

## Overlord 191

### Chapter 191: Chen Clan's Chen Zilong

"Halt! This place is off limits!" said the leader of the group. The group looked powerful, and there were about 40 or 50 people. The leader was a peak Transformation Realm cultivator, and there were a lot of other Transformation Realm cultivators among their ranks as well. As for the other members of the group, they were regular Astral Realm cultivators.

"Impudent! What gives you the qualification to block this path?" berated a late-stage Transformation Realm cultivator from the Gong Clan.

"Qualification? Because we are from the Chen Clan!" said the leader haughtily.

The moment the Gong Clan people heard that, they grew wary. The Chen Clan was most certainly the number one clan of Cloud Margin City. Their ancestor was one of the 10 Emperors, and they had an extremely close relationship with the Cloud Margin Pavilion.

The likes of the Gong Clan and Wen Clan were completely incomparable to the Chen Clan, not even if the two clans merged. With only one Emperor, the entire clan would enjoy glory; that was the pride of a clan with an Emperor. Only those from the Chen Clan would dare seal the path to the Flame Mountain. Any other person trying the same would have been chased off long ago.

"The Chen Clan is the strongest clan in Cloud Margin City, and they also have an Emperor. Looks like we have no choice but to leave," whispered Gong Qinyin.

"Alright." Xiang Shaoyun made the decision to retreat without a second thought. It wasn't that he was giving up on the earthcore fire, but presently, he couldn't afford to act rashly. He had to plan his moves carefully.

Right as Xiang Shaoyun's group was retreating, a different group arrived. Xiang Shaoyun glanced over and saw that Li Yaxuan was among the group. She also looked to be one of the group's leaders.

Li Yaxuan was also looking over at Xiang Shaoyun, and their gazes met. An elegant smile formed on her face as she said, "What a coincidence. We meet again."

"Yes, what a coincidence." Xiang Shaoyun nodded.

"Sister Xuan, who is this?" asked a young man beside Li Yaxuan.

Like Xie Sanqian, that young man was about 17 or 18 years old. At such a young age, he was already a seventh-stage Transformation Realm cultivator, two stages higher than Xie Sanqian. Even at a place like Cloud Margin City, he definitely qualified as a genius among geniuses.

Even Xiang Shaoyun was astonished when he saw the young man. He thought, It is quite a surprise to see such a remarkable genius at a tiny city like Cloud Margin City. This young genius is already comparable to the geniuses of tier-5 organizations.

The young man wasn't breathtakingly handsome, but he looked decent and had a face that one would never get tired of looking at. He was dressed in a thin outfit, showcasing his robust body. It was obvious he was also a hardworking cultivator.

"Overlord Xiang," Li Yaxuan gave a short introduction.

"The one who defeated Xie Sanqian and killed Ye Xuan?" the young man cried out in astonishment.

"That's right." Li Yaxuan nodded.

The young man stared at Xiang Shaoyun with a burning gaze, like a predator that had laid his eyes on a delicious prey. The gaze caused Xiang Shaoyun to have goosebumps.

"I challenge you to a fight!" the young man challenged with a surging battle intent.

Xiang Shaoyun blanked out momentarily before saying, "Why should I fight you?"

"Because I am the only one who can help you get through this blockade, allowing you to go search for the earthcore fire," said the young man confidently.

A doubtful expression surfaced on Xiang Shaoyun's face. Seeing that, Li Yaxuan explained, "He is Chen Zilong of Chen Clan."

Right after she said that, the group that had blocked Xiang Shaoyun's path walked over and bowed to Chen Zilong. "Greetings, young master."

The people in the group moved in a uniformed manner. It was obvious they were all well-trained.

"Rise," Chen Zilong said. He then looked at Xiang Shaoyun and said, "So long as you can defeat me, I will tell them to allow you passage. What do you think?"

"I am not interested in fighting you." Xiang Shaoyun shook his head.

Still mounted on his qilin lion, Chen Zilong said unhappily, "What? Do you look down on this young master?"

"Of course not. But your cultivation level is higher than mine. It is obvious you are bullying someone with a lower cultivation level than you. That is not a fair fight," Xiang Shaoyun said calmly.

"My cultivation level is higher than yours? I thought you have been hiding your cultivation level?" Chen Zilong asked in astonishment.

He was clear on the strength of both Xie Sanqian and Ye Xuan. If Xiang Shaoyun had defeated both of them, it was only understandable that Xiang Shaoyun's cultivation level wouldn't be too low.

He could sense that Xiang Shaoyun only had a cultivation level of second-stage Transformation Realm, but he was also aware that some treasures could help one hide one's real cultivation level. That was why he was so sure Xiang Shaoyun had been hiding his cultivation level. But since Xiang Shaoyun was not admitting to it, he started wondering if Xiang Shaoyun was lying to his face.

Xiang Shaoyun merely released all his aura, revealing his peak second-stage Transformation Realm aura to everyone. To the side, Li Yaxuan clarified, "I can confirm that he is definitely a second-stage Transformation Realm cultivator. He is not hiding anything."

"With a cultivation level of second-stage Transformation Realm, you defeated Xie Sanqian and Ye Xuan. You are a genius capable of punching many levels above your weight!" Chen Zilong immediately grew excited. He paused for a bit before adding, "Too bad you are a tad bit too old. But that doesn't matter. This young master shall allow you an opportunity to become my follower. What do you think about that?"

With the mask on, Xiang Shaoyun looked like he was in his twenties. Reaching the second-stage Transformation Realm at that age wasn't anything special. But since he could punch above his weight, Chen Zilong concluded that he definitely had a secret technique allowing him to do so.

Thus, Chen Zilong changed his mind and decided to make Xiang Shaoyun his follower instead. He felt that it would be very cool to have a follower that powerful. Xiang Shaoyun merely laughed at his offer.

"HAHAHAHA..." Xiang Shaoyun roared with laughter, as if he had just heard the funniest joke in the world.

As a young master of a tier-7 organization who once had countless followers, even if he had fallen from grace, he was still not someone anyone could speak so haughtily against.

A young master of a mere Emperor clan dared to speak like that to him? How laughable! In truth, Xiang Shaoyun wasn't laughing at Chen Zilong's arrogance. He was only laughing at himself, laughing at how low he had fallen.

"Impudent! What is that attitude!" berated a young man beside Chen Zilong.

That young man was one of Chen Zilong's followers. He was no less talented than Xie Sanqian. He was one year older than Xie Sanqian and was also a fifth-stage Transformation Realm cultivator. He was also an inner disciple of the Cloud Margin Pavilion, and his name was Ji Jiuhan.

Xiang Shaoyun completely ignored Ji Jiuhan and gazed at Chen Zilong before saying, "Since you want to fight me so badly, I shall grant your wish. If I beat you, you shall be my follower instead."

Everyone blanked out upon hearing that. None of them had expected that Xiang Shaoyun, who just a moment ago was claiming that he was being bullied, would suddenly accept the challenge.

At the same time, the people there wondered, Has he really never heard of the number one young master of Cloud Margin City?

Chapter 192: One Move Is All It Takes

Number One Young Master of Cloud Margin City!

That was a title unique to Chen Zilong alone.

That served as a proof that not only was he someone with an extraordinary background, he also had an astonishing cultivation talent. His advancement in cultivation had been smooth sailing all the way until he reached late-stage Transformation Realm. He once set up a challenge arena in the city and defeated 49 opponents in a row, winning himself the title of Undefeated Transformation Realm Cultivator.

Apart from that, he was also one of the top 10 personal disciples of Cloud Margin Pavilion. If it wasn't for the fact that he was still too young, he would have also occupied first place within the top 10.

From all that, it was clear how renowned Chen Zilong was in Cloud Margin City. And here was Xiang Shaoyun, challenging Chen Zilong. Everyone stared at Xiang Shaoyun like he was some madman, all thinking that he was truly an ignorant person.

More importantly, Xiang Shaoyun dared to tell this number one young master to become his follower, which caused everyone to wonder if he was thinking straight. Chen Zilong was the descendant of an Emperor. Who would dare to say something like that to him?

"Audacious! Young master, please allow me to cut his head off!" asked a peak Transformation Realm expert from the Chen Clan.

