

## Overlord 111

### Chapter 111: Battle Request

"You can't be afraid, right? It would be a shame if that is the case," Luo Lin said provokingly. Right after he said that, the disciples behind him roared with laughter.

"If you don't even have the courage for something like this, just go back to where you came. You will just die at the Battle of Towns."

"That's right. They don't even have the courage for that. How are they supposed to fight the geniuses of other towns? Just go back. You will only embarrass yourself there."

"Haha, maybe they are only hiding their strength and are not willing to waste time on us."

"Yeah, stop calling them cowards. These are the geniuses of Wu Town. What will we do if they decide to beat us up in their anger?"

The Gateflag Academy disciples jeered.

Looking at their taunting expressions, it was as if they wouldn't stop until they managed to make the Martial Hall Palace disciples fight. The Martial Hall Palace disciples were so infuriated they started shaking in fury.

"Bastard! Vice palace master, permission to battle, please. Let me teach them a lesson!"

"They are obviously trying to provoke us. What are we afraid of? Bring it on! They will be the losing side if we do fight!"

"Yes! Let us trample these Gateflag Academy trash!"

"How about we beat them into submission? That will teach them our actual strength!"

The Martial Hall Palace disciples were all hot-blooded youngsters. They naturally couldn't resist such provocation and started shouting as well. The disciples of the two parties bickered with each other.

"Shut up!" Tan Guanghua berated.

His loud and clear voice rumbled, entering the ears of every single disciple, including those of the Gateflag Academy. He looked at Luo Lin and said, "Luo Lin, is this the Gateflag Academy's attitude?"

"Hehe, they are a bunch of hot-blooded children. Don't mind them, Brother Tan. But then again, if the Martial Hall Palace is afraid of losing, just forget my proposal then," Luo Lin said. He was advancing by taking a step back.

In this situation, it would be hard for Tan Guanghua to not agree to the challenge. If he shirked from this, the Martial Hall Palace would lose all face. None of them could accept that.

"Fine, what do you propose? Don't tell me you will get all the disciples to fight for a winner. If we did that, I'm afraid we won't have any disciples left to participate in the Battle of Towns," Tan Guanghua said.

"Of course we can't do that. We will send out our strongest disciple. Your party will do the same. The winner will lead the alliance during the Battle of Towns. What do you think?" Luo Lin proposed.

"No, that is not proper," the first elder, Jie Shi, interjected before Tan Guanghua could say anything.

"What's not proper about that?" Luo Lin asked.

"An individual's strength does not represent the strength of the group as a whole. How about this, we will fight three rounds. The side with two victories will be the winner," Jie Shi said.

"Yes, I agree," Tan Guanghua said. This would be a comparatively fairer method of selecting the leader. With this, the Martial Hall Palace could also avoid falling for the other party's trick.

Luo Lin hesitated slightly before agreeing, "Sure. Three rounds it is then. The loser will have to obey the winner!" He then shouted, "Fang Qing'er, Lin Yuan, Liao Hao, step forward!"

At that command, one young woman and two young men stepped forth. The young woman was extremely beautiful and alluring. Standing there, she looked like a bright peacock that overshadowed all other women, snatching all attention for herself.

She was Fang Qing'er, 18 years old this year and the number one genius female disciple of Gateflag Academy. Like Gong Qinyin, she also had a five-star physique. As she was two years older than Gong Qinyin, her cultivation level was higher than Gong Qinyin's. She was already a Transformation Realm cultivator, a genius that the Gateflag Academy had kept hidden for the past three years. She was also the reason Luo Lin had made such a proposal to the Martial Hall Palace.

With Fang Qing'er, they were fully confident they could enter the top 10 this time. The other two, Lin Yuan and Liao Hao were similarly very powerful as well. They were also the geniuses of the Gateflag Academy. They were both handsome and heroic, and with their cultivation level of ninth-stage Astral Realm, they were both reliable disciples of their academy. Tan Guanghua and Jie Shi were not blind. The moment they laid their eyes on the three disciples, their faces fell.

"Transformation Realm! That girl is a Transformation Realm cultivator!" Jie Shi cried out in alarm.

"Yes, I know. Looks like we got tricked. Good thing you made your suggestion when you did. Otherwise, we will stand no chance," Tan Guanghua said with a frown.

"Mo Zhu, Lu Yanchao, and Chen Xin. Step forward," Tan Guanghua said.

Three Martial Hall Palace disciples stepped out. Mo Zhu was the proud disciple of Tan Guanghua and was a ninth-stage Astral Realm cultivator only one step away from the Transformation Realm. He also had a handsome appearance. Dressed in his white outfit, he radiated elegance and grace. He was the prince charming for many girls in the Martial Hall Palace.

As for Lu Yanchao, he was a rather low-profiled disciple. A disciple of Vice Palace Master Qing Xiuhe, he was similarly a ninth-stage Astral Realm cultivator. He was rarely seen in the Martial Hall Palace, as he spent most of his time cultivating alone. Lastly, Chen Xin was the eleventh elder, He Yinghua's disciple. She was beautiful and enchanting, comparable to Fang Qing'er the Gateflag Academy had sent out.

"Everyone is here. Do you want to start now or do you have anything else in mind?" Tan Guanghua asked.

"Regular fights are boring. Why don't we increase the difficulty? Let's throw some planks on the river and get them to fight on the planks," Luo Lin suggested.

One had to admit that the difficulty of fighting in such conditions was extremely high. When the young disciples heard that, their expressions changed. Battling on a plank floating on water was no easy task. One would have to control their strength while focusing on the opponent at the same time. This was a feat requiring one to do two things at once.

"Fine," Tan Guanghua agreed. It would be too late to back off now. They both tossed a plank each onto the river.

Liao Hao leaped off the ship and landed on the plank before shouting, "I, Liao Hao, will be first. Who of the Martial Hall Palace will face me?"

"I'll go first." Chen Xin knew she was the weakest of the three; thus she had offered to go first.

But before she could go, Jie Shi said, "We can't afford to lose this round. Lu Yanchao, you go. Don't hold back."

"Yes, first elder." Lu Yanchao cupped his fists before leaping off the deck onto the plank.

When the Martial Hall Palace disciples saw Lu Yanchao landing firmly on the plank without losing balance, they shouted, "Well done!"

"Remember, this is a friendly match. Stop accordingly when a victor is decided. Start now," Luo Lin announced.

## Chapter 112: Repeated Defeat

The battle between Liao Hao and Lu Yanchao began. They were both ninth-stage Astral Realm cultivators and were able to properly balance themselves even when battling on a floating plank. They used everything they knew and battled intensely. At the same time, they held their punches so as to not accidentally fall into the river. They were evenly matched, and for now, it was hard to see which of them would be victorious. The people of both parties were nervously watching the ongoing party.

"Boss, who do you think will win?" Xia Liuhui whispered to Xiang Shaoyun.

Xiang Shaoyun said lazily, "They may look to be evenly matched right now, but if they are fighting on land, I am certain Lu Yanchao will win. But here...he is rather lacking when fighting on water."

Xiang Shaoyun did not give a direct answer, but it was clear enough.

"Oh, do you mean Lu Yanchao will lose?" Xia Liuhui nearly cried out. Even though he had suppressed his voice, the people around him had still overheard him. They all shot Xiang Shaoyun and Xia Liuhui resentful gazes. The honor of both academies were on the line here. How could they praise their opponent and downplay their own people?

But it was at this moment that something had indeed happened to Lu Yanchao.

Liao Hao had flicked some water from the river into Lu Yanchao's eyes, disrupting his vision and interrupting his tempo. At the same time, he launched an attack on the plank Lu Yanchao was standing on, causing him to lose his balance before finally pushing Lu Yanchao into the river with a final attack.

Lu Yanchao did not forget to launch a counterattack on Liao Hao the moment he was falling into the river. Unfortunately, Liao Hao easily dodged it.

Splash!

Lu Yanchao was drenched wet, signifying his defeat.

"Well done, Senior Brother Liao! Gateflag Academy! Victory! Gateflag Academy! Victory!" the Gateflag Academy disciples started chanting.

A wide smile crawled onto Luo Lin's face as he said, "Brother Tan, Brother Jie, it is a good fight, but looks like it's our victory, hahaha."

Tan Guanghua, Jie Shi, and the Martial Hall Palace disciples felt like they had been slapped on the face. The defeat was an insult to them.

