

Paradise 1351

Chapter 1351: To Me, You're Just A Sparring Partner

As Lin Huang remained where he was to rest and regroup after exiting the Tenth Palace, the God's Servants from the Ninth Palace had already quietly arrived.

In less than half a minute, the ten of them formed a circle around him.

Prior to entering the Tenth Palace, Lin Huang might have needed to expend some effort to deal with ten Virtual God rank-9 God's Servants. Now, however, he did not even bother to give opponents of this level more than a glance.

Seeing that the ten God's Servants had formed a battle formation from which a phantom giant beast 1,000 feet tall had swiftly materialized, Lin Huang made no move to stop them at all.

He gripped his sword by the hilt and swung it in a circular attack the instant the giant beast materialized fully.

A ring of blood-red sword gleam spread like a ripple on the surface of water. It charged through the phantom giant beast and the circle of ten silhouettes.

The next second, the giant beast on the verge of attacking stopped completely in its tracks, while the expressions of the ten God's Servants in the circle utterly froze.

One to two seconds later, the giant beast's head fell onto the ground. The physical form that had just materialized disintegrated completely into fragments that filled the sky.

On the other side, a thread of blood appeared on the necks of the ten God's Servants in a circle. Their heads slowly toppled from their necks. The headless bodies fell onto the ground one after the other, completely losing their life force.

From the beginning until the end, Lin Huang had not unsheathed his sword. His previous slash had been delivered with the sword still in its scabbard.

Lin Huang could not help muttering softly as he watched the ten bodies rapidly fade into nothingness.

"It's unfortunate that they hadn't materialized into physical bodies. Otherwise, I might still be able to plunder some loot..."

After killing the ten God's Servants, Lin Huang waited where he was for less than ten seconds before a dazzling golden palace slowly descended from mid-air.

This palace was completely golden in color and its exterior was magnificent beyond measure. At a glance, it gave the impression of being much more luxurious than Sword10's palace.

A moment later, the palace door—which was carved with dragon relief sculptures—opened slowly.

Lin Huang had very little hesitation when he saw that; he hurried in immediately.

This time, he was not attacked upon entry. After stepping through the door, the entire palace hall was displayed before his eyes.

Compared to the magnificence outside, the interior of the palace was decorated even more exquisitely. Not only it was dazzling, but the ceiling and windows were also adorned with countless precious stones of various colors.

There was a giant chandelier hanging from the domed ceiling. A glance was all Lin Huang needed to tell that this giant chandelier which weighed at least several hundred pounds was completely created from Divine Crystals. He even had the urge to cut it down and put it away in his storage space.

“This chandelier of mine isn’t too shabby eh? It weighs a total of eight hundred and thirty-three pounds. The lampshade is completely forged from Divine Crystals. The lamp wicks are made from the fire elemental truth core left behind by a fire attribute heavenly god-level powerhouse after his death. I put in a lot of work to gather these nine wicks...”

A youthful silhouette walked slowly toward Lin Huang.

It was a young man in a white suit. He appeared to be in his early 20s and his looks were such that no one could nitpick about them.

His charisma was extraordinary. He was the kind of fellow who would be instantly noticed even if he were standing in a group of good-looking men.

He was a wealthy young master—not one born into a rich second generation, but one from an ancient family who had passed through many generations and still remained strong.

The expression on his face and in his eyes when he looked at others contained a lingering, faint superiority. Deep in his bones, he was sure that he was more distinguished than the rest.

At the same time as Lin Huang was checking him out, he was checking Lin Huang out too.

“Only mastered one type of God Rule Power and no Elemental Enlightenment at all...” Sword9 was clearly unsatisfied with Lin Huang after giving him a once-over. “Was Sword10 so desperate that he had to cheat to this extent?”

“Why don’t you try me and find out whether Sword10 cheated or not?” Lin Huang did not take what Sword9 said seriously. If the circumstances called for action, he preferred not to talk.

“I’m just describing the facts I’ve observed. The energy waves on your body have already told me a great deal.” Sword9 glanced at Lin Huang. “I’ve no idea what Sword10 told you in the last round or how much he bent the rules for you to be this confident.

“What I want to tell you is that I’m different from Sword10 who is in the Succession Sect. I’m in the Regression Sect. I definitely won’t allow any participants to cheat in my round.

“There are only two ways to pass me. One is to defeat me! The other is to display talent and potential that astonishes me, as well as abilities that I approve of.

“To be honest, I don’t expect much from you, but I hope that you don’t perform too terribly later on, otherwise, I’d look down on Sword10. After all, you’re someone that he chose. For Sword10’s sake then, you’d better give it your all. Try your best not to lose too disgracefully.”

“You’re just a sparring partner, why do you spout so much rubbish?!” Lin Huang could no longer hold back what he had been thinking.

Sword9 was stunned when he heard that. When he snapped back to his senses, a faint smirk of mockery played about his lips.

“So that’s what Sword10 told you; no wonder that you’re so confident.”

He had clearly misunderstood. He was under the impression that to give Lin Huang confidence, Sword10 had told Lin Huang that everyone else was merely a sparring partner.

Hearing that, Lin Huang immediately realized that Sword9 had misunderstood. However, he did not bother to explain.

He drew his battle sword from its scabbard and attacked, using God-slaying Power and Lightning Elemental Power within Divine Power as well as the rapid speed Thunder Eclipse. Although he had not added on Seraphic Speed divine ability and Light Elemental Power, the attack was already at peak speed.

In the blink of an eye, Sword9 saw a blood-red electric arc charging straight through the air toward his face.

Lin Huang’s sword speed gave him quite a shock.

The rapid speed of the attack made him revise his opinion of Lin Huang’s abilities in a flash.

“You’re showing off rapid speed with me?!” Sword9 scoffed and immediately launched a counter-attack.

His main cultivation direction was rapid speed, so his attainments in rapid speed were several times more powerful than Sword10.

When he swung his battle sword, a perfect integration of Wind Elemental Enlightenment and wind attribute sword skills cut through the air together with the blade. A colorless sword gleam collided with the blood-red sword gleam instantly in the void, resulting in an explosion of dazzling scarlet sparks.

‘Such a quick strike! This fellow’s comprehension in Wind Elemental Enlightenment is obviously a cut above Sword10!’ Sword9’s ability was more powerful than Lin Huang had expected. However, that did not make him want to quit. Instead, he became more excited now.

‘Perhaps I can use him to complete my breakthrough in rapid speed!’

At that moment, Sword9’s voice drifted over from opposite him.

“That attack wasn’t too shabby but it was just about on par with Sword10’s level. If you want to pass my round, this sort of attack is far from adequate!”

“You really spout a lot of nonsense!”

Lin Huang ignored Sword9 and swung his sword for another attack. However, he added Seraphic Speed divine ability to the initial foundation; the sword swing was at least three times faster than before.

Even Sword9's eyes lit up seeing upon seeing this attack.

He hesitated no more and countered Lin Huang by swinging his sword again...

Chapter 1352: I Do Not Consent To The Pass that You Have Announced!

Of the ten bodyguards under Great Heaven, Sword10 was the one who had learned everything but not specialized in any particular direction. Meanwhile, Sword9 had trained exclusively in rapid speed.

Apart from Wind Elemental Enlightenment, he was also an expert in a speed type god rule. Not only that, but the direction of his Sword Dao cultivation was also more focused on rapid speed. Over 70% of the sword skills he had mastered were of the speed variety.

Despite Lin Huang giving it everything he had using Seraphic Speed divine ability, lightning and light attribute skills as well as rapid speed sword skill Thunder Eclipse, he was barely able to follow Sword9's speed.

As Sword9 had his body imbued with Wind Elemental Enlightenment, he was physically invisible to the naked eye in the battle.

In the void, all that could be seen was a dark red electric arc that flashed continuously as if it were fighting something invisible.

With every impact, the blood-red electric arcs surged everywhere along with countless colorless sword gleams that shot in all directions.

Although Lin Huang was being suppressed to a small degree, he was just barely able to catch up to Sword9's level by using the Seraphic Speed divine ability in various versatile ways.

Initially, Sword9 thought that Lin Huang's rapid speed would be similar to that of Sword10. However, he soon found out that Lin Huang's rapid speed level was almost on par with his.

Time and again he switched the rapid speed sword skills that he was using in an attempt to disqualify Lin Huang as the heir by defeating him. However, he discovered that Lin Huang was extremely familiar with the use of the Seraphic Speed divine ability and as slippery as an eel. From the beginning until the end, he was not able to so much as graze the corner of Lin Huang's clothes with his attacks.

In a mere flash, a day passed by.

Sword9 felt the entire day was unbearable. Lin Huang's rapid speed was certainly not up to Sword9's own level, but his doggedly determined effort and slippery tactics meant that Sword9 was not able to take advantage of him at all.

Although Sword9 felt rather reluctant, Lin Huang's performance had actually achieved the passing standard. After all, for the whole day, as guardian of this round of the Trial, Sword9 had not been able to do an iota of damage to Lin Huang.

Abruptly he retreated rapidly. Just as he was about to retire from the battlefield, sheath his sword in its scabbard, and announce that Lin Huang had passed the round, he saw that Lin Huang had put on a burst of speed to close the distance and was now swinging his sword for an attack.

