

Prodigies 171

Chapter 171 Late

On the day that the war zone assessment would come to an end, rain fell on Demon Cloud Ridge.

Incessant rain lashed the area but still couldn't wash away the thick blood on the ground. The smoke from the flames of war reached an unprecedentedly tragic state that day.

Every Blood Kill Camp student participating in the assessment was in their final fight.

Outside Demon Cloud Ridge, a group of Blood Kill Camp instructors had already arrived in the empire's Black Wind Army camp. They quietly waited as they peered at the misty Demon Cloud Ridge bathed in rain.

"How many people have been eliminated so far?" asked Dong Lu. He had an unusually burly figure like a mountain.

"117 people. More than half of them were forced into a desperate situation and chose to make a breakthrough in desperation. As a result, they were eliminated. The rest sent out a rescue signal and were eliminated." Song Ling reported after a quick calculation. "The only thing that is uncertain at the moment is how many students died in Demon Cloud Ridge."

Dong Lu frowned, sighing, "The loss is quite huge."

Song Ling thought for a moment and said, "The performance of this year's Blood Kill Camp students is already pretty good. At least, it's a lot better than our year."

Song Ling, a senior colonel of the Black Wind Army, had also participated in the training of Blood Kill Camp!

Dong Lu suddenly asked, "How many students from the 39th Campground did we lose?"

Song Ling said, "At present, seventeen people have been eliminated, and it isn't certain how many of the remaining ten people have died."

Dong Lu frowned. A total of 237 students from the eight camps had come to participate in the war zone assessment. The elimination rate in the 39th Campground was a little high given that seventeen people had already been eliminated.

The situation in the other seven camps wouldn't be much different.

"It looks like no more than fifty students can return to the camp to continue the training," sighed Dong Lu.

Song Ling snorted coldly, "The result is already very remarkable. In the past, only around twenty-three students returned from the war zone assessment!"

Dong Lu smiled. "You're right."

"Speaking of which, someone surprised me this time." Song Ling suddenly remembered something.

"Who?"

“Lin Xun.”

Song Ling briefly described the bloody battle that happened on the volcano a few days ago, and then he exclaimed, “Based on what I saw, Lin Xun isn’t weaker than Bai Lingxi, Zhao Yin, Li Duxing or Zhangsun Hen.”

Dong Lu’s lips curved strangely as he chuckled out loud. “Turns out to be him.”

“What, have you also noticed that he’s very special?” Song Ling asked.

“Well, he really is special. On the first day of the Blood Kill Camp training, he was ranked at the bottom in terms of cultivation level and almost no one thought much about him.”

Dong Lu’s eyes were looking into the distance, seeming to be deep in thought as memories flooded back. “But over time, he has shown extraordinary potential. Every time the others looked down on him, he always proved himself with his strength and stunned everyone.”

“What’s rare is that he is always unpredictable. He seems low-profile and harmless, but in fact, his heart is as tough as iron. Many people in Blood Kill Camp have lost to him.”

“I once heard Chief Xu’s evaluation of him. He said that he has god-like intelligence and is incredibly shrewd. He is very complicated and difficult to figure out so it’s difficult to know what kind of achievements he will have in the future.” Dong Lu sounded emotional.

“Chief Xu actually has such a good evaluation of that boy?” Song Ling exclaimed in surprise. In his view, Xu Sanqi never talked any nonsense.

“That isn’t pure praise.” Dong Lu took a deep look at Song Ling. “You also know that unpredictable people are unruly and difficult to control.”

Song Ling was silent for a long moment before he nodded.

Commotion broke out from afar. Many soldiers in the camp couldn’t help but gasp in exclamation.

Dong Lu and Song Ling were both taken aback. They lifted their heads and saw an ethereal figure speeding towards the camp in the misty rain.

She wore a white dress and her black hair trailed over her shoulders, flowing down to her waist. Her stunning face was elegant and pure. As she walked through the misty rain, she resembled a fairy in a painting. Her entire body gave off an ethereal and otherworldly aura, and her presence drew everyone’s attention.

Bai Lingxi!

She was the first student to return from the war zone assessment!

“The fact that she returned first from the assessment shows that she is extremely confident in the amount of military merits she has obtained. She possesses the innate talent of Eternal Shining Stars and will most likely take first place in the battlefield assessment.” Song Ling said ruminatively.

Dong Lu replied, “She is indeed remarkable. I heard that she will be admitted to the empire’s Qingluo Academy once the Blood Kill Camp training is over.”

Song Ling's expression looked a little complicated as he said, "She is a girl blessed by heaven. Her cultivation path is destined to be different from other cultivators in the empire."

After Bai Lingxi returned, she waited quietly.

There was less than an hour left until the end of the assessment and once the assessment ended, the students' military merit would be assessed and their score would be determined.

Before long, another figure was coming from the distance. It was tall and slim and had a majestic gait. His fierce eyes were dazzling and he exuded a haughty aura. It was Zhao Yin.

Zhao Yin's arrival attracted quite a few surprised gazes. The people's reaction brought a faint, imperceptible smile to his lips.

However, he couldn't help but narrow his eyes and sigh helplessly when he saw Bai Lingxi's graceful and beautiful figure. He came to stand next to Bai Lingxi and said, "Unexpectedly, I'm still not as good as you."

Bai Lingxi's expression was as still as water. "The time you return doesn't affect your final score or ranking."

Zhao Yin smiled brightly and said, "You don't have to be so modest. I have a hunch that you wouldn't return early if you didn't have absolute confidence in your military merits." nOvelnext.com

Bai Lingxi peered at Demon Cloud Ridge in the distance, seemingly reluctant to discuss the topic anymore.

"That's—"

"Li Duxing! How did he become like this?"

Suddenly, an uproar broke out, causing Bai Lingxi and Zhao Yin to shift their gazes to the distance, where a thin figure was slowly approaching their direction. His hair was disheveled, his clothes in rags and his abdomen, chest and legs were dripping with blood.

From afar, he resembled a wounded lone wolf returning from the battlefield.

Bai Lingxi and Zhao Yin narrowed their eyes. Li Duxing had a mysterious background and there had been many rumors about him, though no one had been able to confirm the accuracy of those rumors.

Regardless of the rumors, Bai Lingxi and Zhao Yin only saw a very small number of people as competitors in Blood Kill Camp, and Li Duxing was one of them.

Seeing him return riddled with wounds, discomposed and looking lonely, the two didn't dare to underestimate him.

"Li Duxing is fanatical about swords and always travels alone. He can only be described as someone who couldn't live without being crazy," remarked Dong Lu.

Song Ling exclaimed in surprise, "You know the boy well?"

Dong Lu shook his head. "All the instructors in Blood Kill Camp think the same. Don't you think he is very similar to Xiao Pifu?"

Song Ling's pupils shrank. Xiao Pifu!

He cast his mind back to the ruler who had shocked the world hundreds of years ago with his sword. He remembered how he broke into the Darkness Kingdom single-handedly and massacred thirteen Great Magi.

Xiao Pifu!

A legendary sword ruler!

His glorious deeds had been admired by countless cultivators in the history of the empire.

"Every person has their own path. Li Duxing is still young. Even if he has the same temperament and style as Xiao Pifu, it's difficult to say whether he would possess strength as terrifying as Xiao Pifu in the future," said Song Ling thoughtfully.

Dong Lu smiled, unable to deny it.

After Li Duxing returned, students then came back one after another, including Zhangsun Hen, Gong Ming, Shi Yu and Ning Meng...

In just half an hour, more than 30 students had gathered in the camp.

The fact that these students could safely return in the assessment without being eliminated already proved how strong they were.

"Why haven't we seen Lin Xun return yet?" Song Ling scrunched his brows.

"Wait a moment, the assessment isn't over yet, right?"

Dong Lu's heart pounded with worry. There could only be two reasons that Lin Xun hadn't returned. Either he was still fighting at the risk of his life in the little time left because he lacked enough military merit or that he had encountered danger and was already dead!

On the other side, Shi Yu and Ning Meng were quarreling over the bet.

"Little White Face, hurry up and prepare one thousand gold coins. I will definitely win!"

"Idiot, you will cry when they start to calculate the military merits. You will realize how stupid you sound now!"

"Haha, then I'll wait to see if your military merits will make me cry!"

Shi Yu suddenly raised his eyebrows and said, "Where's Lin Xun?"

Ning Meng was taken aback. He glanced around and muttered, "He wouldn't be eliminated already right?"

Shi Yu sneered, "Don't worry, Lin Xun is much stronger than you. If you haven't been eliminated, how would he be eliminated?"

"There's only ten minutes left till the end of the assessment. Why isn't he here yet?" Shi Yu mumbled with a deep frown.

Ning Meng also lost interest in quarreling with Shi Yu.

Another dozen students returned one after another. But there was still no sign of Lin Xun. It made both Shi Yu and Ning Meng scrunch their faces in worry.

"You seem to be waiting for someone."

In the nearby area, Zhao Yin sharply noticed that Bai Lingxi was glancing at Demon Cloud Ridge from time to time as though she was waiting for something.

"I'm just thinking that Lin Xun shouldn't be eliminated already given his strength." Bai Lingxi said casually.

"Lin Xun?"

Zhao Yin exclaimed. He sounded dumbfounded. "It turns out to be him. I heard that you will challenge him when he reaches the ninth layer True Martial Stage. I'm very curious about why you want to do that."

Bai Lingxi said indifferently. "You wouldn't understand."

A malicious look imperceptibly flashed across Zhao Yin's eyes. "Regardless, he still hasn't returned. I wonder if he encountered danger..."

Before he finished, he noticed that Bai Lingxi suddenly turned her head and she fixed her clear and beautiful eyes in a certain direction. Almost at the same time, a clamor rang out.

"Lin Xun has returned!"

"That guy is really tenacious. He hasn't been eliminated."

"Haha, but he likely didn't return until now because he's worried about the amount of military merits he has obtained."

Amidst the discussion, Lin Xun's elegant and straight figure emerged in the misty rain.

Chapter 172 Ranking Argument

Lin Xun looked a little distressed as his clothes were torn and were stained with mud and blood. Even so, no one laughed at him.

The battle on the volcano a few days ago had made Lin Xun rise to fame. Many people had heard about the matter and so no one dared to mock him.

Many students admired Lin Xun. He had been a nobody when he joined Blood Kill Camp but he had proved his strength with facts, which wasn't something that ordinary people could do.

Zhao Yin was evidently surprised to see Lin Xun. "He actually returned."

Bai Lingxi remarked, "You seem a little disappointed?"

Zhao Yin chuckled, "I'm not disappointed. I just think that it's not worth paying so much attention to him since he only returned at the last moment."

Bai Lingxi suddenly asked, "Who do you think are most likely to be the top three in the war zone assessment?"

Zhao Yin had never thought that Bai Lingxi would ask him for his view. His spirits were instantly lifted and he spoke eloquently, "Speaking about the top three, I can give it a good guess. It will likely be between you, me, Li Duxing and Zhangsun Hen!"

After a pause, he continued, "If there is no accident, the first place crown will no doubt fall on your head and I believe that I will also be in the top three. In other words, we shouldn't need to worry. The only people who really need to compete for the top three are Li Duxing and Zhangsun Hen."

Bai Lingxi sighed and said nothing else.

Zhao Yin seemed taken aback. "Lingxi, you seem to have a different opinion?"

Bai Lingxi's clear eyes glanced at Lin Xun in the distance and she said, "You forgot about him."

Zhao Yin couldn't control the disdain in his heart. He sneered, "Him? Lingxi, you think too highly of him."

He felt that Bai Lingxi had attached great importance to Lin Xun and it made him a little annoyed and uncomfortable.

Bai Lingxi said, "You don't understand."

