

Overlord 151

Chapter 151: I'm Accepting This Mission

Within a certain valley with a waterfall as majestic as the Milky Way.

The flow of water was rapid and violent, repeatedly crashing down on the world below. Below the waterfall stood a young man with his upper body bared who was resisting the weight of the waterfall with his body.

It was worth noting that the impact of this waterfall was something not even a late-stage Transformation Realm cultivator would dare take on for a long period of time. Those failing to resist the impact would injure themselves, with some even having their heads outright crushed under the water.

The young man stood there without as much as an outer energy layer protecting himself. His physical prowess could clearly be seen. He stood firm, as if he had been nailed there. Standing there in a carefree manner, he was completely unaffected as the waterfall crashed down on him repeatedly.

In reality, all his focus was concentrated on resisting the waterfall. His teeth were clenched, and he was struggling to stay alive. In his mind was a pitch-black space, and inside it, a miniature person was seated cross-legged and acting as the guardian protector of his head.

Under the pressure, the pitch-black space seemed to be turning more and more solid, as if it was being forged by the waterfall. As for the miniature person sitting cross-legged, his resonance with the pitch-black space seemed to be slowly growing. It was unknown how long this young man had been standing here, but he was finally reaching his limit.

"AHHHH!"

He raised his head and roared at the sky, unleashing the power previously contained within his body. A purple and gold energy barrier formed around him while the apparitions of a dragon and a tiger appeared around him. He looked like the son of heaven, his imposing might one that few people could compare with.

Who would this young man be if not Xiang Shaoyun?

After parting ways with Dong Ziwan, he did not enter the Backhill Town. Rather, he took a detour and moved through some inhabited mountains, making use of the different geography to temper himself through nature itself.

Currently, Xiang Shaoyun was digging into his hidden potential under a waterfall. At the same time, he was increasing the resonance between his soul and the Nether Soul Domain so as to better his understanding of the Nether Soul Domain. As he erupted his power, part of the waterfall was forced to flow in reverse. From this, it was clear how powerful he was currently.

Finally, Xiang Shaoyun walked out from beneath the waterfall while emanating a steadfast aura, baring his seemingly boundless potential. He proceeded to catch some fish from a pond not far away. After roasting them, he wolfed them down. Done with eating, he lay down on the grassland. Sensing the warmth of the sunshine, his mood improved.

Regular training is not able to increase my cultivation speed. Only by tempering myself endlessly at the edge of death will I be able to grow further. I need to look for a new place of cultivation, a place that is more suitable for me, Xiang Shaoyun thought to himself.

After thinking about it, he decided to first look for a town so he could ask around for some dangerous locations where he would be able to temper himself. It once crossed his mind to go to the Cloud Margin City. There would be more cultivation resources there, but he was also sure that if he dared reveal himself there, it wouldn't be long before his enemies found him.

This was not a risk Xiang Shaoyun was prepared to take. Thus, he was not going to visit Cloud Margin City for now. After he was done resting, he cleaned himself up before resuming his travel.

A few days later, he finally arrived at a town called the Green Bamboo Town, a town that was even smaller and weaker than Wu Town. Its government was also much more destitute in comparison.

As its name implied, green bamboos could be found everywhere in its vicinity. Because of that, the town had a serene and graceful environment. Walking amid the bamboo forest and listening to the bamboos rustling in the wind, Xiang Shaoyun felt incomparably comfortable.

When he arrived at a teahouse near the town, he sat down, ordered a cup of tea, and asked the waiter, "Waiter, do you know of any dangerous areas around here?"

"You're jesting, customer. How would a commoner like me know of something like that?" answered the waiter.

Xiang Shaoyun also thought that it was foolish of him to ask a waiter this question. He should have asked a cultivator instead, not a waiter of a teahouse.

If I can't find out anything about the dangerous locations around here, I'll have to settle with finding some villains, Xiang Shaoyun thought to himself.

Making up his mind, Xiang Shaoyun set off toward the town. Soon, he found a stele. A lot of news was posted on the stele, so were a bunch of missions and bounties. A stele like this could be found in all towns. He had not paid much attention to them in the past. But since he had nothing better to do, he decided to look for a job on the stele.

When his gaze landed on the bounty list, he saw the information of numerous wanted criminals, their portraits and bounty rewards clearly listed. Accepting a bounty request was equivalent to accepting a mission, and the mission must be completed within a given amount of time.

If one failed to complete the bounty request within the given time limit, the mission would be automatically canceled. As for the deposit one paid when accepting the mission, there was no refund. Of course, if one was able to complete the mission on time, one would be rewarded for it.

After studying the list for a bit, Xiang Shaoyun's gaze was locked on one of the bounty requests: "Eliminating the Redwolf Bandits. The head of the bandit leader is worth 1,000 low-grade spirit crystals. The heads of the two vice leaders are worth 800 low-grade spirit crystals each..."

This was a tier-3 bounty, signifying that the strongest enemy one might encounter during this mission was a Transformation Realm cultivator. And this was also the bounty with the richest reward among all the bounties present. A list of people who had accepted the mission previously was listed below, and so far, all of them had failed.

The Redwolf Bandits was a group of bandits based near the town. They frequently robbed the traveling merchants, planting fear in the hearts of the citizens here. It reached a point where more and more traveling merchants no longer dared to visit the Green Bamboo Town.

As for the Green Bamboo Academy of the Green Bamboo Town, it was rather weak and was comparable in strength with the Redwolf Bandits. But if they wanted to eliminate the Redwolf Bandits, they would have to pay a huge price for it. Because of that, the town had issued this bounty, hoping that someone could eliminate the Redwolf Bandits for them.

"You it is, then," Xiang Shaoyun ripped the bounty poster down without a second thought.

An old man in charge of standing guard by the stele sighed and said, "Young man, the moment you rip this poster off, you will have to complete it. Otherwise, you will be the laughing stock of the town."

The old man was a kind person. When he saw how young Xiang Shaoyun was, he concluded that it would be unlikely for this young man to be able to complete the mission. That was why he had sighed.

"Thank you, sir. But I am accepting this bounty request. Please register it for me," said Xiang Shaoyun.

"Sigh, young men are always rash," sighed the old man before registering Xiang Shaoyun.

Overlord Xiang accepting the tier-3 bounty "Eliminating Redwolf Bandits".

Time limit: 3 months.

Deposit: 100 low-grade spirit crystals.

One could not accept a mission for free. If one failed the mission after accepting it, the deposit would be confiscated. The old man was astonished to see that Xiang Shaoyun could actually afford 100 low-grade spirit crystals. Even so, he still wasn't confident in the odds of this young man succeeding.

Xiang Shaoyun ignored the old man's doubtful gaze as he rolled up the poster and strode off with steady paces.

Chapter 152: You Have Been Surrounded

Xiang Shaoyun was in no rush to go look for the Redwolf Bandits right away. He wouldn't act before making a plan. First, he had to figure out the true strength of the Redwolf Bandits, how many Transformation Realm cultivators they had, and the cultivation level of their strongest member. Then, he had to prepare some supplies that could help treat his injuries and help him in attacking and defending.

His first stop was the largest herb store in town. After buying some healing pills, he asked the shopkeeper about the Redwolf Bandits. From the shopkeeper, he found that the strongest person in the Redwolf Bandits was the leader, who was about seventh- or eighth-stage Transformation Realm, followed by the two vice leaders, who were also late-stage Transformation Realm cultivators. They also had no fewer than 10 Transformation Realm underlings under them.

Because of that, the Green Bamboo Academy was unable to do anything to the Redwolf Bandits, allowing the residents of the town to suffer the bandits' tyranny. With his confidence boosted by the information he gained, Xiang Shaoyun was finally ready to head to the Redwolf Bandits' location.

Since they have the numbers, I will only stand a chance if I take them out one at a time. I will have to be cautious and not act rashly, Xiang Shaoyun pondered.

He then dressed up in a luxurious outfit and pretended to be a rich young master. He believed that he could bait the Redwolf Bandits this way. But of course, a luxurious outfit alone was not enough. He also needed an eye-catching mount. Otherwise, his disguise would feel incomplete.

Thus, Xiang Shaoyun bought a demonic horse before leaving town. The horse was at the Minor Demon level, and its horsepower was much better than a common horse's. Only with a horse like this would he be able to showcase the identity of a rich young master.

Mounted on the horse, he headed toward the Redwolf Bandit stronghold.

