

Paradise 1311

Chapter 1311: Cannonball

Looking at the coordinates on the map, Lin Huang could see that they were getting closer to their first targeted competitor. However, he was still in the process of considering whether he should take the shot himself or let Warlord do it instead.

All of a sudden, their target turned and started running frantically in the opposite direction.

“Well, well... I guess he noticed we were on his tail?” Lin Huang glanced at the map and realized that they were still more than 20,000 meters apart. The fact that their competitor starting fleeing suddenly despite the distance proved that he must have had some sort of ability to sense danger. Their competitor must have noticed that he was being hunted down. “He’s straight up fleeing. Could it be he’s somehow figured out that there are two of us?”

“Shall I take the shot? Or should we catch up first?” Warlord asked while running beside Lin Huang.

“Can you take him down?” Lin Huang asked doubtfully.

Lin Huang’s Divine Telekinesis was limited to a range of 1000 meters. The attack range of his telekinetic flying dagger was also 1000 meters at most, or else he would not be able to direct it. Moreover, since under current circumstances he could not lock down his target, it was almost impossible for him to pinpoint the exact location of his opponent. To make things worse, they were also surrounded by many buildings and obstacles. As a result, it was very difficult for him to launch an effective attack over a distance of 20,000 meters.

At Lin Huang’s question, Warlord nodded slightly and replied, “I can.”

“If that’s the case, you should take the shot. Kill him if you can, otherwise, try to buy us some time by slowing him down.”

After getting the green light from Lin Huang, three baseball-sized metal spheres suddenly appeared in Warlord’s palm. He tossed them up lightly, and the three spheres started floating in mid-air, forming a pattern that was similar to the Chinese character ‘品’. The metal spheres then flew out of the window at top speed, heading toward the distance.

After a short while, they saw something odd on the surveillance screen.

Three beams of white light resembling sacred rays shone down from the sky, trapping their competitor who was striding down the stairs right after escaping through a door.

Lin Huang heard a terrible scream from the video that sounded as if a cat had gotten its tail stepped on.

After a while, the white beams of light disappeared, and a figure with burnt hair and tattered clothes could be seen slumping to the ground. After struggling valiantly for a little, the figure finally managed to stand up and continued staggering forward.

However, before he had even taken two steps, the three white beams of light shone down on him again, trapping him once more.

Another terrible scream rang out, sounding even more wretched than before.

After a while, the white beams of light vanished once more. The competitor's head was scorched and bald, and his clothes had become so tattered they could barely cover his private parts.

He dropped to the ground again, but this time, he could no longer get up even after many desperate attempts. In the end, he turned around, looked up at the sky and shouted, "I concede!"

His opponent had only attacked him twice, but it was enough to deplete almost all of his Divine Power. This made him painfully aware that he would die if he were to continue struggling. That was why he eventually decided to admit defeat.

While Lin Huang was still gazing at his opponent's rapidly vanishing form, a pop-up message suddenly appeared before his eyes.

'Competitor defeated, Accumulated points: +2'

This competitor should have already accumulated one point. In addition to one extra point that he received after defeating him in battle, Lin Huang now had two points in total.

Lin Huang immediately clicked on his personal page and started going through the details.

'Participant: Xie Lin'

'Points Accumulated: 2'

'Rank: 386'

Although he had two points, Lin Huang was only ranked at 386th place. However, he was unsurprised. After all, the number of competitors who had accumulated two points and above had already exceeded 100 people more than an hour ago.

After closing the page, Lin Huang turned and asked a question that had been on his mind.

"What were those three spheres just now?"

"It's a type of orbital weapon, more suitable for airborne attacks like these where you can't pinpoint your enemy's position. The advantage of using a weapon like this is that it has an extremely long range and is also extremely accurate to within millimeters..." Warlord explained enthusiastically. He rarely voiced his opinions, but he was always a chatterbox when the topic involved machinery.

After listening to his explanation for a while, Lin Huang began to feel overwhelmed by the amount of information, so he had no choice but to interrupt him.

"I think we should head straight for our second target now."

Since their first competitor had conceded defeat, there was no corpse left to plunder. As a result, there was no need for them to head in that direction anymore.

Both of them immediately changed directions and started off toward their second target as fast as they could.

During their journey, Warlord asked, "Shall I take the shot again? I think the Cannonball that we used earlier would be much faster than us."

"Let's wait until we get closer first," Lin Huang demurred, turning down Warlord's proposal this time before continuing, "Let's not act rashly and alert our enemy, otherwise we won't be able to catch up."

Since the walls of the buildings around them were could not be broken through, competitors had no choice but to run between the buildings instead. As a result, most of their movements were hindered. Lin Huang and Warlord were no exception.

It took them about one or two minutes to travel a distance of more than 10 kilometers.

When they were about five kilometers away from their second target, Lin Huang finally said to Warlord, "You can take the shot now."

A second later, the Cannonball that had locked onto the target shot forward, trapping their targeted competitor with three white beams of light like before.

However, this second competitor was tougher than the first.

After realizing that he was being attacked by three metal spheres, he brandished his sword and tried to slice them apart.

However, the outcome was not as he hoped. He could only suffer beating after beating as the spheres attacked, and his multiple retaliations did not manage to even touch a single ball.

In order to contain this competitor's fierce counterattacks, Warlord even personally controlled the Cannonball and attacked him three more times.

In the end, the competitor ended up depleting all of his Divine Power but still refused to admit defeat. Warlord killed him on the spot.

When Lin Huang and Warlord arrived at the scene, they seized whatever loot they managed to find before stashing the corpse in space storage.

By this time, Lin Huang had finally managed to accumulate three points. Although his ranking improved quite a bit, his name still did not appear on the leaderboard.

The top 100 competitors on the leaderboard had already accumulated three points half an hour ago.

"What's the attack power of your Cannonball?" Lin Huang could not help asking Warlord when they were on the way to their third target.

"If it's just one Cannonball, the attack power is about the same as my basic attack. It can cause damage to a Rank-9 Virtual God powerhouse, but it can't finish him off. However, the damage caused by this skill can be increased by stacking, so the attack power of three Cannonballs is almost doubled.

“The higher the number of Cannonballs, the less the stability, and the harder it’ll be for me to control them. For now, I can only stack up to eight Cannonballs at most, and that will increase my attack power by about four times...”

Again, Warlord became more chatty than usual as the topic of discussion was about machines.

Feeling helpless, Lin Huang could only interrupt him once more.

“You can ask Bloody to do some research on this skill of yours when she comes back, and see if you can improve it. Stability and control problems shouldn’t be that hard to solve. From what I see, it must have something to do with the way you manipulate your energy flow.”

Chapter 1312: Soaring Through the Ranks

Lin Huang and Warlord sped past rows of buildings. The red lanterns hung outside the buildings kept receding from view.

In a world like this where gravity was abnormal, Lin Huang could not even tell which direction was which. This was because gravity existed as long as he could walk on a particular surface. If Warlord’s surveillance system had not locked onto their target, Lin Huang would have lost his sense of direction long ago.

After running at top speed for about two to three minutes, both of them finally arrived at the area where their third targeted competitor was.

This competitor was rather strange. It seemed as though he had no intention of actively seeking out other competitors to fight. Instead, he chose to hide in a large closet and conceal his energy, as if he were waiting for his prey to fall into his lap.

He had indeed done a great job of concealing his energy. He did it so well in fact that it was very likely he could avoid being detected by most Virtual God powerhouses who were using Divine Telekinesis.

However, the scanning function of Warlord’s little robot probe could penetrate multiple walls, allowing it to see the competitor clearly. Moreover, the robot probe specifically scanned for life aura instead of energy waves. As such, it was pointless for a competitor to conceal his energy.

Looking at the video displayed on the surveillance screen, Lin Huang was a little amused when he saw that his competitor was curled up awkwardly inside the closet.

“Doesn’t this fellow realize that it’d be more comfortable for him to sit on a stool inside the closet?”

Warlord suddenly commented when both of them were about 10,000 meters away from this competitor, “Since he’s hiding inside a room, my Cannonball won’t be that effective. I’ll have to use something else.”

Cannonballs were mainly used to launch accurate airborne strikes on targets from afar. Using it as normal artillery would be equivalent to giving up its greatest advantage.

Lin Huang was aware of this, so he had no objections. "Just use whatever you want. As I said before, try to buy us some time if you can't finish him off."

Warlord nodded slightly at his words. Suddenly, dozens of thumb-sized metal spheres flew out from his palm. Apart from having a silver coating, they looked exactly like the Golden Snitch used in a Quidditch game.

Ethereal wings sprouted from the metal spheres, but the spheres shook so vigorously that the wings vanished very quickly.

