

Prodigies 251

Chapter 251 Friends Meet Again

While Mu Wansu was lost in thought, the attendant also seemed to have his own concerns.

After some hesitation, he gritted his teeth and said, "Chief Manager, Young Master Lin Xun's current status seems far from enough to become our VIP, right?"

Mu Wansu offhandedly asked, "Why not?"

The attendant drew a deep breath and said, "Although Young Master Lin Xun is currently famous in Haze City and is a rising star, he's ultimately only a Human Dipper stage cultivator. In addition, he doesn't have any special status and doesn't seem to be a descendent of a noble clan. The VIP seats are designed for the most important guests in the city such as Governor Liu Wudiao, Principal Wei Lingzhen, Commander Du Dongtu, and other bigwigs. Only they have the status deserving of such honor."

After a pause, he continued, "If Young Master Lin Xun is allowed to sit together with these bigwigs, we will have committed a taboo and many people will be unhappy."

Mu Wansu acknowledged and nonchalantly said, "Is that all?"

The attendant was stunned. "Chief Manager, what do you mean?"

Mu Wansu frostily said, "You are right but you made one mistake. Lin Xun is different from others. Remember this well. He must have a seat among the VIPs. Anyone who dares to be negligent about this matter should pack their things and leave at once!"

The attendant's body trembled as cold sweat appeared on his head. He finally realized that the Chief Manager was serious about making Lin Xun a VIP and was not joking around!

But what exactly was different about Lin Xun?

The attendant did not understand.

The truth was that Mu Wansu also didn't understand either. Why had Third Young Master Shi Yu personally given such instructions? Had Lin Xun already grown that important?

She could not help but envy Lin Xun. It had only been slightly over a year but the little imp's life had been getting better and better...

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After leaving the Rune Master Association, Lin Xun walked along the street and eventually entered a place called Precious Pill Workshop.

Precious Pill Workshop was a first-class apothecary in Haze City. It peddled various high-quality pills that were able to satisfy the needs of most cultivators.

Of course, the prices were also exorbitant and beyond the means of ordinary cultivators.

Most importantly, there was an amazing alchemist employed at Precious Will Workshop who could create several unique and precious pills. These pills could not be bought even in the Rune Master Association.

Lin Xun needed a cultivation pill called Cloud Dipper Purple Soul Pill that could only be purchased at the apothecary.

At this point in time, Lin Xun's cultivation was showing faint signs of reaching the perfect Human Dipper stage. His cultivation had clearly improved after the numerous battles he had experienced recently.

At this rate, he should be able to reach the perfect Human Dipper stage before the provincial exam.

However, Lin Xun could not wait that long. The Great Azure Cloud Path's third trial was going to begin in a month and there were only three attempts this time. Hence, Lin Xun did not dare to be negligent in his preparations.

Raising his cultivation was undoubtedly the best insurance he had.

Cultivation naturally could not be separated from supplementary tonics and pills. In the past, Lin Xun had been using the Blue Dipper Aeth Pill. Although it was a pretty high-quality product, it was still a little inferior to the Cloud Dipper Purple Soul Pill.

This could be seen from the price. A bottle of sixty Blue Dipper Aeth Pills cost fifty gold coins while a bottom of thirty Cloud Dipper Purple Soul Pill required a hundred gold coins!

A hundred gold coins were equivalent to ten thousand silver coins! However, even such an amount could only buy thirty Cloud Dipper Purple Soul Pills. Such a pricey item was indeed not something ordinary cultivators could afford.

Previously, Lin Xun was definitely reluctant to spend that much money on such a high-class pill. However, after agreeing to help Liu Qingyan repair her ocarina, he received a commission of ten thousand gold coins. As a result, purchasing Cloud Dipper Purple Soul Pills was no longer a big expenditure for him.

After leaving the apothecary, Lin Xun was a thousand gold coins poorer but also managed to secure ten bottles of Cloud Dipper Purple Soul Pills.

Such an expenditure would stupefy numerous cultivators!

However, Lin Xun did not feel the same. In his view, earning money was for the sake of obtaining better cultivation conditions. Instead, having money without spending it was a true waste of resources.

"With these pills, I should be able to reach the perfect Human Dipper stage before the third trial begins..."

Lin Xun was lost in thought as he walked.

However, his attention was soon drawn by the sound of squabbling nearby. He raised his head to look and saw a dozen thugs surrounding a store and loudly cursing at it.

From the looks of it, it seemed as if they were here to cause trouble for the store.

This was very commonplace in Haze City. When there was profit to be made there would be conflict. When there was conflict, there would be no lack of desperate criminals.

However, Lin Xun was stunned when he saw the store's name. Golden Jade Hall?

He instantly recalled how the Golden Jade Hall owner Gu Yanping had taken good care of Lin Xun in Donglin City. In fact, Gu Yanping had even personally stepped forward to help Lin Xun resolve a dangerous situation.

As such, seeing Golden Jade Hall's signboard appear in Haze City should have originally made Lin Xun happy. However, it was impossible for him to feel any joy at the sight of a dozen thugs trying to cause trouble.

Lin Xun walked forward and swiftly found Gu Liang surrounded by the crowd.

Gu Liang was the son of Gu Yanping and had a pretty good relationship with Lin Xun in Donglin City. Gu Liang's presence made Lin Xun certain that this Golden Jade Hall shop was part of Gu Yanping's business.

"We brothers have taken a fancy to this shop so you'd better get lost. If you keep being noisy, I will kill you on the spot!" said the thug leader with a sinister smile. He was a large man in black, had a fierce face, and looked like an unreasonable person. He appeared completely unafraid of causing trouble in public and clearly had a strong backer.

"Friends, there's always room for discussion. If it's protection money, I guarantee that I will pay on time every month. I hope these esteemed brothers can show some magnanimity and let my little shop off."

Although Gu Liang was young, he was clearly very experienced. He displayed a strong composure the entire time and made sure to keep a friendly smile on his face.

As he spoke, he retrieved a bag of money and offered it to them with a smile. "Please accept this small gift."

The thug leader sent the bag flying with a slap and disdainfully said, "Protection money? Do you think I lack chump change? I'll be honest with you, if you don't give us this store today, don't blame us for being rude!"

The other thugs also sneered.

Gu Liang's heart sank. He realized that this was not about protection money. Someone was targeting him!

"Why aren't you talking? Has this kid gone deaf?"

Upon seeing that Gu Liang was not replying, one of the thugs moved forward and raised his hand to slap Gu Liang's face.

Gu Liang's eyes flashed. The other party pushing things too far had finally triggered the long-suppressed anger inside him.

However, a figure suddenly appeared in front of him right before he could take action. *novelnext.com*

The thug's wrist was broken with a crack and was twisted like braided bread, causing him to scream in pain.

Lin Xun raised his foot and kicked the thug away.

"Lin Xun?"

Gu Liang never imagined that he would see Lin Xun at such a moment, causing him to be both surprised and overjoyed.

"We'll talk later."

Lin Xun smiled and nodded. He looked at the thug leader. "Are you guys going to scam yourselves or do I have to send you guys off?"

"Kid, how dare you find a helper! You're dead meat!"

The thug leader was enraged.

Piak!

However, a slap struck his face before he could move. Several teeth were knocked out, and blood spurted from his mouth and nose as he was sent flying.

Lin Xun's strong showing frightened the other thugs, making them realize that the situation was starting to spiral out of their control.

However, one of them still managed to sternly shout, "Kid, do you know who sent us? No matter your background, you'll not survive past tonight if you dare to interfere in this matter!"

Lin Xun could not be bothered to reply. With another slap, he sent the speaker spiraling through the air before the man crashed into the ground. The man began to foam at the mouth and was no longer able to stand up.

The remaining thugs immediately began to panic. They hurriedly grabbed their injured comrades and fled.

While leaving, they made sure to leave behind a few threats. "Just wait! You guys are finished! No one can save you now that you've offended us!"

Lin Xun could not help but shake his head. He truly did not understand why these lowly thugs dared to act so arrogantly.

"Lin Xun, I didn't expect that you would have to witness such a shameful scene. Sigh, how embarrassing. If my father was around, he would definitely not have allowed such a thing to happen."

Gu Liang displayed a self-mocking smile.

Lin Xun frowned and asked, "You should have been more than capable of dealing with these thugs. Why did you hold back for so long?"

"It's not convenient to talk here. Come, let's continue the conversation inside."

Gu Liang scanned the surroundings before he led Lin Xun into a private room in the shop.

Only then did he explain, "They're just a bunch of small fries. I'm worried about the mastermind."

Worry was clearly visible on his face.

Lin Xun nodded. "Do you know who is pulling the strings?"

A helpless smile rose on Gu Liang's lips. "Who else but the other merchant groups in Haze City? After all, if Golden Jade Hall takes root here, they would have another competitor. How can they idly stand by and watch such a thing happen?"

Lin Xun was surprised. "That's quite similar to the predicament you and your father initially faced in Donglin City."

Gu Liang chuckled. "Yeah, but I'm not as good as my father. He managed to swiftly establish himself in Donglin City and integrate with the other businesses."

There was a sense of pride in his voice. He had always viewed his father as his role model.

Lin Xun said, "Gu Liang, is there anyone in particular you suspect? I might be able to help you resolve this matter."

Gu Liang was taken aback as a feeling of warmth surged in his heart. It had been more than a year since they last met and he had not been certain if Lin Xun had changed since then. However, those words told Gu Liang that Lin Xun was still the same as before!

Chapter 252 Kneeling to Apologize

Gu Liang fell into thought. After a long time, he bitterly smiled and shook his head. "It's been less than seven days since I arrived in Haze City. I'm still unclear about the situation here. It will be tough for me to identify who the culprit is."

It turned out that Gu Liang had come to Haze City on his father's direction to set up a Golden Jade Hall branch. By using Haze City as a foothold, they could accumulate sufficient power and resources to eventually spread the Golden Jade Hall brand to the entire southwest province.

Since Haze City was the capital of the southwest province, Gu Yanping planned to utilize it as a launching pad. If they could successfully establish themselves here, they would be able to recruit numerous merchant talents and further strengthen Golden Jade Hall.

However, Gu Liang never expected that trouble would come knocking before he could find steady footing and was genuinely distressed by this problem.

After learning everything, Lin Xun could not help but feel amazed. The Gu father-son duo were definitely no ordinary characters. It had only been a little over a year but they had already shifted their goal to the entire southwest province!

However, given the merchanting prowess Gu Yanping had displayed in the past, Lin Xun had to admit that he was indeed a rare talent.

As if feeling the topic was somewhat depressing, Gu Liang smiled and said, "I heard several things about you when I arrived in Haze City. You're a rising star that is known in every household. In fact, I almost doubted that it was actually you."

His voice contained genuine amazement.