Zhao Yin frowned. "Lingxi, I really don't understand why you are so confident about him? What is it about him that attracts you?"

His voice contained a hint of jealousy.

Bai Lingxi seemed to understand the meaning of Zhao Yin's words. She shook her head and said, "You misunderstood, I don't have feelings for him, but my intuition tells me that he has enough qualifications to attract my attention."

Zhao Yin disagreed, "He is lucky to have your approval. It really surprises me. But regardless, I don't believe that he has the ability to compete with us for the top three positions."

Bai Lingxi said, "Let's just wait for the final result to come out."

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Lin Xun's return didn't stir any waves, but it did make Dong Lu and Song Ling breathe an inward sigh of relief. They felt it would be a pity if something were to happen to Lin Xun given his previous performances.

Shi Yu and Ning Meng were also relieved.

"You—why did you take so long?" Ning Meng sounded annoyed.

Lin Xun smiled bitterly and shrugged. "I ran into a group of blood poisonous bees on the way back, so I had to change route."

Blood poisonous bees!

Shi Yu and Ning Meng looked at each other and couldn't help bursting into laughter.

Blood poisonous bees were a peculiar poisonous creature in Demon Cloud Ridge. They were extremely fast and experts at hiding so were extremely difficult to kill.

Furthermore, they always moved in groups and attacked a cultivator's buttocks. If bitten, the infected area would become swollen, painful and itchy, but there wouldn't be any life threatening danger. Though the feeling was already disgusting enough.

"Here, let me see if your butt is still there." Ning Meng smiled strangely as he stretched out his hand.

Lin Xun lashed out with a kick. "Get lost!"

Clang!

A bell rang, signaling the end of the three-month war zone assessment.

In the end, forty-two students had returned to the open space in front of Black Wind Camp!

In other words, a total of 195 students were eliminated of the 237 students who came to participate in the assessment!

The elimination rate was terrifying and shocking.

However, all the Blood Kill Camp instructors knew very well that the result was already very good compared to previous years.

When the bell rang, the group of Blood Kill Camp instructors and Black Wind Army soldiers gathered all the students and counted their military merits and assessed their results.

Based on the order that the students returned, they each came forward and handed over their storage ring for collecting military merits. Bai Lingxi was first.

A pile of blood-stained brute totem runes poured out and stacked up like a hill. They filled the area with a bloody stench.

All the students couldn't help but widen their eyes in shock. So many!

A totem brute rune represented a Magi Brute expert killed. There are so many brute totem runes piled up, how many Magi Brute experts had died under Bai Lingxi's hands?

Several Blood Kill Camp instructors came forward to count the military merits.

It suddenly became still and quiet. Everyone was anxiously waiting for the final result, but Bai Lingxi seemed very calm, as though she didn't care.

"1,309 military merits," reported an instructor.

Gasps of exclamations and astonishment arose from the crowd and their gazes turned strange when they looked at Bai Lingxi.

The maiden with the innate talent Eternal Shining Stars seemed to be cloaked in a dazzling halo that made many people feel inferior.

“Unless something unexpected happens, she would definitely take first place.”

Many people had the same thought. They were aware of the number of military merits they had obtained and they knew that they couldn't be compared to Bai Lingxi's.

Zhao Yin was the second to hand over his military merits for assessment. After checking and verifying, Zhao Yin obtained a total of 1,254 military merits. Although slightly less than Bai Lingxi, his score was still remarkable and caused an uproar.

Zhao Yin only smiled modestly in response. Then, he went to stand beside Bai Lingxi and said, “See, my evaluation is right.”

Bai Lingxi didn't say anything.

The third to step forward was Li Duxing, and he obtained a total of 1,258 military merits.

The fourth was Zhangsun Hen, and he obtained 1243 military merits.

Zhao Yin was inwardly pleased because it proved that his evaluation was correct.

The only thing that surprised Zhao Yin was that Li Duxing's military merits exceeded his. Though he felt a little uncomfortable with the result, he could still accept it because there was only a difference of four military merits between them.

“Lingxi, I doubt the top three will change. You are first, Li Duxing is second and I am third.” Zhao Yin said with a smile.

Bai Lingxi frowned imperceptibly and she said, “It's not over yet. Don't speak so soon.”

Zhao Yin nodded. “You're right, then let's wait and see.”

He sneered inwardly, guessing that she was waiting for the other results to be announced. But he felt a little uncomfortable. Could Bai Lingxi actually be thinking that Lin Xun could change the top three positions?

Absolutely ridiculous!

While the two were conversing, the instructors continued to count the military merits.

“Shi Yu, 1178 military merits.”

Shi Yu was relieved to hear his result announced but at the same time he became a little nervous because Ning Meng's would be announced next!

His score determined the outcome of the bet between them. It was understandable for Shi Yu to be nervous.

When he looked at Ning Meng again, he looked like he was facing a powerful enemy. He held his breath and his eyes were glued to the pile of brute totem runes being counted, for fear of the instructors miscounting.

Standing between the two, Lin Xun was a little dumbfounded by their reactions.

“Ning Meng, 1,179 military merits!”

The announced result utterly stunned Shi Yu. I actually lost to an idiot! And there’s only a difference of one military merit between us!

Ning Meng broke into wild laughter and said triumphantly, “Little White Face, I’ll be waiting for you to send over one thousand gold coins and then obediently admit that you’re weaker than me!”

Shi Yu looked extremely bad. He hated the fact that he couldn’t strangle Ning Meng to death. Ning Ming had yelled out at the top of his voice, so didn’t that mean that basically everyone now knew that Shi Yu had lost the bet?

Suddenly, he noticed Lin Xun next to him and he immediately smiled coldly at Ning Meng. “Idiot, Lin Xun also participated in the bet. Don’t you think it’s ridiculous to talk about the outcome of the bet before Lin Xun’s result is announced?”

Ning Meng was taken aback for a moment and then he smiled brightly. “Little White Face, if you lose, you lose. Don’t use other people to lessen the embarrassment for yourself, isn’t that shameful?”

Shi Yu ignored him, turned his head and asked Lin Xun, “Our assessment results are out, do you think you will be higher or lower than us?”

Lin Xun said blankly, “I’m not sure yet.”

He really wasn’t sure. He had collected a lot of totem brute runes but he wasn’t sure how to calculate military merits since it was dependent on the marking criteria that the instructors used.

For example, the military merit obtained from killing a level-eight or lower brute slave wasn’t as much as the military merit obtained from killing a level-nine brute slave.

Time passed by and the scores of each student were accurately counted. Except for Bai Lingxi, Zhao Yin and a few other elite students, none had over one thousand military merits.

Lin Xun was the last to hand over his military merits.

When Zhao Yin saw Lin Xun appear, he kindly reminded Bai Lingxi, “Hey, it’s his turn now. I hope he will be a huge unexpected variable.” His voice contained a hint of disdain.

Bai Lingxi swept a glance over him and said nothing.

“I can’t let that idiot Ning Meng win, otherwise I won’t be able to raise my head again in the future...”

Shi Yu didn’t care whether Lin Xun could compete for the top three positions. He only hoped that Lin Xun could suppress Ning Meng and help vent his anger.

Ning Meng seemed a little nervous and said nothing.

“Let’s see if he can create a miracle this time.” Dong Lu muttered.

“If he can rank among the top five, I will treat you to a bottle of Floating Light Sky Wine.” Song Ling said directly.

Dong Lu's eyes suddenly lit up, and the alcoholic bugs in his stomach were aroused. Floating Light Sky Wine was a fine wine that couldn't be bought even with money!

However, just when everyone was full of anticipation, something strange happened.

All the instructors counting the military merits all paused and gazed at an extremely tattered totem brute rune.

The strange scene immediately caught everyone's attention. Could there be something mysterious about the tattered totem brute rune?

Chapter 173 Climb to the Top in One Move

The unusual scene caught everyone's attention.

No one would have imagined that such a change would happen just as the instructors were almost finished counting everyone's military merits. People couldn't help but speculate what was happening.

Bai Lingxi said softly, "The unexpected variable is here."

Zhao Yin's expression altered subtly and he forced a smile. "I don't think so. It must be because the totem brute rune is so damaged that it's difficult to determine the amount of military merit it is worth."

As Zhao Yin was speaking, he seemed to have regained his confidence. "Look, the totem brute runes that Lin Xun had acquired could at most be exchanged for one thousand military merits. It's wishful thinking if he thinks that he could compete for the top three spots."

He became calm and composed like he had predicted that it would happen.

However, soon, when the instructor announced Lin Xun's score, Zhao Yin was frozen to the spot.

"Lin Xun has obtained 1,309 military merits!"

The audience broke into an uproar, their eyes wide with disbelief.

"How is that possible? He clearly doesn't have as many totem brute runes as Bai Lingxi. Why did he receive exactly the same amount of military merits as her?"

"This...this is too unbelievable!"

"If that's the case, doesn't it mean that Lin Xun and Bai Lingxi are tied for first place in the war zone assessment?"

The students were in an uproar. They couldn't believe what they heard.

Even Shi Yu and Ning Meng were dumbfounded. They thought that Lin Xun would at most obtain a similar score to them, but who would have thought that he not only surpassed them but climbed to the top spot!

In other words, they had both lost to Lin Xun in the bet.

Zhao Yin's expression rapidly changed. If Lin Xun indeed achieved that score, he would drop from the third spot to the fourth!

Zhao Yin completely didn't expect that to happen.

Not only the students were in disbelief, but the instructors counting the military merits and the Black Wind Army generals also couldn't remain calm.

Their gazes turned strange as they looked at Lin Xun. But they all knew that the score that they had given Lin Xun was already the minimum.

If it was according to real military merit, Lin Xun would have even a higher score based on his military merits!

Everything was due to the badly damaged totem brute rune. It was only found on level-2 elite brute soldiers.

A level-2 brute soldier was equivalent to an expert at the intermediate Spirit Dipper Stage!

According to the empire's reward standard, the assassination of a level-2 brute soldiers could be exchanged for 300 military merits at a minimum and 800 at a maximum!

Therefore, after a short discussion, the instructors awarded Lin Xun the same military merit score as Bai Lingxi.

This was because the totem brute rune that Lin Xun had obtained was too unbelievable and could have sparked a lot of controversy. If he scored higher than Bai Lingxi, the controversy would be even more intense.

Lin Xun was equally dumbstruck. He had confidence in his military merits and wasn't worried that he would lose the bet with Shi Yu and Ning Meng, but he never thought that he would climb to the top and be tied with Bai Lingxi.

However, he soon realized it was likely due to the totem brute rune he obtained from killing Shui Ying.

Amidst the uproar and clamor of discussion, the military merit assessment had come to an end, and Lin Xun and Bai Lingxi were tied for first place.

The second place was Li Duxing. This was indisputable.

It was only a little awkward for Zhao Yin who was supposed to be ranked third. However, now that Lin Xun had taken the joint top spot, he was dropped to the fourth place.

"That's the unexpected variable." Bai Lingxi uttered as she turned around and left.

Zhao Yin's expression changed indefinitely. He felt extremely uncomfortable like he had swallowed a fly. Lin Xun is the one who caused all this!

"You want to tie for first place with Bai Lingxi? You have to ask I, Zhao Yin, first!"

Zhao Yin fumed in his heart. He had decided to wait for an opportunity to teach Lin Xun a lesson after returning to Blood Kill Camp, so that Lin Xun would fully understand the gap between them.

Lin Xun had never thought that his assessment score would spark hatred from Zhao Yin. It was definitely an underserved catastrophe.

But some matters were absurd and full of unpredictable changes.

“You lost. You owe me a bottle of Floating Light Sky Wine.” Dong Lu smiled triumphantly.