The other Chen Clan members also spoke out one after another, all wanting to kill Xiang Shaoyun on the spot. Xiang Shaoyun's words had insulted the entire Chen Clan, a clan of an Emperor, and it was punishable by death.

"Boss! Let me fight him! He is not worth your time," requested Ji Jiuhan.

Chen Zilong narrowed his eyes and gazed at Xiang Shaoyun for a bit before saying, "Jiuhan, you go." He then said to Xiang Shaoyun, "If you can defeat him in three moves, I will let your group enter and search for the earthcore fire. As for a battle between you and me, we will talk about it after you are at least a third-stage Transformation Realm cultivator. Perhaps at that time I can suppress my cultivation base and fight you with the same cultivation level. If you can defeat me, I will consider what you said."

"No, young master!" the Chen Clan quickly pleaded.

"Enough. A person capable of defeating me with the same cultivation level does not exist in this world," Chen Zilong declared confidently.

Xiang Shaoyun smiled calmly and said, "Sure, we'll do that." He himself never feared anyone of the same cultivation level as well, even if the person in question was from a clan of an Emperor.

Ji Jiuhan raised a silver spear and shouted to Xiang Shaoyun, "Come on, then. You won't be able to defeat me in three moves."

"Be careful," Gong Qinyin reminded Xiang Shaoyun, who was about to step forth for battle.

Xiang Shaoyun smiled calmly before stepping forward and saying, "I don't need three moves for you. One move is enough."

Xiang Shaoyun had undoubtedly infuriated Ji Jiuhan with those words. No matter what, Ji Jiuhan was an inner disciple of Cloud Margin Pavilion. His combat prowess was not much weaker than Xie Sanqian's. And here, he was being looked at with such contempt? How could he accept that?

"You will pay!" Ji Jiuhan shouted before charging Xiang Shaoyun with his spear raised.

World of Frost!

Ji Jiuhan stabbed his silver spear forward, and instantly, a frost aura spread everywhere. It was as if the weather had instantaneously changed and winter had arrived. The frost spread toward Xiang Shaoyun and froze him on the spot, preventing his escape as the spearhead turned into an ice spike and headed straight toward him.

That was an attack that first sealed the escape before dealing a fatal blow to the opponent. It was an extremely ingenious move. Ji Jiuhan was using his full power, unleashing a combat prowess comparable to that of a sixth-stage Transformation Realm cultivator. Unfortunately for him, it was far from enough to deal with Xiang Shaoyun.

Xiang Shaoyun did not even bother dodging the attack. Purple and gold aura surged out of his body to form an impenetrable energy barrier as he stood there and allowed the attack to land.

Everyone opened their eyes wide, thinking that Xiang Shaoyun had been too careless and was going to get himself killed. Even Gong Qinyin tightened her grip on her weapon anxiously. But the Gong Clan people around her were stopping her from charging forward rashly.

Bang!

Ji Jiuhan's silver spear struck Xiang Shaoyun's barrier, immediately creating a loud explosion that rippled everywhere. The attack failed to penetrate Xiang Shaoyun's barrier, as the spearhead couldn't budge after entering about one third of the barrier.

"Impossible! Die already!" Ji Jiuhan could not accept it at all. He roared and poured all his strength into the silver spear and continued trying to push the spear through the barrier. The silver radiance around the spear peaked, and the frost aura intensified.

Finally, a crack appeared in the barrier. Right this instant, Xiang Shaoyun leaned to the side, causing Ji Jiuhan to shoot forward uncontrollably. It was at that moment that Xiang Shaoyun made his move.

Cloud Splitting Palm!

It was a regular tier-1 battle technique, yet it was the most effective battle technique in such a situation.

Bang!

Ji Jiuhan was unable to pull back in time. In any case, he did not even realize that Xiang Shaoyun was attacking. The only thing he felt was a palm landing on his back. Instantly, his energy barrier shattered, and he was sent flying and coughing blood.

Finally, he crashed heavily onto the ground not far away. Only one move and he had been defeated.

Xiang Shaoyun gazed at Chen Zilong and asked in a carefree manner, "So can we enter now?"

Chen Zilong was pulled back from his shock, and he laughed, "Haha. To first bait the enemy, shifting the truth and the fake, before finally counterattacking and obtaining victory. What a

splendid move. The entire sequence looks simple, but it is extremely clever. You are indeed an opponent worthy of respect. You may all enter."

Chen Zilong had a decent personality. Although his man had suffered defeat, he did not fly into rage out of humiliation. Instead, he magnanimously praised Xiang Shaoyun, showing the grace of an expert. Xiang Shaoyun cupped his fists and saluted Chen Zilong before riding his red wolf away with Gong Qinyin, Mo Mo, and the others without saying anything.

After Xiang Shaoyun left, Ji Jiuhan crawled back on his feet and said with a rueful expression, "Boss, sorry. I have embarrassed you."

"Yes, that was quite embarrassing. But it was not like you didn't have that coming. He was able to kill even Ye Xuan. Do you think he's not your match?" Chen Zilong said. He then muttered to himself, "Life will only be interesting with an opponent like this. Otherwise, it will feel very lonely."

"Zilong, are you really going to fight him with the same cultivation level?" Li Yaxuan asked.

"Sister Xuan, you think I will lose?" Chen Zilong asked.

"That is possible. I have a feeling that he is not as simple as he looks," Li Yaxuan said with the expression of a wise and farsighted person.

"Why so? Do you mean he is actually hiding his strength? Or he has some forbidden technique capable of increasing his combat prowess?" Chen Zilong asked.

"No, his combat prowess is very stable. It is definitely not something he got from a forbidden technique. Moreover, I have witnessed him fight two times. He is indeed only a second-stage Transformation Realm cultivator. But his cultivation base is incredibly thick, and his true combat prowess is no weaker than any of you. Therefore, he is definitely someone with terrifying talent. Also, I suspect the face we are seeing is not his true face," Li Yaxuan voiced her suspicions.

## Chapter 193: Starting the Earthcore Fire Search

The Flame Mountain used to be a desolate mountain. Now, it was a mountain enveloped by flame, and it was quite a spectacular sight to behold. Any other mountain lit on fire would stop burning after all the plants were burned. But here, the fire refused to stop, as if the fire wasn't going to give



up before the mountain itself was destroyed. The unending fire was also how people had noticed that a millennium earthcore fire had appeared here.

The millennium earthcore fire was a flame that had existed for a millennium, becoming a flame that was of a higher existence than a regular flame. It was indestructible and would continue burning unendingly. Not even water could stop this flame from burning everything in existence.

Each millennium earthcore fire would take a long time to form, and each appearance of millennium earthcore fire would be a large event among humans. Even Kings would be attracted when one appeared.

This time, the Cloud Margin Pavilion had made a decision that only those below the King Realm could search for the earthcore fire. Because of that, the Kings had no choice but to look from afar and sigh in regret. But that did not mean that the Kings would sit aside willingly. Some had tried to harvest the earthcore fire in the dark, but all who tried had died for the weirdest of reasons. Those deaths were most likely the Cloud Margin Pavilion setting an example out of them. In the territory under jurisdiction of Cloud Margin City, their words were the law, and anyone who disobeyed would die.

After traveling through Chen Clan's blockade, Xiang Shaoyun's group finally arrived before the Flame Mountain. Looking at the more than 10 burning mountain ridges and sensing the intense heat, Xiang Shaoyun lamented, "This is indeed a place where a millennium earthcore fire has been born. The power of fire is so thick here."

"Yeah, the millennium earthcore fire is somewhere in there. It won't be easy to find it. A lot of people have died trying. We must be careful," Gong Qinyin said.

"I have the coldstar stone to protect myself from the heat. How about you?" Xiang Shaoyun asked curiously.

"Don't worry. My king-grade frost armor will offer me enough protection to go in," Gong Qinyin said.

"Good. Let's not wait, let's go in immediately," Xiang Shaoyun said.

"Don't we need to figure out the whereabouts of the earthcore fire before we do anything?" Gong Qinyin asked.

Xiang Shaoyun waved his hand and said, "That won't be necessary at all. The earthcore fire will be right where the fire started."