Lin Xun had accomplished so much in the year since they last met. Gu Liang could not help but sigh when he compared himself to his friend. He couldn't even do something simple like setting up a small store without thugs coming to cause trouble.

What could have happened to Lin Xun over this period to have enabled him to attain such achievements?

"It's just meaningless fame."

Lin Xun shrugged. "People are scared of fame and pigs fear being fattened up. The more famous you are, the more troubles there will be."

Gu Liang chuckled heartily. "Others wish they could be famous while you view it as trouble. You sure are different."

Lin Xun also laughed. "Let's not talk about these things. Do you plan to continue staying in Haze City?"

Gu Liang nodded. "If I can overcome this hurdle and manage to establish a foothold in Haze City, I definitely won't be leaving any time soon."

He suddenly revealed a mysterious smile. "Lin Xun, although you've grown far more than me over the past year, I will not lose to you when Golden Jade Hall develops in the future."

Before Lin Xun could say anything, Gu Liang continued, "My father plans to develop Golden Jade Hall into a first-class merchant group that will be known throughout the empire. This is certainly not achievable through ordinary methods but my father has already found a way!"

Lin Xun could not help but ask, "How?"

Gu Ling displayed a faint smile. "You'll know in the future. If this path works, I will definitely not be left behind by you."

Lin Xun jokingly cursed, "You might as well have told me nothing."

Gu Liang chuckled. "All in all, I can guarantee that if everything goes smoothly, the Golden Jade Hall brand will spread all over the empire and maybe even to the lands beyond!"

His eyes shone in anticipation of this glorious future.

Lin Xun's heart shook. Spread beyond the empire? Gu Yanping has such grand ambition. If this is true, wouldn't Golden Jade Hall become an enormous faction like Stone Cauldron Alms in the future?

A commotion from the outside suddenly interrupted their reunion.

"Where's the boss? You'd better come out now!"

"That kid who got violent as well, come out!"

Evidently, the group of thugs was back. Moreover, they seemed to be filled with confidence and had clearly found reinforcements.

Lin Xun rose to his feet and said, "Let's go out and have a look."

Gu Liang worriedly said, "Lin Xun, I know you're famous now but the various factions in Haze City have complex relationships and are not to be underestimated. Promise me you won't be rash. Even if the store is smashed by them, there will be an opportunity for a comeback as long as we're still alive..."

Before he could finish, Lin Xun sighed and interrupted, "Alright, alright. Hurry up and go."

What else could Gu Liang say? He was quickly pulled by Lin Xun and they walked out of the private room.

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A group of thugs was crowding around the front of the store, each one sporting menacing expressions. The thug leader was also back although he looked rather comical with his swollen face.

However, they were just extras this time and the main actor was an elder sporting a goatee. He leisurely sat on a chair in the store with an arrogant expression and was closing his eyes as if resting.

When Lin Xun and Gu Liang emerged, the thug leader immediately displayed a resentful expression, pointed at Lin Xun, and yelled, "Old Qian, that's the kid who interfered. If not for him, our group would have already succeeded!"

The other thugs also called out, "Yeah, that's the abominable little bastard. He has zero respect for our Jadelight Pavilion." *NovelExt.COM*

Jadelight Pavilion!

Gu Liang's expression changed drastically. No matter how little he understood of Haze City, even a newcomer like him knew that Jadelight Pavilion was a powerful first-class faction. He never imagined that they would be the ones that were targeting him!

This was far too surprising. Golden Jade Hall hadn't even found its footing yet. How had it offended Jadelight Pavilion?

A strange look flashed in Lin Xun's eyes when he heard the words Jadelight Pavilion and an unnoticeable smile rose on his lips.

Lin Xun displayed a radiant smile. "I couldn't tell that earlier that you guys do have some backbone. To think you dared to return with reinforcements."

"You're asking for it!"

"How dare you act so arrogantly in front of Old Qian. You're dead, kid!"

"Kid, don't blame us for not telling you that Old Qian is one of Jadelight Pavilion's experts. If you two don't want to die, get on your knees and beg for forgiveness!"

The thugs sternly scolded and cursed.

Gu Liang was worried and afraid Lin Xun would do something reckless. Hence, Gu Liang hurriedly cautioned in a low voice, "Lin Xun, don't be rash. We can't afford to offend Jadelight Pavilion. Please let me handle this matter."

The thugs roared with laughter at this sight. They displayed pleased and resentful expressions. If they knew this would happen, they would have done this earlier instead.

However, Lin Xun's smile only grew wider. "Jadelight Pavilion, huh, you guys have found the perfect faction. Let's not waste any more time talking, who is Old Qian? Step forward so we can get acquainted."

The goatee elder was clearly sitting there but was being completely ignored by Lin Xun. The arrogance he displayed enraged the thugs, making them wish they could just kill him.

Gu Liang felt a sense of helplessness and knew that he could no longer stop Lin Xun. However, Gu Liang had also decided to throw caution to the wind. If worse comes to worst, they would fight to their hearts' content now and find a chance to return in the future.

The proud-looking goatee elder called Old Qian, whose eyes were still closed, suddenly released an icy snort.

"Young man, it's not good to have such a temper. I've already given you a chance but you refuse to take it. Don't blame this old man for..."

Old Qian's voice was low and openly frosty. While he was speaking, he finally opened his eyes.

However, his eyeballs abruptly popped from their sockets as if he had seen a ghost and his words froze in his throat.

The thugs could not help but feel excited by Old Qian's stern and commanding voice. As expected of Old Qian, even without using any foul language, merely hearing him speak makes us feel an invisible pressure. Amazing, truly amazing!

They did not realize that their almighty Old Qian was currently in a state of distress. His mind felt as if it had been struck by lightning and he was starting to feel a little faint.

Why is it him!?

Old Qian's expression froze as he recalled the assassination operation several days ago on that stormy night and the apex duel that had occurred in the battle arena...

Why?

Why did I have to encounter this star of disaster?

The corners of Old Qian's lips began to twitch. He did not dare to imagine the consequences if the Jadelight Pavilion higher-ups were to find out that he had provoked the star of disaster.

"Why did you stop talking?"

Lin Xun smiled at Old Qian. He could tell in a single glance that the old fellow had already given up.

Old Qian's lips trembled. Just as he was about to speak, the thug leader cut in and scolded, "How dare you be so disrespectful to Old Qian even at this juncture! You must be tired of living!"

Whap!

Old Qian could no longer hold himself back and ruthlessly slapped the thug leader.

The man cried out in pain as he grabbed his face before looking at Old Qian in disbelief. The other thugs were also stunned and confused by the sudden turn of events.

The thug leader innocently asked, "Old Qian...this...did you hit the wrong person?"

"I was definitely aiming for you, you blind idiot!"

Old Qian trembled in anger as he unleashed another series of slaps to release his rage. The other man wailed in pain and fell to his knees to beg for mercy.

The other thugs were shocked and horrified. As they looked at the crazed Old Qian, they finally realized that they had offended someone they couldn't afford to.

Gu Liang had been ready to fight alongside Lin Xun. Who could have imagined that he would instead be treated to a dog-eat-dog show? He was taken aback. What the hell is going on?

He could not help but look at Lin Xun, only to find him smiling as he watched. Something began to click inside Gu Liang's head, causing him to be shocked. He never expected that Lin Xun's reputation had already grown to such an extent.

"You guys as well. Get on your knees and apologize to Young Master Lin Xun!"

Old Qian had grown tired of dishing out these beatings and also knew that the thug leader would probably lose his life if this continued. Hence, Old Qian glared at the rest of the thugs and demanded they apologize to Lin Xun.

If they failed to gain the star of disaster's forgiveness today, the consequences would be too heavy for even Old Qian to bear.

The thugs immediately fell to their knees. They had already been scared witless. How could they possibly dare to show any hesitation?

After all, they could all see that even Old Qian had gone pale with terror.

Chapter 253 Treat as Scholar

Gu Liang inhaled sharply upon seeing the figure kneeling on the ground.

Lin Xun hadn't uttered anything threatening yet, but he had already compelled the thugs to drop to their knees and apologize. What remarkable power!

However, Lin Xun didn't even glance at the thugs kneeling on the ground. Instead, his gaze moved to Elder Qian, who looked very uneasy.

"You..."

The second that Lin Xun opened his mouth, the old man dropped to his knees and cried out, "I'm sorry. Please forgive me just this one time." *noVelηext.cOm*

The corners of Lin Xun's lips curled upwards. This old guy is so wicked. He is acting so humble to make me feel bad for giving him a hard time.

On the other hand, Gu Liang was utterly shocked. Not only are the thugs on their knees, but the goatee bearded man is from Jadelight Pavilion yet even he is kneeling! This is too unbelievable.

Gu Liang wasn't aware that Lin Xun had become the most feared opponent of the dozen major forces in the city after that night's bloody massacre. Even Qi Yunxiao, the young master of Jadelight Pavilion, had suffered against Lin Xun. How would Elder Qian be an exception?

Elder Qian wasn't considered an important character and was just one of the attendants in the Jadelight Pavilion. There were a handful of people like him in the Jadelight Pavilion and only the thugs would treat him as an important person.

Leaning back on a chair, Lin Xun stated casually, "Tell me what happened."

Elder Qian trembled, his face deathly pale. He thought that Lin Xun still didn't intend to let him go. He clenched his teeth and repeatedly slapped himself across the face. Loud, crisp sounds echoed in the air. His wrinkly face immediately swelled up and reddened.

"I know I was wrong to do this. Young master, please have mercy!"

Old Qian continued to slap himself as he begged for mercy. He knew that the Jadelight Pavilion would swallow him alive if Lin Xun didn't forgive him!

He had to do this for both his future and his life.

He had witnessed Lin Xun's ability in the past. That guy looks young, handsome and harmless but anyone who had tried to deal with him would know that he is a demon!

Lin Xun was like a taboo to the dozen of major forces in Haze City. Who would dare to make things hard for him? Did they have a death wish?

Gu Liang stared at the two of them, dumbfounded. The thugs kneeling on the ground were all aghast. Was that the Elder Qian that they knew?

"Okay, I just want to know why you are targeting Golden Jade Hall. Clearly state the reason and you all can leave." Lin Xun glared at Elder Qian.

Elder Qian inwardly breathed a sigh of relief. As long as I can keep my life, who cares if it is embarrassing?

"Young Master, it's all just a misunderstanding."

Elder Qian took a deep breath before he explained, "If I knew that Golden Jade Hall is related to you, I would have never sent people here to cause trouble, no matter what."

It turned out that before Gu Liang rented the store, Elder Qian had already had his eyes on it. He had already given up on the store but when he came to learn that the person who rented it was an outsider and a youth, he decided to take action.

He took advantage of his powers to send a group of thugs to create a scene, drive Gu Liang away, and forcibly take possession of the store.

However, he had never thought that Gu Liang, who seemed like a pushover and was an outsider, would be acquainted with Lin Xun.