Lu Yanchao climbed back up on the deck and said guiltily, "This disciple is an embarrassment to the Martial Hall Palace."

Water battle was not something he was good at. If this was a land battle, he was confident he could crush Liao Hao.

"Victory and defeat is common in battles. Don't think too much about it," Tan Guanghua said.

"Let me fight the second match," Mo Zhu stepped out and said. Not giving anyone a chance to say anything, he directly leaped onto the plank. The graceful elegance he emanated with his every motion caused the female disciples to cheer loudly for him. They were completely smitten looking at Mo Zhu.

"Eldest senior brother! Victory! Eldest senior brother! Victory!" the girls started chanting.

A victory was much needed to regain the face they had lost during the previous defeat.

Tan Guanghua and Jie Shi both inwardly mourned bitterly, It's over. The Battle of Towns has yet to start, and we are already suffering defeat.

They knew that even if Mo Zhu was personally fighting, it would be pointless since a Transformation Realm cultivator was still waiting there. Sure enough, Fang Qing'er was the one fighting this time.

Her graceful figure landed lightly on the plank, akin to a fairy descending from the heavens. Her appearance immediately captured the gazes of all the Martial Hall Palace's young male disciples. A beauty like that was comparable to even Gong Qinyin. Unfortunately, Gong Qinyin was much weaker than her. Otherwise, if she was the one fighting this Fang Qing'er, it would be a feast for the eyes of the male disciples.

Even Mo Zhu had an odd expression on his face when his gaze landed on Fang Qing'er. The moment he laid eyes on her, his heart grew uncontrollably excited.

"There are still two of you. Just come together," Fang Qing'er's crisp voice rang out.

"Are you looking down on me?" Mo Zhu frowned.

"If your cultivation level is even one phase higher, I am willing to have a fair fight with you. But the current you are still not worthy," Fang Qing'er said indifferently.

"Haha, since Qing'er has already offered, you two should just attack together. If the two of you can defeat her, we will just admit defeat," Luo Lin said cockily. He had full confidence in Fang Qing'er. After all, she was Gateflag Academy's trump card.

"No, I myself shall defeat you!" Mo Zhu yelled and drew the sword hanging on his back before launching an attack at Fang Qing'er. He attacked quickly—in the blink of an eye, he stabbed forth eight times, leaving eight afterimages in the air. It looked as if eight swords were attacking all at once. Each of the attacks was aimed at a different vital part of Fang Qing'er.

This was the strength of Mo Zhu. He was a peak Astral Realm expert, and with his spectacular sword technique, he could even fight early Transformation Realm cultivators. Facing the incoming attack, Fang Qing'er merely stood there silently, seemingly not bothering to defend herself.

Just as Mo Zhu's sword was about to reach her, a layer of energy surfaced on her body and blocked the attack.

Cling! Clank!

The sword struck the barrier, creating sparks and causing a clink to ring out.

"A Transformation Realm expert!" Mo Zhu cried out in alarm. He had already guessed that his opponent was in the Transformation Realm, but when his guess was validated, he still couldn't prevent himself from being alarmed.

The other Martial Hall Palace disciples were also shocked. If the opponent was a Transformation Realm cultivator, Mo Zhu would stand no chance. Even if Chen Xin joined in, they still wouldn't be a match for this opponent.

"Chen Xin, you go as well. Even in the face of defeat, we still have to try our best," Tan Guanghua said, a bitter expression covering his face.

They had been so crushingly defeated before they had even reached their destination. How were they going to continue participating in the Battle of Towns? If they still participated after this, they would only be there to further glorify the would-be victors of the competition.

Chen Xin nodded and leaped off the ship as well. She then joined in and started helping Mo Zhu fight Fang Qing'er. Unfortunately, they couldn't do anything to her even after joining hands. Ultimately Fang Qing'er only gently waved her hand to send the two falling from their planks.

All three Martial Hall Palace disciples had thus been defeated. All of them had unsightly expressions, as if they had swallowed a dead fly, feeling extremely uncomfortable. On the other hand, loud chants erupted from the Gateflag Academy's side.

"Gateflag Academy! Victory! Qing'er! The most beautiful of all!"

"Gateflag Academy! Victory! Qing'er! The most beautiful of all!"

"Martial Hall Palace! Defeat! Martial Hall Palace! Defeat!"

"Martial Hall Palace! Defeat! Martial Hall Palace! Defeat!"

They were so excited it was as if they had all been drugged. All of them started throwing insults at the Martial Hall Palace people.

"Others might swallow this insult, but that does not apply to my boss! If my boss decided to fight personally, he alone can crush all of you!" Xia Liuhui shouted loudly. His voice was extremely loud, to the point even the Gateflag Academy people heard him.

Someone immediately shouted, "Your boss wasn't even given a chance to fight. If he actually dares to come out, my senior sister won't even need to dirty her hands. I alone am sufficient to crush your boss with one finger!"

### Chapter 113: This Young Master Shall Trample on You One by One

The Gateflag Academy disciples were cheering happily when someone from the Martial Hall Palace suddenly jeered at them. Of course they couldn't take it. Over the years, the two parties had been fighting openly and maneuvering covertly against each other without being able to determine a clear victor.



Now, they had finally obtained a clear victory against the Martial Hall Palace. The Martial Hall Palace was supposed to lose the courage to remain prideful. But there seemed to still be someone who feared nothing among them. Was that person trying to court death?

"Boss, he said he's going to kill you with one finger. Will you take that lying down?" Xia Liuhui asked.

Xiang Shaoyun had an urge to slap this fellow to death. He was the one who had courted this trouble in the first place, but now he was shifting the trouble to him? But since his underling couldn't stand the Gateflag Academy's attitude, as the boss, he had to back his underling up.

Xiang Shaoyun stretched lazily and said, "Killing me with one finger? Ohhh, I'm sooo terrified!"

"If you are terrified, shut your mouth. Some words can't be easily said," a strong reply came from the other ship.

Luo Lin did not do anything and allowed his disciples to keep jeering at the Martial Hall Palace. A victory over the Martial Hall Palace like this was rare. They should savor it well.

Just as Xiang Shaoyun was about to say something, Tan Guanghua looked at him and berated, "Stop messing around! Even in defeat, the Martial Hall Palace has the courage to accept it. What is the point of bickering like that?"

Xiang Shaoyun met Tan Guanghua's gaze and said, "Vice palace master, stay out of this. I am definitely going to teach them a lesson."

Acting like a reckless fool, Xiang Shaoyun first disrespected Tan Guanghua before pointing at Luo Lin. "Hey, old dog! After defeating us in a match you proposed on the spot, you are now hoping that the Martial Hall Palace will help you snatch a spot in the top 10?"

Luo Lin frowned and shouted, "Impudent! You dare scold me?"

Xiang Shaoyun rolled his sleeves up, placed both his hands on his hips, and shouted, "So what if I scold you? Old bastard, feel free to send all your disciples my way. I will trample over each and

every one of them. Let me see how capable you are to dare dream of making the Martial Hall Palace obey your commands."

That badly infuriated the Gateflag Academy. Their vice principal had been scolded openly like that, and this fellow was actually looking down on them that much. How could they bear with his insults?

"Vice principal, let me, La Liufeng, go teach him a lesson!" said a youngster. This was the same youngster who was shouting at Xia Liuhui earlier. This La Liufeng was none other than the youngster who had been scared away from the Hundred Beast Mountain Range by Xiang Shaoyun not long ago. The moment he laid eyes on Xiang Shaoyun, he had been thinking of a way to take his revenge. Now, an opportunity had arrived. He would not let it go.

"Ok. Just be sure to not kill him. Crippling him will do," Luo Lin said, fury on his face. He wanted nothing more than to personally slap this Xiang Shaoyun to death himself, but due to his status, doing that would embarrass him even more.

La Liufeng stepped forth, pointed at Xiang Shaoyun, and shouted, "Get your ass over here! You dare insult us? I, La Liufeng, shall trample all over you!"

It had been a while since Xiang Shaoyun had last seen La Liufeng. This fellow had advanced to fourth-stage Astral Realm from first-stage Astral Realm. That was quite a fast growth.

Xiang Shaoyun dug his ear and said, "Why should I fight you? It's not like I stand to gain anything."