The Redwolf Bandits had their stronghold within a valley at a location easy to defend and hard to attack. As for the valley itself, it was part of the main route used by the traveling merchants moving between the various towns. This was also the main route leading to the Green Bamboo Town.

There were several hundred members in the Redwolf Bandits, a local tyrant that many hated but couldn't do anything to. Over time, the route they occupied had become increasingly desolate. Today, Xiang Shaoyun arrived all by himself, looking very much like a solitary hero. But in the eyes of the Redwolf Bandits, he was nothing more than a fat lamb waiting to be slaughtered.

A signal was already sent out from one of the Redwolf Bandits sentries, notifying their companions that a fat prey had arrived. One of them was a one-eyed man. Looking toward Xiang Shaoyun from afar, disdain covered his face as he said, "Where did this reckless kid come from? He dares to venture into our turf all by himself? Just send two brothers out there to slaughter him. Let's see how fat this prey is."

Thus, two bandits left their camp. When Xiang Shaoyun saw two bandits coming toward him, he immediately fled. The two thought he was scared, so they gave chase. After a while, the two were lured to a hidden place where they were subsequently killed.

"They actually look down on me so much that they only send two nobodies to deal with me?" Xiang Shaoyun grumbled.

Once again, he rode around on his mount in a carefree manner, showing himself to the bandits. When the sentry saw Xiang Shaoyun reappearing safe and sound, he immediately reported the news to the one-eyed man.

"Hmph. That kid is being too cocky. Send a few more brothers to lop off his head," said the one-eyed man. He was clearly offended by Xiang Shaoyun's actions.

Thus, seven bandits left the camp and headed straight toward Xiang Shaoyun. This time, the bandits weren't comprised of only Basic Realm cultivators. An Astral Realm cultivator was leading the team. Evidently, they were no longer looking down on Xiang Shaoyun.

Once again, Xiang Shaoyun fled at the sight of them.

"Where are you running to?" the leader of the group yelled before shooting an arrow at Xiang Shaoyun.

Xiang Shaoyun feigned panic and "accidentally" avoided the arrow in his panic before he continued fleeing. The bandits were not suspicious and chased after him, not willing to stop before they caught him. Soon, they vanished from the sentry's view as well. And a short while later, Xiang Shaoyun reappeared on his mount once again, roaming around casually.

"Something is weird about this kid!" said the one-eyed man, who had finally realized something was wrong. He yelled, "Men, come with me. I will personally slay that kid."

"Captain, don't be rash. He might be a bait sent by the Green Bamboo Town. An army is probably hidden somewhere waiting for us," advised someone.

"Makes sense. But are we going to just forget about our dead brothers?" asked the one-eyed man.

"Of course not. Since he dares to come, he definitely won't give up like this. Just send some scouts to find out who's hiding in wait for us before we decide what to do. If he dares to actually come to us, he will definitely die," suggested the person. The one-eyed man accepted the suggestion and sent some scouts to figure out what was going on. He also stopped sending more people after Xiang Shaoyun.

Xiang Shaoyun realized that after falling for his trick twice, they were no longer falling for it. But he did not seem to care. All along, his plan had been to provoke them. This was simply the start.

Xiang Shaoyun continued roaming around casually. He even started shouting at the Redwolf Bandits, "People of the Redwolf Bandits, hear me. I have you all surrounded. Lay down your weapons, keep your hands up, and surrender. I will spare the lives of those who surrender."

The Redwolf Bandits roared with laughter. There were a few hundred of them here. The kid was all alone, yet he claimed to have them surrounded? What kind of joke was that? They even wondered if the kid was simply a madman.

"Kid, I don't care who you are, but don't dream of leaving alive today," shouted the one-eyed man. He then hopped on the back of a demonic wolf and charged toward Xiang Shaoyun with a massive hatchet in hand.

About a dozen bandits were following behind him, and they were all cultivators in the Astral Realm. As for the one-eyed man, he was an eighth-stage Astral Realm cultivator. This was a group that would be feared even in the town. With about a dozen Astral Realm cultivators moving together, only a Transformation Realm cultivator would be able to escape them.

This time, Xiang Shaoyun did not flee. He believed that if he fled, they would definitely not give chase.

Let me first slaughter you guys. That way, I doubt I will have to worry whether or not someone will be willing to chase me afterwards, Xiang Shaoyun sneered inwardly. A spear appeared in his hand as he charged the group of bandits.

When the one-eyed person saw Xiang Shaoyun advancing instead of fleeing, his killing intent surged, and he raised his hatchet and slammed it down at Xiang Shaoyun, roaring, "Kid, eat my hatchet!"

As a Transformation Realm expert, Xiang Shaoyun was able to find a hole in the one-eyed man's attack with a single glance. His spear snaked through the air and stabbed at his opponent from a tricky angle. Before the hatchet hit, the spear pierced into the one-eyed man's left shoulder.

"AHHHH!"

With the spear stabbed into the one-eyed person, Xiang Shaoyun swung him away, sending him flying and crashing into the group of bandits not far away.

"Kill!" As soon as the one-eyed man crashed into the group, Xiang Shaoyun urged his horse forward and charged into the midst of the bandits. His spear danced in the air, turning into numerous sharp attacks that rained down upon the bandits.

Chapter 153: Who Told You I'm Running?

Under the rain of spears, one bandit after another fell, and clouds of blood bloomed in the air one after another. Xiang Shaoyun was on a completely different level from these bandits, and his movements were too fast for them to follow. Running toward him was no different than running to their deaths.

In the blink of an eye, about a dozen bodies were left on the ground, and their mounts had scattered in fear. Meanwhile, the alarm had been sounded in the Redwolf Bandit stronghold. With so many people killed instantly, it was impossible for them to not panic.

On the peak within the stronghold, a group of bandits gathered. These bandits were much stronger than the ordinary bandits. The other bandits also gathered in front of the stronghold, and before long, a few hundred of them were there.

As they braced for Xiang Shaoyun's approach, Xiang Shaoyun only gave them his middle finger and glowered at them with the most contemptuous face he could muster before leaving. He was certainly unable to do anything against so many bandits. His goal was still to lure some of them out so he could kill them off one at a time. That was the only way he could weaken the strength of the group as a whole before eventually eliminating the entire group.

"Tell me. What's going on?" the bandit leader questioned the sentry.

"Head, that kid killed almost 20 of us so far, including One-Eyed Dragon's group. He even claimed to have us surrounded," answered the fearful sentry.

"Idiot! If he really has us surrounded, why is he fleeing?" scolded the head. He then commanded, "Seventh brother, take two men with you and go get the kid's head. We can't spare anyone who dares to challenge us."

"Yes, head!" answered a middle-aged man.

This person emanated an aura that was much thicker than the common bandits here. He was a peak third-stage Transformation Realm expert. His name was Li Hao, and he ranked seventh in this bandit group. He set off with only two people, but the two were respectively first-stage and second-stage Transformation Realm cultivators.

Mounted on red wolves, they rushed out the stronghold and chased after Xiang Shaoyun. The red wolves they rode were Intermediate Demons, much faster than Xiang Shaoyun's demonic horse. Before long, Xiang Shaoyun reappeared in their vision. When they confirmed that there was no ambush, they increased their speed.

Xiang Shaoyun already had a route in mind. He brought them along into some uninhabited woods, making use of the woods to slow them down. He was going to lead them further away from their stronghold before killing all three of them.

Li Hao's group of three moved at a fast speed, not giving Xiang Shaoyun any chance to escape. They even spread out and surrounded Xiang Shaoyun, sealing his escape.

"Run, kid. Come on, keep on running. Where can you run now?" Li Hao berated.

"Run? Who told you I'm running?" Xiang Shaoyun sneered.

"Ohh, you have a sharp mouth. Let me smash that mouth of yours," said the first-stage Transformation Realm bandit. With a yell, he charged forth with his mount before slamming his hammer toward Xiang Shaoyun.

It was a vicious attack. As the hammer was a spiked hammer, if the attack struck, blood would definitely flow. Unfortunately for him, he had been too hasty to attack before even figuring out Xiang Shaoyun's true strength. It was no different from suicide.

Seated on his demonic horse, Xiang Shaoyun bowed down and avoided the attack before stabbing his spear forward. The spear snaked out like a lightning bolt. The first-stage Transformation Realm was frightened to discover that he couldn't avoid the attack at all. The spear pierced straight into his chest, and his armor crumbled apart.