Song Ling snorted, his face devoid of emotions but his heart was filled with complicated feelings. How could a True Martial youngster kill a level-two brute soldier?

How great of a stir would this incident cause if it were to spread out?

However, Song Ling knew that the students’ scores in Blood Kill Camp was a top secret of the empire. They were not allowed to leak their scores to anyone else.

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The war zone assessment that had been going on for three months had finally come to an end.

Some people were eliminated and some were killed on Demon Cloud Ridge. Only a total of forty-two students remained in the camp.

After the students’ military merits were assessed one by one, the Blood Kill Camp instructors didn’t rest. They immediately took the forty-two students who had passed the assessment onto the battleship and left Black Wind Army Camp that evening.

On the battleship.

Shi Yu and Ning Meng were very quiet. They furtively glanced at Lin Xun from time to time like they were looking at a monster.

Lin Xun couldn’t stand it anymore and said helplessly, “Do you two have something to say?”

Shi Yu coughed out loud and uttered weakly, “Uh, I lost the bet, but do I really have to owe you one thousand gold coins...”

Lin Xun immediately raised his brows. “Do you want to go back on your words?”

Shi Yu hurriedly shook his head. “That’s not it. I just need some time to raise such a huge amount of money. You know that it isn’t a small amount. It’s equivalent to one hundred thousand silver coins and ten million copper coins. Given my current powers, it’s really hard to gather together that amount on such short notice.”

He looked very embarrassed. As the third son of Fortune God Shi, it was indeed humiliating if he couldn’t pay the amount he owed from a bet.

Lin Xun said bluntly, “Simple, sign a written promise to pay back the debt.”

Shi Yu nodded reluctantly, “That’s what I should do.”

Lin Xun turned to look at Ning Meng, only to see him mumbling in embarrassment, “That...I...actually...”

Lin Xun said angrily, “Do you also want to sign a written promise?”

Ning Meng readily agreed. He nodded like a chicken pecking at grain.

Lin Xun couldn’t help but smile. He didn’t actually take the bet seriously.

Of course, Lin Xun felt very proud to defeat the two.

“By the way, how did you do that?”

Ning Meng suddenly asked. He had been trying to solve the puzzlement in his mind and so he couldn't hold back from asking Lin Xun anymore.

Shi Yu also looked at Lin Xun curiously.

Lin Xun only said “secret” to the two and it made them speechless. Since Lin Xun didn't want to say anything, they also didn't question him further.

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A few days later.

Lin Xun and the other forty-two students didn't receive a warm welcome when they returned to Blood Kill Camp. Instead, they were ordered to return to their respective campgrounds as soon as they arrived.

The instructors responsible for bringing them back, such as Dong Lu, rushed to report back to Xu Sanqi.

After returning to his respective campground, Lin Xun headed straight to Old Mo's warehouse.

The warehouse was empty and quiet. Xiaoman wasn't around and Old Mo was gone. As he stood alone in the warehouse and gazed at the familiar place, he couldn't help feeling a little emotional.

After standing in silence for a moment, Lin Xun lay down on a bench. His many experiences in Blood Kill Camp flashed across his mind.

A wave of fatigue washed over him and he closed his eyes.

He had been caught in countless fierce battles during his three months on Demon Cloud Ridge. His mind was always tense and he was constantly injured, and he even fell into life threatening danger many times.

His mind instantly relaxed now that he had returned. He was able to have a comfortable good sleep.

Meanwhile, in the central campground of Blood Kill Camp.

After Xu Sanqi patiently listened to the assessment situation on Demon Cloud Ridge, his expression altered subtly and he couldn't help but ask, “Are you sure Lin Xun killed the level-2 brute soldier by himself?”

The instructors who went to Demon Cloud Ridge with the students all nodded.

They didn't know how Lin Xun did it, but they were certain that no one helped him in the assessment.

“Maybe he ran into a heavily wounded level-two brute soldier by chance.” Xiaoke said casually.

Many instructors nodded. They also had the same thought. After all, it was too unbelievable for a True Martial youngster to kill a level-two brute soldier.

Only that explanation made complete sense.

“Why would a Magi Brute expert of that level appear on Demon Cloud Ridge?” Xu Sanqi asked another key question.

“I heard from Song Ling that the Water Tribe was planning something, but we don’t exactly know what,” answered Dong Lu.

Xu Sanqi frowned. “Never mind. The assessment is over. It isn’t necessary to think about it anymore. Xiaoke, have a chat with Lin Xun when you return to the campground. But if he doesn’t want to tell you, you don’t need to force him.”

Xiaoke nodded.

“Everyone, the war zone assessment is over and a total of forty-two students are left. The Blood Kill Camp training will end in three months.”

Xu Sanqi drew a deep breath, his expression imposing and cold. “In the remaining time, we have to do one thing, and that is to eliminate another twelve students from the remaining forty-two!”

All the instructors stared at him blankly and couldn’t understand his reason.

Xu Sanqi quickly explained, “Because the Dipper Transformation Lake...can only take thirty students!”

Chapter 174 The Secret of Rune Beasts

When Lin Xun woke up, his cheeks were warm and moist.

He opened his eyes and saw a little round thing happily licking his cheeks with its little pink tongue.

“Chirp—”

When it saw Lin Xun wake up, it became even more happy and chirped repeatedly in joy.

Lin Xun lifted Jiujiu’s soft body with one hand and wiped the saliva off his face with the other. He smiled bitterly, “The way you welcome me back is too unusual.”

“Hmph, stop pretending. Jiujiu wouldn’t welcome anyone else so enthusiastically.”

Xiaoman was standing beside them with her fair arms crossed in front of her plump chest. The corners of her lips were raised and an annoyed look replaced the joy on her beautiful face.

“How long have I slept?” Lin Xun got up, his body feeling light and comfortable. He had never felt this relaxed before.

“One day and one night.”

As Xiaoman was speaking, she brought over a plate of food. There was roasted pork coated with thick sauce and it was served with aeth grain rice and a cup of freshly squeezed aeth fruit juice. It was a simple meal but it looked great, smelled great, and tasted great.

Lin Xun’s stomach suddenly rumbled and he buried his head in the food.

Jiujiu bounced up and down around his feet like a ball, and from time to time, it rubbed against his leg affectionately. It looked extremely happy.

Xiaoman watched with envy while sighing inwardly.

In the three months that Lin Xun was gone, she had been taking care of Jiujiu, but Jiujiu had never let her touch it. It would struggle fiercely and scream when Xiaoman held it in her arms. Xiaoman didn't know whether to laugh or cry.

She couldn't help but feel jealous seeing Jiujiu greet Lin Xun so enthusiastically. What an ungrateful thing.

"By the way, I heard that you took first in the war zone assessment?" Xiaoman suddenly asked.

"Yes, luckily." Lin Xun mumbled while eating.

"Luck? I think so too. A level-two brute soldier died in your hands. What else could it be besides luck?" Xiaoman said thoughtfully.

Lin Xun understood her meaning right away. He said helplessly, "Big Sister Xiaoman, if you want to know the truth, you can just ask me directly. Why do you have to beat around the bush?"

Xiaoman suddenly pulled and twisted Lin Xun's ear. She coldly snorted, "Hey, you think you can see through a woman's heart? Then why don't you guess what I am thinking now?"

Her beautiful eyes were watery, charming and captivating. But Lin Xun's heart shuddered when she stared at them and he hurriedly said, "Miss Xiaoman, I don't need to guess. You have a chest like a valley and can accommodate the world. How could I, a mere mortal, read your heart?"

Xiaoman forced a smile and bit her red lips. "Are you saying that my breasts are big?"

Lin Xun's face was overcast with weariness. How can she openly talk about breast size?!

Most importantly, it's difficult to answer the question. It seems inappropriate to talk about the size of her chest...

"Uh, let's talk about the results of the war zone assessment instead." Lin Xun smartly changed the topic.

Xiaoman said disdainfully, "Little brother, when you chicken out when you tease a woman, the woman will look down on you."

Lin Xun nodded like he agreed.

When arguing with a woman, admitting defeat is the same as victory!

As expected, Xiaoman suddenly lost interest when she saw Lin Xun voluntarily admit defeat. "Then, do you have something you want to tell me now?"

Lin Xun immediately said, "Yes, about how I killed that level-two brute soldier...I think I should discuss it with Miss Xiaoman."

Xiaoman leaned sideways on the chair and crossed her slender and long legs. She nodded with satisfaction as though she was saying "Good boy!"

Her posture was very seductive, particularly when her smooth fair legs shined captivatingly like ivory under the sunlight. It could easily arouse a person's wild imagination.

Lin Xun was fourteen years old. His experience in the past few years had made him mature quicker than his peers. Although he was already aware of Xiaoman's beauty, his heart still skipped a beat when he saw such a seductive woman lying on her side.

He looked away and coughed out loud. Only then did he tell Xiaoman how he killed Shui Ying.

He had nothing to hide because Xiaoman had already known about his mastery in the art of runes.

"So, it wasn't a fluke that you killed him?"

Xiaoman's eyes lit up. She stared right at Lin Xun like she had found a rare treasure.

"Amazing, who would believe that a ninth layer True Martial youngster could create a rune array with just a heap of useless and useful rune materials?"

The more Xiaoman talked, the more excited she became. "If this matter spreads out, wouldn't the rune masters in the empire be embarrassed to death? I wonder how Old Mo would feel when he learns that you succeeded in producing a rune array?"

Xiaoman seemed happier and more excited than Lin Xun. Her beautiful and sexy face was glowing with pride and excitement.

Although Lin Xun felt that Xiaoman was overreacting, he felt a warmth filling his heart when he saw her become incredibly happy for him.

"My young rune master, well done!"

Xiaoman stood up, and before Lin Xun could react, she wrapped her arms around him and kissed him on the cheek.

Of course it wasn't a romantic action between a man and a woman.

However, Lin Xun still found the intimate action a little uncomfortable. He couldn't help but smile wryly. "Big Sister Xiaoman, can we calm down a little?"

Xiaoman rolled her eyes and said irritably, "You're taking a favor for granted. Okay, then do you think we should tell Chief Xu about this?"

Lin Xun's expression turned serious and solemn. "If Big Sister Xiaoman trusts Instructor Xu Sanqi, there is no harm in telling him."

He gave Xiaoman the option to choose. He trusted Xiaoman but he didn't completely trust Xu Sanqi.

Xiaoman nodded. "I understand."

Lin Xun suddenly remembered something. He took out the black beast tooth he obtained from Shui Ying and said, "Big Sister Xiaoman, take a look at this. Do you know what it is?"

Swoosh!

Before Xiaoman answered him, something unexpected happened. Jiujiu, who had been jumping around Lin Xun's feet, suddenly bounced up and swallowed the black beast tooth in Lin Xun's hand, like it smelled the most delicious thing in the world.

Jiujiu moved so fast that Lin Xun couldn't react in time. He jumped up and it was already too late to stop Jiujiu.

After swallowing the black beast tooth, Jiujiu tottered on the ground like it was drunk. Its round body had a lustrous red shine as it rolled around innocently.

Before long, following a loud chirp, Jiujiu burst into flames. It pierced into Lin Xun's palm and vanished without a trace.

At the same time, a flame-like pattern emerged on the skin of his palm. It was extremely mysterious like a totem.

Lin Xun felt that something was in his palm, but he didn't feel anything abnormal nor did he feel any discomfort.

Lin Xun was completely taken aback. What is this?

"It has absorbed so much power so it needs a while to digest it."

Xiaoman remained very calm. "The same situation happened when I was feeding Jiujiu aeth crystals the other day. It only recovered after around three days."

Lin Xun breathed a sigh of relief, and then he said with a deep frown, "But that beast tooth..."

