

Prodigies 221

Chapter 221 Calm and Peaceful

Rain Listener House.

One of the zither strings snapped with a boom and the melodious tune came to an abrupt end.

Rain Listener sat upright, pondered for a moment, and said emotionally, "I didn't expect the first time that Remnant Snow failed to complete a mission was to kill a youngster at the Human Dipper Stage and not a famous powerful figure."

The attendant outside the door fell silent. His face was solemn, not knowing how to answer him.

In that night's operation, the assassin Grey Marten came back with a completely destroyed sea of qi and a wrecked cultivation base. Assassin Ghost Moon was surrounded by dangers, and even until the end, couldn't detect a trace of her opponent.

Remnant Snow also was defeated.

The wound he sustained was only an inch away from his heart. He would have died instantly if his heart was pierced.

Gray Marten, Ghost Moon and Remnant Snow all lost to the same person. And that person was precisely the teenager at the Human Dipper Stage who was about to take the provincial examination.

The result was so unbelievable and shocking that the attendant still couldn't believe it.

"Even if the mission ended in a failure, it's good that they are still alive."

Rain Listener rose to his feet. Clad in an azure scholarly robe, he looked particularly elegant and refined. He stood in front of a window with his hands behind his back. The torrential rain abruptly stopped and the stars in the night sky looked particularly bright.

"Lord, when Ghost Moon returned, she mentioned that a master intervened in the assassination operation at the time."

The attendant at the door suddenly remembered something. "Also, the master asked Ghost Moon to pass a message back to us."

"Oh."

Rain Listener's eyes gleamed with interest. "What did he say?"

"He asked if you still remember the blood sunset of blue mountain."

Blood sunset of the blue mountain!

Rain Listener's heart trembled as a purgatory world consisting of mountains of corpses and seas of blood flashed in his mind.

In that world, the sunset was red like blood as it enveloped the blue mountain. Thousands of cultivators were slaughtered on the ground and only a mighty figure, bathed in blood, stood tall and proud on the peak of the blue mountain.

"It's him."

A dazed look came to Rain Listener's calm and indifferent face while his emotions constantly fluctuated.

After a long moment, Rain Listener suddenly turned around, calmness restored to his eyes. He ordered, "From tonight on, this mission is permanently canceled."

Outside the door, the attendant was dumbfounded for a moment. The words 'blood sunset of blue mountain' completely changed the Lord's attitude.

The fact that Remnant Snow, Ghost Moon and Gray Marten all failed their mission would no doubt have a tremendous impact on the reputation of Rain Listener House.

Given Rain Listener's identity and wisdom, he must know about the negative impact but he still made such a decision. The attendant couldn't follow his thinking.

"Go, you don't need to understand the reason. You just need to know that we can't touch Lin Xun."

Rain Listener took a deep breath and sighed out loud.

Yao Susu and Lian Fei were waiting anxiously in the hall like ants on a hot pan.

A long time had passed but they still hadn't heard back anything. They both couldn't help but worry.

"Just to kill Lin Xun, they spent ten thousand gold coins to hire assassins from the Rain Listener's House. But everyone, remember, the rich and powerful forces in the empire and the poor are like fire and water. Conflict will break out one day and that is when our Achievers Society will rise."

The members of the Achievers Society bore looks of determination. They were born in a poor family and so they naturally didn't want to be poor all their lives.

"Brother Cao, do you think Lin Xun is dead or alive?" someone suddenly asked.

Cao Yunxiu frowned and said expressionlessly, "It doesn't matter whether he is dead or alive. Since he has refused to join our Achievers Society, he has nothing to do with us. Since he doesn't follow the same path as us, then—"

Before he finished speaking, someone already understood what he wanted to say and interjected, "He's our enemy."

Cao Yunxiu smiled slightly, but shook his head and corrected him, "He's not quite the enemy, but if he gets into trouble, he shouldn't expect those also from lower-level poor families to stand on his side. I'm curious to know how he plans to gain a foothold in the empire now that he has angered the powerful major forces and has drawn a line with us. That's only if he is still alive."

It was unknown how long Lin Xun had been sleeping, but vaguely, he heard an ice-cold voice devoid of emotions ringing in his mind again.

“Dao Seeker, the Omega Secret Realm will open again in one year and the third test of the Great Azure Cloud Path is called Hundred Battles.”

“There are only three chances to pass. If you fail after three attempts, the Omega Secret Realm will fall back into a sealed state until a chance for it to open again in one thousand years.”

When the voice died away, Lin Xun suddenly quivered all over and his eyes sprang open.

Chapter 222 Golden Star Fragment Fire

The familiar room greeted Lin Xun’s eyes, making him feel inexplicably calm and relaxed.

“The last time I passed the second level of the Great Azure Cloud Path happens to be before the quarterly assessment in Blood Kill Camp, which means there is less than three months before the third level of the Great Azure Cloud Path opens.”

Lin Xun cast his mind back to the ice-cold voice echoing in his dream and calculated the remaining time.

The Omega Secret Realm was a supreme opportunity. After he passed the first level of the Great Azure Cloud Path, he was rewarded with the Little Divine Meditation Art and healed the damage on his four heart acupuncture points.

When he passed the second level of the Great Azure Cloud Path, not only did his physical cultivation reach the level of inner-outer perfection, but he also obtained the first part of the Mystery Grotto Devour Wilderness Scripture and the Heavenly Yuan Blade Art.

The two were both unique techniques. One was a profound cultivation art. The darkness of the mystery grotto was connected to the mystery of all things and the devouring of nature formed the ten directions to return to the great wilderness. The cultivation technique was incomparably mysterious and could support Lin Xun to reach the Heaven Ascension Stage.

Although the Heavenly Yuan Blade Art only consisted of three moves, Star-Gather, Moon-Catch and Burning Sun, each one was immeasurable and incomparably mysterious. Given Lin Xun’s current comprehension ability, he could only grasp the first move, Star-Gather.

Regardless, Lin Xun fully realized the value of the Omega Secret Realm after passing the first two levels. He felt it wasn’t an exaggeration to call it a supreme opportunity.

Lin Xun was full of anticipation for the third level.

Before long, Lin Xun checked his body and found that the majority of his strength had been restored and the wound on his abdomen had healed. He just needed to rest to completely recover.

Chirp—

Jiujiu’s cheerful chirps and Xue Jin’s hearty laughter echoed throughout the courtyard.

Lin Xun got up, pushed the door, and walked into the courtyard. He immediately saw Xue Jin drinking proudly with a wine jar in his arms and opposite him was Jiujiu lying in front of a bowl and also gulping down wine. It occasionally chirped happily while its round ball-like body swayed side to side like it was drunk.

Xue Jin burst into laughter and constantly topped up Jiujiu's bowl with wine like he was drinking with a good friend.

Lin Xun's face darkened. He flounced forward and lifted up Jiujiu's soft and round body. He snapped, "You could have learned anything but you learned to drink. I don't have the money to buy you wine."

It was unknown whether Jiujiu understood him but it leaped into Lin Xun's arms and affectionately rubbed its head against his chest. It chirped continuously and looked very silly.

Helpless, Lin Xun sat down opposite Xue Jin and asked, "How long have I slept?"

Xue Jin casually replied, "Three days. It's not that long."

Lin Xun's heart tensed up. "Has anything happened in those three days?"

Xue Jin chuckled, "Don't worry, those guys won't dare to do anything to you, at least until the provincial exam is over."

He spoke casually but his words were filled with absolute confidence.

Lin Xun couldn't help feeling surprised. He knew that while he was asleep, Xue Jin had helped him do something to resolve the troubles brought about by that night's battles.

"Thank you."

Lin Xun raised the wine bowl, expressed his gratitude to Xue Jin, and finished the bowl in one go.

Xue Jin smiled. Then, he pointed to Jiujiu in Lin Xun's arms and asked curiously, "Where did you get this little thing?"

"I found it. I don't know what kind of monster this little guy is but I just kept it as a pet."

Xue Jin broke into laughter. "A pet?! Are you blind? Although I can't tell what this guy's background is, I am certain that it has a lot of extremely special powers."

Lin Xun shuddered inwardly. "Why do you say that?"

Even Xu Sanqi and Old Mo couldn't figure out Jiujiu's background in Blood Kill Camp, but it seemed that Xue Jin had noticed something in Jiujiu.

Xue Jin exclaimed in surprise, "This little guy has been following you for so long. Don't you know about its power?"

Lin Xun looked baffled and then he knitted his brow in deep thought before he finally said, "I only know that Jiujiu can spit fire and the flames are incredibly domineering. They can penetrate the ground and burn rocks. The flames are comparable to an attack of the ninth layer True Martial Stage. Oh, this happened when Jiujiu was born."

Xue Jin's interest was piqued. "What about now?"

Lin Xun shrugged helplessly. "During my training in Blood Kill Camp, I happened to obtain a mysterious black beast tooth from an assassin of the Water Tribe but Jiujiu swallowed it in one mouthful. It went into a deep sleep after that and only woke up three days ago."

Xue Jin said ruminatively, "In other words, you don't know what happened to the little guy after it awakened."

"Indeed."

With a flip of his hand, Xue Jin brought out a glistening silver object shining in the sun like a gemstone.

"What is that?"

Lin Xun's eyes were immediately drawn to the item. He felt a terrifying qi emitting from it. From one glance, he could tell that it wasn't ordinary rune material.

"This was what the little guy spat out from its mouth the night three days ago, after I brought you back."

A strange look flashed across Xue Jin's eyes. "Based on my observation, it is a piece of silver lightning snow metal. It is very precious and incredibly rare. It can easily be sold for five hundred coins on the market."

Lin Xun narrowed his eyes. He suddenly remembered that it was Jiujiu who swallowed Remnant Snow's arrow and saved him during the most critical moment that night.

The piece of silver lightning snow metal wouldn't be related to the arrow that Jiujiu swallowed, right?

Lin Xun told Xue Jin about his speculation.

Xue Jin's eyes lit up. "As I thought."

As he was speaking, he brought out a lower human-grade sword and handed it to Jiujiu.

Jiujiu opened its jet-black and pure eyes wide and stared at Lin Xun. A thought struck Lin Xun's mind and he nodded at Jiujiu.

The moment that Jiujiu opened its mouth and inhaled, the two-foot-long sword was devoured in one gulp.

Lin Xun and Xue Jin both fixed their eyes on Jiujiu, observing intently.

Jiujiu's small, round body suddenly stretched outwards like dough, looking incredibly uncomfortable. Then, wisps of dazzling golden flames rose from his body like sun rays, blazing brightly.

The flames were incredibly domineering and seemed capable of incinerating everything in the world. Even if Lin Xun was a few steps away, he still felt his skin aching like it was being burned.