Xiang Shaoyun was a well-read person. He also had a certain degree of understanding of the earthcore fire. Generally speaking, it would stay right where it was formed. It would not move away easily as it still needed to grow. For example, the current millennium earthcore fire would be trying to grow into a ten millennia earthcore fire, becoming a supreme and divine flame.

That was a path of evolution for the flame, similar to the growth of a cultivator.

"Oh, you sure know a lot," Gong Qinyin said admiringly.

"If you read more books, you will know more as well," Xiang Shaoyun said before walking toward the volcano.

On the way, they encountered many Transformation Realm experts, with a lot of them traveling in groups. Of course, some were also traveling alone. It was obvious all they were here for the millennium earthcore fire.

These people were basically all people with backgrounds, with the majority of them being the disciples or overseers of Cloud Margin Pavilion. These were the people that weren't stopped by the Chen Clan's blockade.

Of course, there were also cultivators from other organizations and unaffiliated cultivators around. These were the people who hadn't entered through the main entry point where the blockade was located. Rather, they had entered through the sides.

The only reason the Chen Clan set up the blockade was to reduce the number of people searching for the millennium earthcore fire in order to reduce Chen Zilong's competitors. They never really intended to fully put the mountain on lockdown. Not even the Cloud Margin Pavilion would let them do that.

The nearer Xiang Shaoyun's group got to the volcanic crater, the higher the temperature. Their mounts were starting to roar in protest due to the rising temperature. Left with no choice, Xiang Shaoyun had to dismount and leave Mo Mo behind to look after his mount.

Gong Qinyin did the same and hopped off her snow lion and left a Gong Clan member behind to look after the mount. At this point, they had to start traveling on foot. But they hadn't even moved far before someone came looking for trouble.

"Leave all the valuables on you behind or prepare to suffer!" said one of the newcomers.

There were seven of them, the size of their group almost similar to the size of Xiang Shaoyun's group. None of them were weaker than the Transformation Realm, and from their attire, they were likely members of some hunting groups or bandits.

"Mo Mo, I'll let you deal with them." Xiang Shaoyun couldn't even be bothered to waste any time with them.

At the command, Mo Mo charged the group without a second thought. Although they were all Transformation Realm cultivators, the strongest was merely a sixth-stage Transformation Realm cultivator. For a group like that to have the guts to rob Xiang Shaoyun's group, it was tantamount to suicide.

Right after Mo Mo attacked, the robbers regretted their decision. Unfortunately, it was too late to regret. They were fated to suffer.

"This will be a cruel path. Are you ready?" Xiang Shaoyun asked Gong Qinyin.

With a resolute expression, Gong Qinyin replied, "The worst that can happen is death."

Xiang Shaoyun gave Gong Qinyin a thumbs up before he started moving.

Naturally, Gong Qinyin followed him. Behind her, four other Gong Clan members followed as well.

After a while, Xiang Shaoyun noticed that all four of the Gong Clan members were enveloped by a red radiance, seemingly having blended into the environment. He mumbled inwardly in astonishment, So turns out they all cultivate the power of fire. No wonder they don't fear the temperature here. Perhaps some of them are even main members of the Gong Clan.

After studying them for a bit, Xiang Shaoyun's gaze ultimately landed on a young man that looked completely ordinary. That man was about 25 years old, and due to the darker shade of his skin, he

looked slightly older than his actual age. He looked completely inconspicuous, but he had the combat prowess of a sixth-stage Transformation Realm cultivator.

Xiang Shaoyun also noticed that the other three Gong Clan members were in a way keeping him in the middle, protecting him instead of Gong Qinyin. It was obvious that he was the actual leader of the Gong Clan's group.

Inwardly, Xiang Shaoyun thought, Looks like the Gong Clan does not fully trust Gong Qinyin. Or perhaps she is lying to me?

Since the betrayal he had suffered, Xiang Shaoyun had been on guard against anyone he met. Even if it seemed like he had a good relationship with Gong Qinyin, he wouldn't fully trust her. That was also why he was able to notice the young man in the group.

Right this moment, a large group of people ran down from the mountain, one of them shouting, "Run! The flame beasts are attacking!"

#### Chapter 194: Flame Beast

The flame beast was a unique demonic beast that resided within lava. They were shaped oddly, looking like a fireball when they were in fact an actual life form. They could also spit flame from their mouths, and their attacks were extremely destructive. If there were only one or two of them, it wouldn't matter. But with hundreds or even thousands of them appearing, they became incomparably scary.

They streamed out of the volcanic crater and started spitting flame at the humans without stop, making everyone flee madly. These humans were already having a hard time moving around this terrible environment. With the flame beasts going crazy as well, the humans struggled even more.

"What should we do?" Gong Qinyin asked anxiously.

"What else can we do? Either retreat or brave on," Xiang Shaoyun said.

"And what is your choice?" Gong Qinyin asked.

"We can't avoid these beasts when searching for the millennium earthcore fire. I will go on. Take care," Xiang Shaoyun said and started heading forward once more. He moved like the wind and in

the blink of an eye, he vanished from their vision. Ever since he found out that someone else was the actual leader of the Gong Clan group, he had been wanting to leave them and move alone. This was the perfect chance for that.

Gong Qinyin had not expected Xiang Shaoyun to leave just like that, completely ignoring her. She was slightly unhappy as she cursed inwardly, Has he noticed something?

"Sister, we should retreat for now. It is not wise to keep moving forward in this situation," said the young man in the Gong Clan who was no longer hiding his identity.

This young man was a young genius of the Gong Clan. Although he was incomparable to the Cloud Margin Pavilion geniuses, he was still someone with a chance to become a King in the future. His name was Gong Fen, a cousin of Gong Qinyin's.

The Gong Clan had never expected that Gong Qinyin would obtain the millennium earthcore fire. After all, she was too weak, which was why Gong Fen was sent with her. Gong Qinyin had no reasons to say no. She did want to tell Xiang Shaoyun the truth, but it was unfortunately prohibited by her father.

They planned to keep things hidden so Xiang Shaoyun could help clear some obstacles for them. And in reality, Xiang Shaoyun had done exactly that. But now, with Xiang Shaoyun leaving, they had to rely on themselves. Gong Qinyin knew that Gong Fen was right. She nodded and retreated with the group.

Hopefully he won't misunderstand me, Gong Qinyin thought to herself.

On the mountain, a large number of flame beasts could be seen, all spitting flame repeatedly at the Transformation Realm cultivators in the area. The weaker cultivators were instantly cooked alive while the stronger ones were able to leave calmly.

Naturally, there were still some cultivators who had high confidence in themselves and continued charging up the mountain, heading toward the volcanic crater. These were mostly the Cloud Margin Pavilion's Transformation Realm experts. All of them were amply prepared for the trip and equipped with high-tier equipment. None of them were willing to give up on the millennium earthcore fire.

Among these people, some were the overseers who were members of the previous generation. They had long reached peak Transformation Realm and were hoping that the millennium earthcore fire

would help them take the final step and enter the King Realm. Some were the freak geniuses of the current younger generation, cultivators of flame power hoping to borrow the millennium earthcore fire to advance their cultivation.

For Xiang Shaoyun to continue climbing the mountain right now was undoubtedly a dangerous decision. He had to face the threats of the flame beasts and the fire in the surroundings that were growing more and more intense.

Ordinary people would immediately be turned to charcoal when they arrived. Not even the energy barrier of Transformation Realm experts could resist the high temperatures here. Xiang Shaoyun was shrouded by a purple, golden barrier. Thus, he could still advance despite the temperature. However, the flame beasts were obstructing his way as well.

The flame beasts were spitting raging flames toward Xiang Shaoyun. The flames they spat were much hotter than regular flames. Xiang Shaoyun could sense something from these beasts and was immediately overjoyed. "Looks like these flame beasts have all benefited from the earthcore fire, and it had let them go through some sort of transformation."

At this thought, Xiang Shaoyun grew excited and increased his pace. With an ingenious footwork, he advanced amid the raging attacks the flame beasts were sending his way. However, there were too many flame beasts. After avoiding four beasts in a row, a few other beasts pounced him.

Left with no other choice, Xiang Shaoyun had to draw his saber to face the beasts. He swung his saber, cutting the beasts into two. The beasts that were cut exploded and sent fireballs flying toward him, catching Xiang Shaoyun by surprise. His defense was nearly broken through by the fireballs, and the terrifying heat seeped into his body, causing him to feel an intense burning pain.

