20,000 merit points." Liu Hong took a deep breath and said, "That is already a very good price. Also, the data might also be incomplete. If it's too expensive, nobody would be willing to buy it. Remember, this is a black market transaction. Not a sanctioned transaction. Even if you try to set an auction for it, nobody would dare to buy it. And in the academy's black market, who can give you a better price?"

"20,000..." Zheng Yunhui sank into thought. After a while, he said, "Can you take out so many merit points at once?"

"Yes."

Zheng Yunhui was astonished. Was this guy so rich?

Liu Hong smiled, "I'll report this to my higher ups. The money won't come out of my own pockets. I'm not that rich."

"This is a big transaction. I won't get raided in the midst of transacting, right?" Zheng Yunhui clenched his teeth, "I don't trust you."

In other words, he had agreed to the price of 20,000 merit points.

"That won't happen." Liu Hong hurriedly said, "This time, we won't be transacting in merit points. The volume is too high so we could get discovered easily. We will be using source qi liquid. The source qi liquid will be valued at the market price of four merit points per drop..."

"Bullshit!" Zheng Yunhui spoke frankly, "The academy's official price is five merit points per drop. The Xia Trade Company has a price of 100,000 dollars per drop. As for the black market, the standard value is generally three merit points. Do you think I'm completely clueless?"

The Xia Trade Company's price was quite cheap, but one would be subjected to the limitations of total earned merit when buying from them.

"If you can offer 7,000 drops, I won't object."

"..."

Liu Hong laughed, "That's still overpriced, right?"

"You can buy or you can piss off."

Liu Hong suggested, "How about this? 6,000 drops and 2,000 merit points. That way, we won't catch anyone's attention easily."

2,000 merit points were still a lot, but that was a reasonable number. As long as they weren't caught in the act, it should be fine.

"I guess that's acceptable..." Zheng Yunhui nodded, "You said earlier that I might not be Su Yu's match. What do you mean?"

"He's already at the fifth-stage Great Strength Realm." Liu Hong was straightforward, "That's why I'm telling you that you might not win. I suspect that he might even be able to reach the sixth-stage by the time the match arrives. When I saw him this morning, he already had 63 acupoints."

"What?"

This time, Zheng Yunhui was truly shocked. That many acupoints? How was Su Yu growing so fast?

"Now you understand why I said that you might not necessarily win?"

Zheng Yunhui's expression changed as he said, "How is he growing so fast?"

"I can't believe it either, but that is the truth. Yunhui, are you still as confident?"

"..."

Zheng Yunhui did not say anything. A deep frown formed on his face.

Liu Hong smiled, "Therefore, you need my help if you want to guarantee my win. You can get 20,000 merit points easily with my deal. Otherwise, you might lose and end up paying a price you can't afford. Life would be difficult for you if that happens."

"Your help?" Zheng Yunhui asked in astonishment, "How are you going to help? Are you going to sneak attack him for me?"

"I can't do that." Liu Hong shook his head, "If I do that and someone finds out, all our plans would be ruined. Su Yu isn't stupid either. If he suspects foul play and decides to renege on the debt, there won't be anything you can do."

"What can you do, then?" Zheng Yunhui said, "If he doesn't have the Infinite Strength blood essence abilities, I won't be scared of his sixth-stage cultivation level. But with the blood essence as his trump card, I might tire myself too much dealing with his blood essence ability. Even if I can outlast the duration of the blood essence, I might not have enough energy to win the match."

His frown grew deeper as he said, "I can't lose. If I lose, I would be in deep trouble. If I have no choice, I should just give up. Damn it. That fellow has actually hidden so much of his strength. I thought he's only in the fourth-stage."

He had truly not expected that Su Yu was already near the sixth-stage. That was too fast.

"Don't worry." Liu Hong smiled, "Defeating him isn't that hard. You're already at the seventh-stage. You're near the eighth-stage. I can see that you're only four acupoints away. I have an Acupoint Adjuration Technique. With this technique, you can open a few temporary acupoints during combat without suffering many side effects. Are you interested?"

"No!" Zheng Yunhui rolled his eyes, "The war academy has plenty of such techniques. My family has some as well. The side effects are quite serious. They will slow my growth. Do you think I'm an ignorant fool like Su Yu?"

Zheng Yunhui's eyes flickered as he said, "Why don't you get a heavenly source fruit for me instead? That is a heavenly treasure when it comes to opening acupoints. I can easily open four acupoints with one such fruit."

Liu Hong cursed inwardly. What a big appetite. What was the heavenly source fruit?

Even Su Yu knew that fruit. That was the same fruit used by the current prefect of Great Zhou, Zhou Potian in the past. With the fruit, he opened nine acupoints in three days and advanced straight into the Great Strength Realm.

Su Yu had read about that incident during his time in Nanyuan. The heavenly source fruits were only produced in some powerful and unique locations. In truth, using this fruit to open acupoints during the Great Strength Realm was a waste. It was better to use it during the Source Opening Realm and save the long period of time one would waste in the first realm.

As for those in the Great Strength Realm, they could cultivate using blood essence or active source qi absorption, both options that were unavailable for Source Opening cultivators.

"I don't have anything like that. I can probably try to look for some earthly source fruit instead..."

Liu Hong smiled, "Why don't you buy some? You can probably open one or two acupoints with one. So you only need two."

"They're too expensive."

"They're not that bad. The earthly source fruit is also more suitable for those in the Great Strength Realm. You only need 500 merit points for one..."

Zheng Yunhui rolled his eyes, "You call that not bad? I only need a few days to open one or two acupoints. At most, I'll spend a week or even half a month. Why do I need to pay 500 merit points to do it?"

"Because you need it now." Liu Hong smiled, "You only need 1,000 merit points for two. Don't forget, you can get 20,000 if you win. If you lose, you still need to pay a high price. How can you reap a profit without any investment?"

Chapter 232: It's Good To Be Prudent (3)

"Fine. You can give me two as a down payment." Zheng Yunhui did not hesitate to make his demand.

"I've agreed to your price, but don't even think that I won't accept a down payment for it. After all, how am I supposed to be sure that you aren't trying to play any tricks? Give me two earthly source fruits as the down payment. That way, even if you set me up, I still won't end up empty handed."

Liu Hong was somewhat speechless. Kids nowadays were truly too cautious.

Zheng Yunhui continued, "Oh, I almost forgot. You better give me a talisman with the attack power of a third-stage Infinite Strength cultivator. While you're at it, I need a defensive talisman as well. That is the only way to guarantee my victory. In short, you need to pay 2,000 merit points as the down payment and 6,000 drops of source qi liquid to complete the transaction."

Zheng Yunhui was running his own scheme as well. With the down payment, even if they were found out, he would still be able to profit slightly. As for what would happen to Su Yu, well, that was none of his business.

He had to first get some benefits for himself. Even though Liu Hong had not mentioned the matter of down payment, Zheng Yunhui insisted.

"What if you lose?" Liu Hong raised his brow, "Wouldn't I make a loss if you end up losing?"

"Losing?" Zheng Yunhui rolled his eyes, "If I can lose even in such a situation, I might as well kill myself. How about this? If I lose...I'll give you a drop of divine blood essence. At that point, it no longer matters since I'm screwed anyway."

Liu Hong was overjoyed. This was what he had been waiting for! That way, even if Zheng Yunhui ended up losing the fight, he would still make a profit. And if Zheng Yunhui won, he would make an even bigger profit. As for the price of the data, sure, he wasn't rich enough to afford it, but someone else was!

"Deal!" Liu Hong said, "I'll get your stuff tomorrow. By the way, when are you fighting? And where are you fighting? You need to tell me everything. I'll be observing in secret to prevent Su Yu from playing any dirty tricks."

"No problem." Zheng Yunhui readily agreed. He had a wide smile on his face. Profit was already guaranteed for him.

He would earn at least 2,000 merit points from this racket. He had earned back everything he had spent to order the Skybreak Technique.

...

Zheng Yunhui left in excitement.

Meanwhile, Liu Hong stayed where he was, deep in thought. That kid had agreed too easily. In truth, 20,000 merit points really weren't much compared to what he could potentially get.

If the transaction succeeded, he could earn much more regardless of who he sold the data to. Even the single character faction would be willing to pay him 50,000 merit points for it. On top of that, Elder Zheng would even praise him for his contribution. He would earn both wealth and reputation!

"Is there anything wrong with this?"

He contemplated. Nothing should be wrong, right? He started thinking about everything he knew. A conflict had erupted between the two kids. They agreed on a private match with divine blood essence and research data as their bets. Everything sounded logical.

Nothing seemed to be wrong...except the fact that Bai Feng had suddenly entered seclusion. Additionally, the two kids had conversed while he was passing by. And Zheng Yunhui had agreed too easily.

Liu Hong raised his brow. Yes. Zheng Yunhui had been too agreeable. Wasn't Zheng Yunhui trying to approach Zhou Pingsheng's student? Was Zheng Yunhui not going to ask Zhou Pingsheng first? Why did it feel like...Zheng Yunhui was basically waiting for him?

"Are all these coincidences...and I'm thinking too much?"

He was going to pay a large sum of money for this transaction. If something was wrong with it, he would be totally screwed.

"These kids...aren't working together to scam me, right?"

Liu Hong laughed at that thought. But immediately after, his face stiffened. Why wouldn't they dare to do so? Didn't he scheme a Skysoar to death back when he was still at the Mental Tempering Stage?

That was a long time ago. Back then, he had taken a big risk in order to break through into the Skysoar Realm. By himself, he acted ignorant and joined a branch of the Myriad Race Cult. Ultimately, he schemed everyone in the branch to death before earning enough resources for his breakthrough.

If he dared to do something so dangerous, why couldn't the others do the same? Even Wu Qi had braved danger and entered the Allheaven Battlefield in order to break through into the Skysoar Realm.

Was there anything a genius wouldn't dare to do? Even Bai Feng had also broken through after suffering countless dangers and difficulties.

"It's not very likely, right?"

Liu Hong still doubted that the two kids would be so gutsy this early in their cultivation.

He patted his own head and laughed, "Well, this is easy to solve. I only need to give it a test. Su Yu...that kid has a very villainous smile. He is a scumbag through and through. I can't risk this. Who should I look for? I can't use my own people for this. Right...that fatty! Yes, I'll use him!"

Liu Hong smiled. He had to perform his due diligence. After all, a large sum of merit points was involved. He could never be too careful.

...

16th of September.

Everything was calm.

Just like in the past, Su Yu arrived early at class and left late. Right after he left the classroom, Xia Huyou appeared and dragged him downstairs.

After running about for a bit, they arrived somewhere empty. Xia Huyou hurriedly asked, "Su Yu, are you going to do a big job soon?"

"Don't lie to me! I heard rumors!" Xia Huyou whispered, "Zheng Yunhui has suddenly bought some earthly source fruits and talismans from the black market. Are you going to carry out your scheme

against him? That fellow is truly generous. He spent 2,000 merit points without any hesitation whatsoever."

"Hmm?" Su Yu blanked out. "How much?"

"2,000 merit points. If it wasn't for my wide network, I wouldn't have learned that Zheng Yunhui was the one who had made the big purchase. We're friends. And I've given you this information for free. Have you agreed to fight him? Don't lie to me. There is no reason for him to purchase earthly source fruits right now. He's not a fool."

After all, Zheng Yunhui was spending 500 merit points just for one or two extra acupoints. Only an idiot would do something like that for no reason. Sure, there was a chance that Zheng Yunhui was simply too rich or was trying to break through a bottleneck.

Su Yu could be considered to be very extravagant spending 50 merit points per acupoint. But Zheng Yunhui was now spending 500 merit points for one or two acupoints. Generally, people would only use something like the earthly source fruit when encountering a bottleneck.

"2,000 merit points...Liu Hong..."

Su Yu cursed inwardly. Had Zheng Yunhui scammed some money from Liu Hong without telling him? How would that fellow be so rich otherwise?

"Su Yu, are you doing a big job?" Xia Huyou asked, "If you're really doing it, I suggest you give up. He might be able to break through into the eighth-stage. And with some talismans in hand, he will be incredibly strong. You won't win. Even if you're at the seventh-stage instead of the third-stage, you still might lose."

Su Yu wasn't too worried. He wasn't prepared to win anyway. The only thing in his mind was the possibility of Zheng Yunhui scamming something extra in advance without sharing!

"Ok. Got it. I'm not doing anything. Don't talk drivell."

"Su Yu..."

"I'm really not doing anything. I need to go. I still need to cultivate. Bye."

"Really? If you're really doing something, you must let me know!" "Yeah, yeah."

"..."

Xia Huyou was suspicious. Was Su Yu really not doing anything? In truth, he really didn't look like he was up to something. In that case, why had Zheng Yunhui bought all those things suddenly? Was he preparing to challenge the Top 100 Ranking?

Xia Huyou shook his head, "I thought it was related to Su Yu. So it isn't?"

...

At the top of the lecture block.

Liu Hong was observing the departing Su Yu. He could never be too cautious. Even if he had to take the risk of alerting the two kids, it was worth it.

After learning about Zheng Yunhui's purchases, the logical action for Su Yu was to cancel the match. But if he continued, what was the source of his confidence? How could he defeat an eighth-stage Zheng Yunhui equipped with talismans?