With a wave of his hand, four flying machines appeared instantly in front of Warlord. Each of these machines was about the size of a typical drone seen on Earth. All of them were grey-colored and marvelously designed.

All four machines flew off into the distance at terrifying speed just after they appeared.

"What are these machines?" Lin Huang could not help asking curiously.

"They're a type of weaponized aircraft that utilizes artificial intelligence. Of the four machines you saw just now, two of them are from the Phantom series, while the other two are from the Frenzy series. The Phantom series is by far the fastest and most agile aircraft that I've ever created. On the other hand, the Frenzy series is equipped with the highest firepower."

"What about those small metal spheres?" Lin Huang asked again.

"Those are bombs..."

Before they could even finish speaking, one of the metal spheres could already be seen on the surveillance screen.

The sphere rolled toward the closet, making a faint sound like a glass ball rolling across the floor.

However, even a faint sound like this caused the sturdy man inside the closet to be even more alert to his surroundings.

Using his Divine Telekinesis, he somehow managed to sense the presence of the metal sphere at almost the same time that he heard it. However, he did not find anything out of the ordinary even after scanning the area several times.

With a hint of confusion, the sturdy man used his sword to push open the closet doors ever so slightly.

He looked down at the floor near the closet and soon saw a silver-colored metal sphere rolling along the ground.

"What the hell..?"

Curiosity got the better of him, so he extended his sword and pointed it at the metal sphere.

However, at this moment, the metal sphere suddenly exploded.

A dazzling white light instantly filled the entire room. Big Guy, who had been staring at the metal ball all this while, naturally fell prey to it.

His pupils contracted in the extreme and he was instantly dazzled by the light to where nothing else was visible.

Almost simultaneously, he sensed that there were about 10 small gizmos that had entered one after the other into the range of his Divine Telekinesis.

Those small metal spheres seemed to have somehow traversed some thousand meters of space in an instant, falling into the bedroom that he was in.

Big Guy's vision had barely even recovered before a series of fierce explosions went off the next instant.

Almost instantaneously, the inferno swallowed up the entire wardrobe as well as Big Guy.

The flames had barely subsided when the four weaponized aircraft arrived at the scene.

All of the aircraft quickly switched to attack mode, and each had dozens of additional gun barrels pointing toward the wardrobe where Big Guy had been hiding.

Without waiting for any orders, all four aircraft began firing immediately as soon as they entered the room.

Big Guy was caught in an endless round of gunfire raining down like a furious thunderstorm.

Lin Huang saw a pop-up message before he and Warlord even arrived at the scene.

'Competitor defeated, points accumulated: +1'

"This fellow looked fierce enough and he seemed to be quite powerful as well. I never expected him to be so weak." Lin Huang could not help raising his brows in surprise.

He had initially thought that Warlord would be facing a tough opponent this time, but in the end, that had not happened at all.

However, after recalling the battle proceedings, Lin Huang soon realized that his opponent was not weak; the competitor had merely been dominated by Warlord since the start of the attack. Big Guy was killed before he even had a chance to retaliate.

Lin Huang glanced at his current points and realized that he had already accumulated four points.

However, Lin Huang still did not see his name on the leaderboard. A few minutes ago, the competitor at the 100th place was still at three points, but now, this competitor had already accumulated four points. As for Lin Huang himself, he was ranked at the 101st place.

He merely glanced at the leaderboard and did not give it overmuch attention.

After spending some time to collect the loot from Big Guy and dispose of his corpse, Lin Huang and Warlord resumed their journey and sped in the direction of their fourth targeted competitor.

A few seconds into their journey, both of them saw that their fourth target had already encountered another competitor. The video feed showed that the two competitors were already engaged in a fierce battle.

“Should we make a move now? Or should we wait for them to finish each other off and collect the rewards when the battle is over?” Warlord asked.

“Let’s join the fight. We don’t know how long the battle will last anyway.” Although Lin Huang took pleasure at the thought of getting rewards without lifting a finger, at that moment, he was even more eager to start his Sword Dao practice with the Sword Servant. Besides, he was also impatient to find out whether his opponent was a Sword Servant or just a normal participant like himself.

Since their target was engaged in battle, there was no need for Warlord to dispatch his gizmos to buy them more time.

Moreover, Lin Huang had not engaged in a fight ever since he began participating in this Trial. He was actually dying to fight with somebody, so he thought of using this opportunity as a warm-up session.

Several minutes later, Lin Huang and Warlord finally located the two competitors and boldly appeared before them.

The sudden emergence of a third party caused an instant reduction in the vicious aura emitted by the two competitors toward each other. Both of them redirected their hostility toward Lin Huang and Warlord instead.

After all, this Trial was an elimination tournament. As a result, almost every participant was regarded as an enemy.

The two competitors even began conspiring telepathically, discussing whether or not they should team up so that they could eliminate this new third party.

“Stop whispering to each other and take me on at the same time!” Lin Huang sensed that they were telepathically communicating with each other. Although he could not intercept the messages, he could guess what they were talking about.

As soon as Lin Huang finished speaking, the two competitors turned and charged towards him simultaneously.

However, at that moment, Lin Huang raised his eyebrows and his eyes flashed with a bright sword gleam.

The next moment, the two competitors stiffened simultaneously.

“Competitor defeated, points accumulated: +3.”

“Competitor defeated, points accumulated: +4.”

Two notification boxes popped up at the same time.

Lin Huang raised his brows and accessed his personal page to check on his points and ranking.

“Participant: Xie Lin.”

“Points Accumulated: 11.”

“Rank: 2.”

Chapter 1313: The First Sword Servant

Unrivaled Combat God was still first on the leaderboard with 14 points.

Yi Ke, who was originally in second place with 10 points, had been pushed by Lin Huang into third place.

Lin Huang's sudden soaring in rank instantly attracted the attention of many competitors.

After all, everyone would access the leaderboard for a look when they were bored. When someone suddenly shot up to second place, it was very noticeable.

"What's going on? Where did this second rank come from all of a sudden?"

"Xie Lin? The name doesn't ring a bell. Seems like he's not a member of any six or seven-star organization. I guess he's just a nobody from some small organization."

"I checked the leaderboard once about three minutes ago and I'm sure I didn't see this name! It's only been three minutes and his ranking soared to second place, he can't be cheating, can he?"

...

Seeing that Xie Lin had suddenly skyrocketed to second place on the leaderboard, all the competitors fell into a heated discussion.

The only few who remained calm were Lin Huang and the few members of Death Sickle.

"Is it possible that his points are only starting to go up now because this fellow's probing ability is more time-consuming?" Fallen Star mumbled softly, looking at Xie Lin's name on the leaderboard.

"No wonder he was able to kill the Bug King and Bug Queen!

"No wonder he's highly regarded by Master Buried Heaven!"

Looking at the latest version of the leaderboard, Twin's two heads both let out a heavy sigh at the same time.

"So Boss Xie Lin really was preparing for a big move before this; now he's suddenly soared to second place!" Destiny said with an excited laugh as if he were the one who had risen to second place instead. "Looking at how his points are accumulating at this rate; it's just a matter of time before he overtakes Unrivaled Combat God."

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Naturally, Lin Huang was aware that the sudden increase in his points would attract attention.

He had no intention of being so high-profile in the first place. His original plan was to take on a few unlucky competitors along the way before encountering the Sword Slave. If things had gone according to his original plan, he would only have encountered four competitors midway. If those four did not have any accumulated points, he would only have attained four basic points, which meant that he would not even be able to make it into the top one hundred ranks on the leaderboard. However, he did not expect to bump into five competitors along the way or that the last two would give him seven points.

Since he had already made it to second place and his rapid rise had been seen by many competitors, Lin Huang decided to just let nature take its course.

After all, people would start noticing him sooner or later if he managed to get into first place. Regardless, Lin Huang was not too concerned about drawing attention.

After defeating the five unlucky competitors along the way, Lin Huang and Warlord continued their journey at full speed.

Because he was unable to monitor the powerhouse whom he still suspected of being a “Sword Servant”, Lin Huang was uncertain whether or not the other party was still at the same place. He could only use the coordinates previously provided by Warlord as a rough guide, and hurry there as fast as he could.

After approximately three or four minutes, both of them finally arrived at the area where Unrivaled Combat God and the “Sword Servant” had fought previously.

When the storeroom-like space appeared within range of Lin Huang’s Divine Telekinesis, he could sense a certain aura in the room right away.

Although the intensity of the aura was merely at that of a Virtual God rank-9, it was sending a vague sense of danger to Lin Huang.

“It’s that fellow!” With just a hint of the aura, Lin Huang had already determined that this other party was indeed the “Sword Servant” he had seen in the video. In fact, he had further affirmed the identity of the Sword Servant as well.