Lin Xun didn't know whether to laugh or cry when he heard his explanation. He originally thought that Jadelight Pavilion was aware of Gu Yanping's ability and so dispatched forces to stop the Golden Jade Hall from gaining a foothold in Haze City.

Who would have thought that the reason would be so strange?

Gu Liang breathed a sigh of relief. He was glad that Jadelight Pavilion wasn't targeting him.

"Get lost." Lin Xun motioned with his hand.

Elder Qian froze for a moment, in disbelief that Lin Xun would let him go so easily. "Young Master, you forgive me for my mistake?"

Lin Xun snapped, "Go, go now, if you don't leave now, don't blame me for taking action."

Elder Qian was finally able to completely relax. He sprang up and sped away with the gang of thugs.

"The matter is resolved now. I should leave too. If you encounter any trouble in the future, you must let me know. Of course, that's only if I am still in Haze City."

Lin Xun rose to his feet, told Gu Liang his current address, and prepared to leave.

"Wait!" Gu Liang shouted.

"Is there something else?"

Gu Liang seemed hesitant but he finally gritted his teeth and said, "Lin Xun, since we're friends, I'm going to be blunt with you. I want to invite you to join Golden Jade Hall. In the future, you will receive a share of Golden Jade Hall's earnings!"

"Why would you do that?"

Gu Liang said irritably, "There's no reason. Just tell me if you accept the offer or not. Of course, I know you're very busy and won't want to manage a business with me. I also won't force you to do so. You just need to put your name down. Also, I can keep it a secret if you don't want others to know about it."

He rambled on, but it made Lin Xun realize that Gu Liang wanted to thank him with some sort of benefit!

"You don't need to do this." Lin Xun said helplessly, "Since we are friends, it's only natural that we help and support each other."

Gu Liang said seriously, "Lin Xun, do you look down on Golden Jade Hall? Do you think there's no benefit to joining us?"

Lin Xun was impressed with Gu Liang's tactic. The youth was using reverse psychology to persuade him to join Golden Jade Hall. He had to admit that his tactic was useful, because he, at least, didn't know what to say.

"How about this? I have a batch of rune materials here, take it as my investment into Golden Jade Hall." Lin Xun brought out a storage bag and handed it to Gu Liang. "Take it. If you don't accept then I won't join."

Gu Liang glared at Lin Xun. He didn't expect Lin Xun to make such a move but he had no choice except to accept it.

"Good, then I leave the important responsibility of helping Golden Jade Hall rise to the top in the empire to you. I'll only be responsible for putting down my name," Lin Xun teased Gu Liang as he strode out of Golden Jade Hall.

However, as he stepped foot onto the street, he couldn't help but turn his head and look up at Golden Jade Hall's signboard. He wondered whether Golden Jade Hall could indeed rise like a star and become one of the top businesses in the empire.

With a toss of his head, Lin Xun disappeared into the sea of people.

"That guy is still the same as before."

In the shop, Gu Liang felt a warm current rushing up in his heart as he thought about everything that had happened. He didn't regret his decision and he knew his father, Gu Yanping, would also do the same.

Gu Liang knew that Lin Xun was a pure cultivator and had a completely different path from him. It was impossible to expect Lin Xun to help Golden Jade Hall in any way but was that important?

No!

At least, Gu Liang was very happy to share the profits of Golden Jade Hall with Lin Xun. After all, he's my friend. As the saying goes, if the monarch treats me as a state scholar, I must treat him the same way!

After a moment, Gu Liang fumbled around with the storage bag that Lin Xun left. He was about to put it away, but after a thought, he decided to peek inside.

Gu Liang froze. Silver Feather Snow Whale Bone, Underworld Fire Lamp Grass, Nine-Cycle Earth Core Iron...

Gu Liang had never thought that the storage bag contain dozens of the rarest rune materials in the world!

Each one can fetch a tremendous price by itself if it makes its way onto the market. How much would it fetch together?

As a business cultivator, Gu Liang quickly added up the amount and reached an astronomical figure in his mind. At least one hundred thousand gold coins! If done well, they could be sold for an even greater price!

That amount was enough to buy out all the properties of Golden Jade Hall!

“That guy...that guy...just casually left such an amazing amount of wealth! He...he...” Gu Liang sat there blankly, his emotions fluctuating. He didn’t know what to say to Lin Xun.

Only after a long moment did Gu Liang draw a deep breath, forcibly suppressing his emotions. His eyes grew increasingly bright and determined.

“Since you dared to throw that much money at me, how can I be worthy of your trust if I don’t develop Golden Jade Hall to become the best business in the world? Lin Xun, I will pay you back with an amount you can never imagine in the future!”

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Granny Feng gave Lin Xun those rune materials to repair the Ancient Law Ocarina. However, out of spite, Lin Xun had requested many rune materials that he didn’t need so he gave them all to Gu Liang.

Lin Xun knew that the rune materials were worth a terrifying amount but he didn’t know the specific figure. However, he didn’t need money at the moment and he felt it was worth putting it all into Golden Jade Hall as an investment.

Of course, given Gu Liang’s character, he would no doubt give Lin Xun more benefits if Golden Jade Hall did develop into a top business.

However, Lin Xun didn’t mind even if Golden Jade Hall failed to develop and completely closed down. He didn’t give the rune materials to Golden Jade Hall to make a profit.

Ultimately, Lin Xun did this largely because of Gu Yanping.

When Lin Xun was living in Donglin City, if Gu Yanping hadn’t helped him guard the door and stop the enemy from entering, he and Xia Zhi likely would have been killed already!

How would Lin Xun forget that Gan Yanping had saved his life?

Of course, Gu Liang regarded Lin Xun as a friend, and Lin Xun also genuinely felt the friendship. Since Gu Liang had asked him to join Golden Jade Hall and promised to share benefits with him, he wouldn’t let Gu Liang suffer.

When Lin Xun returned home, he cast this matter to the back of his mind because from that day on, he had to fully concentrate on his cultivation and make preparations to enter the third level of the Great Azure Cloud Path in one month.

Every entry into the Omega Secret Realm was an incredibly rare opportunity for him and he had to make good use of it. He wouldn’t allow himself to make any mistakes!

Chapter 254 The Celebratory Event Begins

From that day on, Lin Xun went into closed-door cultivation and fully concentrated on his cultivation.

Over time, many cultivators who visited the Rune Master Association noticed that Master Xun, who frequently accepted consignments, had seemed to vanish from the world.

Many cultivators couldn't help but feel disappointed as they thought that Master Xun had left the Rune Master Association and there was little hope of him accepting any more consignments.

Refusing to accept the fact that Master Xun had left, many cultivators had vehemently and repeatedly requested the Rune Master Association to invite Master Xun back. It made Chu Feng feel very helpless.

Of course, he also hoped that Lin Xun would always remain in the Rune Master Association, but he knew that was impossible.

Even if Lin Xun hadn't truly left the Rune Master Association, he knew that Lin Xun was very young with boundless potential and that the Rune Master Association couldn't keep him forever!

Of course, Chu Feng also hoped that Lin Xun could grow stronger. Only then would Lin Xun be able to help him if he needed help as Lin Xun could easily solve his trickiest problem.

Chu Feng had to admit that he only established a friendly relationship with Lin Xun because of selfish intent. But now, he completely regarded him as a friend.

He wasn't bothered even if Lin Xun couldn't help him in the future.

Do your best and leave the rest to heaven and that was enough!

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In the courtyard, Xue Jin was laughing as he teased Jiujiu with a cup of fragrant but incredibly strong alcohol.

However, even if Jiujiu was drooling, it shook its head furiously and declined. Its round, jet-black eyes were filled with tragic determination.

Xue Jin burst into laughter, but he was secretly amazed that Jiujiu was so obedient. Lin Xun had only corrected it twice and it didn't touch any alcohol anymore.

"What power does that kid have to make you, a divine rune beast, bow your head and listen to him? The world is blind." As Xue Jin muttered, he glanced at Lin Xun's room.

His room was different from before—wisps of cryptic power were vaguely circulating Lin Xun's room like mist, making the room particularly mysterious.

It was a simple kind of convergence array with high-grade aeth stones as the source. When operated, it could draw upon the aeth power of heaven and earth to provide power for a person's cultivation.

Of course, no matter how simple the convergence array was, it was still a rune array and not an ordinary rune pattern. Generally, only the rich and powerful clans had the tremendous resources and materials to invite rune masters to set up a convergence array for their cultivation.

Additionally, the operation of a convergence array consumed at least ten high-grade aeth stones, a tremendous expense that was unaffordable to ordinary cultivators.

Lin Xun didn't set up a convergence array because he was rich but because he had to refine the power of the Cloud Dipper Violet Soul Pill at the start of his cultivation. Therefore, he had to circulate the Storm Grinder in his body and perform the Mystery Grotto Devour Wilderness Scripture, which would no

doubt set off a lot of disturbances such as roaring wind and thunder. It would alarm everyone in the courtyard.

Xue Jin was immediately taken aback. A strange look crossed his face when he realized that it was Lin Xun who caused the movements. He reckoned that the technique that Lin Xun was cultivating wasn't ordinary!

To protect Lin Xun, Xue Jin had advised him to coordinate with the convergence array during cultivation. This way, he could conceal his movements during cultivation but also improve his cultivation.

It was a common practice among cultivators of the wealthy and powerful clans. Some had even built a basement in their house to fully concentrate on their cultivation and prevent other people from watching them!

After all, cultivators were the most vulnerable during cultivation. There could be unimaginable consequences if an enemy attacked them during their cultivation session.

"I wonder what the kid's aeth power reservoir is called. It most likely is on the verge of exhaustion after operating for so many days."

Xue Jin counted the days and realized that Lin Xun had been cultivating for over twenty days and the convergence array hadn't paused once.

This was incredibly rare to see. All cultivators had a cultivation limit. When a cultivator's aeth power exceeded the limit that the body could bear, the cultivator could lose their mind or explode to death!

Even Human Spirit Dipper cultivators with a first-grade aeth power reservoir and a remarkable cultivation foundation could rarely cultivate for more than twenty days without a break!

Xue Jin stood dumbstruck in the courtyard. He had witnessed everything so he knew how terrifying Lin Xun's cultivation potential was.

Outwardly, he looked calm but his heart was trembling with terror. He was worried that Lin Xun was training so hard that it would backfire.

"Never mind, that kid is cunning and shrewd. He must know that rushing something often creates more problems. People like him would never do something unfavorable to himself," mumbled Xue Jin, shaking his head.

.....

Lin Xun felt his world was calm and undisturbed as if he had been completely isolated.