Xue Jin was struck by a flash of realization, quickly followed by surprise. "It seems to be one of the different fires in the world, the Golden Star Fragment Fire."

The Golden Star Fragment Fire!

Lin Xun's heart trembled. He had also heard rumors of many different fires born in the world, such as the Stone Bell Jade Fire, Icy Soul Fire, Blazing Pure Fire and Samandhi True Fire.

Each of those different fires had their own mysterious uses. Some assisted cultivators in their cultivation and some were useful in alchemy or for refining weapons.

According to their powers, the different fires were divided into four grades: yellow, earth, heaven and mysterious.

The yellow grade was the lowest and was the most common type of fire in the world.

The mysterious grade was the highest and every fire under this grade was incredibly rare with earth-changing powers.

The Golden Star Fragment Fire was a type of heaven-grade fire.

It might not be as rare as mysterious-grade fire but it was still incredibly rare. Only rich and powerful forces with a long history could be in possession of such a different fire.

However, Xue Jin was certain that the fire released from Jiujiu's body was the Golden Star Fragment Fire. Lin Xun was utterly shocked

If it was true, Jiujiu's background had to be very unusual.

Under the intent gaze of Lin Xun and Xue Jin, the flames around Jiujiu grew increasingly intense and it gradually restored its soft body.

When its body returned to its round sphere form, it opened its mouth and spat out a beam of scarlet light.

Xue Jin made a grabbing motion in the air and swiftly caught the item in his grip. He took a closer look at it and said, "As I thought. The lower human-grade sword had been smelted into a piece of scarlet fire rune iron. Also, it's incredibly pure with no impurities." His voice was full of astonishment.

Lin Xun frowned. "A good aeth tool has been smelted into a piece of rune material. It's a bit uneconomical."

Xue Jin snapped, "How can the value of a lower human-grade aeth tool be compared to a top grade rune material without any impurities? Kid, you found a treasure."

Lin Xun raised his brows in puzzlement. "From what you said, Jiujiu possesses unusual smelting powers?"

Xue Jin said strangely. "It's not only unusual. It's heaven-defying. It can smelt and refine an ordinary aeth tool and remove all its impurities to produce the purest rune material. In terms of value, pure rune materials are worth much more than ordinary aeth tools."

After a pause, he continued, "This is just a comparison in terms of value. Did you know that a pure rune material like this can make aeth tools with significantly improved powers?"

His voice was full of excitement as he explained, "Most importantly, the reason that rune armaments are very rare in the world is because they require top quality and pure rune materials"

Xue Jin paused, staring strangely at Lin Xun. "Kid, you're a rune master. Don't tell me you don't know about this."

Lin Xun frowned, puzzled why Xue Jin was so excited. "From what I know, any rune masters with some rune skills can smelt rune materials in the same way. It's nothing incredible or unbelievable."

Xue Jin said firmly, "You're right, but have you seen a beast that can achieve this by eating? It possesses the Golden Star Fragment Fire and is a natural smelting master."

His eyes blazed as he stared at Jiujiu playing in Lin Xun's arms. "Most importantly, this is just one of its talents."

"Jiujiu has other special talents?" Lin Xun exclaimed, unable to calm himself down.

Chapter 223 Castle of Darkness

While Lin Xun was overwhelmed with shock, Xue Jin suddenly stretched out his hand and grabbed Jiujiu. His palm was like an inescapable net as it imprisoned Jiujiu.

However, with a puff, Jiujiu's round body transformed into a strand of fiery light and vanished with a flicker. The next second, it reappeared tens of feet away.

Lin Xun narrowed his eyes. So fast.

"See, this is its second talent. Shapeshifting."

As Xue Jin put away his hand, the strange look in his eyes intensified like he had discovered a rare treasure of the world. "From what I know, there are very few rune beasts that can transform like Jiujiu."

The so-called shapeshifting was an ability that allowed one's body to transform into another form. For example, Jiujiu was able to transform into a ray of fiery light, an ability that not all rune beasts had.

"Also, did you notice that, after Jiujiu transformed, it flashed across the sky like lightning with incredible speed. This is a very rare ability."

Xue Jin marveled repeatedly. He had encountered many rune beasts with special talents ever since he had started cultivation. He had also seen the imperial family's violet horned beast but he had never seen a strange beast like Jiujiu.

Its body not only contained Golden Star Fragment Fire, but it was also a natural smelting master and it had mastered an incredibly rare shapeshifting ability.

Moreover, the fact that Xue Jin couldn't figure out Jiujiu's origin made it all the more mysterious.

Lin Xun picked up Jiujiu and rubbed its soft round body. Its cute and silly appearance made him couldn't help but wonder whether it was really a rare mysterious beast.

After playing for a long while, Jiujiu repeatedly bit and sucked Lin Xun's finger like it was hungry.

Jolted to his senses, Lin Xun immediately realized a serious problem. This little guy is a strange beast that feeds on aeth crystals.

It had to consume a high-grade aeth crystal every three days when it was a newborn. If Xiaoman hadn't helped Lin Xun raise Jiujiu, he wouldn't be able to support the little monster.

However, Xiaoman was no longer around and Lin Xun had to feed Jiujiu by himself. He couldn't help but inhale sharply at the thought that he often had to prepare high-grade aeth crystals to feed Jiujiu. It was such a huge expense.

Most importantly, Lin Xun didn't have any high-grade aeth crystals on him. He took out some medicinal pills and attempted to feed Jiujiu but it just shook its head in disgust.

"Old Jin, do you have any high-grade aeth crystals on you?" Lin Xun had to ask Xue Jin for help.

Xue Jin said in puzzlement, "This little guy consumes high-grade aeth crystals to replenish its strength."

Lin Xun nodded heavily.

Xue Jin burst into laughter. "Hahaha, yes, this little guy has such miraculous means. Of course it is different from other rune beasts. Hmm, the little guy's stomach is an abyss. It's going to be hard to raise it without any money."

A hint of a gloating smile touched his lips.

Lin Xun shot a glare at Old Jin and then said to Jiujiu, "Go, go ask that man for food."

Jiujiu seemed to understand him. It spun around, stared unblinkingly at Old Jin with pitiful eyes and chirped repeatedly.

Xue Jin coldly snorted, took out a dazzling aeth crystal shrouded in a fuzzy azure glow and said, "This is a top-quality azure aeth crystal. It has ten times the power of high-grade aeth crystals. Only Heaven Ascension cultivators have the ability to absorb and refine its power. If you can eat it, I—"

Before he finished, he heard a swoosh and saw Jiujiu speed towards him. It devoured the aeth crystal in one bite and then chirped in joy.

Immediately after that, flames roamed around Jiujiu's body like breaths and produced a terrifying heat.

In the end, it belched noisily like it was full before it transformed into a streak of flame and vanished into Lin Xun's right palm. Clearly, it was going into a deep sleep again.

Xue Jin stared astonished for a good moment. He finally gasped, "It actually refined the aeth crystal. What an appetite!"

Lin Xun couldn't help but rejoice. "Old Jin, since that's the case, I'll leave Jiujiu's feeding to you."

Xue Jin's cheeks twitched violently as he said through gritted teeth, "Do you know how much an azure aeth crystal can sell for on the market?"

He extended one finger. "One hundred gold coins, twenty times as much as a high-grade aeth crystal. If it needs to eat one every day, I will go bankrupt."

Lin Xun inwardly shuddered with fear, but he still said with a smile. "It will be fine. Old Jin, I believe you will be able to do it."

Xue Jin sneered coldly, "Boy, you are trying to deceive me."

Lin Xun said helplessly, "Old Jin, didn't you say Jiujiu is a rare magical rune beast? You won't watch it starve to death and do nothing, right?"

Xue Jin snorted. "It's not my rune beast. What does it have to do with me if it starves it to death?"

He rolled his eyes, and a mischievous smile crept to the corner of his lips. "However, if you promise me one thing, I may be able to guarantee that it won't starve to death."

Lin Xun said vigilantly, "Let's talk about what it is first. I will definitely help you if I can do it."

Xue Jin chuckled, "Don't be so worried. You may not be able to do it now, but it will definitely be possible for you in the future."

Lin Xun sighed, "What is it?"

Xue Jin no longer concealed what he wanted from Lin Xun. Staring intently at Lin Xun, he said bluntly, "Help me tailor make a rune armament."

Rune armament.

Lin Xun's heart trembled. Rune armaments weren't easy to make and often required the joint efforts of several rune masters.

There was only a chance of success and there was no guarantee.

Even the gathering of rune materials required for rune armaments was an unimaginable large-scale operation. Most importantly, an opportunity was required to successfully produce a rune armament.

At least, as far as Lin Xun knew, only a handful of the cultivators from the upper sects and forces possessed rune armaments in the empire.

The reason was simple: rune armaments were incredibly difficult to make. It was simply unaffordable for ordinary sects and factions in terms of manpower, material resources and financial resources.

Many of the rune armaments known to the world had been passed down for hundreds or even thousands of years. Although new rune armaments had been created, they were incredibly rare.
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For example, even the group of top rune masters, grand masters and rune founders in the Imperial Divine Workshop would have to take several months to produce a rune armament.

As though realizing that his request was too demanding, Xue Jin added, "Of course, I will provide all the rune materials to make the rune armaments. You just need to help me make it. It doesn't matter if you fail."

Lin Xun said with a wry smile, "Old Jin, I'm only a beginner rune master. You have so much confidence in me."

Xue Jin grinned like an old fox. "Haha, a beginner rune master? I have never seen a beginner rune master like you. In my opinion, even Feng Qingyou, the talented maiden of Qinglu Academy, isn't as amazing as you."

Lin Xun's eyes widened. "You are flattering me."

Xue Jin snapped, "Kid, my conditions are already very good. It doesn't matter if you fail. Have you heard of such good terms? Also Jiujiu is a money pit. Do you have the heart to watch a rune beast with magical talent starve to death?"

Lin Xun thought for a moment and said, "Okay, since you're not afraid, what should I be worried about? But I can tell you now that I'm not able to make rune armaments yet."

Seeing Lin Xun agree, Xue Jin grinned and affectionately patted Lin Xun on the shoulder. "Don't worry, I will come to you right away when you have the ability to do so."

The matter was finally settled. Lin Xun solved the problem of Jiujiu's feeding and Xue Jin also received a promise from Lin Xun. Everyone was happy.

"There is still some time until the provincial examination. Do you have any plans for what to do next?" Xue Jin asked.

"Make money. Train." Lin Xun's answer was very simple.

Xue Jin nodded. "Based on the strength you have shown that night, it shouldn't be a problem for you to pass the provincial examination. But don't underestimate the provincial examination. There is never a shortage of remarkable talents and geniuses in the world."

Lin Xun nodded. "I won't underestimate anyone. But if anyone underestimates me, they can only consider themselves unlucky."