Sphhlt!

After spitting a mouthful of blood, he was sent flying, and he crashed into a tree.

"Looks like you are quite capable after all, kid. No wonder you have the guts to challenge us. But you alone are not enough," Li Hao said before charging ahead and slashing his saber seven times in a row.

Each slash was followed tightly by another slash, almost as if they were all joined together. The attack was quick and violent, one that a cultivator in the same cultivation level would have a hard time blocking.

Without even turning to look, Xiang Shaoyun swung his spear around him and formed an impenetrable defense that blocked all seven of the saber slashes. But the impact of the collision was too much for the demonic horse to handle, causing the horse to start bleeding from its nose. The horse did not look like it was going to survive for long.

Right this moment, the second-stage Transformation Realm bandit appeared from beside Xiang Shaoyun. Like a viper, his spear stabbed at a vital point on Xiang Shaoyun's body, aiming to kill with a single hit.

Xiang Shaoyun was lacking in combat experience, but his gift of insights was unmatched. Just as the attack was about to hit, he jumped off his horse. The horse was immediately killed by the two bandits, reduced into a pile of mincemeat.

"Both of you will pay for killing my mount!" Xiang Shaoyun howled as he unleashed his presence of dragon and tiger.

The terrifying oppression of a king crushed down on the two. Li Hao and the other bandit instantly had an illusion that Xiang Shaoyun had transformed into a prince, his majestic presence bearing upon them like the weight of the world. The pressure caused them to cower in fear, and they went stiff for a split second.

Xiang Shaoyun took advantage of that split second and shot a berserk lightning bolt from his spear toward them.

The two Transformation Realm cultivators fully activated their outer energy barriers and tried their best to resist the lightning attack. But the moment the lightning touched their barriers, they went numb and could no longer move.

"Ahhhh!"

Their defenses crumbled apart, their energy barriers and armors penetrated. Blood spurted everywhere. Xiang Shaoyun continued the momentum of his attack, not giving them a chance of survival.

Bang! Bang!

And finally, Xiang Shaoyun lopped off two heads. When the first person who was sent flying witnessed that scene, fear plastered his face, and he quickly crawled away, losing the courage to even get back on his feet.

"Can you escape me?" Xiang Shaoyun sneered as he channeled his energy into his spear before tossing it at the escaping bandit.

The spear pierced the bandit's chest and nailed him into a tree. With that, all three Transformation Realm bandits were killed. Xiang Shaoyun did not stop at killing the three. Although there was nobody else for him to kill at the moment, he needed to tame a red wolf as his mount.

He moved like the wind toward the red wolf Li Hao was mounted on earlier. It was a peak Intermediate Demon that was on the verge of reaching the Great Demon level. Even so, it was still not as fast as Xiang Shaoyun. Xiang Shaoyun leaped into the air and forcefully mounted the wolf, quickly overtaking it.

"Howl!"

Chapter 154: Well Done!

The wolf howled unwillingly as it ceaselessly tried throwing Xiang Shaoyun off. It was not willing to let another human tame it since it already had a master before. Tamed demonic beasts were generally much harder to tame. They would often choose death over yielding to a second human.

"Shut up already!" Xiang Shaoyun said as the presence of dragon and tiger roiled out of him. The power of the tiger's roar was mixed within his voice, and it enveloped the red wolf in a terrifying pressure that caused it to tremble in fear.

Xiang Shaoyun punched the wolf's head, knocking it down. He then jumped off the wolf, lifted it, and ruthlessly slammed it into a nearby boulder.

Bang!

The red wolf wailed miserably. Finally, Xiang Shaoyun rushed toward the wolf and stepped on its neck before asking, "Do you yield?"

As he asked the question, a presence similar to the presence of a tiger king started emanating out of his eyes, causing the wolf to be in even more fear. Among demonic beasts, the stronger a beast was, the more likely it was for other beasts to yield to it. The feeling Xiang Shaoyun was emanating gave the red wolf a sensation that Xiang Shaoyun was in fact a tiger king in human form. Thus, it finally howled its surrender.

"Howl! Howl!"

Xiang Shaoyun let the wolf howl for a bit, and he waited until the wolf completely withdrew its demonic aura and no longer showed any sign of resistance. He then removed his foot from its neck. The red wolf stood up and lowered its proud head before Xiang Shaoyun and licked his leg, expressing that it was yielding.

Xiang Shaoyun then stroked the wolf's head and said, "If you'd done this earlier, you wouldn't have needed to suffer all that. Ok, eat this."

As Xiang Shaoyun said that, a spirit medicine appeared in his palm, causing the wolf's eyes to light up brightly. That was a mid-grade spirit medicine known as a red spirit cactus. It was a spirit medicine that would be very beneficial for a red wolf, and this red wolf longed greatly for it.

The red wolf quickly swallowed the red spirit cactus. Immediately, its demonic aura started surging.

"Huh? Breakthrough just like that?" Xiang Shaoyun was astonished. He had only given the red wolf a red spirit cactus so it could recover quickly. Surprisingly, it had actually broken through from that one medicine.

Xiang Shaoyun gave the wolf some space to break through and instead went to go loot the battlefield. He only took the bandits' severed heads and their money off them. Everything else was left alone. Even king-grade items could hardly pique his interest, much less these weapons that were of much lesser quality.

"After destroying the Redwolf Bandits, I'll have to find a way to clear the stuff in my astral cosmos sea. Otherwise, it will be very troublesome if I have more things I need to store in the future," Xiang Shaoyun muttered.

He currently had a lot of items stored in his astral cosmos sea, with the gold lunar liquid and vicious tiger gold lotus occupying the largest amount of space. The astral cosmos sea had long been stuffed to the brim.

That was what Xiang Shaoyun was fretting over as of late. Waiting for the astral cosmos sea to slowly expand wasn't a reliable plan. It wasn't easy to expand the astral cosmos sea unless he actually broke through into a new cultivation level. But he was still quite far away from the third stage.

More importantly, his recent breakthroughs had been too fast. He had been suppressing his cultivation so as to stabilize his foundation and get used to his new strength. He was finally done with consolidating his new cultivation level, and it was now time to grow again. That was why he had decided to attack the Redwolf Bandits.

After a long while, howls of the red wolf reverberated in the air, telling Xiang Shaoyun that the wolf was done with its breakthrough. When Xiang Shaoyun walked over, he found that the red wolf was much larger than before. It also looked even more heroic, and the wounds on its body had been completely healed.

"Not bad at all. You finally look somewhat like how a demonic beast should look," Xiang Shaoyun praised.

The red wolf stepped over and licked Xiang Shaoyun's leg, thanking him for the spirit medicine. The red wolf was a demonic beast with a common bloodline. Thus, they would only be able to speak human language after reaching the Great Demon level.

"Let's go." Xiang Shaoyun mounted the red wolf and started heading toward the Green Bamboo Town.

He did not return to provoke the Redwolf Bandits immediately. He was sure that if he went there again, he would have all the bandits going after him. He might not fear fighting them one on one, but they had enough numbers to overwhelm him to death. Thus, he had to give them a break before going after them again.

He returned to the stele and gave the old man guarding the stele a bundle containing the three bandit heads. He said, "Here, the mission is partially completed."

When the old man saw Xiang Shaoyun return, he thought Xiang Shaoyun was about to give up on the mission. But when he opened the bundle and saw the three heads within, he was completely shocked.

"This...this is Li Hao the Seven Sabers from the Redwolf Bandits! And the other two are also Transformation Realm bandits!" the old man cried out in alarm.

His alarmed shout attracted the attention of the people around them. Some of the people were here to issue new missions, some were here to accept new missions, and some were only passing by. They all gathered around the stele, creating a small uproar in the area.

"This is Li Hao the Seven Sabers? H-he's dead?"

"Oh shit, I just noticed that someone had accepted the Redwolf Bandit bounty. Is this young man the one who had accepted the bounty?"

"All three of them were famous bandits. They were at least Transformation Realm experts, and they had killed many people in the past. And now, they're dead. Haha, what good news! What a splendid death!"

"The rewards for these three are worth at least 100 low-grade spirit crystals. Who is this young man? He is so powerful!"

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The people were all looking at Xiang Shaoyun curiously, traces of admiration apparent in their eyes. For this particular Redwolf Bandits bounty, one could claim part of the reward before eliminating the entire bandit group. So long as one managed to kill the known leaders of the bandit group, one would be rewarded.