Not even his sixth-stage cultivation would give him that much strength. After all, Zheng Yunhui would truly possess the strength of the top 100 after digesting everything he had obtained through those purchases.

"If Su Yu proceeds with the match without an increase in strength, then this is definitely a plot. But if Su Yu tries delaying the match, then the match would be more believable. He needs to at least reach the seventh-stage. How would he dare to take this risk without any confidence?"

Liu Hong was willing to wait. He was in no rush. Since Su Yu and Zheng Yunhui were both trying to win what the other had to offer, it was only a matter of time before they held the match.

Su Yu would be stupid to go on with the original match after learning about Zheng Yunhui's increase in strength without a corresponding increase in his own strength. Was Su Yu stupid?

"I suppose I'll wait and see what happens next."

Liu Hong smiled. All he needed to do now was to wait for Zheng Yunhui to contact him. As long as Su Yu agreed to the match before reaching the seventh-stage, Liu Hong would be certain that this was a ploy against him.

"Interesting...but I have far more experience with this. Kids, you guys are still too young."

This was but a simple test. He didn't even need to pay any price for it. At worst, he would have to wait longer for the plan to go through. With 20,000 merit points on the line, the test was necessary.

If the two kids could really wait for a month or two for Su Yu to reach the seventh-stage before carrying out the plan to scam him, then he would gladly accept his defeat. After all, everything had been too believable.

As Liu Hong thought to himself, his figure slowly vanished. At the thought of this being a scheme against him and the chance of it succeeding, he suddenly wondered if he should really let it happen.

If this was a scheme and it was good enough to almost fool even someone like him, what if it was used on someone else?

"How very interesting. This would be even more interesting if it's a scheme. And if this is really a scheme...I might even be able to get a split of the profit too."

His gaze landed on the distant books depository. Hehe...perhaps...it would be even better for him if this was actually a scheme.

Chapter 233: Teacher, Hammer Me! (1)

Mental Tempering Garden. Behind a rock garden.

Su Yu stared silently at Zheng Yunhui. Meanwhile, Zheng Yunhui was completely composed.

"You swindled something from Liu Hong?"

"Nope."

Zheng Yunhui denied.

"Do you think I'll trust that?" Su Yu rolled his eyes. "Tell me. How much did you ask from him?"

"10,000 merit points. I told you already," said Zheng Yunhui. "Do you think that's a small amount? Do you know what you can do with that much money? It is enough to have a bunch of Cloudbreach cultivators assassinated."

Su Yu sighed, "10,000 merit points? If I believe that, then I'd be the biggest fool in the world."

"Believe whatever you want."

Su Yu didn't bother to argue. He said, "It doesn't matter how much you ask from him. Both my teacher and I will get 8,000 merit points from the deal. This is fair, right?"

"You're calling that fair?" Zheng Yunhui furiously said, "If we do that, I won't even get what I paid for the Skybreak Technique back..."

Su Yu said nothing and stared at Zheng Yunhui. This fellow should know when to stop. Did Zheng Yunhui really take him for a fool? The only reason he was working with this fellow was because he couldn't personally deal with Liu Hong. He needed a face for the scam.

Su Yu didn't know how much money this fellow had kept for himself, but it definitely wasn't a small amount.

After a while, Zheng Yunhui coughed awkwardly and said, "That's too much. How about 7,000 merit points?"

"Forget it. Let's cancel the plan..." Su Yu stood up to walk away.

Zheng Yunhui was getting anxious. He hurriedly said, "No, no. Fine. 8,000 it is..."

"9,000 merit points!"

"?" Zheng Yunhui was getting agitated, "Su Yu! That's too much!"

"You agreed too easily." Su Yu rolled his eyes, "You agreed without any hesitation. You have definitely kept more than half of the actual amount. I have probably only asked for a small portion of what you have asked for."

"I..." Zheng Yunhui was speechless. After a long while, he said, "If you increase the price again, then we really have to cancel the plan. Fine. We'll do 9,000. If you continue asking for more, forget it."

"Deal." Su Yu said, "Is Liu Hong suspicious?"

"I don't think so?" Zheng Yunhui was uncertain. "If he's suspicious, why would he be giving me stuff..."

Su Yu's eyes turned sharp.

Zheng Yunhui coughed and said, "Don't worry about it. I'm referring to the down payment. It's part of the total sum we're going to be splitting. He gave me the stuff this morning..."

He then eyed Su Yu curiously, "How surprising. I did not expect you to be hiding so much of your strength. You're already at the fifth-stage. How long would you take to reach the sixth-stage?"

"Not anytime soon."

Su Yu was unwilling to say much. Zheng Yunhui merely smiled. He did not ask too much. But inwardly, he was starting to take Su Yu more seriously.

He had thought that Su Yu had relied on luck to defeat Chen Qi. But it was very likely that this fellow had been hiding his strength even back then.

"How about challenging the top 100 together next month after scamming Liu Hong?"

"That's too early for me."

Su Yu shook his head. He wouldn't touch the Top 100 Ranking before reaching the seventh-stage. Perhaps he needed to wait until he was at the ninth-stage. He would either stay out of it completely or join in once he had absolute strength to crush all those bastards, including Huang Qisheng.

"Fine. But I've decided to challenge it next month."

Zheng Yunhui turned solemn as he said, "It feels like I'm not the only one releasing rumors in the black market. Have you been spreading rumors as well?"

Su Yu calmly said, "Nope. By the way, if someone else offers a higher price, feel free to deal with that person. We'll get the money in hand before deciding what to do next."

"..."

Zheng Yunhui frowned, "What are you trying to do?"

"I'm trying to make money." Su Yu did not think much before answering, "It's a scam anyway. It doesn't matter who we sell to. It would be even better if you can conclude the deal right after the fight. We can't delay. If we delay, the academy might get wind of it and more and more people will find out. If that happens, we won't be able to continue with our scam."

"I understand." Zheng Yunhui thought for a bit and said, "Let's do it four days from now. We'll find a place to fight on the 20th. Also, you are too treacherous. I need to be careful about you as well lest you really end up winning. I will fight with all my strength."

Su Yu indifferently said, "I'll be fighting with all my strength as well. There's nothing I can do if you lose. You already know all my trump cards. You have a large advantage over me. Don't expect me to hold back in that situation. Since Liu Hong will be around to observe the match, there might be some other people as well. Do you think that we can hold back without exposing ourselves with our strength? Do you think those people are fools?"

Zheng Yunhui's face turned even more solemn. It was supposed to only be an act. But when he heard Su Yu's words, he knew he had to take the fight seriously.

It was no longer just an act. He was a genius. A freak. Someone beyond all his peers. Su Yu was not yet considered someone at his level. A defeat in the hands of someone like that would be too bitter a pill to swallow.

"Su Yu, in that case, during the day of the fight, forget everything and fight with everything we have. I don't need you to hold back. If you win, so be it."

Zheng Yunhui stood up, his presence soaring as he said, "Frankly, it's only tens of thousands of merit points. That is nothing compared to my faith in my own strength. That should be the case for you. Don't forget the reason you start cultivating for some money. Our goal, first and foremost, is strength."

"We should be the strongest among our peers. We should also be strong enough to stand against those above our level." Zheng Yunhui solemnly said, "Four days later, I will use all my strength. I won't hold anything back."

"I'll do the same."

Su Yu replied.

"Only tens of thousands of merit points..." Su Yu sighed and said, "You exposed yourself. Next time, be sure to not contradict yourself when lying."

"..."

Zheng Yunhui's imposing presence instantly dropped due to awkwardness.

Su Yu couldn't even be bothered to say anything else. He left directly.

Behind him, Zheng Yunhui explained, "Hey, it's really not that much! Don't be so petty. Fine, I'll deduct the cost of the Skybreak Technique and split the rest with you."

"Do whatever you want."

Su Yu replied and left.

...

Back at the research center, Su Yu released a long breath.

Strength!

In the coming fight against Zheng Yunhui, he wanted to test his own strength. He wanted to see if he could really stand his ground against a freak of this generation. As for his Infinite Strength blood essence, he did not intend to use it at the beginning.

"Zheng Yunhui might be able to enter the eighth-stage. I won't be his match..."

His cultivation level was lower. To win, he had to rely on Divine Characters and martial techniques.

His opponent was a freak. Someone surpassing those with the same cultivation level. Just how could Su Yu defeat an opponent like that?

"I also can't forget about my cultural weapon...If the blood character can really advance into the next tier, then I'll have a true trump card."

Su Yu did not know how strong second tier Divine Characters were. He only knew that it would be even stronger than his kill character after the advancement.

"Four days. I have 63 acupoints opened. I still need 9 acupoints to reach the sixth-stage..."

Without reaching the sixth-stage, how was he supposed to put up a fight against Zheng Yunhui?

"It's a pity I can't enter the Source Qi Secret Grotto again."

He lacked merit points. It wasn't worth it to enter the grotto right now. He previously had 246 merit points left. Recently, he had spent 66 merit points to buy some Infinite Strength iron-winged bird blood essence. He only had 180 merit points left. He was spending money like water.

If he went to the grotto with his remaining merit points, he would only have 80 merit points left. That was not worth it since he didn't have other resources he could use in the grotto.

"180 merit points. I should leave some for my cultivation. I'll use the rest to strengthen my cultural weapon."

He suddenly thought of Zhao Li. It was time to pay the Weaponsmithing Faculty another visit. His cultural weapon was only a mold. It was not yet a truly powerful weapon. With a wave of his hand, a

tiny black saber flew out of the blood essence pool. The shiny saber flew straight into his sea of willpower.

...

Zhao Li had told Su Yu to attend classes at his place on the 8th of every month. But Su Yu had been too busy recently. He couldn't find any free time to visit.

This was his second visit to Zhao Li's research center, and he found the place was cold and cheerless. Previously, there were a decent number of people here to observe Zhao Li's weapon forging. This time, there was nobody around.

The door was shut.

Su Yu knocked on the door. After a while, a sloppy Zhao Li walked out. When he saw Su Yu, he sized Su Yu up before saying, "It's not the 8th today. Why are you here?"

"Teacher, I'm here to strengthen my cultural weapon."

"Strengthen your weapon?" Zhao Li frowned, "What's the rush? You haven't even confirmed your main Divine Character. Why are you strengthening your weapon so early? After strengthening it with wrong abilities, it will be very hard to remove them."

While speaking, Zhao Li walked back into the research center. Su Yu followed him into the building. After walking through the door, he wasn't greeted by an enclosed corridor like the Wentan Research Center. Instead, a large courtyard greeted him.

Only after entering the building at the other side of the courtyard would he reach Zhao Li's research center proper. With the courtyard around, Old Zhao's research center looked a lot more warm compared to the Wentan Research Center.

But it did not look like anyone had been taking care of the courtyard, so it looked rather bland.

"Have you been attending the weaponsmithing classes?"

"Some of them..." Su Yu answered awkwardly, "I have been busy with cultivation recently. And I was appointed the class monitor of the senior class, so I don't have a lot of free time. Therefore..."

"You don't need to explain yourself."

Zhao Li walked into the building. Instead of heading to the room Su Yu had been to previously, he stopped in the living area and sat down.

"Tea?"

"It's ok. Teacher, let me brew you a fresh pot..."

Su Yu hurriedly stepped forth and started helping brew a new pot of tea.

Zhao Li did not stop Su Yu and sat down with exhaustion on the couch. After letting out a long breath, he said, "Have you formed your character technique?"

"Yes. It's a saber."

"How many initial Divine Characters?"

Su Yu stiffened slightly before answering, "A lot."

"How many?"

Zhao Li was somewhat surprised. He said, "More than 20?"

"Yeah..."

Zhao Li gripped his armrest tightly. With an odd look in his eyes, he said, "Are your seniors in your faction aware of this?"

"They think I only need 18 Divine Characters."

That was an interesting answer.

"Why didn't you tell me the same thing?"

"Because I need your help to strengthen my cultural weapon. I need to tell you the abilities of my Divine Characters. I might even need more help from you in the future. I want my cultural weapon to have a higher compatibility with me."

"How many Divine Characters do you have now?"

"Four. All human characters. Blood, lightning, kill, battle..."

"Oh?" Zhao Li was astonished, "Just from the literal meaning of those characters, they are probably offensive characters. Did you pick those deliberately or is this a coincidence?" "Coincidence."

"That makes things even more interesting. You have a natural affinity with the offensive path, then. Even your character technique is a saber."

After a short gasp of admiration, Zhao Li said, "Tell me about their abilities."

"Blood absorption, illusion, lightning, killing intent, and battle intent."

"Good abilities." Zhao Li praised, "Battle and killing intents might sound useless, but these two are very important for those walking the path of offense. They will grant you the courage to fight, to battle, and to kill. As someone who has killed before, you should know the importance of morale. It isn't an

exaggeration to say that morale plays a large part in combat. With a thicker killing intent, you can even weaken your opponent."

After thinking for a bit, he asked, "What's the level of your willpower right now?"

"55 percent."

Yes. Su Yu had reached 55 percent willpower. He had reached the Mental Tempering Stage during the monthly examination. Half a month had passed but he had only grown by 5 percent.

His growth speed had slowed down considerably. That was because he had been mainly focused on opening acupoints recently. Of course, this was still a very fast speed for most people, it was only slow for him.