Xue Jin laughed. "Then, I look forward to the exams."

Lin Xun got up with a smile and walked out of the courtyard. "I'm going to the Rune Master Association. Chu Feng has helped me massively. Now that the danger has been lifted, I should thank him in person."

Xue Jin waved. "Go ahead."

Xue Jin fell into deep thought once Lin Xun left. After a long moment, he sighed, shook his head and took out a pure black note.

Without any movements from him, the letter burst into flames and incinerated into nothingness.

Meanwhile, in the Forbidden City, the capital of the empire, an ancient castle-like black building stood on a majestic mountain by the lake.

The building was dark and grand. No light in the world seemed to dare approach it, and it seemed to lay forever in the shadows.

In the entire empire, only a handful of higher-ups knew that the building was called the Castle of Darkness.

The owner of the castle was as mysterious as night. Only a very small number of people in the world knew her name, but rumors about the Queen of Darkness had always been circulating throughout the empire.

On a winding stone path in front of the Castle of Darkness was a kind and gentle old man strolling up in black court attire.

As he arrived at the ancient castle, the giant bronze door creaked open. He tidied his robe and walked in with huge strides.

The inside of the castle was completely dark, like it was always night. The inside was solemn and quiet, and filled with an oppressive power.

"Miss, I have found some clues about the origin of the boy Lin Xun," the old man said softly as he stood in the darkness.

"Oh." An indifferent, ethereal voice echoed in the darkness.

Instantly, a shaft of light emerged from the ancient castle and dispelled the darkness, revealing a throne of white bones.

On the throne sat an illusionary figure that seemed to be of infinite height like it was overlooking the world.

The old man bowed his head.

Chapter 224 The Mystery of His Life

The illusory figure sitting on the throne of white bones seemed like the ruler of darkness, exuding terrifying might and power as though omnipresent.

"Who is he?"

When she spoke, her voice had a unique charm and was as mysterious as the night.

Vaguely, the illusory figure transformed into a woman. Her hair was bunched together in a high bun and secured with a black wooden phoenix hairpin. She looked very young with fair, soft skin and her blue eyes had a detached indifference seen only with superiors.

She was dressed in a gorgeous, tailored black formal robe that accentuated her slender and perfect figure. On the pinky of her fair right hand was a black gemstone ring. The ring was jet-black like eternal darkness and it resembled an open eye.

The Queen of Darkness.

The woman, who was an integration of elegance, beauty and nobility, exuded a solitary and vacant aura of darkness.

It was a kind of darkness that seemed capable of devouring souls and sinking everything including time.

It was just that, in the eyes of the old man, all he saw was a graceful figure from the darkness. He saw nothing apart from that.

"He isn't from Feiyun Village."

The old man bowed his head as he spoke and his voice was gentle and calm. "I have personally investigated and found out that three months before he came to Feiyun Village, the Violet Abyss Prison Mine that the founding emperor abandoned back then was completely destroyed one night and not a trace remained."

The Queen of Darkness fell silent on the throne of bones. After a long while, she asked, "Do you mean he is the child from back then?"

The old man shook his head and continued, "I investigated the area where the Violet Abyss Mine Prison was originally located. I am just puzzled that, given Lin Xun's cultivation level of the second layer True Martial Stage at the time, it would take him at least one year to reach Feiyun Village. There is a huge clash between three months and one year."

The Queen of the Darkness's voice was cold as she said, "There's no clash. Given Lu Boya's ability, it is completely possible for him to set up a transportation rune formation and instantly teleport the child out of the Violet Abyss Mine Prison."

The old man's eyes narrowed in surprise. "Lu Boya didn't die!?"

The Queen of Darkness nodded, "At this point, there's no need to hide it from you anymore. The reason why I insisted on going to the Great Three Thousand Mountains a year ago was to pay Lu Boya a visit."

The name sent the old man's emotions roiling and a dazed look came to his kind and gentle face.

Only after a long while, the old man finally responded with a complicated expression, "No wonder. I heard from Xue Jin that Lin Xun has unimaginable skills in the art of runes. I was puzzled as to who he learned them from. It turned out to be Lu Boya."

His expression was a mixture of surprise, astonishment and bewilderment. He couldn't imagine why Lu Boya, who was confirmed to have died long ago, was still alive.

"The death of Lu Boya back then has always been a mystery. Only I know the truth. All the higher-ups of the empire and the group of old people on the stargazing platform had been deceived by Lu Boya."

The Queen of the Darkness's calm voice seemed to be fluctuating, showing her unsteady emotions. "It's just that, now, it seems that Lu Boya is really dead."

It was as if she was very upset about Lu Boya's death.

The old man also fell silent. If the Violet Abyss Mine Prison created by the founding emperor himself had been destroyed, then how could Lu Boya still be alive?

"Lu Boya didn't die back then but he took the child who should have died long ago and hid in the Violet Abyss Mine Prison. But he likely didn't expect that a disaster would suddenly descend upon him and take his life."

The old man sighed, complicated emotions swirling in his eyes, as if he was reminiscing about the past.

The Queen of Darkness's voice had regained its usual indifference and calmness. "What I'm curious about is whether the person destroyed the Violet Abyss Mine Prison to kill Lu Boya or Lin Xun."

The old man's eyes narrowed. This question was very important. If it was to kill Lu Boya, it would suggest that they were unaware of Lin Xun's identity.

If it was to kill Lin Xun, it would prove that the murderer didn't know that Lu Boya, who was already proven dead back then, was a person full of mysteries.

Of course, the murderer might wanted to kill both Lu Boya and Lin Xun.

"Only Lu Boya knows what happened back then. Lin Xun wouldn't have been able to survive if not for him. It's just a pity that the mystery can't be solved after his death." The Queen of Darkness sighed.
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The old man pondered for a moment and said, "Miss, let's not talk about the past. Now that we know about Lin Xun's background, do we—"

The Queen of Darkness interrupted, "Cover the matter."

The old man was baffled. "Cover it?"

The Queen of the Darkness said indifferently, "Only Lu Boya knows about the reason so since Lu Boya didn't tell him the reason, we shouldn't overstep our place and meddle in the matter. Unless one day he possesses the power that will make me change my mind. Only then will he have the qualification to know about everything."

The old man nodded.

Faint footsteps suddenly sounded from the depths of the castle.

"Let's call it a day."

The figure of the Queen of the Darkness suddenly turned illusory on the throne of bones and gradually disappeared into nothingness.

The old man bowed with impeccable manners before he turned around and left the darkness-shrouded castle.

Just as they both vanished, a little girl cloaked in a black robe that concealed her face appeared.

The night-like darkness in the ancient castle seemed to not affect her vision as she quickly came to the empty throne of bones.

"It's useless to hide from me. You can isolate your conversations from the world, but you can't hide it from darkness, and I come from the darkness," the little girl murmured.

"Little Sister Xia Zhi, Little Sister Xia Zhi."

Suddenly, a clear and bright voice rang out and a ray of bright violet light cut through the darkness from the distance.

Upon a closer look, it was a youngster around twelve to thirteen years old. He was clad in a robe brighter than snow that accentuated his red lips and pearly white teeth. His eyes were as bright as the stars but his most unusual feature was the natural violet lotus mark between his brows.

Although he was only a youngster, he radiated a sacred violet glow around his body with every movement he made. He had an extraordinary transcendent bearing like an immortal.

The youngster's eyes grew even brighter when he saw Xia Zhi standing in the dark. He said with a smile, "Little Sister Xia Zhi, why are you here? Aren't you afraid of Lord Darkness scolding you?"

His expression and manner were unusually affectionate and warm.

Xia Zhi ignored him, turned around, and walked away.

The youngster wasn't bothered by her lack of response. He stepped forward, looked at Xia Zhi with a blazing gaze and said, "Little Sister Xia Zhi, I have discussed this with my father yesterday. When I break through to the Heaven Ascension Stage, he will discuss marriage with Lord Darkness and betrothe you to me."

Xia Zhi remained silent and completely disregarded the youngster's existence.

The young man seemed to understand Xia Zhi's personality very well. He didn't take offense and just smiled. "To tell you the truth, given my innate talent, Golden Sea Violet Lotus, I'm absolutely confident that I will reach the Heaven Ascension Stage at the age of fifteen. In three years, we can be together."

The youngster gazed at her, his eyes full of longing and excitement.

Xia Zhi suddenly halted her footsteps and broke the silence, "No one can control who I want to be with."

After she said that, she continued to move forward in the dark, her slender figure seeming particularly lonely in the darkness.

The youngster finally couldn't remain composed. His voice contained a tinge of anger as he said, "Little Sister Xia Zhi, besides I, Chi Cangfeng, who is a better match for you in this world? Who in the empire can compete with me in terms of talent, background and cultivation?"

Xia Zhi ignored him and continued to walk away. Soon, she came to a bronze door in the depths of the castle.

She raised her hand and was about to push open the door when the youngster called Chi Cangfeng sped over and stood in front of her. He took a deep breath and said resolutely, "Little Sister Xia Zhi, I just want to tell you that you belong to me. No one in this world can take you away from me."

Xia Zhi suddenly raised her head, but without any visible movement, Chi Cangfeng was uncontrollably blasted across the air and landed more than ten feet away.

Xia Zhi didn't even glance at him. She pushed the bronze door and walked through, the door rumbling shut behind her.

Chi Cangfeng squatted on the ground, his eyes fixed intently on the closed door. A chilling fierceness came to his handsome face.

"Xia Zhi, you will be mine. Even if Lord Darkness is around, he won't be able to protect you for many years. At that time, whether you like it or not, you will be my woman. In this world, only you are worthy of becoming my woman. Only you can match I, Chi Cangfeng," the youngster muttered. He rose to his feet and drew a deep breath. The ruthless look and anger faded from his face and he restored calmness to his features.

He strolled through the Castle of Darkness, his body exuding wisps of sacred violet light. At such a young age, he already had a unique and extraordinary bearing.

"Lord Darkness, junior will take my leave now. In three years, I will pay another visit with my father."

When he came to the gate of the ancient castle, he bowed slightly towards the darkness and pushed the door open.

After Chi Cangfeng left, the entire Castle of Darkness fell into complete silence, only darkness remained.

If anyone was present they would be astonished to see that a teenager who clearly didn't belong to the Castle of Darkness, a forbidden place in the empire, could come and go freely.

After a long moment, a low and charming voice sounded in the Castle of Darkness. "The Chi Family has begun to come and feel me out. It's getting more and more interesting. I also would like to see who will be the first to be unable to sit still among you all."

On the winding stone path in the mountains, the old man watched Chi Cangfeng as he left. His brows were imperceptibly scrunched together and he couldn't help but look at the Castle of Darkness standing atop the mountain. What is Miss thinking?

Chapter 225 Ancient Law Ocarina

Haze City.