Xiaoman shrugged. "Who knows what it is, but it should be a treasure given Jiujiu's reaction. Jiujiu seems to like it more than aeth crystals."

In other words, the beast tooth was likely more valuable than an aeth crystal. As to how precious and rare it was, it was impossible to know now.

Although bitter about the outcome, Lin Xun had to accept it since it had already happened.

He suddenly remembered another matter. "Big Sister Xiaoman, have you ever seen rune beasts that can transform into a rune and be stored on a cultivator's body?"

Xiaoman said blankly. "I have never seen one before."

Lin Xun's expression turned serious and his forehead creased. "When I was a child, I read a book called the All-Beast Record and it noted that all the rune beasts in the world are divided into earth-grade, heaven-grade and holy grade..."

According to the All-Beast Record, earth-grade rune beasts were the most common in the world. Like human cultivators, their powers would continue to evolve with cultivation. The rune beasts that beast tamers raised were also mostly earth-grade.

Heaven-grade rune beasts were superior to earth grade rune beasts in terms of bloodline, talent and strength. They possessed extremely high intelligence. Not only could they cultivate and evolve, but they could also master unique combat arts.

Heaven-grade rune beasts were incredibly rare in the world and were very valuable in the Ziyao Empire.

For example, the violet-horned beast belonging to the imperial family was a heaven-grade rune beast. It possessed unimaginable divine powers and could deter Heaven Ascension cultivators from attacking or invading!

It was rumored that the violet-horned beast was ranked in the top 30 of heaven-grade rune beasts!

Holy-grade rune beasts were even rarer than heaven-grade rune beasts. They were only born with luck and only one might emerge in thousands of years.

Only around six or seven holy-grade rune beasts had been recorded in the historical books of the Ziyao Empire. However, the records were very vague and made no mention of their unfathomable divine powers.

“What puzzles me the most is that there is an extremely complicated process for rune beasts to recognize their masters before they could be stored in a cultivator’s body. I haven’t heard of any beast like Jiujiu who could be stored in a cultivator’s body without having to acknowledge a master.” Lin Xun expressed his puzzlement.

“All this only proves that Jiujiu isn’t a descendant of the golden flame beast at all. Its origin may be more rare and mysterious than we can imagine.”

A ruminative expression crept into Xiaoman’s eyes. “But you don't have to worry. Although Jiujiu hasn’t recognized you as its master, it’s obvious that it already treats you as its family. It shouldn’t pose any threat to you.”

Lin Xun thought about it and nodded eventually.

“Be prepared, in three days, you will start a new training. This training is related to whether you can finally enter the Dipper Transformation Lake. You mustn’t relax during this period.”

Just before Xiaoman left Old Mo’s warehouse, she reminded Lin Xun, and her words made Lin Xun’s heart tremble.

Chapter 175 New Record

Three days later, the training in Blood Kill Camp resumed. Only then did Lin Xun realize that that was the real training of Blood Kill Camp!

The remaining forty-two students would receive one-on-one training.

Each student would be under the training of one instructor and the instructor would draw up a special training tailored to each student’s characteristics. *novelnext.com*

This was to encourage each student to realize their potential.

Furthermore, instructors could impart a more in depth knowledge in theoretical subjects such as how to practice a martial art to the perfect realm at the shortest time possible.

For example, they could explain in depth about the various dangers and tests that cultivators would have to face in the Spirit Dipper, Spirit Sea, Heaven Ascension Stage and Cyclic Derivation stages.

Even though such deep-level secrets in cultivation and martial arts were only theoretical knowledge, they encompassed the many experiences and hard work of countless former sages. It was valuable knowledge that couldn't be learned in the outside world.

Such training also had not been covered in Blood Kill Camp in the past.

This indicated that Lin Xun and the other forty-one students had passed the series of tests and received acknowledgement in Blood Kill Camp.

The remaining students would receive the true inheritance and cultivation of Blood Kill Camp!

.....

Since Lin Xun was first in the war zone assessment, he had priority in choosing a training instructor.

Many people speculated that he would choose Xu Sanqi as his training instructor, but he unexpectedly chose Xiaoke.

Xu Sanqi might have incredible power as the chief instructor, but Lin Xun felt he wasn't the most suitable.

Only Xiaoke understood how he had progressed from the sixth layer True Martial Stage to now. Only Xiaoke was familiar and understood everything about Lin Xun.

Lin Xun believed that only an instructor who understood him could conduct training that targeted his strengths and weaknesses and thereby further improve his strength.

Xiaoke didn't refuse Lin Xun's choice, but Xiaoman felt heartfelt admiration towards his decision.

From that day on, Lin Xun began a new set of trainings under Instructor Xiaoke's guidance.

Unlike the previous training, he couldn't relax for a moment. On the contrary, it was more brutal and harsh than before.

Xiaoke had never been known as a lenient instructor. She formulated the most comprehensive and extreme training plan for Lin Xun based on his limits.

Under such extreme training, Lin Xun was completely drained at the end of each day. He felt his body was on the verge of collapsing after every training session.

Fortunately, the supply of aeth medicines was no longer limited in Blood Kill Camp. As a result, every student was able to recover after training in the shortest time possible and continue their daily training.

Over time, Lin Xun gradually fell in love with such brutal and boring yet fulfilling training sessions.

His aeth power, physical strength, spirit cultivation, and martial arts were all gradually improving.

Unlike other students, Lin Xun had only broken through to the ninth layer True Martial Stage slightly over one month ago, and so he had a greater room for improvement compared to the others.

As his overall strength continuously changed, Xiaoke would make little adjustments to his training plan in order to bring out his full potential.

Xiaoke knew that cultivation was similar to going against heaven. The higher one wanted to climb, the stronger the foundation one had to establish before climbing the peak.

The True Martial Stage was the foundation stage in cultivation. If a cultivator couldn't hone their cultivation foundation to its greatest level, it would be too late to rebuild the foundation at the Spirit Dipper Stage.

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Time silently passed by like flowing water.

One month later.

In a secret room, Lin Xun inhaled deeply, mobilizing all the aeth power in his body, causing them to tumble like raging waves.

His fist released an azure glow as he slammed it into the aeth testing stone opposite him.

The surface of the aeth testing stone rippled like waves. A beam of light shot straight up, rushing past one mark after another.

Each mark represented the degree of aeth power possessed at the True Martial Stage.

Lin Xun had tested his aeth power before in the Donglin Martial Training Hall. At the time, he only possessed a sixth layer True Martial cultivation base yet his aeth power was already 4,900 catties!

In other words, Lin Xun could compete with cultivators at the pinnacle of the eighth layer True Martial Stage in terms of aeth power.

Now that Lin Xun had reached the ninth layer True Martial Stage, been through over one year of brutal training in Blood Kill Camp, and practiced the Mystery Grotto Devour Wilderness Scripture, his aeth power was no longer the same as what it used to be.

Soon, the beam of light burst forth from the aeth testing stone as it quickly crossed the 8,000 catties mark.

Xiaoke's expression didn't change in the least.

Generally speaking, only cultivators at the pinnacle of the ninth layer True Martial Stage could possess an aeth power of 8,000 catties.

However, the Blood Kill Camp students didn't follow such benchmarks.

Xiaoke's expression only turned a little serious when she saw the beam of light showing no sign of slowing down as it neared the 9,000 catties mark.

9,000 catties!

This was the aeth power standard that every outstanding Blood Kill Camp student should reach. Xiaoke was certain that every one of the remaining forty-two students undergoing training in Blood Kill Camp could also achieve it.

To distinguish the difference between the forty-two students, one would have to see how high they reached beyond 9,000 catties.

9,100 catties.

9,300 catties.

9,500 catties.

.....

As the light ray continued to rise on the surface of the aeth testing stone, Xiaoke's expression grew more and more serious, and even turned somewhat solemn.

The light ray only slowed when it broke through the 9,800 catties mark but Xiaoke's expression still hadn't relaxed.

Her eyes were fixed on the surface of the aeth testing stone, as though anticipating something.

The empire's Divine Workshop had created this aeth testing stone and thus it was incredibly accurate and stable. The ordinary ones on the market couldn't be compared to it.

The aeth testing stone had 9,999 marks, which represented the limit that could be achieved in the ninth layer True Martial stage.

Generally speaking, the marks above the 8,000 marks were rarely used when testing the strength of True Martial cultivators.

However, Xiaoke found that the marks on the aeth testing stone seemed to be insufficient to test Lin Xun's aeth power...

When she saw the light ray collapse with a boom as it reached the 9,999 catties mark, she was convinced that the aeth testing stone was indeed not suitable for Lin Xun the weirdo!

The thought of Lin Xun's aeth power surpassing the 10,000 catties mark destroyed her originally calm state of mind.

10,000 catties!

This was a natural chasm. Since ancient times, only very few people among the countless True Martial cultivators in the empire could break through this natural chasm!

Even ordinary Spirit Dipper cultivators couldn't possibly possess such strong aeth power!

"Instructor Xiaoke, this..."

Lin Xun had been watching closely all along. He was equally surprised and scratched his head in puzzlement.

"No need to test anymore."

Xiaoke suddenly snapped awake and left with Lin Xun.

That night, Xiaohe went to find Xu Sanqi and told him about the matter. "Lin Xun's aeth power has exceeded the 10,000 catties mark."

Xu Sanqi was taken aback at first and then he nodded. "Yes, based on his performance on Demon Cloud Ridge, it's not surprising."

So far, seven to eight students among the remaining forty-two had successfully achieved this.

So Xu Sanqi wasn't particularly surprised.

"But Lin Xun is different from the other students. His power only slowed slightly when it broke the 9,800 catties mark. I believe that his final result wouldn't just be around the 10,000 catties mark."

Xu Sanqi's eyes narrowed and his cold, rock-hard face grew serious. "Then, how much do you estimate it to be?"

"I can't tell," said Xiaohe, "Unless we test it again with another aeth testing stone."

Xu Sanqi was helpless. "Impossible, the aeth testing stones in Blood Kill Camp are for cultivators in the True Martial Stage. The aeth testing stones with marks above 10,000 catties are specially used to test Spirit Dipper cultivators. There aren't any in Blood Kill Camp."

He couldn't help but sigh, "Who would have imagined that the empire benchmarks aren't suitable for those youngsters? They have simply broken previous records and created a new height."

Xiaohe corrected him, "It's not only the students of our Blood Kill Camp who could achieve this among the True Martial cultivators in the world."

Xu Sanqi said, "Have you ever seen someone as special as Lin Xun? As far as I know, he still hasn't reached the pinnacle of the ninth layer True Martial Stage, isn't that right?"

Xiaohe completely understood what Xu Sanqi was hinting at.

Indeed, Lin Xun hadn't yet reached the pinnacle level yet he already possessed such strong aeth power. How strong would his aeth power be if his cultivation base had reached the perfect stage?

"Remember, everything about him must be kept secret. A person's strength brings about danger and being too smart gets them hurt. I don't want him to be targeted by those influential people in the empire." Xu Sanqi made a decision after a long thought.

Xiaohe nodded and then she suddenly asked, "Chief Xu, is it worth it? You should know that helping students hide their secrets is tantamount to going against the will of the empire."

Xu Sanqi narrowed his eyes and remained silent for a long moment. Then he said, "I obey the will of the empire, not the will of those influential people. Xiaohe, you should understand the difference between the two."

"But if you do that, it could be very bad for you if someone finds out," Xiaohe said seriously.

Xu Sanqi snorted. "I am helping the empire train talents and not helping those influential people train obedient dogs! If they get mad, at worst, Blood Kill Camp will be closed like the last time."

A smile curved Xiaoke's lips. This was the Xu Sanqi she knew.

"Are you doing all this just for Lin Xun?" Xiaoke asked her last question.