The moment he said that, the Gateflag Academy people started heckling at him again. They now had an impression that this guy was merely someone with a big mouth but was in fact a coward who did not dare to fight.

But that was not the case for the Martial Hall Palace people. They were clear how strong Xiang Shaoyun was. Just a few months ago, he had defeated Li Tianba who was an eighth-stage Astral Realm cultivator. Would someone like that be a coward?

Tan Guanghua was about to stop Xiang Shaoyun when Jie Shi started talking to him through voice transmission, "Just let him be. Maybe this will change things for the better."

Since Jie Shi was saying that, Tan Guanghua decided to not do anything as well. In any case, they had already lost the bet. They had nothing to lose now.

"Coward, what do you want? Feel free to say it! I will grant your wish!" La Liufeng shouted.

"So the Martial Hall Palace has to obey the Gateflag Academy after losing the bet earlier, right? Well, if you lose, just cancel that arrangement," Xiang Shaoyun replied.

"Impudent! That is something we have decided upon! How can we cancel it so lightly?" Luo Lin said unhappily. He then shot Tan Guanghua and Jie Shi a gaze. "Is this the kind of disciple the Martial Hall Palace breeds? Someone who would pester endlessly upon losing? If you are going to take defeat with such bad grace, you shouldn't have agreed on the bet in the first place."

Before Tan Guanghua and Jie Shi could reply, Xiang Shaoyun's voice rang out again, "Old bastard, our vice palace master and first elder were simply trying to not embarrass you too much. If they had sent me out earlier, none of you guys would be my match. What? You don't believe that? Fine, I'll allow him to fight me with three of his other fellow apprentices!"

Xiang Shaoyun was behaving like an ignorant but reckless fool, giving his opponents an impression that he was just an idiot. Did he not see a Transformation Realm expert among the Gateflag Academy disciples? He still dared to brag like that? It would seem like there were no limits to how much a person could brag. But one had to admit that those words of Xiang Shaoyun's were very effective at infuriating the Gateflag Academy's people.

"That kid is too cocky! Not only is he scolding our vice principal, he is also provoking all of us! I can't stand him anymore!"

"Vice principal, agree to it! We shall torture him to death! That will show him!"

"Yeah! We need to teach him a good lesson. We can't allow someone like that to get even more cocky!"

"We have already defeated their three strongest disciples anyway. There is no need to bear with this kid's insults. Let me go out and crush him!"

The Gateflag Academy disciples started shouting in rage, each of them wishing nothing more than to rip Xiang Shaoyun apart. At this moment, Lu Xiaoqing arrived beside Xiang Shaoyun and said anxiously, "Shaoyun, don't let your emotions get to your head!"

"Step aside. There is nothing scary about them," Xiang Shaoyun said. He then gave the Gateflag Academy people his middle-finger before saying, "Come! Come if you dare! I, Xiang Shaoyun, shall allow you to send anyone you want against me. If I get myself killed, the Martial Hall Palace will definitely not further pursue this matter. But if I win, cancel the agreement earlier."

"Fine, you said so yourself. Don't blame us if you get killed!" Luo Lin said.

He could see that Xiang Shaoyun was merely a seventh-stage Astral Realm cultivator. Even if he could punch above his weight, he would at most be able to match someone at the eighth stage. There was nothing to fear.

"Come and face your death!" La Liufeng hopped onto a plank impatiently and shouted while pointing at Xiang Shaoyun.

Luo Lin couldn't even stop him in time. Thus, he could only sigh inwardly, Liufeng is a disciple with decent prospects. It will be beneficial for him to be taught a lesson, I guess. In any case, that big-mouthed kid has personally allowed us to pick anyone we want to send against him anyway. One defeat won't matter to us.

Just as Xiang Shaoyun was about to jump off the ship, Gong Qinyin suddenly appeared beside him and said, "If you can cancel the agreement, I will consider the grudge between us over."

Earlier, Gong Qinyin wanted to step forth and do battle as well. But she was only at the seventh stage. Even with her trump cards, she would only be able to fight a ninth-stage Astral Realm cultivator, not a Transformation Realm cultivator. Xiang Shaoyun's courage to put his life on the line had caused her to look at him in a new light.

#### Chapter 114: You Can Piss Off Again

"Haha, don't forget what you say, little girl. Remember to stop bothering me in the future," Xiang Shaoyun laughed.

Currently, everyone was focused on him. When they saw Gong Qinyin standing so close to him and heard what he called Gong Qinyin, their faces twitched. If this was any other day, they would have

already tossed this fellow into the river. He was actually calling their goddess a little girl? That was unacceptable! They forced themselves to calm down and see if this fellow would be beaten up by the Gateflag Academy people instead.

Xiang Shaoyun then walked to the deck and hopped onto a plank. He did not jump toward the Martial Hall Palace's plank. Rather, he leaped straight toward La Liufeng.

"A defeated opponent dares to act tough in front of me? Piss off," Xiang Shaoyun bellowed. His voice was loud and imposing. Combined with a tiny bit of his presence, when the soundwave drilled into La Liufeng's ears, La Liufeng's mind went blank momentarily.

In his eyes, the descending Xiang Shaoyun seemed to have transformed into a dragon, and he also looked like a fierce tiger, looking incomparably fearsome. Just as he was blanking out, Xiang Shaoyun's feet struck his face.

Splash!

La Liufeng was kicked into the river before he could react. The sight of that sent everyone into silence.

The Martial Hall Palace disciples shouted, "Well done!"

The defeat of Mo Zhu, Lu Yanchao, and Chen Xin had filled them with anger. Now, Xiang Shaoyun had vented their anger for them. After sending La Liufeng into the river, Xiang Shaoyun landed on the plank steadily, looking incomparably dashing while doing so. He then flicked his bangs and formed a charming smile on his handsome face, causing numerous girls to cheer for him.

Xiang Shaoyun was slightly younger than Mo Zhu. However, the charisma he was emanating had surpassed even Mo Zhu's, and he seemed like a completely different person now compared to when he was heckling like a reckless fool. After shedding his skin and undergoing a rebirth of his body, he now possessed an elegance not many people could compare to.

"Bastard! That was a sneak attack! I do not accept that!" La Liufeng shouted after getting out of the water. His nose was slanted to the side from the kick and was even bleeding, making him look rather sorry. But his valor was still laudable.

"Sure, I'll give you one more chance," Xiang Shaoyun said as he gestured tauntingly at La Liufeng.

"Die!" La Liufeng jumped off the ship again. While midair, he drew his weapon and swung it straight at Xiang Shaoyun. He was trying to let Xiang Shaoyun have a taste of his own medicine.

La Liufeng was attacking at his full power. Coupled with the height advantage he currently held by attacking from above, he was confident he could kill Xiang Shaoyun with one slash. But when his sword was about to land, Xiang Shaoyun reached out and caught his sword between two fingers. Everyone was alarmed at the sight. Catching a weapon with his fingers? How powerful were his fingers?

"You can piss off one more time." Xiang Shaoyun pulled the sword before swinging La Liufeng into the river again. Now, La Liufeng looked even more sorry. He had been defeated with one move by Xiang Shaoyun two times in a row, completely embarrassing himself.

"The three who fought earlier, you may come at me together. I will deal with all of you at once." Xiang Shaoyun did not bother giving La Liufeng a second look, and he provoked the Gateflag Academy people again.

While doing so, he blatantly stared at Fang Qing'er, as if his gaze was going to penetrate her clothes and see everything underneath. Fang Qing'er had always been a rather headstrong person, but Xiang Shaoyun's gaze still made her feel unwell as if bugs were crawling all over her body. She glared at Xiang Shaoyun, her eyes filled with a sharp glint as she tried to force Xiang Shaoyun to remove his gaze. But it was completely useless.

"Girl, not bad. Hey, do you want to be my maidservant?" Xiang Shaoyun continued his provocations. His words were driving the Gateflag Academy youths nuts.

"Bastard, do you think nobody in the Gateflag Academy can do anything to you?"

"Don't stop me! I'll go kill him right this moment!"

"He is courting death. Does he think he is a match for Senior Sister Fang? Hah, he thinks too highly of himself."

"Calm down, he's just trying to provoke us. Don't fall for it. Maybe he has some unknown trump cards."

"Trump card my ass. I'll kill him right where he stands!"