As Lin Xun walked along the bustling street, he finally confirmed that, after some observations, the bloody massacre three nights ago indeed had no impact on him. He knew this was due to Xue Jin's interference.

This undoubtedly made Lin Xun feel a lot more relaxed.

Before long, Lin Xun came to a stop when he passed a rune transmission light screen in the center of the city.

On the light screen, a woman with a perfectly beautiful face and a serious demeanor was speaking very quickly, "Today, we have invited Fang Yu, a renowned advanced rune master in Haze City, to help us evaluate a Snowfury Blade."

As she was speaking, a dazzlingly bright blade appeared in her grip. "This blade is a treasure personally made by the mysterious Master Xun. I believe many friends are very curious why Master Xun's Snowfury Blade is significantly stronger than ordinary Snowfury Blades."

"Now, we invite Elder Fang Yu to explain to us."

As the light screen flickered, the figure of an old man appeared. He was dressed in a luxurious silk robe and radiated an imposing bearing.

An uproar broke out.

"It's indeed Elder Fang Yu. He is one of the top figures in Haze City and he is one step away from reaching the rune grandmaster level in terms of his mastery in the art of runes."

"The mysterious Master Xun has been very secretive and everyone is curious what kind of person he is. Now, even Elder Fang Yu wants to evaluate the aeth tools made from the hands of Master Xun. This is too exciting. Perhaps, we can find out how powerful Master Xun is from this appraisal."

"Damn it, be quiet. Listen to what Elder Fang Yu has to say."

Dumbfounded, Lin Xun swept his gaze around and saw many cultivators lift their heads and stare at the giant light screen in curious anticipation.

Lin Xun had never thought that he would have such a resounding reputation in Haze City, let alone be broadcasted on a rune transmission light screen. Furthermore, he had never imagined that a renowned advanced rune master would be invited to appraise his works.

It was no doubt an honor for any rune master, but Lin Xun felt a little strange about it.

He even doubted whether the mysterious Master Xun that everyone was curious about was actually him.

At that moment, Fang Yu cleared his throat on the rune transmission light screen and lifted up the Snowfury Blade, his expression solemn. "To be honest, the first time I saw this blade I was astounded by Master Xun's marvelous workmanship. Indeed, the Snowfury Blade is just a mid tier human-grade aeth tool and is very commonly found on the market. However, Master Xun, through a unique method, gave new powers to the blade that had long been well-established and recognized. This is undoubtedly a ground-breaking creation."

Fang Yu couldn't control his emotions and his eyes blazed fanatically.

As he explained, many cultivators were firmly drawn to the light screen, their eyes wide with unconcealable astonishment.

Master Fang Yu's choice of words and his high praise of Master Xun made them suspect whether Fang Yu was a long-established advanced rune master.

Rune masters were known to be prideful and proud. It was almost impossible for them to bow their heads and compliment another rune master.

Yet, Fang Yu had unreservedly praised a mysterious rune master highly in an admiring tone, surprising everyone.

This made the many cultivators present more curious whether Master Xun was really as powerful as Fang Yu had said.

However, Lin Xun felt extremely uncomfortable when he heard the compliments. If he didn't know Fang Yu was an advanced rune master, he would have suspected that he had been bribed to exaggerate his ability.

On the light screen, Fang Yu gestured with frantic enthusiasm as he described the Snowfury Blade in professional rune terminology.

It was very rare to see someone able to explain such boring rune information in such an easy to understand way. It was very witty and interesting and captured everyone's attention.

However, the more that Lin Xun listened, the more he couldn't stand it. The way he made the Snowfury Blade was not as exaggerated as Fang Yu had described.

He only made the blade to make money and had no intention of creating anything ground-breaking.

It was very normal for someone to ramble after a person had achieved remarkable success.

However, Fang Yu, an experienced advanced rune master, clearly regarded the mysterious Master Xun as the strongest master in the world and so was very generous in his praise.

If he knew that the mysterious Master Xun was only a fourteen to fifteen year old youngster, how would he feel and would he feel embarrassed about what he had said?

“Young Master, since this Master Xun is so powerful, he may be able to repair your Ancient Law Ocarina.”

Suddenly, a crisp and clear voice caught Lin Xun’s attention.

Ancient Law Ocarina!

Someone still has an ancient musical instrument that has long vanished from the world! Lin Xun exclaimed in his mind.

From a young age, he had seen Mister Lu occasionally take out a palm-sized tear-drop-shaped musical instrument to play.

The noise it produced was sometimes thick and hazy and sometimes deep and resounding. It gave a sense of time like it was from ancient times.

Sometimes it was ethereal and lonely, like a cultivator walking alone in the world and constantly glancing around, unable to find the end of the road.

Sometimes it was simple and pure, like the lofty mountains and flowing streams. It cleared the mind and soothed the soul and spirit like one was bathing in the sounds of heaven.

Mister Lu was very fond of the musical instrument. He would be very happy to be only accompanied by the instrument all his life even if the road had no end.

Only later did Lin Xun learn that it was called Ancient Law Ocarina, a musical instrument that had almost disappeared with time. It had nine tone holes, and each one produced a different note. The number nine represented externality.

The instrument could even produce a magnificent effect if an art cultivator with a remarkable musical talent played it.

However, the Ancient Law Ocarina was extremely special. In order to control it, the performer not only needed to have a tremendous spirit power, but also an innate musical talent.

Mister Lu had once said that the tunes of the Ancient Law Ocarina could kill but also save people. It had endless magical uses but there were very few in the world who could play it.

The reason why the Ancient Law Ocarina had almost become extinct with time was precisely because very few people in the world could control it. Such a mysterious instrument gradually vanished from the world as the time passed.

This was the reason that Lin Xun was so surprised to hear someone mention the Ancient Law Ocarina and he couldn’t help but turn around.

Not far away stood a pretty and elegant young master in an azure robe with red lips and pearly white teeth. Fanning himself, he looked very graceful.

Standing beside him was a well-behaved and bright little maid.

Aware of Lin Xun's gaze, the azure-robed young master greeted Lin Xun with a smile, seemingly humble and polite.

The little female servant cast Lin Xun a sidelong glance, but she was rather rude. "What are you looking at?" Her voice was crisp and pleasant.

However, the azure-robed young master scolded her, "Ying'er, don't be rude."

The little maid pursed her lips. "Little Young Master, that guy's gaze is strange. He clearly has bad intentions."

The azure-robed young master reddened with embarrassment and shot a glare at the little servant. "I won't bring you out if you keep talking nonsense."

The little maid's aggressiveness immediately faded. Although she didn't say anything else, she still cast occasional vigilant glances over Lin Xun, like he was a bad guy.

"Young master, my servant has always been wilful. Please forgive her rudeness," the azure-robed young master said apologetically.

"It's fine."

Lin Xun smiled brightly. How would I be bothered about what a little servant said?

Who would have thought that his smile felt like a porcupine's spike in the little maid's eyes. She vigilantly reminded, "Young Master, this guy has a chilling smile. Even if he's not a bad person, he definitely isn't a good guy."

Lin Xun was taken aback.

However, the azure-robed young master tapped the little maid's head with his fan and scolded, "If you say something wrong again, I'm really going to be angry."

He gave Lin Xun a cupped fist salute from afar and was about to leave with his maid.

However, Lin Xun couldn't help but say, "My friend, if you want to repair the Ancient Law Ocarina, maybe you really can try to ask Master Xun."

The azure-robed young master abruptly halted his footsteps and a strange glint flashed across his eyes. He pondered for a moment and said, "Thank you for your advice. Farewell."

He left with the maid.

Lin Xun shrugged. He wanted to help him because he was really fond of the Ancient Law Ocarina due to its association with Mister Lu.

Unfortunately, the young master clearly had no interest.

Meanwhile, Fang Yu's appraisal of the Snowfury Blade was about to come to an end. "If possible, I really hope to have the opportunity to meet Master Xun. I would have no more regrets in life if I can receive his teachings."

All the cultivators buzzed like never before. After listening to Fang Yu's evaluation, they grew more curious about the mysterious Master Xun and they seemed to have already regarded Master Xun as a sage-like figure.

Only Lin Xun shuddered. The old man is too crazy. I just hope that I won't ever meet him.

Without further delay, Lin Xun hurriedly left and headed to the Rune Master Association.

Not long after Lin Xun left, a woman couldn't help but cackle in a bronze carriage in the distance. She shook with laughter and almost cried.

Chapter 226 Maiden Yan'er

The woman in the bronze carriage was clad in a black dress. Her long waterfall-like hair was rolled up in a bun, revealing a section of her fair and soft neck. Her beautiful face was fair and delicate like a blooming rose.

She was a rare beauty. She was, of course, the person in charge of Stone Cauldron Alms in Donglin City and the woman known as Black Rose—Mu Wansu.

She now had a completely different status and identity. Half a year ago, she received a massive promotion and became the manager of Haze City Stone Cauldron Alms.

Donglin City was a remote, border city, while Haze City was the capital of the southwest province. The fact that Mu Wansu had leapt to such a height undoubtedly proved that she possessed unquestionable ability and power.

She was shaking with laughter like she had heard the funniest joke in the world. "Master Xun, hahaha, that old guy exaggerates too much. If he knew that the so-called Master Xun is just a teenager. I wonder what his reaction would be."

"Miss Wansu, are you really sure that Master Xun is the little guy who stirred up a storm in Donglin City last year?" asked Wang Lin, a treasure appraiser of Donglin City Stone Cauldron Alms. He had also come to Haze City with Mu Wansu.

"Besides him, who else could it be? Wang Lin, you also saw the Flame Blade that he made when he first came to Donglin City."

Mu Wansu finally controlled her laughter after much difficulty. "Although the Snowfury Blade and Flame Blade are different, they have the same marking-the Xun character."

Wang Lin pondered for a while, trying to remember the presentation from the advanced rune master Fang Yu.

He couldn't help but sigh emotionally, "We haven't seen each other in a year, and Lin Xun has suddenly become the famous Master Xun in Haze City. The world is indeed unpredictable. Who would have

thought that Lin Xun, who used to live in the slums of Donglin City, would encounter such life-changing experiences?”

Mu Wansu’s eyes glazed over as she fell into deep thought. She remembered the first time she saw Lin Xun was in Feiyun Village in the depths of the Great Three Thousand Mountains. At the time, Lin Xun was just a country bumpkin and he wasn’t considered remarkable as he only had the strength of a second True Martial Stage cultivator.

At the time, Mu Wansu was very puzzled when First Young Master Shi Xuan regarded Lin Xun highly, but she now finally understood.

To this day, she could still clearly recall First Young Master Shi Xuan’s words: “There is a kind of person in the world who will release dazzling brilliance when given the chance. Perhaps we will find out whether he is a dragon in the future.”