“What the...”

Sword9 was furious; his original intention of letting Lin Huang pass this round of the Trial completely dissipated.

‘You ungrateful brat, I initially wanted to pass you but since you yourself don’t want to leave this level, don’t blame me!’

Sword9 cursed silently and charged into battle again with fire in his eyes.

The battle lasted for three days and three nights. It was a battle of speed versus speed; both fighters displayed their rapid speed abilities to the full.

After three days had passed, Sword9 was feeling more and more aggrieved as he had not even managed to so much as graze Lin Huang at all. Although Lin Huang had not managed to attack him either, he was still extremely aggravated.

However, Lin Huang obviously felt differently. By the fourth day, he felt that he was getting more and more familiar with the usage of the Seraphic Speed divine ability. He even had a vague feeling that his Seraphic Speed divine ability might breakthrough any time to become a god rule.

After four continuous days of fighting and not being able to do anything to Lin Huang still, Sword9 felt this impasse was a complete waste of time. He had initially been triggered by Lin Huang, but after three days of venting his rage, the entire battle had become meaningless.

However, he did not try to retreat directly from the battle this time. Instead, he addressed Lin Huang.

“The battle between us has already lasted for four days...”

“Stop talking nonsense, keep on fighting!”

Lin Huang already knew what Sword9 was going to say so he interrupted him right away. After all, it had not been easy for him to find a suitable opponent for rapid speed. Moreover, his own rapid speed was on the verge of a breakthrough; it was only natural that he was unwilling to halt the fighting.

“You...” The veins on Sword9’s forehead twitched in his fury. He calmed himself down by taking a few deep breaths before continuing, “I already have a rough understanding of your abilities over these four days of observation. Although you’re still lacking in many ways, you’re not too bad in terms of talent and potential; on this point, I am at least grudgingly satisfied. Therefore, I’ve decided to acknowledge your ability and let you pass the Ninth Palace.”

Initially, Sword9 thought Lin Huang would cease attacking after hearing that. He certainly had not expected Lin Huang to continue swing after swing with his sword, giving Sword9 no chance at all to retreat from combat.

“I don’t consent to pass this level!” The next second, Sword9 heard Lin Huang say something that utterly shocked him.

What the hell?! This little brat was declining the opportunity to pass the level?!

Sword9 was stunned for a while; he could not understand the workings of Lin Huang's brain at all.

"Senior, you said that I'm lacking in many ways—I think so too. Therefore, I've decided to learn and train here with you. I'll only go to the next palace when I've completely remedied my shortcomings." Lin Huang looked at Sword9 with a smirk. "I don't want to lose in the next palace because of what I still lack."

"You..." Sword9 had not expected Lin Huang to use his own words to silence him.

"Please don't be miserly with your teaching, Senior. I'll do my best to learn and correct my flaws." Lin Huang's words caused Sword9's refusal to die on his lips before he could even open his mouth.

The actual underlying meaning of what Lin Huang said was, 'Just accept the fact and be my sparring partner! You have no say in when the sparring session will end; I'm calling the shots!'

Lin Huang had already laid out the situation verbally. Sword9 no longer had the strength to rebel; he had no choice but to bite the bullet and continue being Lin Huang's sparring partner.

Time passed in a flash; a week sped past rapidly.

Throughout the week, Sword9 had become completely numb. He had more or less guessed why Lin Huang had been unwilling to pass this level; he also knew that the lad was treating him as merely a sparring partner. However, there was nothing that he could do about it.

There was no way he could eject the participant by force if the participant was unwilling to leave. He had no choice but to be an emotionless sparring machine.

On that day, Lin Huang was practicing his sword skills with Sword9 as usual.

Suddenly, in his mind, he felt as if something had pierced through a paper window. An instant later, a massive volume of information regarding Seraphic Speed divine ability automatically surged into his brain. All of this information took Lin Huang only an instant to comprehend.

The next second, his Seraphic Speed divine ability had automatically elevated into a Seraphic Speed God Rule.

Lin Huang sent his sword swinging; the speed of this attack surpassed the original limit of his speed. He was more than a few times faster than before, if not more.

Sword9's danger senses screamed a warning at him suddenly, but by then it was too late for him to counter the attack. He could only watch the sword coming straight at his neck.

However, the sword gleam deviated suddenly the next second. Before Sword9 could track the new trajectory of the sword swing, a small piece of the collar on the left side of his neck had been nicked off.

Sword9 only snapped back to his senses after seeing Lin Huang sheathe his sword back into its scabbard. He also noticed the piece of white cloth that Lin Huang was holding between the two fingers of his left hand.

"You've lost." Lin Huang grinned at Sword9.

Sword9 sheathed his sword expressionlessly and retreated hundreds of meters away. “Congratulations, you’ve passed the Ninth Palace.”

“Thanks!” Lin Huang clasped his fists together while smiling at Sword9. He put away his battle sword and strode out of the palace.

Chapter 1353: You Are Such a Nice Person

Coming out of the Ninth Palace, Lin Huang was in a joyful mood.

It had taken less than half a month for him to successfully elevate his Seraphic Speed divine ability to a Seraphic Speed God Rule. He had not expected this kind of progress.

He originally thought that it would possibly take him at least two or three months to finish it.

Lin Huang also knew that the main reason for his quick breakthrough was the extra effort from Sword9. Sword9 had put a lot of pressure on him for Lin Huang’s rapid speed sword skill. Before the breakthrough of his Seraphic Speed divine ability, he had been continuously suppressed by Sword9. It was only through the use of various Seraphic Speed divine ability techniques that Lin Huang had been able to remain undefeated.

Moreover, even after Sword9 had discovered Lin Huang’s objective, he had not quit but had continued to play the role of a sparring partner.

That was why when Lin Huang finally left the Ninth Palace, he had thanked Sword9.

Less than half a minute after exiting the Ninth Palace, the God’s Servants of the Eighth Palace arrived very quickly.

There were only two God’s Servants in this wave. Both were humanoid monsters and female.

Lin Huang originally thought that he would have encountered more and more God’s Servants, but after this round, he realized that the number of God’s Servants had nothing to do with the palace number—it was related to the personality of the palace guardian.

There were not many God’s Servants serving Sword10 because his personality was indolent and he did not really like others to do his work for him, whereas there were ten God’s Servants serving Sword9 because he liked the feeling of dominating others from a high position of superiority. The number of God’s Servants for Sword8 was even less than that of Sword10— Lin Huang guessed that it was highly probable that Sword8’s personality was one that did not really enjoy ordering others around.

Lin Huang despatched the two God’s Servants with a single blow. He did not need to wait too long before the Eighth Palace descended.

This palace looked as if it were constructed from bronze. Its style was rather quaint and unadorned; it even looked a bit old.

Lin Huang did not pay too much attention to all of this. After the door opened, he drew himself up and rushed in.

After he stepped across the threshold of the palace door, a big empty hall came into view.

The big hall seemed to be at least thousands of square meters in size and was completely bare of adornment or furnishing.

Lin Huang looked over his surroundings and silently wondered whether or not Sword8 would be an iron-fisted no-nonsense man without a shred of humor.

Very quickly, however, his eyes widened as he noticed a figure that suddenly appeared not too far away.

It was a petite girl who looked to be half a head shorter than his sister Lin Xin. She was also thinner than Lin Xin by quite a bit.

The iron-fisted tyrant of his imagination turned out to be a cute young girl, which left Lin Huang slightly dumbfounded.

“You’re...Sword8?”

Even though he knew that there could be no guardian other than Sword8 in this palace, Lin Huang could not help asking all the same.

The petite girl nodded faintly and a blush rapidly spread over her face. Even her breathing rate increased slightly.

‘Is she really that shy, or is it just for show?’ Lin Huang felt some slight suspicion stirring in his heart.

Although he had met a variety of people in recent years, this was the first time he had seen a young girl as shy as Sword8.

Moreover, among the three hundred over Sword Servants serving under Great Heaven, she was ranked eighth, which was a sufficient indicator that her ability was outstanding even within heavenly god-level ranks. Lin Huang felt that a person as shy as this could not possibly be for real.

As if she sensed the doubt in Lin Huang’s tone, the young girl added weakly, “I... I’m strong...”

“I believe that. After all, you’re ranked as Sword8.” Lin Huang nodded with a smile, but could not help asking after that, “Can I ask what your Sword Dao specialization is?”

“I mainly cultivate ultimate dao-type...” Sword8 had nothing to hide. After all, Lin Huang would find out later on when they fought; there was no need to be secretive. “I also know a bit of force-type and rapid speed sword skill.”

“Ultimate dao-type...”

Lin Huang raised his brows when he heard that; his ultimate dao-type was actually the strongest of his three cultivation directions.

“My level isn’t hard. As long as the person attempting to pass can hold out for an hour, they’ll pass this level.” Seeing that Lin Huang had not spoken for a long time, Sword8 hurriedly informed him of the rules for passing the Eighth Palace.

“Could we start now?” Seeing that his opponent did not seem to have any intention of fighting and also that she was a ‘little girl’, Lin Huang did not really want to launch a surprise attack first. As a result, he had no choice but to ask a question like this to give the other party time to prepare before battle.