This is the power of lava! Xiang Shaoyun cried out inwardly.

Bang! Bang!

His momentary distraction caused him to be completely surrounded by flame.

"Piss off!" Xiang Shaoyun roared and unleashed his Berserk Lightning Blade and opened a path clear of fire. He then quickly fled through that path.

The Overlord's Nine Nether Steps was worthy of being a top-tier footwork. It enabled Xiang Shaoyun to move at a speed comparable to an eighth- or even ninth-stage Transformation Realm cultivator.

The flame around him became thicker and thicker, to the point he could no longer see the way forward. His energy barrier also started crumbling, forcing him to use the power of his lightning bone to protect himself instead. The innate purple lightning was worthy of being a high-level lightning power as it was completely capable of resisting the flame in the surroundings.

Apart from the lightning power, Xiang Shaoyun also had a king-grade armor on his body, which was something Dong Ziwan had given him previously at the Blackhill Town. With the two layers of defense, the damage he suffered was greatly suppressed. Otherwise, he would have been burned to death alive.

The higher he climbed, the stronger the flame beasts were. Now, he was already facing attacks of numerous Great Demons. He wanted to avoid these beasts, but he failed, as he was already surrounded by three Great Demon flame beasts.

"Roar! Roar!"

The three flame beasts roared and sent forth blazing waves of flame that wrapped around Xiang Shaoyun. He quickly retreated, but he was still struck and nearly lost his hair to the flame!

"There are increasingly more flame beasts around here. I need to move faster!" Xiang Shaoyun muttered before finally deciding to use his saber intent.

He then unleashed the Berserk Lightning Blade together with his saber intent, achieving human saber unity. The purple saber energy glided across the air, slicing through the incoming flame before slashing the three flame beasts apart.

Rumble! Rumble!

The three flame beasts exploded at the same time, resulting in a terrifying explosion that forced Xiang Shaoyun to retreat. He was even forced to take out the coldstar stone to protect himself against the heat. The moment he took out the coldstar stone, someone not far away noticed him.

The coldstar stone was worthy of being an item of extreme cold. The instant it was taken out, the temperature around Xiang Shaoyun instantly dropped to an ice-cold temperature. An ordinary person would suffer frostbite just by holding the coldstar stone. Even freezing to death was a possibility.

But here in this environment with such intense heat, the coldstar stone was extremely useful. Xiang Shaoyun sensed a wave of chill expanding from the stone, and suddenly, he felt much more comfortable than before.

"Good thing I had prepared myself in advance," Xiang Shaoyun muttered as he resumed his climb.

But it was at this moment that he sensed someone rushing toward him at an extremely high speed. He turned around and saw two middle-aged men approaching him quickly. From the aura they were emanating, it was obvious they were about eighth- or ninth-stage Transformation Realm cultivators.

Xiang Shaoyun did not wait in place for them to arrive. Instead, he increased the speed of his climb.

"Kid, stop right there!" shouted the middle-aged man in a black robe.

The other person also howled, "Stop there or we will kill you after we catch you!"

Without a doubt, these two were here for Xiang Shaoyun's coldstar stone. Both of them were cultivators of the power of fire. Even so, the temperature here had exceeded their resistance, and it was nearly impossible for them to actually get near the volcanic crater. The coldstar stone brought by Xiang Shaoyun had given them hope.

Xiang Shaoyun was fast, but due to the flame beasts getting in his way, his speed was only half of his usual speed. Fortunately, his pursuers were also obstructed by the flame beasts and were forced to slow down as well.

Xiang Shaoyun turned around and shouted provocatively, "Old dogs, if you keep this up, I will slaughter you!"

"You dare speak like that to us? Stay there and wait for us if you have the balls!" shouted the man in the black robe.



Xiang Shaoyun only gave them the middle finger before further increasing his speed. He exhausted a large amount of energy doing so, but he was able to ultimately break free of a large number of the flame beasts around him. Even so, the higher he got, the stronger the flame beasts he encountered. The world of flame up here was quite a terrifying sight.

Xiang Shaoyun took out a gold serpentine crocodile skin and used it as a cloak while he braved the flame all around him. Inwardly, he started grumbling, If I had known this, I would've bought a shield. I would suffer less with a shield.

The gold serpentine crocodile skin he had was a king-grade leather that he had yet to get someone to forge into armor. Now, he was forced to use the raw material. But staying only on the defense was not a solution. A flame beast had already appeared noiselessly behind him and bit down at him.

Xiang Shaoyun had been focused on his front. Thus, he was unable to avoid the bite and was bitten. The flame spitting out of its mouth broke through his energy barrier and landed on his king-grade armor.

"Scram!" Xiang Shaoyun yelled and swung his saber at the flame beast.

The slash managed to injure the flame beast, but Xiang Shaoyun also suffered due to the flame beast's explosion. He was sent rolling on the ground, coughing blood.

"Damn it! These beasts will all explode upon death. Damn it!" Xiang Shaoyun cursed gloomily.

The other flame beasts were still attacking without stop, forcing him to flee in a sorry manner.

At this time, Xiang Shaoyun caught a glimpse of the two pursuers not far away. He sneered and muttered, "Well, let's play a game then."

He charged toward the two while dissolving some low-grade spirit crystals in his astral cosmos sea to quickly replenish his exhaustion. This was the benefit of having an astral cosmos sea. He was able to devour the energy within spirit crystals to replenish his energy at a much faster speed than others.

After dissolving a large number of spirit crystals, Xiang Shaoyun once again had a sensation that he was about to break through. His energy supply became extremely plentiful, seemingly able to break through at any time he wanted.

"Good boy. You are coming back to your death?" shouted the man in the black robe when he saw Xiang Shaoyun returning.

At the same time, the man broke away from the flame beast he was fighting and swung the chain in his hand at Xiang Shaoyun. The other middle-aged man in a gray robe took on the flame beast for him, allowing him to focus on Xiang Shaoyun.

These two were unaffiliated cultivators that were rather well-known in Cloud Margin City, known as the Double Crimson Tyrants. The man in the black robe was called Wei Chixiong, while the man in the gray robe was called Wei Shaxiong. The two cultivated the power of flame, and they also cultivated a team battle technique that was extremely powerful when they worked together.

The one attacking Xiang Shaoyun was Chixiong, who was good at flaming-chain attacks. The flaming chain in his hand shot out like it was alive, trying to wrap itself around Xiang Shaoyun. Xiang Shaoyun chose to not face the incoming attack head on. He quickly moved to the side, causing the chain to hit the flame beast behind him instead.

Bang!

The flame beast immediately exploded when hit.

Chixiong was already on guard, so he quickly pulled his chain back and formed a shield of chain in front of him, blocking the impact of the explosion. Unfortunately for him, Xiang Shaoyun took this opportunity to sneak an attack. From the side, the saber slashed straight toward Chixiong.

"Die, old dog!" Xiang Shaoyun shouted with an intense killing intent.

"Don't dream of hurting my elder brother!" Shaxiong shouted and stabbed his flaming fork toward Xiang Shaoyun.

The flaming fork split into three sharp energy spikes that stabbed straight at Xiang Shaoyun's vitals. Xiang Shaoyun was forced to shift the trajectory of his saber to face the incoming attack. Chixiong finally had the time to react, and his chain shot out again and formed a pincer attack with his brother.

The Double Crimson Tyrants were both late eighth-stage Transformation Realm cultivators. And with their teamwork, they were able to unleash a combat prowess no weaker than that of ninth-stage Transformation Realm experts. In fact, in their current form, they could even kill some ninth-stage Transformation Realm experts.

Xiang Shaoyun was instantly pushed into a crisis. Chixiong's attack whipped his shoulder, leaving a burning pain as blood started seeping out. If it wasn't for the flame beasts disturbing them at the side, he would have been captured then and there.

"Damned flame beasts!" Chixiong cursed in rage.

They wanted to capture Xiang Shaoyun but were also forced to deal with the flame beasts as well. The disturbances of the flame beasts made things much more difficult for them. Xiang Shaoyun wasn't any better off either. He was also suffering the attacks of two different parties—the beasts and the brothers. He was forced to use anything he knew just to stay alive.