When she thought about Lin Xun’s current accomplishments in Haze City, Mu Wansu was really impressed by First Young Master Shi Xuan’s accurate judgment of Lin Xun back then.

Lin Xun might not be the most impressive, but for a teenager from a village, he was like a carp leaped into the dragon gate.

Immediately, Mu Wansu curled a corner of her rosy plump lips in a sneer. “That bastard didn’t even say a word when he left. I won’t give face to him when I see him. It doesn’t matter that his identity has changed.”

Wang Lin smiled bitterly. When Lin Xun was in Donglin City, Mu Wansu didn’t particularly like Lin Xun and it was Wang Lin who personally came forward to reduce the tension between them.

Who would have thought that Mu Wansu still held a grudge towards Lin Xun? Wang Lin didn’t know whether to laugh or cry about that.

“But Wang Lin, remember that no one in Haze City knows about Master Xun’s identity. This has to be Lin Xun’s doing and he has to have a reason to do so. Out of respect for the First Young Master, we should pretend to not know anything,” Mu Wansu reminded him.

Wang Lin suddenly realized that although Mu Wansu sounded aggressive, she, in truth, had long dropped her prejudice against Lin Xun.

The bronze carriage quickly steered away.

My Wansu organized her thoughts and said ruminatively, “In two months, it will be the Haze City Stone Cauldron Alms 100th anniversary. It is also my first major event after I got promoted. Earlier, First Young Master Shi Xuan personally came forward to help me invite art cultivator Liu Qingyan to join us. When I arrive at Stone Cauldron Alms, I want to meet the famous art cultivator as soon as possible.”

Wang Lin’s eyes lit up. “Miss Wansu, Liu Qingyan has arrived earlier than expected?”

Mu Wansu nodded and said thoughtfully, “As an art cultivator, Liu Qingyan is very remarkable to gain such a resounding reputation in the empire. Even the First Young Master has repeatedly reminded me to treat her as the most important guest. I’m very curious to see whether her charm is really as rumored and can really turn the world upside down.”

The azure-robed young master and servant Ying'er walked side by side along the bustling street.

"Ying'er, don't be so rude next time," scolded the azure-robed young master.

Ying'er stuck out her tongue and chuckled, "Of course I will listen to your words but that guy was really annoying. I don't think he even knows what the Ancient Law Ocarina is yet he dares to give you advice. How ridiculous!"

The azure-robed young master knitted his brows in deep thought. "Ying'er, do you think I should try and ask that Master Xun?"

Ying'er pursed her lips and said, "Young Master, that guy is clearly exaggerating Master Xun's ability! Why would you believe him? Also, even the rune grandmasters of the Divine Workshop failed to repair the Ancient Law Ocarina. Would Master Xun be more amazing than the rune grandmasters from the Divine Workshop?"

"But I—" the azure-robed young master wavered.

Ying'er couldn't help but sigh, "Fine, fine, I'll accompany you to ask when there's a chance."

The azure-robed young master smiled. "Yes, I won't give up even if there's only a glimmer of hope."

Ying'er muttered, "I hope you won't be disappointed again this time, but I feel that I will definitely be disappointed."

The azure-robed young master swept an annoyed glance at Ying'er. "Alright, we should hurry back. Otherwise, Granny will be very angry if she knew that we had snuck out."

"Miss, I won't dare to be angry at you." An old voice slowly rang out.

The azure-robed young master and Ying'er froze, looking at each other in dismay.

A wrinkled old woman with silver hair sauntered towards them with the support of her walking stick.

She seemed slow but she arrived in front of the two in the blink of an eye. Looking helplessly at the azure-robed youngster, she sighed, "Miss, it's dangerous to come out alone. If something happens to you—"

Before she finished, the azure-robed young master hugged the old woman's arm and said sweetly, "Okay, okay, granny, I won't dare to do it next time. Don't be angry."

One moment, he was a handsome and graceful young man, and the next moment, he became a cute little girl. Her charm stunned all the passersby.

Clearly, the azure-robed young master called Yan'er was a woman disguised as a man.

"Hmph, and you little servant, if this happens again—"

The granny clearly doted on the azure-robed maiden called Yan'er and couldn't bear to scold her. She just threw a glare at Ying'er.

Ying'er bowed her head. "Granny, I'm sorry."

"Go back quickly. If you don't go back, those young masters will create a scene, especially the Little Sword Lord of the Xie family. I can't stop him if he acts wildly in Haze City."

The granny turned around and walked away.

The maiden Yan'er frowned. She felt a headache coming on at the thought of the young masters gathered at her residence.

Those young masters were all nobles of the upper-class clans. They always did whatever they wanted and not many people dared to provoke them, even in Forbidden City.

When they heard that she was coming to Haze City, they all flocked there one after another. If they acted wildly in Haze City in order to find her, they might cause some sort of calamity.

"Granny, I don't want to go back."

The young maiden Yan'er looked at the granny with a pitiful look. Her pure and clear eyes were indescribably beautiful and innocent like black gemstones.

"You have to." The granny stated without any hesitation.

Yan'er bit her lip and suddenly said, "I'll go back, but you have to promise me one thing."

"Miss, just tell me. I will definitely promise you if it's within my ability. But if I can't, please don't make things difficult for me."

Yan'er grinned, her smile pure and stunning like a flower blooming silently after the rain.

She said, "It's a very simple thing, and it certainly won't make things difficult for you."

The granny sighed in relief. "Miss, what is it?"

Ying'er rolled her eyes. "Granny, Miss heard that there is a Master Xun in Haze City who could repair her Ancient Law Ocarina so she wants you to come forward and help her find Master Xun."

The granny snorted, "Someone in Haze City can repair the Ancient Law Ocarina? How would you believe that lie?"

Ying'er quickly responded, "Yes, I also don't think Master Xun can do it, but Miss is so concerned about this matter that she was easily deceived by a bad guy."

Granny narrowed her eyes, a terrifying glint flashed across them. "Who deceived Miss?"

"Ying'er, be quiet."

Yan'er glared at Ying'er and explained to the granny. "I just want Master Xun to give it a try. It has nothing to do with the youngster. Please, I just want to give it a try. I have no other request."

The granny seemed persuaded. After a moment she said, "Fine, but Miss you have to come back with me now. As for Master Xun, I will find time to invite him over."

Yan'er's eyes lit up. "Granny, you are the nicest person to me. With your help, the matter will definitely be successful."

The granny dotingly patted the maiden's head. "As long as Miss is happy."

Meanwhile, Lin Xun was unaware of all this. He had just arrived at the Rune Master Association when Chu Feng invited him into a quiet room. Chu Feng exclaimed in delight, "It's amazing that you could simultaneously deal with a dozen of rich and powerful forces. Not only that, even if they suffered a loss, they don't even dare to make a huge deal out of it or let the matter spread. I'm utterly impressed."

Chapter 227 Standing up to Injustice

Lin Xun didn't know how to respond to Chu Feng's enthusiastic praise. He smiled bitterly and said, "Big Brother, I came here to thank you for your help that night."

Chu Feng said with a smile, "It's a trivial matter, so don't mention it."

Lin Xun's voice was serious, "It may be a trivial matter for you, but not for me. You helped me when I needed it the most."

Three nights ago, Chu Feng had not only provided Lin Xun with detailed information, but also supplied him with medicines, weapons, equipment as well as several places to hide and rest.

If it weren't for his help, Lin Xun felt he likely wouldn't have been able to survive to the end.

He owed Chu Feng a huge favor.

Chu Feng's eyes widened in surprise. "What!? Little Brother, why are you acting so distant with Big Brother?"

In truth, he was very glad that Lin Xun had accepted his favor.

Most importantly, after what happened that night, Chu Feng had fully realized that Lin Xun was indeed extraordinarily remarkable given that he was able to defeat dozens of powerful forces and make them retreat without uttering a word to the public.

Chu Feng was already very satisfied to maintain a good friendship with Lin Xun.

The two conversed for a while before Lin Xun got up and said goodbye.

He had already promised Chu Feng that he would continue to complete consignments in the Rune Master Association once he recovered. On one hand, it was to make money, and on the other hand, he wanted to help Chu Feng. [17ELNExt.com](http://www.17ELNExt.com)

After all, the fame of Master Xun had resounded throughout the entire Haze City. Lin Xun's presence could bring tremendous benefits to the Rune Master Association.

Lin Xun had planned to customize a blade for himself so he handed over a list of rune materials to Chu Feng and asked him to help him gather the materials. Naturally, Chu Feng agreed without the slightest hesitation.

After the massacre three nights ago, Lin Xun came to realize that the standard blades on the market weren't suitable for him despite their tremendous powers. As a result, he couldn't bring out his full power in battle.

Cultivators who specialized in battles also would often hire a rune master to tailor-make a weapon for themselves. Lin Xun just had been too busy to do so.

Lin Xun finally had the time to customize a weapon for himself since there was still quite a bit of time until the provincial examination.

When Lin Xun completed his tasks in the Rune Master Association, it wasn't noon yet and so he wasn't in a hurry to return home. Instead, he took a stroll along the vibrant streets.

Haze City was prosperous and bustling, with many novel and rare things that he had never seen in his life.

For example, there were stations opened by beast tamers where one could hire rune beast-pulled carriages and also purchase pets.

For example, there were flower stores opened by plant masters which sold all sorts of beautiful aeth flowers and plants. They were very popular with girls.

There were also fruit and vegetable shops, restaurants, arenas, antique alleys and the slave market square. There were all sorts of stores that dazzled the eyes.

All of which were very rarely seen in a border city like Donglin City.

As Lin Xun briefly browsed the various shops, he marveled inwardly. This is the Ziyao Empire. The more prosperous a city, the more it shows the power of the empire.

However, prosperity and power are both superficial. As a cultivator, the foundation of a person is still one's cultivation.

Lin Xun reckoned that it would be difficult for him to make another breakthrough any time soon since he had just reached the Human Dipper Stage not long ago.

He also wasn't in a hurry. One's cultivation was built on effort and time. It couldn't be rushed. But there were still other ways he could improve his strength.

For example, upgrading his weapons and equipment. This was one of the most effective ways to increase his powers.

In addition, martial arts practice could also raise his strength in combat. Lin Xun's mastery of Star-Gather had only just passed the Inkling realm and reached the Elemental Realm. He was still far from reaching the Precise Realm, let alone the Perfect Realm.

If he could further improve his mastery of Star-Gather and reach the Precise Realm, he could bring out even more terrifying power.

However, the circulation of Star-Gather consumed a huge amount of stamina and power and so could only be used as a trump card. Therefore, Lin Xun instead put his focus on his grasp of the Six Word Blade Art.

The Six Word Blade Art was an extremely secretive and ruthless blade technique. Even Instructor Xiaoke and Xu Sanqi regarded the blade art highly.