Xiang Shaoyun was submitting the three heads to prove his strength and to reclaim the deposit he had made when accepting the bounty.

"Senior, can I get the reward?" Xiang Shaoyun asked, not willing to stay there to be gawked at by so many people.

"Sure, sure you can. Well done, young man!" praised the old man in excitement.

Soon, the old man gave Xiang Shaoyun 500 low-grade spirit crystals. This was a wealth capable of inviting envious eyes. After all, in the eyes of an ordinary person, this was a large sum of wealth.

After accepting the spirit crystals, Xiang Shaoyun was about to leave and grab a meal at a random restaurant before heading to bed. He would continue his hunt another day. But when he was about to leave, the old man called out at him, "Young brother, are you looking for a place to rest?"

Xiang Shaoyun nodded. "Yes. I'm kind of tired, so I'll continue another day."

"Please come with me, then. Allow me to arrange a fine dwelling for a young hero like you," the old man offered.

Xiang Shaoyun hesitated slightly before going along with the old man. After a short while, he found that he had arrived at the Green Bamboo Academy.

So he's someone from the Green Bamboo Academy! Xiang Shaoyun thought to himself.

"I am an elder of the Green Bamboo Academy, Luo Yongcheng," the old man finally introduced himself.

"It's my pleasure to meet you," Xiang Shaoyun cupped his hands and greeted.

"Young brother, the Green Bamboo Academy will be the best place you can rest in town," said Luo Yongcheng.

Chapter 155: Cultivating an Ultimate Technique

The Green Bamboo Academy was an academy that was comparatively smaller than the Martial Hall Palace, but it was still the best place one could rest in the Green Bamboo Town. In the academy, green bamboo rustled about in the wind; the silent elegance of the environment gave people a feeling of utmost comfort. The disciples here were also much weaker than the disciples of other towns.

From Luo Yongcheng, Xiang Shaoyun found that the Green Bamboo Academy did not even dare to participate in the Battle of Towns because their disciples were too weak. Each time they had participated in the past, they ended up losing all their participating disciples. Thus, they had eventually stopped joining. As for the reason for them being so weak, it was improper for Xiang Shaoyun to ask too much about it.

Luo Yongcheng brought Xiang Shaoyun to a residence and told someone to prepare some fine liquor and dishes to welcome Xiang Shaoyun.

The two chatted as they drank. Luo Yongcheng was trying to figure out where Xiang Shaoyun came from and his reasoning for wanting to eliminate the Redwolf Bandits.

Xiang Shaoyun only gave some noncommittal replies. As for his reasoning for wanting to eliminate the Redwolf Bandits, he gave an honest reply, "If I tell you I only accepted the bounty to temper myself, will you believe it?"

"Of course I will. I can't think of any reason otherwise," Luo Yongcheng said. He sighed and continued, "How good would it be if the disciples of our academy are half as brave as you. Without risking their lives, how are they supposed to go far in cultivation?"

Xiang Shaoyun only drank silently and did not say anything to that.

Luo Yongcheng raised his head and gazed at Xiang Shaoyun. "Young brother, you have an impressive combat power. But I don't think your Transformation Realm cultivation is quite

sufficient. Yes, you can kill Li Hao the Seven Sabers, but you need to watch out for the bandit leader and the two vice leaders. All three of them are late-stage Transformation Realm experts. This is especially so for the leader. He has a terrifying king weapon with him, which is the reason nobody dares to provoke his Redwolf Bandits."

"King weapon?" Xiang Shaoyun cried out, emotions finally showing on his face.

"That's right. Without the king weapon, our Green Bamboo Academy wouldn't be so afraid of them," Luo Yongcheng said. He paused slightly before adding, "It is a very sinister weapon, capable of severing one's soul, and its attacks are extremely tricky to guard against."

"There is such a weapon?" Xiang Shaoyun was astonished.

He was aware that a weapon capable of harming one's soul was definitely not an ordinary king weapon.

"That's right. In fact, we have reported this to the Cloud Margin City a long time ago. Hopefully, they will send someone over to take the king weapon away from the Redwolf Bandits. Only then will the Green Bamboo Academy stand a chance against the bandits. Otherwise, it will be very hard for us to maintain the peace of the Green Bamboo Town," Luo Yongcheng said. He emptied a glass of liquor before continuing, "I was wondering if you were a disciple of Cloud Margin Pavilion sent here to deal with the Redwolf Bandits, but it seems you have no idea of what's going on here, huh?"

Xiang Shaoyun nodded. "I really wasn't aware of it all. Thank you for telling me, senior. Otherwise, it will be hard for me to complete the mission."

"Wait, you're still planning to complete the mission?" Luo Yongcheng was flabbergasted.

He thought that Xiang Shaoyun would change his mind after knowing the truth, but it would seem he was wrong.

"Of course. I have never stopped doing something I have set my mind on," Xiang Shaoyun said firmly.

Luo Yongcheng looked at Xiang Shaoyun with an approving gaze when he heard those words. Soon, Luo Yongcheng left, leaving Xiang Shaoyun resting alone in the residence. Xiang Shaoyun

sat in the courtyard and circulated his cultivation method, activating all nine of his stars. He started to absorb the astral energy from nine corresponding stars up in the sky.

This was a night with a starry sky, an optimal time for cultivation. The twinkling stars in the sky appeared so very tiny, but the power contained within them was one everyone wished to obtain.

With his unique physique, Xiang Shaoyun was able to absorb a large amount of astral energy when he cultivated. Strands of sparkling and translucent energy latched on to his body, turning him into a brightly lit person. He looked incomparably exalted and divine.

The stars within him pulsed, and the astral energy coursed through his meridians like rivers. His acupoints all shone brightly, and even the dragon in his lightning bone had awakened. Combined, they all painted a picture of an ancient river of stars within his body.

The river of stars formed some sort of resonance with the stars in the sky above, causing Xiang Shaoyun's absorption speed to grow even faster. The nine stars shone brighter while the lightning energy in the lightning bone grew more concentrated.

After an entire night of meditation, morning arrived. Xiang Shaoyun finally woke up from his meditation after taking in the purple qi of the first rays of the sun. He felt completely refreshed, his exhaustion from yesterday gone without a trace.

"I've improved a lot this time, haha!" Xiang Shaoyun clenched his fists and laughed.

His astral energy absorption rate had always been faster than a regular person's. But without the battle he got himself into yesterday, he wouldn't have been able to absorb astral energy at the speed he had last night.

The one night of meditation had brought him into the mid second-stage from the initial second-stage. This rapid advancement was a result of the time he had recently spent tempering and suppressing his cultivation base. At this speed, he would probably need only about three months to reach the third stage. And if he could fight more intense battles, the speed would be even faster.

Today, Xiang Shaoyun did not plan to go look for the Redwolf Bandits, as he was going to practice an ultimate technique. This so-called ultimate technique wasn't exactly a battle technique. Rather, it was a state of mind, known as human weapon unity. Human weapon unity was a state where a cultivator became one with his weapon, allowing him to unleash an even greater combat strength.

Generally speaking, to enter this state, a cultivator had to know his weapon like the back of his hand. Moreover, a high level of compatibility between the cultivator and the weapon was required. Normally to unlock this state, in addition to a combination of numerous other factors, the cultivator needed a fate weapon they had personally nurtured and used in countless battles. They also needed to be familiar with the weapon's battle technique.

Since Xiang Shaoyun needed time to grow his cultivation level, trying to enter this state was one of the only ways he could still grow stronger rapidly. And the reason he suddenly decided to cultivate this mode was due to what he had heard from Luo Yongcheng.

The leader of Redwolf Bandits had a weapon capable of harming one's soul. He had to be prepared to face that. Simply put, during his battle with the Redwolf Bandit leader, he had to kill the leader as quickly as he could. By not giving the leader a chance to use the weapon, he would be able to reduce the harm he would suffer from the fight.

The Overlord Skyslaying Saber had been stored in the astral cosmos sea for a while now. Apart from undergoing the baptism of the gold lunar liquid, the saber had also undergone the nourishment of his astral energy and his vitality. A sort of connection had formed between him and the saber.

Although something still seemed to be missing, Xiang Shaoyun was confident he stood a chance at entering the human weapon unity state in his current condition. After wiping some of his own blood essence on the saber, he started swinging the saber around randomly, trying to capture the sensation of human weapon unity.