He would need three or four days to increase his willpower by one percent. Even after spending an entire month, he wouldn't be able to gain more than ten percent. And his cultivation would only grow slower the higher it was. With this speed, he might need a year to reach 99 percent.

"That's pretty good."

Zhao Li thought that Su Yu was growing quite fast. Or too fast, to be precise.

"Generally, below the Skysoar Realm, you can nurture an additional Divine Character with every 10 percent willpower you gained. In other words, 10 Divine Characters is the limit for most people below the Skysoar Realm. Of course, some people are very talented or lucky enough to gain some treasures. These people might be able to nurture more characters. As for your character technique, it needs 20 initial Divine Characters..."

Zhao Li suddenly had an amused look as he said, "Kid, I think you will never ever reach the Skysoar Realm."

Su Yu had an embarrassed expression. He didn't know what to say.

Zhao Li wasted no time. He stood up and said, "We'll drink the tea later. Come on. Let's work on your cultural weapon. You'll be my assistant for this."

"But Teacher, I don't know anything."

"It's easy. Just control your willpower and attach your Divine Characters onto the weapon. You still can't materialize your characters, but you can project their impression to the weapon. That way, I can get a clearer look at your abilities and strengthen your weapon in a direction that is suitable for you."

"I understand. Thank you, Teacher!"

Su Yu was overjoyed. He was finally going to strengthen his cultural weapon.

Chapter 234: Teacher, Hammer Me! (2)

After about 10 minutes, the two arrived at the hall Su Yu had visited previously. The room was messy, with numerous materials thrown all over the place.

Zhao Li did not even spare the materials a glance as he said, "Take your weapon out."

Su Yu released his cultural weapon. The weapon hovered in the air.

With a look at the weapon, Zhao Li nodded, "Not bad. Like I said, your filter room is very good at nurturing cultural weapons. This weapon mold won't need long to advance into the profound-grade soon. But you don't need a profound-grade weapon yet. You might not even be able to control it properly. Therefore, we won't be advancing it. At most, we'll push it into a pseudo-profound weapon."

He turned solemn and said, "Project your characters to the weapon. Use all your strength and activate their abilities."

Immediately after, the world before Zhao Li's eyes changed.

Illusion!

Zhao Li was surprised. He did not break out of the illusion. Instead, he started observing his surroundings. He was quite surprised at what he saw. This was a very powerful illusion. Even a seventh-stage Cloudbreach like him was slightly affected by it. This character seemed much stronger than normal first tier characters.

Next, lightning sprung up everywhere in the illusion.

Killing intent erupted.

Battle!

Kill!

"They're all very strong..."

Zhao Li was astonished. All four of this kid's characters were very strong. Generally, human characters would be weaker. But the characters of this kid were not weak at all. That was especially true for the illusion. It didn't feel like a mere first tier character.

"Keep going." Zhao Li said, "Fully unleash the strength of your abilities. I'll strengthen your weapon accordingly."

A ball of flame appeared in his hand. A black metallic ore was melted by him as he said, "This material is used to stabilize cultural weapons. Since you're an offensive character master, your weapon needs to be tough and durable. This material is called the profound yellow iron. Remember it."

While melting the material, Zhao Li started hammering the saber. After a series of hammering, a thin layer of film appeared around the black saber.

"Ah!"

Su Yu cried out as a sharp pain was assaulting him.

"Continue projecting your characters. This material is adapting to the weapon and your characters. It's normal to feel pain during this process. But this way, the final product will have higher compatibility with you. If you buy a weapon and let a different weaponsmith work on it for you, the compatibility definitely won't be as high."

"Thank you, Teacher..."

Su Yu felt like his head was going to burst apart.

The pain was rather extreme.

Zhao Li ignored Su Yu's painful expression. He wanted to see how long this kid could last.

With 55 percent willpower, he needed to keep four Divine Characters active while having his cultural weapon forged, damaging his willpower in the process. It would be impressive if he could even last five minutes.

"But this kid is very tenacious. I reckon he can last 10 minutes. I'll wait for you to cry for your mother after 10 minutes."

...

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Sounds of banging resounded, accompanied by Zhao Li's voice as he explained the process.

"This is the dazzling light stone. It is able to strengthen your illusions."

Yet another liquid fused with the weapon, bringing more pain to Su Yu's willpower.

The massive hammer continued banging on the weapon. The weapon was completely fine, but Su Yu felt like the strikes were hitting his head instead of the weapon.

Five minutes...eight minutes...ten minutes...

Su Yu was sweating heavily, his face pale.

Zhao Li asked, "Can you still hold on? If the pain is too much, you can also consider withdrawing your characters. The compatibility will drop and the weapon won't feel as smooth to use, but it will still be usable."

"Teacher...I'm fine!"

Su Yu replied while gasping for breath. His clothes were already drenched with sweat. A small puddle of sweat had formed on the ground under him. Beads of sweat were falling off his body like raindrops.

"In that case, we'll continue. Let me know when you reach your limit."

Zhao Li resumed the forging process, and the regret in his heart rose. What a pity. Truly a pity. Why hadn't this kid picked the Weaponsmithing Faculty?

But from all the offensive Divine Characters Su Yu had, Zhao Li also knew that this kid was more suited for the path of offense. However, he was still not reconciled to this. After all, this kid had caught his eyes even before entering the academy.

The two remained silent as the forging continued.

Zhao Li silently hammering Su Yu while Su Yu was clenching his teeth and endured strike after strike while his body trembled. Slowly, his head started feeling light.

He had not noticed that the hammer had switched from hammering the weapon to hammering the air not long ago. Or to be accurate, the hammer was hammering his willpower.

Zhao Li did not say anything. The massive hammer danced in the air and struck his willpower noiselessly. He was forging Su Yu's willpower. He was expanding Su Yu's willpower.

Without countless tempering, how could one's willpower grow strong?

Without countless tempering, how could one's willpower grow durable?

In front of Zhao Li, willpower was just another material he could forge. Only by forging it numerous times would a willpower more powerful than those in the same cultivation level could be formed. Only then would the strongest sea of willpower take form.

"Forging the weapon...and the man!" Inwardly, Zhao Li wondered, "How many of my hammers can you withstand?"

He had accepted many students before. Like he told Su Yu before, one of his students had even reached the Cloudbreach Realm.

He was 120 years old. Over the years, he had accepted 14 students. But after his previous student graduated, he had stopped accepting students. He had taught all 14 of his students sincerely.

Each of those students had been given one chance. A chance to have their weapons forged by him. If they could last five minutes, they would receive this opportunity: having their willpower forged.

Of the 14 students, 12 of them were able to last 5 minutes. That was proof that Zhao Li had an eye for talent. And among those 12, 3 fainted from pain after a single strike. Of the remaining 9, 6 couldn't last more than 3 strikes. Of the final 3, the best of them lasted 9 strikes. And that was the strongest student of Zhao Li, the individual who had eventually entered the Cloudbreach Realm.

Thus, this was also a way to measure one's potential. The longer one could endure, the more potential one would have. Of course, Zhao Li wasn't sure if that was really true, but from the performance of his students, that seemed to be the case.

The third strike landed.

Boom!

Su Yu felt like he was going deaf. His vision swam.

The fourth strike landed.

Even more beads of sweat fell off Su Yu's body.

Fifth strike. Sixth strike...

Again and again, the massive hammer dropped. The rumbling sound echoed in Su Yu's head. His sea of willpower was as firm as a mountain while his willpower was being struck again and again, causing it to go through an endless cycle of obliteration and rebirth.

Pain!

Su Yu couldn't understand why he was feeling so much pain. Was this how it felt like to forge weapons? Was this the only way to forge the strongest cultural weapon?

"T-teacher..."

Zhao Li was shocked. Dang it! The kid could still speak? What in the world?

"Teacher..." Su Yu muttered weakly, "Will...this weapon...be comparable to high-tier profound-grade weapons after the forging?"

"More or less."

"Then...does that mean that the weapon would be even more expensive?"

"..."

Zhao Li cursed inwardly before answering, "Of course. Even a low-tier profound-grade cultural weapon is worth thousands of merit points. Your current weapon is only a top-tier yellow-grade weapon. If you can last long enough, it will be comparable to profound weapons. Its value will jump from 100 merit points to 1,000 merit points..."

"A-an increase o-of 900 merit points?"

Su Yu was so shocked even his willpower started wavering.

"You need to last longer! This is not enough. You need to last at least...30 strikes!"

Zhao Li cursed inwardly. This little bastard loved money more than his life!

"Then...then it means a single strike...is worth 30 merit points?"

Su Yu was stunned. Immediately after, his fighting spirit soared as he roared, "Teacher, hammer me!"

His battle character shone brightly. An intense fighting spirit erupted from him. How could he not be excited? A single strike was worth 30 merit points.

Holy shit! What was this old man waiting for? Hammer him! Come on, stop staring!

"..."

Zhao Li was stunned.

Damn it! He was here to teach weaponsmithing, not accounting! This kid was too good at calculating.

"Yes. Hang on. A single strike is worth 30 merit points."

Zhao Li resisted the urge to roll his eyes. Whatever. Just look at that kid. After hearing about money, his battle intent had soared so much his Divine Character was shining like a sun. What else could Zhao Li say?

Boom!

Yet another strike landed.

"210 points!"

Su Yu roared.

He remembered that he had been hammered seven times so far. Of course, there were even more strikes earlier, but those strikes felt different. He could feel that the later strikes were the crux.

Zhao Li had the urge to give someone a beating, but now was not the time for it.

Rumble!

"240 points!"

Boom!

Again and again, the strikes landed. Su Yu roared until his throat was hoarse. This was his motivation to keep enduring the strikes. He kept telling himself how poor he was. He kept telling himself he couldn't even afford a proper cultural weapon.

If he could forge a cultural weapon comparable to a profound weapon, he would be able to keep using it until the Skysoar Realm. Compared to all that, what was a little bit of pain?

"390 points!"

Su Yu continued roaring with his hoarse voice. He was shouting so hard his face flushed red and the veins on his neck became visible.

At this point, the look in Zhao Li's eyes finally changed.

13th strike.

He wasn't serious when he said 30 strikes earlier. He wondered if Su Yu's sea of willpower had collapsed from all that hammering.

"Is your sea of willpower still fine?"

Zhao Li asked loudly.

"I...I'm fine...Teacher...hammer me!"

Zhao Li was shocked. The kid was still fine?

He was actually asking for more?

Boom!

Yet another strike landed. Su Yu's sea of willpower trembled as a powerful external force invaded, causing the golden book to pulse slightly. Su Yu was completely dazed, so he didn't notice what was happening.

After the slight pulse of the book, Su Yu's sea of willpower seemed to have expanded slightly. Even Zhao Li's body shook when he felt the counterforce from his strike.

"Hmm?"

Zhao Li was stunned. Willpower rampart? Had he only reached the kid's willpower border now? He had thought that he had long reached the willpower border.

Everyone's sea of willpower had different strength and size. Of course, the sea of willpower was a metaphysical existence instead of a real physical existence. Since Su Yu's sea of willpower was finally shaking, it meant that his hammer strikes had finally reached Su Yu's willpower border.

"I'm only reaching it now..."

Zhao Li blanked out. In that case, this was the first time the kid's willpower had grown since the hammering?

The growth in this case did not refer to the willpower percentage. Rather, it referred to the breadth of the willpower. The endurance of willpower. Basically, the sea of willpower was akin to a bottle of willpower. And now, Zhao Li was enlarging that bottle.

"In that case, I'll stop holding back."

Zhao Li was already sweating profusely. With a roar, he held onto the hammer with his own hand before bringing it down.

Boom!

"450 points!"

Boom!

"480 points!"

Boom! Boom! Boom!

"Teacher...sl-slower..."

Su Yu was finding it hard keeping up as his mind was too heavy to be doing all those calculations.

"Slow my ass. Continue!"

Zhao Li was starting to turn pale. Using the Soul Expanding Art in this manner was exhausting a lot of his own willpower.

He landed one strike after another. At the final strike, Su Yu collapsed onto the ground. He had fainted.

Zhao Li also crumpled on the floor while gasping for breath. He looked at Su Yu with an odd gaze. Damn it. What kind of monster had he encountered? Was this kid still a human?

"How many strikes did he take? 28?" Zhao Li muttered to himself.

But his words seemed to have triggered the unconscious Su Yu who mumbled, "870 points...29...Teacher...one more strike..."

Pa!

Zhao Li slapped Su Yu unconscious. Just go to sleep! Damn it! Why was he still counting money in that daze? The kid must have gone crazy from his poverty. If they continued, the kid's sea of willpower would probably collapse.

"28...no, 29 strikes in total."

Zhao Li was in total disbelief. The student who had withstood 9 strikes back then had reached the Cloudbreach Realm. And that student wasn't even 50 yet. In that case, how far could Su Yu, who had withstood 29 strikes, go? Sure, this wasn't the absolute measure of one's potential. But it still meant something...

Zhao Li massaged his head. He could feel a headache coming. Was the kid going to reach the Mountainsea Realm? The Sunmoon Realm? Or the fabled Eternal Realm?

"My hammer strikes must be weaker today due to my lack of sleep. Yeah. I would have hammered him to death with three strikes otherwise!"

Zhao Li said to himself. He refused to believe this! Then again, this kid was truly scary. He had terrifying tenacity and potential.