Under normal circumstances, a fellow who was able to counter the skills of someone like Unrivaled Combat God usually would not remain in the same place and wait idly for another opponent to come by. The only reasonable explanation was that the other party was a Sword Servant who was unable to leave the zone that he had been designated to guard.

Right as Lin Huang sensed the other party, the other party sensed Lin Huang’s and Warlord’s approach as well.

Perhaps it was because the other party was upset after previously being disturbed by Unrivaled Combat God. At the appearance of Lin Huang and Warlord, the powerhouse in the so-called storeroom immediately sent his Sword Dao toward the approaching duo.

Driven by a powerful will, the Sword Dao—almost True Martial Level in its strength—surged toward Lin Huang like a wave.

This time around, the other party was not actually directly attacking, but trying to force Lin Huang and Warlord to retreat by using Sword Dao. There was no sign of any sword gleam either.

Seeing the other party’s “courteous” welcome, Lin Chuang could not help itching to exercise his skills. He responded in kind, using true god-level will to send his Sword Dao out in the form of waves.

The two colorless unseen waves collided in the air, setting off an earth-shattering blast.

This was the ultimate clash of Sword Dao.

Those who had not yet reached True Meaning Level would not be able to sense anything unusual. If one were accidentally involved in such a confrontation, however, even a Virtual God rank-9 powerhouse might be smashed to smithereens from the massive tidal waves caused by the collision of Sword Dao against each other.

Fortunately, right before Lin Huang made his move, he had already secretly commanded Warlord to leave the battlefield.

This was a duel between two top-tiered Sword Dao powerhouses. Lin Huang was burning with excitement whereas his opponent was surprised.

Lin Huang's opponent thought that this was a mere amateur challenging him since the intensity of Lin Huang's and Warlord's auras came nowhere close to that of Unrivaled Combat God.

However, in this short engagement, he immediately realized that he had underestimated Lin Huang. Although he was still unable to determine Lin Huang's true abilities, he at least knew that his opponent's Sword Dao level was not that far below his own.

The collision of the two Sword Dao was like two opposing waves slamming together. For a long time, it was hard to determine which was the winner or loser.

Lin Huang only waited for a short while, and when he saw no result, he whipped his sword out right away.

The dark red blade sliced through the void like a paper-knife slicing through a thin sheet of paper.

Under the blade stroke, the opponent's Sword Dao finally collapsed.

With a slight smirk, Lin Huang withdrew his Sword Dao as he landed on the ground firmly with both feet. Then, he raced toward the warehouse.

Within seconds, his figure darted past countless buildings, finally arriving in front of the "warehouse".

At a closer glance, before him was no warehouse, but a five-story house that was slightly larger than usual.

With just one brief glance, Lin Huang's Divine Telekinesis spread out and immediately locked onto his opponent's exact location.

He leaped into the air once again as he darted through a window and landed in a room on the fifth floor.

Less than 20 meters away from Lin Huang stood a slightly plump, bearded man.

Lin Huang sized up his opponent curiously. If not for the vague Sword Dao emanating from him, this person seemed extremely ordinary with no sign of the aura a powerhouse should have.

Instead of attacking immediately, the bearded man eyed Lin Huang from head to toe as if he was trying to put a clear face to the person who was able to challenge his Sword Dao.

"If I'm not mistaken, you're one of the three hundred guarding the BOSS, am I right?"

Lin Huang asked straight away. Although he had already guessed earlier, he wanted to hear the answer from the horse's mouth.

"That's right," the bearded man replied with a nod, "I already have some ideas as to who you are as well. You're not a competitor, are you?"

"I'm the participant who initiated this Trial," Lin Huang replied honestly. After all, he was not concerned about letting the other party know about such things. If the other party was Great Heaven's Sword Servant, it was unlikely that he would leak the information to the other competitors.

At Lin Huang's answer, the bearded man's expression instantly turned serious. His aura began to churn and even his beard seemed to have been stirred as if by a gust of wind. The dispirited middle-aged man from seconds ago was suddenly transformed into a magnificent king in an instant.

"Come on then; let me see if you are qualified to receive the inheritance of the swordmaster!"

Chapter 1314: Let Me Give You Another Piece Of Advice

Great Heaven's three hundred Saber Servants were Heavenly Gods during their lifetimes, so they were relatively bold and powerful in the great world.

The only thing was that because this Trial was initiated by Lin Huang, all three hundred Saber Servants' combat strength, physical qualities, and even their Sword Dao were significantly restricted.

However, even so, the abilities of these Saber Servants could not be underestimated.

After all, they had heavenly god-level experience and insight, so even at the same level as the others, their powers and abilities would definitely surpass those of most Virtual Gods.

Even Unrivaled Combat God, the number one Virtual God genius in the God Territory, was almost entirely at a disadvantage when facing the bearded man.

It was not too much to say that even if the bearded man was hard-pressed in a fight, his various attributes were already at the very peak limits of a Virtual God rank-9. Given the disparity between personal combat experience and combat consciousness, it came as no surprise that a Virtual God genius as strong as Unrivaled Combat God could be easily defeated.

However, when the bearded man encountered Lin Huang, the situation completely changed.

The bearded man's Sword Dao had been suppressed to the level of half-step Sword Dao true meaning, whereas Lin Huang's Sword Dao had also achieved half-step Sword Dao true meaning.

The bearded man's will was restricted to that of a Virtual God rank-9 while Lin Huang's will was already at true god-level.

The bearded man's physical strength had been limited to that of a Virtual God rank-9 as well while Lin Huang's physical strength was almost at true god-level, boosted by Tyrant and other imperial monsters.

The bearded man's Divine Telekinesis was limited to that of a Virtual God rank-9 while Lin Huang's Divine Telekinesis was boosted to true god-level by Seamless.

The bearded man was restricted from using his true god-level God Rule Power but Lin Huang had mastered the God-slaying Power, which enabled him to directly use God Rule Power.

In every aspect, Lin Huang was no worse off than the bearded man. In fact, he might even be more powerful in certain attributes.

Both figures collided in the air constantly, the battle swords in their hands clashing together nigh-on millions of times within a mere few minutes.

All the furniture in the room shattered into pieces. The walls, the floor, and even the ceiling were all heavily damaged without a single inch unscathed.

However, the walls did not crumble, the floor had not yet collapsed, and the ceiling still seemed firm and solid with no signs of caving in.

Lin Huang devoted himself wholeheartedly to this battle; he did not even use his God-slaying Power.

This was not so that battle would be fair, but to further the absorption of his gains.

Every strike against the bearded man's sword helped him absorb more Sword Dao nutrients.

Even when his Sword Dao had reached its limit in absorption, he could sense the veil that separated him from achieving Sword Dao true meaning getting thinner and thinner.

The intense battle between the two continued for hours, where every stroke of the sword was met by an equally ferocious parry. The lightning-like sword gleams, red and black, were a flurry of motion in the air, but both combatants received not a single scratch.

Immersed as he was in the battle, Lin Huang did not notice his change of rank on the leaderboard.

As early as half an hour into his initial encounter with the bearded man, his 11 points had already been overtaken by the third and fourth-ranked competitors.

Roughly about an hour later, his ranking dropped to thirteenth place.

By the time another hour had passed, he had dropped to thirty-sixth place.

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Many people were secretly discussing why Lin Huang's points remained static.

"I told you so; Xie Lin is just a nobody. Look, two and a half hours have passed now and his points haven't gone up at all. It's impossible that they can't detect a participant after a whole two and a half hours, right?"

"Like I said, which organization did this fellow pop up from? How is it possible for him to rival Unrivaled Combat God's unbelievable power?!"

"His points skyrocketed just a few minutes earlier, but they haven't changed for more than an hour now. However you look at it, it still looks like his points were obtained by cheating!"

...

Several people in Death Sickle were confused as well.

Lin Huang had shown his true abilities previously, but why had he suddenly gone quiet and become inactive for more than two hours?

“What’s going on? He’s not hiding something up his sleeve again, is he?” Destiny had complete faith in Lin Huang’s capabilities and believed that Lin Huang was plotting a big move during this lull.

“Can it be that the detection devices have malfunctioned?” Fallen Star frowned slightly. Naturally, she would much rather see Lin Huang take first place instead of Unrivaled Combat God. After all, he was a member of Death Sickle.

“Xie Lin’s quiet again. I wonder if he’s just toying with us?” Twin’s fiery red-haired right head laughed.

“There are many possibilities...for example, he might have suddenly had an epiphany, the detection devices might have malfunctioned, he might be trapped somewhere and can’t get out, or he could be in a bad mood and doesn’t want to do anything...” Twin’s icy blue-haired head did not find the situation strange at all.

“Which scenario do you think is the most likely then?” The fiery red-haired head asked immediately.