Sword8 hesitated for a moment; she looked torn for an instant before asking softly, “You don’t want to chat for a while more to delay things?”

Lin Huang shook his head, unable to stop from chuckling—so that was how this girl was going to throw the game.

“Are you from the Succession Sect?”

“What sect?” Sword8 looked blank.

“Don’t you have a Succession Sect and a Regression Sect within the ranks of the Sword Servants? Don’t tell me you’re in the Regression Sect?” Lin Huang was a little surprised.

“Regression Sect?” The expression on Sword8’s face showed that she was completely at a loss. After thinking for a while and coming to no conclusions, she looked up at Lin Huang and asked, “Do Sword Servants have to join a sect? Which sect do I belong to?”

Lin Huang was left speechless. The girl seemed completely unaware of the existence of the sects within the Sword Servants’ ranks.

However, based on her reaction, Lin Huang could hazard two quick guesses.

Either the girl had superb acting skills, enough that he could not see any traces of subterfuge, or she was so innocent that other Sword Servants did not have the heart to drag her into either faction. As a result, she had no idea about the warring factions within the ranks of the Sword Servants.

For the time being, Lin Huang was still unable to judge whether the girl was the former or the latter.

“I’m just kidding, you don’t have to take it seriously.” Lin Huang did not want to continue going round and round on this topic with Sword8 and chose to gloss over it instead.

“Oh you were only joking; it scared me!” Only then did Sword8 feel relieved.

“I think we’ve had enough time to chat. If we continue any more, it will be too obvious that you’re throwing the game,” Lin Huang reminded his opponent that this was a Trial.

“I would have forgotten if you hadn’t mentioned it. If it’s too obvious that I’m throwing the game, Sword1 will scold me.” Sword8 smacked her head hard, finally seeming to remember what she was here to do. “Thank you for your reminder, you’re such a nice person!”

Lin Huang was speechless for a moment; he certainly had not expected that he would be given a ‘nice guy’ label during the Trial.

“Are you ready?” Sword8 asked Lin Huang, “If you’re not ready, I can wait for you a little bit longer.”

Lin Huang was rendered completely speechless by this little girl.

“I’m ready, go ahead and attack!”

As soon as Lin Huang finished speaking, he saw that Sword8 was suddenly wielding a battle sword. What surprised Lin Huang was that it had a broken blade. The original length of the long sword should have been least one and a half meters long, but the blade had broken off about a third of the way down. The fracture mark was clearly visible; what was left of the blade measured only about 40 centimeters, give or take.

“You don’t need to be surprised. My original weapon was a broken sword. I’m used to that, so now that I’m a guardian here, I set my weapon to be a similar broken sword.”

Lin Huang felt his heart sink a little when he heard that. If his opponent could get to the position of Sword8 using a broken sword, it was more than enough to indicate her real abilities were much higher than her current position.

This was because a broken blade could not possibly have a complete sequence rule.

Under normal circumstances, Sword Servants serving under Great Heaven were unlikely to use god sequence relics with incomplete sequence rules. This meant that Sword8 might have achieved her position under the circumstances during which her weapon lost its sequence rule power.

These thoughts flashed through Lin Huang’s mind. The next moment he saw that Sword8 had gripped her battle sword horizontally in one hand; she suddenly exerted a burst of power with both legs and her figure vanished right away...

Chapter 1354: Terrifying Ability Unrelated to Appearance

“So fast!”

Lin Huang’s pupils narrowed slightly. Sword8’s attack was no slower than Sword9 in terms of speed and Sword9 had specialized in rapid speed.

In the blink of an eye, Sword8’s figure was already in front of Lin Huang.

Just as Lin Huang swung his sword to intercept the attack, he saw blue veins suddenly bulge out aggressively on Sword8’s sword-wielding right hand and her muscles rapidly swelled up. Her arm, originally only about 50 centimeters in length, expanded to over a meter long in the blink of an eye. Her arm and its knotted muscles were as thick as Tyrant’s, if not even more so.

Even more bizarre, however, was that her sword speed did not increase—in fact, rather strangely, it seemed to slow down slightly.

The instant he saw this unusual change, Lin Huang seemed to sense something. He had initially readied his sword for a Thunder Eclipse attack against his opponent, but he abruptly switched from attack mode to defense instead. The blood-red sword gleam in front of Lin Huang condensed into a looming mountain over a hundred feet high.

“Mirror·Unmovable Mountain!”

Like the thunder touch from the rapid speed sword skill, Mirror was the general designation for Lin Huang’s defensive-type sword skills. The name came from the Dark Mirror Monster Skill.

This series of defensive-type sword skills were purely Sword Dao skills, however, and had nothing to do with Dark Mirror.

The truth was that from the moment he entered the Trial until now, aside from skills that could directly assist in his sword skills, Lin Huang had not utilized any of his other Monster Skills at all.

For one, his main purpose in entering the Trial was to improve his Sword Dao ability, so he had avoided the use of abilities that had nothing to do with Sword Dao. For another, he had not yet encountered an opponent strong enough to force him to use skills unrelated to Sword Dao.

Much earlier during the Competitive Trial when he first encountered Sword23 and Sword29, Lin Huang had been defeated, escaping from the room guarded by the two of them. Even then he had maintained the attitude that this was a Sword Dao battle, and had not used any divine abilities and skills unrelated to Sword Dao.

Right as Lin Huang changed his tactics, the gleam from the battle sword in Sword8's hand had already reached him.

The next moment, with a loud noise, the black gleam that extended from the broken sword collided with the huge red mountain in front of Lin Huang.

The point of impact where the black sword gleam and the red mountain had collided instantly turned deepest black. At the same time, Lin Huang also saw cobweb-like fissures on the surface of the Unmovable Mountain.

Less than half a second later, the Unmovable Mountain that Lin Huang had expended such massive amounts of divine power to build collapsed completely under the assault of the black sword gleam.

At the same time, Lin Huang felt a terrifying wave of titanic force traveling through his sword blade; the next instant he was sent flying like an uncontrollable artillery shell.

'In one move she instantly switched from rapid speed to force-type...so the force-type has the momentum and attack power that's close to that of her rapid speed.' Lin Huang immediately discerned his opponent's attack methods.

He had not expected that Sword8's little bit of force-type would turn out to be such a terrifying level of skill.

Sword8's rapid speed was almost at Sword9's level, but what one had to remember was that Sword9 specialized in rapid speed. In this force-type attack, Sword8's strength and attack power had completely exceeded Sword10's by way more than a level and had exceeded Lin Huang's current attainments in force-type by more than a hair.

'This lass's overall skill level is clearly much higher than Sword10. If she isn't lying, her rapid speed sword skills should be higher than mine...' For Lin Huang, this was not good news.

"On no, I've used too much strength!"

Sword8 gave a sudden shocked exclamation from the other side upon seeing Lin Huang flying backward.

Lin Huang did not know whether to laugh or cry when he heard that.

He was not sure if his opponent's words were sincere or if they were intended as mockery.

He flew back a distance of several dozen kilometers before he felt the force of impact decreasing. Only then did Lin Huang use his feet in the air to break his momentum. After sliding several dozen meters through the void, he finally stabilized himself.

"Hey, are you okay?"

At that moment, Sword8's voice was heard suddenly and her figure appeared less than 100 meters in front of Lin Huang.

Lin Huang looked at her, fully alert.

"I'm okay."

"I'll use a little less strength, otherwise you won't be able last for an hour," Sword8 suggested.

"No need, you can use the normal level that you used just now," Lin Huang shook his head and rejected the proposal.

"But... I only used seventy percent of my strength, which is not my normal level..." Sword8's voice was a little faint. "So should I use seventy percent or a hundred percent?"

"A hundred percent," Lin Huang was slightly stunned for only a moment before he answered, "I need enough pressure so I can find an opportunity to break through."

"Okay; you mustn't die." Sword8 was worried.

"Don't worry, I won't," Lin Huang responded, expression blank.

After a brief conversation, the two resumed fighting.

Despite being fully psychologically prepared, the ensuing battle was much more difficult than Lin Huang had expected.

As Sword8 said, she had not used her full strength earlier. She had held back, not only in force-type but also in her rapid speed. In reality, her rapid speed sword skill level was higher than that of Sword9. Lin Huang could not gain an advantage with his rapid speed either.

What dumbfounded Lin Huang the most was not his opponent's overwhelming skill in force-type, but her overwhelming rapid speed sword skill.

Sword8 had mentioned previously that her main cultivation direction was rapid speed; she was not lying at all.

Lin Huang's rapid speed was the strongest of his three Dao Sword paths, but Sword8's rapid speed was more than a level above his own.

She was skilled in at least one million types of sword skills; in terms of usage and depth of various sword skills, she was even better than Sword10.

Originally Sword10 had mentioned that if he ever encountered Sword1, Sword1 would find a way to counter all of his sword skills. Lin Huang felt the exact same way now that he had met Sword8. No matter what sword skills he used, his opponent countered them easily.

If Lin Huang's Sword Dao had not elevated to ultimate True Martial Level and Sword8's Sword Dao had been capped at early-stage Martial Level according to the Trial rules, he would have been defeated long ago.

In the battle with Sword8, Lin Huang was overwhelmed by her in almost every way. He only managed to get through it by virtue of his slightly stronger rapid speed and even stronger Sword Dao.