Finally, a young man from Gateflag Academy could no longer hold in his anger, and he rushed out to meet Xiang Shaoyun. He was an eighth-stage Astral Realm cultivator. That was why Luo Lin didn't bother to stop him. He wanted to see clearly if this kid was only pretending to be weak.

This newcomer was far stronger than La Liufeng. And he also wasn't as hot-headed. He planned to first land on the other plank before starting his attack. Xiang Shaoyun seemed to know what he was trying to do. Thus, he kicked the water, causing the opposite plank to shift its position.

That messed with the newcomer's preplanned landing position, causing his face to fall. But he was still a decently capable person. He slashed the water with his sword and borrowed the impact to do a somersault in the air before landing on the plank.

This time, it was the Gateflag Academy people's turn to shout. "Well done!"

Right this moment, Xiang Shaoyun glided across the water on his plank as if it was a surfboard.

"Watch out!" the Gateflag Academy people shouted.

Alas, it was too late. Xiang Shaoyun was too fast, and he arrived almost as soon as his opponent landed on the plank. His palm shot out toward his opponent.

Cloud Splitting Palm!

Bang!

His opponent wasn't given any chance to react. He was immediately struck and was sent flying into the river. By this point, all the Gateflag Academy people had unsightly expressions. Some of them were even shouting, "Shameless! That is no fight, that is a sneak attack!"

Although the Martial Hall Palace also felt that Xiang Shaoyun was too shameless, they still felt very good seeing the Gateflag Academy suffering defeat. He had completely vented their anger.

"Lin Yuan, go. Do not make any mistakes," Luo Lin said.

A youngster standing not far behind him stepped forth and said, "Be at ease, vice principal. I will treat him well."

He then jumped off the ship. Midair, he drew his massive saber and swung it toward Xiang Shaoyun.

"Die!" Lin Yuan's way of dealing with Xiang Shaoyun was to either not attack at all or attack with everything he had. He would not repeat the mistakes his two fellow apprentices had done earlier by underestimating their opponent.

### Chapter 115: The Boss Is Undefeated

Lin Yuan's heavy attack was suffused with a large amount of astral energy that flooded the space above Xiang Shaoyun with green radiance, not giving Xiang Shaoyun any chance of surviving the attack. Everyone was curious if Xiang Shaoyun could survive such an attack that was crushing down on him like a mountain.

The Martial Hall Palace disciples grew anxious when they saw the attack. They stared at the ongoing battle with their eyes wide, praying that Xiang Shaoyun would survive. Facing the incoming saber, Xiang Shaoyun's eyes turned sharp as well. He shouted and drew his Golden Wolf Sword before meeting the saber with his sword.

Cling! Clank!

A series of sparks were created in the air, and the impact created numerous ripples on the river's surface. After his attack was blocked, Lin Yuan did not continue attacking. Rather, he did a somersault midair and landed on the other plank. Upon landing on the plank, he controlled the plank and glided across the water toward Xiang Shaoyun.

Sky Blinding Woods!

Lin Yuan was indeed worthy of being one of the top three young geniuses of the Gateflag Academy. The moment he attacked, he unleashed an earth-shattering might. He swung his saber, sending out a boundless saber energy that proceeded to form an entire forest large enough to block out the sunlight, not allowing even a ray of sunlight to pass.



From this, it was clear he possessed enough strength to face any peak Astral Realm cultivator. Those with cultivation levels lower than Lin Yuan's would not dare to easily take on this attack of his.

On the ship, Luo Lin nodded. He could almost see Xiang Shaoyun's defeat already. As for the Martial Hall Palace people, they all stared at the ongoing battle nervously, not willing to miss any detail of it.

However, what they saw wasn't as exciting as they had expected. Facing the attack, Xiang Shaoyun's eyes grew in power as two lightning currents shot out of them. The trajectory of Lin Yuan's attack was bared before his eyes. Also shown to his eyes were the tiny openings in the attack.

"Break!" Xiang Shaoyun crouched slightly before thrusting his sword forward.

The sword was launched from an extremely tricky angle that made it hard for others to even see where the attack had come from.

Clang!

The stab wasn't aimed at Lin Yuan's vitals. Rather, it was aimed at the incoming saber and shifted its trajectory, causing the attack to instead strike the river.

Bang!

The attack created a spectacular wave of over 10 meters long that crushed forward. After the stab, Xiang Shaoyun followed up with a kick.

Gale Winds Kick!

This was a first-grade battle technique, but when used by Xiang Shaoyun, the attack moved at lightning speed and struck Lin Yuan before he could even react. Lin Yuan was strong but not strong enough for Xiang Shaoyun. Like the two before him, he fell into the river.

"No! That is not possible!" Luo Lin cried out in shock.

"Well done! Well done!" Tan Guanghua and Jie Shi shouted at the same time.

They were aware that Xiang Shaoyun was an extraordinary person who even managed to obtain Elder Zhen Peng as his follower. But they had never expected that Xiang Shaoyun had actually been hiding so much strength. If they had sent him out in the start, things wouldn't have gotten so bad for them. Fortunately, it seemed like there was a chance to reverse their defeat after all.

"My boss is amazing! My boss is undefeated!" Xia Liuhui started cheering in excitement, as if Xiang Shaoyun's victory was his own victory.

"Shaoyun is great!" Lu Xiaoqing said, her eyes filled with emotions. At the same time, the bitterness in her heart deepened. What she saw only proved that the gap between her and Xiang Shaoyun had only grown. What should she do?

Even Gong Qinyin was looking at Xiang Shaoyun in a different light as she thought, Is master correct that my talent is incomparable to his?

Once again, Xiang Shaoyun fixed his gaze on Fang Qing'er with a perverse light in his eyes. "Girl, come on down here. They are too useless. It doesn't matter how many of them come, the result will be the same."

"I, Liao Hao, shall be your opponent!" offered the youth who had defeated Lu Yanchao earlier before Fang Qing'er could give a reply.

"Senior Brother Liao, let me help you!" offered a different youth. Apart from the two, a third person also stepped forward and joined in without saying anything.

"Hey, this is too shameless, Gateflag Academy," the youths of Martial Hall Palace started complaining resentfully.

"He was the one who told us to send everyone we want," Luo Lin replied.

Tan Guanghua and Jie Shi both remained silent. They focused on Xiang Shaoyun, trying to ascertain if he had any way out of this. This time, he would have to face three opponents at once. On top of that, he had to battle on water. That would not be easy at all.

"Oh? Finally, more of you are willing to come. Alright, time for you guys to piss off as well," Xiang Shaoyun roared; a trace of solemnness covered his face, and his voice rumbled on like a fearsome thunderclap. At the same time, the projections of a dragon and a tiger appeared midair.

When his three opponents sensed his terrifying presence, they were immediately assailed by a stifling sensation stopping all the attacks they were just about to launch. Xiang Shaoyun took this chance and attacked, swinging his Golden Wolf Sword around and causing blood to spray everywhere.

"Ahhhh!"

Splash! Splash! Splash!

Three miserable wails rang out in the air as the three fell into the river. Everyone sank into silence once again. Their eyes were wide open in shock, as if their eyeballs were going to pop out soon. Nobody had expected that Xiang Shaoyun would be able to so easily defeat the three opponents before sending them into the river.

They felt like they were dreaming. More importantly, the presence Xiang Shaoyun emanated during that moment gave them an urge to kneel before him. That was something they found hard to believe.

"Splendid!" Tan Guanghua called out gleefully.

By his side, Jie Shi was filled with joy as well. Words could no longer portray his current joy. As for Ye Tianlong who had always disliked Xiang Shaoyun, he felt extremely uncomfortable, as if he had just swallowed a fly.

That damnable power of presence! Ye Tianlong cursed inwardly.

Wu Mingyang from the Wu Clan also similarly hated Xiang Shaoyun. Even though Xiang Shaoyun was currently winning glory for the Martial Hall Palace, it only served to increase his desire to see Xiang Shaoyun dead.

If I can't think of a way to kill him, in the future, the Wu Clan will suffer, Wu Mingyang thought gloomily.

"Trash! You are all useless!" Luo Lin was fuming.

He had never expected that this kid would be so powerful, capable of using the power of presence only those at the Transformation Realm and above could use. There was even a chance that this kid was in fact a Transformation Realm cultivator. He was confused as to why the Martial Hall Palace hadn't sent this kid out in the first place. Was this some sort of trick? Were they planning to let their opponent taste joy before desperation?