Lin Xun had practiced the blade art to the Precise Realm but was still a long way from reaching the Perfect Realm. He intended to use the rest of his time to bring his control of the Six Word Blade Art to the Perfect Realm.

If he could achieve that, at least, he wouldn't need to resort to Star-Gather to smoothly pass the provincial examination.

Additionally, he had achieved unexpected progress in his spirit cultivation. After his battle against his assassins, Lin Xun had illuminated another three spirit stars in his mind-sea. In total, twenty-one spirit stars were shining brightly in the sky of his mind-sea. They shined upon his spirit and made his spirit sense power increasingly stronger.

"Battle strength is very important but I also have to prepare for entering the third level of the Great Azure Cloud Path in the Omega Secret Realm before the provincial examination," Lin Xun contemplated. There was only less than three months until the third test of the Great Azure Cloud Path opened.

The third level was called Hundred Battles and he only had three attempts to pass. Although Lin Xun didn't know how difficult and dangerous the third test would be, he wouldn't dare to be careless.

He had to be fully prepared if he wanted to get his hands on the reward for passing the third level. He speculated that the third test was related to battle since it had the name Hundred Battles.

He thought it over and over again, and came to the decision that it was most important to raise his strength first.

Suddenly, an uproar afar jolted Lin Xun awake from his contemplation. He looked up to see a brawny man dragging a woman into a carriage.

The woman was disheveled and her clothes were torn. She constantly screamed out in tears, "Help, help, I don't know him, I really don't know him"

However, with an embarrassed expression the brawny man explained to the onlookers, "Sorry that you all had to see this. This is my daughter-in-law. She had an affair for the past few days and I finally caught her red handed. She not only won't admit she did wrong but also wants to create a scene so I'm going to take her home now."

Everyone nearby showed contempt on their faces.

Someone even scolded out loud, "What a slut. She cheated but still won't admit her wrongdoing. She should be drowned."

"What a shameless woman! Why are you screaming? No one will save you even if you scream to death."

"Brother, hurry and take your daughter-in-law away. Don't let her embarrass you anymore."

Everyone criticized the woman.

The brawny man said gratefully, "Thank you, thank you for your understanding, I will take her away now."

He grabbed the woman by the hair and dragged her towards the carriage.

The woman's face blanched with despair, fear and helplessness. But it was useless no matter how hard she struggled. She could only scream out loud, "Help, help, I really don't know him."

Just as she was about to be dragged into the carriage, a voice rang out, "Hold on!"

The crowd of onlookers were utterly surprised, not expecting someone to stand up for the woman.

They looked up to see a handsome young man had appeared out of nowhere. He was blocking the brawny man's path. The man was of course Lin Xun.

The brawny man narrowed his eyes and yelled, "Little brother, this is my family affair. Why are you, an outsider, interfering in my family matters? Move out of the way!"

"Yes, young man, you are too nosy. Get out of the way and let the big brother take the slut away," someone scolded Lin Xun.

The others also agreed, telling Lin Xun to move aside.

There was a smug twinkle in the brawny man's eyes as he was about to shove Lin Xun away by his shoulder. "Hurry and—"

Before he finished his sentence, he screamed out like a slaughtered pig. Lin Xun had twisted his hand and dislocated his joints. He sank to his knees and curled on the ground like a cooked prawn.

"You—you—you want to die—" the brawny man cursed.

Uproar broke out from the onlookers. They had never thought that the seemingly harmless young man would take action without a word.

"Little brother, you are in the wrong. You shouldn't interfere in other people's family affairs."

"Yes, you went too far. This is Haze City. Many people are watching this. Don't tell me you want to kill on the street?"

"Hmph, I think this kid has his eyes on the man's daughter-in-law. The woman is pretty good-looking, and her skin is fair and smooth. The kid is a hot blooded teen. He must be drawn to the woman's beauty."

There was a clamor of discussion around. The street was crowded with people so they weren't afraid that Lin Xun would dare attack them.

Then, they heard the sound of cracking bones. Without uttering a word, Lin Xun had snapped the brawny man's limbs. As he knelt on the ground, his face contorted with pain, his forehead beaded with sweat, and anguished screams constantly came forth from his mouth.

The scene immediately drew criticism from the onlookers.

At that moment, a sigh sounded on the third floor of a restaurant. "Why is it that guy, Lin Xun, again?"

The person who spoke was a remarkably handsome young man—Qi Yunxiao, the young master of Jadelight Pavilion.

He had been drinking in boredom when the sudden disturbance on the street had caught his attention, like it had done with Lin Xun. He inadvertently glanced at the chaos, but his face grew overcast and his heart tumbled when he saw Lin Xun's familiar figure.

He cast his mind back to what had happened that night three days ago and the loud slap he received in the face from his father.

"That guy is getting more and more arrogant. He actually interfered in another person's family affairs in broad daylight. He really doesn't know what's good for him. Let's go and see how he is going to make a fool of himself this time," Qi Yunxiao said through gritted teeth as he stood up.

The attendant next to him reminded, "Young Master, the head of the clan has issued a strict order to not provoke Lin Xun again."

Qi Yunxiao interrupted, "Who the hell is going to provoke him? We are just there to watch! Do you understand?"

He turned around and made his way down the restaurant stairs.

The attendant quickly followed him.

Chapter 228 Drawing a Sword to Help

More and more onlookers and cultivators gathered on the bustling street. But when they learned that Lin Xun was standing up for a woman who had cheated, many people became flushed with anger.

Unfortunately for Lin Xun, the rescued woman was so worked up that she had fainted on the ground and couldn't help defend Lin Xun.

However, Lin Xun didn't care. He just looked at the brawny man kneeling on the ground who was screaming tragically to gain the onlookers' sympathy. His eyes were sharp as blades.

"I'll give you one chance to state your name, background, origin and your purpose of kidnapping the woman," Lin Xun said calmly.

The brawny man roared in anger, "Everyone, this kid is not only a bully but he is trying to slander me. What does he mean by kidnap? I'm just teaching my daughter-in-law a lesson."

Someone couldn't help but say to Lin Xun, "Young man, that's enough. Don't make another mistake. There are so many people present. You will face the wrath of the public if you continue your mistake."

Kacha—

Lin Xun completely ignored him. He lifted his foot and pressed it into the brawny man's right hand. Blood seeped out amidst the sound of bones breaking.

The brawny man screamed in agony, but, wanting to maintain his dignity, he roared, "Boy, kill me if you dare!"

Many onlookers became angry when they saw the bloody scene. They felt that Lin Xun had gone too far.

A cultivator stood forward and said righteously, "Boy, you dare wound someone in broad daylight? I am going to teach you a lesson today." He immediately won a lot of applause.

Qi Yunxiao, who was hiding among the crowd, couldn't help smiling. Lin Xun, Lin Xun, let's see how you clean up this mess now.

Kacha—

Lin Xun completely disregarded the cultivator. He slightly lifted his foot and crushed the brawny man's other hand with it. The man whimpered in pain, his eyes rolled back into his head, and he lost consciousness.

"You want to die!"

The cultivator was infuriated that Lin Xun ignored him. He stepped forward and aimed a palm strike at Lin Xun.

The blast of wind around his hand was chilling as the palm slammed through the air. He clearly had used all his strength.

However, Lin Xun just made a grabbing motion in the air and clutched the opponent's wrist. With a violent shake of his hand, the cultivator quivered rapidly like a sieve and all bones in his body shattered. He thudded into the ground like a dead fish, screaming in agony.

One attack had suppressed a cultivator.

The ordinary people repeatedly drew back in fear. They had never thought that the youngster would be so powerful and fierce.

Some cultivators couldn't help but narrow their eyes while shuddering inwardly. The attack seems simple but it was filled with all sorts of murderous intent. Only remarkable cultivators can pull out such an attack.

That youngster isn't ordinary.

Everyone froze for a moment. Qi Yunxiao, who was hiding in the crowd, cursed in his mind. What a bunch of trash! You are frightened by that little attack.

Qi Yunxiao also knew that most of the onlookers were ordinary people or inexperienced cultivators. They only gathered to watch the scene. It was impossible to expect them to join hands to deal with Lin Xun.

It was just that Qi Yunxiao felt extremely uncomfortable to see Lin Xun scaring off everyone with just one little attack.

He came to see Lin Xun make a fool out of himself and not to see how he showed off.

Lin Xun aimed another kick at the brawny man. The man jolted up like he was electrocuted.

When he saw Lin Xun standing in front of him, his face contorted with anger, and just as he was about to scream out again, he saw Lin Xun crouched down with a sharp blade in his grip. Lin Xun pressed the blade against his throat.

The brawny man blanched with terror, and fear flooded his eyes. “What—what—what are you doing? Are you going to kill me?”

As he was speaking, he glanced around as if asking for help. But although everyone looked disturbed, no one was willing to step forward to help.

The brawny man’s face paled even more and when he saw a cultivator lying on the ground beside him. He felt he was about to collapse.

“I’ve given you the chance. If you don’t tell the truth, I won’t just simply break your arms.” Lin Xun said with a smile. As the blade glinted in his hand, it flashed across the air and slashed off the man’s ear in one swift and clean motion. Blood spewed everywhere.

The brawny man screamed in pain. “I’ll tell the truth! I’ll tell the truth!”

At that moment, the handsome young man before him was like a devil. An unprecedented fear gripped him.

The brawny man endured the pain and said, “My name is Hu Debiao and I am from Chengnan.”

“State the important point—why do you want to kidnap this woman?” Lin Xun uttered coldly.

Hu Debiao continued in a trembling voice, “For a transaction. A good-looking woman is worth a lot of money.”

Before he finished, an uproar broke out from the crowd. Their gazes changed from sympathy to anger, puzzlement, scorn and contempt.

“So, she is not your daughter-in-law,” said Lin Xun.

Hu Debiao had completely lost the strength to fight back. “No.”

Everyone fumed with rage. But it wasn’t because Hu Debiao was a human trafficker. It was because a human trafficker had deceived them. They felt embarrassed from the shame.

When Lin Xun saw this, he got up and said to the people around him, “Everyone, this is the scum you tried to protect. Now, are you satisfied?”

Many people flushed red with embarrassment.

Someone muttered, “Who could have known that he is a human trafficker? If we had known this earlier, we would have killed him together.”

Lin Xun shot a cold look at the person. “Didn’t you hear that woman’s cry for help just now?”

The man retorted, “In today’s world, who would be so stupid to save someone when they hear a cry for help? Only in stories would someone draw a sword to stand up to injustice.”

Lin Xun snorted. An indescribable hatred and anger surged in his heart. When did it become a stupid thing to stand up to injustice?
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He pointed to Hu Debiao on the ground. “Right, so when traffickers use the same method like he did to kidnap your daughters, daughters-in-law, relatives and friends, let’s see who in this world will help you.”