The battle continued for countless rounds to the point; Lin Huang could not even tell how much time had passed.

Suddenly, Sword8 sheathed her weapon and retreated from the battlefield.

"It's been an hour—you've qualified!" Sword8 beamed at Lin Huang happily; the impression she gave was as if she had been the one who passed the level.

"Thank you!" On the contrary, Lin Huang's face showed no trace of jubilation. He merely nodded and asked Sword8, "Can you be my sparring partner for a few more days?"

"Okay, okay! No one has played with me for a long time!" Sword8 did not hesitate; with a very happy expression, she agreed.

"Then let's continue!"

Chapter 1355: I Like The Number Eight

While fighting against Sword8, Lin Huang was almost continuously dominated by her in battle.

Sword8 seemed small and harmless, but once she was in battle mode, it was as if she were a whole other person. She transformed into someone extremely ferocious, focused, and even intelligent.

Indeed, she was not only very skilled at using brute force but in battle mode, she was also very good at analysis. She could decipher most of Lin Huang's moves. Even the few rare moves that she was unable to crack, she could always find a way to counter them when Lin Huang used them for the second or third time.

Lin Huang was practically certain that of all the sword cultivators he had encountered in so many years, Sword8 was the most terrifying in terms of natural talent and potential.

As for why she was ranked eighth, Lin Huang speculated there might be two reasons.

One possibility was because she used a broken sword, and the weapon had no advantage compared to Great Heaven's other bodyguards. The other possibility might be related to her mentality. To a certain extent, Sword8's mentality was still immature, and her mind seemed to have stayed at the developmental level of a small child.

Great Heaven's bodyguards were ranked on their overall abilities, and mentality was one part of the whole package. Sword8 was very much not up to par on this particular point, which might have also contributed to why her overall abilities were only ranked in eighth place.

Previously when Lin Huang and Sword10's practice had ended, Sword10 had also mentioned that Lin Huang's overall ability should be sufficient to get him past all the stages below Sword3.

After encountering Sword9, Lin Huang had made a breakthrough in his Seraphic Speed divine ability and his rapid speed sword skill had skyrocketed, improving his overall strength.

Logically speaking, it was unlikely that he would encounter any great obstacles for the stages below Sword3.

However, Sword8's performance really surprised Lin Huang right from the start because he was overwhelmed in practically all aspects. Except for his slight advantage in rapid speed, Sword8 was stronger than Lin Huang in almost all other aspects of Sword Dao.

After regaining his equilibrium though, Lin Huang had worked out why Sword10 had not mentioned anything about Sword8.

Although Sword8 was extremely powerful, her temperament was such that it was very likely she would have suppressed her true abilities and let all the participants pass her level.

Lin Huang, however, had now encountered a Sword8 who had unleashed her full abilities at his request; she was also a powerhouse whose abilities might even exceed Sword4.

Lin Huang and Sword8's practice sessions passed by day after day.

Under the tremendous pressure exerted by Sword8, Lin Huang's use and expansion of the different Sword Dao paths such as rapid speed, force-type, and ultimate dao-type improved daily.

It took him less than a week to complete in-depth integration of different Sword Dao types. His rapid speed sword skill was no longer purely rapid speed, and his force-type was no longer merely force-type—he could now command a combination of various types at will.

Lin Huang could now use ultimate dao-type sword skills with force-type and could also perfectly switch between force-type and rapid speed. He had also learned how to perfectly integrate rapid speed sword moves with force-type, and ultimate dao-type (in reality, the different approaches in the cultivation of various Sword Dao paths were not completely independent).

...

On the fourteenth day of practice with Sword8, Lin Huang finally elevated his grasp of the lightning elemental attribute, and he mastered a force-type Lightning Elemental Enlightenment—Heaven's Punishment.

Then again, perhaps there might just have been too much pressure exerted on his force-type.

On the thirty-third day, Lin Huang's Superhuman Strength divine ability finally transformed into the Superhuman Strength God Rule.

At this point, Lin Huang's force-type abilities had finally advanced to the same level as Sword8.

His force-type was on par with Sword8, and his rapid speed was slightly stronger than hers. This elevated Lin Huang's overall ability to Sword8's standard.

Although Sword8 still held a strong advantage in ultimate dao-type, Lin Huang's Sword Dao was more powerful, which made up for his disparity in that path.

Lin Huang, who had been relying on the Seraphic Speed God Rule to contend with Sword8, finally had the ability to confront her head-on.

Lin Huang had initially thought he would make up for his shortcomings in ultimate dao-type by utilizing the pressure brought about by Sword8's ultimate dao-type.

He did not expect that she would walk out on him after less than a day of practice.

"I don't want to play anymore. It's no fun now." All this while Sword8 had been happy to serve as a sparring partner because battles with Lin Huang were very comfortable.

At first, she had completely dominated Lin Huang in combat; later on, his abilities had improved but the pleasure of battle was still there. Now, however, Lin Huang wanted to practice his new sword skills with her, and his initial lack of proficiency with many of these new skills had led to a decline in the overall smoothness of battle. Sword8 did not think that there was any fun in this sort of fight, so she abandoned her role right away.

Lin Huang smiled and nodded; he did not say much.

After all, this girl had practiced with him for more than 30 days and had even helped him to gain two breakthroughs in force-type that upgraded his overall ability by an entire level. This 'sparring partner' had definitely filled the role very satisfactorily; there was no need to demand anything further.

"Then we'll stop playing," Lin Huang said as he sheathed his sword. His gaze softened as he looked at Sword8. "Thank you, lass!"

"What are you thanking me for? I should be the one thanking you!" Sword8 also put her sword away and smiled at Lin Huang. "Thank you for playing with me. I haven't had such a good time in ages."

"I have a question; you don't have to answer if you don't want to." Before he left, Lin Huang suddenly remembered one of his doubts. "With your abilities, you should be ranked higher among Great Heaven's bodyguards, shouldn't you? Why are you ranked eighth?"

"Because I like the number eight. I told Lord Swordmaster that I wanted the name Sword8 and no one was allowed to try and take it from me. Lord Swordmaster agreed." Sword8's expression was entirely matter-of-fact and she did not seem to see anything wrong with her approach.

"Oh, so that's what it is..." Only then did Lin Huang realize he had been over-thinking things previously.

"What about your abilities then? Which rank should you actually be?" Lin Huang asked again.

"I can't defeat Big Brother Sword1, and I can't defeat Bunny. I've beaten Big Nose a few times, but I know he deliberately let me win. The rest can't beat me," Sword8 thought about it and gave her answer.

"Who is Bunny? Is that Sword2? Big Nose is Sword3?" Lin Huang asked curiously.

"Oh no, I'm done for now! I promised Bunny that I wouldn't say their nicknames in front of outsiders..." After Sword8 heard Lin Huang's inquiry, she realized she had said something that she should not have, and hastily covered her mouth.

"What nicknames? I didn't hear anything." Lin Huang smiled.

"Yes, you can tell them that you didn't hear anything!" Sword8 nodded quickly.

"..."

"Lass, you take good care. I'll go on to the next stage now," Lin Huang called to Sword8 and turned to leave, but he stopped in his tracks when he heard Sword8's shout.

"Wait a minute!"

"Is there anything else?" Lin Huang asked, rather surprised.

"Your overall abilities are okay, but your ultimate dao-type is still a little weak. I'll give you some sword skills as a present," Sword8 said and skipped in front of Lin Huang.

She then stood on tiptoe, reaching toward his forehead to tap the tip of her finger against it.

A massive amount of Sword Dao Inheritances instantly flooded Lin Huang's brain.

After Sword8 pulled her hand back, Lin Huang briefly probed the information that she had transmitted and immediately widened his eyes.

Sword8 had transmitted had more than 1.6 million sword skills, which was twice the inheritance of Sword10!

The key thing was that she had not only mastered a large number of sword skills, but she had also honed her use and expansion of sword skills far beyond Sword10. No wonder this girl was terrifyingly powerful in ultimate dao-type.

"Thank you!" Lin Huang thanked her again.

"You're welcome. If you have a chance in the future, just come and play with me." Sword8, who had retreated over ten meters away, waved at Lin Huang.

"If there is a chance, I definitely will!" Lin Huang nodded slightly. Only then did he turn and walk in the direction of the palace door.

Chapter 1356: Sword3

After exiting the Eighth Palace, Lin Huang had originally thought to practice with Sword7 and the others for some time before meeting Sword3. He was striving to elevate his overall abilities to yet another level.

As it turned out, he could not help taking just a single day to pass all the stages from Sword7 to Sword4.

There was no reason other than Sword-7 to Sword4—the four guardians he had encountered one after the other—had not been able to pressure him at all. He had not even needed to use his full power to easily defeat the four of them.

Less than twenty-four hours after leaving the Eighth Palace, Lin Huang welcomed the arrival of the Third Palace.

Lin Huang knew from Sword10 that the abilities of Sword1 to Sword3 were not at the same level as the swordmaster's bodyguards from the previous stages.

Therefore, Lin Huang was excited but slightly nervous about his upcoming opponent.

However, when he saw the Third Palace slowly materializing in the void, Lin Huang was so stunned he took a while to regain his senses.

