

Overlord 971

Chapter 971: Battle of the Rising Suns: Begin

Based on the note left by Xiang Shaoyun from two lives ago, there was an icesoul heart, some equipment in the Armament Pavilion, and some other items left behind. For him from two lives ago, these things weren't anything special, but they were absolute treasures for the current him.

But while he was in the coffin, the other disciples had stolen them all. Xiang Shaoyun searched around and found nothing. He felt like crying.

"No, there's still a saint soul tree. I hope it's doing fine," muttered Xiang Shaoyun as he started rushing toward the tree.

When he arrived, he found that a part of the saint soul tree had been chopped off as well. Fortunately, the roots and a large part of the tree remained. Obviously, the tree had been protecting itself. Otherwise, the disciples would have probably dug it up completely from the ground.

"Those thieves!" Xiang Shaoyun cursed furiously.

Before this, he did not care if the entire secret space was robbed clean, but after learning that everything here was meant for him, his heart started aching.

"Young master, do you want us to chase after them and get everything back?" asked the toad, taking this as an opportunity to display his loyalty.

Not willing to be left behind, the turtle also hurriedly said, "That's right! Those little fellows are nothing special at all. Both of us are more than enough to crush all of them!"

"You really think you are undefeatable? There are Saints waiting outside. You will only get yourself killed," replied Xiang Shaoyun.

The toad and the turtle shut their mouths. They might be powerful Demon Sovereigns, but it wouldn't be easy to become Demon Saints. The gap between the two realms was unimaginably large.

There weren't many things left in the secret space, but this place was now Xiang Shaoyun's personal property. He was thinking of a way to move the Celestial King's Palace and the saint soul tree, but how was he supposed to? It was a hard question to answer.

His astral cosmos sea might be able to store everything in existence, but the Celestial King's Palace was incredibly large. He doubted that his astral cosmos sea could withstand the burden of storing the entire palace. After all, there were still a lot of things left in the Celestial King's Palace.

As for the saint soul tree, it was a sentient tree. Convincing the tree to come with him wouldn't be easy.

He returned before the Celestial King's Palace in a stressed manner. There, he took out the book on formations and started studying it, hoping to find the true essence of the formation enveloping the palace. Finding the true essence would solve his current predicament. When he had controlled the formation earlier, he had merely utilized a small part of the formation's abilities. In truth, he hadn't even fully grasped the formation.

As he went through the book, more memories awakened, and his understanding of the formation deepened. This was, in fact, a massive formation of 10 parts that enveloped almost the entirety of the secret space, which was how the secret space had stayed hidden for so many years.

It didn't seem possible that he would be able to move the entire secret space. His only option was to fully activate the formation. Perhaps he could then hide the secret space once again. The spirit crystals powering the formation had lasted for a long period of time. If he hid the secret space once again, the remaining energy would probably last only 10 more years.

"So be it. I'll return for the Celestial King's Palace in 10 years and turn it into my personal palace," muttered Xiang Shaoyun. He started controlling the formation and deepening his understanding of it. He also started combing through all the formation nodes carefully. That way, he would prevent any mishaps when he proceeded to hide the secret space later.

Afterward, he brought the turtle and the toad with him and headed for the exit. While stepping through the exit, Xiang Shaoyun turned and pointed the Holy Spirit Banner in a certain direction. There was a sealing formation eye there, and with the Holy Spirit Banner, the secret space would remain sealed for 10 years. Unless a top-tier Saint or a stronger expert came here, nobody would be able to unveil the secret space.

The three then rushed out of the secret space, and the Holy Spirit Banner activated the formation's sealing power. Once again, the secret space vanished from existence.

The final fight of the four academies was already in progress. Four stages had been erected on Lonesoul Island, and disciples were fighting on each stage. The final survivors of the four stages would be crowned as the Four Blazing Suns. This was the highest honor a cultivator of the younger generation could achieve.

After the Four Blazing Suns were crowned, the decisive battle would be held and the ultimate champion would be determined. The current disciples standing on all four stages were True Martial Academy disciples. Around the stages, the disciples of the three other academies were wearing unsightly expressions.

Although the True Martial Academy had always been known as the strongest of the four, nobody wanted to see them dominate the rankings to this extent since it would be a source of great humiliation.

"Are there none from the Nine Palace Academy capable of taking a spot on the stage? This is embarrassing!" shouted an unhappy overseer from the Nine Palace Academy.

As he spoke, his gaze landed on a certain youth sitting cross-legged to the side. That youth was none other than Jiu Tian, the Nine Palace Academy's trump card. He was a prodigy that had formed a resonance with the Nine Palace Sword Formation at his birth.

Jiu Tian sensed the overseer's gaze and nodded before saying, "Give others a chance to fight. A fight at this level does not require me."

Not even the overseer dared to say anything. He could only send a different disciple onto the stage. The Dragon Phoenix Academy naturally also wished to have someone take one of the spots on the stage and increase their prestige.

Huang Tianji took the initiative to charge onto one of the stages, and he roared, "Piss off. This stage is mine now."

The moment he stepped onto the stage, he activated the Royal War Aura. A dragon appeared and charged the True Martial Academy disciple with a crushing might.

"Someone from the imperial court? Fine, let me experience the Royal War Aura," said the True Martial Academy disciple as he faced Huang Tianji fearlessly.

Huang Tianji lived up to his status as the crown prince. After the blow Xiang Shaoyun had dealt him previously, he had been cultivating arduously. He was now a peak ninth-stage Dragon Ascension Realm cultivator, and with the Royal War Aura, he was one of the strongest disciples present.

The True Martial Academy stood no chance and was forced off the stage. From the fight, Huang Tianji's fame rose. The Dragon Phoenix Academy disciples viewed him in a new light after witnessing the performance of this crown prince who had always remained relatively low-profile. Perhaps he had been hiding his strength all along.

Right after obtaining his first victory, Huang Tianji pointed at Ouyang Chuanqi and shouted, "Ouyang Chuanqi, get up here if you have the guts. Since Xiang Shaoyun is not around, I will vent my anger on you instead!"

Chapter 972: Clash of Two Prodigies

Who would have guessed that after his first victory, Huang Tianji would challenge Ouyang Chuanqi? One ought to know that this was a competition between the four academies. Generally, the defenders on the stages would be waiting for the challenges of other academies. Their main goal would be to win honor and glory for their respective academies, yet this prince had decided to fight one of his own.

Even so, there was no denying that he had just made the competition even more interesting. Ouyang Chuanqi naturally wouldn't back off from a challenge. He jumped onto the stage, pointed his spear at Huang Tianji, and said, "As you wish. Bring it on!"

"I don't know why you decided to follow Xiang Shaoyun, but I'll tell you that you must be blind to make that choice," said Huang Tianji as he charged Ouyang Chuanqi ferociously.

Huang Tianji's Royal War Aura was pushed to the maximum, and he streaked through the air like a dragon. His spear lit up and sent a fiery dragon out that proceeded to coil around Ouyang Chuanqi.

The attack was as powerful as the attack of a third-stage Sovereign. In fact, it could probably match the attack of a fourth-stage Sovereign. This was the fearsome combat strength a top prodigy possessed.

What made Huang Tianji's strength even more impressive was the fact that this was only a casual attack. If he fought at full strength, he could probably match an actual fourth-stage Sovereign.

Ouyang Chuanqi did not hold back in the fight. He had been planning to save some strength to fight Xiang Shaoyun, but he was left with no choice but to use his full strength against Huang Tianji.

The two prodigies from the Dragon Phoenix Academy clashed and instantly attracted a lot of attention. The surrounding observers gasped at their displayed might.

Huang Tianji moved like a dragon, and it was as though an actual dragon had descended upon the stage. At times, the dragon would charge, and at times, the dragon would bare its fangs and brandish its claws. His combat strength was unrivalled, and he created numerous intense shockwaves as he wreaked havoc on the stage.

Meanwhile, Ouyang Chuanqi was akin to a brightly radiating sun. As he swung his spear repeatedly, he sent numerous fiery rays forward. It almost seemed like a dragon was battling a natural calamity on the stage. The two lived up to their statuses as genius cultivators. Very few disciples could match them in terms of strength.