Chapter 176 Final Assessment

Xu Sanqi asked in response, "How many other students in the camp do you think need us to help cover up their secrets?"

Xiaoke thought about it and understanding dawned on her.

There were currently forty-two students in the camp and, except for a few people such as Lin Xun and Li Duxing, everyone else had a deep background. There was no need for them to do anything.

Xu Sanqi said, "Lin Xun is different. He is the most special student in Blood Kill Camp. He not only has unimaginable potential, but, more importantly, he also has an incredible mastery in the art of runes. Both the newly transformed Violet Hero Battleship and the Flying Star Crossbow are top tools in the world. It's hard to know whether it would be a blessing or a curse if he was used by those influential people in the empire."

In just a few words, Xu Sanqi had shown his distrust in the influential people of the empire and even seemed to oppose them!

.....

Lin Xun didn't know that the uniqueness that he had shown had already caught Xu Sanqi's attention, and it even brought him a certain degree of protection.

Only time would tell whether the protection was good or bad.

Training continued to happen every day. When Lin Xun reached the pinnacle of the ninth layer True Martial Stage and lit up the eighth spirit star in his mind-sea, only three days were left of the one year training in Blood Kill Camp.

The training that day came to an end and Xiaoke suddenly said, "Tomorrow is the last round of assessment. The thirty students who pass will be able to enter the Dipper Transformation Lake."

Lin Xun was taken aback for a moment. He only then realized that he had been in Blood Kill Camp for almost one year.

That night, Lin Xun and Xiaoman had dinner in Old Mo's warehouse.

While they were eating, Lin Xun sharply noticed that Xiaoman seemed a little distracted. He couldn't help but ask, "Big Sister Xiaoman, you don't seem to be in a good mood?"

Xiaoman sighed faintly, "Don't worry about me. Just make sure that you're prepared for tomorrow's assessment. There are only three days left. It will be disappointing if you are eliminated at this point."

Lin Xun nodded and they ate silently.

Xiaoman felt that the atmosphere was a little dull and so she asked, "Jiujiu still hasn't woken up?"

Lin Xun nodded. Ever since the little thing had swallowed the black beast tooth, it had fallen into a deep sleep in his palm.

"It looks like that the black beast tooth is indeed an amazing treasure," Xiaoman remarked thoughtfully.

Lin Xun stared at Xiaoman and said, "Big Sister Xiaoman, although I may leave Blood Kill Camp soon, you must tell me if you have any trouble."

His tone was calm and serious.

Xiaoman was taken aback. Only after a long moment did she sneer out loud, "You think you can help me solve my troubles?"

Lin Xun didn't seem affected by her response. Instead, he assumed a serious and solemn expression. "But at least I will do my best and won't frown once."

Xiaoman acknowledged him, got up, and walked out of the warehouse. "Have a good rest. If you're eliminated in tomorrow's assessment, I won't acknowledge you as my little brother anymore."

Lin Xun watched Xiaoman leave. He eventually gave a brisk toss of his head, shaking off the distracting thoughts.

.....

However, Lin Xun didn't notice that Xiaoman's eyes had misted over just as she turned around to leave the warehouse.

She walked alone in the dark night, her silky soft hair flowing gently in the light wind. It brought a hint of coldness.

"That little brat is too emotional. When he leaves Blood Kill Camp, I wonder how many girls' hearts he will steal in the future," muttered Xiaoman.

Her emotions roiled uncontrollably because of Lin Xun's words. It had been many years since she had ever experienced that feeling.

Suddenly, Xu Sanqi's tough voice rang like a sword in the night. "This year's training will end soon. Do you really plan to not leave Blood Kill Camp?"

Xiaoman's body stiffened and the tears instantly faded from her beautiful eyes. She said pitifully, "Chief Xu, are you going to kick me away?"

Xu Sanqi's thin spear-like figure appeared before her. He swept a glance over Xiaoman and said, "I'm not kidding. The points you won in the last bet are enough to get you out of Blood Kill Camp. You don't have to bear the responsibility of the empire anymore. There is a rare chance. You should think properly about it."

"I don't need to think about it," Xiaoman said without hesitation. "I have chosen to stay in Blood Kill Camp. As for this chance...give it to Xiaoke."

Xu Sanqi's razor-sharp eyes narrowed as he said solemnly, "You know that Xiaohe will immediately head to Forbidden City to settle the grudge if she can leave Blood Kill Camp. Are you really mentally prepared?"

A grim look passed over Xiaoman's beautiful face, and after a long pause, she gritted her teeth and said, "I have already done something wrong back then. I don't want this wrongdoing to continue."

Xu Sanqi stared at Xiaoman for a long moment, and he eventually nodded. "You chose your own path. I hope you won't regret it in the future."

He turned around and left.

Xiaoman sat alone in the dark, gazing at the night sky. Suddenly, she felt a weight lifted off her heart.

After so many years, it's time to let go!

.....

Early next morning.

Lin Xun and the other forty-one students were summoned and led to a huge site by Xu Sanqi.

The place was very special. The ground was paved with smooth, jet-black rocks, and the surface was engraved with mysterious runes. They glistened with a dreamy shine under the sunlight.

Thirty stone pillars stood in the center of the site. Each one was nine feet tall and entirely jet-black. They resembled giant swords piercing into the sky.

The students felt an indescribably solemn aura assaulting their faces as they stood in the site. They quivered inwardly and dared not utter a slight noise.

"Those thirty stone pillars represent thirty passages into the Dipper Transformation Lake!"

Xu Sanqi instantly captured the students' attention. Their eyes blazed when they looked at the stone pillars.

Their ultimate goal of entering Blood Kill Camp was to enter the Dipper Transformation Lake.

The opportunity was right in front of them!

"This assessment is also your last assessment in Blood Kill Camp. The rules of the assessment are very simple. Students will compete for the thirty stone pillars. Those who fail to grab one can challenge any student with a stone pillar. You have one hour, and students without a stone pillar at the end of the assessment will be eliminated from the camp!"

Xu Sanqi quickly explained the assessment rules. "Remember, you can't fight in groups. Only one on one challenges are allowed. You can only use combat weapons and auxiliary items such as short crossbows and poisonous fog are not allowed!"

Suddenly, the atmosphere became tense.

There were forty-two students present, but only thirty stone pillars. In other words, twelve students would be eliminated after the assessment!

Only three days remained of the Blood Kill Camp training. Who would want to be eliminated at this point?

No one!

Lin Xun was a little surprised by the simple assessment rule. It might sound simple to compete for one of the thirty stone pillars in one hour but upon a deeper thought, it is extremely dangerous.

If a student who had occupied a stone pillar was challenged by someone and lost, it would be very difficult for them to recover and regain control.

However, the winning side would also face danger because their strength would be exhausted after the battle. They would no doubt become the target of other students without a stone pillar.

The assessment not only tested their combat strength but also their consumption of physical strength!

“Now, the assessment begins!” said Xu Sanqi.

Swoosh!

Before his voice died away, the students were already racing towards the thirty stone pillars in the center of the site like arrows fired from the bowstring.

Everyone scrambled to be the first; the scene immediately turned chaotic.

All of them did everything they could to be the first to occupy a stone pillar.

Boom!

A student had just stepped on the stone pillar when someone charged over and forced them off the stone pillar with a palm thrust.

Soon, similar scenes happened one after another.

It was the same with Lin Xun. He was one of the first to reach a stone pillar but three students were competing with him.

Battles inevitably broke out. As soon as he stepped on the stone pillar, a muscular youngster roared, “Get down!”

As he was roaring, he aimed a punch towards Lin Xun.

With a wave of his sleeve, Lin Xun effortlessly blasted the muscular youngster across the air. The youngster slammed into the ground, screaming in agony.

The other two students’ faces immediately blanched with fear. They took a hard look at Lin Xun and immediately turned around to choose another target.

Lin Xun stood tall on the stone pillar as he surveyed the surroundings. He immediately found an interesting scene.

Bai Lingxi, Zhao Yin, Li Duxing and Zhangsun Hen had already occupied a stone pillar but no one dared to challenge them.

Everyone knew that trying to take Bai Lingxi's stone pillar was no different from throwing eggs at a rock.

Similarly, Lin Xun also found that many students without a stone pillar would look hesitant when they made contact with his eyes. In the end, none of them dared to move towards him.

This made Lin Xun realize that he indeed possessed a certain power in Blood Kill Camp that deterred the other students from targeting him.

The chaos didn't last particularly long on the battlefield. Thirty students had occupied a stone pillar each, and the remaining twelve students increased their vigilance. Instead of rashly attacking, they were observing and choosing the most suitable target.

Lin Xun was surprised to find that Ning Meng hadn't grabbed a stone pillar. His eyes were wide open as he carefully chose his opponent.

When Lin Xun noticed the fighting spirit blazing in Ning Meng's eyes as well as the look of excitement on his face, he was speechless for a while. He understood that Ning Meng intentionally didn't grab a stone pillar.

He wanted to have a good fight!

"This assessment seems a little too easy..."

Some instructors whispered in the distance. They felt that the assessment was a little too calm and that there wasn't anything interesting to watch.

"It just began. The real show is about to start," said Xu Sanqi indifferently

Chapter 177 Heavenly Lightning Ring

The atmosphere was tense and austere.

The twelve students without a stone pillar were cautiously choosing their targets and those occupying a stone pillar also didn't relax their guards. Every student was ready for battle like they were facing formidable enemies.

Only Lin Xun, Bai Lingxi, Zhao Yin, Zhangsun Hen and Li Duxing looked the calmest and most relaxed.

They were the most outstanding group of people in the camp and had established their reputation in the one year of training.

Only stupid people would choose to challenge any of them for a stone pillar.

Perhaps, this was the reason that Bai Lingxi felt a little bored. She sat down cross-legged on the stone pillar, closed her eyes, and started to meditate.

This wasn't arrogance or disregard for the other students, but absolute confidence in her own strength!

Many students were full of admiration and envious of her.

However, the dull and boring atmosphere was quickly destroyed. Ning Meng seemed to have chosen a target. He pointed at the young man on a stone pillar afar and said loud and clear, "Zhangsun Hen, I haven't found an opportunity to challenge you for a whole year. You can't escape this time!"

His words caused an uproar.

Who would have thought that Ning Meng would immediately point his finger at Zhangsun Hen?

He was too brave!

Who was Zhangsun Hen? He was comparable to Bai Lingxi, Zhao Yin and Li Duxing. How could anyone be able to shake his position?

Most importantly, this was the last assessment and concerned who would enter the Dipper Transformation Lake!

Based on those circumstances, no one expected Ning Meng to challenge Zhangsun Hen.

In the distance, Shi Yu couldn't help but scold Ning Meng out loud. "That idiot is so stupid. He could have waited to settle his grudge later on!"

Lin Xun scrunched his brows. He suddenly remembered that, when they first met, Shi Yu had joked that Ning Meng's nemesis Zhangsun Hen had also come to Blood Kill Camp.

Lin Xun didn't care much at the time. He just thought it was some sort of competition between teenagers. Who would have thought that Ning Meng would erupt in the last assessment?!

All this indicated that the conflict between Ning Meng and Zhangsun Hen wasn't that simple.

The commotion around didn't seem to affect Ning Meng. His mighty figure stood tall, his eyes flashed like lightning, and he looked incredibly heroic.

This made everyone realize that Ning Meng was not joking. He was serious!

Finally, Zhangsun Hen said, "I have been waiting for this day for a long time. I just didn't expect you to be so impatient to want to decide the winner in this assessment."

His voice had a unique harshness and sounded like a blade scraping across metal. It made people uncomfortable.

He looked handsome and elegant, but his eyebrows arched arrogantly. It made his bearing aggressive and domineering.