"This is obviously not a palace, is it?!"

The shape and style of the Third Place were a far cry from Lin Huang's expectations because what was forming in the void was not a palace, but a huge green sphere.

To be precise, it was a planet full of lush green vegetation...

Lin Huang visually inspected the planet for a moment; its size looked similar to Earth.

As he was wondering where the Trial would take place, a giant bronze gate suddenly appeared near him.

The gate was hundreds of meters high and covered with mysterious patterns.

The moment Lin Huang looked toward the gate, it opened as if pulled by some invisible force.

Lin Huang knew that this was probably an invitation from Sword3.

He did not hesitate and stepped through.

The next moment, as if he had passed through a portal, a lush, dense forest met Lin Huang's gaze.

Lin Huang looked around. The vegetation here was abnormally large, at least dozens of times more so than the vegetation on Earth.

Each of the trees was terrifyingly thick and strong, growing to over hundreds of meters in height. Even the weeds on the side of the road were slightly taller than Lin Huang, who was 1.8 meters tall.

'Has my body shrunk, or are the plants here just giant-sized?' Lin Huang could not help wondering.

Just then, a majestic figure appeared not far in front of him.

Sensing the figure's appearance, Lin Huang immediately collected his thoughts and looked toward the other party.

Upon seeing how the newcomer looked, Lin Huang could not help being more than a little stunned.

The newcomer was a one-armed man. He only had a left arm; his right had been severed at the shoulder.

What caught Lin Huang's attention, however, was not the severed arm, but the man's head.

Although the newcomer's body seemed completely humanoid, the head above the neck was that of a sinister elephant.

To be precise, this head was seventy percent similar to that of a mammoth.

The man seemed sinister because he had a long scar on his face that ran from his forehead down through his left eye and all the way to the left corner of his mouth.

The man's left eye was silvery-white, without pupil or iris. Since his scar connected to the corner of his mouth, his entire mouth seemed skewed to the left.

As for the man's remaining right eye, although it was not very large, anyone could tell from his gaze that he was a true powerhouse.

As for the copiously scarred elephant's trunk, it helped Lin Huang officially connect Sword8's 'Big Nose' with a real person.

'Big Nose is Sword3, so Bunny should be Sword2...'

"Participant, if you've made it to this stage, it means that your abilities aren't too bad." Sword3's voice sounded hoarse and oppressive; to Lin Huang, the sound seemed to be of the same frequency as rumbling thunder.

"I don't think they're good enough," Lin Huang shook his head as he evaluated himself.

Sword3 was stunned for a moment. 'Why are you stealing my lines?!'

"I pulled Sword8 into helping me with a period of special training. What I gathered from her is that my overall abilities aren't as powerful as yours, much less those of Sword2 and Sword1. At my current level, my chances of obtaining the Great Heaven inheritance aren't high," Lin Huang continued.

"It seems you have a clear perception of yourself." Sword3 nodded slightly.

"At this level, I may have to trespass on your hospitality for a while, Sir," Lin Huang said frankly.

"You're planning to use me to achieve a further breakthrough?" Sword3 was still expressionless, his attitude unreadable. "It depends on whether you have the ability to achieve a breakthrough!"

"Sir, all you have to do is to make a move and I will try my best." Lin Huang smiled faintly.

Sword3 did not continue talking. By nature a taciturn person, even if he met the swordmaster's other bodyguards, he would not say much. His attitude toward strangers was cold; for him to speak two sentences to Lin Huang was already difficult.

A battle sword slowly coalesced in Sword3's left hand, inky-black with a straight, narrow blade.

The sword was nothing eye-catching, but Lin Huang immediately sensed the extreme menace emanating from it in Sword3's grasp.

His opponent's Sword Dao might not be as strong as his own due to Trial restrictions, but Lin Huang felt an extreme sense of danger as Sword3 wielded his weapon.

This sense of danger usually only manifested under one specific circumstance—when his opponent was powerful enough to kill him.

It took only an instant for Lin Huang to determine that Sword3's overall abilities were at least one level higher than his own. If he was even just slightly careless in this trial, it was likely that he would be killed right away by his opponent.

'So powerful!'

Lin Huang felt himself starting to breathe hard, but he quickly adjusted his state of mind and grasped his battle sword. His Sword Dao rose sharply.

Just as Lin Huang's Sword Dao reached maximum capacity, the violent aura surrounding Sword3 also rose to its peak.

In the dense jungle, both figures disappeared on the spot almost at the same time.

The next instant, a soaring blood-red gleam and a gray gleam collided in the void.

A second later, the blood-red gleam shattered in full momentum, and a black figure shot backward like a cannonball. It crashed into the ground dozens of kilometers away, smashing a deep crater into the earth several kilometers in diameter. (The damage was minimal because the Space Rule and the stability of materials on this planet were much higher than in the gravel world.)

Lin Huang slowly clambered up from within the deep crater. His right forearm and three of his five fingers had all been fractured after his opponent's attack. Fortunately, his possession of the Divine Regeneration skill meant that these small injuries were healed instantly.

He examined his arm and found that it had been completely mended. Lin Huang then looked up at the void in the direction where Sword3 was standing and narrowed his eyes slightly.

Lin Huang had already seen the combination of rapid speed sword skill and force-type in his opponent's attack earlier.

Sword3's rapid speed was slightly weaker than Lin Huang and almost on par with Sword8. In force-type however, Sword3 was more than a level stronger than himself.

'Based on the information Sword8 provided, this fellow is stronger than her, but not so strong to the point where she has no chance of winning. So basically, of the three Sword Dao paths, it's highly probable that Sword3 is only stronger than Sword8 in one of them. At present, he seems to be more than a level stronger than Sword8 in force-type—which means he shouldn't be that much better than Sword8 in the other two aspects... Otherwise, even if he decided to go easy on her, if one were to compare notes, it's unlikely that Sword8 could beat him

Having determined that his opponent's main cultivation direction was in force-type, Lin Huang felt slightly more relieved.

If Sword3's main cultivation direction was in ultimate dao-type, and his force-type—more than a level stronger than Lin Huang—was merely secondary, then Lin Huang would be utterly overwhelmed.

Lin Huang maintained a serious expression even as several million inferences flashed through his mind in the blink of an eye.

'Even if his main cultivation path isn't ultimate dao-type, Sword3's abilities in that aspect shouldn't be too much weaker than Sword8. That is to say, he's stronger than me in both force-type and ultimate dao-type...

'This stage of the Trial can't be taken lightly at all!'

Chapter 1357: Making It Past the Third Palace

The battle with Sword3 was Lin Huang's most stressful one so far.

Not only was Sword3 overwhelmingly strong in force-type, but even his ultimate dao-type was at the same level as Sword8; Lin Huang was completely crushed.

If not for his rapid speed advantage in addition to his Sword Dao true meaning being stronger than his opponent, Lin Huang would probably not have had any leeway to retaliate at all.

After being defeated in their first head-on exchange, Lin Huang chose to use either rapid speed to dodge or ultimate dao-type to counter Sword3's attacks as much as possible, instead of going head-to-head or being on the defensive.

Most of the time, it was Sword3 who scored hits on Lin Huang. Occasionally when Lin Huang managed to find a lapse in the tempo of his opponent's attack, he would use rapid speed sword skill to counterattack. However, due to the strength of Sword3's ultimate dao-type, even if his speed was not as good as Lin Huang's, his defensive sword skills were such that Lin Huang could get nowhere.

On Lin Huang's part, occasionally he was unable to dodge in time and even if he tried to parry, he would suffer some minor injuries. Fortunately, these small injuries healed almost instantly as a result of Divine Regeneration, so they had not affected Lin Huang's abilities at all.

As time went by, Lin Huang searched every day among the inheritances he had obtained for sword skills that might help him deal with Sword3. He also tested them out one by one.

Under the pressure that Sword3 brought to bear, the number of sword skills that Lin Huang accumulated every day continued to expand. His learning speed was also a little faster than when he had been fighting against Sword10.

It took only around two hundred days for the total number of sword skills that Lin Huang had mastered to soar from over 100,000 to 200,000.

Lin Huang originally thought that when the number of sword skills that he mastered had reached 200,000, his Sword Dao would have a breakthrough again. However, his Sword Dao true meaning was now at the upper limits of True Martial Level and he could not achieve any further breakthrough.

Even if there had been an increase in the number of sword skills that he had mastered, without a breakthrough in Sword Dao true meaning, Lin Huang could not achieve a transformative upgrade in his overall abilities.

Sword3 seemed to sense Lin Huang's condition. Seeing that Lin Huang continued to use him to practice his sword skills, Sword3 finally could not help commenting.

"Your inability to achieve a breakthrough in Sword Dao is no longer a matter of skill accumulation but the lack of opportunity for a breakthrough. That's why it has remained at True Martial Level. It won't do you much good to continue wasting your time learning more swords skills.

"I suggest you temporarily set aside your ultimate dao-type and seek breakthroughs in the other paths!"

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Sword3 merely reminded Lin Huang of this and did not elaborate further.

To be honest, Lin Huang knew why his Sword Dao true meaning had not achieved a breakthrough. He originally thought that he would just bank on Sword3's abilities to accumulate more sword skills, and when the accumulation far exceeded what was demanded for a breakthrough, he would be able to forcefully break the Sword Dao barrier.