### Chapter 116: I'll Blush

Naturally, Tan Guanghua and Jie Shi were unaware of the conclusion Luo Lin had reached. In fact, they were currently filled with regret. An extraordinary youth like Xiang Shaoyun was right there, but they had sent three other disciples out only to be humiliated. Were they blind? If Xiang Shaoyun had not insisted on challenging the Gateflag Academy, this confrontation would have ended with their complete defeat. Fortunately, Xiang Shaoyun was now standing there trampling his opponents, defeating several Gateflag Academy disciples in a row, and filling their hearts with satisfaction.

"Girl, are you coming or not? Do you want me to go up there instead?" Xiang Shaoyun started heckling again.

Fang Qing'er nodded before lightly stepping on the floor, gracefully fluttering off the ship and landing on the river. Instead of standing on a plank, she directly stood steadily on the water. This was also an ability only available to those at the Transformation Realm and above.

Fang Qing'er was not even a regular first-stage Transformation Realm cultivator. She was already in the second stage. Xiang Shaoyun was able to see that much. Otherwise, she wouldn't have been able to so easily defeat Mo Zhu and Chen Xin.

"After comprehending the power of presence, it won't be hard for you to break through into the Transformation Realm in the future. Unfortunately, you are showing off too much. Do you want to join the Gateflag Academy? I will grant you a chance to be my follower," Fang Qing'er offered nonchalantly.

Her charm was indeed enough to captivate numerous young men. But Xiang Shaoyun was no ordinary young man. He had a heart of steel, and he was also a person with a wide worldly experience. Fang Qing'er was not enough to captivate his mind.

"Haha, I offered to make you my maidservant, and you offered to make me your follower. Why don't we make a bet? If I lose, I will be your follower and will obey all your commands. If you lose, you shall be my maidservant. What do you think?" Xiang Shaoyun laughed heartily.

Everyone was filled with doubt when they heard this, Is Xiang Shaoyun even stronger than Fang Qing'er?

"Qing'er, ignore his provocation. He is only trying to disturb your mind. He won't be your match. Just get it over with," Luo Lin said. No matter how he looked at it, Xiang Shaoyun was a mere seventh-stage Astral Realm cultivator. He refused to believe Fang Qing'er would suffer defeat here.

Fang Qing'er stared at Xiang Shaoyun and said solemnly, "If you lose, be my servant."

Having said that, she dashed toward Xiang Shaoyun. Stepping on water, her lithe figure moved like a water fairy, and her palm shot out toward Xiang Shaoyun's chest with lightning speed. With her astonishingly fast attack, one ought to acknowledge that she was worthy of her identity as a Transformation Realm cultivator.

Even though Xiang Shaoyun had stayed vigilant all the while, the attack still nearly hit him. He quickly slanted his body to the side to barely dodge the attack. Even so, the cloth on his chest was still ripped apart.

"What an unruly girl. You're actually ripping my clothes off in public? I will let you know that I am not a loose person," Xiang Shaoyun replied seriously.

At first, Fang Qing'er was unaffected by his words. Just as she was about to follow up with another attack, she heard his final sentence and was so infuriated she almost fell into the river from her anger.

"If you insist, we can get a room. I will let you rip my clothes to your heart's content there. I'm too shy to do it in public like this. In fact, I'll blush!" Xiang Shaoyun said bashfully as he pulled some distance from her. This time, not only Fang Qing'er was infuriated, even the people on both ships were commenting on Xiang Shaoyun's shamelessness.

"I hope your actual strength is comparable to the prowess of your mouth," Fang Qing'er said as she stamped the water. She spun in midair and sent kick after kick toward Xiang Shaoyun. Her attacks crashed forward with an imposing momentum, creating numerous ripples in the water.

Such continuous attacks weren't something ordinary Astral Realm cultivators should be able to stop. With Fang Qing'er attacking at full power, Xiang Shaoyun could no longer stay as calm. His eyes focused, and he steadied his footing before repeatedly punching the air before him.

Bang! Bang!

Punches and kicks met again and again, causing muffled sounds to ring out repeatedly as two different astral energies spread throughout the battlefield. The impact forced Xiang Shaoyun to step backward repeatedly; his figure swayed on the plank, as if he was going to fall into the river soon.

"Time for your defeat!" Fang Qing'er bellowed and released her presence, which then pressed down upon Xiang Shaoyun. Even as she did so, she did not stop sending kick after kick.

Attacking with physical attacks and presence at the same time was an ability unique to Transformation Realm cultivators. Facing a two pronged attack, Xiang Shaoyun still maintained his calm. After all, Fang Qing'er's presence was completely ineffective against him. He was only busy thinking of a proper way to completely overwhelm the girl.

No matter how fast Fang Qing'er kicked, Xiang Shaoyun's fist would be there. Even facing the strength of a second-stage Transformation Realm cultivator head on, he still appeared relaxed. Everyone started to suspect that Xiang Shaoyun was already a Transformation Realm cultivator.

"How is that possible? How is that possible? That kid is obviously only a seventh-stage Astral Realm cultivator. How can he block Qing'er's attack?" Luo Lin was incomparably shocked.

On the other hand, Tan Guanghua and Jie Shi were already bursting with joy. Xiang Shaoyun was a super dark horse surpassing all expectations.

After a series of failed attacks, Fang Qing'er finally retreated and pulled open a gap between her and Xiang Shaoyun. She stared at him with her unblinking eyes, her heart no longer calm.

"Keep it coming, girl. You are quite strong. In fact, I was nearly sent off the plank earlier," Xiang Shaoyun said. If he hadn't undergone the cleansing of lightning, granting him a valiant body, he

would not have a combat prowess comparable to that of a Transformation Realm cultivator. That was his ultimate trump card, his true strength.

"Your combat power is indeed surprising, but you are still not my opponent," Fang Qing'er praised before she unleashed her next round of attacks. This time, she did not fight Xiang Shaoyun in melee range. Rather, she palmed at the empty air repeatedly, creating numerous waves on the river. The waves then combined to form a massive tidal wave that roiled forth toward Xiang Shaoyun.

The massive amount of water blocked Xiang Shaoyun's vision. At the same time, a massive power was hidden within the wave, making it an attack difficult for Xiang Shaoyun to block.

Xiang Shaoyun controlled his plank and moved farther away before his palm shot out and dispersed the wave crashing down at him. The wave was completely dispersed, but Fang Qing'er was nowhere to be seen.

"Time for you to lose!" Fang Qing'er had unknowingly appeared behind Xiang Shaoyun, her slender sword slashing down toward Xiang Shaoyun. It turned out the wave attack was merely a distraction. This was her actual attack.

"Shit!" Xiang Shaoyun also understood he had been tricked.

#### Chapter 117: Surrender, Girl

If this was on land, Xiang Shaoyun would have many methods at his disposal to dodge the attack coming from behind him. But here on a floating plank, he was completely helpless. But that did not mean he would be defeated just like this. Just as Fang Qing'er's sword was about to strike him, lightning energy surged out of his body to form a lightning barrier that protected his entire body. He had actually given shape to his energy and formed a barrier!

Clang!

Fang Qing'er's sword struck the barrier covering Xiang Shaoyun's back, sending him flying. His foot seemed to be stuck on the plank, as the plank remained under his foot even as he streaked through the air. After flying a long distance, he finally landed back on the river with the plank beneath him, his figure swaying about, having barely avoided falling into the river.

Sphhlt!

Xiang Shaoyun was still injured, however, as he coughed up a mouthful of blood after landing. That was due to him erecting his barrier too late. If he had erected it earlier, he wouldn't have been injured. He only had himself to blame for being overconfident. As for how he had managed to give shape to his energy when this was supposed to only be doable by those in the Transformation Realm, the story started during the time he had first returned from the Hundred Beast Mountain Range.

After he had returned from the Hundred Beast Mountain Range, Xiang Shaoyun was at the seventh stage with combat prowess comparable to those in the Transformation Realm. His offensive power was already comparable to a Transformation Realm cultivator, but his defensive power was far weaker. Thus, he had been in secluded cultivation trying to give shape to his energy as well.

After all, he was not a regular Astral Realm cultivator. He was blessed with the innate purple lightning, and his first star was filled with lightning energy. His physical body was also extremely powerful after his rebirth. He was comparable to Transformation Realm cultivators in every aspect.