However, in Haze City, a major event had attracted the attention of everyone—the 100th-anniversary celebration of Stone Cauldron Alms that would soon kick-off!*noVelnext.com*

Stone Cauldron Alms had invested a lot into the 100th-anniversary celebration. It was said that all the important figures of the powerful and rich forces would attend the celebration that day, including Liu Wujun, the Governor of the City Lord Office, Wei Lingzhen, the Principal of Haze Academy and Du Dongtu, the person in charge of the Violet Plume Army.

Every one of them could be called an authority figure with the power to turn clouds and cease rain in not only Haze City but also the entire southwest province.

The identities and status of the guests invited were already indicative of the tremendous amount of money that Stone Cauldron Alms had put into the celebration. Moreover, such an impressive guest list wasn't something achievable with money alone!

Of course, everyone looked forward to the arrival of Miss Liu Qingyan the most, who was known throughout the empire for her heavenly voice.

It was easy to imagine how great of a stir such a star-studded event would cause in Haze City.

As the celebration neared, the atmosphere buzzed like never before and conversations and enthusiastic discussions about the celebration filled the streets, alleys, restaurants and teahouses.

Of course, the most talked-about topic was undoubtedly Liu Qingyan.

This may be the celebrity effect. Liu Qingyan was like the brightest star in the night sky. Her presence would draw countless eyes.

Unfortunately, Lin Xun wouldn't know that this grand event was about to kick off, regardless of the huge sensation it caused.

He had something more important in his mind—He had to make preparations to challenge the third level of the Great Azure Cloud Path in the Omega-Secret Realm!

.....

Jade Leaf Pavilion.

Sitting in front of her desk, Liu Qingyan propped her chin in her palm. She looked tired and sleepy.

On the desk was a piece of snow-white paper with lines of graceful and neat handwriting on it. It was the lyrics to the new song that she had been working on. She was only halfway through it.

"Excellence is fleeting, the path is difficult. After hundreds and thousands of twists and turns to find the way, there is no road to longevity. Only the burial mounds of the heroic souls stand in front, hair gray and withered, who is alone among them?" Liu Qingyan murmured, her usually bright eyes were cloudy as she furrowed her brows in frustration

As Granny Feng stood on one side, she couldn't help sighing emotionally. The way is always cruel and brutal. The path is very narrow and difficult and time just runs away. Even if one searches until old age, they may find nothing in the end!

She had never thought that the Miss of her family would become so emotional

Granny Feng couldn't help but ask, "Are these the lyrics for your new song?"

Liu Qingyan shook her head and smiled slightly. "Granny, if I were to sing such a sad song in the Stone Cauldron Alms 100th anniversary celebration, I think many people wouldn't be happy."

Granny Feng snorted. "Miss, you don't need to care about this. They invited you so how could they be so picky?"

Liu Qingyan suddenly bit the tip of the brush and asked aloud, "Granny, is there any news from Young Master Lin Xun?"

Granny Feng's face darkened at the mention of Lin Xun's name. "How would that little bastard so easily hand over the Ancient Law Ocarina? But don't worry Miss, I will find a chance to personally visit Master Xun."

Liu Qingyan hurriedly dissuaded, "No need. There's no rush. Granny, don't make things difficult for Young Master Lin Xun. I already feel very bad about what happened in the arena last time."

Before Granny Feng could say something, she changed the subject, "By the way, do you think Young Master Lin Xun will also attend the Stone Cauldron Alms celebration?"

Granny Feng narrowed her eyes, saying warily, "Miss, that kid is not a good person..."

Liu Qingyan interrupted helplessly, "Granny, you are overthinking. I was just thinking that I owe Young Master Lin Xun a great deal. He has helped me so much, but because of me, he had to duel with Huang Jianchen, so I want to make up for it."

Granny Feng nodded. "Miss, you don't have to. From what I know, the Stone Cauldron Alms has already sent an invitation to Master Xun, that kid's master, and Master Xun will surely bring him along."

Liu Qingyan nodded, and her eyes lit up. "That's good. Young Master Lin Xun understands the Ancient Law Ocarina so he must have dabbled in music. I wonder what he would think about my performance."

Granny Feng suddenly became vigilant again, but when she was about to say something, Liu Qingyan had resumed writing the lyrics so she held back and didn't say anything. However, she inwardly vowed to not allow Lin Xun anywhere near Liu Qingyan.

In the early morning a few days later, the entire Haze City was very lively like it had just awoken from a deep sleep.

Masses of people had already crowded the front of the Stone Cauldron Alms' grand and magnificent building. Many of which had been waiting since last night.

The reason was very simple. It was the day that the Stone Cauldron Alms 100th anniversary celebration kicked off and many distinguished guests as well as Miss Liu Qingyan would arrive that day!

What kind of grand and magnificent event would it be?

Many people were full of anticipation.

Chapter 255 Suffer Mocking

A large red carpet was rolled out across the ground just outside Stone Cauldron Alms and the number of attendants present was as many as the clouds in the sky. It was an incredibly lively scene.

Elite guards had blocked off the roads leading up to Stone Cauldron Alms to prevent any obstruction to the arrival of the distinguished guests.

People had already crowded both sides of the roads. Masses of people were everywhere to the point that not a drop of water could pass. The majority were cultivators but some were ordinary people.

They had all come to watch because they couldn't join the celebration inside without an invitation from the Stone Cauldron Alms.

Even so, they didn't want to miss such a grand event.

It had to be said that many influential and famous people would arrive in Haze City, including Liu Qingyan and other legendary world-famous art cultivators. Many felt their trip would be worthwhile to even catch a glimpse of them.

Many young men and women were waving banners written with many exaggerated and eye-catching slogans on both sides of the crowds.

For example, 'the landscape may be picturesque, but it can't be compared to your smile. Miss Liu Qingyan Welcome to Haze City!', 'Heavenly Voice Qingyan! The celestial beauty of your voice can only be found in heaven!'

Although very exaggerated, it clearly showed what sort of influence Liu Qingyan had on the younger generation.

When Chu Feng arrived with the invitation, he couldn't help but marvel at the scene. Stone Cauldron Alms has put a lot into this event.

Chu Feng didn't hurry inside. Instead, he stood with the crowd, curious to see how many important figures would attend the grand event.

Before long, the crowd broke into exclamations.

"The principal of Haze Academy is here!"

"Elder Wei Lingzhen is a renowned Heaven Ascension cultivator. He had been teaching at Haze Academy for years and rarely makes appearances at events. I didn't expect him to also attend."

Amidst gasps of shock, an old man in plain ordinary clothes rode down the road on a donkey. He had a lean physique and radiated a calm and indifferent bearing like he was aloof from the world.

Many cultivators' eyes sparkled with admiration and awe.

It was Wei Lingzhen, a famous figure in Haze City.

"Wei Lingzhen is the first to appear..." Chu Feng exclaimed. From what he knew, Wei Lingzhen lived a simple life and didn't like to show his face in public. It was incredibly unusual for him to be the first to appear.

This fact alone showed how incredible the Stone Cauldron Alms was. Not everyone could invite Wei Lingzhen over, who lived a secluded life.

Not long after Wei Lingzhen arrived, bursts of exclamations repeatedly rang out in the area.

Figures from wealthy and powerful sects and clans arrived one after another. Some came in chariots, some traveled together in groups, and some came on rune beasts. But every one of them had a majestic bearing and a noble aura that assaulted the onlookers' faces.

Gaps and exclamations of awe ripped throughout the crowd again.

When Governor Liu Wujun appeared with his team of people, it caused an even greater stir. Liu Wujun was the most powerful person in the entire southwestern province of the empire!

Chu Feng's expression altered subtly into a complicated one as he watched Liu Wujun's army of people enter Stone Cauldron Alms.

However, just as he was about to withdraw his gaze, a middle-aged scholar from Liu Wujun's team headed his way.

Chu Feng immediately narrowed his eyes. His eyes turned cold with a tinge of hatred flickering imperceptibly in the depths.

"I didn't expect to see you here. What a surprise." The middle-aged scholar strode towards Chu Feng with his hands behind his back and his chin slightly raised. He glanced down at Chu Feng with a hint of arrogance.

"You can come but I can't?" Chu Feng immediately lost his elegant bearing. His voice turned as chilling as ice and his face grew overcast.

"Haha, so many years have passed but you still haven't given up? You must know that, as long as I remain in Haze City, you will never be able to lift your head high." The middle-aged scholar said leisurely, "Look, I can enter the Stone Cauldron Alms celebration venue, but you, the head of the Rune Master Association, wasn't even sent an invitation and have to stand outside and watch. Your friends and family in the Forbidden City will look down on you even more if they learn about this."

The veins on Chu Feng's forehead were about to pop. He glowered at the middle-aged scholar but after a moment he smiled. "Sorry to disappoint you but I did come with a personal invite. Unlike you, who is only Liu Wujun's lackey and is only able to attend because of him."

He withdrew his gaze from the middle-aged scholar and strode towards the entrance of Stone Cauldron Alms.

As he took out an invitation letter, an attendant respectfully hurried over to escort Chu Feng into the venue.

The middle-aged scholar blankly watched on. But when he saw that Chu Feng was indeed welcomed into Stone Cauldron Alms, a sinister look flashed across his eyes.

"So what if you can go in? Given your identity, you will just be looked down on and isolated during the event!" The middle-aged scholar sneered as he stepped in.

Meanwhile, earthshaking cheers erupted from the crowd and the enthusiasm reached an unprecedented height. Many people screamed at the top of their voices and their faces were crazy with excitement.

Needless to say, Liu Qingyan had arrived.

Chu Feng would no doubt also go crazy if he was present given his admiration for Liu Qingyan, but unfortunately, his mood had turned sour after he saw the middle-aged scholar.

The middle-aged scholar was called Ruan Lingdu and was one of Governor Liu Wujun's advisers.

Only Chu Feng knew that Ruan Lingdu had another identity, a guest elder in the Chu Clan in the Forbidden City, and he was highly valued by the Chu Clan!

Chu Feng was also from the Chu Clan, but he was different from Ruan Lingdu in that he was a true direct descendant of the Chu Clan!

However, more than ten years ago, Chu Feng was schemed against as clan members competed for power. As a result, he was expelled from the Chu Clan!

Otherwise, given his identity, how would Chu Feng be working in Haze City?

The most upsetting thing for Chu Feng was that, although the enemies didn't dare to kill him, they hadn't given up and sent Ruan Lingdu to Haze City to oppress him. Chu Feng suffered a lot of humiliation and torture as a result.

For example, in the past few years, he could have formed friendly ties with many powerful forces in the city given his identity as the head of the Rune Master Association. However, ever since Ruan Lingdu had become Governor Liu Wujun's advisor, Chu Feng had become isolated by many major forces in Haze City and no one wanted to become friends with him!

For example, logically speaking, his identity as the head of the Rune Master Association was enough for him to easily receive an invitation for the Stone Cauldron Alms' 100th anniversary, but he didn't receive one and had to borrow Lin Xun's to attend.