But then again, this predicament was something he had intentionally put himself in. He was trying to use pressure to force more of his potential out. Once again, he dissolved over 1,000 low-grade spirit crystals in his astral cosmos sea. A boundless energy filled his body while his nine stars erupted in power. The energy coursed through his meridians while his acupoints shone brightly as his entire body absorbed the energy to grow stronger.

The pincer attack neared while a flame beast was spitting flame at him from behind. Attacked from all directions, escape was now impossible.

"Break!" Xiang Shaoyun unleashed all his power and howled, causing a terrifying power to emanate from him and ripple outward.

## Chapter 196: Drawing in Lightning

With Xiang Shaoyun's shout, his aura soared. At the same time, the presence of dragon and tiger surged out from him, roaring. Instantly, the seemingly unequaled kingly presence roiled out from him, pushing the attacks of the Double Crimson Tyrants and the flame beasts away.

"What's going on here!" Chixiong asked in astonishment when he noticed the powerful pressure.

Shaxiong's eyes went wide as he said, "His aura is growing! He is breaking through! Stop him or things will get troublesome!" Just as the two were about to attack Xiang Shaoyun, the flame beasts suddenly started attacking them and ignored Xiang Shaoyun.

They had all sensed the presence of the king of beasts emanating from Xiang Shaoyun, a presence that they instinctively feared. Because of that, Xiang Shaoyun was able to catch a respite and successfully break through.

Third-stage Transformation Realm!

After the breakthrough, Xiang Shaoyun felt himself fill with power. Astral energy coursed through his veins, thoroughly improving the condition of his body.

The strength Xiang Shaoyun gained through a breakthrough was perhaps several times or even more than 10 times more than what others at a similar cultivation level would obtain. Otherwise, he wouldn't have required so many spirit crystals to sustain his breakthrough.

Previously, he was able to battle an eighth-stage Transformation Realm cultivator as a second-stage Transformation Realm cultivator. Now, he could easily fight a ninth-stage Transformation Realm cultivator or even someone at peak Transformation Realm. That was the scary part about his physique.

Xiang Shaoyun took a deep breath and smiled in satisfaction. "Finally, another breakthrough. Let me try out my new strength..."

His gaze landed on the flame beasts not far from him. The beasts were also staring at him, a complicated look in their eyes. The person before them was obviously a human, but why was he giving off the pressure of a beast king?

Xiang Shaoyun casually swung his saber, sending out a saber energy that was much stronger than before. Before the flame beasts could even react, they were killed.

As the flame beasts exploded, an energy barrier formed around Xiang Shaoyun's body again. The defensive power of his energy barrier had also increased significantly. Now, the barrier was able to easily block all the explosions without suffering any damage whatsoever.

"Not bad. I have indeed grown a lot. If I was at the fourth stage, I doubt I would even need to fear the temperature here anymore. But for now, the coldstar stone will be enough," Xiang Shaoyun muttered in satisfaction before his gaze finally landed on the Double Crimson Tyrants.

The two were naturally still dealing with the flame beasts. Of course, they had also sensed the increase in Xiang Shaoyun's strength and were already planning to fight while retreating. Earlier, they hadn't been able to take down their opponent even after working together. Now that their opponent had broken through, they stood an even smaller chance against him.

"Let's go," said Chixiong when he saw Xiang Shaoyun looking at them.

"Leave? Will you be able to?" Xiang Shaoyun smiled before he darted forward like a lightning bolt and arrived before the two in the blink of an eye. At the exact moment he arrived, he swung his saber at them.

Berserk Lightning Blade!

No saber intent was used in the attack, but the power of innate purple lightning was used instead. The tyrannical lightning power was akin to a divine lightning bolt shooting down from the sky.

The Double Crimson Tyrants were given no choice but to counterattack, as they were unable to escape in time.

Trapping the Sun, Piercing the Moon!

They held nothing back and worked together to unleash their strongest attack. They were using a king-grade technique, which was also the only technique they knew. This was the same technique that had helped them kill many experts.

Chixiong's flaming chain turned into numerous chains that enveloped the area several dozen meters around them. At the same time, Shaxiong stabbed his flaming fork more than 10 times in quick succession, each stab sending three energy spikes flying forward. With the two working together, it almost seemed like they could trap the sun and the moon and that they possessed the power to destroy stars.

Rumble! Rumble!

The attacks of the two parties finally met, creating a series of intense explosions. The flame beasts were all forced into retreat by the might of the collision. They no longer dared to advance. As for Xiang Shaoyun, he was completely trapped in the cage of chains formed by the Double Crimson Tyrants.

"Haha, don't dream that you can defeat us just because you broke through. Time for you to die!" Chixiong roared with laughter as he quickly pulled his chain back so as to kill Xiang Shaoyun.

At the same time Shaxiong kept watch, not giving Xiang Shaoyun any chance to escape.

"Seems like I have underestimated you two. However, that still doesn't change the fact that you two are the ones who will die," said Xiang Shaoyun. Immediately, his presence of dragon and tiger surged out. At the same time, his lightning bone erupted with power, wrapping his entire body with lightning. Then, he attacked again.

Lightning Slash From the Clear Sky!

Xiang Shaoyun used his trump card, turning his entire person into a lightning bolt before swinging his saber with the power of human saber unity. At the same time, the heavens above seemed to have sensed something. Dark clouds gathered, and a massive lightning bolt shot down.

That bolt of lightning struck Xiang Shaoyun's body, but it did not harm him at all. Instead, the lightning energy poured into his body, increasing the power of innate purple lightning within his lightning bone. With this combination, the prowess of his slash reached a whole new level.

Rumble! Rumble!

The power in Xiang Shaoyun's body was too rich, and because of that, he had to unleash it. Otherwise, the overabundance of power would kill him. He swung his saber madly, sending one purple energy after another streaking across the air, leaving numerous over 10-meter-long cuts everywhere. Even the flame beasts that were unable to escape in time were killed, to say nothing of the Double Crimson Tyrants.

The two felt like they were facing a natural calamity that forcefully tore their attacks and their weapons apart. Their defenses were akin to paper and were immediately destroyed while their bodies were turned into mincemeat. They died a terrible death.

Not far away, some Transformation Realm cultivators had sensed the series of explosions and the sudden lightning bolt. They were greatly shocked.

"What's going on? Who released such terrifying power? Don't tell me a King has arrived?"

"No, no Kings will come. Perhaps a Great Demon is breaking through and facing the lightning tribulation?"

"The direction of the sound...isn't that where the Double Crimson Tyrants are? Did they do that?"

"What a terrifying lightning power. Is that the work of the pavilion's freak genius, Lightning Kid?"

"Lightning Kid? That's the younger brother of the Young Lightning King. He is definitely capable of something like that!"

...

All the people were alarmed by the power they felt. None of them dared to approach the source of power as someone so terrifying could only be a peak Transformation Realm cultivator. In fact, it felt even slightly stronger than the power released by a peak Transformation Realm cultivator. Approaching rashly was no different than suicide.

At times, curiosity would get one killed.

## Chapter 197: The Profundity of Nether Soul Domain

Xiang Shaoyun was no longer attacking. He stabbed his saber into the ground and knelt down on one knee, his body twitching repeatedly as strains of purple lightning crackled around his arms. The purple lightning looked as if it was going to burst out of his arms at any moment, and it put him in extreme pain.

Hair drooping down, he started sweating without stop. He looked like he had been completely exhausted of energy, looking to be in an incredibly terrible state. In truth, he was not over-exhausted. Rather, he had an overabundance of energy and was currently suffering a backlash of it.

That was the consequence of accidentally drawing on that bolt of lightning from the sky earlier. Drawing lightning into one's body was something that could normally only be done once a cultivator reached the King Realm. Moreover, one needed to ignite one's fate star to accomplish something like that.

Xiang Shaoyun had accidentally done it before reaching the King Realm. If he told others, not many people would even believe him. Only someone with an innate lightning physique possessing high intimacy with the power of lightning would be able to call lightning into their body before the King Realm.

Xiang Shaoyun's lightning bone was most likely the source of his intimacy with the power of lightning. That was why after the full activation of his lightning bone, a natural lightning bolt had suddenly come from the sky, allowing him to borrow the power of the heavens and slaughter his opponents.