'It's like a river blocked by a dam. If the dam doesn't collapse, I'll let the river water accumulate until it's higher than the dam so it will naturally overflow. Accumulating skills to that sort of level might not be something that can be achieved within the next two hundred days though.'

Lin Huang, who originally wanted to fight a protracted battle, felt that Sword3's reminder made some sense.

In actual combat, mere brute force was not the solution to the problem; it was necessary to use brainpower as well.

'This time I might be able to charge through recklessly, but what will I do if I encounter something that I can't charge through in future?'

After considering this, Lin Huang began to think about other countermeasures.

'I'm facing a temporary block in elevating my ultimate dao-type so I'll set that aside first. I want to make further breakthroughs, so I should start with my rapid speed sword skill and force-type. But Sword3 isn't able to put pressure on me any longer in rapid speed. So for now, I can only start with force-type...

'Force-type...' Lin Huang murmured silently in his heart. The first thing that flashed through his mind was an image of roaring thunder and crackling flames—and then his eyes suddenly lit up...

'Among all the various elemental powers, it's relatively easy to use Lightning and Fire Element skills to produce force-type effects. Currently, the only force-type rules that I have mastered are the

Superhuman Strength God Rule and Heaven's Enlightenment from the Lightning Element. If I want to elevate further, I can start with other Lightning or Fire Element skills.

'My initial Lightning Lord skill came from Kylie. Among my summoning beasts, however, aside from Kylie who has mastered Lightning Element skills, there's also Thunder. Those with Fire Element skills include Charcoal, Bloody Robe, and Inferior Imp...'

Lin Huang glanced at his character panel again. The monster skill slot page listed all their main skills; there were only twenty-three in total.

'Divine Telekinesis, Holy Power, Divine Regeneration, Divine Strength, Divine Defense, Divine Disguise, Divine Witchcraft, Elemental Immunity, Leech Pods, Absolute Control, Divine Purification Light, Revival, Immortal Warrior Body, Vampire Particles, Lightning Lord, Dark Mirror, Doll Forbidden Skill, Punishment, Knight, Integration, Mechanical Building, Mechanical Recovery, Evil Blood Substitute.'

In his early immortal-level stages, Lin Huang had 30 Monster Skill spaces. After he elevated to Imperial-level, his Monster Skill spaces had already been increased to 50, but he had not filled in the blank skill grid.

This was mainly because Lin Huang was strong enough, and there were no Monster Skills that he particularly wanted to acquire so he simply left the skill grid blank. When he really needed to use a specific skill, it was still not too late to extract it.

"Xiao Hei, I want to specifically extract Charcoal's Demon Flame, Bloody Robe's Hellish Fire, Inferior Imp's Abyssal Black Fire, and Thunder's Lightning God."

"Are you sure you want to use a grade-3 card for a card draw chance X80?"

Under normal circumstances, the card draw chance used to redeem a Skill Extraction Card should have been 10 times. However, because the function of the Skill Extraction Card was randomly selected, when Lin Huang required a specific extraction the expenditure of card draw chances also doubled. For four specific draws, he needed to expend 80 card draw chances.

Lin Huang was no stranger to these rules and nodded right away.

"Confirmation!"

The next moment, Xiao Hei's notifications came very quickly one after the other.

"Successful extraction!"

"Congratulations to the host on obtaining the monster skill Demon Flame."

"Congratulations to the host on obtaining the monster skill Hellish Fire."

"Congratulations to the host on obtaining the monster skill Abyssal Black Fire."

"Congratulations to the host on obtaining the monster skill Lightning God."

After glancing at his four newly acquired Monster Skills, Lin Huang's sword skills suddenly changed and he quickly began to integrate these four Monster Skills into Fire and Lightning Element sword skills.

Days passed. Perhaps because he had previously mastered Lightning Elemental Enlightenment, Lin Huang only took thirteen days to advance Lightning God to Lightning Elemental Enlightenment—Lightning God.

After that, it took him another 28 days to finally transform the Fire Element skill Demon Flame into Fire Elemental Enlightenment—Demon Flame.

At that point, Lin Huang's force-type finally elevated to the same level as Sword3.

As soon as the disparity in force-type was lessened, Lin Huang's overall ability was no longer weaker than Sword3.

Although Sword3 still had a great advantage in ultimate dao-type, Lin Huang's Sword Dao made up for this part of the disparity.

Moreover, the elevation of his force-type changed Lin Huang's combat mode from retreating and parrying to going head-to-head.

Since Lin Huang's overall ability had advanced to the same level, the pressure that Sword3 put him was also much less.

Lin Huang chose to go head-to-head with Sword3 repeatedly for further breakthroughs.

Sword3 also continued to cooperate, playing the role of a sparring partner.

Because the pressure was much lower, Lin Huang's breakthrough progress was also much slower.

Thirty-one days passed, and he finally elevated his Monster Skill, Hellish Fire, to Fire Elemental Enlightenment—Hell.

The moment that Fire Elemental Enlightenment—Hell coalesced, Lin Huang's battle sword had just clashed with the dark blade in Sword3's hand.

This time, however, they were no longer evenly matched.

In the void, the strong blood-red and grey gleams collided violently. The gray gleam only resisted for a moment before retreating and was finally ripped apart by the blood-red gleam. Almost at the same time, Sword3's elephant-headed figure was sent flying backward from the gray gleam...

This was the first time in nearly three hundred days that Lin Huang had made him retreat.

Sword3's figure smashed uncontrollably into a deep crater more than 20 kilometers away, sending up a cloud of dust from the ground.

He did not suffer much damage, however. The physique of a Wild Beast's Bloodline was far more fearsome than a True God's Body.

Sword3 shook his head, slightly dizzy, and climbed up from the crater.

After he levitated into the air, he had no intention of fighting with Lin Huang any further. Instead, he put away the sword he was wielding and said to Lin Huang,

"You've passed my level."

“Thank you, Sir!” Lin Huang clasped his hands together lightly and also sheathed his sword. As he was looking around to find the portal so he could leave, a bronze gate appeared less than ten meters in front of him and slowly opened on its own.

Lin Huang did not hesitate and walked straight toward the door...

Chapter 1358: Bunny

Looking at the Second Palace that was rapidly materializing before his eyes, Lin Huang could not help raising his brows.

The Second Palace also looked nothing like a palace; it was a shabby little log cabin. From the outside, it was about 70 to 80 square meters at most and looked like it had been abandoned for at least two or three decades.

‘It’s supposed to be a palace, why make it look like that?’

Lin Huang was convinced that the Second Palace had not looked this way originally, otherwise, the seller would not have been able to find a purchaser at all.

As Lin Huang continued his silent criticism, a squeaky noise suddenly sounded.

He immediately looked toward the source of the sound, and the small wooden door of the cabin slowly opened.

“Although the house is different, the formula is rather familiar...”

Lin Huang smiled and walked straight toward the cabin as naturally as if he were visiting an old neighbor. Without any hesitation, he crossed the threshold of the small wooden door.

Lin Huang was not surprised to see a vast expanse of grassland inside the door.

After all, this was a Trial arena. If it was really a small log cabin that had less than 80 square meters of space, the two of them would not be able to unleash their abilities at all once they began fighting.

The world behind the small wooden door had cloudless blue skies and lush grass extending as far as the eye could see.

Lin Huang took a deep breath. The scent of flowers and grasses filled his lungs, putting him in a joyful mood.

Almost simultaneously, however, Lin Huang sensed a figure gradually materializing not far away.

He lifted his head and stared straight ahead. Someone was standing there on a big stone that was about half a meter high.

To be precise, it was a man with a rabbit’s head. He was not tall; the impression he gave was that of a teenager wearing a bunny mask.

Lin Huang knew that the man’s head was real, however.

This was a rabbit-headed man with clean white fur.

He looked to be only about one point six meters tall, not including his ears, which were furry and very long—more than forty centimeters or so.

Taken together, from the soles of his feet to the tips of his ears he was almost two meters in height.

Because his ears were so long, however, he appeared shorter.

Not only did he look short, but he also seemed thin and frail.

On the surface, this fellow did not seem threatening at all. As he stood on that half-meter high rock surveying Lin Huang from high ground, his two scarlet eyes showed not the slightest emotion.

‘This fellow should be the Bunny that Sword8 mentioned...’

Lin Huang was not surprised by Sword2’s physical appearance. When Sword8 had let slip the nickname “Bunny” previously, he had already guessed. Moreover, he had also seen the elephant-headed Sword3 earlier.

“Being able to pass Long Nose’s level means that you probably possess some solid capabilities. He’s not the sort of character who goes easy on participants,” the rabbit-headed man said with a smile after weighing Lin Huang up thoroughly.

“Senior Sword3 is indeed the strongest opponent that I have ever encountered.” Lin Huang nodded with a smile.

“That’s a bit of a premature declaration; I’m stronger than him.” Sword2 shooked his ears.

“...”

Lin Huang then remembered that this man in front of him was a powerhouse who was ranked higher than Sword3.