Also, Zhao Li couldn't help but be impressed by Su Yu who could even continue counting money in such a condition. Thinking about that, Zhao Li didn't know whether he should laugh or cry. Was that because of the kid's potential, or was that because the kid loved money too much?

"With such a weak level of willpower, he lasted this long. How terrifying. He is capable of forging ahead in spite of all challenges. He is able to endure all sorts of hardships."

If the willpower of others was akin to steel that had been tempered once, then Su Yu's willpower was basically equal to steel that had been tempered a hundred times.

"This isn't right. How is he so tenacious? It almost feels like...his willpower has been ravaged countless times before."

Zhao Li scratched his head in confusion, to the point he nearly pulled some of his hair off. Just how old was Su Yu? For Zhao Li, Su Yu was basically still a baby. Why did it feel like this baby had been tempered countless times before?

Chapter 235: How Much? (1)

When Su Yu woke up, the sky was already dark.

His previous pain was all gone. He felt completely refreshed. He was no longer in the hall. Rather, he found himself in the living area. When he looked at his bed, he saw that it was a shabby couch. He smiled and looked around, but Zhao Li was nowhere to be found.

Su Yu was in no rush to leave. He tried sensing his cultural weapon. Next, a black saber appeared in front of him. It looked almost the same as before, but it felt much more solid and reliable than before.

"You're awake?" Zhao Li walked in and said, "Try using your Divine Characters with it."

He quickly added, "Use your characters one by one."

Su Yu gave it some thought and attached the lightning character to the weapon. The process felt much easier than before. Next, the character activated.

Rumble!

A loud rumble sounded and a bright flash erupted within the living area. Zhao Li remained calm. He indifferently sent his willpower over and erased the lightning in the room.

"How does it feel?"

Su Yu was in complete shock. He could feel that his lightning attack had increased considerably. And it also felt much easier to use.

"Teacher..." Su Yu opened his eyes wide and hurriedly said, "Are cultural weapons so powerful? I feel like my destructive power has increased from a rating of 10 to at least 12."

"That's normal." Zhao Li nonchalantly said, "Why would all cultural researchers want cultural weapons otherwise? A low-tier profound-grade cultural weapon is worth thousands of merit points. If it isn't worth the price, who would buy it?"

Su Yu regretfully said, "I think I only managed to last 29 strikes..."

Zhao Li's face darkened. He decided to ignore Su Yu.

Su Yu said, "Teacher, you added quite a lot of materials to the weapon. How many merit points are they worth?"

He eagerly said, "Teacher, let me pay for the materials. As for the forging fee, I really can't afford to hire you yet, Teacher. Can you not charge me the forging fee?"

Zhao Li felt like laughing when he looked at Su Yu. The kid was right. He still couldn't afford Zhao Li yet. With the measly 180 merit points the kid had, it was impossible to hire an earth-grade weaponsmith.

Seeing that the kid was speaking bluntly, Zhao Li gave it some thought and said, "Sure. I won't be charging you for the service. For your four Divine Characters, I added four different materials into the weapon. Additionally, I added a few other stabilization materials. I'll only charge you the cost of these materials, 120 merit points."

"120 points..."

Su Yu hated parting with money, but he didn't say anything and swiped 120 merit points over to Zhao Li.

Zhao Li smiled and said, "Your weapon is already near the profound-grade. However, it is still not a true profound weapon. Otherwise, you won't be able to control it. You can consider it a pseudo profound weapon."

The so-called pseudo profound weapon was basically a weapon with the prowess of a profound-grade weapon yet usable by those in the Mental Tempering Stage. A weapon like this was much more valuable than a proper low-tier profound-grade weapon. It was basically a level 30 weapon that could be used by a level 20 individual. Its practical value far surpassed that of a low-tier profound-grade weapon.

Naturally, Zhao Li couldn't be bothered to say all that. This weapon mold was already a top-tier yellow-grade weapon before this.

"In the future when you form new Divine Characters, you can slowly strengthen the weapon. And when you complete your character technique, you can fuse the weapon with your character technique, creating a unique cultural weapon that belongs to you alone. At that time, you will be able to fully maximize your strength."

Su Yu nodded.

Zhao Li then looked outside and said, "It's getting late. Go back. Come and learn more about weaponsmithing when you have the time. It is never a bad thing to learn more about the properties of some materials. That way, you won't be completely oblivious when you encounter a treasure outside."

"Alright. I'll be taking my leave, Teacher. Thank you again."

"Go."

Zhao Li waved his hand and looked on as Su Yu walked away.

After Su Yu left, Zhao Li exhaled deeply. He couldn't think about it. The more he thought about the kid, the more regretful he felt. What a good seedling.

Each time he thought of that, he had the urge to beat Bai Feng to death. Seated on the couch, he took a sip at his tea as a hammer appeared in front of him. With a pulse of his willpower, the large hammer started striking his sea of willpower.

Willpower expansion.

He was 120 years old, the son of the fourth principal, and a seventh-stage Cloudbreach. His cultivation speed was very slow. But there was a reason for it. If the willpower of others was the size of a bowl, then his willpower was the size of a barrel.

Zhao Li did not mind his speed. For him, things like cultivation realms weren't too important. For a weaponsmith, endurance was more important. Without endurance, so what if he could reach the Mountainsea Realm?

Sure, his willpower would be stronger, but it would only last for three to five minutes. How was he supposed to keep forging weapons then? The hammer continued striking his sea of willpower, but he had an indifferent expression. He continued sipping on tea while thinking.

A character technique with over 20 initial Divine Characters. Could that kid withstand the pressure of so many characters?

"Soul Expanding Art..."

Zhao Li muttered. Should he teach this method to the kid? He was somewhat unable to convince himself to do it. He was indignant.

Strictly speaking, the Soul Expanding Art might not necessarily be a good thing. With a larger sea of willpower, one would gain a stronger foundation. But that would also slow down the speed of one's advancement.

Zhao Li himself was the perfect example. He was still a seventh-stage Cloudbreach after living for so long.

He had a very high seniority. In fact, his seniority was even higher than Wan Tiansheng's. But Wan Tiansheng was already in the Mountainsea Realm while he was stuck in the Cloudbreach Realm.

Even the strongest Cloudbreach was still a Cloudbreach. Wan Tiansheng could kill him in one slap. Furthermore, with a lower cultivation level, he would also have a shorter lifespan.

Most cultural researchers didn't care about the weakening of their body. But when they grew old, their sea of willpower would also start withering.

Theoretically, a Cloudbreach could live for 200 years. The limit of a Mountainsea would be pushed to 300 years. But in reality, how many people could live that long?

Of the Mountainsea that had emerged after year 50 of the Anping Calendar, how many were still alive? As for Skysoar cultivators, they probably couldn't live more than 150 years.

If Zhao Li did not advance into the Mountainsea Realm, his sea of willpower would also start withering after a few more years. Of course, with his deep foundation, he would still possess a powerful combat strength even with a withering sea of willpower. That was a unique advantage of his.

"I need to observe more..."

Zhao Li shut his eyes and stopped thinking about the matter. At times, the Soul Expanding Art might ruin someone. After all, it wasn't a good thing for a character master walking the path of offense like Su Yu to advance too slowly.

Those walking the path of offense required a lot of combat. They would constantly dance on the edge of death. These people needed to grow quickly. That was one of the reasons he had rejected Bai Feng back then.

Hong Tan only knew about the endurance of the Soul Expanding Art, but he wasn't aware that if Bai Feng had cultivated the Soul Expanding Art, he would probably still be stuck in the Mental Tempering Stage today. In this world, one couldn't gain strength for free. To gain something, one would need to lose something.

...

Wentan Research Center.

Fragment room.

Su Yu had an odd look in his eyes. He finally sensed that something was different about himself.

"My willpower percentage...dropped?"

He had been thinking about this for quite a while. Yes. His willpower percentage had dropped. Earlier, he had 55 percent willpower. But it had since dropped to the level of a fresh Mental Tempering Stage student.

He had a complicated expression. Naturally, he could sense that the actual strength of his willpower had not been weakened. So what did the drop of his willpower percentage meant? Did his limit...increase even more?

Su Yu was speechless. Just what had Old Zhao done to him? Had his limit been raised by those hammer strikes? It hadn't been easy for him to reach 55 percent willpower. But before he knew it, his willpower percentage had dropped back down.

"My limit has increased while my willpower percentage has dropped. But my strength remains."

That should be something good, right? After some thought, he concluded that it was probably a good thing. But he still felt somewhat gloomy. The Skysoar Realm felt even further away now.

"Fresh Mental Tempering Stage...this is acceptable. I can feign weakness and catch my opponents unaware. No, I'm not even pretending. My willpower percentage is really this low..."

Having reached that conclusion, he stopped contemplating and stepped into the second section of the fragment room. Wave after wave of willpower started assaulting him. His willpower erupted in resistance.

Ten minutes...thirty minutes...

He found that he could now last even longer in the fragment room. He couldn't even feel his limit coming, but he could feel that the willpower attack of the room was much less painful than before.

He stayed in the room until he couldn't anymore before leaving. And when his willpower recovered, he felt that his willpower percentage had increased. It was only a one percent increase, but this one percent felt much stronger than the previous one percent.

"My cultural weapon is stronger and my willpower is stronger as well..."

He turned his attention toward the blood character. Was that fellow going to advance or not? If it could reach the second tier, his strength would grow even more. Or at the very least, his illusions would be even more powerful.

He entered the filter room, allowing the blood character to absorb even more blood. At the same time, he also started cultivating with blood essence. After this cultivation session, he would no longer have any blood essence. And he only had 60 merit points remaining...

"I'm broke again."

Just like that, he had finished using around 1,000 merit points. He felt rather helpless. He stopped thinking about that and started focusing on his cultivation. While cultivating, he was also studying the Skybreak Technique's second move.

For the Skybreak Technique, each move required 16 acupoints. The second move was known as Life Reaper. It required 32 acupoints in total. With the first move, Wallbreaker, he could break through his opponent's defense. At that time, he could use the second move and reap the life of his opponent.

First, break the defense. Next, reap the opponent's life. The first move was more of a move with a specific usage. For example, he had destroyed Chen Qi's defenses with only one move during their match.

"For the second move, it mainly focuses on killing."

Through studying the second move, he was slowly starting to understand the usage of his kill character. As for the 32 required acupoints, he already had all the acupoints opened. He only needed to learn how to link those acupoints into a system to use the second move properly.

Without a willpower text, he could only slowly study by himself. A willpower text would help him save a lot of time.

"Open more acupoints, increase my willpower, strengthen my Divine Characters, and practice martial techniques..."

Su Yu was very busy. He was starting to wish that he could skip even sleep. Only when it was around three in the morning did he force himself to stop and go to sleep. He didn't want to overwork his body.

That night, he was assaulted by a nightmare again. These nightmares had been rather rare recently. As usual, he was killed in the dream. Usually, that would be enough to wake him up.

But this time, it didn't feel as painful. His body merely trembled slightly as he drifted back into sleep again. That night, he had a nice sleep.

Chapter 236: How Much? (2)

17th of September.

As usual, Su Yu arrived early to the classroom.

Beside him, Wu Lan had arrived early as well. Normally, the two did not interact with each other much. But today, Wu Lan took the initiative to say, "Su Yu, I'm breaking through in two days. This time, I'll charge straight to the third-stage Great Strength Realm."

Wu Lan had a proud look on her face. She was going to catch up to Su Yu soon! She was already at the ninth-stage Source Opening Realm when she joined the academy. And she also cultivated the advanced War God Art. Finally, she had opened 12 acupoints. The third-stage Great Strength Realm wasn't far away!

Su Yu looked at her speechlessly. Was she sure? She was so confident. Was she sure that she could open 24 acupoints in the grotto? Why did this woman think that the advancement into the Great Strength Realm was a journey straight to the third stage? For her, it was as if the first two stages did not exist.

"What blood essence are you using?"

"Mountainbreak bull blood essence, of course," said Wu Lan, as if there couldn't be any other option.

The look on her face was basically saying that as a genius, that was naturally the blood essence she was going to use.

Su Yu was getting tired of speaking to her. He wanted to tell her to take a look at Chen Qi and Lin Yao. Those two had suffered so much just to get some mountainbreak bull blood essence. This girl sure came from a rich family. It sounded like the mountainbreak bull blood essence was nothing for her.

"I thought you said once that you don't need the support of your family anymore?"

Wu Lan's face turned red as she angrily said, "Exactly! I didn't ask for their support! I am only borrowing...I mean my grandaunt insisted on supporting me!"

"..."

Su Yu cursed inwardly. Truly shameless. Insisted on supporting her? He wanted a grandaunt like that as well.

"Who's your teacher?"

Su Yu asked, suddenly curious. He had never asked about the teachers of his fellow classmates.

"My elder sister!"

"..."

What a complicated relationship. Su Yu was getting even more tired. So her elder sister was now her teacher as well...Fine, the academy wasn't really that strict about relationships and hierarchy so it wasn't a big deal.

"Is your elder sister strong?"

Su Yu wasn't too interested in Wu Lan's advancement. He was more interested in her elder sister, a legendary genius from the previous generation. Bai Feng was one such legend, but Su Yu had seen Bai Feng so much that he wasn't feeling anything from seeing him anymore.

As for Hu Wensheng, he had been defeated in one move. His legend had been broken. And Liu Hong...was basically a shameless scoundrel. Su Yu looked down on him.