This was definitely an occurrence that would cause someone to be overjoyed, and Xiang Shaoyun was currently both in great pain and great joy.

"Drawing lightning into the body! I actually managed to draw lightning into my body! HAHAAHA!" Xiang Shaoyun roared with laughter.

He was very clear that after accomplishing that, he would possess a tiny portion of an offensive power one would only have after becoming a King. In fact, the offensive prowess of natural lightning was much more powerful than the attacks of a regular King Realm cultivator.

From the condition of Xiang Shaoyun's surroundings, that much was clear. Numerous deep cuts could be seen all around him while severed limbs and the flesh of flame beasts were sprayed everywhere. All that served as a proof for the terrifying destructiveness of his attack.

As for the Double Crimson Tyrants, not a trace of them remained. They had been completely obliterated, not even leaving a corpse behind. At present, Xiang Shaoyun did not have the time to wallow in joy. He had to fully absorb the lightning energy that was running wild in his body. Otherwise, his body would be greatly damaged.

Then again, Xiang Shaoyun did not need to do anything himself. His lightning bone was automatically absorbing the lightning energy. His first star was doing the same. After a long while, the strains of lightning energy crackling on the surface of his skin were finally gone. One by one, they entered the lightning bone and the stars. Not only had he fully consolidated his newly gained strength from the breakthrough, he had grown even stronger. He was recovering rapidly, and only a



tiny trace of pain still lingered in his meridians. That was a side effect of having lightning energy forcefully channeled into his body by the lightning bolt earlier.

Fortunately, the hidden medicinal power within Xiang Shaoyun's body had been dug out again as strains of healing power started coursing through his body. Everything was progressing in a favorable direction.

Xiang Shaoyun stood up and resumed his climb toward the volcanic crater. Inwardly, he was still feeling gleeful. This trip is totally worth it. If I can get the earthcore fire as well, it will be perfect.

This time, he was able to climb without any disturbance from the flame beasts. They all seemed to have realized how powerful Xiang Shaoyun was and were unwilling to come rushing to their deaths. Or perhaps they were merely waiting for Xiang Shaoyun to enter deeper into their turf before ending him once and for all.

The higher he got, the more terrifying the fire in the surroundings was. Here, even stones would be burned into crisp, and outer energy barriers would be completely helpless against such an extreme temperature. Harvesting the millennium earthcore fire without full preparation was almost impossible.

Xiang Shaoyun was only able to stay safe thanks to the coldstar stone he had. Otherwise, he would have made the trip for nothing. One other problem he encountered was that the fire was so thick one's visibility was very low. It was very hard to see what was ahead.

Xiang Shaoyun had a wondrous vision, and because of that, he held some sort of advantage in this kind of environment where visibility was low. Apart from that, the Nether Soul Domain seemed to be contributing as well. It allowed him to sense what was ahead of him, giving him the sensation that he did not need his eyes to see everything clearly. The last time he had the same sensation was at the Blackhill Sect cave when he found the secret room.

This wondrous sensation made Xiang Shaoyun realize that the Nether Soul Domain definitely possessed an extraordinary power. He also found that the Nether Dragon Soul Headband played some sort of role in the sensation he was feeling, and the headband seemed to be the reason why this sensation had become much clearer than before.

Looks like I need to search through the ancient texts to find out more about the Imperial Nether Clan when I get the chance, Xiang Shaoyun thought to himself.

Relying on what he sensed through the Nether Soul Domain, Xiang Shaoyun advanced and avoided all the flame beasts in the area. Finally, he arrived near the volcanic crater. Here, he was starting to sweat as the coldstar stone's power could only do so much. This place seemed to be the source of all the fire in the area.

He could sense that not far ahead of him some other people were also heading toward the volcanic crater. To be precise, he sensed three people. One was walking easily as if treading flat land, and the person completely ignored the intense fire in the surroundings. Another was relying on a massive shield to protect his entire body as he headed to the summit. The last person seemed to be struggling somewhat, yet was still able to advance.

The first person was a young man about 20 years old. His red hair whipped about in the air, his bearing carefree and heroic. The second person was a middle-aged man who was a peak Transformation Realm cultivator. His thick cultivation base was incredibly obvious. The third person was about 30 years old. He had a dark tone of skin, and his upper body was bared, revealing his sturdy body. With his feet bare, he advanced step by step.

All three of them were emanating auras of the fire element. The former two were obviously assisted by some treasures while the third person seemed to be relying entirely on himself to climb, which was quite an astonishing feat.

Xiang Shaoyun concluded that the three were his greatest threats for now. Just as he was about to resume his climb, he suddenly noticed Chen Zilong and Li Yaxuan arriving together. Apart from them, Xie Sanqian and two other young men were also climbing the mountain from a different direction.

At the same time, he also sensed that in the surrounding area some people were being burned alive while some were forced to retreat. The millennium earthcore fire was not something anyone could obtain. Only those with both strength and luck could obtain it.

"I have to be fast!" Xiang Shaoyun did not hesitate to hasten up the mountain with his full strength.

Surprisingly, no flame beasts could be seen. There must have been a reason. Sure enough, after a while, roars rang out from ahead of him. Flame beast kings had appeared.

Xiang Shaoyun originally thought that the appearance of Demon Kings would definitely cause people to retreat. But he found that instead of retreating, they were increasing their speed in excitement.

It greatly confused him. As he was trying to decide on what to do, he heard Chen Zilong's voice transmission, "Only by obtaining the flame beast king's demonic core would one be able to approach the millennium earthcore fire smoothly."

## Chapter 198: Qilin Arm

The flame beast king's demonic core shared the properties of the earthcore fire. After all, it was a life form that had come into being from the power of fire the earthcore fire was emanating. Because of that, its demonic core allowed one to approach the earthcore fire unharmed.

If one approached rashly without the demonic core, one might be a victim of the earthcore fire's attack. After spending a millennia to form, the millennium earthcore fire possessed a certain degree of intelligence. One could say that it now possessed some sort of consciousness. Thus, if one wanted to obtain it, one had to first obtain its approval.

Other than that, the only way to get it would be to rely on the brute strength of an expert. But since these people here were all Transformation Realm cultivators, none of them possessed the power to suppress the earthcore fire with brute force.

Xiang Shaoyun tossed Chen Zilong a grateful look before he resumed his climb. Without Chen Zilong's reminder, he would have focused only on entering the volcanic crater. And if he did that, he would most likely suffer gravely.

"Why did you tell him that?" Li Yaxuan asked doubtfully.

"I just want to see how strong he really is," Chen Zilong said nonchalantly.

They then continued up the mountain as well. At the summit of the mountain, a flame beast flew out. It spat terrifying tongues of flame out of its mouth repeatedly.

The flame beasts were simple demonic beasts that only knew one attack. This was completely unlike other demonic beasts that had numerous variations in their attacks. But flame beasts held the superiority in regards to the seemingly boundless energy they had at their disposal due to the kind of environment they resided in.

Although the first young man who was climbing the mountain was not a King Realm cultivator, he had an astonishing combat prowess. He was able to easily avoid the attacks of the flame beast and was able to even find an opening to launch a counterattack.

That young man's name was Huo Linfei, a freak from the Cloud Margin Pavilion. He ranked three among all the personal disciples and had a chance of becoming a King Realm cultivator in a few years' time.

He was surrounded by a clump of green flame capable of facing the surrounding flame, allowing him to remain unaffected despite the harsh environment. Holding a saber with a blazing flame on its blade, he swung it around repeatedly while dodging the attacks of the flame beast. Each attack he sent was capable of posing a threat to even King Realm cultivators.

That was the type of valiant combat prowess Cloud Margin Pavilion geniuses had. The middle-aged man arrived soon after and joined the battle as well. He was clear that the flame beast king had to be killed before they could proceed into the volcanic crater. Next, the barefoot man arrived as well. He drew a massive crimson sword, lifted it, and slammed it down at the flame beast.

The middle-aged man was called Qian Chen, while the barefoot man was called Fan Ren. The former was a high-level overseer of the Cloud Margin Pavilion while the latter had an unknown background. The two had similar combat prowess to Huo Linfei.

All three of them were equipped with king-grade weapons. They worked together and were able to force the flame beast into retreat. The flame beast had even sustained injuries. All three of them possessed enough strength to battle King Realm experts.