“I mainly cultivate rapid speed sword skill.” Sword2’s battle sword slowly coalesced in his hand. It was a thorn-like blade that looked like a tree branch and the point of the blade was almost as thin as the tip of a needle. A hint of playfulness showed in his scarlet eyes. “If you can get through one day with me, I’ll consider you to have passed this stage.”

Lin Huang did not respond to Sword2’s remarks. From the moment he entered the Second Palace, his intent had not only been to pass this level but also to find a sparring partner to enhance his abilities.

Sword2 grasped the hilt of his weapon in his right hand, bent his knees and leaned forward, already in attack stance. Before he made his move, he grinned at Lin Huang, revealing two gleaming white front teeth.

“Are you ready?!”

“Bring it on!”

The silver blade in Lin Huang’s hands had also coalesced into being. His aura began to rise sharply and in barely a breath, it reached its peak.

The moment Lin Huang answered, Sword2 suddenly disappeared on the spot.

The stone under Bunny's feet slowly crumbled and turned into powder, the entire half meters' worth of it.

'So fast!'

Lin Huang's pupils suddenly contracted. His eyesight and Divine Telekinesis had yet to capture his opponent's movements, let alone his opponent's movement trajectory.

Almost at the same time Sword2 disappeared, Lin Huang suddenly felt an extreme sense of danger to one side of him.

Without any hesitation, he immediately initiated the Seraphic Speed God Rule and moved like a flash. His figure instantly appeared hundreds of meters away.

Even so, as he planted his legs firmly, he still found a slash about 20cm long on the left waist of his robe.

"You're still a little too slow!" Sword2 stood where Lin Huang had originally been standing, grinning and showing his two front teeth before suddenly disappeared once more.

Lin Huang quickly dodged again...

In just half an hour, Lin Huang's black robe had more than ten slashes on it.

In terms of rapid speed sword skill, his abilities were far below that of his opponent.

Under this extreme pressure, however, Lin Huang began striving for a breakthrough once more.

He was no longer relying solely on Seraphic Speed to dodge but was merging Lightning Element skills with his ultimate dao-type Thunder Eclipse, trying to achieve a breakthrough in Elemental Enlightenment.

In the next half hour, the number of sword slashes on his black robe increased from 16 to 107.

Fortunately, he possessed sufficient Divine Power and God Rule as well as Divine Regeneration skills, so he did not suffer substantial damage.

The next day was arguably the worst for Lin Huang in terms of being thoroughly schooled.

Throughout the day, he was constantly taking a beating. Sword2 managed to slash Lin Huang's black robe more than 2000 times, but Lin Huang barely found an opportunity to attack. All day he delivered less than 10 slashes in total, but could not even brush the cuffs of Sword2's sleeves at all.

As soon as the twenty-four hours were up, Sword2 cheerfully sheathed his sword and moved to the side.

"It's been twenty-four hours. According to the conditions that I mentioned earlier for passing this stage, you've qualified. Congratulations, you've successfully made it past the Second Palace!"

As usual, Lin Huang did not accept this result.

"Senior Sword2, I hope that I can stay and practice for a while."

After hearing this, Sword2 was silent for a moment. “You must consider this carefully. If you give up your chance to exit this level now, you must beat me or be strong enough to make me admit defeat before you can pass.”

“I know the rules.” Lin Huang nodded with a smile. “Let’s continue!”

Seeing that Lin Huang had made up his mind, Sword2 said nothing further. The thorn-like blade coalesced in his hand again, and he vanished once more...

Chapter 1359: Making It Past The Second Palace

Lin Huang’s battle with Sword2 could be described as extremely difficult, to the point where he felt he should completely retract what he said about Sword3 being the strongest opponent that he had ever encountered. Sword2 was much more difficult to deal with than Sword3.

Sword2 completely overwhelmed Lin Huang with rapid speed sword skill alone. Although Lin Huang knew that his opponent’s force-type was not as good as his, he had no chance to unleash his capabilities

Every day his robes were slashed to rags by Sword2 and he bled copiously. If not for Divine Regeneration, Lin Huang reckoned he would not be able to last even a day. The amount of blood he shed daily was enough for him to die two or three times.

Under this kind of pressure though, his rapid speed Sword Dao was taxed to the limit. It only took six days for him to complete a breakthrough in Lightning Elemental Skill and successfully master Lightning Elemental Enlightenment—Instant Flash.

Even so, Lin Huang was still outclassed in rapid speed sword skill.

Sword2’s speed was like the speed of light and his rapid speed sword skill had been cultivated to the ultimate peak; he was so swift that all his opponents gave up hope.

Even though he had achieved another breakthrough in rapid speed, Lin Huang still could not track Sword2’s movements or the trajectory of his attacks. It certainly did not feel any easier than before.

Fortunately, after his breakthrough in rapid speed sword skill, Lin Huang’s speed of movement markedly increased. This reduced his daily injuries considerably and the number of new blade scars on his body was reduced by about 80% every day.

Just like that, the days passed by. Even though he still could not track Sword2’s movements, Lin Huang chose to fight to the death nonetheless.

After another twelve days, Lin Huang was finally able to elevate the Divine Purification Light skill obtained from Kylie to Light Elemental Enlightenment—Sun Shadow.

The moment he mastered Sun Shadow Enlightenment, Lin Huang suddenly found that he could track Sword2’s movements albeit with great difficulty; this made him ecstatic.

Sword2’s approaching attack came in the form of a white gleam shooting toward Lin Huang like an arrow of light. Lin Huang’s Sun Shadow Enlightenment suddenly activated and his whole body

transformed into little specks of blood-red particles that dissipated to one side and then re-formed hundreds of meters away.

“Sun Shadow?!” Sword2 was shocked when he saw that. As a powerhouse who had practiced several kinds of Light Elemental Enlightenment, he recognized at a glance the Enlightenment that Lin Huang had used. “It seems you’ve made another breakthrough.”

“I can finally somewhat follow Senior’s movements.” Lin Huang grinned.

“Really?” Sword2’s ears moved slightly and the smile on his face bore a hint of playfulness.

The next moment, he vanished again.

This time, however, his movements were no longer a straight line as before—instead they were erratic. His voice also seemed to come randomly from all directions.

“Can you still follow my movements now?”

“Uh...”

Lin Huang was more than a little speechless. His opponent only needed to add in ultimate dao-type movement skills and Lin Huang was once again unable to track him. Soon though, he came up with a counter-measure in his mind.

“Xiao Hei, extract Thunder’s skill—Phoenix!”

When Thunder advanced to Legendary Level, it awakened its bloodline powers in the dual attributes of wind and fire. In addition to having mastered lightning attributes, it had also mastered many wind attribute skills.

“Host, you have extracted the skills of the Thunder card twice, this is the third time.”

“The third skill extraction requires expending twice the number of card draws of the second extraction, and the expenditure of the designated draw is also twice that of the second designated draw. In other words, to extract the skill “Phoenix”, it will require the expenditure of 80 card draw chances!”

“Are you sure you want to use 80 card draw chances?!”

Earlier when he extracted his four previous skills, Lin Huang had only used 80 card draw chances. Now, the extraction of a single skill required the expenditure of 80 card draw chances. This caused Lin Huang untold amounts of pain.

Although Goldfinger’s asking price was exorbitant, Lin Huang nodded without much hesitation.

“Confirmed!”

After mastering the Phoenix skills, Lin Huang began a new round of advanced practice.

Another eighteen days passed by in no time at all and Lin Huang’s advanced skill bar kept skyrocketing. Under the fearsome pressure brought on by Sword2, his Phoenix Monster Skill had finally advanced to become Wind Elemental Enlightenment—Heavenly Roc.

With another breakthrough achieved in rapid speed, Lin Huang was finally able to keep up with Sword2.

Although he was slightly inferior to Sword2 in terms of movement speed and blade speed, Lin Huang was now at least on the same level. He was also already able to track Sword2's movements and trajectory of attack.

Without the absolute advantage in speed, Sword2 was slightly stronger than Sword8 in force-type but far inferior to Sword3 who specialized in force-type.

In ultimate dao-type, although Sword2 was much stronger than Lin Huang, he could not do anything to Lin Huang anymore.

"This Trial will end now." After Lin Huang had mastered Heavenly Roc, his fierce battle with Sword2 lasted for less than an hour before Sword2 voluntarily retreated from combat and sheathed his weapon.

The battle had entered a stage of true stalemate. Sword2 could not do anything to Lin Huang, and Lin Huang could not do anything to him. There was no sense in continuing. Moreover, his duty as a sparring partner was now complete so naturally, there was no need to continue wasting time.

"Thank you, Senior!" Lin Huang also sheathed his sword in its scabbard and thanked Sword2.

"No need to thank me. As a member of the Succession Sect, it's my good fortune to encounter a participant like you." Sword2 finally expressed his stand.

"Senior, you praise me too highly."

"I have to say, you have the most terrifying talent and potential of all the Sword Dao cultivators I have ever seen. Even when the swordmaster was at the same level as your combat ability, he was far inferior to you in terms of comprehension speed. Never have I ever seen anyone who could master Elemental Enlightenment so quickly..."

Sword2's words made Lin Huang blush slightly.

It was not because his mastery of Elemental Enlightenment was fast; rather, it was because he had a conduit. To quickly master the various Elemental Enlightenment, he had secretly used the Epiphany Card.