There were only two from that generation that Su Yu hadn't seen yet. One was Xia Yuwen. The other was Wu Qi.

"Of course!" Wu Lan's face turned proud when talking about her elder sister. She said, "My elder sister is a ninth-stage Skysoar. She's going to reach the Cloudbreach Realm soon. Your teacher is not her match. She can defeat him in one move."

"Hehe."

Su Yu sneered and said nothing more. Forget it. He wouldn't be able to learn anything useful for this lady. He was only a little bit curious anyway.

"Su Yu, wait until I reach the third-stage Great Strength Realm. I'll let you know that I'm very strong as well!"

"Yes. You're very strong."

Su Yu nodded. Sure. But she had to reach that level first. Also, by the time she reached the third stage, he would probably be at the sixth or seventh stage already. Maybe. Wu Lan, keep working hard!

Suddenly, Xia Huyou entered the classroom and waved at Su Yu. Su Yu frowned and walked over without saying anything.

...

"Su Yu, are we still brothers?"

"What are you trying to say?"

"Are you going to fight Zheng Yunhui?"

"Nope."

"You're lying to me!" Grief covered Xia Huyou's face as he said, "I heard some rumors about it! I am an information peddler! Why are you trying to hide this for me? I even learned that there is a bet between you two. Is it the Skybreak Technique?"

He didn't know the exact details. He only knew that there was a bet.

The Skybreak Technique was most likely the stake.

Su Yu smiled, "Who told you all that? That person is lying. Also, don't even dream of starting a betting pool on the fight. Even if we do fight, we won't fight publicly. No outsiders will see our fight."

"So a fight is really happening?" Xia Huyou asked curiously, "Are you confident? That fellow...I suspect that he is going to reach the eighth-stage. He will probably be skipping classes for now to push his cultivation level up. As an eighth-stage Great Strength cultivator...he will be strong enough to challenge the top 100."

"We'll see."

Su Yu was unwilling to say more. The entire fight was a scam. It was better for Xia Huyou to not get involved.

Su Yu was about to leave when Xia Huyou suddenly said, "Su Yu, don't do anything stupid. You have a bright future. There is no need to ruin your future just for a momentary satisfaction."

Su Yu turned around.

He looked at Xia Huyou. The smile on Xia Huyou's face vanished as he solemnly said, "I have still heard of some rumors. I hope those are mere rumors. Otherwise, you will be in great trouble if you lose."

Su Yu smiled, "Am I that kind of person?"

Xia Huyou looked at his friend, not knowing what to say.

Suddenly, an interesting thought came to Su Yu. He asked, "How many merit points can you move?"

"Why?"

"Do me a favor and raise the price."

Nothing much was said, but Xia Huyou's expression still changed. A pensive look covered his face. He sank into thought, connecting dot after dot in his mind.

After a while, he softly said, "There will be people observing in secret when the product is being inspected."

"That's not an issue."

Su Yu smiled. He was ready for it. He had no fear.

"I understand." Xia Huyou smiled, "Why are you telling me this?"

"Aren't we brothers?" Su Yu's eyes flickered as he said, "Furthermore...it's real."

"..."

Xia Huyou's face changed again. What was the meaning of that?

From Su Yu's earlier words, he had concluded that this whole thing was a ploy. But was it real?

"Su Yu..."

Su Yu smiled, "I'm certain I won't lose. And if I do end up losing...well, life is hard with the multiple character faction anyway. I am curious...will I have a future if I switch to the single character faction now?"

Xia Huyou looked at Su Yu with a frown. Su Yu said nothing else and left. Xia Huyou was greatly confused. So was it a ploy or not? Truth and lie seemed to have intermingled, causing even him to feel confused.

On the 17th, Su Yu opened another acupoint. At this point, he had opened 64 acupoints in total. He had used his remaining 60 merit points to buy 20 drops of iron-winged bird blood essence from Xia Huyou.

Once again, he was penniless.

On the 18th, he applied for a leave from his classes.

That day, he spent the entire day cultivating. Drop after drop of blood essence was used as he cycled between the filter and the fragment rooms. He cultivated untiringly.

On that very day, he used 8 drops of blood essence. The effect left a lot to be desired. Even with such a high intensity of training, he had only opened one acupoint.

Although he had spent much less money compared to when he visited the grotto, he had spent a lot of time and energy. In fact, what he spent that day couldn't be considered a small sum of money. If he had bought the blood essence through the official channel, he would have to spend 40 merit points for 8 drops of iron-winged bird blood essence.

On the 19th, Su Yu applied for another day of leave.

He continued cultivating in seclusion. That day, he used nine drops of blood essence to open another acupoint, leaving him with only three drops.

Thus far, he had opened 66 merit points. All the resources he had prepared to reach the sixth-stage had been exhausted, but he was still 6 acupoints away. He was already growing very quickly.

A normal person would only open an acupoint per month. Even the faster ones would take around half a month. Meanwhile, Su Yu had relied on blood essence and his book to cultivate at a speed that was ten times faster than a genius of the same level.

...

While Su Yu was in seclusion.

A certain rumor started spreading among selected circles.

Liu Hong's office.

The door was pushed open.

Zhou Pingsheng stepped into the office.

"Senior Brother Zhou..." Liu Hong hurriedly stood up and smiled, "You honor me with your presence. Is there anything I can help you with? Come, have a seat!"

Zhou Pingsheng sat down and went straight to the point, "Is Su Yu really having a match with Zheng Yunhui?"

"What?"

"Liu Hong!" With an upset tone, Zhou Pingsheng said, "Are you still trying to hide it from me?"

Liu Hong smiled, "Have you misunderstood something, Senior Brother. Yes, there is a match. But it's a game between children. I didn't keep it in mind. Why are you suddenly asking about it?"

Zhou Pingsheng coldly said, "A game between children? From the rumor I heard, that is no game. The stakes of the match...are not simple."

"Stakes?"

"Liu Hong, stop acting in front of me." Zhou Pingsheng unhappily said, "You bought quite a lot of resources for Zheng Yunhui from the black market. Do you think I'm really not aware of that?"

Liu Hong smiled, "Oh, right. Zheng Yunhui wants to challenge the Top 100 Ranking so he looked for me to buy some things as preparation."

"Can he afford those things?" Zhou Pingsheng snorted, "You sponsored him, right?"

"Yeah, but that's a loan. I'm charging him interest..."

"Are you going to keep acting?" Zhou Pingsheng was getting angry, "Liu Hong, are you afraid that I would steal your contribution to the faction? What a joke. Do I need to do that? I'm only worried that you would miss out on the thing that truly matters. If the rumors are true, then we must get our hands on it."

"Instead of reporting what you found, you actually reached a private agreement with Zheng Yunhui? What are you trying to do? Are you trying to swallow the fruit yourself?"

Liu Hong frowned. He slowly said, "Senior Brother, that's not my intention. There are too many rumors. I still don't know if they're true. Su Yu might not be able to get that thing out. If I report it now and it ends up untrue, wouldn't it be a joke?"

When Zhou Pingsheng heard that, he frowned slightly and said, "True. So what do you think? Is it true?"

"Hmm..." Liu Hong smiled, "I'm really not sure. I already have an agreement with Zheng Yunhui. If it's real, he'll sell it to me for 50,000 merit points. If it's not real, he won't be able to run off with what he owes me."

"In truth, even without your visit today, I'm already planning to visit you after a few days..." Liu Hong awkwardly said, "My pockets are quite empty. I definitely can't complete this transaction without support. Also, my cultivation is too low to determine if the data is real or not. If I end up scammed...then I'll be in deep trouble. Thus, I'll be relying on you to determine if the data is real."

Liu Hong solemnly said, "Senior Brother, you run the books depository and are very knowledgeable. In fact, in our faction, nobody is more knowledgeable than you. But I'm still not sure. This feels too easy..."

Liu Hong frowned, "I'm really not trying to hide anything from you. This simply feels too easy. The thing we have been trying so hard to get is suddenly in Su Yu's hands..."

Liu Hong smiled helplessly, "Senior Brother, would I dare to report something I'm so uncertain of? If it's fake, then it would be too embarrassing."

Zhou Pingsheng nodded.

He smiled and said, "Don't worry. You're right. I have learned a lot after so many years in the books depository. When the time comes, I'll be there to verify the authenticity of the data."

Liu Hong said, "Senior Brother, should we find a few more experts to assist us?"

"No." Zhou Pingsheng shook his head, "It's not a good idea to let too many people know about this. That will only make it harder to keep this a secret."

"How about the 50,000 merit points?" Liu Hong awkwardly said, "I can't afford that. Why don't you get in touch with Zheng Yunhui instead? You can negotiate with him..."

He blushed and said, "I already paid him a down payment of 2,000 merit points."

Zhou Pingsheng thought about it before shaking his head, "I can't show myself. It's enough to have you as our agent. You're in charge of dealing with the black market and that is considered a black market transaction. It will be very troublesome if I get involved directly."

He frowned, "50,000 merit points are too expensive. Zheng Yunhui sure is greedy."

He was trying to keep his hands clean. Liu Hong was naturally the perfect candidate to do all the dirty work. That way, if they ended up raided, Liu Hong would be the one caught, not him.

"That's already quite cheap..." Liu Hong smiled bitterly, "His opening price was 100,000 merit points. I told him it's impossible but he said that he knows how important this thing is. If it's real, it's worth millions."

Liu Hong had a vexed expression as he said, "I spent a long time negotiating with him but he ended up bringing the Xia Family up. I had no choice but to set the price at 50,000. If you think this isn't proper...why don't I try lowering the price more?"

Zhou Pingsheng frowned and said, "Forget it. Don't make more troubles. Try to keep as little contact with the Zheng Family as possible."

He added, "I'll look for Senior Brother Zheng. That's too much money. The two of us won't be able to afford it."

He was about to leave when Liu Hong awkwardly said, "Senior Brother...uhm...can you report the price as 52,000 merit points? You can get the 1,000 merit points while I'll get the other 1,000. Things are...a little tight on my end recently..."

"..."

Zhou Pingsheng laughed and said, "Sure. You...Elder Zhao left quite a lot of stuff behind..."

"I can't touch those things! My teacher is still in seclusion!" Liu Hong hastily said, "Senior Brother, I'm a person of integrity! We'll only take 2,000 extra merit points. That's enough..."

Zhou Pingsheng smiled and nodded. He didn't say anything else. He left the office.

52,000 merit points? What? Liu Hong must be remembering things wrongly. The price was clearly 60,000 merit points!

He had no problem giving Liu Hong 1,000 merit points. After all, Liu Hong was the one who had started the plan so he still deserved a little compensation, right?

Chapter 237: Fight (1)

20th of September.

Su Yu applied for another day of leave. On that day, Zheng Yunhui also applied for leave.

In fact, apart from the two, a few other people were missing from the class as well.

...

Visitor District. Normally, this place did not have too many people.

There was a training center here. It was opened by an old instructor. It was a quiet place as it normally didn't get a lot of visitors. Today, visitors were coming one after another.

The instructor running the place was already quite old. He personally ran it instead of hiring someone to do it, and just as he was in the middle of moving a chair outside to sit under the sun, visitors started coming.

"Old Chen, is the third floor empty?"

The old instructor blanked out slightly. After a while, he finally recognized the visitor, "Manager Zhou, why are you here?"

Zhou Pingsheng smiled and said, "I'm only here to take a look. There will be a match between students here later. Don't let anyone know we're here, do you understand?"

"Yes, yes." The old instructor hurriedly nodded.

"Alright. We'll be going up. You can just stay here."

"Alright!"

The old instructor did not dare to say anything. This was a big shot. An old student like him who wasn't even in the Skysoar Realm couldn't afford to offend someone like that.

That was a Cloudbreach expert. He should be honored by the presence of someone like that. How would he dare to ask anything? Fight between students? He didn't care. He was just somewhat curious. Were they Manager Zhou's students?

The old instructor had not been paying attention to the matters of the academy for a very long time. Thus, he was unsure. But he decided to not think about it too much. After staying in the academy for so many years, he had learned to not ask anything when he shouldn't.

Not long after Zhou Pingsheng and his companion went upstairs, new visitors arrived.

Xia Huyou came with a middle-aged man. When they arrived, Xia Huyou looked around before saying, "Uncle, it's here."

The middle-aged man nodded and said nothing.

Xia Huyou walked up to the old instructor with a friendly smile and said, "Grandpa, do you have any other rooms on the third floor?"

The old instructor wasn't even looking at Xia Huyou. He only looked at the middle-aged man. His expression changed and he hastily said, "Yes! But..."

The middle-aged man said, "It's fine. We'll go up. We'll compete fairly."

Xia Huyou's eyes flickered. He smiled and said nothing else. It was obvious some other people had arrived before them. The two went upstairs. The old instructor heaved a breath of relief. Why did he feel like something major was about to happen today?

Even that person was here!

...

Third floor.

Inside a large training room, Zhou Pingsheng frowned. Liu Hong's eyes flickered as he said, "Senior Brother..."

"Ignore them." Zhou Pingsheng snorted coldly, "This is the academy, not the Xia Trade Company."

Liu Hong said nothing else. He lowered his head while his eyes continued flickering. This was getting more and more interesting. He wondered if Bai Feng and Chen Yong were involved as well.

"Are these kids being instructed to do this or is this...their own plan?"