“How would I know? You can ask Lin Huang yourself, then you’ll find out,” the icy blue head replied.

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Meanwhile, the battle between Lin Huang and the bearded man continued.

Lin Huang had not yet stopped because every stroke of his sword meant his gains increased.

The bearded man showed no sign of stopping as well because it was his natural duty to train with the swordmaster’s future heir. Even if the other party might not be able to obtain Great Heaven’s inheritance, at least he did demonstrate the potential to become an heir.

Of course, one of the conditions for the bearded man to be a training partner for the heir was that the heir had to prove their ability to counter his attacks unreservedly, and Lin Huang had proven himself capable of doing so.

Time continued to tick by and more sword marks appeared on the walls of the room.

All of a sudden, a swift slice and the edge of Lin Huang’s sword grazed the bearded man’s cheek, drawing a drop of blood.

Lin Huang smiled as he sheathed his sword.

The bearded man instantly retreated several dozen meters away and sheathed his sword as well. “I’ve lost!” He folded his hands together and raised them in salute to Lin Huang.

“It was just a casual duel; think of it as us comparing notes. There’s no win or lose here,” Lin Huang said with a smile as he shook his head, “Besides, you had all kinds of restrictions put on you so you didn’t get to show your true abilities.”

“A loss is a loss, there’s no excuse,” the bearded man said with a wave of his hand.

“However, the swordmaster has over tens of thousands of sword cultivators. Even at heavenly god-level, there are over three hundred and sixty cultivators, all of whom are good with swords. Among the three hundred and sixty, I’m considered average. I know a bit of everything here and there; I don’t really like to stick to just one path, so my abilities are average. If you want to earn more gains, challenge the other sword cultivators under other swordmasters. I believe you’ll gain more.”

“Let me give you another piece of advice. If your Sword Dao can’t achieve True Martial Level, you should just forego the final assessment. Otherwise, you’ll die!”

Chapter 1315: I’ll Run Away If I Can’t Beat Them

“Participant Xie Lin defeated BOSS, points accumulated: +100!”

A push notification popped up in front of all the competitors.

Lin Huang was no exception.

When he saw the push notification appear, he was stunned.

“What on earth? Does that mean other competitors received this announcement as well?!”

To be honest, this was something that Lin Huang wished had not happened as the announcement revealed his identity as the participant. Although many might still be too confused to wrap their minds around the differences between ‘participant’ and ‘competitor’ at such short notice, there had to be some who noticed that something was amiss.

Naturally, the same group of people would start making assumptions about Lin Huang’s identity.

After the ‘global’ announcement disappeared, only then did Lin Huang’s personal push notification appear.

“Sword Servant defeated, points accumulated: +100”

On his personal page, Lin Huang’s original 11 points had increased to 111 points.

On the leaderboard, Lin Huang’s name rocketed to first place, far ahead of Shen Wushuang who was the current first runner-up.

Shen Wushuang only had 49 points currently—not even half of Lin Huang’s points.

At this moment, Shen Wushuang stood at under the eaves of a house, gazing from afar at the small building where the bearded middle-aged man was. His brows creased slightly as he brooded.

‘Could someone really defeat that fellow?! Despite the various restrictions placed on him, he’s still a Heavenly God nonetheless. Under the restrictions, all of their abilities are capped at virtual god-level and their Sword Dao is at half-step True Meaning Level. Other than that, their combat experiences and consciousness far exceed that of a Virtual God...how did that fellow manage it?’

Shen Wushuang was quite sure that Lin Huang had not won with the help of a team.

Firstly, the trial had only been in progress for less than half a day and the competitors' placement was all random. It was not possible for Lin Huang to locate members from the same organization and team up together in such a short amount of time.

Secondly, even with restricted strength, a Heavenly God was not an opponent who could be defeated just by forming a team. If the challengers' Sword Dao was not on par with the BOSS, it would not make any difference whether it was one challenger or a hundred challengers. In the BOSS' eyes, all of them were no threat at all.

Thirdly, all 300 trial BOSSes specialized in different fields respectively; each of them had different weaknesses as well. In theory, everyone could form teams based on the BOSS' weakness to increase their chances of winning. However, it was only the first day of the Trial. Whether it was the location of each BOSS, their abilities, or weaknesses, nobody really knew any of that yet. It had already been difficult for him to find himself a team in just half a day, not to mention he and his teammates bumped into a BOSS who annihilated them moments after the team was formed.

The only possibility that occurred to Shen Wushuang was that this fellow named Xie Lin was so powerful that he defeated the BOSS on his own.

Moreover, unlike most people, Shen Wushuang's focus was usually on different things.

Many smartasses noticed the use of the word "participant" almost immediately.

"Participant? Based on previous push notifications, shouldn't all of us be called "competitors"? Does it mean participants and competitors are the same and I'm overthinking things? Or does it mean that this Xie Lin person is different from the rest?"

"Participant?! He can't be the person who initiated this Competitive Trial, can he?"

"This Xie Lin is somehow different from the rest of us..."

...

Most competitors, however, did not notice the different words used in the push notification.

"Don't participants and competitors simply mean people who are participating in the trial? What's the point of nitpicking at those minor details?"

They were mostly concerned about the BOSS' defeat at Lin Huang's hands.

"God, please accept my kneecaps as an offering so I can defeat the Heavenly God BOSS (simplified version)!"

"The reason why he was quiet for the past two hours must have been because he was fighting the BOSS. The end boss is so OP!"

"He defeated the BOSS who's a Heavenly God, and you're saying he's not cheating?! Despite being restricted in all aspects, we're still talking about a Heavenly God powerhouse! Anyway, I'm a hundred and one percent convinced that no Virtual God could have beaten an opponent like that!"

“That fellow must be a participant from outside the God Territory. With abilities like that, he must be among the top ten Virtual Gods, if not number one. But this name, Xie Lin, I’ve never even heard of him in the God Territory. Could he be a local super-genius from the Great Heaven Territory?!”

...

The few Death Sickle members had mixed responses as well.

“He managed to defeat a BOSS who was maxed out at virtual god-level? Seems he’s much stronger than I imagined.” Fallen Star was very aware of how powerful even a suppressed Heavenly God could be. She had no confidence that she could defeat one herself.

“From the looks of things, it looks like Master Buried Heaven made the right choice,” mumbled both of Twin’s heads at the same time.

“Boss Xie Lin is OP!!!” Destiny was an absolutely NC fan.¹

Meanwhile, Lin Huang remained in the small five-story building.

After fighting the bearded middle-aged man and briefly checking his accumulated points, Lin Huang immediately sat down with his legs crossed and started absorbing the gains from this fight.

Warlord stood guard by Lin Huang, not stirring even an inch from his side.

Lin Huang started replaying the fight in his head rapidly, lapping up all the minor details. Even though the bearded man did not think too highly of himself—admitting that he was not very skilled at everything he learned—in the eyes of any Virtual God sword cultivator, he was at peak capacity. For Lin Huang, he was a rare opponent.

The bearded man was way more proficient in sword techniques than Lin Huang—this was why Lin Huang could unleash all of his abilities without reservation. To defeat the bearded man, Lin Huang had exhausted almost all of his own sword techniques. In fact, Lin Huang had even utilized many of the inheritances obtained from the Demon Sword Tomb which he had yet to practice.

The fight had been extremely satisfying, but he learned a lot too.

Lin Huang sat for more than two hours in the small building.

Although his Sword Dao strength was already maxed out to its limits, Lin Huang could feel that his Sword Dao was almost at the breakthrough point.

His accumulated experience had reached its maximum limits too. He could now see the vague form of Sword Dao true meaning behind the proverbial window paper. All that was left for him to do was to break through the paper covering the window, so to speak.

However, Lin Huang was aware that he could not rush it. Even though he could sense his breakthrough, it still depended on luck and opportunity.

If luck was on his side and the time was right, he might achieve that breakthrough in his next fight.

If he was not lucky enough or it was not his time yet, he might not be able to breakthrough in the next three hundred fights.

'It's most crucial to not be anxious at moments like this.' Lin Huang was clearly aware that pivotal moments like this required him to stay calm. Otherwise, he might jeopardize his chances and mess up.

After Lin Huang composed himself again, he snapped his head toward Warlord

"Have you discovered other Sword Servants?"

"Currently, I have discovered eighteen suspicious locations. My surveillance bugs have all disappeared for no reason after getting close. There is a high probability that those are areas guarded by Sword Servants but there's still the possibility of strong competitors finding the surveillance bugs," Warlord replied instantly.