Under the extreme pressure of Sword2's rapid speed sword skill, the cultivation effects that the Epiphany Card brought were doubled. Three consecutive Epiphany Cards allowed him to achieve three Elemental Enlightenment in succession in just over a month.

This was the reason that he could grasp God Rule Power and Elemental Enlightenment so quickly when he faced Sword3 and Sword8 previously.

In the early stages of his encounter with Sword10, Lin Huang had realized that his own abilities were not enough to obtain the Great Heaven inheritance. To maximize the benefits of this Trial, he had chosen to use the Epiphany Card to enhance his ability as much as possible. Even if he failed to obtain the inheritance in the end, at least the gains from the Epiphany Card were very tangible.

Moreover, to be precise, the Epiphany Card did not interfere with the fairness of the Trial.

The improvement of Lin Huang's abilities was through the strength of his own unremitting efforts. It was not a bonus from any external factors.

Even Lin Huang had not expected to reach Sword2's level, much less pass this stage.

"With the talent and potential that you've displayed, if the swordmaster were still alive, I think there would be a high probability of you being accepted as a disciple." Sword2's comment was already highly positive, but after that, his ears suddenly drooped. "The swordmaster has fallen, however, and if you want to obtain his inheritance, you have to follow the rules.

"According to the rules, only those who have passed the assessment of all Ten Palaces can obtain the inheritance of the swordmaster. You've passed through nine of the Ten Palaces, and it seems like you're just a step away. The truth is, the last step is the most critical and the most difficult.

"As a diehard loyalist of the Regression Sect, Sword1 will not allow participants to obtain the swordmaster's inheritance so easily..."

Chapter 1360: You and The Swordmaster Are Of The Same Kind

"You should have noticed by now that all the guardians below Sword3, except for Sword8, used at most only one type of rule power during the Trial..."

When Sword2 mentioned this, Lin Huang immediately realized something. "You mean, their powers were restricted?"

"Naturally! The ten bodyguards under the swordmaster are all ninth-rank powerhouses. All of them have mastered nine complete god sequence chains. If those sequences are subdivided into God Rule Powers or Elemental Enlightenment, there would be at least ten or more of them.

"However, the highest level of combat strength that the swordmaster's chosen heir can have is only Virtual God rank-9. At Virtual God level, those who have mastered God Rule Power or Elemental Enlightenment in advance are few and far between. That's why certain restrictions have been imposed for the final Trial of the Ten Palaces. Those under Sword3 are only allowed to use one kind of rule power.

"Of all the guardians, Sword8 was the swordmaster's most beloved bodyguard, so he lifted the restrictions on the multiplier effect of ultimate dao-type on rule power for her. She was also allowed to become a minor BOSS below Sword3. Of course, this is also because the swordmaster understood her personality and knew that she would not hinder the participants.

"As for myself and Sword2, we are the two difficult stages in the trial. Under the restrictions on rule power, we can only use three kinds of rule power at most. Also, the multiplier effect of our ultimate dao-type on rule power is completely unrestricted."

"So in reality you only used level-3 rule power?!" Lin Huang was shocked when he heard that. "But the speed of your rapid speed sword skill is much faster than my rapid speed sword skill amplified with level-4 rule power!"

"That's the multiplier effect of ultimate dao-type sword skills. The effect is almost the same as the multiplier of level-2 rule power," Sword2 explained with a smile. "Isn't the speed multiplier of your ultimate dao-type close to the effects of level-1 rule power?"

“When Sword3 fought me, he also only used level-3 rule power?!” Lin Huang quickly followed up with another question.

Sword2 nodded slightly.

“What about Sword1? Are there fewer restrictions on his authority than for all of you?!”

“Yes. As the final guardian of the Ten Palaces, Sword1 is authorized to use level-6 rule power. But the good news is that his level-6 rule power is limited to three of each power for rapid speed sword skill and force-type respectively. From this perspective, he is not as good as you currently, whether it be in rapid speed sword skill or force-type.

“The problem is that Sword1 mainly cultivates ultimate dao-type. Even under circumstances where his Sword Dao is restricted, his sword skills are extremely terrifying under the multiplier effects of rapid speed sword skill and force-type.

“Not only that, but he is also a die-hard Regression Sect member; he won’t go easy on anyone for this last level.

“There are only two ways to go for you to obtain the swordmaster’s inheritance.

“One is to defeat Sword1!

“The other is not to admit defeat no matter how much you’ve been beaten up; continue until he approves of you!”

The second option sounded truly awful...

Lin Huang was secretly cursing in his heart.

“Finally, regardless of whether you can successfully obtain the swordmaster’s inheritance or not, you’d better receive my inheritances first.” As he finished speaking, Sword2 hopped and appeared in front of Lin Huang. He did not pay attention to Lin Huang’s objections but put his finger on Lin Huang’s forehead and transmitted all his Sword Dao inheritances into Lin Huang’s brain.

“Even if you fail the final Palace, if you can get out alive and pass on my inheritances, that would be a good thing too.” After transmitting his inheritances, Sword2 withdrew his finger. “Although the relevant memories of the Trial will be erased if you fail, the memory inheritances given voluntarily will not be erased.”

“Thank you, Senior!” Lin Huang thanked Sword2 while he bowed slightly.

After saying farewell to Sword2, Lin Huang quickly reappeared in the dense forest of Golden Crow Mountain.

He remained where he was and immediately began to probe his memory.

Sword2 had mastered more than 2.1 million sword skills (above pseudo-mythical level), far exceeding even Sword8.

Just as Lin Huang finished checking his new inheritances, there was a sudden violent dimensional fluctuation from the void.

In front of Lin Huang's astonished gaze, a blood-red palace quickly formed in the void and slowly descended onto the ground.

"What's going on? Shouldn't I be fighting God's Servants first? Why the sudden jump in the normal flow of things?"

From the Tenth Palace to the Second Palace, every time before Lin Huang had seen the actual palace itself, there would be God's Servants attacking first. Regardless of the number, there would always be a wave of them. Every time a God Palace appeared, it would be after he had defeated the God's Servants. When he came out of the Second Palace though, Lin Huang did not see a single God's Servant; the God Palace automatically appeared.

Aside from being completely blood-red, this God Palace seemed to be nothing special.

As the blood-red palace touched the ground, Lin Huang's nose twitched slightly—he smelled a very faint scent of blood.

Just as he was doubting himself, the doors of the blood-red palace suddenly opened slowly.

Without any hesitation, Lin Huang grinned and strode right through.

After he entered the palace, Lin Huang began looking around and evaluating his surroundings.

The interior decorations of the palace were not extravagant; they were normal.

The unique thing was that most of the items were red.

No matter if it was the walls, the load-bearing columns, the dome, or the chandelier, the main color was red, differing only in the various shades of it.

Even if there were some other colors, they were only embellishments.

"He really must love red..." Lin Huang could not help muttering to himself quietly.

It was at that moment that a voice came from not far away.

"I am a Blood Demon and I naturally like the color red. However, the interior of this palace is decorated this way not because I like it, but to restrain my desires..."

Lin Huang lifted his head and looked toward the source of the voice. It was a very handsome man who looked to be only 25 years old or so. His facial features were as perfect as if they had been sculpted.

Just by height and appearance alone, this was a man who would rate full marks by most people's standards of attractiveness.

Since coming to the gravel world, Lin Huang had seen many handsome men and beautiful women in recent years. This fellow before him, however, had an absolutely flawless face.

This was also the first time that Lin Huang willingly admitted there were men more handsome than himself.

“This is the method given to me by the swordmaster. Being in contact with red for a long time will raise my threshold of sensitivity to the color.”

Sword1 did not immediately make a move to attack when he appeared; instead, he talked about mundane things with Lin Huang.

While Sword1 was talking, his eyes stayed on Lin Huang, weighing up the latter carefully.

“Your name is Lin Huang?”

“Yes.” Lin Huang nodded slightly. The other party was in no rush to attack so he was not in a hurry either.

“I’ve watched your battles; your performance has indeed been amazing.” Sword1 gave him a good evaluation.

“You’ve seen it all?” Lin Huang was a little surprised.

“Yes; from the moment you entered the Swordfiend Abyss to you making it past the Second Palace just now, I have watched every battle.” Sword1 nodded slightly. “All the Trial sites of the swordmaster are under surveillance. As the guardian of the last level, I have the authority to allocate and monitor the surveillance. But the other gatekeepers do not know about this.”

“...” Lin Huang was speechless for a while. He had not expected that he would be spied on by the other party throughout his trial.

“To be honest, it initially surprised me, the way you achieved insight after insight, mastering new Rule Bending Powers again and again in such a short time because it is something that even the swordmaster could not do. Then I suddenly realized that you and the swordmaster are of the same kind...”

Hearing that, Lin Huang groaned in his heart.

‘Did he notice that I cheated with an Epiphany Card?!’

What did it mean when Sword1 said that he was of the same kind as the swordmaster?! Was Great Heaven also a traveler?!

“I don’t quite understand what you mean, that I’m of the same kind as the swordmaster...” Lin Huang maintained his composure. “Is that a compliment?”

“I mean it literally.” Sword2 smiled faintly, and stared keenly into Lin Huang’s eyes, “Are you are also a traveler?!”