This was Chu Feng's current situation: He had been expelled from his clan and was suppressed and humiliated by Ruan Lingdu. He looked impressive to outsiders, but in truth, his situation was incredibly embarrassing.

However, those years of oppression strengthened Chu Feng's tenacious state of mind. He would never accept defeat so easily.

Moreover, Lin Xun's appearance had given him a glimmer of hope!

As Chu Feng walked into Stone Cauldron Alms, he was led into an incomparably spacious hall. The hall was beautifully decorated with carved beams and pillars. He reckoned the hall could easily accommodate tens of thousands of people!

Luxurious!

Wealthy!

Stylish!

This was the impression that Stone Cauldron Alms gave Chu Feng.

Many people had already arrived in the hall. Any one of them was likely an authority figure of a major force in Haze City.

As the celebration hadn't begun, the powerful and influential people were exchanging greetings with one another like friends chatting and laughing.**novel**Ext.**Com**

However, each one of them, without an exception, scrunched their brows and looked away when they saw Chu Feng. It was as though they completely disregarded his existence.

Even though Chu Feng had already expected to receive such treatments, he couldn't help feeling upset when he faced those cold and indifferent gazes.

But soon, he recovered. He came here to catch a glimpse of Liu Qingyan and he shouldn't think about anything else other than that. As for those disregarding gazes, he had already ignored them.

Ruan Lingdu followed him into the hall. He felt triumphant to see Chu Feng being disregarded and treated coldly. So what if you have an invitation? You're just asking for humiliation!

Wherever Ruan Lingdu went, an influential figure would come forward to talk to him. He seemed extremely popular.

It was a world of difference compared to the treatment that Chu Feng received.

Chu Feng's lips curled in disdain. He knew that Ruan Lingdu was only popular due to his identity as one of the closest advisors of Governor Liu Wujun. Additionally, he had the support of the Chu Clan in the Forbidden City so he could get what he wanted in Haze City.

Otherwise, given Ruan Lingdu's ability, he couldn't possibly convince all the major forces in Haze City to join hands to snub Chu Feng!

An attendant guided Chu Feng to the front row of seats in the hall—the seats reserved for the distinguished guests.

Chu Feng was completely dumbfounded. How could this happen? Even if I wasn't disregarded and isolated, my status and identity as the head of the Rune Master Association still wouldn't be enough to sit in the front row...

He guessed that it was related to the invitation that Lin Xun gave him.

Then, he heard mocking laughter behind him. "Some people do not know their place and think about things that they shouldn't think about. Should we call them courageous or foolish? Hahaha, how funny. Everyone, have you seen such a clown before?"

Without looking back, Chu Feng knew that it was Ruan Lingdu mocking him!

Chapter 256 Battle for seats

As Ruan Lingdu ridiculed Chu Feng, the many influential and powerful figures around him also donned mocking smiles. Chu Feng's actions are indeed embarrassing. How would he be qualified to sit in the distinguished guest's seats?

His action is as ridiculous as a monkey wearing a crown and as funny as a clown.

Chu Feng felt as though thorns were being pierced into his back as the many eyes watched him. A humiliating feeling rushed to his heart once again.

Although he had often been snubbed and ridiculed for years, it was the first time that so many powerful people had mocked him at the same time. *NovelNExt.com*

Chu Feng drew a deep breath and said to the attendant, "Did you do this on purpose? Who told you to do this?" His voice was somewhat cold.

He wanted to find out whether someone was deliberately trying to embarrass him or whether there was more to it.

The attendant seemed taken aback. He respectfully explained, "Senior, your invitation states that this is the seat specially prepared for you."

Chu Feng quickly took out the invitation letter and looked at it carefully. "Really?"

Ruan Lingdu laughed in an even more exaggerated manner. He would have rushed forward to mock Chu Feng further if he wasn't worried that he would lose his poise.

Even some of the influential figures beside him couldn't help but shake their heads. The Rune Master Association President Chu Feng is embarrassing.

The disturbance immediately attracted the attention of people from afar. A middle-aged man who seemed like the chief attendant came over to ask about the situation. "Fellow cultivator Chu Feng, dare I ask who gave you the invitation letter?"

Chu Feng glanced at Ruan Lingdu, who was watching in the distance before he said to the middle-aged attendant. "I'm here on behalf of Young Master Lin Xun."

The middle-aged attendant smiled. "That's correct. This seat is specially prepared for Young Master Lin Xun."

Chu Feng looked dumbstruck. The distinguished guest seat is prepared for Lin Xun!

Immediately, he felt a weight lifted off him. He sat down and completely ignored the mocking mocking gazes around him.

Ruan Lingdu, who was laughing complacently, suddenly stiffened. His laughter halted abruptly as if a rock had been stuffed into his mouth.

The powerful and influential figures around him were equally in disbelief. How could this be?

Given Chu Feng's identity, how could he possibly be qualified to sit in the row of distinguished guests' seats?

"Are...are you mistaken?" Ruan Lingdu asked the middle-aged attendant with a frown.

He felt a strong sense of bitterness rising in his heart.

"Fellow cultivator, it can't be wrong. The manager personally arranged the seating. There won't be a mistake," the middle-aged attendant replied with a smile.

“But...how could Chu Feng be qualified to sit there?” Ruan Lingdu was very baffled.

“Oh, are you asking about the seat? The seat was originally prepared for Young Master Lin Xun. Fellow Cultivator Chu Feng came on behalf of Young Master Lin Xun,” the middle-aged attendant responded casually.

“Who the hell is Young Master Lin Xun?” Ruan Lingdu blurted out.

Immediately, he noticed the strange gazes of the people around him.

Wait!

Lin Xun?

Suddenly, Ruan Lingdu completely snapped away from his anger and cold sweat soaked his body. It turns out to be that evil demon!

Ruan Lingdu had also heard about the massacre on that rainy night. As an adviser to Governor Liu Wujun, he knew well what the Black Glory note meant!

The duel between Lin Xun and Huang Jianchen, an aristocratic clan descendant from the Forbidden City, made Ruan Lingdu more aware of the terror of Lin Xun.

“I see,” Ruan Lingdu mumbled.

He finally understood the reason for the strange looks he received from the influential and powerful figures. They knew how powerful Lin Xun was!

Some of them had also received a Black Glory note.

When he again looked at Chu Feng, who had already seated himself in the distinguished guest row, his face grew more overcast.

As he cast his mind back to how he mocked Chu Feng for not knowing his place, he felt his cheeks reddening and flushing as if someone had slapped him.

The other influential figures' expressions also looked a little unnatural. Although they could occupy a seat in the hall, they would never be qualified to sit at the distinguished guest row.

However, someone like Chu Feng was able to occupy one of those seats on behalf of Lin Xun. It felt like a silent counterattack on them and they couldn't help feeling uncomfortable.

At the same time, they were puzzled as to why Lin Xun, a teenager, was qualified to sit in the distinguished guest seats?

Such an arrangement was too absurd!

Of course, there could be other secret reasons. Perhaps, the manager of Stone Cauldron Alms felt that Lin Xun possessed the qualification to occupy a distinguished guest seat. If that was the case, it was even more unusual.

Lin Xun was just a teenager with an unknown background but he was able to make the Black Glory Sacred Hall send a note to protect him and also made the Forbidden City's aristocratic clan descendants give up on pursuing matters with him.

And now, he was a distinguished guest of the Stone Cauldron Alms 100th anniversary!

How would this not be shocking?

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Chu Feng sighed inwardly. He could imagine how he would be neglected and isolated if Lin Xun hadn't given him the invitation.

Similarly, he didn't expect Lin Xun to have such a relationship with the Stone Cauldron Alms. Who wouldn't find it shocking that the honor of being a distinguished guest in the 100th-anniversary celebration was given to a teenager?

Soon, all the guests invited had arrived. The seats around Chu Feng had been occupied by many powerful figures, such as Wei Lingzhen, the principal of Haze Academy, Du Dongtu, the head of the Violet Plume Army, great cultivator Yao Tuohai, and Little Sword Lord Xie Yutang.

Governor Liu Wujun was seated next to Chu Feng.

The funniest thing was that Ruan Lingdu came with Liu Wujun so he wasn't allocated a seat. He had to stand next to Liu Wujun and serve him while Chu Feng was seated in front of him.

Ruan Lingdu gritted his teeth and almost shattered them. He had insulted and humiliated Chu Feng for over ten years, but now, he had to stand while Chu Feng sat down.

Ruan Lingdu would have flung his sleeve and stormed off if it wasn't for the occasion. However, he had to stand there like a statue and keep Governor Liu Wujun company until the end of the celebration.

Undoubtedly, this was one of the greatest torments to him!

On the other hand, Chu Feng was delighted. He felt even more grateful toward Lin Xun. If it wasn't for him, how would I be able to enjoy such an honor?

Most interestingly, when Wei Lingzhen, Du Dongtu, Yao Tuohai and Xie Yutang learned that Chu Feng came on behalf of Lin Xun and that the seat was actually prepared for Lin Xun, their expressions turned strange.

Wei Lingzhen and Du Dongtu exchanged a smile with each other. They found Lin Xun quite interesting. They had often heard of his name but had never seen him in person.

Yao Tuohai narrowed his eyes as complex emotions swirled in his heart. There was anger but also fear. In the past, why would he pay any attention to Lin Xun, who was an insignificant ant to him?

However, after so many things had happened, how could he not understand that the youngster he had oppressed in Donglin City was no longer the same as he was in the past.

However, as a Heaven Ascension cultivator, Yao Tuohai was only afraid of the force possibly behind Lin Xun and not Lin Xun himself!

As for Xie Yutang, he just frowned and didn't say anything. But he couldn't help but feel a little irritable. Why is it Lin Xun again?!

Governor Liu Wujun sat there in silence, his expression solemn. But when he heard the name Lin Xun, he couldn't help but fall into deep thought. It was the third time he had heard this name.

The first time was after the rainy night massacre that happened a few days ago.

The second time was the duel in the arena.

And now was the third time. It was hard for Liu Wujun not to notice Lin Xun.

Soon the Stone Cauldron Alms 100th anniversary celebration kicked off. Mu Wansu's graceful figure emerged on the white jade platform in the center of the hall.

Clad in a black dress, she looked particularly charming and beautiful. Her every movement exuded a capable elegance. She was like a black rose, and her charm brightened people's eyes.

Everyone realized that the celebration had finally begun!

.....

Meanwhile, Lin Xun, who was in closed-door cultivation, also opened his eyes.

Swoosh!

A ray of divine light seemed to shoot forth from his eyes, piercing the darkness in the house.

At that time, Lin Xun's aura was pulsing like molten lava around him and his skin glowed a sky-blue hue. He looked sacred and radiated a transcendent air.

His black eyes were deep and as clear as the stars. His handsome and angular face no longer looked immature and he exuded calmness and confidence.