"There shouldn't be too many competitors who can do that. Let's go to each area and find out since most of those areas are almost certainly where the Sword Servants are standing guard. So what if they're competitors? We fight when we need to. We need to decide who wins and who loses eventually," Lin Huang said confidently. Then, he added shamelessly, "If I bump into a super-genius who can dominate this entire era, I'll just run away if I can't beat them. It won't be that hard to run away, right?"

Chapter 1316: Sword126

Under the night sky, red lanterns bathed the rows of uneven buildings in a reddish glow.

Lin Huang slowed his pace, gaze stopping at a small upside-down three-story building not too far in front of him.

Based on what Warlord had described, the surveillance bugs had disappeared after venturing into this area. It was most probably the work of a Sword Servant who was standing guard here.

Immediately after Lin Huang stepped into the area, his Divine Telekinesis detected someone's presence in the inverted three-story building.

According to his Divine Telekinesis, this someone was a petite young lady who was currently sitting with her legs crossed in the middle of a living room located on the first story. Her eyes were closed, and she was pretending to be asleep.

After seeing this, Lin Huang could definitely confirm her identity as a guardian Sword Servant.

However, as soon as Lin Huang's Divine Telekinesis registered her presence, the young lady detected the intrusion into her territory as well.

Her eyes snapped open. Despite having her back to Lin Huang, she merged her Sword Dao with a ferocious determination and sent it shooting toward Lin Huang.

In the blink of an eye, a flash of purple starlight streaked across thousands of meters like lightning, aiming directly at the point between Lin Huang's eyebrows.

Lin Huang responded almost immediately. Merging his will and his Sword Dao into a flashing blood-red gleam, he aimed a slash at the approaching beam of starlight.

In the void, a needle-thin purple glow and a hair-fine blood-red gleam collided with each other.

It was a pure clash of Sword Dao that was directed by sheer will. The attacks were devoid of Divine Power or sword gleam.

For sword cultivators whose Sword Dao had yet to reach level-6, they would be completely unable to see that small glowing purple dot and the faint blood-red gleam, much less go up against such power.

The two splashes of color canceled each other out as they clashed, without a trace of color or sound.

However, the aftermath of the clash between two Sword Dao of near-True Meaning Level rippled across the material world—a gale rose from between the rows of buildings, causing lanterns in the vicinity of several hundred kilometers to sway violently.

“A very keen stroke !” Lin Huang commented with a laugh.

He did not commend his opponent’s speed nor praise his opponent for having impressive Sword Dao. In a sentence, Lin Huang had honed in on the direction of his opponent’s Sword Dao cultivation.

Without haste, the petite lady stood up and turned around to look at Lin Huang. Her gaze seemed to pierce through the door and alight on Lin Huang’s face.

“Yours isn’t too bad either.”

“Participant Xie Lin,” Lin Huang introduced himself with a smile. At the same time, another god battle sword relic appeared in his hand.

The petite lady’s battle sword rapidly materialized in her hand as well.

“Sword Servant under Master Great Heaven, Sword126.”

Lin Huang experienced some surprise when his opponent announced her name.

He once heard a similar name—Sword11.

‘Could it be that Sword11 is also a Sword Servant from Great Heaven?!’ The thought flitted across Lin Huang’s mind but was instantly suppressed. ‘No, Sword11’s real name is Liu Ren. He only changed his name to Sword11 after Swordfiend Abyss...’

Lin Huang did not brood on this. The idea only lingered in his head briefly before it was consigned to the back of his mind. After all, with a strong opponent in front of him, a small distraction could potentially cost him the entire fight.

The moment Sword126 spoke from a few thousand meters away, the main door to the first floor of the small building opened on its own.

Sword126 stood on the upside-down floor and gazed at Lin Huang who stood on the distant roof of another building.

Lin Huang focused his attention on Sword126 too.

Across from him stood a petite woman whose height reached slightly over a hundred and fifty meters. She had the youthful face of a fifteen or sixteen-year-old girl. Moreover, she had breasts that were disproportionately large compared to the rest of her body.

This woman who stood before Lin Huang perfectly encapsulated the phrase, “big boobs with a child-like complexion”.

She wore a plain black Taoist robe that could barely contain her ample bosom, and she had shaved her golden hair like a boy. Her sharp eyes scanned Lin Huang up and down.

“What are you looking at?”

The woman’s gaze became hostile when she realized Lin Huang’s gaze was fixated on her chest.

“I like the way you carry your Taoist robe,” Lin Huang hastily changed the topic. He was well aware that he could not tell the truth at moments like this, otherwise, this lady might butcher him. One could never underestimate a woman’s wrath.

Based on her hairstyle and attire, Lin Huang knew this was a woman who prioritized Sword Dao more than anything. Paying attention to anything other than her Sword Dao would be a form of violation, as far as she was concerned.

Knowing Lin Huang was deliberately avoiding the question, the anger in Sword126’s eyes showed no signs of diminishing.

“Participant, attack!”

“I won’t hold back then.” Lin Huang gave a brief nod.

His right hand gripped the hilt of his sword and unsheathed it the next instant. The flash of a red gleam blossomed like a new moon in the night sky.

Almost simultaneously, Sword126 unsheathed her sword too.

The sword in her hand was very unique—it had an extremely narrow body the width of two fingers; other than the spine of the blade, the body of the sword was all blade; the tip of the sword was as thin as a sharp needle.

Seeing the sword that was narrower than a saber, Lin Huang could not help raising a brow.

However, he immediately identified the approach she used in her Sword Dao.

Narrow swords like this were best suited for medium to short-range slashes and thrusts.

True to his expectations, the moment the narrow sword cleared its sheath, Sword126 trained the point of her sword on Lin Huang—this was Single Sword Thrust.

The point of the sword seemed to slice the air apart. Wherever the sharp edge of her sword sliced through, the body of the sword appeared as a blur, leaving only the sword tip blazing with an electric gleam akin to a flash of lightning.

The next moment, the electric gleam shot across the sky, triggering blasts of air around the body of the sword.

Despite making a move after Lin Huang, Sword126 moved much faster than him.

In the void, a blood-red new moon and a streak of purple lightning collided with each other.

In an instant, blinding rays of reddish-purple exploded into the air and lit up half the sky.

It was as though dawn had arrived in the surrounding areas.

It must be noted that they were not fighting in an empty space. The entire place was a sea of buildings. Despite the obstacles created by row upon row of interspersed buildings, the brightness of the rays still could travel hundreds of kilometers away, evidence of just how terrifying their moves were.

It was different from their first encounter, which was merely a clash of Sword Dao. This time, both of them went all out unrestrained.

Under the influence of two strong wills, maxed out Sword Dao and Divine Power were fully unleashed.

Explosive thunder boomed across the space tens of thousands of times. Countless buildings trembled as though there was an earthquake.

In the Competitive Trial space, there were many competitors near the place where Lin Huang and Sword126 were fighting.

The competitors freaked out when they sensed the anomalies that were happening.

“Who’s fighting?! Why is the battle so terrifying?!”

“I can’t even penetrate through the walls of the buildings here. Who in the world could cause such tremors?!”

“This isn’t caused by mere mortals. I don’t believe anyone has that sort of power. Yep, it must be an earthquake!”

“Great Heaven’s inheritance lives up to its name indeed—it’s hard to believe that there’s such a powerful beast among us competitors. Who can it be, I wonder? Xie Lin, or Unrivaled Combat God? Or is it those fellows who’ve been training in secret?”

Chapter 1317: Feeling Challenged

In the void, rays of purple and red flashed continuously like two moving spotlights.

It sounded like millions of thunderbolts booming loudly every time they crashed into each other.

To those who were unaware of what was going on, they might think there was a thunderstorm in the Trial space.

The battle between Lin Huang and Sword126 had already lasted for more than an hour.

Sword126 was undeniably strong but in a different way from the bearded middle-aged man Lin Huang encountered before. Similar to Lin Huang, the bearded man developed himself holistically with almost no short staves.¹

Yet, Sword126 chose an alternative path. She only used only three attacks—thrusts, downward cuts, and upward cuts, with thrusts consisting of 80% of all her attacks. She only used cuts if thrusts were ineffective.

Of course, she had perfected her thrusts. Each one was blindingly fast and at an angle that was hard to deal with.

That was why Lin Huang was constantly kept on his toes when he was battling Sword126. A momentary distraction could lead to her piercing through his brain or heart in a single stroke.

In reality, Sword126's cultivation method could easily dispatch weaker opponents in no time. However, the tables could be turned easily if she met a match like Lin Huang instead.

No matter how powerful her thrusts or how varied her moves, her attacks were still too easy to read. In a fight where she faced an opponent equally as strong, as long as the opponent lasted a certain amount of time, understood the way she attacked, and got used to the rhythm of her attacks, she would be checkmated.