To give shape to his energy, he had to activate the lightning energy within his body and form a resonance between the lightning energy and his 360 acupoints, controlling the energy to swirl around his body. With that, he would be able to give shape to his energy and form his own energy barrier. That was easy to say but not easy to do.

Xiang Shaoyun was only able to do that after spending an entire month trying, which nobody was aware of. If it wasn't for the sake of Martial Hall Palace's honor, he wouldn't have revealed it today.

"Transformation Realm! Xiang Shaoyun is also a Transformation Realm cultivator! How is he growing so fast? Half a year ago, he was still a third-stage Basic Realm cultivator!" a disciple cried out in alarm.

"This is too crazy! It has only been half a year, and he has advanced by two realms? Is his physique really only a five-star physique? I feel like he is more likely to have a six-star physique instead."

"No matter what, he is the pride of the Martial Hall Palace. Perhaps he can really reverse the situation for us."

"Don't get too excited. His opponent is no pushover either. We still don't know yet who will win."

...



"Transformation Realm? That is not possible! Why is he emitting only the aura of a seventh-stage Astral Realm cultivator? Is he some super genius capable of comprehending the power of presence and giving shape to his energy at the Astral Realm?" Luo Lin muttered to himself in shock. He felt like he was having difficulty thinking right now. He found that he couldn't be sure what this kid's cultivation level was anymore.

Even Tan Guanghua and Jie Shi were just as confused. On the river, Fang Qing'er's eyes were filled with excitement as she dashed along the river toward Xiang Shaoyun. She was getting excited after finally meeting an opponent she could fight with her full power.

"What an interesting little girl. I am definitely making you my maid." Xiang Shaoyun's battle intent started surging as well when he sensed Fang Qing'er's excitement. A purple aura swirled around him, and the projections of a purple dragon and a tiger appeared around him as his kingly presence roiled out.

"Surrender, girl," Xiang Shaoyun shouted. Then, he stepped forth, crushing the plank beneath him. He was stepping on water as he dashed toward Fang Qing'er.

After reaching the Transformation Realm, people would be able to start using the lightness skill. The so-called lightness skill was in fact a method of coursing one's energy through the 365 acupoints, activating one's energy so as to make one as light as a cloud, leaving no footsteps even when stepping on snow.

With that ability, one would be able to float slightly and even jump higher as well. This was part of what set Transformation Realm cultivators apart from those in earlier realms. At this level, one could be considered to have finally become a proper cultivator. Since Xiang Shaoyun had already exposed his strength, he decided to stop messing around. His kingly presence crashed down at Fang Qing'er like a berserk hurricane.

Fang Qing'er had a sudden sensation that Xiang Shaoyun had transformed into a king. The majesty he was emanating gave her an urge to immediately bow before him. Fortunately, she was someone with firm willpower. She unleashed her own presence and was barely able to suppress the urge to bow. She then shouted as energy rippled out of her body, and she slashed with her sword, unleashing the most extraordinary attack she had unleashed thus far.

Clear Sky Expanse!

Instantly, it was as if ten million swords had appeared, all thrusting straight forward. The dazzling swords seemed to have destroyed everything in the air, creating an expanse of clear sky.

The power erupting from her caused all the disciples to open their mouths wide in shock. They could clearly sense the might of this attack and that it was seemingly unstoppable. Everyone doubted if Xiang Shaoyun could even survive it.

Golden Wolf Sword Technique!

Facing this attack, Xiang Shaoyun did not retreat. He mustered all his power and raised his Golden Wolf Sword as he faced Fang Qing'er's attack head on. His sword energy shot out and transformed into a golden wolf. A vicious aura started spreading as the wolf crashed into Fang Qing'er's sword attacks.

This was a wolf king, a mighty and powerful wolf king. With pure strength, it crushed every single sword energy it encountered. It was at this moment that Fang Qing'er could no longer resist the kingly presence and was sent into a retreat. She coughed out a mouthful of blood which sprayed all over the river before her body finally started sinking into the river.

Just as she started sinking, a figure darted over, wrapped his arm around her slender waist, and stopped her from sinking into the water. Fang Qing'er looked up, and a handsome face entered her vision. When she looked into the pair of eyes as captivating as the milky way, she was momentarily stunned.

"You sure smell good. If you fall into the water, you will only be giving those bastards a free show. I can not allow that," said Xiang Shaoyun after taking a deep breath.

One ought to acknowledge that Fang Qing'er was really good looking and also had a good figure. In fact, her beauty was totally comparable to Gong Qinyin's, with the two each beautiful in their own way. The crowd from both ships were stunned as they witnessed what was happening. Never had they expected that Fang Qing'er would be defeated just like that.

They had also not expected that Xiang Shaoyun would actually arrive and save her right before she fell into the water like a Prince Charming. The sight of the two standing on the river with Xiang Shaoyun's arm around her waist looked like a scene out of a beautiful painting. After a momentary stun, the young men of Gateflag Academy fumed.

"Release Senior Sister Fang, or I will kill you!"

"This kid deserves death! He dares to touch Senior Sister Fang? She is my goddess!"

"Damn it! Senior Sister Fang has been defeated? No, this is not real!"

"Release Senior Sister Fang, or I will fight you to the death!"

#### Chapter 118: Take My Trump Card

"Let go of me!" Fang Qing'er finally woke up from her reverie and started struggling.

"Let go? No. From now on, you're my maid," Xiang Shaoyun said unrelentingly. Those words were not only for the ears of Fang Qing'er but for everyone present.

"You..." Fang Qing'er's face flushed red when she heard that.

For some reason, the urge to bow before the man before her was growing in her heart, to the point she could no longer suppress it. The urge grew like wild weeds that couldn't be fully exterminated no matter what one did.

"Impudent! Let her go if you know what's good for you!" Luo Lin's voice rang out, his aura surging. He was fuming.

Xiang Shaoyun met Luo Lin's gaze and said fearlessly, "Would you shut up, you old fogey? She is now my maid and is no longer related to the Gateflag Academy."

"Bastard! Let me rip that mouth off your face!" Luo Lin could no longer bear it. He leaped off the ship and streaked through the air as he headed straight toward Xiang Shaoyun aggressively like an eagle swooping down toward its prey.

"Hold right there, Luo Lin!" Tan Guanghua also leaped off the ship he was on, but he was still too slow. Luo Lin was an eighth-stage Transformation Realm cultivator. His fearsome strength was not something Xiang Shaoyun could resist. Just as Luo Lin was about to reach Xiang Shaoyun, Xiang Shaoyun did something that shocked everyone there.

"Old bastard, take my trump card!" Xiang Shaoyun yelled and tossed Fang Qing'er toward Luo Lin as if she was a weapon.

Everyone opened their eyes wide in shock. He was actually throwing out a beauty like her? Was he even a man? How barbaric!

Even Fang Qing'er herself was stunned. Just a moment ago, she still had an impression that Xiang Shaoyun was a gentleman who treated ladies well, but immediately after, he did something like that. She really did not know what she should think of him now.

Luo Lin was a capable combatant. When he saw Fang Qing'er flying toward him, he immediately shifted the energy gathered in his hand and turned it into a soft energy that gently caught hold of Fang Qing'er. He then attacked Xiang Shaoyun with his other hand. But by now, Tan Guanghua had arrived.

Bang!

Tan Guanghua blocked Luo Lin's attack; the impact of their collision created waves more than 10 meters tall that crashed against the banks of the river.

"Why are you losing your temper, Luo Lin?" Tan Guanghua asked with a smile.

"Tan Guanghua, are you going to stand in my way? This kid keeps scolding me without showing an ounce of respect. Is this the kind of respect the Martial Hall Palace disciples show their elders?" Luo Lin said resentfully.

"That is Shaoyun's fault. Shaoyun, come apologize to Senior Luo Lin. This shall end here," Tan Guanghua said as he shot Xiang Shaoyun a kind gaze.

Without Xiang Shaoyun, the Martial Hall Palace would have been utterly defeated today.

"Hmph. I don't care for his apology, but the Gateflag Academy shall remember today." Luo Lin snorted coldly and went back to their ship with Fang Qing'er. The moment they got back on the ship, they sailed away without waiting for the Martial Hall Palace.

"Let's go, Shaoyun," Tan Guanghua said.