"I finally reached the perfect realm..." Lin Xun sighed. As he breathed out, he pierced the air and blasted a hole into the wall like a thunderbolt.

Waterfall-like aura and thunder-like breathing!

This was a sign seen only when one reached the perfect realm of the Human Dipper Stage!

In Lin Xun's body, sky-blue aeth dipper power constantly roamed around the aeth power reservoir, transforming once leaving the storm vortex, setting off countless ripples. It was incredibly pure, clear and mysterious.

However, countless cultivators would tremble and their scalps would go numb if they saw that scene. It was hard to believe that a Human Dipper cultivator would have such terrifying and powerful aeth dipper power!

Chapter 257 Hundred Battles Secret Realm

Lin Xun's cultivation had improved tremendously after his closed-door cultivation. He had reached the perfect realm of the Human Dipper Stage and his strength had also soared.

If Lin Xun encountered Huang Jianchen again, he was confident that he could easily defeat him without needing to resort to Star-Gather!

However, Lin Xun also didn't feel particularly threatened when he faced Huang Jianchen in the arena.

The blade that finally defeated Huang Jianchen only contained a third of the essence of Star-Gather and wasn't the true Star-Gather!

As for how powerful Lin Xun was now, even he didn't know himself. But he was certain that he wouldn't be afraid of facing Earth Dipper cultivators.

He silently checked the changes within his body and then inhaled deeply. He restrained his qi and restored his body to its usual tranquil and calm state.

He also withdrew the convergence arrays in his room.

Although he had only been in closed-door cultivation for one month, he had consumed a huge amount of materials. He had used up all the cloud dipper violet soul pills and he had consumed ten pieces of high-grade aeth stones every day to operate the convergence array.

In total, Lin Xun had spent 6,000 gold coins in that one month!

This was a tremendous expense unimaginable to ordinary cultivators. Even the children of wealthy families could hardly spend such a huge amount on cultivation in one month.

However, it couldn't be helped. Lin Xun possessed the Storm Grinder, which was akin to a bottomless pit. It brought him a solid cultivation foundation, but it also consumed resources far more than those of his peers!

Everything had pros and cons. Since Lin Xun had heaven-defying powers, he also needed more resources for his cultivation.

Otherwise, he wouldn't be able to travel far along the cultivation path without sufficient resources to support him, regardless of how talented he was or how outstanding his foundation was.

Even the cleverest housewife couldn't cook a meal without any rice.

.....

As Lin Xun walked out of his room, Xue Jin lifted his head and glanced at him. He muttered, "What a monster!"

Lin Xun smiled. "Why do you say that?"

Xue Jin said irritably, "I have been cultivating for a long time, but I have never seen anyone at the Human Dipper stage be able to train for one month without eating or drinking. Cultivators who had attempted to do so had lost their minds in the process or exploded to death. When has someone like you cultivated for an entire month and looked like nothing had happened? Not only that, but your cultivation level has also improved once again. Are you not a monster?"

Lin Xun nodded and said seriously, "Old Jin, if you want to praise me in the future, just say it directly. You don't need to beat around the bush."

Xue Jin held his breath, holding in his anger. Then, he rolled his eyes and said, “Kid, you are becoming more and more shameless. Are you not afraid of karma?”

Lin Xun thought for a moment and smiled. “It’s fine. There are many shameless people in the world. I’m not the worst one.”

Xue Jin couldn’t argue with Lin Xun and so he changed the subject. “Tell me, are you planning to attend the Stone Cauldron Alms anniversary celebration? It’s getting late. You’ll still make it if you leave now.”

Lin Xun shook his head. “I have no interest in it. I have already asked Chu Feng to attend on my behalf. I came to find you about something else.”

Xue Jin sighed, “I know, the more familiar someone is with you, the more impolite you are to them. You’re acting so natural even if you want to ask a favor from me. Do you think I should keep a distance from you in the future?”

Lin Xun smiled. “That’s fine, but if that’s the case, it will be difficult for me to help you make a rune armament. After all, you’re going to draw a line with me. Even if I want to help you, there’s nothing I can do...”

Before he finished his sentence, Xue Jin grumbled, “Little brat, stop talking nonsense. Quickly tell me what you want from me?”

Lin Xun immediately said seriously, “I may still need to go into closed-door cultivation. It will take at least one day but I don’t know how long it will take. I only hope that you can make sure that no one bothers me during that period.”

Xue Jin was a little puzzled. “What’s the difference between this and your one month of closed-door cultivation?”

“It’s not the same. If I don’t have your protection this time, there will be serious consequences if an accident happens.”

Xue Jin narrowed his eyes as he realized that Lin Xun’s closed-door cultivation this time wasn’t just simply for cultivation.

“Fine!” Xue Jin agreed after a thought.

Lin Xun breathed a sigh of relief.

That day was the day that the third level of the Great Azure Cloud Path would open. Lin Xun knew that he would lose his ability to perceive the outside world once he entered the Omega Secret Realm. If someone were to disturb him during that period, his life could be in fatal danger.

In the past, Lin Xun didn’t need to worry about any danger because he had entered the Omega Secret Realm in safe places such as Feiyun Village and Blood Kill Camp.

It was different now. He had many enemies in Haze City. They might be afraid of him and not dare to come and attack him, but what if such a thing happened?

Therefore, Lin Xun asked Xue Jin for help.

.....

Lin Xun returned to his room and sat down cross-legged on the bed. He cleared his mind and quietly sensed the Omega Door suspended in his mind-sea.

Only after an unknown period did Lin Xun feel his mind-sea swaying. He fell into a trance-like state and a familiar feeling flooded his body.

In a split second, Lin Xun had appeared in a mysterious space again.

The perfectly straight Great Azure Cloud Path extended into the distance where the mysterious and towering Omega Door stood.

As Lin Xun stood on the Great Azure Cloud Path, he surveyed the surroundings. He couldn't help but sigh emotionally. It had already been an entire year since he challenged the second level...

Soon, a cryptic undulation swept over and silently scanned Lin Xun's body. Then, a cold, clear and emotionless voice reverberated throughout the space.

"Dao Seeker, the third level of the Great Azure Cloud Path is called Hundred Battles. You have three chances to pass. If you fail, you will have to wait seven days before you can challenge the level again. If you fail all three attempts, you will be disqualified and the Omega Secret Realm will return to a sealed state."

"I understand." Lin Xun nodded. Having been in the Omega Secret Realm many times, he was very familiar with the voice.

"The challenge begins."

As the voice rang out, a dazzling shaft of light descended upon the Great Azure Cloud Path and completely drowned Lin Xun's figure.

"Enter the Hundred Battle Secret Realm and fight against one hundred secret realm experts!"

"If you are still standing after one hundred battles, you will pass without a reward!"

"If you win all one hundred battles, you will pass and receive a reward!"

"If you fail during the one hundred battles, you fail the level!"

The ice-cold voice continued to ring, stating the rules for the third level of the Great Azure Cloud Path.

Lin Xun found that he was standing in a huge arena suspended in nothingness. He scanned around and saw that there was not a thing in sight.

Many sculptures stood in the arena, each one a different shape. Some were humans, some were demons, devils, ghosts and spirits. Some were strange creatures that Lin Xun had never seen nor heard of before!

There was a skeleton with wings and an eye between its eyebrows!

There was a giant covered with black scales standing on a tortoise and had snakes hanging around his ears!

There was an ox-headed human with golden skin. He was equipped with heavy armor and sitting astride an unknown beast.

Each one was bizarre. It was as though the representative of each ancient creature had traveled through time and appeared before him.

Lin Xun shuddered inwardly as he swept a glance over the statutes. The sculptures were too peculiar and mysterious. He had never heard of such creatures existing in the world.

Many legends from ancient times had circulated throughout the empire. Many of them had mentioned gods, demons and devils but Lin Xun couldn't connect those legends with the statues in front of him!

They were too mysterious but also too frightening. It was difficult to imagine what the background and origin of the creatures were, let alone why they appeared in the secret realm in the form of statues.

The ice-cold voice mentioned that I have to fight against secret realm experts in Hundred Battles. Could it be that those so-called secret realm experts are related to those statues?

Lin Xun felt uneasy.*NovelExt.com*

"Dao Seeker, you have one hundred opportunities to fight. If you can't survive to the end, it will be considered a failure."

"A failed battle equals death. After the resurrection, you have a quarter of an hour to adjust yourself."

The cold and empty voice rang again, elaborating the rules of the challenge.

Lin Xun stood there in puzzlement. There are three attempts to challenge the level and for each attempt, there are one hundred opportunities to fight!?

What a strange challenge!

Lin Xun was most baffled that he had the chance to resurrect after he died in battle. How shocking is that!?

However, the Omega Secret Realm is a mysterious place where everything before me is cast from some mysteriously terrifying power. The so-called death and resurrection must be illusionary and not true death and resurrection!

Otherwise, it would have completely broken the laws of heaven and earth.

Lin Xun carefully reviewed the rules and found it strange that he could successfully pass even if he lost one hundred battles. It didn't make sense to him.

If that's the case, I can still pass if I can resurrect after losing one hundred times!

But immediately, Lin Xun frowned. It won't be this simple. There are only three chances to pass the level and each chance consists of one hundred opportunities to fight. If it was that easy, the conditions for passing the level wouldn't be so complicated.

Before Lin Xun could make sense of the rules, a statue with a human head, a snake body and four limbs produced a strange wave of energy in the right corner of the arena. Immediately, it started to flake and peel off. It was coming to life!

Chapter 258 Shadow of Death

The statue shattered to pieces and a human-headed creature with a snake's body and four limbs suddenly came to life!

Lin Xun narrowed his eyes, increasing his vigilance.

Following another peculiar buzz, a simple, unadorned blade appeared in Lin Xun's hand.

At that moment, the creature had already fixed its sinister blood-red eyes on Lin Xun.

His four stout arms resembled rocks as they grabbed a strangely shaped blood-red blade around ten feet long. Even by just standing there, he exuded a bloodthirsty and violent aura.

"The first battle is against an expert from the Snake Spirit Clan!" the ice-cold, empty voice echoed across the arena.

Boom!

Before the voice died away, the Snake Spirit Clan expert let out a deafening roar. Brandishing the blood-red blade, he charged toward Lin Xun.

Instantly, heaven and earth changed. An indescribably frightening aura enveloped Lin Xun. He seemed to see specks of stars descending from an endless sky like falling comets about to wipe out the world and turn the universe to dust!

The scene was terrifying yet...familiar!

Isn't that Star-Gather?!

As such a thought flashed across his mind, he felt a sharp piercing pain shooting throughout his body. He felt like his spirit was being shattered and his body split into two yet he couldn't do anything. Everything darkened before him and he slipped into unconsciousness.

.....