Lin Huang got used to Sword126's style of attack in a mere half an hour. The rest for the hour, he continued fighting her to learn her thrusts while using this fight to hasten the assimilation process of what he had learned from her.

Although Sword126 utilized various thrusts and cuts to fill in the weaknesses in her attack style—it was becoming obvious that the chances of her winning the battle diminished by the hour.

Even though it seemed like she came off more aggressive than her opponent, only the parties involved understood that it was Lin Huang who was in full control of the battle. He had familiarized himself with her combat style and secured his chances of winning.

Even if Lin Huang did not possess moves powerful enough to wipe her out and this stalemate could go on for an extended period, she had lost the battle. She had used up all of her moves but nothing affected Lin Huang.

Sword126 did not bother making things complicated. Once she was sure that she had no chance of winning, she swiftly dodged his attack and retreated to the small building where she stood guard. She returned to standing on the inverted floor and looked at Lin Huang from an upside-down position.

After sheathing her sword, she threw at Lin Huang expressionlessly, "You won."

"Thank you for going easy on me." Since his opponent had already surrendered, there was nothing Lin Huang could do but to sheathe his sword as well.

Initially, he had wanted to train as much as possible with her. Yet, the moment she realized there was no way she could win, she simply surrendered.

Lin Huang let it pass. After all, there were still 298 Sword Servants waiting for him. There was no need to stay here and try to wring blood from a stone.

“No need to be polite. You’re not weak, that’s for sure,” said Sword126 bluntly, “However, if you’re thinking about obtaining Great Heaven’s inheritance, you still have a long way to go.”

“I’ve heard the same thing from the person before you,” Lin Huang smiled at her. He did not think too much about it because it was not her intention to insult him. She was simply telling the truth.

According to the bearded man, Lin Huang would have to achieve a breakthrough to Sword Dao True Meaning Level if Lin Huang wished to pass the final trial. Although Sword126 did not come right out and say it, Lin Huang knew what she implied. Otherwise, she would not have pointed out how far Lin Huang was from achieving his goal.

“Oh, that’s right. I wanted to ask you. Do all Sword Servants have numerical names similar to yours?” Lin Huang could not help asking.

“Yes.” Sword126 did not avoid the question.

“Is there one named Sword11?”

“Of course. Our names are listed in order starting from Sword1,” Sword126 explained.

If she had been talking to a competitor, she would not bring up such matters. However, Lin Huang was the participant who initiated the Competitive Trial. Although his chances of success were very low, he was still the person who would potentially obtain Great Heaven’s inheritance. Moreover, if the participants failed the Trial, they would probably die in the Trial as well. Even if they survived, their memories of anything related to the Great Heaven inheritance would be wiped clean. Therefore, there was no need to worry about participants leaking secrets about the Great Heaven inheritance to external parties.

Lin Huang was dumbstruck to hear Sword126’s reply. He had asked the question out of curiosity but he did not expect such a startling answer.

Before hearing Sword126’s reply, Lin Huang had always thought that it was a mere coincidence that Liu Ren had changed his name to Sword11. Now, it seemed like there was more to that than met the eye.

“Could you tell me what kind of rules are used to determine your name sequence then?” Lin Huang pressed.

“Of course it’s based on our abilities, what else?” Sword126 retorted instead. Suddenly, as though she recalled something, she gave Lin Huang a wary glance. “That’s all I can tell you. You can stop asking about Sword Servants now. If your abilities aren’t powerful enough to obtain the inheritance, there’s no point in you learning about all these things.”

Sword126’s response cut off all possibilities of Lin Huang asking more questions. Lin Huang thought he could ask more about Sword11, but it was apparent that she no longer wished to reveal more.

‘Seems like I can only start looking for other Sword Servants and see if I can find out more,’ Lin Huang thought.

Watching Sword126 slowly vanishing, Lin Huang’s mind wavered.

There was something about Sword11 that he was concerned about.

However, seconds later, a push notification appeared and forced him to return to reality.

“Participant Xie Lin defeated BOSS, points accumulated: +100!”

It was yet another ‘global’ announcement.

After seeing this announcement, nearly three thousand competitors started to feel stressed out.

Those who suspected Lin Huang of cheating now held their tongues.

He might have cheated the first time, but he had now successfully eliminated his opponents twice.

He might have wormed his way through loopholes in the rules for the first instance. Yet, doing it for the second time sounded somewhat improbable. It was highly unlikely that a loophole as big as this existed in the trial rules. Therefore, the only explanation was that he was truly, undeniably strong.

Naturally, after knowing about this monster in the trial, many competitors retreated into spectator mode. After all, the possibility of them emerging as the champion was nearly zero now, so they might as well watch how things unfolded.

The ones who were most stressed out right now were none other than Unrivaled Combat God and the few who were trained in secret by various organizations.

When Unrivaled Combat God first climbed up the ranks, those who were secretly trained did not mind so much. Firstly, they knew the extent of his abilities. Secondly, the trial had only just started then. The difference between everyone’s cumulative points was not that extensive. All of them thought the endgame fight for points between competitors was the real deal.

However, a newbie whom no one had heard of had appeared out of the blue and eliminated two BOSSes in a row. The difference in cumulative points between them and the number one ranking was far too steep now. They could hardly keep calm.

As an analogy, people from this particular group could be compared to those overachievers who obtained marks higher than 680 every time. All of a sudden, a new student transferred to their school and obtained more than 700 marks in two mock exams back to back. It was impossible to not feel challenged.

Chapter 1318: Identity Revealed

After defeating Sword126, Lin Huang hurried towards the next possible Sword Servant location with Warlord.

Lin Huang no longer considered hunting down other competitors.

Currently, all the competitors’ accumulated points were still rather low and their Sword Dao was not as strong as Lin Huang’s. The Trial would only last for ten days, so Lin Huang refused to waste his precious time on them. He would rather fight the Sword Servants, no matter what his accumulated points were. His priority right now was to ensure that he learned something from every fight.

After the hour-plus fight with Sword126, the number of potential Sword Servant locations had increased to thirty-one.

Lin Huang followed the route that Warlord had laid out and arrived at the next location in no time.

This time, the Sword Servant was located in a rundown double-story building. He was a lanky man dressed in a grey robe by the name of Sword33.

After hearing the number of his name, Lin Huang knew this fellow was much stronger than Sword126.

Lin Huang's assumption was proven right after they engaged in combat.

Sword33's Sword Dao path was very simple—if one move was all it took to solve the problem, never make a second move. If a straightforward attack was all it took to settle things, never deviate.

The only aim of his swordsmanship was to use the simplest move to achieve the best result.

His methods were unlike Sword126's more circuitous methods whereby her moves did not vary greatly and were executed in simple sequences.

The foundation of Sword33's Sword Dao was much stronger than Lin Huang's. Despite their simplicity, Sword33's moves were distilled from the essence of countless other sword moves. They were wildly versatile and had no set sequence.

To Lin Huang, this fight was much more difficult than his first two fights. All of Sword33's moves were terrifyingly efficient; it seemed as if every slash from him could end Lin Huang's life. Moreover, almost all of Lin Huang's attacks were countered by Sword33 in the most direct manner.

This fight continued for an entire six hours. As Lin Huang's cumulative points were static during that time, Unrivaled Combat God once again overtook Lin Huang on the leaderboard. Lin Huang's position dropped to first runner-up.

However, Unrivaled Combat God was only able to celebrate his victory for three minutes before Lin Huang's accumulated points surged ahead with another one hundred points, taking the lead once more.

After more than six hours, Lin Huang had nearly exhausted all of his Sword Dao moves and won by a hair.

The fight with Sword33 made Lin Huang realize his own weaknesses. His moves were not efficient enough; there were many sword techniques that he had yet to master, and he needed to be much more proficient in driving his Sword Dao with his will.

After the fight, Lin Huang sat on the rooftop of the double-story building with his legs crossed and used up three full hours to review the fight he had with Sword33. Then, he sped over to the next location with Warlord.

After encountering Sword33, Lin Huang bumped into Sword47, Sword163, Sword159...

He challenged all of them, one at a time.

In fact, he totally forgot about his accumulated points as he was on the road twenty-four hours a day, fighting, and assimilating everything he reaped from the fights. He would not waste a single second. He had no time to think about eating or sleeping; he had not even taken a single sip of water.

To further increase his travel speed, he summoned Thunder.

The first half of the Trial passed by in the blink of an eye.

Five days had passed already out of the ten set for the Trial.

Xie Lin's name remained on the top of the leaderboard no matter what, with a high score of 8937.

Other than defeating 89 Sword Servants, he had bumped into other competitors too during the last five days. Lin Huang had immediately cut them down so his time on the road was not affected. As for the first runner-up, Unrivaled Combat God, the points he had accumulated were not so few either. He had 3341 points. Even though he tried his best to catch up, the gap between him and Lin Huang widened further and further.