"It is truly surprising that the Dragon Phoenix Academy actually has such excellent saplings this batch," said a True Martial Academy elder that was hiding in the air.

"True. One of them is a genius from an imperial court, and the other seems to be the heir of the Ouyang Clan. With their strength, they can easily get into the top 20 of this competition," said a different True Martial Academy elder.

The faces of Shadowflash and Feng Huosuo, who were from the Dragon Phoenix Academy, twitched. They were both thinking that the two elders were speaking inappropriately. Claiming that these two disciples could only enter the top 20 even with their strength was basically the same as slapping the Dragon Phoenix Academy's face.

Shadowflash said, "These two aren't even the strongest of our disciples. You will witness the true strength of our disciples soon."

"That's right. They do not represent the full quality of our disciples," said Feng Huosuo.

They were both elders of the Dragon Phoenix Academy. They might not have upstanding personalities, but they still wouldn't tolerate any contempt toward the academy for the sake of their collective honor.

"It doesn't matter what you say. The ones to stand on the stage until the very end will be the true champions," said the Nine Palace Academy elder.

"I don't see the lord guardian's disciple around. Did he..." muttered a Sacred Deer Academy elder somewhat anxiously.

"All the disciples are out. He's probably dead," replied someone.

"Is the lord guardian's disciple really that weak?" muttered the Sacred Deer Academy with disbelief.

"Everyone will die. The secret space is filled with danger. It's really not surprising if he really got himself killed there," said Feng Huosuo, rejoicing at the calamity that had befallen Xiang Shaoyun.

He definitely did not wish to see Xiang Shaoyun come out alive. With Xiang Shaoyun's tough backer and potential, he would be a great threat to Feng Huosuo if he continued growing.

At this time, the situation on the stages had changed considerably. The True Martial Academy only occupied two stages now. One was occupied by both Ouyang Chuanqi and Huang Tianji, while the final stage was occupied by the Nine Palace Academy. The Sacred Deer Academy was occupying no stages at the moment.

Of the four stages, the stage with Ouyang Chuanqi and Huang Tianji had the most intense battle. They matched each other evenly, and it wouldn't be easy for a victor to be decided between them. However, they were also both aware that if their deadlock continued, the victor wouldn't be able to stay on the stage for long afterward.

Huang Tianji transformed into a dragon and soared into the sky. His Royal War Aura surged as his battle strength increased, reaching a level comparable to a fifth-stage Soul Foundation Realm cultivator, stunning the surrounding disciples.

Ouyang Chuanqi did not want to leave any regrets in this battle. His entire person enlarged, and he seemed to have transformed from a sun into a bird. He did not transform into any regular bird but a divine bird, the three-legged golden crow that was also known as the sun god. A torrential flame spread out from him, and a celestial cauldron appeared midair. Instantly, the entire stage was flooded with fire.

After several collisions resulting in multiple fearsome shockwaves, a figure was flung from the stage. It was none other than Huang Tianji. Ouyang Chuanqi remained on the stage with his hand over his chest and his face pale. Evidently, he was fully exhausted from the fight.

"Well done!" Tang Longfei cheered from below the stage.

"Captain Ouyang is indeed strong," said Xuan Yuantian in excitement.

Han Chenfei was also filled with excitement. Inwardly, she thought, Ouyang Chuanqi's strength is actually quite surprising. Even an expert like him is willing to submit before the overlord. Xiang Shaoyun must still be safe. He is a man of miracles.

She had long noticed that Xiang Shaoyun wasn't among the many disciples that had gathered. She was greatly worried over his safety.

"The overlord shall not be sullied," said Ouyang Chuanqi before hopping off the stage.

What he did essentially meant that he was giving up fighting for the glory of being one of the Four Blazing Suns.

Ouyang Chuanqi knew that even if he could return to his peak condition, he wouldn't be able to emerge as the ultimate champion. There was a certain man with an infinitely higher chance to get the first place.

Overlord, if you still don't show yourself, I will be dissolving the Overlord Legion after this, thought Ouyang Chuanqi.

After Ouyang Chuanqi left the stage, Han Chenfei leaped onto it. This was a stage set for the genius disciples from all around the world. Each of them wanted a chance to prove themselves. After Han Chenfei got on the stage, Xia Liuhui displayed commendable courage as he actually charged over and challenged her.

"Beauty, let's get to know each other. I'm my boss's faithful little brother, Xia Liuhui. We practically grew up sharing our underpants. How may I address you?" said Xia Liuhui with a look of infatuation on his face.

"I am Han Chenfei," she replied. After a short pause, she added, "If you don't mind, feel free to address me as sister-in-law."

Chapter 973: Are You Even Worthy of Knowing Her Name?

When Xia Liuhui heard Han Chenfei's words, his mouth went wide agape in shock. He then slammed his own chest and howled, "The heavens are unfair! The heavens are unfair! What is the point of life? Come, strike me down with a bolt of lightning!"

Right after he said that, a loud peal of thunder rumbled above him, greatly frightening him. He nearly fell from the stage from fright.

"I have wronged. Heavens, please spare me," Xia Liuhui hurriedly shrank his neck and pleaded.

In truth, what he heard was merely a lightning bolt summoned by a True Martial Academy disciple fighting on the neighboring stage. The heavens weren't striking him down. The surrounding disciples roared in laughter when they saw Xia Liuhui acting like a clown.

"Who is this clown? He's hilarious! With this much strength, is he not embarrassed to step on the stage?"

"True. He is making a fool out of himself. I wonder who his boss is. Someone is actually willing to accept a little brother like this?"

"Things must be pretty awkward for this kid right now. He had actually accidentally teased his own sister-in-law."

Xia Liuhui did not dare to make a move against Han Chenfei and left the stage in a sorry manner. He showed all the people his middle finger and said, "At least this young master has the guts to get on the stage. If you're so gutsy, go get on the stage as well. I guarantee you will have even your balls smashed up there."

One ought to say that Xia Liuhui had a poisonous tongue. He instantly offended everyone with his words. Fortunately, intense battles were occurring on the stages, so not many people bothered with him.

At this time, Yu Ziyang, who had been staying put thus far, finally made a move. He made a bold decision and picked a stage occupied by the True Martial Academy. The True Martial Academy disciples were freakishly strong, and Yu Ziyang was displaying a confidence that signified his extraordinariness.

Yu Ziyang had a physique of extreme yang, and his entire person was like a burning sun. The strength he displayed was no weaker than what Ouyang Chuanqi displayed earlier. One could say that the two were actually identical in strength.

An intense battle unfolded between Yu Ziyang and the True Martial Academy disciple. Yu Ziyang's opponent had a background that was just as tough as his, and that person naturally had a rich number of trump cards as well. He wouldn't have been able to win over 10 consecutive battles on the stage otherwise.

The fight lasted about two hours, and the disciples around the stage were stunned by their persistence. Yu Ziyang, like an incomparably mighty and unstoppable sun prince, sent out nine burning suns.

The True Martial Academy disciple showed an extraordinary strength as well. He was using the long-lost Nine Revolution Exploding Star Technique. With his freakish battle strength, he eventually defeated Yu Ziyang. The True Martial Academy disciples started cheering.

"Senior Brother Zhou Haoyu is amazing. He has won 18 consecutive battles so far."

"That Dragon Phoenix Academy disciple is not bad himself for being able to push Senior Brother Zhou to that extent. If he's in our academy, he is probably strong enough to be ranked in the top 10."

"Looks like this time around, our academy will be bagging the top four positions of the competition. The other academies really can't cut it."

"It hasn't been long, so there might be dark horses from the other academies. Even so, first place is definitely ours."

With Yu Ziyang's defeat, the Dragon Phoenix Academy disciples wore unsightly expressions. They all hoped that either Baili Yixiao or Zhan Wushuang would step on the stage and teach those fellows a lesson.

Not long after, Lei Bao won a battle on one of the stages and won some prestige for the Dragon Phoenix Academy. Unfortunately, he was pushed off the stage by a Nine Palace Academy disciple after two rounds of defense.