"Yes, we need to set sail as soon as possible. After all, they have my maid," Xiang Shaoyun said.

"Boss! Victory! Boss! Victory!" Xia Liuhui was still chanting, waving a large white flag around.

"Xiang Shaoyun! Victory! Martial Hall Palace! Victory!" the other disciples started chanting as well.

Xiang Shaoyun had fully vented their anger today. Thus, they gave him the welcome of a hero. His performance had completely conquered them. Their eyes were filled with admiration as they looked at him, hoping that a day would come when they could act as overbearing as Xiang Shaoyun—to subdue a big beauty to be his maid with force and to scold the vice principal of Gateflag Academy fearlessly.

Just seeing him do all that filled them with great satisfaction. Unfortunately, that would only remain their dream as it would not be easy at all to be as powerful as Xiang Shaoyun. As for Ye Tianlong, he did not even dare to continue seeing Xiang Shaoyun as his enemy anymore.

Even Wu Mingyan was withdrawing the hostility he had shown Xiang Shaoyun. Before he was completely sure, he would no longer easily act against Xiang Shaoyun. Otherwise, that would be tantamount to suicide.

The Martial Hall Palace's ship set sail again, heading toward the Golden River Valley. After obtaining victory for them, instead of strutting around in a high-profiled manner, he went to the cabin and kept to himself. He simply couldn't stand the burning gaze all the disciples had when looking at him. It was fine if only the girls were looking at him like that, but now, even the guys were.

Ten days later, the Martial Hall Palace and Gateflag Academy finally arrived near the Golden River Valley. Beneath them they saw a golden river, and it was bright and shiny under the sunshine, like a stream of liquid gold. Occasionally, gold-scaled fish could be seen in the river. This was a species of extremely valuable gold-scaled fish. Due to their speed in water, they were extremely hard to catch.

This was a fish that would increase the medical efficacy of a medicine when both were used together, and it was also capable of increasing one's lifespan. The Martial Hall Palace disciples wanted to catch some, but were warned that there were also water demons in the river, which stunned them all. Going into the river was tantamount to suicide. Their entire journey here had been a peaceful one, and it had given them the illusion that the river was safe.

"Although our journey has been peaceful, that is merely due to our good luck of not encountering or provoking any of the water demons. But if we dare to go hunting in the river, calamity awaits," Tan Guanghua said. He warned, "In the future, no matter where you go, be sure to remain vigilant and never underestimate your surroundings."

The disciples all replied, "Yes!"

"Alright, we're already at the Golden River Valley. Do your best and try to enter the top 10. Of course, it is even more important to protect your life well. I hope that I can see the same number of you leaving the valley," Jie Shi said.

Although he knew it was quite impossible to expect all of them to survive, he couldn't exactly say that. The battle was going to start soon, and he couldn't say something that would drop their morale.

They docked at the bank. There, many people had already arrived. Numerous banners representing the various academies were fluttering about in the wind. Jadewater Town's Jadewater Hall, Backhill Town's Blackhill Sect, Shi Town's Shi Academy, and many other academies of various towns were present.

These were all the towns in Cloud Margin City's territory, over 100 of them. About 90 of them were already here, filling the area with people. Apart from the elders leading the disciples, the place was almost entirely filled with young disciples, filling the place with a youthful vigor.

#### Chapter 119: You Want Me to Keep Being the Dark Horse?

Among the over 100 towns in Cloud Margin City's territory, 10 stood above all others. These were also the top 10 towns during the previous Battle of Towns. They were respectively Cloud Dragon Town's Cloud Dragon Pavilion, Cloud Tiger Town's Cloud Tiger Palace, Vortex Town's Divine Wind Academy, True Martial Town's True Martial Pavilion, Sea Serpent Town's Sea Tundra Academy, Jadewater Town's Jadewater Hall, Blackhill Town's Blackhill Sect, Yellow House Town's Yellow House Academy, Justice Town's Justice Hall, and Jade Mountain Town's Jade Mountain Academy.

The 10 academies of these 10 towns were the strongest powers in Cloud Margin City. That was especially true for the academies with higher rankings that always had King Realm cultivators in their academies.

Because of that, the disciples of these academies were also much stronger than the disciples of other academies. It was not hard for them to get into the top 10 during each Battle of Towns.

After the conflict between the Martial Hall Palace and Gateflag Academy, they docked separately instead of working together like they had agreed on earlier. The young disciples were extremely excited and kept looking around after disembarking the ship, trying to find out what kind of opponents they were going to face.

"Boss, there are so many people here! There are a lot of beauties as well!" Xia Liuhui kept looking around and cried out when he saw the pretty girls everywhere.

"Stop embarrassing yourself," Xiang Shaoyun said with contempt.

"Xia Liuhui, don't lead Shaoyun astray. He is not a pervert like you," Lu Xiaoqing said.

Ever since Xiang Shaoyun had further showed his strength, Lu Xiaoqing had been sticking to him all the time, afraid that other women would approach him. There were a few times where Gong Qinyin wanted to have a chat with Xiang Shaoyun. But when she saw Lu Xiaoqing sticking to him, she decided against it.

"Yes, sister-in-law. My boss is indeed a gentleman. It was my fault," Xia Liuhui said, quickly slapping his face.

Inwardly, he was thinking something entirely different, If even my boss is a gentleman, nobody else is a gentleman.

The Martial Hall Palace picked an empty spot and set up camp. When they were done, Tan Guanghua said, "The competition will start in three days. Just stay here during this period and don't go anywhere. Also remember to not create trouble."

Then, he told them more about the situation in the Golden River Valley and told them the various rules of the competition. He had already told them all that on their way here, but this time, he was merely reminding them. He also made it clear that Mo Zhu would be their leader during the competition. Many disciples were dissatisfied as they felt that Tan Guanghua was being partial here.

Mo Zhu, being an honorable person, stepped forth and asked, "Vice palace master, is this proper?"

He then looked at Xiang Shaoyun, his meaning clear.

"Hehe, I am gratified that you can say that. Don't worry. I have a different arrangement for Xiang Shaoyun. Alright, you may all leave now," Tan Guanghua said with a smile.

After everyone left, Tan Guanghua looked at Xiang Shaoyun and asked, "Do you share their thoughts?"

He was trying to ask if Xiang Shaoyun also thought he was being partial.

Xiang Shaoyun smiled and replied, "I understand the vice palace master did that for my sake."

"Oh? Tell me more," Tan Guanghua said, his interest piqued. He had heard many rumors about Xiang Shaoyun, but he had always believed that the rumors were exaggerations and had never thought much about it. But after the conflict with Gateflag Academy, he was looking at Xiang Shaoyun in a new light.

"You just want me to keep being the dark horse, right?" Xiang Shaoyun went straight to the point.

"Looks like your accomplishments have not been due to luck. You have a sharp mind as well," Tan Guanghua nodded praisingly before he continued, "That's right. You will be our super dark horse. I want you to help the Martial Hall Palace reach the top 10. Are you confident you can do that?"

"Hehe, I'll just do my best." Xiang Shaoyun did not make any promises. He did not know the strength of his competitors. Thus, he wouldn't make any blind promises.

"You are a slippery one, aren't you? If you can enter the top 10, you will be rewarded by the Cloud Margin City. The rich rewards will help you easily reach the Transformation Realm. So long as you can enter the top 10 individually and our other disciples work harder, the Martial Palace Hall might be able to place top 10 overall as well," Tan Guanghua said.

"Um. I'll try my best," Xiang Shaoyun was still unmoved.



Seeing how Xiang Shaoyun was behaving, Tan Guanghua was forced to pull out his trump card, "If you can enter the top 10, I will also reward you with a tier-4 battle technique! Bear in mind, that is a true king-grade technique!"

Such an attractive offer was sufficient to drive many disciples mad. But who was Xiang Shaoyun? For him, king-grade techniques were no different than common vegetables. Would he need a reward like that at all?

"Alright. How about this? If I can get top 10, just give me an additional 100 mid-grade spirit crystals. That's all," Xiang Shaoyun did not want to drag the negotiation on so he made a random request. No matter what, he was a member of the Martial Hall Palace. It was reasonable to expect him to fight for their glory. In any case, he was not worried that his identity would be revealed in a competition at a small city like this.