It was too bad this sensation was not something one could capture just because one wanted to. Fortunately, there was a place within the Green Bamboo Academy that would be optimal for Xiang Shaoyun to capture that feeling.

Chapter 156: Saber Intent

The basic moves of using a saber consisted of vertical slashes, horizontal slashes, slicing, stabbing, and so on. These basic moves were what Xiang Shaoyun was currently focused on rather than some complicated or advanced moves. He swung the saber around repeatedly; his moves flowed into each other smoothly, as if they were the most natural of moves. Only a true expert in the way of saber would be able to see their imperfections.

The saber moves in accordance to the body, the body moves in accordance to my will, the saber is akin to my body, my body and mind is one, moving as my heart desires... Xiang Shaoyun pondered

on the saber without stop as he swung the saber around, trying his very best to fuse the Overlord Skyslaying Saber with his body and make it a part of him so as to enter the mode he desired.

Unfortunately, even though he understood what to do, the sensation he looked for was still nowhere to be found. It wasn't because of the low compatibility between him and the Overlord Skyslaying Saber. Rather, it was because there seemed to be a layer of fog obscuring his sense of direction and stopping him from entering that state.

This was the third day in a row he had been practicing the saber. Even the most basic of saber moves had been repeated over and over, yet he had nothing to show for his hard work.

Over the three days, Luo Yongcheng had visited Xiang Shaoyun occasionally, but when he saw Xiang Shaoyun practicing the saber, he did not disturb him. In any case, eliminating the Redwolf Bandits was a task that required some time. In accordance to the mission Xiang Shaoyun had accepted, he still had three months.

Today, Luo Yongcheng had personally arrived with some fine liquor and dishes. It seemed he was planning to have a drink with Xiang Shaoyun.

"Brother Xiang, this is the Green Bamboo Liquor brewed by the Green Bamboo Academy. I guarantee you will want more after tasting it," said Luo Yongcheng. They seemed much closer now than before.

As far as Luo Yongcheng was concerned, it was only a matter of time before a young genius like Xiang Shaoyun became a King Realm cultivator. Thus, maintaining a good relationship with Xiang Shaoyun was of utmost importance to Luo Yongcheng.

Xiang Shaoyun set the saber aside and took a sip of the liquor Luo Yongcheng offered. When he swallowed the liquor, he had a sensation that a clear spring was flowing within his body. He couldn't help but praise, "A fine liquor!"

It was indeed a rarely seen fine liquor. It was brewed using the morning dew gathered from bamboo leaves and green bamboo shoots. The liquor might not be particularly strong, but it was refreshing and cool, able to remove the exhaustion and stress one was feeling.

After training the saber for three days with nothing to show for it, Xiang Shaoyun was getting agitated. This Green Bamboo Liquor had arrived just in time to cleanse him of his negative emotions, allowing him to loosen up somewhat.

"It's good that you like it. A lot of people complain that the liquor is too mild, but not many are aware of its merits," said Luo Yongcheng with a smile.

"For me, mood is very important when drinking. A person who is worrying about something will require a strong liquor. As the saying goes, drink the worry away. Without a strong liquor, how can one drink the worry away? As for a mild liquor, it is suited for someone who is feeling agitated—to calm one's mind and ease one's nerves. A mild liquor is more suited for the current me. Thank you very much, Brother Luo," said Xiang Shaoyun as he sipped on the liquor.

After calming himself, he reached a conclusion that practicing the saber was not something to be rushed. Instead, it was a process of accumulation. Only by constantly deepening one's comprehension of the saber would one be able to progress smoothly in the way of the saber.

It had only been a year since he had started cultivating. His time with the saber was even shorter. To rely on the little experience he had to accomplish human saber unity was simply wishful thinking.

"Haha, this is quite a surprise. So you are also a liquor connoisseur? I would have never guessed it." Luo Yongcheng smiled.

The two started their drinking session. Toward the end of the session, Luo Yongcheng finally broached the main topic, "Brother Xiang, I see that you have been practicing the saber for the past few days. How is it going, if you don't mind me asking?"

Xiang Shaoyun shook his head and smiled bitterly. "How is it that easy? I planned to first complete my saber before going to look for the Redwolf Bandits. But it seems like I will have to change my plan. I'll resume my hunt tomorrow."

"There's no rush for that. I'm here because there is a great opportunity I would like to offer you, brother," Luo Yongcheng said, his tone turning serious.

"Oh, what are we talking about here?" Xiang Shaoyun asked in astonishment. Opportunity was something any cultivator longed for. It was not something one could encounter easily. He couldn't help wondering if Luo Yongcheng had any hidden intentions.

"Brother Xiang is working hard to rid the Green Bamboo Town of the Redwolf Bandits. Your action will benefit the people of Green Bamboo Town. Thus, I naturally have to provide any benefit I can

to you, brother, but whether you can grasp this opportunity in your hand will depend on your own comprehension ability," Luo Yongcheng said. He paused for a bit before resuming, "Within the Green Bamboo Academy is a place called the Saber Forest. There, a remarkable saber master once resided, leaving behind a saber intent from when he had comprehended the saber there. It might be the best place for you to comprehend the saber, my brother."

"Oh? There's such a good place here?" Xiang Shaoyun was overjoyed.

The so-called saber intent was a more advanced saber concept. In truth, the human saber unity phase was also a sort of saber intent. The next phase after that would be the saber steering phase, a phase where one could freely control the saber to either fly around or kill enemies with only a thought. The final phase would be the saberless phase, a phase where every part of a person was a saber. One's every word, every motion, and every inch of body could itself be a saber. Xiang Shaoyun did not know which phase that saber intent was at, but the Saber Forest was nevertheless still a great place for him to comprehend the saber.

"That's right. But unfortunately, generation after generation, our disciples have failed to comprehend the saber intent there. Nowadays, it has been nothing more than an abandoned area in our academy," Luo Yongcheng sighed.

"Where is this Saber Forest? I ask that Brother Luo lead me there," Xiang Shaoyun asked impatiently.

"Hehe, of course I will bring you there. But..." Luo Yongcheng kept Xiang Shaoyun in suspense.

"But what? Please say it," Xiang Shaoyun asked. Inwardly, he mumbled, Sure enough, there is no free meal in the world.

"If you can comprehend the saber intent, I hope you can hold one lesson and share with us your experience when you had comprehended it," Luo Yongcheng said.

In other words, Xiang Shaoyun had to teach them what he comprehended from the saber intent. This was in fact a harsh request. Nobody would be willing to spit out something they had gained with hard work.

But Xiang Shaoyun agreed with no hesitation whatsoever. "I can agree to that."

So long as he could comprehend the saber intent, he did not mind sharing what he had learned.

"You are indeed a straightforward person! Come with me, then," Luo Yongcheng said with praise.

Thus, the two headed toward the Saber Forest in the academy. The Saber Forest was located at the back of the academy, which was a serene and secluded place filled with a lush forest of bamboo.

As they walked, Green Bamboo Academy students could be seen every now and then. This was one of their favorite cultivation spots as all of them also wished to one day comprehend the saber intent. When they saw Luo Yongcheng, they came over and gave him their respects. Their curiosity was piqued when they saw a youngster by Luo Yongcheng's side.

"That is where the Saber Forest is," said Luo Yongcheng as he pointed in a certain direction.

Chapter 157: Comprehending the Dao

The so-called Saber Forest was a place amid the bamboo forest behind the academy, but there was no actual forest there. Only an expanse of broken bamboo could be seen. The bamboo had all been cut, leaving the bases where, for some reason, new bamboo sprouts weren't growing.

When Xiang Shaoyun saw the Saber Forest, his eyes opened wide in astonishment. There were over 1,000 chopped off stalks of bamboo. The cuts were completely identical, as if all the bamboo had been chopped off by one single cut. This sight looked more like a miracle.

"A single slash to cut so many bamboo; this is how this place came to be known as the Saber Forest," Luo Yongcheng said. He had been similarly shocked when he had first seen the Saber Forest.

"Do you know who did this?" Xiang Shaoyun asked.

Luo Yongcheng shook his head. "We have no idea."

"Not even you guys know?" Xiang Shaoyun was surprised to hear that.