After all, strength was not all one needed to remain on the stage. High endurance was also required, and one also needed to have a high enough recovery speed. In short, one needed enough comprehensive strength to qualify as one of the Four Blazing Suns.

Evidently, Lei Bao was strong but not strong enough to proclaim hegemony among so many geniuses. As time passed, changes started occurring on all the stages. Han Chenfei was pushed off her stage after lasting five rounds, and she was wholly convinced with her defeat.

The only stage that remained the same was the stage with Zhou Haoyu on it. He was the True Martial Academy's fifth-ranked disciple. In a situation where the higher-ranked True Martial Academy disciples weren't making any moves, he looked like he had a chance to rank first in this competition. At this moment, he had achieved 23 consecutive victories.

At this time, one particular disciple decided to challenge Zhou Haoyu, causing an uproar among the disciples. The challenger was Yu Caidie, the Dragon Phoenix Academy's number one beauty. She was also one of the top beauties taking part in the competition. In fact, she was ranked the same as Devil Concubine, and nobody could decide which was better looking.

After years of bitter cultivation, Yu Caidie looked even more extraordinary than before. As she walked, she left blooming lotuses in her steps. It was as though an empress was gracing everyone with her presence. The disciples all held their breaths as they stared at her. She seemed to have stolen everyone's hearts as they all looked at her in infatuation.

"What a beautiful woman. She is a goddess."

"I hereby swear that I will make her mine. She can only belong to a man like me."

"Stop dreaming. Why don't you look at yourself in the mirror? Are you worthy of a goddess like her?"

Zhou Haoyu was an elegant man who had always considered himself a playboy. He never had a lack of women around him, but he had never seen a woman as attractive as Yu Caidie apart from Devil Concubine.

"Beauty, I am Zhou Haoyu. I wonder, what is your name?" he asked gracefully.

"I'll tell you after you defeat me," said Yu Caidie. Her entire person was enveloped in a curtain of multicolored radiance, dazzling all onlookers with her beauty.

"Good. A beauty always deserves a hero. I shall let you witness my true strength. I believe you will fall for me," said Zhou Haoyu who had practically fallen for Yu Caidie at first sight. He wanted to show her his true strength, and he wanted to subdue her.

Suddenly, the sky changed as though nine stars were about to drop. A powerful pressure descended upon the area, giving one the illusion that the sky was collapsing. This was a fearsome sensation.

This was Zhou Haoyu's strongest technique, the Nine Revolution Exploding Star Technique. The appearance of this technique gave an illusion that the sky was collapsing. Anyone would feel helpless against something like it.

Yu Caidie might be strong and a ninth-stage Dragon Ascension Realm cultivator, but since she wasn't fighting with her phoenix, she was essentially restricting herself. To face this technique, she would probably have to use her trump card.

"Beauty, can you tell me your name now?" said Zhou Haoyu, displaying the same grace as before.

As far as he was concerned, the number of people present capable of dealing with his technique would not number more than five. He was confident he could subdue her without fighting.

Just as Yu Caidie was about to answer, a voice rang out, "Are you even worthy of knowing her name?"

Chapter 974: Womenfolk Have No Business Here

The sudden voice carried a calm tone, but it still created ripples among the intense ongoing battles. Zhou Haoyu froze slightly when he heard the words, but he quickly readjusted his expression. He withdrew his strength and said, "Hehe, this is the first time I, Zhou Haoyu, have faced such disrespect. Do you have the guts to step on the stage?"

Fury bubbled in his heart, and he wanted to teach the speaker a lesson. At the very least, he would make sure that the person left the stage on a stretcher. When she heard the voice, Yu Caidie shivered slightly and looked toward where the voice had come from.

Not far away, a young man was walking over. He was akin to a star amid the night sky, a boundlessly fascinating person that would suck in the attention of all who looked at him.

Unfortunately, the picture was spoiled by a hunchbacked old man and an extremely ugly middle-aged man walking alongside him. The two had such terrible appearances that they gave one the urge to throw up just by being seen.

"Wooo, boss, you're finally here. Do you know that I was on the verge of entering the secret space to search for you? Even if you were kidnapped by some female ghosts, I would still give my life to save you," said Xia Liuhui shamelessly as he threw himself at Xiang Shaoyun.

However, a different figure arrived beside Xiang Shaoyun before him. That figure was none other than Money.

He was currently in the form of a tiny snake, and he directly embedded himself onto Xiang Shaoyun's arm. There, he complained, "Boss, the Celestial Horned Dragonsnake's horn I found was snatched away from me. You need to get it back for me!"

"Um. Don't worry. Nobody will be able to take what is rightfully yours," said Xiang Shaoyun. He looked at Xia Liuhui and said, "Stay put for now. I need to teach some smartass a lesson first."

He then stepped forth, walking on empty air like he was taking a stroll in a park, emanating boundless grace doing so.

Some of the women started exclaiming in excitement, "He is so good-looking!"

After going through the Limit Stimulation Technique's tempering, Xiang Shaoyun's entire body was cleansed. He was already good-looking before, but he now looked even more flawless. Even a woman as exceptional as Yu Caidie was momentarily dazed looking at him, not to mention the other women.

"The overlord seems to look even more extraordinary now," muttered Han Chenfei as she looked at Xiang Shaoyun tenderly.

Looking at Xiang Shaoyun stepping onto the stage, Zhou Haoyu's gaze turned sharp. A thick hostility was radiating from his eyes as he said, "Lord guardian's disciple? I wonder if you have the strength to back your confidence."

Xiang Shaoyun completely ignored him and looked at Yu Caidie as he said, "Womenfolk have no business here. Go down."

His words created a massive uproar among the disciples. Yu Caidie was their goddess, and Xiang Shaoyun's use of such a tone of voice against her was nothing but an insult.

"Kid, get off the stage. Who do you think you are? You dare speak like that to my goddess? I'll skin you alive!"

"That's right. Who does he think he is? Senior Zhou, beat him up!"

"That's right. Beat him up so badly his mom won't recognize him. He is too hateful. Does he really think the goddess will topple over him just because of that pretty face he has? He must be dreaming!"

"Don't hold back, Senior Brother Zhou! Beat him down! You have our support!"

The many disciples grew restless, wishing they could teach Xiang Shaoyun a lesson on Zhou Haoyu's behalf.

What Yu Caidie did next shattered all their hearts. A gentle smile formed on her face as she said, "Um. Make sure you win. I'll be waiting for you to be the first of the Four Blazing Suns."

She then gently drifted off the stage.

Xia Liuhui exclaimed in admiration, "Worthy of being my boss! He is almost half as amazing as me!"

The moment those words left his mouth, numerous rocks were thrown his way. The people around him were getting tired of him.

"Kid, you have successfully infuriated me. I only need one move to make you leave on a stretcher," said Zhou Haoyu, whose tone of voice abruptly calmed considerably.

Inwardly, he was burning with rage. He wished for nothing more than to tear Xiang Shaoyun into pieces. It hadn't been easy for him to finally find a woman he liked, but it turned out the woman was already taken. He found it hard to accept, and he wanted to snatch the perfect woman from him.

"I'll return the same words to you," said Xiang Shaoyun confidently.

In the past, he had always been several stages lower than his opponents in terms of cultivation. Now that he was at the peak of Dragon Ascension Realm and had completely formed his draconic aura, he had enough confidence to not fear anyone. This was the type of confidence the strong would have.

"Take my strongest attack," said Zhou Haoyu as he once again activated his Nine Revolution Exploding Star Technique. Nine stars appeared in the sky and descended upon Xiang Shaoyun, crushing him with a suffocating sensation.

How many of his peers could withstand such an attack? Zhou Haoyu did not think that the young man before him would be able to withstand his attack. The other disciples thought the same.

"You will be the first step toward completing my master's request. I, Xiang Shaoyun, shall be reserving the first position for myself," declared Xiang Shaoyun strongly as he made his move as well.

Unrivaled Sky Crushing Punch!