Other than Unrivaled Combat God, there were still another four people who had earned more than 3000 points. The disparity in their cumulative points was very small. Three others obtained more than 2800 points (including one who got more than 2900 points). Fallen Star from Death Sickle was obviously among them.

Among the top ten—other than Lin Huang who scored a runaway win—the competition between them was extremely close.

The difference between their points ranged from the lowest— 17 points—to a maximum of only 81 points.

On this day, Lin Huang was on the road as usual when a push notification popped up before him.

“Competitor Forbidden Lamella defeated BOSS, points accumulated: +100!”

Lin Huang was startled when he saw the announcement. It was the first time he had seen another competitor successfully take down a Sword Servant.

‘I’m not familiar with this name. Perhaps he’s a local from the Great Heaven Territory?’

Lin Huang had not looked at the leaderboard since the first day. If he had, he would have noticed that this fellow named Forbidden Lamella was the previous second runner-up. Due to the sudden 100 point increase from beating the BOSS, he had overtaken Unrivaled Combat God to become the first runner-up.

However, this Forbidden Lamella was not local to the Great Heaven Territory.

It was understandable that Lin Huang had never heard of Forbidden Lamella. In fact, other God Territory competitors who joined this Trial in the Great Heaven Territory had never heard of Forbidden Lamella.

This was because Forbidden Lamella was the Sword Dao super-genius secretly trained by the grade-7 organization, Divine Clapnet.

Most God Territory competitors did not know what was going on with him, but some of them had formed at least some assumptions about his identity.

As the second runner-up, Forbidden Lamella had already been conspicuous since the beginning. Now that he had defeated a BOSS and risen to number two, he attracted even more attention.

Many people started to notice the anomaly in the push notifications too.

Previously, whenever Xie Lin defeated a BOSS, the message in the push notification had always referred to him as a “participant”. After reading that 89 times, everyone had gotten used to the term “participant”. Those who initially suspected Lin Huang’s identity had almost forgotten about this anomaly.

However, the push notification that popped up after Forbidden Lamella’s defeat of a BOSS specifically referred to Forbidden Lamella as a “competitor”, which was clearly different from Lin Huang.

This spurred a lot of speculation among the competitors.

“Whenever Xie Lin defeated a BOSS, he was called a “participant” 89 times continuously but Forbidden Lamella was called a “competitor” instead. Something’s going on with Xie Lin!”

“I always thought that participants and competitors refer to the same thing even though different terms were used. Now, it seems like a participant is a special designation.”

“What makes him a participant while the rest of us are competitors?”

“Now that I think about it, five days ago, a notification popped up suddenly and asked if I’d join this Competitive Trial. Could it be that Xie Lin’s the one who initiated this Trial?!”

...

Lin Huang did not know the “global” announcement triggered by Forbidden Lamella had spurred such great suspicion among the competitors about his identity. Lin Huang had only glanced briefly at the push notification, and had noticed the word “competitor”. He did not brood about this Forbidden Lamella either. Lin Huang’s only priority right now was to waste no time on anyone other than the Sword Servants.

Based on his calculations, he would not be able to challenge around two hundred Sword Servants in the five days he had left. Therefore, he had no time to lose. If he could challenge another Sword Servant, he would do it. He had no time to be concerned with other matters.

Chapter 1319: Breakthrough To Sword Dao True Meaning!

Ignoring all external interference, Lin Huang focused all his attention on challenging Sword Servants, not even bothering to check if there were any changes to his points. He even spent the whole journey on the road carefully absorbing his Sword Dao gains.

To increase his Sword Dao to the greatest possible extent, he never used anything other than his Sword Dao in every match no matter how challenging the situation was. He had not even used his God-slaying Power.

Onlookers only saw his continuous wins when they received “global” notifications and thought that he had won easily. Nobody knew that in reality, he had lost two rounds in the past few days — the first when he encountered Sword23, and the second when facing Sword29. After these defeats, Lin Huang did not waste any time getting upset, but straightaway moved on to his next target. Nevertheless, he did make a mental note to himself that he would return for a match sometime soon.

On the sixth day of the Competitive Trial, Lin Huang won another 11 battles consecutively. By the twelfth round, he encountered a strong opponent once again.

His opponent this time was Sword30.

Although he had only been through five days of actual combat training, Lin Huang's skills had improved by leaps and bounds. However, he was still at a disadvantage when going up against Sword30.

The fight had gone on for almost six hours before a single strike gave him the winning edge.

The moment he raised his sword to defeat Sword30, Lin Huang suddenly felt as if he just pierced through a paper window.

In an instant, everything he had ever learned about Sword Dao in the last four years surged into his mind. Every sword skill that he had picked up over the years since he began to cultivate Sword Dao now appeared to him from a new perspective as they were slowly integrated into his body.

Things he once found difficult became clear instantly and things he was familiar with, he now saw with new eyes and new understanding.

Lin Huang felt as if a veil had been suddenly lifted from his eyes and he could finally see clearly.

However, the moment of enlightenment lasted a mere second before he realized what was happening.

"This... Did I breakthrough to Sword Dao True Meaning?!"

Not far away, Sword30, who had not yet completely vanished, flashed Lin Huang a grin.

"Congratulations, you've finally achieved Sword Dao true meaning! You might even stand a chance of obtaining the swordmaster's inheritance now."

"Thank you for your kind words," Lin Huang replied politely before sending his consciousness within him to check on the changes in his body.

Sure enough, the Sword Dao in his body had completely transformed.

The silver Sword Heart had become blood-red.

Its size, previously gigantic as a mountain, had now shrunk to a talisman the size of a fingernail now held in the palm of the small Sword Soul.

The small Sword Soul, who had originally looked about five or six years, now looked about 10 years old.

As the small Sword Soul continued holding the Sword Heart in his right palm, his left arm suddenly reached toward the sky.

Within seconds, a golden sword fell from the heavens. It shrunk rapidly as it fell, and in just a few seconds, it turned into a golden talisman the size of a finger and landed on his palm.

The small Sword Soul then clapped the talisman onto the Sword Heart's hilt with some force. A golden imprint slowly began to form on the hilt.

From what Lin Huang could see of it, the engraved imprint looked like a complex design of divine patterns with gold lines that swirled slowly through everything.

The moment the golden sword was fully transformed into the imprint, Lin Huang sensed a myriad of inherited sword skills flowing into his head.

These were not just swords skills of humans, but countless sword skills of monsters as well.

Lin Huang had completely forgotten that the golden sword was still in his body. Although his body had hosted this golden sword for so long, it had never brought him many substantial benefits so it completely slipped his mind.

It was only this moment when the Sword Scripture merged with the Sword Heart that Lin Huang suddenly recalled the existence of this item within him.

After just a brief inspection of these newly acquired Sword Dao inheritances, Lin Huang then quickly shifted his attention.

Although the blood-red Sword Heart seemed to have shrunk tremendously, Lin Huang could feel the obvious changes in his body. His Sword Heart was not just stronger than before, he felt reborn.

Slowly, he stretched out his right arm and a trace of blood-red sword gleam instantly formed into substance.

He was not using a single trace of his Divine Power at the moment. The glint of sword gleam was wholly the work of the Sword Dao.

The difference between Sword Dao true meaning and Sword Dao was that Sword Dao required a physical medium to be effective in the physical world. For example, it would have to draw support from Divine Power or a battle sword to exert its power. If Sword Dao was missing a physical medium, even a level-6 Sword Dao would be unable to interfere in or affect the material world.

Sword Dao true meaning, on the other hand, could be directly condensed into a physical substance even without the aid of a physical medium and could affect as well as directly interfere in the material world as well.

The blood-red sword gleam that had condensed in Lin Huang's palm was completely formed by Sword Dao true meaning. In fact, he could even touch it if he wanted to.

Looking up, he noticed that Sword30, who had been previously nearby, had now disappeared into thin air. A thought dropped into Lin Huang's head, and right away, the blood-red sword gleam in his hand shot out like an electric bolt.

The sword gleam instantly penetrated the wall of the small building where Sword30 was at.

The impenetrable building wall that Lin Huang had previously tried to pierce through was now as fragile as a sheet of thin paper under just one Sword Dao true meaning attack.

"If I use my sword, it shouldn't be difficult at all to slice through this entire building." Seeing the power of Sword Dao true meaning, Lin Huang gave a satisfied nod.

What Lin Huang found even more satisfying was that Sword Dao true meaning did not require the use of his will. Instead, he just needed to have a thought in mind and he would be able to command with ease as he wished.

Most importantly, the faster his thoughts, the faster the sword moved.