He had concluded that this whole thing was probably a ploy. Of course, to know if it was really a ploy, he only needed to wait and see.

A single Skybreak Technique willpower text had caused the appearance of divine blood essence and research data from the Wentan Research Center. The entire thing was too surprising.

And the two kids were truly bold. The value of the divine blood essence and the data was probably worth more than 100,000 merit points. These kids weren't even in the Skysoar Realm yet but they were already so good at creating trouble.

Liu Hong stole a glance at Zhou Pingsheng and inhaled deeply. Regardless of whether this was a ploy or not, the only thing he needed to do later was to...prevent the transaction from happening.

He no longer wanted to get involved in the transaction anyway. At this point, he was only aiming to earn as much as he could. And if he couldn't, so be it.

No matter what, he had to "prevent" the transaction from going through. He had to try his very best to stop it.

From Liu Hong's understanding of Zhou Pingsheng, he was a very conceited individual. The moment he decided that this was real, he would stubbornly insist on completing the transaction. He would even berate Liu Hong for trying to stop him or even try to push him out.

It didn't matter. It would be better if this fellow would erase all his contribution when reporting this to the higher ups. In any case, contribution wouldn't be of great help to him anyway. In fact, Zhou Pingsheng needed to thank Liu Hong for receiving news about this transaction so fast.

If Liu Hong hadn't deliberately bought stuff for Zheng Yunhui from the black market in a high profile manner, the tiny rumors Zheng Yunhui had spread personally would be completely useless. Nobody would take a kid like him seriously.

"The Xia Family is here too..."

Liu Hong started thinking. Perhaps...he could really make a lot of money this time.

...

In a teahouse opposite the training center.

Inside a private room in the teahouse, Chen Yong was drinking tea while looking at the opposite building with a pensive look.

...

Beside the training center.

Inside a restaurant, Jia Mingzhen and company were eating while chatting merrily, "Let's watch the show. It will be a good show. So what do you guys think? Is Su Yu really taking out the real deal?"

"Who knows?"

"Guess how many people are hiding nearby?"

"The number wouldn't be small," said a female elder. "The rumors have been spreading through the black market. I suspect even some people outside the academy have heard of this. The other academies, the military, the cult, and even those old geezers at the Foreign Students Faculty might have heard of it by now."

Jia Mingzhen wiped his oily mouth from all the eating and said, "I don't care about those people. I'm only curious if a certain geezer is here."

"No idea."

They roared with laughter. One of them said, "Is he going to raid them and seize everything if he's here?"

Jia Mingzhen said, "That's very hard to say. If the product is real, he might really show up. If not, then he might not. Do you really think that you can hide anything from him in the academy? If even us managed to get wind about this, that geezer is definitely aware. He has countless eyes and ears in the academy."

Jia Mingzhen hesitated slightly before continuing, "I suspect there is still a mastermind behind this whole thing. From my observation, that Zheng kid has been focused on dealing with the single character faction. But in the end, Liu Hong caused the rumors to spread when he was buying things for the kid. I even wonder if Liu Hong really didn't have those things in stock or if he was merely intentionally purchasing them from the black market to spread the news."

"Who knows?"

The group continued chatting among themselves. Suddenly, one of them said, "He's here!"

They all looked downstairs and saw Zheng Yunhui walking over with firm and powerful steps. A long saber hung on his back, denoting his status as a child of an influential warrior family. For someone like him, it didn't matter if he had a cultural weapon or not. He would still need to carry a martial weapon on him.

"Eighth-stage Great Strength Realm!" Jia Mingzhen said, "What a fine kid. Looks like the peace of the Top 100 Ranking will break next month."

His eyes lit up as he continued, "Is he...carrying the product on him?"

That piqued the curiosity of the rest of the elders. One of them smiled and said, "I can sense a faint aura on him. He's probably carrying it on him. He's really not holding back for this match. I wonder if Old Man Zheng is aware of this. If the kid really ends up losing...he will probably receive a beating from the entire Zheng Family."

"10 drops of Cloudbreach divine blood essence..." Jia Mingzhen said, "It's a pity these aren't Mountainsea blood essence. Otherwise, even I would be tempted."

"How many drops have he taken out of his family?"

"No idea. But he has definitely brought a decent number of drops. Or maybe all of them."

"Even Cloudbreach blood essence is pretty good since the divine race is too hard to kill. As for those we manage to kill, we might not necessarily be able to extract any blood essence from them. It's a pity this is not the blood essence of the original divine race. Otherwise, I'll probably get involved even if it's only some Cloudbreach blood essence..."

While they chatted among themselves, Zheng Yunhui arrived at the training center.

And a short while later, Su Yu arrived as well.

"Fifth-stage Great Strength Realm. He's not at the sixth-stage yet."

Today, the group of elders came prepared. With nobody paying any attention to them, they were able to act freely. One of them used an unknown method to determine Su Yu's cultivation method and smiled, "He's not weak. This kid has been growing very fast. No wonder he's confident enough to face Zheng Yunhui..."

He paused slightly and continued, "If he comes with a fake product, we will all be disappointed. But if he comes with the real deal...Then I'll feel even more disappointed."

They were now certain that Su Yu was a genius or even a freak. And yes, talent was important. But at times, one's moral standing and disposition was even more important. If Su Yu had really stolen the core

research data of Wentan Research Center, he wouldn't be worth nurturing no matter how talented he was.

Even if Hong Tan and the others decided to spare him, the academy would still let go of someone like this. After all, nobody knew just what kind of person someone like this would become after gaining strength in the future.

Jia Mingzhen nodded and sighed, "I hope it's fake...but I doubt a fake product can fool those fellows."

They stopped talking. Their feelings were very complicated. If it was fake, then Su Yu had successfully played everyone for a fool. After all, so many different parties had arrived for the sake of his data. But if he was really here with the real deal, then his future was basically ruined.

Regardless of the result of the match, his future would be ruined. After all, that data did not belong to him. The data was a product of countless years of effort and hard work of Hong Tan and the others. How would anyone be willing to nurture a traitorous person like him?

"Can this perhaps be a ploy by Bai Feng and Chen Yong?" Someone suddenly asked.

"Impossible. They don't have the brains for an elaborate ploy like this. Bai Feng only knows how to fight while Chen Yong only knows how to endure. Hong Tan isn't even around. How would those two dare to do something this big?"

"True."

Once again, they sank into silence. After a short while, they all looked at Jia Mingzhen, who smiled and released a Divine Character. The Divine Character turned into a screen.

"I need to avoid Zhou Pingsheng's detection..."

As Jia Mingzhen said that, he released another Divine Character that wrapped around the screen, preventing the leakage of any aura.

Next, a different elder released a different Divine Character, "Track!"

The character vanished.

And immediately after, a scene appeared on the screen formed by Jia Mingzhen's Divine Character.

The sole female elder in the group smiled and said, "Let me give you a hand."

Yet another Divine Character appeared before vanishing. Now, sound was coming out of the screen as well.

Tracking, listening, and spying...

The elders demonstrated their special abilities.

At that time, someone else sighed and said, "Our group is really not suited for this kind of job. We don't have too many characters related to infiltration. We even need a few people joining hands to accomplish a simple task like this."

Jia Mingzhen did not seem to mind, "That's normal since this is not what we specialize in. If you really love spying, then just form more related characters. As for me, I don't have the time to spare for that."

They were all ready to watch the show that was going to unfold soon.

Chapter 238: Fight (2)

On the training center's third floor.

The old instructor went upstairs again and awkwardly took out a device before setting it up in front of Liu Hong's group. Through the device, they were able to see clearly what was going on in the room on the second floor.

Liu Hong and Zhou Pingsheng weren't surprised. A lot of training centers had the habit of spying on their customers. This was especially true for training centers that also provided the venue for people to spar. These training centers would frequently create recordings of these spars.

Some would use the recordings for themselves while some would simply use those recordings in their information peddling business. Therefore, the two had not bothered making any preparations to spy on the match themselves. When cultivators spar, the recordings could be used as learning material for other cultivators.

"Manager Zhou, Assistant Liu, shall I leave?"

The old instructor was somewhat flustered. There was still another group of important guests waiting for him next door.

"You may leave," Zhou Pingsheng replied indifferently. The old instructor was glad to hear that and hurriedly left the room.

After the old instructor left, Liu Hong looked at the two people on the screen and smiled, "Senior Brother, who do you think will win this match?"

"Zheng Yunhui." Zhou Pingsheng replied nonchalantly, "It doesn't matter if he can defeat Su Yu or not. Today, he will be the winner."

"Senior Brother." Liu Hong frowned, "Are we going to meddle in the match?"

"Don't put it that way. We simply have to get our hands on the data." Zhou Pingsheng solemnly said, "Su Yu will never sell the data. And if we forcefully take it from him, he can claim that we robbed him and get us in great trouble. We can only get it if it lands in Zheng Yunhui's hands. Junior Brother, you know what I mean. Senior Brother Zheng is of the same opinion."

He smiled and added, "Don't worry. If Zheng Yunhui can lose even as an eighth-stage Great Strength cultivator, then he would be utterly useless. He is still a member of the Zheng Family's main branch. He won't be so weak."

Liu Hong did not say anything else. If they really had to meddle, with a seventh-stage Cloudbreach expert on their side and the distance between them and the kids, those two would probably not notice anything.

...

Second floor. Within a large room.

Both Su Yu and Zheng Yunhui had arrived. The hostility between the two was thick. Both were regarding the other coldly.

Zheng Yunhui asked, "Where's the stuff?"

Su Yu tossed out a bag. The Skybreak Technique willpower text was revealed alongside a jade pendant. When Zheng Yunhui saw the jade pendant, his expression changed as he asked, "Is it in there?"

"Yes. Do you know what this is?" Su Yu said, "This is a temporary talisman used to record precious information. It comes with the ability to set passwords. You will only be able to access the data with my password. If you try to access it through brute force, the pendant will self-destruct. Zheng Yunhui, don't even think of playing tricks."

Zheng Yunhui frowned, "How am I supposed to know if the data is real?"

"I will prove it later." Su Yu's eyes turned cold as he asked, "My stuff is here. How about you?"

"Hmph!" Zheng Yunhui took out a golden bottle. The bottle wasn't large, but it was radiating a golden light.

"Look carefully..."

He opened the stopper and immediately after, a drop of blood essence darted out. Zheng Yunhui was ready for it so his willpower erupted, pressing the blood essence back into the bottle as a popping sound rang out in the air before sealing the bottle again.

"Did you see that? Divine blood essence! Even a drop of blood essence has some sort of consciousness."

Su Yu could sense a surging blood essence power.

His gaze was burning hot as he looked at the bottle and asked, "How many drops?"

"Five."

Su Yu's face fell as he said, "We agreed on eight!"

Zheng Yunhui furiously said, "Your stuff is not worth that much! I asked around. It's only worth five drops. Furthermore, the ten drops are being stored in two different bottles. I can only take one bottle with me. If I take both, they will definitely find out immediately."

"You..."

"Cut the crap. If I lose, I'll pay you 2,000 merit points on top of that."

"Do you even have that much money?"

"Hmph!" Zheng Yunhui coldly said, "No. But I can give you the two grotto free entries the academy gave me."

"Are you serious?"

"Of course." Zheng Yunhui impatiently said, "You already verified the authenticity my stuff. How about you?"

Su Yu smiled. He tossed the temporary talisman over and said, "Keep it in your hands first. If I lose, I'll give you the password. After the match, I'll show you. You only need to prepare some materials. I'll produce some blood essence right in front of you. You can easily see if I'm lying or not. If the data is fake, feel free to spread what I did here. My reputation in the academy will be ruined."

Zheng Yunhui frowned, "This is a private match. The academy won't care about it. Stop trying to trick me. If it's fake, wouldn't I have worked hard for nothing? Su Yu, don't mess around with me. Either you prove that this is real now or you can just return me the Skybreak Technique and call this off."

Su Yu frowned, "You don't trust me?"

"Of course not."

Su Yu said, "I don't trust you either. If I show you the data now and you lose, wouldn't you get the data anyway?"

He sank into a short silence before suggesting, "Why don't you get the shopkeeper to buy some materials for you. Buy as many materials as you want. Since you're willing to pay, I don't mind. Also, don't even dream of deducting the formula through the materials. If you win, I'll produce some blood essence immediately. If I fail to produce any blood essence, you can further injure me. I won't have anything to say. Do you really think that someone like me will willingly allow myself to be injured so heavily that I have to be bedridden for months or even a year?"

Su Yu solemnly said, "If you still can't believe me with all that, then there's nothing I can do. I won't show you the formula right now."

After some hesitation, Zheng Yunhui nodded. He left the room and called the old instructor over. Su Yu wasted no time and wrote a long list of materials, including blood essence, pills, natural resources, ores, and so on. In total, there were nearly 100 different materials listed.

The old instructor was quite a knowledgeable person due to his age. Thus, when he saw the list, he asked in astonishment, "You're buying all these? They are worth at least 300 merit points."

Su Yu said nothing and simply looked at Zheng Yunhui.

Zheng Yunhui cursed inwardly. Damn it! That bastard was deliberately making him waste money. What an asshole!

But Su Yu was clearly not going to pay for all that. And in order to prove that Su Yu's data was real, Zheng Yunhui had no choice but to pay for these materials. He clenched his teeth and gave the old instructor 300 merit points. With a smile, he said, "If this is not enough, I'll reimburse you when you get back."