Xiang Shaoyun's battle intent surged, and a torrential fist intent flooded out. A terrifying golden radiance burst out, and an overbearing fist manifested as though a friend god had personally launched a punch at the descending stars.

The tyrannical fist carried with it a thick vicious gold energy and blasted the nine stars into pieces. The gold energy proceeded to rush toward Zhou Haoyu, giving him a sensation that he was facing something unblockable. His face fell as he tried his best to erect his defenses, but he found that he couldn't even utilize any of his strength at the moment. The fist's shockwave struck him and sent him flying like an artillery shell. Blood sprayed everywhere.

Everyone was stupefied. Who would have guessed that Zhou Haoyu, who had won 23 consecutive battles, would be sent flying in a single move? It was unbelievable.

"Unrivaled Sky Crushing Punch?" Zhan Wushuang exclaimed with his eyes narrowed. The others might not recognize this fist technique, but how could he not recognize it? That was the fist technique he relied on, and he found it hard to accept the fact that Xiang Shaoyun was now using the same technique.

"Worthy of being my boss! He defeated that kid with one punch! If it was me, I would have probably needed two punches to do the same," said Xia Liuhui shamelessly.

"How did this fellow become so terrifying?" muttered Ouyang Chuanqi with a helpless smile. His confidence had been dealt a great blow when he had witnessed Xiang Shaoyun's new strength.

Chapter 975: Another Victory

The main reason Ouyang Chuanqi had decided to follow Xiang Shaoyun was due to his fear of the Nether Soul Domain. His last bet with Xiang Shaoyun had also played a great role in that. Thus, he didn't mind following Xiang Shaoyun for a bit to figure out if Xiang Shaoyun had scarier trump cards.

As he got to know Xiang Shaoyun, he learned just how much a freak Xiang Shaoyun was. Apart from a crazy speed of advancement, there did not seem to be an end to Xiang Shaoyun's potential. He would always display an unimaginable strength when one least expected it. Because of that, Ouyang Chuanqi had the feeling that the gap between him and Xiang Shaoyun was only growing larger and larger.

Xiang Shaoyun was now a peak Emperor, and that dealt Ouyang Chuanqi an even greater blow. He did not even have the courage to face Xiang Shaoyun in a fight anymore. Prior to entering the secret space, Xiang Shaoyun was still a peak seventh-stage Dragon Ascension Realm. It had only been six months, yet he had grown by two stages, reaching the very apex of the Dragon Ascension Realm. Who could compare with him in terms of growth speed?

How old was Xiang Shaoyun currently? He was not even 30 years old. Not many people in the four academies could match his growth speed.

The surrounding disciples took some time to recover, and then a huge uproar erupted.

"This is not possible, right? How did he defeat Senior Brother Zhou with one hit? No, this is not true. I will challenge him!"

"You won't cut it. Let me go. Senior Brother Zhou must have been suffering from some injuries after so many battles. I will definitely beat this kid so badly he starts crying for his mother."

"That's right. Senior Brother Zhou must have been too exhausted. Not everyone can defend the stage until the end. The final person standing will be the ultimate victor."

"Are you blind? He won with true strength. Feel free to step on the stage if you don't believe it. I guarantee you the result would be the same."

Unsurprisingly, some of the disciples were unwilling to accept Xiang Shaoyun's victory, and one such person stepped onto the stage. The challenger was someone Xiang Shaoyun knew somewhat. He was Ling Zhiyan, one of the people orbiting Gu Feng of the True Martial Academy earlier.

With a demanding tone, he looked at Xiang Shaoyun and said, "If you do not want to leave on a stretcher, hand over the saint soul fruits. I promise no harm will come your way if you agree. In fact, I can help you get an easy victory if you agree."

Ling Zhiyan knew that Xiang Shaoyun had impressive combat strength, but he was pretty strong himself. He had long reached ninth-stage Dragon Ascension Realm, and although he was Gu Feng's attendant, he was also a genius cultivator ranked 17th in the True Martial Academy.

"You talk too much," remarked Xiang Shaoyun indifferently.

"Looks like you really don't know what's good for you. Fine, get ready to leave on a stretcher," said Ling Zhiyan as a pair of fiery wheels appeared in his hands. A powerful burst of flame erupted from him as the two fiery wheels turned into two brilliant suns that intersected to form a powerful disk of flame that he tossed toward Xiang Shaoyun.

Dual Sun Wheel!

The two fiery wheels moved in an "8" trajectory as they headed toward Xiang Shaoyun. A raging wave of flame surged forth overbearingly, an attack no ordinary person could block. Unfortunately

for him, such an attack wasn't anything for Xiang Shaoyun. He reached out with both hands to catch the two fiery wheels.

The sight shocked many observers. After all, the wheels were a pair of sovereign weapons. Xiang Shaoyun was actually attempting to grab them bare-handed when they were moving at such a high speed. Even if the raging flame around the wheels wouldn't kill him, the wheels themselves should be capable of killing him.

"Fool," Ling Zhiyan sneered.

He already had a follow-up attack prepared, but when he saw what Xiang Shaoyun did, he believed that the follow-up was no longer necessary. What happened next was Xiang Shaoyun's act of completely disregarding the flame and successfully catching the two wheels in his hands.

All the disciples were dumbfounded. Were those still human hands? They actually managed to catch the fiery wheels? That felt too unreal.

Ling Zhiyan was only distracted momentarily. He immediately launched his follow-up attack. He charged forth and swung an arm at Xiang Shaoyun, throwing a figure over. The figure's appearance was completely unexpected.

Roar!

At the same time the figure appeared, a fearsome roar rang out. The surrounding disciples felt their blood stirring, and if they were any nearer, many would probably die or suffer serious injuries from the impactful roar.

Xiang Shaoyun had initially expected Ling Zhiyan to attack with some concealed weapons, but it turned out that he had actually thrown out a flaming lion. The flaming lion also happened to be a mutated beast, and it probably had the same concealment technique as Money that allowed it to embed itself on Ling Zhiyan's body.

The lion's roar caught Xiang Shaoyun by complete surprise, and he was momentarily deafened. The lion arrived before Xiang Shaoyun and opened its jaws wide, chomping down at Xiang Shaoyun's head with its sharp fangs.

Everything happened in the blink of an eye. Some of the women present shrieked in alarm as they could already imagine Xiang Shaoyun's head being split.

This is the consequence of refusing to listen to me, thought Ling Zhiyan proudly.

Suddenly, Xiang Shaoyun sent a kick out. The kick struck the flaming lion's underbelly and sent it spinning toward Ling Zhiyan, giving Ling Zhiyan a great fright. Ling Zhiyan hurriedly tried capturing the flaming lion with soft energy to minimize the injury the lion might suffer.

But when he came in contact with the lion, he felt a terrifying impact that made it hard for him to catch the lion. Thus, the lion's massive body landed on him and crushed him on the stage. Everything had happened too fast, and everyone still couldn't wrap their mind around it.

Xiang Shaoyun lightly landed on the lion and stood on it, forming some sort of flesh pyramid with Xiang Shaoyun on top, the lion in the middle, and Ling Zhiyan at the very bottom. It made for quite a comical sight.

The lion roared indignantly, and it struggled to get up. However, it was as though a mountain was pressing down on it. No matter how it struggled, it couldn't break free. At the same time, Ling Zhiyan was also incapable of mustering any strength, and he felt absolutely humiliated.

He just couldn't understand why Xiang Shaoyun was unaffected by the lion's roar. In truth, Xiang Shaoyun wasn't unaffected. He had merely been able to recover instantly. The roar wasn't able to deal enough damage to him, allowing him to react almost instantaneously.

At present, Xiang Shaoyun was using the profundity of earth to concentrate the power of heaviness and gravity to suppress the lion and Ling Zhiyan, making escape impossible for them.

After all, Xiang Shaoyun's soul had reached the level of a seventh-stage Sovereign. Nobody in the Emperor Realm could hope to withstand his soul suppression.

"I surrender," Ling Zhiyan quickly surrendered as he was unwilling to continue lying in his current position before all the disciples like a clown.