This was Zhangsun Hen. His grandfather was Zhangsun Xiongyuan, a top general in the empire. He was an expert that could shake the empire and had made outstanding contributions to the empire. He was known as the pillar of the empire.

As the grandson of Zhangsun Xiongyuan, it was easy to imagine what powerful identity and status Zhangsun Hen had.

Although identity and status meant nothing in Blood Kill Camp and everything depended on true strength, Zhangsun Hen wasn't just an ordinary young master. On the contrary, he had extremely outstanding strength and was remarkable in every aspect.

"Impatient? Nonsense, I just don't intend to let you enter the Dipper Transformation Lake." **NOVELnext.COM**

As Ning Meng laughed, he slammed his foot on the ground and sped skywards. Wisps of terrifying and dazzling thunderbolts surged all over his body. He swung his halberd up and slashed it down at Zhangsun Hen.

He did it without the slightest hesitation!

Boom!

Shrouded in thunderbolts and crushing the air with its terrifying power, the halberd resembled a dragon in the air.

Everything proved that Ning Meng wasn't joking.

Zhangsun Hen's face darkened a little. With a shua, a long sword appeared in his grip and a chilling fierce aura suddenly poured out his body.

It was as though a bloodthirsty sword was breaking out of its sheath.

In the blink of an eye, the two were locked in a fierce battle. One was grand like a thunderbolt and exhibited an haughty and overbearing stance.

The other was filled with murderous intent. His sword glinted like lightning in his hand and its terrifyingly sharp tip shook the world.

The duel between the two young youngsters immediately attracted everyone's attention.

Even Xu Sanqi and the other instructors in the distance cast their eyes towards them. Both Ning Meng and Zhangsun Hen were exceptional talents in the camp. No matter who lost, it would be a loss to Blood Kill Camp.

However, a battle clearly was inevitable.

Rumble—

The violent wind raged and the terrifying divine light danced wildly in the air, producing bursts of booming noise.

Many people were surprised when they saw that Ning Meng and Zhangsun Hen were evenly matched.

Some people fell into deep thought.

Zhangsun Hen was the grandson of General Zhangsun Xiongyuan of the empire and had a prestigious background.

However, Ning Meng wasn't inferior in that aspect. His grandfather was Iron Blood King Ning Bugui who had guarded the western frontier of the empire for hundreds of years. He was known as Iron Blood War God.

Both had a military background, but they saw each other as enemies. Many people speculated that the battle had a deeper meaning and perhaps was related to the conflict between the two great military forces of the empire!

Boom!

Suddenly, Ning Meng was blasted away, staggering backwards in mid-air. Many people gasped. Is the winner of the battle going to be decided?

Lin Xun frowned, his heart tightening.

He had been paying close attention to the battle. Zhangsun Hen was undeniably strong and all his combat arts were extraordinary.

Ning Meng wasn't inferior in comparison, but Lin Xun knew that Ning Meng would fall into a disadvantageous situation if he didn't gain control of the battle.

Lin Xun didn't expect that Ning Meng would be in an unfavorable situation. He couldn't help but worry about him.

"You haven't practiced your Thunderbolt of Eight Wasteland enough. It's much inferior to my Golden Sun Assassination Spirit Art." Zhangsun Hen sneered, his clothes flapping in the wind and his body shrouded in smugness.

Shua!

As he was speaking, his sword slashed out more than ten times in a row. Golden rays shot up one after another, splitting the air.

Ning Meng staggered and dodged. A sword narrowly missed his cheeks and only left a bloody scar as it brushed past.

"Haha, is that all you can do? To tell you the truth, I came to Blood Kill Camp not for the Dipper Transformation Lake, but to completely defeat you coward!"

Zhangsun Hen sneered again. "If your father hadn't secretly sent you to Blood Kill Camp, I would have found a chance to defeat you!"

Everyone stared at them in shock. They never expected that there would be such a huge grudge between two youngsters from the military.

What was the truth behind everything?

Having been continuously humiliated, Ning Meng's face was livid and his eyes were blazing with murderous rage. However, he had no strength to counter Zhangsun Hen's attack.

"Get lost. A coward like you isn't worthy of being the grandson of the Iron Blood King!"

As Zhangsun Hen roared, he drew closer and closer. The sword produced ear piercing booms in his hand as he brought it down at Ning Meng.

Full of mighty power, the sword seemed unstoppable. It could easily make one despair.

At that moment, Lin Xun's and Shi Yu's faces blanched.

Xu Sanqi and other instructors narrowed their eyes. They were prepared to rush to the rescue. Even if Ning Meng was defeated, they wouldn't let him die in Blood Kill Camp.

Bai Lingxi, who was meditating with her eyes closed, also seemed disturbed. Her bright eyes suddenly snapped open and she peered at the sword in Zhangsun Hen's hand.

The sword move was called Golden Sun Incinerate the World! It was a technique unique to the Zhangsun clan!

However, at that critical juncture, the corners of Ning Meng's lips curved coldly.

Boom!

Thousands of thunderbolts burst out from his body, rapidly taking the shape of a round ring in the air!

The lightning ring was dazzling and striking as it released terrifying killing intent like it wanted to destroy the world. Even the world paled.

Heavenly Lightning Ring!

Xu Sanqi's heart trembled and the expression on his rock-hard face finally altered subtly.

Other than Xu Sanqi, everyone else couldn't react in time before an earth-shaking collision noise rang out like two volcanos clashing. A terrifying rumble echoed across the world and many students felt their blood and qi pulse around their bodies as terror filled their hearts.

Then, Zhangsun Hen screamed out tragically. He suddenly fell from the stone pillar to the ground. His hair was disheveled, his clothes were torn, his dark skin was mangled, and blood was trickling out from his body, dyeing the ground red.

"Heavenly Lightning Ring...you...you actually succeeded in cultivating this secret art with the power of the True Martial Stage..." A bitterness came to Zhangsun Hen's malicious face. With a thud, he lay on the ground again and he didn't even have the strength to stand back up!

The audience was utterly astonished and silent.

Shock filled everyone's heart. They couldn't imagine how Ning Meng, who was close to losing, could suddenly turn the situation around and suppress Zhangsun Hen!

It was too unbelievable!

Lin Xun's and Shi Yu's expressions were surprisingly the same. They both wore a strange expression as they stared at Ning Meng on the stone pillar. They knew that he had been intentionally pretending to be weak to grasp the opportunity to defeat Zhangsun Hen in one move.

Who said that the seemingly reckless and straightforward guy is an idiot?

The way that Ning Meng handled the battle clearly showed he was a guy full of schemes!

"Heavenly Lightning Ring...It seems that he has been enduring silently to wait for that moment to come. There is finally a decent character among the descendants of the Iron Blood King Ning Bugui."

A ruminative look appeared in Bai Lingxi's eyes.

In the silent and astonished atmosphere, Ning Meng, who was standing on the stone pillar with a victorious posture, had undoubtedly become the focus of everyone.

Many people realized that the youngster who could defeat Zhangsun Hen wasn't as ordinary as he seemed.

Then, an unexpected scene happened. Ning Ming seemed to have lost all his strength. He staggered and fell on his buttocks on the stone pillar. He looked embarrassed as he cursed in fury, "Damn it, the image I created is all ruined."

Everyone was speechless.

Chapter 178 Revenge Comes

Ning Meng's embarrassing appearance didn't draw much ridicule because of Zhangsun Hen's defeat.

On the contrary, many students' eyes lit up when they saw him collapse on his buttocks from exhaustion on the stone pillar. They were eager to act because they still hadn't grabbed a stone pillar.

It was no doubt the best time to attack to snatch a stone pillar!

They weren't the only ones who noticed this. Lin Xun and other students who had already occupied a stone pillar also saw it.

Simply speaking, although Ning Meng had successfully occupied a stone pillar after a fierce battle, his situation was more dangerous than before.

This was part of the assessment. Students could continue to challenge one another and attempt to take their stone pillar before the one-hour assessment time was over.

That scene was enough to show the danger behind the seemingly simple assessment.

Just when some students were anxious to act, Ning Meng suddenly said aloud, "Lin Xun, I can't fight anymore. As my friend, you wouldn't want to see me eliminated, right? Since that's the case, I leave the rest to you!"

Everyone was dumbstruck. He's asking for help?

Even Lin Xun was taken aback. When did he become so shameless?

"I..."

Before Lin Xun could say anything, Ning Meng interrupted, "It's decided. Given your strength, you can grab a stone pillar at any time, isn't that right?"

Many students without a stone pillar were a little baffled. If they wanted to take Ning Meng's stone pillar, they would have to face Lin Xun first.

Who was Lin Xun?

He placed first in the quarterly assessment and the first in the war zone assessment. Perhaps, some people had underestimated him in the past but who would dare to do so now?

"However, I'm worried that I won't be able to take care of you by myself. What should I do if two people challenge both you and I at the same time?"

Lin Xun sighed. He didn't care what others would think of him about agreeing to help Ning Meng. After all, he saw only Ning Meng and Shi Yu as his friends in the entire Blood Kill Camp. How could he abandon Ning Meng?

Furthermore, his help didn't break any rules. So, even if he was criticized, there was nothing they could do to him.

His personal reputation was nothing compared to his true friend.

However, Lin Xun couldn't help but worry and take into account other unexpected situations happening.

"Don't worry, isn't there Little White Face?" Ning Meng smiled proudly like he had already considered that possibility.

"Idiot, you actually counted me as well?"

Shi Yu was furious. If Ning Meng swallowed his pride and asked him for help, he, of course, would agree. But the fact that Ning Meng looked so certain that he would help irritated him.

"Hey, what do you mean, your friend is in trouble. Can you just stand by and watch?" Ning Meng asked in response.

Shi Yu's expression changed indefinitely. He asked himself and knew that it was indeed very difficult for him to just stand and watch.

"What if three people challenge us three at the same time?" Lin Xun asked with a frown.

"It's simple. I'll jump off the stone pillar first and then you guys can help me take it back. As for the stone pillar you vacated, haha, you can also take it back if anyone dares to grab it!" Ning Meng spoke confidently like everything was within his grasp.

However, the other students couldn't help but call him shameless when they heard the conversations between them. How could he shamelessly and self-righteously speak about ganging up?

Simply shameless!

However, the other students were most frustrated that Ning Meng's plan didn't violate the assessment rules and so they could only curse inwardly.

Lin Xun and Shi Yu finally understood that Ning Meng had planned this beforehand. Otherwise, he wouldn't dare to take such a huge risk to challenge Zhangsun Hen.

We mustn't be deceived by that guy's rough and reckless outward appearance!

Lin Xun and Shi Yu shared the same thought.

The other students were evidently annoyed with the three. One by one, they looked at them with contempt, disdain and coldness, as though they regarded them as despicable.

Unfortunately, Lin Xun and Shi Yu could only accept it. There was nothing they could do since they had a shameless friend Ning Meng.

"Ridiculous."

An instructor furrowed their brows in annoyance in the distance. "This is an assessment, how can they pull such a trick?"

Many instructors echoed, "If we let them do what they want, what is the point of this assessment?"

In response, Xu Sanqi waved his hand expressionlessly, "As long as they don't break the rules, let them. Learning to recognize and use the rules are also a knowledge that they must master."

The instructors fell silent. Although they still didn't feel comfortable, they had to admit that Xu Sanqi's was right and they couldn't refute him.

Rules were dead and people were alive. If people only followed the rules and didn't know how to adapt, they would forever be restricted by the rules. It would bring about many problems and would affect their future path.

After hearing about Ning Meng's shameless arrangement, the students without a stone pillar also gave up on attacking Ning Meng.

However, it didn't end there. Just when Ning Meng was about to breathe a sigh of relief, someone suddenly said aloud, "You three have gone too far."