Luo Yongcheng replied, "No. Back then, an important person had arrived at our Green Bamboo Academy to ask for some Green Bamboo Liquor. He then stayed here for a bit. At first, we did not

think much of it, assuming that he was only staying here for a bit because he liked the environment. What we did not expect was that one day, he suddenly released a heaven-defying slash, alarming everyone in the academy at the time. By the time we arrived, this place had already been turned into what you see now." He paused slightly and continued, "He then left, leaving behind this Saber Forest as a way to thank our academy for the liquor."

"Just like that?" Xiang Shaoyun asked in disbelief.

"Yes. That was when we found out he was in fact a hidden expert. We did not dare to ask for advice from the Cloud Margin City regarding this matter, worried that they would occupy this Saber Forest for themselves, or even outright destroy it," Luo Yongcheng said. He further added, "After many years of investigation, we finally found out that he is most likely one of the 10 emperors of Cloud Margin City, the Saber Emperor."

"Saber Emperor? This was left by an Emperor Realm cultivator?" Xiang Shaoyun grew even more excited.

"Alright, I will clear the disciples from this place for a bit to give you some space. We will talk further when you manage to gain some comprehension from the saber intent here," Luo Yongcheng said before moving ahead to disperse the disciples from the area.

Xiang Shaoyun stayed behind alone, taking in everything around him. He started roaming around in the Saber Forest, caressing every single bamboo where it had been cut. When he felt how clean the cut was, the shock in his heart grew.

He found cutting a dozen or a few dozen stalks of bamboo with one slash believable. But what he saw here was over 1,000 stalks of bamboo with completely identical cuts. That, he found hard to believe. It was also worth noting that all the bamboo had lost all its vitality after that one slash, as if it was all completely dead.

One ought to know that generally, even after cutting a bamboo, so long as the roots remained, the bamboo would be able to slowly regrow. But the over 1,000 bamboo stalks here were completely dead, and there was no indication that they would regrow.

After roaming around for a bit, Xiang Shaoyun sat down cross-legged, calmed his mind, and started sensing the environment around him. Due to his background, he knew a lot of things many people didn't. Thus, he was aware that to comprehend something left behind by a person, one had to first immerse oneself in the environment that person had been in so as to better capture that fleeting sensation.

The meditation lasted seven days and seven nights. He sat there without eating and drinking, baring himself to the elements, fully immersed with the world around him. Unfortunately, he still didn't get anything from his meditation session. He couldn't capture the sensation he was looking for at all. Tonight, he finally stood up as he could no longer keep himself calm.

"Dear saber intent, what do I need to do to find you?" Xiang Shaoyun mumbled gloomily.

He walked around aimlessly and arrived at the edge of the Saber Forest. Outside the Saber Forest, the normal bamboo could be seen gently swaying to the wind.

"Hu—"

Suddenly, a gust of wind swept past, sending a bamboo leaf brushing past his face. Abruptly, Xiang Shaoyun felt a sharp pain. He hissed in shock, and when he touched his face, he found that it was bleeding.

"The bamboo leaf...is capable of harming me?" It left Xiang Shaoyun speechless.

As he mumbled, his gaze landed on the bamboo leaves that were fluttering about in the air. Suddenly, the Nether Soul Domain in his mind activated, and an astonishing scene appeared in his mind.

In the scene, an indistinct figure could be seen seated cross-legged in the bamboo forest. Noiselessly, he swung his saber, sending a saber energy gliding across the air. With a "whoosh", an expanse of bamboo was felled.

Xiang Shaoyun stood there blankly, the scene replaying in his mind repeatedly, slowly bringing him into a unique mental state. That slash was so very natural and so very smooth. It looked like a completely casual slash, yet it contained an extraordinary power within. With one slash, over 1,000 stalks of bamboo were felled.

How had that person accomplished it?

Xiang Shaoyun kept watching the repeating scene in his mind, trying to figure out the essence behind the slash. But at the same time, he had a feeling that he still lacked something to actually

comprehend the essence. It was at this moment that he recalled how the bamboo leaf had cut his face. The leaf seemed completely harmless, yet it was a fact that it had caused him to bleed.

How?

Xiang Shaoyun pondered incessantly, his body sat down cross-legged without him realizing it, and the Overlord Skyslaying Saber appeared on his knees. Once again, he sank into deep meditation, one even deeper than the one before.

Even when ants crawled up his body, he did not seem to realize it, nor when the birds had landed on his head. He had completely blended into the world around him. This was the most optimal state one could be in when comprehending the dao.

In a flash, half a month passed. He was covered in dead leaves and bird feces, as if he were a statue. On this day, the Overlord Skyslaying Saber on his knees suddenly started shuddering. Strands of purple and gold energy started emanating out of the saber, the impact jolting the dead leaves off his body as wind started billowing around him. Out of nowhere, Xiang Shaoyun gripped his saber and gently swung it.

Swish!

A saber energy shot out before vanishing immediately. The saber returned to its previous position, and everything returned to how it was before, as if nothing had happened at all.

Hu! Hu!

The wind brushed past noiselessly; the bamboo swayed gently.

Pa! Pa!

Next, an expanse of bamboo in front of Xiang Shaoyun collapsed. Luo Yongcheng just happened to be in the vicinity at this time. When he heard that sound, his heartbeat sped up, and he inwardly cried out in alarm, H-he couldn't have comprehended it for real, right?

Without a second thought, he rushed to where Xiang Shaoyun was.

Chapter 158: That Was Just Luck

Xiang Shaoyun finally opened his pair of sharp eyes, joy covering his face. He had spent about a month in total, and he had finally touched upon the concept of saber intent, understanding what exactly human saber unity was. The over 100 bamboo stalks neatly felled before him was the best proof of his comprehension.

Human saber unity relied not only on one's compatibility with the saber. What was more important was one's understanding on how to properly use a saber. It was with that understanding that one could better utilize the various saber techniques.

How should a saber be used? When to slash vertically, slash horizontally, slice, or stab? One had to know when to use which in order to perfectly make use of the saber. Upon reaching perfection in the way of using the saber, one's hand would move in accordance to one's will, and the saber would move in accordance to the body, destroying everything that stood in the way of the saber. The saber was part of the body. One should be able to use the saber like one's own limb, doing what one wanted with the saber.

The Nether Soul Domain had contributed greatly to the relatively short period Xiang Shaoyun had used to gain this comprehension. Without the Nether Soul Domain capturing the scene of the saber expert slashing his saber in the forest before replaying the scene in his mind repeatedly, it would be very hard for him to catch on to the actual essence of the slash.

Of course, the leaf that had cut his face had also played a great role in helping him in his comprehension. The bamboo leaf had swayed along with the wind. In that moment, the wind was the leaf, and the leaf was the wind. Only by becoming one with the wind could the leaf cut his face.

The same concept applied to him and the saber, and by achieving human saber unity, he was able to unleash a greater power from his saber.

When Luo Yongcheng arrived and saw the uniformly cut bamboo, he was overwhelmed with shock.

"They are really the same! Brother Xiang, you have comprehended the saber intent!" Luo Yongcheng cried out in alarm.

Initially, he did not hold much hope in Xiang Shaoyun succeeding. He was 99 percent sure Xiang Shaoyun would fail to comprehend the saber intent. After all, so many people from the Green Bamboo Academy had failed. He found it hard to believe that a young man like this would be able

to accomplish what so many had failed. But a miracle had indeed happened. Xiang Shaoyun had successfully comprehended the saber intent.

"It was just luck," Xiang Shaoyun said humbly.

"If that is luck, everyone in the Green Bamboo Academy might as well kill themselves," Luo Yongcheng mumbled. He then waved his hands and said, "Haha, this is great! Don't forget your promise! I'll tell the principal and the others about this!"

"Don't worry, I won't forget my promise. Give me three days. I need to consolidate my gains. Three days later, I will share my experience with the academy." Xiang Shaoyun nodded.

"Not a problem. Take your time," Luo Yongcheng said and left.

After Luo Yongcheng left, Xiang Shaoyun gently stroked his saber before swinging the saber around with lithe motions. He was still practicing the basic saber moves. But for some reason, his moves this time looked incomparably harmonious, giving off a feeling that he and the saber were part of nature itself. More importantly, the might behind his saber moves was now much more powerful than before, with each of the basic moves akin to a killing move.

Gradually, Xiang Shaoyun increased the speed of his saber swings, until eventually, he was akin to a berserk storm. Each of his slashes had tripled in power, and with the large increase in the speed of his blade, the tiny openings in his saber technique prior to this were no longer present.