As the three were working together to deal with the flame beast king, yet another flame beast king shot out from the volcanic crater. The second flame beast king was even stronger than the first flame beast king. The moment it came out, a torrential flame flooded the area.

The three were forced to retreat temporarily. They did not dare to face the second beast, and the situation started turning for the worse for them. It was at this time that Xiang Shaoyun, Chen Zilong, Li Yaxuan, Xie Sanqian, and the others arrived as well.

"Let's work together and kill the flame beast kings first. We can fight for the demonic core after," Huo Linfei shouted.

"I agree," Qian Chen said.

"Yes, we have to first kill the flame beast kings," said Li Yaxuan.

Thus, they formed two groups and started fighting the two flame beast kings. The flame beast kings were not here as decorations. They kept spitting terrifying tongues of flame everywhere, forcing everyone to roll around dodging the flame. Those without king-grade armor were instantly killed.

Xie Sanqian was having a hard time dealing with the flame attacks. If it wasn't for the two people protecting him at all times, he would have been killed right then. He knew he shouldn't force it, so he stopped forcing himself and quickly retreated. He decided to try getting the demonic core after everyone was done with the flame beast kings. His eyes shone with a sharp glint when he noticed that Xiang Shaoyun was also present.

Xiang Shaoyun was not idling around. He drew his saber and joined the group with Chen Zilong, Li Yaxuan, and the others in their battle with the flame beast king. Everyone was fighting with their full power and nobody was holding back. Dreadful and powerful attacks started flooding the area.

Chen Zilong was fully displaying the combat power the number one young master of Cloud Margin City should have. His fists enlarged, and fiery scales covered them. Each punch he sent was accompanied by the projection of a roaring qilin; the might of his punches were extremely terrifying.

Qilin Arm!

That was Chen Zilong's proud trump card, the one and only in the Cloud Margin City.

It was rumored that the Chen Clan Emperor had injected some qilin blood he had obtained by accident into Chen Zilong's arms during his childhood. From then on, his arms had changed, becoming extraordinarily strong and capable of breaking through all defenses.

Chen Zilong did not disappoint and relied on this pair of arms to gain his title as the number one young master of Cloud Margin City.

As for Li Yaxuan, she was also astonishingly powerful. She was dual wielding a pair of swords, one of the wood element and one of the fire element. The two elements criss-crossed without stop as she unleashed her outstanding swordsmanship, which was destructive enough to directly injure the flame beast king.

With these two, Xiang Shaoyun did not feel much pressure from the flame beast king at all. However, his gold serpentine crocodile skin did get ignited by the flame beast king's attacks.

From that alone, it was obvious the flame attacks of the flame beast king was not something ordinary flames could compare to. The attack forced Xiang Shaoyun to retreat from the battle in a sorry manner.

While he retreated, he could sense that the coldstar stone was growing weaker and weaker. It did not seem like the stone would last any longer. He could not afford to delay any longer and had to enter the volcanic crater immediately.

"I can't hold back anymore," Xiang Shaoyun muttered to himself and charged forth again, unleashing his saber intent.

With Chen Zilong and Li Yaxuan keeping the flame beast king busy, he could attack without fear. He swung his saber, unleashing an enchanting saber energy that glided across the air. In a flash, the saber energy struck the flame beast king, severing one third of its body away from it.

"Roar! Roar!"

It enraged the flame beast king, and it immediately spat a fireball at Xiang Shaoyun. His face fell and quickly unleashed his Lightning Slash From the Clear Sky. This time, he did not attract any natural lightning from the sky. Instead, he only utilized the innate purple lightning in his lightning bone which shot forth together with the saber energy.

Rumble! Rumble!

## Chapter 199: Worked Hard for Nothing

Xiang Shaoyun's earth shattering attack crushed the flame beast king's attack, but the impact still sent him tumbling down the mountain. He coughed blood repeatedly as he rolled down the steep mountain in a sorry manner.

However, his attack had also opened up an opportunity for Chen Zilong and Li Yaxuan. The two joined hands and attacked, blasting the flame beast king apart. The flame beast king's demonic core appeared before them. Not far away, Xie Sanqian was watching everything unfold, and he coveted the demonic core greatly, but he did not dare to snatch something from Chen Zilong and Li Yaxuan.

"We got the demonic core!" Chen Zilong said as he quickly grabbed it.

Li Yaxuan did not bother fighting over the core with him. She was here to help him in the first place. She glanced at Xiang Shaoyun who was tumbling down the mountain and sighed, "Without him, we wouldn't have been able to kill the beast king so easily."

Chen Zilong also glanced in Xiang Shaoyun's direction and smiled. "He is a worthy opponent." He then tossed the demonic core to Li Yaxuan and said, "Sister Xuan, keep it. Let's go down together."

"Don't you need it?" Li Yaxuan looked at Chen Zilong in astonishment.

"I don't," Chen Zilong said confidently. Standing there with his fiery Qilin Arms, he looked incomparably heroic.

At this time, the other group had just finished off the flame beast king they were fighting as well. However, the group was made up of many different parties. Thus, they started fighting among themselves for the demonic core.

Although Chen Zilong and Li Yaxuan had arrived later than some of them, they were the first to go down into the crater. As for Xiang Shaoyun, he stabilized himself and stopped falling. However, his inner organs were still aching, as he had sustained internal injuries from the flame beast king's attack.

"Looks like I had worked hard for nothing," Xiang Shaoyun smiled helplessly.

If he hadn't broken through not long ago, he wouldn't have faced the flame beast king head on. He rejoiced that he was wearing king-grade armor. Otherwise, he would have suffered an even worse fate. He did not feel discouraged. After dissolving some healing herbs in his astral cosmos sea to heal himself, he started climbing toward the volcanic crater again.

When Xiang Shaoyun arrived at the summit again, Huo Linfei, Qian Chen, Fan Ren, and the others were still fighting. He knew that there was still one demonic core up for grabs. He would have to rely on himself to get it.

Currently, the holder of the demonic core was Fan Ren. He alone suffered the combined assault of Huo Linfei and Qian Chen, yet he still remained standing and was not defeated immediately. It was obvious how valiant his combat prowess was.

He had an extremely powerful defensive technique that formed a shiny shield around him, which was how he had been able to stop the combined assault of Huo Linfei and Qian Chen. At the same time, he swept his massive sword around madly, forcing the two to retreat instead.

"I don't care who you are. Hand over the demonic core or die!" Huo Linfei said as his figure blurred. He swung his blazing saber, sending a saber attack from a tricky angle and demolished Fan Ren's attack. He followed up with even more attacks that placed Fan Ren in a terrible predicament.

Qian Chen was no pushover either. He stabbed his sword forward repeatedly, sending numerous sharp sword energies that rained down on Fan Ren's shield, creating numerous sparks. No matter how powerful Fan Ren's defense was, facing two opponents as powerful as himself, he had no way of breaking free and entering the crater.

Right this moment, Fan Ren caught a glimpse of Xiang Shaoyun who was not far away from them. A crafty smile formed on his dark face as he shouted to Xiang Shaoyun, "Catch the demonic core!" Then, a red item was seen flying toward Xiang Shaoyun.

Xiang Shaoyun blanked out slightly before he quickly caught the red item. That successfully shifted Huo Linfei and Qian Chen's attention away from Fan Ren.

"Bastard! I'll deal with you later!" Huo Linfei cursed before dashing toward Xiang Shaoyun.

Qian Chen did not hold back either. He also rushed at Xiang Shaoyun while roaring, "Kid, hand over the demonic core, and I will spare your life."

Xiang Shaoyun had an unsightly expression as he found that what he had in hand was merely a piece of flint. He quickly retreated while explaining, "This is not the demonic core!"

As he said that, he tossed the flint away, trying to pull himself out of trouble. Huo Linfei and Qian Chen immediately realized that they had been tricked. Alas, Fan Ren was already nowhere to be found. Obviously, he had entered the crater.



"Damn it! We were tricked! Go!" Huo Linfei shouted to Qian Chen, his face falling as he gave chase.

Qian Chen hesitated slightly before he rushed down the crater as well. As for Xiang Shaoyun, he heaved a sigh of relief as he grumbled, "Damn it, I nearly got myself screwed because of that fellow."