Of course, if he wanted to launch a stronger attack, Sword Dao alone would definitely not suffice. He could still merge it with Divine Power, God Rule Power, and even the Rule Bending Power that was contained in a battle sword.

After a brief moment of coming to terms with all the changes that had happened within him, Lin Huang was certain that his powers had once again skyrocketed.

However, the immense increase in his powers this time around came from within him and not from external forces of any sort, which pleased him even more.

Now that his Sword Dao had transformed into Sword Dao true meaning, Lin Hwang's final goal had been achieved, but he had not given up on his intention to continue challenging other Sword Servants.

Although it was highly unlikely for his Sword Dao true meaning to improve greatly in such a short period, Lin Huang was not going to miss the opportunity of dueling and learning from other Sword Servants.

After all, all Sword Servants were at Heavenly God combat level and they had mastered the highest level of sword cultivation of Sword Dao heavenly rule. Even if their overall powers were hugely restricted, there were still plenty of things he could learn from them.

Lin Huang thought of taking advantage of his breakthrough in Sword Dao to clear all the remaining Sword Servant levels in the next few days since his powers had soared and his combat efficiency had significantly increased.

Of course, aside from dueling and learning, he had other ideas for two certain Sword Servants.

"Sword23 and Sword29, I did say that I'd return sooner or later. Both of you can wipe your asses and wait for me in the next two days then... Hehehe..."

Chapter 1320: A Major Change In Rules!

Ever since his Sword Dao reached True Martial Level, Lin Huang's speed in hunting down Saber Servants had increased considerably.

Five days ago, one match took him about an average of one hour, but he could now finish two matches in an hour instead. It was not that he could not finish his fights in a shorter time; he merely wanted to spend about half an hour per match to make sure that his opponent had gone all out. Only by doing so could he learn some useful tricks from his opponent.

After all, the set up in this stage of the tournament greatly restricted the actual strength of all Saber Servants, to the point where their Sword Dao could only be used if it was at True Meaning Level and below. If Lin Huang were to use his Sword Dao—which was now at True Martial Level—in his fight, it was almost certain that he would wipe out his opponent in just a second. The tournament would be pointless then as he would never be able to learn anything new from it.

However, Lin Huang's strength had still increased tremendously even though he had been suppressing his Sword Dao on purpose. This was because he did not need to have a strong will to power his Sword Dao anymore.

An average of only 20 minutes was needed in a battle with a Saber Servant whose serial number was over 100. As for those with serial numbers ranging from 30 to 100, an average of half an hour was needed. For those whose serial numbers were below 30, it would take Lin Huang at least an hour to finish each match.

Within the last two days, the most powerful Saber Servant Lin Huang had encountered had a serial number of 13. This Saber Servant, who was known as Sword13, forced Lin Huang to use his Sword Dao True Meaning after fighting for only 30 minutes. This Saber Servant even used his level-6 Sword Dao and was only defeated after fighting for nearly an hour with Lin Huang.

Apart from Sword13, Sword18 had also forced Lin Huang into using his Sword Dao True Meaning.

"During the matches where I didn't use Sword Dao True Meaning, the strength of my Sword Dao should be ranked somewhere around the twentieth Saber Servant. Well, well, it seems that there's still much room for improvement..."

Lin Huang's evaluation of himself was fairly accurate for the first part of his soliloquy, but the latter part could not help but seem as if he were belittling himself.

The comparison that he made about himself was actually a bit harsh.

After all, the 300-over Saber Servants under Great Heaven were all heavenly god-level powerhouses, so their actual Sword Dao level was at the level of Sword Dao heavenly rule. As a result, even though their Sword Dao was restricted to below True Meaning Level, their level of knowledge and experience with swords was not something that ordinary sword cultivators at virtual god-level could rival.

Lin Huang was already considered quite powerful, seeing that he still managed to get into the top 20 rankings even though all of his opponents' Sword Dao was at the same level as his, not to mention that they were heavenly god-level sword cultivators.

After all, Lin Huang had not even reached virtual god-level. If he somehow managed to reach heavenly god-level in a few years like these Saber Servants, it would not be surprising if he managed to place first in their midst, even after restricting his Sword Dao.

In the last two days, Lin Huang had challenged a total of 93 Saber Servants, and he had been on a continuous winning streak.

However, apart from Lin Huang, Unrivaled Combat God and other competitors had already begun to hunt for Saber Servants as well.

The competitor with the most number of hunts at the moment was Forbidden Lamella, who had prior experience defeating Saber Servants. So far, he had already defeated three Saber Servants.

Competitors with the second-most number of hunts were Unrivaled Combat Goduang and two other competitors. All three of them had defeated two Saber Servants each.

In addition to these four competitors, a group of five competitors, including Fallen Star, had also defeated one Saber Servant each.

However, Lin Huang could roughly speculate that those Saber Servants defeated by Unrivaled Combat God and the others were all ranked 200th and above. Some of these Saber Servants might even rank 250th and above.

As more and more Saber Servants were defeated by competitors, one would notice that the “global” announcement made by the system always addressed everyone as “competitors”. Lin Huang was the only person who was addressed as a “participant” instead.

Almost every competitor noticed this anomaly, and all of them were convinced that Lin Huang was somehow different from the rest.

However, apart from the few competitors from Death Sickle, everybody else had never heard of the name Xie Lin before. Many people even started speculating about his identity.

Lin Huang paid no attention to any of this. All he cared about was to defeat as many Saber Servants as he could, non-stop.

After all, other competitors had already begun hunting for Saber Servants as well, and they had already defeated quite a number of them. However, from Lin Huang’s point of view, each successful competitor meant that he would have one less chance to participate in actual combat. As a result, he would have fewer chances to learn new things too.

“Currently, Unrivaled Combat God and the others have defeated a total of 14 Saber Servants, whereas I’ve defeated 182 Saber Servants. In other words, there are only 104 Saber Servants left. It seems that I’ll have to hurry up and defeat as many more as I can.

“Warlord, what are the coordinates of my next target?” Suddenly the ground began to shake right after Lin Huang finished his question.

Feeling puzzled, Lin Huang did a quick scan of his surroundings. Soon, he realized that all the buildings around him were shaking, not just the one he was in.

‘Don’t tell me that there’s an earthquake?!’

Lin Huang did not sense any source of Divine Power around him, so he knew that the shaking was not caused by a battle. That was why he initially thought it was an earthquake.

However, this thought had barely crossed his mind when he suddenly sensed a violent fluctuation of space.

The next moment, Lin Huang realized that he was in a completely different environment.

The building he was standing in was still there, but when he looked around, he noticed that the other buildings were not the same anymore.

“What on earth happened? Did we just get teleported into a new place along with the building?” Lin Huang came back to his senses and noticed that some faraway buildings also looked different compared to earlier.

Warlord nodded and said, "I'm afraid so. I sense that the coordinates of the surveillance bugs released a few days ago are different now."

"Are you saying that we're not the only ones who were teleported?! Don't tell me the coordinates of other competitors, as well as other Saber Servants, are different too?!" Lin Huang made a bold guess.

As Lin Huang stared at a series of completely different buildings in the distance, a push notification suddenly popped up in front of him.

"There are only three days left before the end of this Competitive Trial. In order to have a more definitive result for this Trial, the rules are now modified as below:"

- '1. The position of the participant, as well as all BOSSes and competitors, will undergo a random change every 24 hours.'
- '2. The coordinates of the participant and all of the remaining BOSSes will be displayed. The coordinates of the participant will be displayed as a gold-colored dot, whereas that of the BOSS will be displayed as a red-colored dot.'
- '3. The Trial will end as soon as the participant is dead or defeated. The competitor who successfully defeats or kills the participant will be the final winner of this Competitive Trial by default.'
- '4. The Trial will also end if all BOSSes are dead or defeated. The participant or competitor who is ranked first on the leaderboard will then be the ultimate winner of this Competitive Trial.'
- '5. In the eventuality where neither the participant nor all BOSSes are dead or defeated, a final decision will be made after 10 days. The participant or competitor who is ranked first on the leaderboard will then be the final winner of this Competitive Trial.'
- '6. Competitors are allowed to form their own teams to hunt down the participant and the remaining BOSSes.'
- '7. All players will have access to the GPS service. The coordinates of competitors can be located by searching for their names; their positions will be displayed as a white-colored dot. There is limited access to the GPS service, whereby each player can only use the search function three times, regardless of whether they are the participant or a competitor.'
- '8. All BOSSes can now hunt freely with no restrictions. All BOSSes are no longer stationed at buildings and are free to hunt while on the move. All BOSSes will automatically recognize the participant and all competitors as hunting targets and will keep on hunting until its opponents are either dead or defeated. All BOSSes are prohibited from attacking each other, but they are allowed to hunt in groups.'

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