Lin Xun didn't know how long it took him to wake up, but when he did, he found himself standing in the arena again, surrounded by the bizarre statues. It was as if nothing had happened.

However, his face blanched with terror when he looked at the human-headed snake statue.

The battle floated across his mind like the tide. It was so clear that it felt like a nightmare engraved deep in his mind.

That blade...is so terrifying!

The more Lin Xun thought about it, the more chilling it felt. When the blade struck him, he felt death for the first time. It was so intense and so frightening. It was incredibly hard to imagine unless a person experienced it for themselves.

“Star-Gather...that guy knows the Star-Gather move...and its power is more than double that of mine!”

Lin Xun was completely shaken. His first battle ended in a second and he was defeated by a blade art he was most familiar with!

This utterly shocked Lin Xun. During the split second that he was killed, the feeling of terror, suddenness and despair made Lin Xun realize for the first time what it was meant by life and death could be decided in a split second!

It's too terrifying...

If it happened in real life, how would I be able to resurrect?

Resurrect?

Wait! *novelnext.cOM*

Lin Xun suddenly realized a problem. According to the rules, he would be given a quarter of an hour to rest and adjust after each battle.

In other words, he would have to start the second battle soon!

“No, I have to quickly figure out what exactly is being tested at this level. If every expert represented by the one hundred statues in the arena is as powerful as the Snake Spirit Clan expert, I have no chance of winning...”

Lin Xun drew a deep breath, trying hard to calm himself down. He quickly tried to think of a solution.

“The Hundred Battles secret realm, one hundred battles, the test should be related to battle, but cultivation, combat skills, technique, experience may also be the key to the test.”

“So, what exactly is being tested?”

“Based on the strength of the Snake Spirit Clan expert, I am no match for him even if I have the strength to fight back. This means that the fighting technique is not being tested. The difference in strength between us is too great. This is only the first battle and there are another ninety-nine battles. Regardless of how superb a person's fighting techniques are, it's still impossible to win against absolute strength.”

“If that's the case, then it's testing combat arts?”

“Yes!”

“Star-Gather!”

A thought suddenly struck Lin Xun's mind. He realized a key point. The Snake Spirit Clan expert coincidentally used the Star-Gather move which he was very familiar with.

As Lin Xun pondered, time flew by. Soon, following a buzz, another sculpture shattered to pieces and another strange creature came to life.

It was a well built man of at least ten feet tall. His facial features were perfectly sharp like they were carved by a knife. His face was fair but his eyes glowed a mysterious blue hue and his body emanated wisps of mist-like black flames.

“The second battle is against the Demon Spirit Clan expert!”

When Lin Xun heard the ice-cold voice ring again, he tightened his grip around his blade. He was fully ready. Qi roamed around his body like bubbling lava.

“Die!”

Amidst the chilling voice, the Demon Spirit Clan expert strode forward. His slender fair hand suddenly transformed into a blade as he lightly drew it across the air.

His motion was clean, direct, precise and extremely simple, yet it emanated a tyrannical power that reached straight into a person’s heart!

Lin Xun was unable to evade or block. His vision blurred as he seemed to see countless stars falling from the eternal night sky, like a starry river descending upon the world.

The terror, despair and aura of death again flooded his heart. He trembled all over, and his mind was similarly being impacted.

Immediately, endless pain struck him. Everything darkened before him and he died once again.

.....

When he woke up, his face was overcast and troubled.

Although he had been resurrected once again and his body and spirit were unscathed, the feelings of fear, despair, and helplessness from death lingered in his mind!

Every time he was distracted, he would think about how the Snake Spirit Clan expert and Demon Spirit Clan expert killed him. The scenes were like shadows left in his mind that he couldn’t expel!

Lin Xun knew that if he couldn’t get rid of those shadows of death, they would become inner demons in his mind. As they accumulated, the more dangerous it was for him. In the serious case, he could completely collapse and lose his mind and cultivation!

The two deaths made him understand why the rules stated that even if he failed all one hundred battles he could still successfully pass as long as he could persevere to the end.

The reason was that the impact of deaths would continue to accumulate. The more he failed, the more difficult it was to withstand the impact and he could be easily eliminated.

Therefore, if he continued to fight like that, it would be impossible for him to survive to the end.

What else would he have to fight if his fighting spirit and mind had collapsed?

if he didn't want to lose his mind, he would have to admit defeat!

This was the most terrifying aspect of Hundred Battles. Compared to it, the previous two levels of the Great Azure Cloud Path weren’t worth mentioning at all.

“Why is this level so cruel and brutal? Which bastard came up with the idea of this level back then? They are crazy...”

Lin Xun's face grew more overcast as he came to that conclusion. Even though he had made sufficient preparations, he still felt powerless when he faced the Hundred Battles Secret Realm

If the third level of the Great Azure Cloud Path is already so difficult, won't the next levels be even more brutal?

Buzz~

An undulation reminded Lin Xun that the third battle was about to begin.

This time his opponent was a giant standing on a blue tortoise and had snakes hanging around his ears. His body was completely covered in black scales. He was called the Blue Scale Clan expert.

Having learned from the previous two battles, Lin Xun unhesitatingly made a move. He swung his blade and launched his strongest trump card—Star-Gather!

However, Lin Xun was again killed immediately in that brief exchange. Again, he was defeated by Star-Gather!

.....

"Damn, it's impossible to pass," Lin Xun cursed when he was resurrected.

He was exasperated. He had high hopes that he would easily pass the third level of the Great Azure Cloud Path now that he had reached the perfect realm of the Human Dipper Stage and had a good mastery of Star-Gather.

Who would have thought that reality would be so cruel!

The most troublesome thing for Lin Xun was that every time he failed, he felt like he was being killed in real life. The feelings of death and fear constantly accumulated in his heart like lingering spirits. They constantly corroded and battered his mind and consciousness.

In cultivation, this was called inner demons!

If he could get rid of the inner demons, even if he failed every time, he could likely withstand the impact to the end and successfully pass the third level. But how would it be so easy to expel the inner demon?

Many cultivators in the world would be unable to get up after encountering a setback on their cultivation path. They would lose themselves, their minds, their cultivation or perhaps lose their lives.

Why?

They couldn't defeat the inner demon!

Lin Xun was facing that kind of danger. The most terrifying thing for him was that his setback was to face death and experience death!

Although he could be resurrected, the impact from the shadows of death was real!

The inner demons continued to accumulate as he died. It was easy to imagine what terrifying impact it had on Lin Xun.

However, Lin Xun wouldn't so easily admit defeat. After realizing the seriousness of the problem, he forcibly discarded all the distracting thoughts in his mind and began to think of a solution.

Instead of sitting still, it was better to fight with everything he had!

Instead of complaining about how cruel the level was, it was better to accept it and change it!

The worst people were those who admitted defeat after suffering setbacks and failures without giving it their all. How could such people become true cultivators?

"Star-Gather...death...inner demons in the mind..."

Lin Xun stood motionless in the arena like he had become a statue. But inside, he was frantically finding a solution.

"Inner demon is caused by death, and death is caused by the Star-Gather. If I want to defeat and expel the inner demon...I have to start from Star-Gather!"

Lin Xun grasped the key problem. "But, how do I start?"

Chapter 259 Magnificent Melody Transformation

To defeat his inner demons, he had to be better than his opponents in the comprehension and control of Star-Gather!

After racking his brain, this was the most direct way that Lin Xun could think of.

However, it was easier said than done. How would it be so easy to achieve that step?

Martial arts cultivation was divided into four realms: Inkling, Elemental, Precise and Perfect. Lin Xun's grasp of Star-Gather was only at the Elemental Realm and he was only beginning to comprehend and appreciate the essence and mystery of Star-Gather. He was still a distance away from being able to control it.

On the other hand, his previous three opponents, experts from the Snake Spirit Clan, Demon Spirit Clan and the Blue Scale Clan, had all displayed power of the Star-Gather of at least the Precise Realm!

It would be very difficult for Lin Xun to grasp the Star-Gather to the same realm let alone surpass his opponents.

However, that seemed to be the only way. Otherwise...once the inner demons moved deeper into his mind, his mind could completely collapse!

This was the most terrifying thing. If he failed the third level, not only would he lose the chance to enter the Omega Secret Realm ever again, but an inner demon could also corrode his cultivation and mind!

No matter what, Lin Xun had to fight with everything he had.

Soon, a familiar buzz rang again in the arena. The fourth battle was about to begin. Lin Xun immediately calmed his thoughts and his heart was blazed with fierce fighting spirit once again.

Since it was a battle and it tested the Star-Gather move that he was very familiar with, it was a perfect learning opportunity!

Given his opponent's control of Star-Gather and their power, their attack would likely kill him every time. But at the same time, it allowed him to experience the true mystery and power of Star-Gather most directly and comprehensively!

If he could learn from his opponent's strengths to combat his weakness, he perhaps would have a chance to reverse the situation.

.....

While Lin Xun was battling and trying to pass the third level, the celebration in Stone Cauldron Alms was in full swing. As night fell, the celebrations were coming to an end.

However, none of the guests' interest died down. On the contrary, as the celebration neared the end, they grew more and more excited.

This was because the legendary art cultivator Liu Qingyan would perform on stage as the finale!

This was the event that all guests were undoubtedly looking forward to the most.

Stone Cauldron Alms had arranged various exciting events for the celebration. For example, they had invited Liang Daqian, a descendant of one of the best puppet clans to perform a puppet battle show. Liang Daqian simultaneously controlled thousands of puppets of varying sizes and made them fight like a real war. Horses clattered, swords clashed and dust whirled in the air. Many people were mesmerized and couldn't help but marvel at his remarkable skills.

Another example was the Hundred Birds Pay Homage to the Phoenix show performed by a beast tamer family. The beast tamer master miraculously attracted hundreds of various species of birds to dance and sing on the platform. The magical beast taming skills caused another sensation in the audience.

The scale and standard of the grand celebratory event were world-class. Even the powerful figures in the audience felt that their trip was worthwhile.

Only Ruan Lingdu felt as uncomfortable as if he had eaten flies. Ever since the celebration started, he felt extremely uncomfortable like a thorn was in his back. He hated the fact that he couldn't skin Chu Feng alive when he saw him sitting in the distinguished guest seats.

However, he could only think about it. On such a grand occasion, he didn't dare to make the slightest mistake.

It was easy to imagine how much fury and resentment accumulated in his heart since he had been suppressing them since the start of the celebration.

As for Chu Feng, he had been enjoying the celebration. Especially when he confirmed that Ruan Lingdu was standing behind him like a wooden statue.

However, when it was announced that Liu Qingyan was about to appear, both Ruan Lingdu, who was raging and bitter, and Chu Feng, who was relaxed and elated, discarded all distracting thoughts and focused their gaze on the stage.

It was as if Liu Qingyan could make them temporarily forget their hatred.