Xiang Shaoyun did not stop, and he quickly rushed down the crater with no hesitation. The crater's wall was extremely steep. The moment they entered, they would start sliding down the hot wall and suffer the extreme heat.

Xiang Shaoyun was sliding down with his bottom on the wall. The moment his bottom touched the hot wall, he started shouting in pain as the heat burned away his pants. He felt incredibly embarrassed, but fortunately, nobody was paying attention to him. In such a situation, nobody could be bothered to pay any attention to something that insignificant.

Even Xiang Shaoyun himself couldn't be bothered. He immediately stabbed his saber into the wall to control the speed of his fall. He would definitely not want to fall straight to the bottom like this.

After all, if he fell all the way down, he would fall straight into a large amount of lava. The terrifying temperature of lava was enough to turn them all into crisp. The coldstar stone was still growing weaker. It was going to stop working at any moment.

Realizing that, Xiang Shaoyun quickly dissolved the icesnow fruit in his astral cosmos sea. Otherwise, it would be very hard for him to resist the extreme heat. Right after he dissolved the icesnow fruit, a frost aura coursed through his body, making him feel much better.

"The icesnow fruit has yet to reach the king grade. It won't be able to last long. I need to get the demonic core before the effect ends," Xiang Shaoyun decided.

At this time, his Nether Soul Domain showcased its prowess again as the scene of what was going on below him unfolded in his mind. Down below were a large number of flame beasts. They were all residing in the lava and spitting terrifying tongues of flame. They were all tightly clustered around a clump of pulsing flame, not allowing anyone to approach.

As for Chen Zilong, Li Yaxuan, Fan Ren, Huo Linfei, and Qian Ren, none of them dared to move rashly. There were a few others who had arrived much earlier. All of them were hanging on the wall, staring at the clump of flame at the middle of the beasts. Their gazes were burning.

Everyone knew that they were looking at the millennium earthcore fire.

## Chapter 200: Millennium Earthcore Fire

The millennium earthcore fire was only a tiny clump of flame. It swayed about gently, looking like an innocent fairy as it pulsed repeatedly. It transformed without stop, assuming one form after another, such as the form of a tiny flower, a tiny flame beast, a demon head, and so on.

It looked incredibly odd yet innocent, as if it posed no threat at all. But in truth, it was dreadfully destructive and not even a King Realm cultivator could easily survive its attack. It had after all taken a millennia to form before finally showing itself to the world.

Everyone present wanted to tame the earthcore fire, but it wasn't an easy feat. Just the large number of flame beasts surrounding the earthcore fire were annoying enough to deal with. One had to possess sufficient intimacy with fire or one had to be skilled enough in taming flames before one could even consider obtaining the earthcore fire.

The people were scattered all over the crater, all staring at the millennium earthcore fire and thinking of a way to obtain it. Also hanging on the wall was a certain young bald monk. He had a handsome face, a monk brand on his head, and a wide pair of ears. Coupled with the Buddhist cassock he wore, his entire person emanated kindness.

He seemed to be chanting something repeatedly, which was most likely a Buddhist flame taming technique. The earthcore fire started pulsing incessantly, looking like it was going to fly toward the monk soon.

"Where did this monk come from? You're trying to steal from us?" someone shouted resentfully.

Nobody else spoke as everyone started using their own respective secret techniques to attract the millennium earthcore fire as well. Chen Zilong had activated his Qilin Arms, causing numerous apparitions of fire qilin to appear behind him, with some of them roaring fiercely.

Fire qilins were top fire elemental beasts and were born intimate with fire, possessing an innate ability to control fire. In fact, they were not much weaker than the legendary beast, the vermilion bird.

Chen Zilong was planning on using the fire qilins to attract the millennium earthcore fire. Sure enough, what he did immediately worked. The millennium earthcore fire started changing its direction and slowly pulsed in the direction of Chen Zilong. Even so, it still remained rooted where it was. When the others saw this, they grew anxious.

Fan Ren, who had a demonic core on hand, was even more brazen. He directly went down, trying to approach the millennium earthcore fire. He did not seem to have any regards for his own life. Thanks to the aura sharing similar properties with the earthcore fire that the demonic core was emanating, the damage he suffered while approaching was reduced considerably.

Huo Linfei did not wait around doing nothing either. He fully unleashed his green flame. The green flame was in fact a beast flame that was much more powerful than ordinary flames. With the green flame as bait, he tried to attract the earthcore fire.

Another person took out an odd bottle. It was unknown what function the bottle had, but when the bottle was aimed at the millennium earthcore fire, it started releasing some sort of energy that tried pulling the millennium earthcore fire in.

Everyone used different techniques, trying their best to obtain the ultimate prize. At this point, the millennium earthcore fire seemed somewhat confused. It started surging, instantly increasing the temperature within the crater and intensifying the fire burning within the crater.

Two people were immediately injured and nearly fell off the wall. They quickly retreated, no longer daring to stay. But two clumps of flame suddenly appeared before them. Next, their energy barriers were ignited, followed by their bodies.

"Ahhhh!"

The two wailed miserable before falling off the wall, their bodies on fire. The numerous flame beasts also started stirring, but not one of them dared to move. They were akin to puppets under the millennium earthcore fire's control that could only stay there awaiting its command. Everyone's hairs stood on end at the fearsome sight.

Their senses told them that the two had been killed by two strains of energy released by the millennium earthcore fire. They wondered if the millennium earthcore fire had in fact obtained a full consciousness and had transformed into a demon. What should they do if it decided to attack them next?

Xiang Shaoyun, who had been staying silent, started getting uneasy. He had a feeling that the millennium earthcore fire was merely toying with everyone. That's right. Toying. Like a playful child, it was playing with its toys as it wished and had no intention whatsoever to submit to anyone.

Looks like this earthcore fire is not simple at all, thought Xiang Shaoyun.

He was feeling vexed by the fact that he had never cultivated the power of fire before this. He also did not know any flame taming techniques, and he did not have the flame beast king's demonic core. How should he proceed then?

"Amitabha. Everything in the world has a spirit. A human has a spirit, a demon has a spirit, even a flame has a spirit. As for you, you are a spirit among flames, while I am a Buddha among humans. If you become my karmic flame, I will help you become the most supreme of karmic flames," chanted the young monk.

Traces of dharmic teachings were contained within his words, words capable of reeling in all living beings. Even the others there were slightly affected by the words, and they felt their will wavering. It was unknown if the millennium earthcore fire actually understood what was said, but it sent a strain of its power toward the young monk.

The young monk stood his ground and slammed both his palms forward, forming a Buddhist symbol before him. The Buddhist symbol then captured that strain of power in his palm and started refining it. When the others saw that, they were first astonished before they realized something.

It was the test of the millennium earthcore fire. If the young monk was able to refine that strain of power and obtain the millennium earthcore fire's approval, he would most likely be the master of the millennium earthcore fire.

"I am the son of qilin, born to be the God of Fire. I am the only one who can help you become a divine flame. Submit!" shouted Chen Zilong who fully activated his Qilin Arms. The qilin apparition turned solid before it charged toward the millennium earthcore fire.

As a response, the millennium earthcore fire sent a strain of power toward Chen Zilong as well. Chen Zilong was overjoyed as he quickly accepted that strain of power with both hands and started fusing it with his arms. When the others saw that, they started shouting as well, but not one of them was able to solicit any response from the millennium earthcore fire.

Apart from them, the earthcore fire only gave a chance to Fan Ren, Li Yaxuan, and Huo Linfei. The person with a bottle couldn't accept it and shouted, "I will take you myself then!"

He then increased the power of his bottle, causing a massive devouring force to surge out as he tried to pull the millennium earthcore fire in with brute force. But instead of pulling the millennium earthcore fire up, he alerted the flame beasts. They immediately sent tongues of flame toward him.

"F\*ck! Fine, I quit!" He was smart enough to know when to quit. After a shout, he quickly escaped.

The speed in which he fled was incredibly astonishing, to the point even Xiang Shaoyun was gaping in amazement.

That guy sure is good at hiding his strength, Xiang Shaoyun judged inwardly.

Right this moment, the temperature of his surroundings soared as a strain of flame appeared near him.