This was the benefit of comprehending saber intent. It gave his saber technique a qualitative change. As Xiang Shaoyun practiced, he imprinted his current sensation into his mind. Finally, he stopped, pleased with his training session.

"Only now can I truly be considered a saber master." Xiang Shaoyun smiled in satisfaction.

He then proceeded to eat a large amount of food to replenish himself, as he had not eaten anything in a long while. Three days later, he was finally back to his optimal state. He stood there silently, waiting for Luo Yongcheng to come with the academy disciples to learn the saber from him.

As he stood there gazing at the Saber Forest, he muttered inwardly, "The saber master that once stayed here had most likely intentionally left the slash behind. It wasn't a slash left after gaining a

new comprehension. He had probably reached the saber steering phase at that time. What a remarkable saber master."

At this time, Luo Yongcheng arrived with a group of people. There were young and old among them, but there weren't many of them. In total, only about a few dozen people were brought over.

For an academy, this was quite a low number of people to gather. Xiang Shaoyun originally assumed that he was supposed to hold a lesson to everyone in the academy, but looking at the crowd before him, that did not seem to be the case.

"Brother Xiang, this is the principal, these two are the vice principals..." Luo Yongcheng started introducing the people in an enthusiastic manner.

Xiang Shaoyun stepped forward and humbly greeted them one by one. No matter what, he was still a second-stage Transformation Realm cultivator. Thus, it was still not the time for him to put on airs.

"Haha, what a fine young hero. I never expected the person who had accepted the Redwolf Bandit bounty to be a young hero like you. You have even comprehended the saber intent here. Looks like we are truly getting old," said the principal.

The principal was a slim old man. As an eighth-stage Transformation Realm cultivator, he was the strongest expert in the Green Bamboo Academy.

"You are too kind, principal. I need to thank your academy for giving me this opportunity," Xiang Shaoyun said. He then broached the main topic, "So shall we start now?"

"Sure!" the principal agreed. He then turned and spoke to the people behind him. "Everyone, sit properly and listen well. This is the young hero who has comprehended the saber intent in the Saber Forest. He is going to share with us his experience in comprehending the saber intent."

Everyone was looking at Xiang Shaoyun with complicated gazes. The young man before them was not a disciple of their academy, yet he was the one who had managed to grasp the opportunity waiting right in their academy. They were envious and regretful at the same time.

Suddenly, a voice rang out, "I refuse to believe he has comprehended the saber intent. Unless he can prove it in front of us, we will have a hard time believing him."

The speaker was a middle-aged man with a medium build. He was also a Transformation Realm cultivator and was an elder of the Green Bamboo Academy.

"Eighth brother, look here. These are the cuts left by Brother Xiang. What is there to not believe?" Luo Yongcheng said gloomily.

"Hmph. How are the cuts sufficient to be proof?" the eighth elder snorted coldly. He then looked at the others and said, "Everyone, don't be afraid to voice your thoughts. Should we get him to demonstrate what he has comprehended? It would be way too embarrassing if we end up tricked by a young man like this."

With the eighth elder fanning the flame, the others started voicing their agreement. They demanded that Xiang Shaoyun demonstrate what he had learned. They would only be willing to listen to his lesson if they were convinced by his demonstration.

"Principal..." Luo Yongcheng looked to the principal, requesting for help with his eyes.

But before the principal could say anything, Xiang Shaoyun smiled and said, "Sure. Since that is the case, why don't we exchange a few pointers, elder. You will then be able to personally sense the existence of the saber intent. Who knows, you might even learn something from it!"

Xiang Shaoyun was not one to say no to free target practice.

Chapter 159: Thank You for Showing Leniency

"Ok. Let me personally experience the so-called saber intent. Don't disappoint me," said the eighth elder. No matter what, he was a third-stage Transformation Realm expert. He would not fear Xiang Shaoyun. But of course, he was also unaware that Xiang Shaoyun had already slain Li Hao and two other Transformation Realm experts from the Redwolf Bandits, hence the elder's confidence. If he had known that, he would not be willing to be the one to challenge Xiang Shaoyun when nobody else was doing so.

"Don't worry. I will make sure you experience it clearly," Xiang Shaoyun sneered.

When Luo Yongcheng saw that Xiang Shaoyun had agreed to the challenge, he couldn't say anything else. He only shot the eighth elder a look of pity as he thought, Old eight, you have always been an arrogant person. I'm afraid today will be the day you're taught a lesson for your arrogance.

Everyone moved to make some space and waited for the spar expectantly. Most of them were only curious as to what was so special about the young man to be able to comprehend the saber intent not even they could comprehend.

Xiang Shaoyun and the eighth elder stood facing each other, neither taking the initiative to attack first.

Xiang Shaoyun finally opened his mouth, "Since you are the elder, you should attack first."

"Hmph. You are the junior. How can I take advantage of a junior? You first," said the eighth elder with a snort. From Xiang Shaoyun's eyes, he could see how little the young man cared about him. It further inflamed the anger within him as he thought, So cocky at such a young age? Looks like I will have to teach him a proper lesson.

"If I attack first, you won't have the chance to do anything," Xiang Shaoyun said nonchalantly. That wasn't him being cocky. He simply had absolute confidence in himself.

"What big words. Don't cry that I'm bullying you later, then," said the eighth elder. He had a bad temper, and he was losing patience dealing with an arrogant young man. He dashed forward, drew his sword, and slashed at Xiang Shaoyun.

"Sculpting the Moon!"

Blue sword energy rippled out with an astonishing might, as if it was capable of carving even the moon high in the sky. Xiang Shaoyun stood still, his expression serene. He did not look like he was going to do anything at all. When the attack was about to arrive, he finally moved; his figure gently drifted to the side and avoided the attack. The eighth elder was somewhat astonished, but he felt more anger—anger that his opponent did not even bother to hit back.

"Let's see how many times you can dodge! Sculpting the Sun!" The eighth elder's sword split into two swords as he attacked Xiang Shaoyun from two different directions at an even faster speed.

The entirety of the sword move was laid bare before Xiang Shaoyun's wondrous eyes. With his wondrous footwork, he once again dodged the attack.

"Sculpting the Stars!"

Without pause, the eighth elder mustered all his strength and sent forth his third attack, vowing to defeat Xiang Shaoyun with it. The sword energy swept down toward Xiang Shaoyun like a massive curtain.

The crowd around them cheered when they saw the incomparably enchanting swordplay. They all believed that Xiang Shaoyun would not be able to avoid it.

This time, Xiang Shaoyun did not dodge. He lifted his saber and casually slashed it toward the incoming sword. The slash appeared slow, yet the saber intent moved at an incredibly fast speed. All everyone could see was a flash before the saber energy disappeared.

After the swing of the saber, the world seemed to have gone still, including the eighth elder's attack frozen in midair. As for the eighth elder himself, he stood completely still, as if Xiang Shaoyun had frozen him.

Suddenly, the eighth elder's attack crumbled apart and vanished as if it had never appeared in the first place. Apart from that, the clothing he wore also started falling off his body, exposing his sturdy upper body. Everyone stared blankly with their eyes opened wide in shock.

They had only seen a flash and Xiang Shaoyun swing his saber once. That one slash had not only defeated the eighth elder's attack; it had also shredded his clothes to rags. All of it was accomplished without leaving so much as a scar on the eighth elder's body—it was an inconceivable slash.

"Thank you for the match," Xiang Shaoyun said as he cupped his fists calmly instead of continuing to attack. He had initially planned to leave the eighth elder completely naked from that slash, but he ultimately decided against it and held back. It was always good to not burn bridges.

When the eighth elder finally recovered from his shock, the only sensation he felt was how cold his limbs had gone, as if he had taken a stroll at the gates of hell. It planted extreme fear in his heart.

He had clearly felt the entirety of the process when the saber had danced about his body, stripping his clothes off. If Xiang Shaoyun wanted to kill him, he would already be dead.

"T-thank you for showing leniency!" the eighth elder said and wiped off his sweat. Then, he gloomily returned to the crowd. Someone immediately gave him a cloak to cover his naked upper body. This action covered him in even more shame.

"Splendidly done! That is indeed the legendary saber intent. An endlessly stunning slash, Brother Xiang," Luo Yongcheng took the lead and showered Xiang Shaoyun with praise. Since he was the one who had brought Xiang Shaoyun here, with Xiang Shaoyun's victory, he shared in the glory as well.

"That is indeed an inconceivable slash," praised the principal. He then added, "Everyone, sit down and listen to Brother Xiang's lesson."