"Sure."

The old instructor did not hesitate. These two had attracted quite a lot of people today. After the old instructor left, Zheng Yunhui looked at Su Yu again. Inwardly, he wondered if Su Yu could really produce a blood essence right in front of him. Or was he required to help him fake the performance? Whatever. He would have to act accordingly depending on the situation.

...

Third floor.

Zhou Pingsheng's eyes flickered as he looked at Liu Hong. Liu Hong nodded and said, "I'll provide all the materials. We'll make sure they're using only our materials. That way, he won't be able to play any tricks."

"Umm." Zhou Pingsheng nodded, "Don't give Su Yu a chance to try anything. Pay close attention to him after his defeat. If he really can produce the blood essence..."

Zhou Pingsheng's eyes lit up. Then they would earn big! 50,000 merit points were nothing compared to what they could gain.

"We better not let the Xia Family get the list. We don't want them to deduce the formula through the materials..."

Before he could finish his words, his expression changed. Outside, the middle-aged man from the Xia Family had stopped the old instructor.

After taking a look at the list of materials, his face twitched. Was this a joke? Were these materials capable of producing those special blood essence? Just what was he looking at?

The list included ores used for cultural weapon forging, different blood essence in the Great Strength and Infinite Strength Realms, natural resources of the Allheaven Battlefield that weren't too expensive.

Even some daily groceries could be found in the list, such as soy sauce. Just what was this list? This was a completely illogical list. He would be willing to lick the shoes of anyone capable of deducing the formula from a list like this.

After a look at the list, the middle-aged man left unhesitatingly. He would rather just wait for the result. It was pointless to try and study that list. That little bastard was too crafty.

...

Second floor. Inside a room.

Su Yu took off his robe and changed into a martial outfit. He was also holding a standard design saber in his hand.

Zheng Yunhui did not need to get changed. When he saw Su Yu doing that, he sneered, "You won't be my match even if you fight naked. I'll give you a chance. Why don't you consume your blood essence now and try to hurt me."

Su Yu ignored the provocation. He breathed lightly. After a while, he looked at Zheng Yunhui and said, "Do we start now?"

"I don't care." Zheng Yunhui smiled with disdain, "You're at the fifth-stage Great Strength Realm, right? Do you really think I'm unaware of that?"

"You sure talk a lot."

Immediately after, a chilly arc flashed through the air.

Whoosh!

The arc was formed by the swing of a saber. Su Yu did not bother hiding his cultivation level and swung his saber forward with an eruption of source qi.

"Too weak..."

Zheng Yunhui was in the middle of sneering when darkness covered his vision.

"Hah!"

Zheng Yunhui didn't have any time to think. With a roar, his willpower and Divine Character erupted. With a rumble, he shattered the illusion.

Only to be faced with a rapidly approaching tiny saber.

Zheng Yunhui's heart chilled as he saw the saber coming for his throat. He immediately leaned back and swung at the incoming saber. At the same time, his cultural weapon, a tiny sword, appeared.

From his instantaneous reaction, it was clear he was experienced in combat. He was someone who had truly fought with opponents intending to kill.

Weapons clanged against each other as Zheng Yunhui fell on his back. He followed that up with a roll on the ground.

Bang!

Su Yu's saber struck the hard floor, creating sparks and sending broken stones flying everywhere. Only then did a bloody scar appear on Zheng Yunhui's throat. The flying broken stones also left a few bloody scars on his face. His blood had been drawn!

Su Yu did not show mercy after grabbing the upper hand. His killing intent erupted as his cultural weapon shot forth.

"Battle!"

"Kill!"

Facing the incoming saber, Zheng Yunhui roared and slammed his palm into the floor, pushing himself up before swinging at the saber. At the same time, his cultural weapon shot toward Su Yu.

"Murder!"

His murderous intent grew thick as he utilized his murder character.

Su Yu sent his willpower out, but the sword instantly stabbed through his wall of willpower. The lightning character activated, striking the sword with a lightning strike.

Splurt!

The trajectory of the sword was changed, but it still cut a small wound on Su Yu's face, causing him to bleed as well.

Chapter 239: Fight (3)

Meanwhile, Zheng Yunhui had taken several steps backward after blocking Su Yu's cultural weapon. With a wave of his hand, his cultural weapon retreated. He gazed at Su Yu solemnly.

He had nearly been defeated then and there.

Fifth-stage Great Strength Realm.

This fellow did not feel like a fifth-stage Great Strength cultivator at all!

The fight had only started yet the two were already bleeding. Sensing the wound on his throat, Zheng Yunhui clenched his teeth and said, "You tried to kill me!"

"I'm fighting with all my strength. And I'm an offensive character master."

Su Yu's reply was simple. He specialized in killing. Right after that, thick killing intent erupted from his cultural weapon, electrical currents danced around the weapon, and an illusion was created.

"Fuck off!"

With a loud roar, Zheng Yunhui activated a different Divine Character. This character was related to sound.

His roar rippled outward, breaking the illusion around him.

Meanwhile, Su Yu's mind was jolted while his eardrums shook. Blood started flowing out of his ears.

Whoosh!

After shattering Su Yu's illusion, Zheng Yunhui ignored the incoming lightning strike and suddenly grew larger.

"Kill!"

Holding his saber with both hands, he pounced on Su Yu.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

The lightning strike hit him, instantly burning his clothes and causing even his skin to slightly split apart. His entire body was bleeding, but he had a resolute look on his face. In terms of Divine Character and willpower, he was not necessarily weaker than Su Yu. But in terms of physical cultivation, he was definitely stronger.

Thus, he aimed to get near Su Yu before hacking Su Yu to death. As the saber descended, Su Yu hurriedly retreated, only to be met with a wall behind him. His eyes turned solemn, but he did not panic. His yellow-grade martial weapon suddenly shone.

"Battle!"

Su Yu's battle intent rose to an astonishing level.

"Life Reaper!"

He lashed out with the second move of the Skybreak Technique. With a rumble, the martial weapon that was supposed to last him until the Infinite Strength Realm shattered as it struck the wall. Countless broken blades shot forth.

Splurt! Splurt! Splurt!

Sounds of blades entering flesh rang out repeatedly. Like a mad demon, the bloody Zheng Yunhui roared in pain before bringing his saber down on Su Yu.

Rumble!

Su Yu blasted through the wall while coughing blood. He performed several rolls on the floor to distance himself from Zheng Yunhui before stopping. While gasping for breath, he noticed the new wound on his chest.

He hurriedly tore a strip of cloth off his shirt and gave himself a crude bandage while retreating. He had also summoned his cultural weapon back.

Opposite him, Zheng Yunhui was also breathing heavily.

Looking at Su Yu with red eyes, he said, "Well done, Su Yu. I am more and more interested in you."

His entire body was dyed red with blood, as though he was a man made of blood. His muscles started wiggling, ejecting one broken blade after another from his body. The broken blades fell on the floor, creating crisp sounds in the room.

"Is this all you have?" Zheng Yunhui sneered, "Use your blood essence or I'll cut you to death before long."

Su Yu ignored those words. He swallowed a drop of source qi liquid and continued breathing heavily. When he looked at his bloodied body, he laughed.

Next, his cultural weapon flew out again.

Zheng Yunhui roared as his martial weapon shone brightly. At the same time, his cultural weapon shot toward Su Yu's head. Both of them were fighting without holding back, each of their attacks fatal.

With a stomp on the floor, Su Yu leaped before kicking the wall, catapulting him out of the way of the cultural weapon.

At the same time, Zheng Yunhui parried the incoming cultural weapon once again, but at that moment, he felt a chill crept up his spine as all his closed wounds split open again. His healing wounds were once again bleeding.

Drop after drop of blood flew out of his body before being absorbed by Su Yu's cultural weapon.

"Damn it!"

Blood absorption!

Seeing that he couldn't stop himself from bleeding, his willpower erupted as yet another Divine Character was activated.

A large amount of his willpower was consumed and in the blink of an eye all his wounds healed.

With a pale face, Zheng Yunhui looked at Su Yu furiously. Su Yu had a look of astonishment on his face.

"Healing Divine Character?"

"Hmph!" Zheng Yunhui snorted coldly. All three of his Divine Characters had been exposed.

Murder, sound, and healing.

As for Su Yu, he had also used multiple character abilities to give Zheng Yunhui all sorts of trouble.

...

"These two..."

All the experts observing in secret were shocked. The two kids were really fighting with their lives on the line! This was only a spar, but the two were treating it as a battle to the death. One was fifth-stage Great Strength while the other was eighth-stage Great Strength yet the fight felt more like a battle to the death between Infinite Strength cultivators.

"I'm afraid both of them are already near the level of the top 100 students...Some of those beyond top 90 are probably not even their match..."

At that moment, a change occurred yet again. After Su Yu's cultural weapon returned to him, it enlarged into the size of a regular saber. At the same time, four Divine Characters attached themselves to the weapon.

"Fuse!"

With a roar by Su Yu, his characters were forcefully fused together. The saber started shaking. At the same time, Zheng Yunhui roared as his body grew even larger. Every single one of his acupoints was shining brightly.

Su Yu swung his saber, and when the saber was about to hit, Zheng Yunhui's body shone, followed by a loud clang.

The impact of the hit sent Zheng Yunhui rolling on the floor, but he stood up immediately and laughed, "You're dead, idiot! Why must I take your attack with my body?"

Talisman!

A broken talisman could be seen falling from Zheng Yunhui's body. The talisman had blocked the attack for him.

Su Yu's face was pale and his eyes were cold. Inwardly, he was cursing endlessly.

Shameless!

This fellow had really used a talisman!

"You're screwed!"

Zheng Yunhui roared with laughter as he charged Su Yu again. Su Yu said nothing and crushed the drop of iron-winged bird blood essence he had kept in his mouth. With a roar, his hands shot forth like lightning. His left hand met the blade, causing more blood to flow while his right hand clawed at his opponent.

A chunk of flesh was dug out of Zheng Yunhui's chest.

More blood flowed out.

"Ahh!"

Zheng Yunhui yelled in pain, but he still managed to get off a kick, sending Su Yu flying with a sharp pain in his waist. Su Yu's bones had been broken by that kick.

"Bastard!"

Zheng Yunhui took several steps back before looking at the wound on his chest. The wound was so deep even his bones were visible.

As for Su Yu, he was deathly pale, his hands were bleeding, and his waist was also dyed red with blood.

"Let's see how much longer you can last!"

Zheng Yunhui did not try getting close to Su Yu again. He sent his cultural weapon flying toward Su Yu. At the same time, Su Yu sent his cultural weapon out as well. One saber and one sword danced in the air as they clashed. Lightning, sound waves, killing intent, battle intent, everything mixed together.

A short while later, Zheng Yunhui withdrew his cultural weapon while his face turned red with anger. Several chips had appeared on that tiny sword.

He looked at Su Yu and asked, "Where did you get that?"

Was that still a yellow-grade weapon?

Su Yu ignored the question. He had exhausted too much of his willpower. But Zheng Yunhui wasn't doing any better either. He activated his Divine Character again, healing the wound on his chest. This time, the wound was healing much slower.

While panting for breath, Zheng Yunhui grinned and said, "You're probably out of energy, right? Without Divine Characters, how are you going to fight me now?"

"Try to find out."

It was getting hard for Su Yu to move. Zheng Yunhui had a rapid recovery method, but he didn't have one.

"Sure. I'll try. Have a taste of Zheng Family's special technique!"

"Roar!"

With yet another roar, he grew even larger. He was around 1.8 meters tall previously, but after several rounds of enlargement, he was now nearly 2.2 meters in height. With his blade in hand, he advanced imposingly toward Su Yu.

With a bang, his saber connected with Su Yu's saber.

He swung his saber a second time, missing and hitting a nearby weapon shelf.

He swung his saber for the third time, but the saber was caught by Su Yu who was still unleashing the prowess of an Infinite Strength cultivator.

Then, Su Yu raised his knee and sent it toward Zheng Yunhui's crotch.

"Hahaha! I discovered something!"

Zheng Yunhui laughed heartily and met the knee with his own knee. The collision gave Su Yu so much pain he wondered if his knee had been crushed. Even Zheng Yunhui's face twitched from the pain. He said, "Only your hands have the strength of the Infinite Strength Realm. Blood essence ability? Nothing special!"

Su Yu's knee attack did not come with the strength of an Infinite Strength cultivator.

After several exchanges, Zheng Yunhui had noticed this weakness. Thus, he was able to instantly inflict a heavy injury on Su Yu.

Su Yu retreated. He was now limping.

Zheng Yunhui advanced with his saber. "You have too many weaknesses. Su Yu, looks like this is it for you."

Hum!

The saber descended toward Su Yu. Suddenly, Zheng Yunhui's vision blurred for a split second. Zheng Yunhui wasn't given the opportunity to think too much into it as he was alarmed by what he saw next. Dead?

He seemed to have...killed Su Yu with that swing of his saber?

Dead?

No, it felt wrong.

He retreated hastily and unleashed his willpower to shatter the illusion. However, nothing changed. Immediately after, he felt an incoming attack at the back of his head.

"Hah!"

Zheng Yunhui roared and stomped on the floor, sending him into the air. The attack missed his head and struck his back, causing him to cough blood as his internal organs shook while an intense pain assaulted his back.