More importantly, this place was very far from where he came from, and this territory belonged to an opposing power of his previous sect. Thus, it wouldn't be easy for them to find him here. That was why he had the confidence to keep his identity hidden.

"A hundred mid-grade spirit crystals? That won't be easy to gather, but 1,000 low-grade spirit crystals won't be a problem. Alright, I agree," Tan Guanghua said. He paused slightly before continuing, "This Golden River Valley used to belong to an organization attached to the Cloud Margin City. Although it has been destroyed for many years, there might still be some opportunities waiting for you inside. Be on the lookout for those opportunities."

Meanwhile, Luo Lin and the few Gateflag Academy elders were in a meeting.

"Do you have a way of killing that kid?" Luo Lin asked. Others might not know who "that kid" referred to, but the people here knew clearly.

One of them answered, "That kid is the treasure of Martial Hall Palace. If we touch him, I'm afraid an actual war will break out between us."

"I'm not saying we kill him. I'm saying we make an accident happen. If we allow that kid to grow, our Gateflag Academy will forever be unable to raise our head before them," Luo Lin said.

"Vice principal, an old friend of mine is an elder at the Blackhill Sect. He's here as well. If I get him to tell his disciples to pay special attention to the Martial Hall Palace, I doubt they will mind doing us this favor," said another elder.

"Yes, that is a good idea. The Blackhill Sect is also a top 10 academy. Their disciples should be enough to kill that kid," Luo Lin said joyfully. He then added, "Remind our disciples to help the Blackhill Sect disciples if needed. It would be even better if we can slaughter all the Martial Hall Palace disciples in the Golden River Valley."

## Chapter 120: Reaching the Golden River Valley

Three days passed in the blink of an eye. The Battle of Towns was starting. A chariot pulled by four massive birds appeared in the sky above. All four of the birds were Demon Kings; their demonic auras were imposing and mighty, causing all the people below to be awestruck.

A few people were seated on the chariot. They had solemn expressions, sharp gazes, sturdy bodies, and extraordinary bearings. These were the big shots that had arrived from Cloud Margin City. All of them were Skysoar Realm cultivators. At their appearance, the elders of the numerous towns all led their disciples and saluted them deferentially.

A gorgeously dressed middle-aged man on the chariot spoke and said, "The once every three years Battle of Towns is going to start soon. I am here on behalf of the city lord to check on your progress during the past three years. The disciples will all enter the Golden River Valley. There, the disciples will be killing gold serpentine crocodiles for points, and one month later, the ranking of the disciples will be decided based on their points. The top 10 disciples will be handsomely rewarded and will also be given the chance to become outer disciples of the Cloud Margin Pavilion. The overall points of the disciples will also determine the ranking of the academies, and the top 10 academies will be handsomely rewarded."

After that announcement, the numerous disciples started talking among themselves.

"The top 10 disciples can become outer disciples of Cloud Margin Pavilion? That...is such a generous reward!"

"Yeah. The Cloud Margin Pavilion is the place where all geniuses of Cloud Margin City gather. It is said that after joining, one will be supplied with numerous cultivation resources, and even king-grade battle techniques are abundant there."

"But only 10 spots will be open. I'm afraid only those from the top towns will have a chance."

"Don't think too much about it. I would be happy just leaving the Golden River Valley alive. We shouldn't even think about the rewards."

After the King Realm cultivator made his announcement, someone started giving out jade plates to the participants. These jade plates would record the number of gold serpentine crocodiles each disciple killed. The plates were also capable of determining the actual killer of the gold serpentine crocodiles, preventing the disciples from cheating.

Soon, the disciples headed toward the Golden River Valley, and they grew excited. The Golden River Valley was not far ahead of them; they only needed to sail along the river for about an hour. But upon arrival, their excitement turned into bitterness.

Swish! Swish!

When the numerous ships arrived beside the Golden River Valley, the river beneath them was no longer as gentle as it was. The river had fierce currents and was filled with a large number of golden serpents known as goldwater serpents. They weren't necessarily high-leveled beasts, but their sheer quantity was enough to overwhelm anyone with fear.

The long golden serpents were swimming everywhere. From their triangle-shaped heads and their tongues that they stuck out every now and then, it was very obvious they were an extremely poisonous species of serpent.

Apart from that, a bunch of gold crocodiles had also appeared. Sharp spikes ran along their thick skin, and when they opened their massive jaws, numerous sharp fangs could be seen. It was undeniable that these were fearsome beasts.

The goldwater serpents and gold serpentine crocodiles were the demonic beasts inhabiting the outer fringe of the Golden River Valley. As for the gold serpentine crocodiles that inhabited the inner fringe of the valley, they were the new species resulting from the interbreeding of the goldwater serpents and the gold crocodiles.

The young disciples started killing the beasts. There were a lot of goldwater serpents and gold crocodiles here. These beasts would not leave them alone. Rather, they would even hop onto the ships. Thus, without killing these beasts, the disciples wouldn't be able to actually enter the Golden River Valley proper.

The Martial Hall Palace's ship was also a target of these beasts' attacks. Even goldwater serpents at the Intermediate Demon realm were hopping onto the ship. Currently, the ships were no longer guarded by the elders. Thus, the disciples could only rely on themselves.

As the leader, Mo Zhu stood on the very front and faced the incoming beasts. He ordered, "Protect our wings, do not get dragged down, and prioritize entering the Golden River Valley."

Killing these goldwater serpents and gold crocodiles was in fact a waste of their time since it would give them zero points. As for people like Lu Xiaoqing and Xia Liuhui, they were completely filled with fear at this moment.

They had very little combat experience. Without the baptism of blood, the strength they had was like an empty shell, as they wouldn't be able to properly utilize their full strength. Right this moment, a tiny goldwater serpent jumped over and opened its jaws wide, trying to bite Lu Xiaoqing's face.

"AHHHH!"

She lost her mind in fear and did not even remember how to attack. She merely stood there and screeched.

Sphhlt!

Xiang Shaoyun drew his sword and slashed the goldwater serpent into two. Then, he shouted, "These beasts feast on human flesh. If you don't kill them, you will end up their food. Don't fear them. Fight with all you got."

Xiang Shaoyun's Golden Wolf Sword danced through the air, slashing one beast after another, dying the river red with blood. After Lu Xiaoqing and Xia Liuhui heard Xiang Shaoyun's words, they immediately calmed down, mustered their courage, and joined in the fight.

Soon, some of the ships managed to break off from the beast blockade to enter Golden River Valley proper. There were also some ships that had been completely taken over by the beasts and had turned into beast dens.

In those ships, not one disciple survived. They had all turned into beast fodder, painting a spectacle too horrible to be seen. Fortunately, the Martial Hall Palace's ship was able to pass through the blockade safely.

Although the Martial Hall Palace was not one of the top 10 academies, they had still placed twenty-third during the previous Battle of Towns. If they couldn't even break through this blockade, they could forget about entering top 10.

For some reason, after passing through the blockade, the river turned calm again. The goldwater serpents and gold crocodiles also did not bother pursuing them. In fact, when they looked in the direction of the inner fringe, their eyes were filled with fear.

Inside the Golden River Valley proper, numerous ships docked at the bank, and the disciples were getting off the ships. The so-called Golden River Valley proper was in truth an island. On the island, boulders of odd shapes, trees, flowers, numerous other plants, and dilapidated buildings could be seen.

From afar, apart from the fact that everything on the island was gold, it did not look like anything special. But this was also the place where the gold serpentine crocodiles resided. The gold serpentine crocodile was a mutation that was a result of interbreeding between goldwater serpents and gold crocodiles, and it had fearsome combat power.

It was rumored that there was even a gold serpentine crocodile king here, but nobody knew if that was true. The disciples immediately scattered and started hunting for gold serpentine crocodiles.

Some of the smarter disciples headed straight toward those dilapidated buildings. They heard from their elders that those dilapidated buildings were left behind by the organization that was once the strongest power in Cloud Margin City. Perhaps they would be able to chance upon some fortuitous encounter.

"Everyone, to me. We need to work together and kill the gold serpentine crocodiles together. Be sure to not work alone!" Mo Zhu said.

Mo Zhu was a fine leader. Thus, a large number of them were willing to listen to him. Right this moment, someone cried out in alarm, "Where's Xiang Shaoyun? Why is he missing?"

Everyone finally looked around and found that Xiang Shaoyun had gone missing.