It was Zhao Yin. He stood with his hands behind his back, and his graceful and handsome face wore a righteous expression.

All the students felt their spirits were lifted. A good show is about to start.

Ning Meng frowned. "I don't think we need you to tell us what to do."

"Indeed, your move doesn't violate the assessment rules." Zhao Yin nodded, "But...some things aren't just about the rules. Since you're so shameless, I will have to do the same."

Under everyone's surprised gazes, Zhao Yin floated away from his stone pillar and landed on the ground.

He ran his eyes across everyone and finally fixed his eyes on Lin Xun. "Among you three, you are the strongest. Do you dare to accept my challenge?"

His words were powerful and resounding. Many students couldn't help but applaud him.

Ning Meng's face turned overcast. He didn't expect Zhao Yin to appear and directly target Lin Xun.

Zhao Yin had basically ruined all of Ning Meng's arrangements.

Shi Yu's eyes flashed a cold glint. From his understanding, Zhao Yin wasn't an impulsive person. On the contrary, Zhao Yin was narcissistic and egoistic. In the entire Blood Kill Camp, he had never attached any importance to anyone except for Bai Lingxi.

How would someone like him stand forward for righteousness?

There had to be another reason.

And the reason might lie in Lin Xun!

"That guy can't hold back in the end. But he chose a good time to attack. It reeks of

righteousness and no one can criticize him.”

Bai Lingxi suddenly opened her eyes and looked at Zhao Yin.

She knew very well that Zhao Yin harbored strong hatred towards Lin Xun after he was pushed down the ranking to fourth in the last war zone assessment because of Lin Xun.

However, Bai Lingxi didn't expect that Zhao Yin wouldn't be able to control his anger and chose to challenge Lin Xun.

But she very quickly understood that Zhao Yin's action appeared righteous and won praise from the other students. Not only would he have a chance to defeat Lin Xun, but he also could wash away the humiliation he suffered.

Of course, Zhao Yin had another reason to challenge Lin Xun, and that was to prove that he was better than Lin Xun in front of Bai Lingxi.

Bai Lingxi was reluctant to admit this. She regarded Lin Xun highly because of his strength and nothing else.

But obviously, Zhao Yin didn't think so.

“Strange. Today's assessment seems a little strange,” whispered an instructor.

“Indeed, usually top students like Lin Xun and Zhao Yin don't have to worry about being challenged by other students as long as they occupy a stone pillar. But Zhao Yin chose to challenge Lin Xun at this moment. There had to be a deeper reason behind it.”

The other instructors also couldn't understand.

Xu Sanqi pursed his lips but didn't say anything. He vaguely knew the reason but Zhao Yin's decision still surprised him a little.

Though Lin Xun was the most surprised. He didn't expect Zhao Yin to resent him because of a ranking in the war zone assessment.

He couldn't help but wrinkle his brows when Zhao Yin pointed his fingers at him. Does this guy think he's a savior? No one else has said anything, but he jumped out and acted all righteous. How ridiculous.

“What, Lin Xun, you don't dare to accept the challenge? Could it be that you only like to gang up on other people?” Zhao Yin asked, a trace of mockery in his voice.

However, Lin Xun smiled. “Come if you want to challenge me. Why are you acting like a squeamish lady? When you want to kill someone, do you also ask if they want to be killed by you? This isn't gentlemanly manners. It's stupidity.”

Lin Xun wouldn't lose in a battle of words.

As everyone knew that the word stupid was generally used to call the Magi Brute Race, it was even more humiliating for Zhao Yin to be described as stupid.

Many students were shocked. They didn't expect Lin Xun to be so impolite.

Shi Yu couldn't help laughing. Lin Xun—that guy never likes to lose.

Although Zhao Yin outwardly remained calm and composed, his face was imperceptibly overcast with a fierce frown and a cold glint flashed in his eyes.

“Okay, good! When you lose, I will ask you again who is the stupid one!”

As Zhao Yun’s bone-chilling voice rang out, he suddenly soared into the sky in a flash like a mighty dragon emerging from an abyss.

At that moment, wisps of dazzling violet light were flowing all over his body like he had transformed into a giant scorching violent sun. He illuminated the world and overlooked the universe. His body was filled with immeasurable power.

This was the innate talent unique to Zhao Yin—the Violet Sun Body!

Chapter 179 The Big Dipper Surrounds the Sun

Innate talents were a cultivator’s cultivation talent, which includes comprehension, constitution, and bloodline. It was collectively referred to as innate talents.

According to the empire's classification of innate talents, talents in the world were roughly divided into nine different grades.

Grade one was the highest.

Grade nine was the lowest.

People with rare innate talents could cultivate several times faster than ordinary people, but the most terrifying thing was that their ability to comprehend cultivation arts and martial arts was also much superior to that of ordinary people!

The Violet Sun Body was a type of innate talent that belonged to Zhao Yin and was ranked as grade seven.

Despite it only being only a grade-seven talent, he was already naturally superior to ordinary cultivators in terms of cultivation. He could be called one in a million.

At least, the remaining forty-two students in Blood Kill Camp were already the best among the younger generation of the empire yet only Bai Lingxi and Zhao Yin possessed innate talents.

This showed how rare innate talents were!

.....

Zhao Yin made a sudden move. His body glowed all over like a giant violet sun illuminating the world. His magnificent bearing immediately attracted everyone’s attention.

“That’s the Violet Sun Body! It’s said that the body blazes like the sun and the aeth power it brings contains terrifying power that could melt mountains and vaporize rivers!”

“Although Zhao Yin is only at the ninth layer True Martial Stage, he is already extraordinary and is at the pinnacle of the True Martial Stage due to the fact that he possesses an innate talent. It will be difficult to defeat him!”

“Lin Xun is brave to provoke Zhao Yin. He has gotten himself in a difficult position. He might be eliminated this time.”

Many students marveled. Zhao Yin’s imposing bearing had astonished them.

Although Lin Xun was ranked first in the war zone assessment, that was only a score and no one knew how strong he really was.

However, everyone thought it was crazy of Lin Xun to want to fight against a top cultivator like Zhao Yin.

The situation had suddenly become very interesting. When Zhao Yin challenged Lin Xun, the other students paused what they were doing and stopped fighting for a stone pillar. They all focused their attention on the battle about to break out on the summit.

Even Bai Lingxi couldn’t continue her meditation. She shifted her bright eyes to Zhao Yin and Lin Xun, seemingly very interested.

Shi Yu frowned. But he was relieved to see that Lin Xun still wore a calm expression like usual and didn’t panic in the slightest.

Maybe he has a trick up his sleeve?

Shi Yu decided to watch first.

Ning Meng looked extremely poor. Zhao Yin had suddenly jumped out and ruined his good plan. He even dragged Lin Xun into the situation!

Ning Meng wouldn’t be able to forgive himself if Zhao Yin defeated Lin Xun and made him unable to enter the Dipper Transformation Lake.

“Be prepared to help and stop the battle. This battle is no doubt going to be extremely fierce. One person will be eliminated between Lin Xun and Zhao Yin and we can’t change anything. We can only see who wins in the end,” Xu Sanqi ordered, his face cold and stern.

The other instructors felt a chill in their hearts. They wouldn’t have attached so much importance to the battle if it was between other students.

Lin Xun and Zhao Yin were both elite students in Blood Kill Camp and no one dared to be careless in the face of the duel between them.

“Zhao Yin is so obnoxious. People like them can pass the assessment smoothly without doing anything yet he had to provoke other people. He is such a bully,” muttered Xiaoman. She had suddenly appeared.

“You can’t say that. This is an assessment. It tests a student’s true strength. As long as it doesn’t violate the rules, no one can say anything,” an instructor objected.

Seeing that they were about to quarrel, Xu Sanqi said coldly, “Quietly watch the battle!” While speaking, he shifted his gaze to Lin Xun and Zhao Yin.

The other instructors also knew that a battle was inevitable, so they all calmed down and shifted their gazes that way.

.....

Clang!

As a sword cry resounded in the air, a sword appeared in Zhao Yin's grip.

The sword was an ordinary aeth sword that was two feet and four inches long and three fingers wide. But in Zhao Yin's hands, it seemed to have transformed into a divine weapon. A violet glow surrounded the sword's body like it was a beam of violet qi. Clasp the sword tight, Zhao Yin exuded an intimidating and mighty aura.

Zhao Yin's imposing bearing soared once again!

Many students' faces paled. It was only an imposing bearing but they couldn't help but tremble inwardly. Is this the power of the Violet Sun Body?

"I hope you won't disappoint me," Zhao Yin uttered coldly, his face filled with arrogance.

Lin Xun smiled, casually drew the Jade Wave Blade and said after a thought, "Why don't we decide the outcome of the battle with one move?"

Everyone was shocked. Lin Xun is crazy. Does he think he could defeat Zhao Yin with one move?

"Why is that guy so rash? Does he really think that he can defeat Zhao Yin in one move?" Even Shi Yu was a little baffled. He couldn't understand what Lin Xun was thinking. He hadn't left himself much leeway if the battle was decided in one move!

Many people were equally as confused as Shi Yu. They thought Lin Xun had become crazy to make such a proposal.

Zhao Yin's eyes were chilling as he said coldly, "Are you sure?"

Lin Xun nodded. "Of course."

"I didn't expect you to be this brave. Unfortunately courage isn't enough. I will give you an unforgettable one move!"

As Zhao Yin inhaled deeply, the violet light around him intensified. It was so dazzling that many people didn't dare to look at him directly.

"Then come." Lin Xun smiled faintly, his eyebrows were sharp like blades and his dark eyes were flashing like lightning. An azure glow shrouded his body and made him look ethereal.

The atmosphere suddenly turned oppressive. Invisible murderous spirit surged like the tide and filled every inch of the air.

Everyone felt stifled and their expressions changed uncontrollably like they were being inexplicably oppressed.

The two were just facing each other but there was already such terrifying force. What would happen when the battle began?

The one move would no doubt be an earthshaking blow that would determine the winner in an instant!

Everyone had to keep their eyes wide open and waited with bated breath.

.....

Zhao Yin was the first act. Violet qi rose from his body as he made seven swift slashes in the air, which corresponded to seven different directions in the space.

If the seven directions were connected, one would notice that they were the positions of the Big Dipper!

In a split second, seven stars had seemingly emerged, surrounding Zhao Yin in a protective stance. Violet qi burst forth from his body and gathered around the sword in his hand.

Rumble!

Suddenly, everyone felt their souls shaking. It was as though they saw the stars in the Big Dipper protecting a giant violent sun as it came crashing down. Endless violet qi filled the air as though to engulf the world.

The terrifying power was frightening!

“Big Dipper surrounds the sun, violent qi drive from the east!”

Xu Sanqi’s eyes widened as a terrifying lightning flashed across them.

It was the Big Dipper Violet Star Art, an unparalleled art of the imperial family. Once used, it was as though the Big Dipper had descended and a violet sun illuminated the sky. The power released was incomparably terrifying.

Zhao Yin was the great-grandson of Marquis Bowang in the Forbidden City, and Marquis Bowang was an uncle of the current emperor. In other words, Zhao Yin was a member of the imperial family.

It wasn’t surprising that he could practice the Big Dipper Violet Star Art but Xu Sanqi knew that the art was extremely difficult to grasp. Over hundreds of years, very few people of the imperial family had successfully mastered it.

Therefore, it was very astonishing that Zhao Yin was able to perform one of the unique moves of the Big Dipper Violet Star Art.

Most importantly, Zhao Yin was only at the ninth layer True Martial Stage. Even if he couldn’t bring out the full power of the Big Dipper Violet Star art, it was already very unbelievable that he was able to learn it.

Perhaps, this was the most terrifying thing about the innate talent Violet Sun Body.