Chapter 976: Beast Transformation Technique

If one was to claim that Xiang Shaoyun's victory over Zhou Haoyu was luck, one definitely had to accept that he possessed true strength after his victory over Ling Zhiyan. All the people that were jeering at him earlier shut their mouths.

They were all geniuses. Anyone capable of participating in this competition in the first place would be a future pillar of the dominion. They were no idiots, and they were all coming to a realization that it wouldn't be smart to offend a freak like Xiang Shaoyun.

He stood on the stage, and he did not care to challenge anyone. He only waited silently for challengers. Today, he would fulfill his promise to his master and become the number one disciple.

This title might not be important to him, but this would still be him strongly making his existence known to the Ziling Sect. Many people were awed by his display of strength, but many were also unhappy with him. Song Fan still wanted to determine a victor between him and Xiang Shaoyun, so he decided to step onto the stage.

But before he could, Xiang Chenxi stopped him and said, "He has changed. I'm afraid you won't be his opponent anymore."

Even prior to this, when Xiang Shaoyun was still a seventh-stage Dragon Ascension Realm cultivator, he could already give Song Fan a hard fight. Now that he was a peak Emperor, would Song Fan still be his match?

"No, I must fight him. Even if he has advanced, he might not have consolidated his strength. And even if he did manage to consolidate his strength already, I can still defeat him," said Song Fan confidently.

He then leaped onto the stage and pointed his spear at Xiang Shaoyun as he roared, "We did not manage to end our fight previously. Let's end it once and for all here!"

"You won't cut it. Get your so-called Little Overlord up here instead," said Xiang Shaoyun with a shake of his head.

Xiang Shaoyun was slightly interested in the Little Overlord, and he wanted to see if he was actually related to him. Or, to be precise, he wanted to see if that person was related to Xiang Zixuan.

"You can say that after defeating me," said Song Fan as he stabbed his snake-shaped spear forward repeatedly.

Numerous snakes were sent toward Xiang Shaoyun. They surrounded him with an overbearing might, presenting a fearsome sight to behold. Song Fan's attacks looked ordinary, but their might definitely wasn't.

Xiang Shaoyun did not bother using a weapon, nor did he bother dodging. He faced the attacks head on with the Unrivaled Sky Crushing Punch. These energy snakes weren't able to do anything to him.

After undergoing the baptism of a real battlefield, Xiang Shaoyun's battle instincts had grown considerably. No matter what technique his opponent used, he could use the simplest and most straightforward method to defeat the opponent in the shortest time frame possible.

There was no mercy on a battlefield, and he similarly wouldn't show any mercy on the stage. After shattering the energy snakes sent by Song Fan, he forged ahead toward Song Fan, intending to end the fight in one fell swoop.

Song Fan seemed to have expected that Xiang Shaoyun would be able to smash through his attacks. His face remained calm as a burst of power erupted from within his body. Tearing through his clothes, scales started growing on his skin. They were even on his face, and they made him look incredibly ferocious.

His transformation gave everyone a shock. One of them was particularly knowledgeable and exclaimed, "Is this the Beast Transformation Technique?"

"The Beast Transformation Technique is an extremely hard to cultivate ancient technique, and it was supposedly lost many years ago. It actually reappeared here. He is indeed worthy of being a True Martial Academy disciple.

"The Beast Transformation Technique can increase his combat strength, but it can only stay active for a limited amount of time. He might not necessarily be able to defeat his opponent before he runs out of time.

"Just watch. I have a feeling this will be an interesting match."

Xiang Shaoyun initially planned to defeat Song Fan as quickly as possible, but when he saw the beast transformation, he was no longer in any rush. He wanted to see just what else his opponent was capable of.

"Bring it on. This is where your streak of victories ends," declared Song Fan confidently.

"So now you're neither a human nor a monster. Are you happy this way?" sneered Xiang Shaoyun.

"You shall die for your insolence!" Song Fan roared and charged forward like an arrow.

After the beast transformation, Song Fan had naturally become extremely powerful. Even his speed had reached a shocking level. He instantly reached Xiang Shaoyun and stabbed his spear forward.

"I managed to hit him!" Song Fan cried out in excitement.

Alas, what he saw next was Xiang Shaoyun gradually fading into nothingness. He had struck nothing but an afterimage, and he instantly had an ominous feeling. He cursed, "Shit!"

By the time he reacted, Xiang Shaoyun's attack had already arrived beside him.

Major Slab Palm!

Xiang Shaoyun slammed both his palms forward repeatedly, aiming for a single spot. He unleashed 18 consecutive palms instantaneously, sending Song Fan flying and coughing blood. Fortunately for Song Fan, he was able to forcefully twist his body midair and charge Xiang Shaoyun once again as if completely fine.

Snake Swallowing the Elephant!

A massive snake appeared and bit down at Xiang Shaoyun. The snake displayed the bearing of a being capable of consuming everything in existence. Anyone would feel tiny in the presence of this great serpent, and a sense of helplessness would rise within one's heart.

This was an ultimate technique Song Fan had obtained after great hardships, and it granted him a strength matching a fifth-stage Soul Foundation Realm cultivator. It even gave one the urge to just surrender and not fight.

Facing the massive snake, the Shark Devourer Saber appeared in Xiang Shaoyun's hand. His presence changed in its entirety as waves of blue radiance started rippling out of it. A vast ocean and a massive shark appeared. Rushing forward with a torrential sea wave, the shark charged the snake.

The snake seemed to have the upper hand as it attacked ferociously, forcing the shark into a defensive position as it protected itself with the layers of waves. Before long, the situation turned around. The waves became more and more furious, and after rippling forward seven times, the massive shark jumped out of the water and bit at the snake's head.

The blue saber radiance occupied the absolute upper hand now as the snake crumbled apart. Song Fan hurriedly started retreating, not wanting to give Xiang Shaoyun a chance to follow up with attacks. Xiang Shaoyun naturally wouldn't give up on this opening, and he swiftly gave chase.

"You might be slightly stronger than me, but don't you dream of dealing me any real injuries," said Song Fan as he entered a fully defensive stance. His strengthened body, armor, and layers of thick defensive barrier worked together to form an ultimate defense protecting him.

Xiang Shaoyun remained silent and continued attacking with the Seven Overlapping Waves Slash. Song Fan wasn't even able to defend himself in time, as Xiang Shaoyun's attack was too fast. Furthermore, the attacks came unendingly, with all of them aimed at a singular point.

Song Fan's defenses collapsed completely, including his scales and armor. He was nearly cut in two from his waist, and when it seemed like he was about to die, he was kicked off the stage.

Chapter 977: Is This Really Your Dragon Phoenix Academy's Abandoned Disciple?

Everyone sank into silence when they saw Song Fan being kicked off the stage. Not a noise was made, and even the challenges going on at the other stages were put on a temporary pause.

Xiang Shaoyun's moves weren't particularly flashy, and they even looked crude. However, each move he made carried a might that seemed capable of sweeping away everything in his way.

One ought to know that Song Fan was a prodigy ranked highly in the True Martial Academy. He was a right-hand man of the Little Overlord. Thus, the easy way in which he was defeated had shocked many people.

Xiang Shaoyun did not say anything. He did not feel any pride from putting Song Fan down. On the contrary, he was bored. He longed for an intense battle, and he hoped that the next challenger would be able to give him some pressure. Perhaps this was the type of loneliness all who stood at the peak would feel.

Dugu Qiubai, the number one genius of True Martial Academy, looked at Xiang Shaoyun with a trace of slight interest in his eyes. However, he quickly shut his eyes again, as though Xiang Shaoyun's current performance was still not enough for him to personally make a move.

The atmosphere turned repressive, and for a while, there were no new challengers. Zhan Wushuang couldn't hold himself back anymore, but instead of challenging Xiang Shaoyun, he stepped onto a different stage and blasted a True Martial Academy disciple off the stage with only several punches, creating a stunning performance.

"Xiang Shaoyun, I hope you can last until the end," Zhan Wushuang issued his challenge.

"The same goes for you," replied Xiang Shaoyun nonchalantly.