Many people's expressions visibly changed. Indeed, an innocent woman's life was saved because of Lin Xun. If the same thing had happened to them, what would they do?

Lin Xun couldn't be bothered to say anything else to them. He glanced at the cultivator collapsed on the ground beside Hu Debiao. "If my guess is right, it was you who urged others to fight against me. I believe you two are working together."

The cultivator and Hu Debiao turned ashen-faced.

"Tell me, who sent you?" Lin Xun asked bluntly. He had come into contact with many underground gangs when he was in Donglin City, so he knew that it was impossible for human traffickers to act alone. There had to be a major force behind them.

"We—"

The second that Hu Debiao opened his mouth, the cultivator shouted, "Don't say it!"

Seeing this, Lin Xun didn't want to waste any time. He slashed the cultivator's neck with his blade, splattering blood onto Hu Debiao's face. Hu Debiao was so frightened that he wet his pants

"Say it." Lin Xun shifted his cold gaze onto him.

"We are from the Black Python Gang," Hu Debiao quickly answered. He didn't dare to hesitate in the slightest.

Black Python Gang.

Many people's faces blanched. The Black Python Gang was the most notorious gang in Haze City and was known to kidnap women.

Immediately, many people started to rage, urging Lin Xun to kill Hu Debiao.

Lin Xun felt a little better. At least these people still have a conscience.

Qi Yunxiao, who was hiding in the crowd, looked incredibly disappointed. With a gloomy face, he turned around and was about to leave.

However, his vision suddenly blurred and he looked up to see Lin Xun blocking his path. With a smile, Lin Xun grabbed Qi Yunxiao's arm and dragged him to the center of the crowd.

Qi Yunxiao's expression dramatically changed. He attempted to struggle free.

However, Lin Xun said to the onlookers, "Everyone, it's very easy to kill Hu Debiao, but the same thing will still happen everyday if we don't eliminate the Black Python Gang. The First Young Master of Jadelight pavilion, Qi Yunxiao, has agreed to help everyone get rid of the evil Black Python Gang."

Qi Yunxiao fumed. When did I agree to this matter?

Before he could speak, Lin Xun's voice rang in his ears, "If you don't cooperate with me, don't blame me for standing in front of your Jadelight Pavilion every day and beating up every single person from your Qi Family that I see. Let's see what you can do to me then."

Qi Yunxiao trembled, his eyes almost split apart from anger. This guy dares to blackmail me?! He has gone too far!

But unfortunately for him, he couldn't say anything because, as Lin Xun had said, no one in the Jadelight Pavilion dared to touch Lin Xun because of the Black Glory note.

The most infuriating thing for him was that they didn't know if they should fight back or not if Lin Xun went up to bully people of the Jadelight Pavilion.

Just when Qi Yunxiao was conflicted on what to do, cheers erupted from the crowd. They all applauded the young master of the Jadelight Pavilion for his courage and proclaimed him a hero.

Lin Xun smiled. "Everyone is right. Since the Jadelight Pavilion has come forward, even ten Black Python Gangs will be wiped out in the blink of an eye. Everyone must remember Young Master Qi Yunxiao for his kindness. It's really rare to see a young hero have the courage to fight against the evil forces."

Immediately, applause and cheers erupted from the crowd.

Qi Yunxiao was completely dumbstruck. He had no choice but to agree in front of everyone.

He really regretted coming over there to watch. If he had known that would happen, he would have hid as far as he could.

But it was too late to take back his actions. Lin Xun was clearly determined to make him suffer. If he dared not to agree, given Lin Xun's fierce and ruthless personality, he no doubt would block the Jadelight Pavilion's entrance and cause trouble there.

Being used in such a way, Qi Yunxiao felt so indignant that he wanted to weep and even cut his throat and kill himself.

Chapter 229 Mysterious Granny

By the time Qi Yunxiao woke up from his shocked state, he discovered that Lin Xun was no longer around but many people were eagerly gazing at him.

The gazes...felt like they were staring at a debtor who had refused to pay back their money. It made Qi Yunxiao feel extremely uncomfortable.

"Young Master, what do we do?"

The servant who had been following Qi Yunxiao asked in a low voice.

"What else can I do?! First take that guy away!"

Qi Yunxiao pointed irritably at Hu Debiao on the ground. Lin Xun had left but he didn't have the guts to leave.

The servant let out a sigh of relief. "I'm glad to hear that. It's better to deal with the Black Python Gang than to watch Lin Xun come to our door and bully our people."

Qi Yunxiao felt extremely uncomfortable, but he had to admit that a Black Python Gang was indeed not as much of a threat as Lin Xun was to them.

Qi Yunxiao signaled with his hand as he said, "Bring the unconscious woman with us. When she wakes up, escort her home."

The attendant nodded. Carrying Hu Debiao in one arm and the unconscious woman in the other, he was about to leave with Qi Yunxiao.

At that moment, someone yelled out, "Young Master Qi, do you know when Jadelight Pavilion will take action against the Black Python Gang?"

Qi Yunxiao said coldly, "If the Black Python Gang survives past tonight, I, Qi Yunxiao, will kill myself in apology!"

After that, he left with his attendant.

Cheers erupted from the crowd behind him. Everyone was praising Qi Yunxiao for his courage. He is indeed worthy of being the young master of Jadelight Pavilion.

Qi Yunxiao's expression morphed indefinitely upon hearing the praises. He sometimes gnashed his teeth, sometimes he frowned and sometimes his expression turned strange.

After a long moment, he asked, "Say, are they really praising me sincerely?"

The attendant was taken aback by the question. Then, he nodded. "Of course, Young Master. You are going to help them get rid of an evil force, how would they not be grateful?"

Qi Yunxiao's face softened and he said thoughtfully, "I didn't expect it to actually feel good to help other people..."

The attendant was at a loss for words.

Qi Yunxiao's anger seemed to have faded as he said proudly, "Since I promised them, after tonight, the Black Python Gang..."

The attendant immediately understood his meaning. "Young Master, rest assured. Leave it to me. I guarantee that the mission will be completed tonight!"

Qi Yunxiao smiled in satisfaction as though he had forgotten about the indignation that Lin Xun made him suffer...

The attendant knew that his young master was still very immature compared to Lin Xun. He wasn't lacking in intelligence or talent but he lacked experience.

However, that was normal because his young master was only fourteen years old, the age when one's temperament was most unpredictable.

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When Lin Xun returned home, he was surprised to see Chu Feng waiting for him with all the rune materials he required to forge a blade.

Chu Feng beamed when he saw Lin Xun. They briefly chatted before Chu Feng said goodbye and left.

“That guy is quite amazing,” remarked Xue Jin who was drinking alone in a corner.

Lin Xun smiled. “There are many smart people in the world, but only a few are like Chu Feng: smart and generous.”

Xue Jin chuckled. “The more he is like this, the more he wants.”

Lin Xun nodded, turned around, and walked into the room.

Chu Feng had brought over all sorts of rune materials. Some were for making the blade and some were for refining rune ink.

In the past, Lin Xun only needed to purchase rune ink and ordinary weapons to make aeth tools as all he had to do was engrave runes on the ordinary weapons. But it was different this time because he wanted to customize a blade for himself, which meant that he had to prepare the rune inks and blade materials by himself.

Most importantly, the blade he wanted to make was different from the various standard blades sold on the market!

In other words, he intended to design a brand-new battle aeth tool for himself.

This was no doubt an extremely challenging task. Many rune masters in the world could make aeth tools but only very few could utilize their knowledge in the art of runes to design a custom aeth tool.

It was the same as creating a brand new tool—It was full of unknowns and he had no examples to follow. He had to explore and try everything himself, which consequently increased the risk of failure.

Generally speaking, only people at the rune grandmaster level would have that kind of creative ability.

Although it was Lin Xun’s first time designing an aeth tool, he had been following Mister Lu since a young age and had come across many bizarre and rare rune patterns so he wasn’t the least bit afraid.

Lin Xun sat down in the room and organized the rune materials into groups. Then, he prepared paper and ink and began to brainstorm.

The composition of the rune ink, the blade’s appearance and materials and the rune patterns...were all carefully planned out.

He based the design on his cultivation base and fighting style. Everything was designed with his fighting needs in mind!

The atmosphere in the room was still and quiet. Lin Xun’s back was straight as a spear as he sat in front of the desk, his expression focused and serious. Only the brush in his hand produced scratching noises as it slid across the paper.

The art of runes was a mysterious power.

Once an ordinary tool was engraved with runes, it would transform into an aeth tool and possess unbelievable powers. It was indeed very magical.

Runes also concerned every aspect of cultivation, such as alchemy, tool making, beast taming, puppets and aeth plants.

The tremendous influence that runes had could be seen everywhere in the empire. For example, the rune transmission light screen used to broadcast news, the rune shuttle that provided transportation, and the battleships with incredible defense power were all things that enhanced life in the empire.

Runes could be said to not only occupy an extremely important position in the cultivation system, but also affected all aspects of the entire world!

As a result, the rune master profession was a special existence.

All the rune knowledge that Lin Xun knew had been learned and passed down from Mister Lu. He might only be a rune master at the initial stage, but the rune knowledge he possessed was far greater than what any beginner rune master had.

Otherwise, he couldn't have possibly helped Old Mo improve the structure of the aeth engine of the Violet Hero Battleship nor would he have been able to create a killing weapon like the Flying Star Crossbow.

Even the power of the aeth tools he made on commission for the Rune Master Association was superior to the aeth tools on the market!

He was the only one who knew that he possessed an unimaginable mastery in the art of runes because of the rune knowledge that Mister Lu had imparted to him.

However, the key to him successfully making aeth tools every time and with significantly greater powers than those on the market was because of the Omega door in his mind-sea.

He had already produced several aeth tools and so he was very familiar with the almost imperceptible fluctuation from the Omega door in his mind-sea.

It was that imperceptible wave of movement that made every aeth tool production successful. Moreover, the weapons he made were all visibly stronger than the aeth tools on the market!

Lin Xun didn't know the reason for that, but he reckoned that the strange movement from the Omega door was a mysterious power. Perhaps, when he truly passed all the tests in the Omega Secret Realm would he be able to truly understand and control that power!

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Time flew by. Several days had passed in the blink of an eye.

Lin Xun had already finalized all the ideas for his new blade. He had formulated a plan and dealt with the required rune materials one by one. He was about to start the real work.

Lin Xun's injuries had completely healed a few days ago. His cultivation had not only been restored but he was also much stronger than in the past.
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This was a direct benefit from real-life battles. Battles could help temper a cultivator and help them transform on their road to become the strongest.