Many students were stunned by the sight. They felt their minds shaking. Only a few could remain as calm and composed as Xu Sanqi.

For example, Bai Lingxi and Li Duxing. Their pupils shrank and they were a little surprised because they remembered that Zhao Yin had never used this move before during training in Blood Kill Camp.

Does this mean that he has always been hiding his strength?

Can Lin Xun block the attack?

It will be very difficult!

Bai Lingxi felt that he could possibly block the attack but she knew it would be useless if that was all he could do.

Lin Xun would no doubt lose if he couldn't defeat Zhao Yin in one move!

Clearly, Lin Xun's chances of winning were very slim.

Everything seemed to be happening very slowly, but in fact, it was the different reactions of different people in a split second. Everything was happening at an incredible speed.

Zhao Yin's move had drawn everyone's attention so no one had noticed that Lin Xun also slashed out his blade at the same time.

Buzz!

A peculiar blade cry suddenly rang out.

The blade cry resembled a sigh from the depths of the starry sky. It sounded illusionary like a dream. Everyone just felt their vision blur and before they could react, they saw stars descending from the sky.

They were like comets surrounded in dazzling fire light as they swept across the sky. They were so bright and glaring that they seemed terrifying like they contained power that could wipe out everything. It was as though the apocalypse was descending.

Many people seemed to have fallen into an abyss of terror. They felt despair and helplessness like they couldn't escape no matter what they did.

"That's—?!"

Xu Sanqi clenched his fists tight as he stood aghast.

"That..."

Bai Lingxi sprang up, her bright eyes glimmering.

Li Duxing drew a deep breath and seemed to be suppressing his pounding heart.

Many instructors' expressions rapidly changed.

Time seemed to have frozen.

The seven Big Dipper stars that surrounded Zhao Yin's body were descending one by one and boundless darkness was engulfing the surging violet qi.

Then, a blade glinted in the darkness, tearing apart the soul-shaking scene. Zhao Yin's violet sun body seemed to have lost all its brilliance and was rapidly dimming.

The blade was called Star-Gather.

Chapter 180 No One Dares to Attack

By the time the students had snapped out of their trance-like state, they realized that the battle had already ended but the atmosphere had become indescribably strange.

Xu Sanqi and the other instructors were all solemn, surprised, in disbelief, and silent.

On the other side, Bai Lingxi was standing up, her dress fluttering in the wind and her hair flowing down to her waist. As she peered into the distance, there was a blank expression on her stunningly beautiful face.

Li Duxing was drawing deep breaths, as if to calm the turbulent feelings in his heart.

No one uttered a single word; the atmosphere was deathly still.

The students were all dumbstruck when they looked at the battleground.

Zhao Yin was lying unconscious on the ground. His body twisted strangely like he had suffered unimaginable pain before losing consciousness. His face was contorted with a bewildered, panicked, and reluctant expression.

Before the battle, he was like a giant violet sun illuminating the world, possessing divine power and looking down on the world. But, at that moment, he looked incredibly pitiful.

They turned to look at the stone pillar and saw Lin Xun's graceful figure still standing. He was completely unscathed and only his face was a little pale.

In everyone's eyes, he seemed to be cloaked in an indescribably majestic aura and compelled people to feel awe and admiration.

"Zhao Yin is defeated!"

Finally, someone cried out, breaking the silence and the strange atmosphere. Everyone jolted back to their senses.

"What exactly happened?"

"I don't know, I only saw stars falling from the eternal night. It was as though the sky was splitting."

"That's also what I saw."

"Zhao Yin has the Violet Sun Body but he still lost...unbelievable. It's too unbelievable!"

Clamor of amazement burst from the onlookers.

Many students' faces were twisted with disbelief. The battle was indeed decided in one move, but they didn't see how Zhao Yin was defeated!

It was too astonishing!

Shi Yu exhaled a breath of turbid air. His gaze turned complicated as he looked at Lin Xun. Turns out that he has been hiding his strength.

Ning Meng burst into loud laughter. What he was worried about hadn't happened and so he felt extremely relieved and delighted.

Bai Lingxi sat back down on the stone pillar, but her eyebrows were slightly wrinkled and there was a ruminative look in her eyes. It was as though she couldn't figure something out.

Li Duxing was as silent and lonely-looking as always. But he took occasional glances at Lin Xun. No one knew what was on his mind.

"Leader, have you ever seen that blade art before?"

An instructor couldn't help but ask out loud, and the other instructors immediately turned to look at Xu Sanqi.

They were also very puzzled by the blade art that Lin Xun used to defeat Zhao Yin and why it contained such incredible power.

It could be said that the strength simply shouldn't belong to a True Martial cultivator!

"I've never seen it before."

Xu Sanqi's answer disappointed the other instructors, but also surprised them. It added a hint of mystery to Lin Xun.

"The battle has already been decided. Let's go and rescue Zhao Yin. Although he lost, we can't let him lie there in humiliation."

Xu Sanqi gave an order, and an instructor immediately rushed out to bring back the unconscious Zhao Yin.

Only when Xu Sanqi confirmed that Zhao Yin wasn't in life-threatening danger did he breathe a sigh of relief. Zhao Yin was only unconscious from severe injuries. Xu Sanqi gave a wave of his hand and said, "Continue the assessment."

.....

Zhao Yin's instant defeat caused a huge stir.

However, the assessment was still underway, and many students without a stone pillar couldn't care too much and started to act.

Most importantly, Zhao Yin's tragic defeat meant that he was eliminated and had no chance to enter the Dipper Transformation Lake.

As a result, the stone pillar that Zhao Yin had grabbed was vacated and became everyone's target.

Meanwhile, the students occupying a stone pillar increased their vigilance and were on guard for attacks.

After witnessing the earth-shaking battle, all the students came to realize the terror of Lin Xun.

No one dared to target Lin Xun and no one dared to approach Ning Meng.

Lin Xun breathed a sigh of relief. He sat cross-legged on the ground, cautiously analyzing the situation around him.

Lin Xun had already exhausted his strength to perform the Star-Gather move two times on Demon Cloud Ridge. And that was already his limit.

After he returned from Demon Cloud Ridge, his strength had improved significantly under Xiaoke's guidance. Not only had he reached the pinnacle level of the ninth layer True Martial Stage, but he had also lit up the eighth star in his mind-sea.

His training had helped him unleash a tyrannical power in his battle with Zhao Yin. As a result, he defeated Zhao Yin in one move.

Of course, most importantly, the Star-Gather move was incredibly powerful!

It had to be said that Lin Xun still hadn't fully grasped the essence of the Star-Gather move and the power he displayed wasn't one tenth of its full potential. Even so, he still defeated Zhao Yin in one move. It could easily be imagined how terrifying the power of Star-Gather was.

Lin Xun couldn't even imagine what kind of destructive power it would produce when he completely grasped the essence of Star-Gather and was able to unleash all its power.

The Star-Gather was only the first move in the Heavenly Yuan Blade art. There were also the Moon-Catch and Burning Sun!

The power of the last two moves would surely be superior to Star-Gather!

All that was, of course, due to the Omega Secret Realm.

As Lin Xun thought about the Omega Secret Realm, his heart trembled uncontrollably. He calculated the time and realized that he could again enter the Omega Secret Realm in half a year...

"Hey, you're strong. Not only did you defeat Zhao Yin, but you also completely eliminated the possibility of him entering the Dipper Transformation Lake. What a domineering move."

Shi Yu's voice suddenly sounded.

Lin Xun checked his body and he only felt at ease after confirming that he still had half of his power left. He said casually, "What, you think I went too far?"

Shi Yu shook his head. "How would I? I'm just thinking that, if Zhao Yin wakes up, he would completely resent you because of this matter. You also know about his background and that he is related to the imperial family. His great-grandfather Marquis Bowang is the current emperor's uncle. There will definitely be trouble in the future."

Lin Xun frowned. "You seem to be gloating."

Shi Yu smiled bitterly. "How would I dare? I'm just reminding you."

Lin Xun thought for a moment and then shrugged indifferently. "It's okay, if I encounter trouble in the future, I believe that you and Ning Meng won't ignore it."

Shi Yu looked blank. "How can you be as shameless as that idiot?"

Lin Xun smiled. "I can't help it. I realized that if I wasn't shameless, I would only be tricked and deceived by you two."

Shi Yu slapped his forehead and sighed, "I made the wrong friends!"

While the two were conversing, battles were constantly breaking out on the battlefield. The students had gone berserk to acquire a stone pillar. They exhausted all the means they had. A cloud of smoke pervaded the battlefield.

However, as time passed, one after another, students failed miserably, were knocked out or were injured and unable to fight again.

Inevitably, Shi Yu had also been targeted, but the battle unsurprisingly ended with Shi Yu's victory.

Lin Xun noticed that there was a largest fraction of students from the 39th Campground among all the students present. There were as many as seven people.

In addition to Lin Xun, there were Shi Yu, Ning Meng, Li Duxing, Gong Ming, Qi Can, and Ye Xiaoqi.

However, only four of them, Lin Xun, Ning Meng, Shi Yu, and Li Duxing, had occupied a stone pillar. Gong Ming, Qi Can and Ye Xiaoqi were still fighting for one.

Soon, Ye Xiaoqi was defeated.

The little fatty youngster who was an expert in making people hate him turned around and left, knowing that there was no hope of grabbing a stone pillar anymore.

Not long after Ye Xiaoqi's failure, Qi Can also encountered a crisis and was knocked unconscious.

Lin Xun didn't feel a ripple of emotion seeing him in such a state. Among all the 39th Campground students, Qi Can, Xin Wenbin and Wen Mingxiu hated Lin Xun the most.

Xin Wenbin and the others had already been eliminated in the previous assessments, and now only Qi Can remained. Unfortunately for him, he didn't manage to make it to the end.

When there was only one minute left in the assessment, only one student without a stone pillar was left on the battlefield.

He was called Feng Lin. He had already lost several times in a row, but he still persevered. Though it was obvious that he had no hope of changing anything in the remaining one minute.

Surprisingly, Feng Lin didn't admit defeat and surprised many people.

However, when Lin Xun noticed Feng Lin had locked his eyes on Ning Meng, his eyes immediately narrowed.
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If Feng Lin went to compete for Ning Meng's stone pillar in the final minute, it would be a little difficult for Lin Xun to help out in time and a change might happen.

“Don’t worry about that idiot. Just watch.” Shi Yi’s voice suddenly rang out, sounding mysterious.

A thought struck Lin Xun’s mind, and he turned to look at Ning Meng in the distance.

Almost at the same time, Feng Lin was charging towards Ning Meng. Clearly, in his opinion, Ning Meng was seriously wounded and it was nearing the end of the assessment, so even if Lin Xun stepped forward to help Ning Meng, it would be difficult to change anything. Therefore, he attacked without any hesitation!

At that moment, the corners of Ning Meng’s lips quirked into a light smile like he had predicted that to happen.

This is bad!

Feng Lin also sensed a bad feeling, but he was already charging forward and couldn’t turn around. He had no choice but to grit his teeth and swing his blade down at Ning Meng with all his strength.

Almost at the same time, Ning Meng unleashed a loud roar and brought his halberd up in a slash. Shrouded in terrifying thunderbolts, it danced in the air and slammed down like a waterfall.

With a loud bang, Feng Lin’s body was blasted across the battlefield as he screamed in agony.

“Pah! You really think I don’t have any strength to fight? Who wouldn’t leave a trick up his sleeve? You’re blind!” Ning Meng remarked contemptuously.

Everyone was stunned. Could that guy have been pretending to be weak all along?

The corners of Lin Xun’s lips twitched. That guy is definitely a scheming man! I mustn’t be deceived by his rough and reckless appearance in the future!

At that moment, the bell rang, signaling the end of the assessment.