In the past, Zhan Wushuang was someone he had to slightly look up at, but now, Zhan Wushuang was someone on equal standing with him. It was even possible that Xiang Shaoyun could afford to look down on Zhan Wushuang now. That wasn't even arrogance. It was merely the loftiness any worthy cultivator would have, the confidence that one was unequalled.

Time passed, and eventually, Jiang Qi from the Sacred Deer Academy also took over a stage and gained some prestige for her academy. She looked like an ordinary sweet girl, but the potential she displayed was absolutely comparable to the top geniuses there.

The Nine Palace Academy also occupied a stage.

The disciple occupying the stage was the Nine Palace Academy's number two genius. His combat strength was impressive, and his attacks were overbearing. He was able to quickly occupy the stage for his academy.

And thus, the True Martial Academy was momentarily occupying no stage, and their faces turned unsightly. Even so, they were in no rush as they still had a decent number of genius disciples who had yet to make a move. People like Dugu Qiubai, Little Overlord, and Dugu Qiubai were still staying put.

As far as the True Martial Academy was concerned, those three were definitely going to be part of the Four Blazing Suns, with the final member of the four to be the only variable.

Shortly after, True Martial Academy's Gu Feng made her move. She selected Jiang Qi as her opponent, trying to snatch a stage for her academy.

Gu Feng fought at her full strength, harnessing the bloodline of an actual phoenix to grant her valiant combat prowess. Even with her strength, she was only ranked seventh in the True Martial Academy. One could see just how intense the True Martial Academy's internal competition was.

However, Jiang Qi was someone the Sacred Deer Academy had taken great care at cultivating. She was no weakling, and she had an Innate Water Star Physique and a nine-star physique that allowed her to combine strength and gentleness when fighting. She was well-rounded in offense and defense. She also had a great mastery over the profundity of water, and with her strength, a massive battle erupted between her and Gu Feng.

After an intense fight, Jiang Qi defeated Gu Feng and preserved her spot on the stage. The Sacred Deer Academy elder was pleased with Jiang Qi's performance. If she was defeated so soon after getting on the stage, it would be a source of embarrassment for their entire academy.

As time passed, Xiang Shaoyun had also won several fights in a row. There were some who kept refusing to believe that he was as strong as he seemed. They wanted to test his strength, and they ended up being defeated one after another.

"Is this really your Dragon Phoenix Academy's abandoned disciple?" a True Martial Academy elder asked Shadowflash and Feng Huosuo.

"Yes. Don't be blinded by his potential. He has a terrible character," said Feng Huosuo.

A Nine Palace Academy elder said, "I personally think this child is decent. Since he has been abandoned by your academy, we can consider recruiting him after all this is over."

"I think so as well. This child looks good, and he is practically dripping with righteousness. The Sacred Deer Academy is willing to make an exception and recruit him," said a Sacred Deer Academy elder with an appreciative look.

"Haha, our True Martial Academy will be the best fit for a good sapling like this," said the True Martial Academy with a hearty laugh.

As for Feng Huosuo and Shadowflash, their faces darkened. They were the ones who had framed and forced Xiang Shaoyun out of the academy. But now, he had turned into a treasure in the eyes of the other academies, and the two were greatly upset by it.

"You might not know this, but it was all thanks to these two elders that my young master became the Dragon Phoenix Academy's abandoned disciple," the wolf guard's voice rang out.

Next, the wolf guard appeared out of nowhere.

"Wolf guard, don't think that you can run your mouth just because you're a high-level elder," said Shadowflash.

"Hehe, are you afraid of admitting to what you did? My young master is overflowing with talent, and even my master looks at him favorably, which is why my master accepted him as a disciple. For selfish reasons, the two of you forced him out of the academy. You can scheme all you want, but you will eventually pay for it. My young master will emerge as the champion, and I'll see what you have to see after returning to the academy," mocked the wolf guard.

That was the truth. As the abandoned disciple of the Dragon Phoenix Academy, if Xiang Shaoyun proceeded to become the competition's champion, the Dragon Phoenix Academy's reputation would be completely ruined.

As the key persons who had forced Xiang Shaoyun out of the academy, Shadowflash and Feng Huosuo would definitely face some complications in the academy. One ought to know that this competition was something the four academies attached great importance to.

It wasn't going to be easy for the Dragon Phoenix Academy to advance from third place after staying there for so many years. If Xiang Shaoyun was still their disciple and emerged as the champion, everything would change.

Alas, it was too late for them to change anything. The elders of the other academies finally understood what was going on, and their eyes lit up in excitement as they started considering recruiting Xiang Shaoyun.

"Hmph. You really think he will be the champion? I doubt so," said Feng Huosuo with a cold snort.

"Keep watching, then. If the young master can't even do that much, he won't be qualified to be my master's disciple," said the wolf guard confidently.

The competition continued. After about half of the disciples were eliminated, Xiang Shaoyun, Zhan Wushuang, Jiang Qi, and the Little Overlord were the ones remaining on the four stages.

Xiang Chenxi, the Little Overlord, had gotten on the stage by defeating the Nine Palace Academy's number two disciple. From that, one could see just how strong he was.

The Nine Palace Academy disciples were naturally unable to accept that they did not have even one of the stages under their name. Finally, Jiu Tian, their number one disciple, made a move with Zhan Wushuang being his target.

Chapter 978: Jiu Tian

Jiu Tian was a genius that had resonated with the Nine Palace Sword Formation at birth. He was destined for greatness, and the Nine Palace Academy had always taken great care of him. He had only been released to the public during this competition.

He was young yet had a mature look, and was dressed in a gray outfit that made him look older than he was. His eyes reminded one of an old man who had seen the vicissitudes of life.

His appearance caused much excitement among the Nine Palace Academy disciples. They all wanted to personally witness Jiu Tian's might. The other disciples also looked over, curious as to just how strong the number one disciple of the Nine Palace Academy was.

"I had thought that you would only step on the stage at the very end," said Zhan Wushuang.

"That was the plan, but you guys are wasting too much time. So here I am," replied Jiu Tian indifferently.

"Let the fight begin," said Zhan Wushuang as he made the first move.

This was the very first time Zhan Wushuang had felt such pressure from an opponent. This pressure was stronger than what he felt facing Baili Yixiao in the past. He was displeased with it, and he wanted to personally smash the pressure apart and prevail over it.

Wolf Breaker!

His battle intent was as boundless as ever, and his fists had always been his strongest weapons with which he could punch a hole in the sky. He was at the very peak of the Emperor Realm, and after this competition, he would focus on forging his soul foundation. He was confident that he was currently strong enough to defeat anyone below the Soul Foundation Realm.

Naturally, Jiu Tian had the same confidence. He emanated the same presence of someone who believed that he was unrivaled. Blades of wind started swirling around him. These blades were powered from a unique wind found only high up in the sky, the purpleflame wind.

The wind was purple in color and could ignite everything it blew through. It felt more like fire than wind, but it also had a fearsome power that could rip everything apart. When one obtained full mastery over it, one would be able to tear even space apart.

The purpleflame wind was a top-tier wind, and it was not the type of power an Emperor was supposed to be able to harness or tame. In fact, even a Soul Foundation Realm expert would need to flee when faced with this wind.

However, Jiu Tian had actually tamed this power and was wielding it freely—quite the shocking discovery for many people present.

The purpleflame wind was even slicing open Zhan Wushuang's indestructible fists. Zhan Wushuang hurriedly retreated in panic. As he watched the blood flow out of his gold, shining fists, an ominous feeling welled inside him.

"Surrender. You are not my match," said Jiu Tian with the same indifference.

"There is no such thing as 'surrender' to me," roared Zhan Wushuang as he released his Indestructible Avatar. His body started growing, and a burst of destructive gold energy erupted from him. It was as though he had transformed into a war god, and he charged Jiu Tian in his avatar form.

Heaven Smasher!

Zhan Wushuang was fighting with all his strength. A pair of fists smashed forth like a golden mountain that was going to smash even the sky apart. A heavy pressure descended upon the surrounding disciples, and some of them paled.