Meanwhile, Jiujiu had also awoken two days ago. He was still bouncing around like always, but Lin Xun knew that he possessed incredible talent, though no one knew what he would transform into in the future.

That day, just when Lin Xun was all prepared and was about to start refining rune ink, Chu Feng suddenly stopped by.

His face was overcast with worry and he said bluntly when he saw Lin Xun, "Little Brother, we encountered a huge problem this time!"

Lin Xun narrowed his eyes and asked, "What's the matter?"

Chu Feng said bitterly, "Last night, someone came to find me and asked Master Xun to come with her."

Lin Xun scrunched his brows, "Who was it?"

Chu Feng's expression became increasingly glum. "An old woman with incredible strength. Most importantly, her background isn't ordinary. Although I don't know what her background is, based on my observation, I know she would kill me without any hesitation if I dare to disagree!"

Lin Xun was baffled. An old woman didn't pay any importance to Chu Feng, the head of the Rune Master Association. From that fact alone, one could imagine how terrifying the old woman's background was.

At that moment, Xue Jin, who was sleeping in a corner, suddenly opened his eyes and his lips curved in an imperceptible cold smile. Then, with a brisk toss of his head, he fell back asleep.

Lin Xun didn't notice Old Jin's reaction and just asked with a frown, "Then Big Brother, did you agree?"

Chu Feng hurriedly shook his head. "How would I dare? But I only managed to fight for three days of time to think about it. If we don't agree by then, I'm worried..."

Lin Xun understood. He couldn't help but knit his brows in deep thought. If I go with the old woman, I would undoubtedly expose my identity.

Most importantly, if she had bad intentions, it would be very dangerous for him.

Chu Feng seemed able to read Lin Xun's mind as he said, "Don't worry, the old woman's purpose is very simple. She wants you to repair an aeth tool and has no other intention."

After contemplating it over and over again, Lin Xun finally inhaled deeply and said, "Fine, in three days, I will go and see that arrogant and unreasonable old woman with you!"

Chapter 230 Aristocratic Clans

Three days later, on the second floor of the Rune Master Association.

Under Chu Feng's leadership, Lin Xun met the unreasonable old woman.

She was indeed an old woman. Her hair was silver, her face was wrinkly, and her eyes were cloudy. She looked very ordinary as she leaned on her black wooden stick.

However, Lin Xun felt like he saw an erupting volcano when he laid eyes on her. There seemed to be molten lava spewing into the sky, incinerating everything it touched as if to melt the world.

At that moment, a cold current uncontrollably rushed out from Lin Xun's heart. His nerves tensed up and an indescribable oppressive power almost suffocated him.

His expression abruptly changed. But when he looked at the old woman again, he didn't feel anything strange. It was as though everything that happened was just an illusion.

However, that only made Lin Xun more afraid. Ever since he had come to the Ziyao Empire, he had met many remarkable people such as Yao Tuohai, a famous great cultivator in the southwest province, the mysterious Queen of Darkness, the mysterious old man who always followed the Queen of Darkness, Xin Rutie of the Imperial Army, Xue Jin, and Xu Sanqi.

Just like them, the old woman exuded an unfathomable and immeasurable aura

The old woman was undoubtedly a top master in the world!

Seeing Lin Xun, the old woman scrunched her brows. "This is Master Xun?"

Chu Feng's expression changed but Lin Xun answered before him, "I am Master Xun's apprentice."

The old woman's face suddenly grew cold. "Master Xun is too arrogant. Could it be that he wants me to go and invite him in person?"

"Elder, please calm down, Master Xun is very odd and he doesn't like being threatened. But his apprentice can also deal with a lot of matters," Chu Feng explained humbly. "You may not know but Master Xun highly regards his apprentice. Master Xun has imparted to him with his knowledge and I believe you will be satisfied with his ability."

The old woman snorted coldly. "What if he can't solve my problem?"

Before Chu Feng could answer, Lin Xun said with a smile, "Whether or not I can depends on what needs to be repaired. After all, even a rune grandmaster wouldn't dare to confidently say they can repair anything."

The old woman couldn't help but take another look at Lin Xun when she saw him speak so confidently and calmly despite only being in his teens.

"What's your name?" asked the old woman.

"Elder, junior's name is Lin Xun," Lin Xun said with a cupped fist salute.

The old woman was taken aback. "Lin Xun? Your name is a bit offensive to your master's title."

However, Lin Xun calmly explained, "Master has once said that he accepted me as his apprentice because of my name. He said it's fate."

The old woman sneered, "Your master is indeed odd. The way he accepts an apprentice is also so sloppy." Her remark was very impolite. She not only mocked Master Xun but also belittled Lin Xun.

Chu Feng's heart leapt to his throat. He glanced at Lin Xun in worry in case he couldn't contain his anger.

Surprisingly, Lin Xun beamed. “Elder indeed has sharp eyes. I also felt that my master was too hasty in his decision when he accepted me as his apprentice. But it can’t be helped. Master is that kind of person.”

The old woman took a deeper look at Lin Xun and warned in a chilling voice, “Kid, regardless, if you can’t solve my problem, don’t blame me for being rude.”

She again sounded extremely arrogant and unreasonable. Chu Feng trembled all over, but Lin Xun only smiled calmly and didn’t respond.

“Let’s go!” The old woman turned around and left.

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Jade Leaf Pavilion.

It was a courtyard spanning five acres in the central area of Haze City. The inner courtyard consisted of little bridges, streams, and pavilions. All sorts of rare plants and flowers were grown throughout the courtyards. It was extremely tranquil, like a paradise in the vibrant city.

The courtyard belonged to the Stone Cauldron Alms. Of course, only the wealthy and powerful Stone Cauldron Alms could own such a beautiful courtyard of that scale in the extremely expensive central area of Haze City.

At that moment, Qi Yunxiao, Yuan Shu, Wen Mingxiu and other children from the wealthy and powerful clans in Haze City had congregated in the main hall of the Jade Leaf Pavilion.

However, the usually prideful and arrogant sons of the wealthy and powerful clans kept a low profile and even seemed a little reserved.

This was because they were only guests invited to help entertain the other guests!

On the other side of the hall sat a dozen youngsters, all dressed luxuriously and wearing prideful expressions. Their manner of speech and their movements all showed a reserved sense of superiority.

Compared to those youngsters, Qi Yunxiao and the others were clearly inferior in terms of appearance and bearing.

This was because the dozen youngsters were all from the Forbidden City, the capital of the empire. Behind each of them was a top major force in the Forbidden City!

If the wealthy and powerful forces in the empire were divided into classes, the forces able to establish a tremendous foundation in the Forbidden City were undoubtedly one of the strongest!

Those forces were often referred to as the aristocratic clans.

The top forces in Haze City might be able to rule an area but they couldn’t be compared to the aristocratic clans in the Forbidden City.

Therefore, although they were all sons of wealthy and powerful families, Qi Yunxiao, Wen Mingxiu, and Yuan Shu were only there to entertain the dozen of aristocratic youngsters from the Forbidden City.

They felt very awkward because although they had acted humble, they could still distinctly feel the dozen youngsters treat them coldly and even disregard them.

For the first time in their lives, they tasted what it meant to be ignored. But they didn't dare to complain or get angry.

"Mingxiu, don't be upset. Those guys look down on us but do we look up to them? Look at them, they act high and mighty and consider everyone beneath them. If they weren't born into the aristocracy, they would have been killed already."

Qi Yunxiao whispered to Wen Mingxiu when he noticed her looking glum. *nOvEl nExt.cOm*

"I think you are the one who's very uncomfortable." Wen Mingxiu gave Qi Yunxiao a sideways glance.

Qi Yunxiao didn't deny it. "There's no doubt that I'm uncomfortable, but there's nothing I can do about it. We're inferior to them in terms of family and background. We have to admit it."

Wen Mingxiu said thoughtfully, "The upper-class aristocratic clans also have a very strict hierarchy. For example, among the thirteen youngsters here, seven are from a lower aristocratic family and five from a mid aristocratic family. Only one is from a top aristocratic family."

"The rich and powerful forces in Haze City can only be regarded as tyrannical powers in one area and are inferior to even the lower aristocratic clans. I heard from Father that the aristocratic families are aristocratic not just because of their wealth and background but because they can influence all aspects of the empire. Their every move can influence the decision of the higher-ups of the empire. This is the most terrifying thing about them."

Wen Mingxiu inadvertently cast a glance at the youngster sitting on the platform opposite them and continued, "For example, the Xie Family behind Little Sword Lord Xie Yutang is one the seven top aristocratic clans. They can be called a monstrous authority and can heavily influence the imperial court."

Wen Mingxiu suddenly froze and her expression visibly changed. Xie Yutang had swept a glance over her as if giving her a warning. One glance sent a chill down her spine.

Fortunately, Xie Yutang quickly withdrew his gaze. Wen Mingxiu felt like she had survived a calamity.

Little Sword Lord Xie Yutang was one of the most dazzling figures in the empire in recent years. Rumors had it that he was a cultivation genius and he had grasped the secret sword art of the Xie family. In hundreds of years, Xie Yutang was the only one who had comprehended and grasped the unique art of the Xie Family!

Most terrifyingly, Xie Yutang was only nineteen years old yet he was already at the Spirit Sea Stage.

"I don't know why the little Sword Lord is here. He is the only one present at the Spirit Sea Stage. Isn't it a little too flashy?" Qi Yunxiao said sourly.

"Let's not talk about him." Xie Yutang's glance had frightened Wen Mingxiu.

The atmosphere in the hall of Jade Leaf Pavilion was very unusual. Xie Yutang and the other aristocratic clan descendants were conversing with one another and seemed to be having a good time.

Wen Mingxiu, Qi Yunxiao, Yuan Shu and the others were ignored and neglected, but they still sat there humbly and didn't dare to treat them with disrespect.

However, Xie Yutang, Wen Mingxiu or any other person present was only considered as a guest.

They were all waiting for the owner who was temporarily living in Jade Leaf Pavilion.

Despite the fact that the owner still hadn't made an appearance, not one person was impatient.

Even Xie Yutang and other young masters of the Forbidden City's aristocratic families seemed very patient.

Before long, the sound of footsteps outside the hall lifted everyone's spirits. They all turned their heads to the door.

Many people's faces lit up with anticipation. With their best posture and utmost manners, they were about to get up to greet the owner at the door.

Not long after that, a silver-haired old woman appeared, followed by a young man. Apart from them, there was no one else.

Everyone was surprised.

Of course, they knew who the old woman was. They were only surprised by the youngster following the old woman.

Who is that guy? Why is he with Granny Feng?

Qi Yunxiao, Wen Mingxiu, Yuan Shu and the other youngsters from the wealthy and powerful forces in Haze City couldn't help but widen their eyes in shock.

Someone even exclaimed out loud, "Lin Xun? Why...Why is this guy here too!?"