After the fight, they became much friendlier to Xiang Shaoyun than before. Just his strength alone qualified him to face them as equals, not to mention the supreme saber intent he had demonstrated. Not even the principal himself was confident he could block that slash. It would only do them good to maintain a cordial relationship with such a young hero.

The Green Bamboo Academy thus withdrew the contempt they had toward Xiang Shaoyun. A trace of admiration could even be seen in their eyes when they looked at him. Everyone sat down obediently, waiting for Xiang Shaoyun to start his lesson.

Xiang Shaoyun did not make things difficult for them. He directly started the lesson. "I learned this saber intent from your Green Bamboo Academy. Now, I shall share my entire experience comprehending the intent without holding anything back. Whether you can get anything out of the sharing session will depend on yourself. Comprehension is something I won't be able to help with."

He then proceeded to tell them everything he had learned during the half month he had spent comprehending the saber intent. Everyone present regardless of age listened with full concentration, and without realizing it, everyone sank into a state of deep contemplation.

Even after Xiang Shaoyun stopped talking, everyone was still in deep thought, slowly savoring everything Xiang Shaoyun had said in hope of learning something from his experience.

It was at this moment that a panicked voice broke the serenity. "Bad news! The Redwolf Bandits are attacking, and they are going to reach town soon!"

That voice pulled everyone back to the real world.

"Nice timing. I was just about to go hunt for their heads!" Xiang Shaoyun said, a trace of excitement visible on his face. Comprehending the saber intent had greatly boosted his confidence. Now, he did not fear even late-stage Transformation Realm experts.

"Brother Xiang, we shall accompany you to the battlefield," said the principal.

"What? No way. That is my mission. Please don't fight over it with me," Xiang Shaoyun left those words before mounting his red wolf and rushing toward the bandits.

Chapter 160: All of You Deserve Death

Not all the Redwolf Bandits were joining the attack. Only a third of them, about 200 bandits, were participating. They rode toward the town, leaving a massive cloud of dust behind them, as they moved with an imposing momentum.

The leader of the raid was a vice leader called Mo Lang, a peak seventh-stage Transformation Realm expert. He was riding on a Great Demon red wolf. An incorporeal murderous intent was emanating from his cold face. Both his arms were not covered by any clothing, clearly showing the large number of scars on them. These were the scars that he had accumulated over years of fighting and killing. For him, these scars were akin to medals of honor.

He rode in front of the group of bandits with a black spear hanging on his back, emanating a vicious presence capable of planting fear in anyone's heart. Everyone who saw the bandits outside the town quickly scurried into the woods. As for those who weren't able to run in time, they were reduced to mincemeat under the stampede of red wolves, painting a horrible scene.

Soon, the bandits arrived at the town's entrance and started robbing the people there. As for the town guards, they had been long gone without trace after seeing a large group of bandits approaching. Looking at how weak this town was, it was only natural that it remained a completely unknown town.

"Take the portrait out and ask if anyone here has seen him," said Mo Lang. Then, someone behind him took out a portrait of a person resembling Xiang Shaoyun.

If Xiang Shaoyun saw the portrait, he would probably be saying something like, "All of you deserve death for drawing such an ugly painting of this young master!"

Meanwhile, Xiang Shaoyun was rushing from the Green Bamboo Academy. Why was he in such a rush? Because he greatly longed for a battle. It had been a month since he had accepted the bounty for the Redwolf Bandits. But so far, he had only killed a handful of them. He only had two months left to eliminate the entirety of the Redwolf Bandits, and this bandit attack would be a good opportunity for him to get rid of a portion of them.

When he arrived at the town's entrance and saw that the bandits were killing and robbing everyone including the old, the young, and the women, he was infuriated.

"All of you deserve death!" Xiang Shaoyun howled before charging the two bandits closest to him. He did not even need to attack personally as the red wolf had ripped the two apart after throwing itself at them.

"Ahhhh!"

Their miserable wails attracted the attention of Mo Lang and the others.

Someone beside Mo Lang pointed at Xiang Shaoyun and said, "Third head, that seems to be the same kid who had provoked us a month ago. Sure enough, he is here!"

"Got it. Brothers, chop him to death," said Mo Lang with a cold glint in his eyes.

At Mo Lang's command, more than 10 people charged Xiang Shaoyun. They held nothing back as Xiang Shaoyun was instantly enveloped by a rain of swords, sabers, and spears. Facing the incoming attacks, Xiang Shaoyun did not slow down, and he merely swung his saber once. The saber energy swept out, destroying all the incoming attacks before slitting the throats of the attackers.

They did not even notice the attack coming. They only felt a cold sensation across their necks before they descended into eternal slumber. The sight of over 10 heads falling after one slash sent a shiver up the spines of the bandits.

"Bastard! You will pay for the lives of my brothers!" shouted the Transformation Realm expert beside Mo Lang as he charged out.

Apart from him, two other Transformation Realm experts moved as well. Joining hands, they attacked, not giving Xiang Shaoyun any respite. As for Mo Lang, he advanced slowly on his red

wolf, his hand gripping his black spear tightly, preparing to hit Xiang Shaoyun with a fatal attack the moment he saw an opening.

Xiang Shaoyun leaped off his mount and said, "Not a single one of you scums will leave this place alive."

Xiang Shaoyun was not a saint himself, but he still maintained the honor of a warrior. Thus, he would never harm the commoners who couldn't protect themselves. These bandits before him, on the other hand, did not have such inhibitions. Their act of wanton killing had crossed his bottom line.

Berserk Lightning Blade!

Lighting crackled around Xiang Shaoyun's body, making him look like a god of thunder as he swung his saber down at the bandits. With one slash, three saber energies flew out. A majestic purple radiance flooded the area as the imposing attack completely suppressed the auras of the three Transformation Realm experts, slightly delaying their attacks. It was during this window of slight delay that Xiang Shaoyun's sword energies arrived.

"Die!" Mo Lang was forced to act when he sensed the dreadful sense of oppression. If he still held his hand, his three underlings would suffer.

Mo Lang exhibited a power worthy of his identity as a peak seventh-stage Transformation Realm cultivator. His astral energy surged out of his body as a magnificent spear energy shot toward Xiang Shaoyun.

Mo Lang might be fast, but Xiang Shaoyun, who had comprehended saber intent, was faster. By the time Mo Lang attacked, the saber energies had already struck their targets. The three Transformation Realm experts were split into two; their blood sprayed everywhere, forming a disgusting cloud of blood.

Mo Lang's spear attack finally arrived before Xiang Shaoyun. Xiang Shaoyun couldn't avoid it in time since he had just finished attacking the three Transformation Realm bandits, but then he did something that shocked everyone. Using his own body, he faced the incoming spear attack.

Even Mo Lang couldn't believe what he was seeing. The black spear struck Xiang Shaoyun's body, but instead of piercing into him, a crisp clank rang out. The attack had been blocked by Xiang Shaoyun's king armor.

It was at this moment that Mo Lang realized he had fallen for Xiang Shaoyun's trick. He quickly withdrew even as Xiang Shaoyun grabbed at his black spear with one hand and swung the saber at his head with the other hand.

The saber moved at an astonishingly fast speed, and normal Transformation Realm cultivators would never be able to avoid this attack. But Mo Lang was no ordinary cultivator. He leaned backward until his back and his mount's back touched, barely dodging the attack. Staring at the few drifting hairs above his face, he shivered. Xiang Shaoyun was about to continue attacking when Mo Lang's mount suddenly attacked.

"Roar!"

It was a fifth-stage Great Demon, and as a beam shot from its mouth toward Xiang Shaoyun, he was forced to stop attacking and to instead dodge. One could say that the red wolf had saved Mo Lang's life.

Then, Mo Lang sat back up again and started thrusting his spear at Xiang Shaoyun. He attacked so fast a wall of spear afterimages was formed in the air. The rapid attacks did not give Xiang Shaoyun any chance to rest.

Xiang Shaoyun waved his saber around repeatedly to block the incoming attacks. The longer the exchange lasted, the stronger Xiang Shaoyun became, until eventually, all nine of his stars were fully activated.

"Boundless Dome!" Mo Lang even used his strongest technique, trying to kill Xiang Shaoyun before he could counterattack.

Numerous black energy spears appeared on top of the spear afterimages, and accompanied by the apparition of a vicious wolf, the attack swept forth toward Xiang Shaoyun.