They could clearly feel that the might of his attack was comparable with the might of True Martial Academy's number five genius, Zhou Haoyu. The fist energy crushed forward with a might to reduce all in its path to nothingness. This was what gave Zhan Wushuang the absolute confidence to be ever victorious.

Alas, his ever-victorious fists were nothing in Jiu Tian's eyes. Jiu Tian made a simple motion of pressing his palms together before swinging them at the incoming fist energy. Like some sort of demonic flame, the purpleflame wind sliced through Zhan Wushuang's fist energy and reached his chest.

Zhan Wushuang had never imagined that the purpleflame wind would be so terrifying. Even his fist energy was destroyed so easily. The Indestructible Avatar he was so proud of wasn't able to protect him against the wind either. His chest was split, and he was sent flying. He crashed outside the stage, dying the ground red with his blood.

The fight's development stunned all onlookers. Who would have imagined that someone as strong as Zhan Wushuang would be defeated in a single move? One ought to know that Jiu Tian hadn't even used his strongest trump card. How strong would he be after using his trump card? Would he be undefeated in the Emperor Realm?

The battle intent of Dugu Qiubai, Devil Concubine, Little Overlord and the others rose. As far as they were concerned, Jiu Tian was the type of opponent worth their time.

Baili Yixiao was stirred into action, but when he wanted to make a move, Long Shi stopped him and said, "Society master, your opponent should be that person from the Sacred Deer Academy. Just leave this person for later."

No matter what others said, Baili Yixiao was definitely someone with the potential to be one of the Four Blazing Suns. As his most faithful subordinate, Long Shi naturally did not wish to see Baili Yixiao facing such a powerful opponent so early on.

"Um. I'll wait further," replied Baili Yixiao calmly.

In truth, the one person he viewed as a worthy opponent was Dugu Qiubai. After all, both of them were pure sword masters. A clash between them would be interesting.

"I told you. You asked for this," said Jiu Tian with a faint smile on his face.

Away from the stage, Zhan Wushuang was still dazed. He couldn't even feel the pain in his chest because his heart was aching. He had thought that he had already reached the apex of the Emperor Realm, and he was confident that he would be one of the Four Blazing Suns. But now, he was defeated with one move. One could only imagine how terrible he felt right now.

None of the Crushing Sky members dared to say anything to him. They were clear that he could only rely on himself to snap out of his shock.

"Jiu Tian is too scary. He will definitely be one of the Four Blazing Suns. The only thing we don't know is if he will be the first of the four."

"He definitely won't be the first. Dugu Qiubai will be the one to take first place. After all, he is the one known with titles such as the Martial Fanatic, Martial Demon, and Martial Addict."

"That's right. I suppose Jiu Tian will take second place, with Devil Concubine taking the third place and Little Overlord taking fourth place."

"Do you think that Xiang Shaoyun won't be one of the four? He seems pretty strong and unfathomable as well."

"No way. He is still a tad bit too tender. Someone will eventually end his victory streak."

The observers started talking among themselves, fully convinced by the strength Jiu Tian had displayed. It was at this moment that a young man stepped onto Xiang Shaoyun's stage. The young man was in his 20s and was of a similar age to Xiang Shaoyun. He was a peak eighth-stage Dragon Ascension Realm cultivator, an amazing cultivation realm for someone this young.

The moment he stepped onto the stage, a loud clamor erupted among the True Martial Academy disciples.

Chapter 979: Sword of Speed Bu Feng

This youth might not be a ninth-stage Dragon Ascension Realm cultivator, but he was actually ranked fourth in the True Martial Academy. He was even stronger than Zhou Haoyu. He was Bu Feng, a genius cultivator specializing in the power of wind. He had a history of pretending to be weak so he could catch his opponent off guard. He might be young, and his cultivation level might not be the highest, but he was able to unleash a combat strength that nobody could underestimate.

It was said that he was the last disciple of a grand elder from the True Martial Academy. After a year or two, he would be able to enter the ninth stage and become one of the top disciples in the academy.

He was a sword user, and different from the sword of righteousness Baili Yixiao cultivated, he cultivated the sword of speed. There was the saying that only speed was unrivaled, and he had pushed his speed to his very limits.

Even Dugu Qiubai had personally remarked that Bu Feng would be a decent opponent if the two actually had the same cultivation level. Instead of challenging Jiang Qi, who was the weakest among the stage defenders, or Jiu Tian, who was the most dazzling existence among all four defenders, he had challenged Xiang Shaoyun. Was it because he was looking down on Xiang Shaoyun?

Bu Feng did not have a tall frame, and he cut his hair short. He had a stout face where traces of baby fat could still be found. Because of that, he did not look like someone in his 20s. A sword hung on his back, and he was clad in a gorgeous outfit that made him look like the scion of a wealthy family.

Bu Feng and Xiang Shaoyun stared at each other, and there seemed to be sparks where their gazes met.

"Bu Feng has really decided to act. He has actually chosen Xiang Shaoyun as his opponent. I wonder if he will win."

"Are you stupid? Bu Feng's strength is second only to the Little Overlord. He is definitely capable of defeating Xiang Shaoyun. Nobody can stop his sword of speed."

"True. His sword of speed can't even be detected. Without saint armor, one will be completely helpless against him."

"Be that as it may, Bu Feng is still not at the ninth stage, so there is still a gap between him and Xiang Shaoyun. This will probably be an interesting battle."

The many disciples started speculating about the fight between Xiang Shaoyun and Bu Feng, with many of the True Martial Academy hoping to see Bu Feng victorious.

With a genial smile on his face, Bu Feng said, "I can feel that you have a decent power of wind within you. Therefore, I'm here."

"Sure. Let's start," said Xiang Shaoyun with a nod.

Xiang Shaoyun would underestimate no opponent, let alone this opponent who was giving off a different feeling. Although Bu Feng was only a peak eighth-stage Dragon Ascension Realm cultivator, Xiang Shaoyun could sense that his opponent had a much higher combat strength than just eighth-stage Dragon Ascension Realm.

"You really want me to make a move? I'm very fast," said Bu Feng with a slightly embarrassed tone. Anyone who saw his current harmless appearance would not think he was a genius cultivator.

"Yes. This will be your sole chance to make a move," said Xiang Shaoyun confidently.

"Sure, here I come," said Bu Feng as he drew his sword without hesitation.

He moved like a lion pouncing on a rabbit. His sword instantly stabbed toward Xiang Shaoyun's chest.

Before Xiang Shaoyun could even blink, the tip of the sword arrived before his chest. All his hair rose on end in alarm. Fortunately, he had the Phantom Shift technique that allowed him to instantaneously move away from the attack. Just as he was about to launch his counterattack, Bu Feng's second attack arrived in the form of a horizontal slash as though he was reading Xiang Shaoyun's new location.

Xiang Shaoyun's pupils shrank as he bent backward to avoid the swing. Because of that, he lost the initiative and allowed Bu Feng to continue raining a storm of attacks down on him. Each swing of

Bu Feng's sword carried an unfathomably sharp sword energy and contained a domineering wind energy. Furthermore, his swords were incredibly swift and hard to guard against.

The sword of speed was so fast that even Xiang Shaoyun couldn't cleanly avoid them all. Wounds started appearing on his body. Xiang Shaoyun had never imagined that someone could be so fast. The sword seemed to be everywhere, and each attack connected with the other smoothly, not giving him any chance to do anything at all.

Fortunately, Bu Feng was a stage lower than him in cultivation. He wondered if he would already be seriously injured if they both had the same cultivation level. Of course, that did not mean that Xiang Shaoyun would be defeated. He was, in fact, fast enough to keep up with Bu Feng. He just hadn't been given a chance to display his speed.

Bu Feng had started cultivating the sword of speed since he was three, and he had cultivated it for over 20 years now. It was the only focus of his cultivation. He never learned any overly complicated battle technique, and he had a firm belief in the prowess of pure speed.

And in truth, he had also achieved numerous unbelievable feats relying on his sword of speed. Ultimately, he caught the attention of the seniors in the True Martial Academy. Anything could display a terrifying might once cultivated to the extreme limits.