When he raised his head again, the illusion had vanished. Su Yu was even more pale than before. He was kneeling on one knee as he smiled, "Isn't this exciting?"

"Impossible!" Zheng Yunhui was alarmed, "When did you create that illusion? My willpower is stronger than yours. Why couldn't I break it?"

"Impossible!"

The same word resounded in several other places.

Zheng Yunhui had actually been fooled by Su Yu's illusion and received a heavy injury as a result.

Zheng Yunhui's willpower was above 85 percent. He was even actively defending against illusions. How could he fall into Su Yu's illusion so easily?

"Second tier Divine Character!"

Someone in Jia Mingzhen's group exclaimed.

They were all in disbelief.

But that was the only explanation for what Su Yu just did. That was the only way Su Yu could continue fooling Zheng Yunhui with his illusion even when Zheng Yunhui was aware of the illusion.

Since Su Yu's willpower was weaker, then the tier of the Divine Character was the only explanation.

Chapter 240: Terrible Feeling (1)

Second floor of the training center.

The floor had been destroyed. The wall had collapsed.

A large amount of blood was gushing out of Zheng Yunhui's mouth. His internal organs had been injured heavily. He was both in disbelief and fury.

He was a genius. A freak. The strongest of his generation in the Zheng Family. He had expected himself to perhaps suffer defeat to the likes of Xia Chan or Wan Mingze. But even against those people, he was still confident in victory.

Today, he was merely fighting against a fifth-stage Great Strength cultivator. Yet he had been injured so heavily.

"Su Yu..."

Looking at the smiling Su Yu, Zheng Yunhui struggled back on his feet. With blood still dripping from the corner of his mouth, he smiled, "Do you think...you already won?"

While gasping heavily for breath, Su Yu replied, "Nope. I'm not afraid of your comeback. But I do want to say that an eighth-stage Great Strength cultivator...is really nothing special."

Nothing special. Those words echoed in Zheng Yunhui's ears.

Eighth-stage Great Strength Realm. Three stages higher than Su Yu's cultivation level.

Zheng Yunhui clenched his teeth. Yes. Eighth-stage Great Strength? Nothing special.

"You're right...but today...I want to win!"

Zheng Yunhui roared. He wanted to win! If he couldn't even defeat someone with a lower cultivation level, how was he supposed to contend against the other freaks of this generation?

"Su Yu! You think you're going to win this?"

Source qi gathered around Zheng Yunhui. His acupoints shone even brighter. All 96 of his acupoints were brightly lit. He had just entered the eighth stage. But at this moment, a new acupoint lit up in his body.

Zheng Yunhui's face turned red.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

The sound of his heartbeat resounded in the room.

"Su Yu, you think you already won?"

Zheng Yunhui walked toward Su Yu. Step by step, he walked forth. With the first step, one new acupoint opened.

With the second step, the second new acupoint opened.

"Do you think the people of the Zheng Family will admit defeat so easily?"

The third new acupoint opened.

"Do you think the children of influential families like us are all wastrels?"

The fourth new acupoint opened.

At that point, not even those experts who were observing the fight could be indifferent anymore.

The two freaks had fought with the intensity and strength of Infinite Strength cultivators.

Even with their serious injuries, the battle wasn't ending. Instead, it was slowly reaching a new climax.

"Zheng Yunhui..." Jia Mingzhen cursed, "He is too competitive. Why is he using a secret technique to open temporary acupoints? Even if he wins, he will be bedridden for months."

The female elder said, "I'm more interested in Su Yu. As a fifth-stage Great Strength cultivator, he is able to force Zheng Yunhui to the point he's using a secret technique. Can Xia Chan and Wan Mingze even defeat him?"

At that question, the elders sank into silence.

There sure were a lot of freaks this year.

Every single one of them possessed the combat strength of Infinite Strength cultivators at such a young age. Su Yu, in particular, had been growing at an astonishing rate.

...

Third floor.

The middle-aged man from the Xia Family had a solemn expression as well. He looked at Xia Huyou and said, "Both these kids will be formidable rivals for you."

"No." Xia Huyou smiled, "They are my friends. My companions. My business partners. I like to see them strong. Only when they are strong will things be more interesting. And only businesses done with the strong can be considered big businesses. I like strong people."

The middle-aged man laughed. He said, "Huyou, do you think Little Chan can defeat either of them?"

"Not now." Xia Huyou was blunt, "Not even the Sky Sundering Saber can help her defeat them. Xia Chan has too little experience when it comes to fighting with her life on the line. She has always viewed sparring and killing as two separate matters. Against opponents like these two, a tiny bit of hesitation is enough to give her a serious injury."

The middle-aged man nodded. That was true. Xia Chan was not inexperienced with death, but she was still somewhat indecisive and gentle. She wasn't as ruthless and crazy as these two.

Yes, these two were crazy. The moment they started fighting, they attacked to kill. A clueless observer would probably think that this was a fight to the death instead of a mere spar. They were too ruthless.

...

In a different room.

Zhou Pingsheng had been watching the fight in silence. Suddenly, he said, "Su Yu must be suppressed. Make sure of it."

Liu Hong nodded.

Zhou Pingsheng coldly said, "He has only joined the academy for a month yet he is already strong enough to nearly defeat Zheng Yunhui."

Looking at the screen, he saw that Zheng Yunhui's aura was rising further and further. Zheng Yunhui was on the cusp of the ninth stage. Seeing that, he calmed down slightly. The Zheng kid had used a secret technique. There was no way he could lose now. Su Yu was an arrow at the end of its flight.

Meanwhile, Liu Hong was starting to doubt his judgment. Had he guessed wrongly? Had Su Yu accepted the challenge because of his second tier Divine Character? Because he was confident in his victory?

"Was I mistaken? Is the data real?"

He was really starting to doubt himself. Previously, he had thought that there was no chance for Su Yu to win. But reality proved that Su Yu had nearly won. Of course, it was also clear that Su Yu was going to lose soon.

...

Su Yu had sustained heavy injuries.

His waist, his chest, and his legs had all sustained injuries. His source qi was low, and his willpower was nearly fully exhausted as well. It was too exhausting to use a second tier Divine Character. He couldn't defeat Zheng Yunhui. His whole body was feeling weak.

Meanwhile, Zheng Yunhui was opening new acupoints to reach the ninth stage. Things looked completely hopeless for Su Yu. Looking at Zheng Yunhui who was slowly walking toward him, Su Yu grinned.

Zheng Yunhui frowned. This bastard was still smiling? Asshole! Su Yu had agreed to lose this match! But instead of losing, that bastard had given him such heavy injuries! And that bastard still dared to smile? Zheng Yunhui wanted to give Su Yu an even worse beating.

He had been injured heavily. Additionally, he would also suffer a backlash from using the secret technique. After this, he would probably spend a long time in recovery. He wouldn't let Su Yu off easily!

Su Yu didn't care about what Zheng Yunhui was thinking. His cultural weapon enlarged into the size of a normal weapon again.

"You...are truly durable."

Su Yu laughed. Electrical currents started running along his saber.

Rumbling Thunder!

At the same time, the lightning character shone blindly.

The saber swept forth.

This was the Lightning Source Blade.

The normal acupoints of Su Yu were completely exhausted of source qi. However, he had also opened additional acupoints for the Lightning Source Blade. And those acupoints were still pretty fresh right now.

As for his willpower...did Zheng Yunhui think that he was out of willpower?

What a joke!

The lightning character and the Lightning Source Blade were a perfect match for each other.

The saber attack had been launched out of nowhere. A loud rumble accompanied its advance. Zheng Yunhui was both alarmed and furious. His source qi erupted as he swung his saber.

Boom!

Instantly, Zheng Yunhui's entire body was charred. More cracks appeared on his beloved weapon. It was showing signs of completely breaking apart. At the same time, Su Yu's badly damaged hand started shining once again. The duration of his blood essence activation was not so short. It was actually still active. Resisting the intense pain, Su Yu slammed his injured foot on the floor and charged Zheng Yunhui.

"Scram!"

Zheng Yunhui abandoned his saber and threw a punch at Su Yu.

Bang!

A punch connected with a claw, leaving numerous wounds on the fist.

Bang!

Zheng Yunhui ignored his injuries and threw another punch, sending Su Yu flying away with a broken sternum. Su Yu crashed onto the ground and coughed a large amount of blood. Zheng Yunhui was also down on one knee as he gasped for breath.

"Damn it! You...can still...fight?"

He was going crazy. That bastard was already so heavily injured! Why was he still capable of fighting? What was up with this fellow?

Su Yu's chest was still rising and falling, proving that he was still alive. After a short while, he struggled back up and grinned, "Zheng Yunhui...I am...far stronger than you had imagined!"

Hum!

Once again, his saber floated up and shot toward Zheng Yunhui's head.

Bang!

Zheng Yunhui punched the saber away, opening yet another wound on his fist. He cursed, "You're cheating! You must have used some drug to increase your willpower!"

It was simply impossible for Su Yu to be so tough. This bastard had even used a second tier Divine Character. How could he still have willpower to spare? Zheng Yunhui refused to believe that! This was a lie! Everything was a lie!

"Ah..."

Su Yu couldn't even be bothered to give a reply. He continued attacking with his cultural weapon. The furious Zheng Yunhui punched the weapon off again and again. The fight was not over yet.

...

Meanwhile, the same term was being repeated in multiple different rooms.

"Soul Expanding Art!"

Jia Mingzhen, Chen Yong, and the middle-aged man were saying the same thing.

That was most definitely the Soul Expanding Art!

Su Yu's willpower was terrifyingly durable. His willpower level had just reached the level of the Mental Tempering Stage, yet he had a higher endurance than Zheng Yunhui. What did that signify?

Zhao Li!

Zhao Li had taught this kid the Soul Expanding Art!

On the third floor, Zhou Pingsheng's expression changed as he muttered, "Zhao Li! Damn it! Why is that old geezer involved with this kid? This will be troublesome!"

Zhao Li was a seventh-stage Cloudbreach, someone at the same cultivation level as Zhou Pingsheng. But Zhao Li had a unique identity. He was the son of the fourth principal. The owner of the Source Qi Secret Grotto.

Yes, he was the owner of the Source Qi Secret Grotto. Since the fourth principal had a surviving descendent, the grotto created from his Divine Character naturally had an owner as well. But Zhao Li was not the type of person who cared too much about all that so he allowed the academy to run the grotto as they wished.

But it still belonged to Zhao Li. If one day Zhao Li decided to take the grotto back, what should the academy do? Thus, even people like Wan Tiansheng had to be very careful and keep that fellow happy.

Furthermore, Zhao Li was someone with the potential to become the second weaponsmith capable of forging earth-grade cultural weapons. His status was definitely not lower than that of any elder in the academy.

Zhou Pingsheng's face turned gloomy.

Su Yu was actually involved with Zhao Li.

"Isn't he minoring in weaponsmithing?" Zhou Pingsheng asked, "Why is Zhao Li teaching the kid his core teachings?"

Liu Hong was still confused. He asked, "Zhao Li? Core teachings?"

"Soul Expanding Art!" Zhou Pingsheng coldly said, "Su Yu's willpower is too thick. This is not something he should possess at this level of cultivation. Thus, he must have cultivated the Soul Expanding Art, Zhao Li's unique cultivation method. It is a rare willpower cultivation method that can be used below the Skysoar Realm. It is even comparable to the academy's Myriad Text Sutra."

"What?"

Liu Hong was really unaware of all that. His eyes flickered as he wondered why he knew none of that.

Zhou Pingsheng ignored Liu Hong and returned his focus to the screen. The flying saber was still attacking Zheng Yunhui relentlessly. Even Zheng Yunhui's temporary breakthrough seemed useless as his injuries were too heavy. His presence was starting to drop.

And the moment his temporary acupoints closed again, his strength would drop. Meanwhile, Su Yu could probably keep going for a very long time.

"Is Zheng Yunhui really going to lose?"

Zhou Pingsheng couldn't help but to start believing that Su Yu might win. And he found it hard to believe. Zheng Yunhui would be the one to be defeated?

"Impossible. Zheng Yunhui will be able to exhaust Su Yu's willpower in less than 30 seconds. Not even Soul Expanding Art can help someone last this long..."

30 seconds later.

Zheng Yunhui had a look of despair on his face. Looking at the saber that was still attacking him, he cursed, "Su Yu! Fuck you and your family! Tell me! You're already a Skysoar, right? Tell me!"

He roared furiously.

That bastard had been fighting with only his willpower for some time. How could he still continue? The heavens were unfair!

Totally unfair!

With blood still dripping out of the corner of his mouth, Su Yu smiled. He was about to speak when Zheng Yunhui grabbed his saber. Ignoring the saber's struggle and allowing the saber to cut his hand, Zheng Yunhui charged forth and landed a kick on Su Yu.

"Fuck you! Come at me again, asshole!"

Zheng Yunhui was going crazy. Once again, he grabbed at the saber. More blood flowed out of his hand as the saber struggled, but he refused to let go.

"Again!"

He charged forth again and stomped down on Su Yu who was on the ground.

Su Yu cut a sorry figure as he desperately rolled away.

"Fight me with your physical cultivation, bastard!"

Bang!

The floor cracked.

"What kind of man uses willpower to fight?"

"..."