Xiang Shaoyun repeatedly retreated with six Goldplates all around him. Numerous sword strikes landed, creating numerous sparks as the Goldplates blocked the attacks.

No matter what, Bu Feng's cultivation level was still lower than his, which was why Xiang Shaoyun could protect himself with his defensive technique. But that did not mean that Bu Feng would give up on attacking. He sent out 36 in a flash, each attack landing on the exact same spot. In fact, it almost seemed like all 36 had arrived at the same time.

What he did was almost unimaginable. One ought to know that there would be gaps in between the attacks of a sword wielder. However, Bu Feng could actually have all his attacks arrive at almost the exact same time.

Finally, the Goldplates were penetrated, and the sword stab finally came into contact with Xiang Shaoyun's waist. Bu Feng was overwhelmed with joy, believing that this would be Xiang Shaoyun's defeat. However, he found that his sword couldn't advance any farther after hitting Xiang Shaoyun's waist. It was as though he was stabbing something extremely solid.

It turned out that after Xiang Shaoyun entered a full defensive mode, the toughness of his body had reached an entirely different level. He was, after all, someone who had tempered himself with the Limit Stimulation Technique. His flesh was as tough as a sovereign weapon. Bu Feng's attack had already been weakened after going through the Goldplates, and they weren't able to deal much damage to Xiang Shaoyun's body.

Even so, Xiang Shaoyun was still moving in the opposite direction to weaken the stab. After all, Bu Feng was wielding a sovereign sword that was completely capable of penetrating his skin. At the exact moment Bu Feng's attack was weakened, Xiang Shaoyun made his move before Bu Feng could recover.

Since his opponent was so fast, Xiang Shaoyun's best choice was to restrict his opponent's speed, and he swiftly came to a solution.

Gravity field!

Chapter 980: It Would Be Boring Otherwise

After absorbing the mystic earth essence energy, Xiang Shaoyun's comprehension of the profundity of earth had reached an even deeper level. The gravity field he created was incredibly powerful, and it was as though gravity on the stage had been multiplied by over 1,000 times.

Bu Feng instantly slowed down, and his expression shifted. He needed to retreat immediately, or he would be in big trouble. However, he was weighed down by the gravity field, whereas Xiang Shaoyun wasn't. Thus, Xiang Shaoyun was able to swiftly approach him before striking his chest with a Major Slab Palm.

Bu Feng might be fast, but the distance between him and Xiang Shaoyun was too small. And with the sudden disturbance caused by the gravity field, he was unable to avoid Xiang Shaoyun's attack. Xiang Shaoyun did not apply all of his strength in the palm attack, but it was still enough to make Bu Feng cough up blood.

Instead of pursuing, Xiang Shaoyun looked at Bu Feng, who had crashed at the edge of the stage, and said, "Just surrender. You're not my match."

The sword of speed might have the potential of being undefeated, but as long as the person using the speed wasn't given a chance to utilize any of it, it would fall apart by itself.

Bu Feng looked at Xiang Shaoyun with indignance and asked, "How many different powers have you cultivated exactly?"

Based on his research before this fight, Xiang Shaoyun had already displayed several different powers thus far. He couldn't understand why someone cultivating so many powers would still be so strong.

"Nine," Xiang Shaoyun replied nonchalantly.

His reply caused an uproar among the surrounding disciples.

"That is not possible! How can someone cultivating nine powers be so strong?"

"Wasn't it proved a long time ago that cultivating nine powers leads nowhere? Has he succeeded? That's not possible, right?"

"I heard that Xiang Shaoyun has successfully fused the nine energies. This fellow is basically a freak."

"No matter how freakishly strong he is, this will probably be his limit. I have never heard of someone cultivating nine powers reaching the Soul Foundation Realm."

With Xiang Shaoyun personally admitting to cultivating nine powers and proving that he had a nine-star physique, people were both shocked and regretful. Many of them did not believe that he could grow further.

Bu Feng gave Xiang Shaoyun a thumbs up and said, "I accept this defeat. You're stronger than me."

He admired Xiang Shaoyun's courage to cultivate nine powers, and he also understood that Xiang Shaoyun had been holding back against him. Thus, he left the stage instead of continuing to waste time on the stage.

Xiang Shaoyun shut his eyes and rested, slowly healing his light external wounds while waiting for the next opponent. In truth, he was getting tired of waiting for one opponent after another like this. He wanted to meet those truly strong geniuses already.

At this time, a man as sturdy as an iron tower rushed onto the stage. He was a Nine Palace Academy disciple. Instead of wasting any time saying anything, he activated his own gravity field and sent it crushing toward Xiang Shaoyun.

This person had decided to pit himself against Xiang Shaoyun after seeing that Xiang Shaoyun was also capable of using a gravity field. He wanted to see how well his single power cultivation would do against Xiang Shaoyun, who had cultivated multiple powers.

Facing someone with the same cultivation level, Xiang Shaoyun would never be as strong as someone focusing on a single power, as he could only muster the power of one star at a time. However, his astral energy capacity had been expanded by the gleamstar water to a level far beyond others. He had also absorbed the mystic earth essence energy that had given his power of earth a great boost.

The two gravity fields clashed. However, Xiang Shaoyun was using a reverse gravity field instead of a regular gravity field. It completely messed up his opponent's gravity field. At the same time, he utilized his ultimate speed and used both the Havoc Dance and Enemy Sealing techniques to seal his opponent's every move.

His opponent couldn't even find a chance to attack, and he was having a terrible time.

"Damn it! I refuse to believe that you're really that strong! Take my strongest attack, Shifting Mountain and Ocean!" the opponent roared and used his trump card. His strength was pushed to his limits as both his arms assumed a hugging position. A massive mountain appeared out of nowhere before him, which he swung at Xiang Shaoyun.

The mountain looked incomparably real, and the energy forming the mountain was unbelievably powerful. It was as though the mountain was going to smash the entire stage into pieces.

Would Xiang Shaoyun be able to withstand this attack?

This was the display of someone capable of fully harnessing the power of an element. It was not really surprising since this person was also known as a genius cultivator, and no genius would be a pushover.

Xiang Shaoyun had no way of avoiding the attack, and his only option was to face it head on. In fact, he had the chance to end the technique before it even formed, but he wanted to experience the man's full strength. This was the kind of experience that would further enhance his combat experience and combat strength.

After all, his Nether Soul Domain gave him senses sharp enough to constantly deduce his opponent's moves. He would be able to imitate his opponent's technique. For example, the Major Slab Palm and the Unrivaled Sky Crushing Punch had both been learned in this manner.

This Shifting Mountain and Ocean technique was impressively strong, enough to give Xiang Shaoyun great pressure. He pushed his power of earth to its limits while absorbing the boundless natural earth energy around him with the profundity of earth. He then also launched an attack of his own.

Meteor Fall!

Numerous meteors flew out, trying to smash the mountain apart.

Unfortunately, the meteors weren't able to do anything to the mountain. It became evident just how strong his opponent was and how worthy his opponent was to be known as a genius.

This result wasn't surprising. This person, in particular, was a strength-based cultivator. Xiang Shaoyun had competed against him with strength, and it was understandable that he wasn't doing well.

This allowed Xiang Shaoyun to realize that by relying on the power of a single star, he wouldn't be able to reach the apex. It was extremely important for him to find a way to utilize all his stars.

Just as the mountain was about to crash down on Xiang Shaoyun, he instantly shifted the energy he was using. Powerful lightning energy erupted from him, and the destructive energy started wreaking havoc. The mountain was smashed into pieces.

Of his nine stars, his lightning star was the strongest. The destructiveness of the lightning element also served to further boost the might of this star. The instant his lightning energy erupted, he transformed into a charging lightning dragon and shot forth a barrage of lightning punches powered by his rich fist intent.

Sounds of explosions rang out repeatedly, and the stage shook without stopping. The Nine Palace Academy disciple entered a fully defensive position but still failed to block Xiang Shaoyun's lightning attack. His defenses were smashed apart, and his entire body was scorched black.

And with that, Xiang Shaoyun won yet another easy victory. He finally lost his patience and roared, "Why don't all of you come together? It would be boring otherwise."