Not only that, all tens of thousands of people in the hall stopped what they were doing and paused all conversations. All gazes shifted to the stage.

Liu Qingyan was about to appear!

This was the charm of Liu Qingyan. The legendary art cultivator known throughout the world possessed too many dazzling rings of light around her. Now that she was about to appear before them, who wouldn't feel excited?

Even the unusual imposing figures' faces were alight with curiosity as if they wanted to know whether Liu Qingyan deserved her reputation.

The hall fell silent and the atmosphere was still.

Soon, wisps of mystical light rose on the white jade platform like mist, floating gently like a sea of clouds. At the same time, a clear and melodious melody resounded through the hall like a stream flowing through an empty valley.

The melody was beautiful and ethereal, like the cry of dancing cranes in the sky, bamboo leaves whispering as they swayed in the breeze, the melodious camel bells ringing in the desert, and the soothing waves of a sapphire ocean.

Everyone seemed to have been teleported to another world.

The sunlight and moonlight streamed through the rising mist.

The leaves of thousands-of-year-old cypress trees drooped from the rain. Thousands of bamboo formed a lush green wall.

Exotic flowers bloomed outside the gate, swaying plants by the bridge delicately perfumed the air by the bridge, and water flowed amongst moss-blanketed rocks and walls.

Occasionally, cries of cranes resonated through the air and the colorful divine feathers of a phoenix streaked across the sky...

The mysterious ape and white deer concealed themselves while the golden lion and jade elephant hid in plain sight.

Such a mysterious scene was like a paradise. Everyone was utterly mesmerized. They couldn't believe that a piece of music could produce such a beautiful spectacle.

As the music entered through the ear, the scene was formed from one's thoughts and emotions. Although Liu Qingyan was nowhere to be seen, the melody alone was enough to amaze all the guests.

When Liu Qingyan appeared, everyone's eyes blazed uncontrollably with admiration.

A slender, illusionary figure emerged from the colorful mist on the white jade platform.

At that moment, Liu Qingyan was dressed in a plain white dress and azure fabric shoes. She was completely different from when she was disguised as a man. Her hair flowed down past her slender waist, her eyes sparkled, and her soft and delicate skin glowed. Her stunning face had a unique detached indifference.

It was Liu Qingyan, the soul singer in the hearts of young people all over the world. Her unique heavenly voice was famous throughout the empire!

“Liu Qingyan!”

“Liu Qingyan!”

“Liu Qingyan!”

Excited cheers erupted from the hall. Most of which were from the youngsters of wealthy and powerful families. All of them screamed with excitement without caring about their image.

However, no one criticized them. Although the influential people didn't say much, they were similarly stunned and moved.

One's fame was always greater than what one deserved, but Liu Qingyan was indeed as stunning as rumored and lived up to her reputation!

Liu Qingyan didn't say anything after she appeared. Her crystal clear eyes ran across the crowd and then she withdrew her gaze. No one noticed but she paused when she passed Chu Feng, and a trace of disappointment flashed across her eyes.

After that, she said in a clear voice, “Today is Stone Cauldron Alms's 100th-anniversary celebration. I am very fortunate to be able to participate in it. I have nothing except a song to express my congratulations.”

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Hundred Battles Secret Realm

Die!

When another statue came to life, Lin Xun unhesitatingly brought his blade down in a slash.

Star-Gather!

At that moment, Lin Xun looked incomparably calm but with an unusual fierceness in his eyes. He gathered all his strength to that blade slash.

Boom!

Following an earth-shaking crash, Lin Xun was again killed on the spot.

However, he was soon resurrected with another shadow of death in him.

This was already his 27th failure, and every failure brought him endless pain and fear of death. The experience of constantly hovering between life and death was even more tormenting than hell.

However, Lin Xun gradually grasped some secrets to success.

He knew that the shadows of death would deepen and increase in his heart every time he failed. They would constantly attack his mind but if he circulated the Little Divine Meditation Art and focussed on

visualizing the movement of stars, it had an amazing effect on suppressing the inner demons.*novelnext.COM*

Of course, it was only suppression and not expulsion.

However, he could only apply that approach during the quarter of an hour of resting time after each death. The Little Divine Meditation Art had no effect in battle.

However, even so, it gave Lin Xun a chance to breathe.

Additionally, the many battles and repeated deaths allowed Lin Xun to comprehend and grasp many secrets and the true essence of Star-Gather. This could be considered progress.

Unhesitatingly, Lin Xun sat cross-legged on the ground and operated the Little Divine Meditation Art. In his clear mind-sea, he began to visualize the starry sky and suppress the inner demons tumbling in his mind.

Lin Xun had fallen into a very strange state. He constantly fought, constantly met death, constantly resurrected, and constantly activated the Little Divine Meditation Art to suppress the attacks of the inner demons.

It was like a cycle, except that his opponent was different each time and every opponent performed a different style of Star-Gather.

It was unknown how long had passed but Lin Xun suddenly frowned when the 47th battle was about to commence.

The shadows of death accumulated in his mind were too much and reached a limit. Without the suppression of the Little Divine Meditation Art, they would erupt like a volcano.

However, Lin Xun had already predicted that such a situation would happen and had made preparations.

Without any hesitation, he said directly, "I admit defeat, I give up on this opportunity to pass the level!"

Chapter 260 Flying Light Flying Light

The night was as gentle and still as water.

Xue Jin was lying in a corner, snoring loudly.

Suddenly, Xue Jin's eyes sprang open. He sensed a sharp blade aura roaming in Lin Xun's room. It was filled with destructive and tyrannical energy.

This is bad!

Xue Jin's heart sank. Then, he immediately sped towards Lin Xun's room.

However—

Before he got there, a shaft of blade light split Lin Xun's room into two.

Just as the shaft of blade light was about to slash the ground and cause even greater damage, Xue Jin stretched out his hand in the air.

An invisible force rushed forth, imprisoning the shaft of blade light. It hovered in mid-air for a brief moment before vanishing with a boom.

Rumble—

The house had split in half and the walls had collapsed. It was close to being destroyed. Xue Jin scolded Lin Xun in his mind. Has that kid gone crazy? Why is he destroying things in the middle of the night?

If he hadn't acted in time, the power of that blade could have devastated the entire courtyard and even impact other buildings and streets!

At that moment, Lin Xun rushed out of his room, his murderous spirit still lingering around his body. His eyes were blazing with rising killing intent. He was akin to an unsheathed treasured blade from an abyss and wanted to wipe out the entire world!

Xue Jin's pupils shrank, and his expression turned solemn. Something is wrong! Inner demons must have entered his body!

Given Xue Jin's power, he could immediately tell that Lin Xun was like a barrel of gunpowder at that moment. His mind had been blinded, his will was out of his control, and killing intent had flooded his body. All were signs that he was almost losing his mind!

Only one thing in cultivation could cause such symptoms—inner demons!

"Damn, this kid just started his closed-door cultivation today and he asked me to protect him. But now he encountered an obstacle in his cultivation!"

Xue Jin's heart sank, finding the situation tricky.

Inner demons were seemingly invisible, but they were the most terrifying obstacle in a cultivator's cultivation path. Once the so-called inner demons appeared, life and death were out of their control. In the lightest cases, a person's cultivation base would be destroyed, and in serious cases, they would perish and disappear.

The only one who could resolve one's inner demons was oneself; no one else could help!

"Die!" Lin Xun yelled with murderous spirit roaming around his body like a waterfall. The blade in his grip roared wildly.

Xue Jin gritted his teeth and rushed forward. He stretched out his hand and whacked Lin Xun hard on the neck before he could react.

With a thud, Lin Xun went limp and collapsed to the ground.

But he hadn't lost consciousness. He pulled himself up with difficulty, looking deranged and completely different from usual.

Xue Jin was certain that the inner demons were deep in Lin Xun's body and the situation had reached a precarious stage!

What to do?

Xue Jin's expression dramatically changed. He had greatly admired Lin Xun, believing that he was a demon-like genius in both cultivation and the art of runes.

It would be a pity for someone like him to destroy himself.

However, Lin Xun was facing inner demons. Even Xue Jin couldn't do anything to help him.

"It seems like I have to bring him to that place..."

Xue Jin gritted his teeth and made a decision. He immediately grabbed Lin Xun by his arm and was about to leave when Lin Xun suddenly cried out in a hoarse voice, "Old Jin, put me down...let me...go!"

Xue Jin was first taken aback. But when he looked at Lin Xun, he saw that, although he looked deranged, there was a hint of clarity in the depths of his eyes.

However, his body was still enveloped in a murderous spirit and violent aura. His expression constantly alternated between sinister and normal. Xue Jin couldn't help but worry whether Lin Xun could retain that little trace of clarity.

"Quickly!" Lin Xun roared like a wild beast, his voice hoarse.

Xue Jin sighed as he let go of his arm. Lin Xun collapsed on his buttocks on the ground with a thud, drawing several deep breaths. He closed his eyes and activated the Little Divine Meditation Art!

Xue Jin didn't dare to be careless. He vigilantly guarded the area, ready to take Lin Xun away if something strange were to happen.

Time passed but Lin Xun was still sitting cross-legged on the ground. He hadn't shown any more berserk behaviour, though his murderous spirit still lingered around him. Xue Jin breathed a sigh of relief.

Then, his expression grew complex. Inner demons are extremely terrifying. Not many people would survive in the face of them but Lin Xun resolved such a precarious situation with his powers.

Xue Jin couldn't understand how he managed to do it.

He sat at a stone table, staring silently at Lin Xun.**NOVELNExt.COM**

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Stone Cauldron Alms.

It was already late at night, but the hall was still buzzing and the atmosphere had reached an unprecedented height.

Many people were screaming with excitement. Even the great influential people were stirred and a myriad of thoughts were swirling in their minds.

Liu Qingyan had long departed the white jade platform but no one in the hall wanted to leave. They were still reminiscing about her wonderful song.

Flying light, flying light, soothes with a glass of wine.

How high is the azure sky, and how deep is the amber ground?

But only the cold moon and warm sun come to fry life.

Those who eat bears are fat, those who eat frogs are thin.

Where are the noble ones? Does peace exist?

Trees grow in the east of the sky and beneath it lies the torch dragon.

Sever the dragon's feet and chew the dragon's flesh. Stop it from returning and lying low at night.

The old will not die, and the young will not cry.

What does it mean to consume gold and swallow white jade?

Who rides an azure donkey in the clouds like Young Master Ren?

Bones lay in piles and formations on the great way, why is the way not of complete emptiness?

Flying Light Song!

This was the song that Liu Qingyan sang during the finale of the celebration. The song was rumored to be a reinterpretation of an ancient tune and she had personally composed the lyrics. She had given the tune an indescribable transformation.

The young cultivators most resonated with the verse 'sever the dragon's feet and chew on the dragon's meat, stop it from returning or lying low at night!'

How remarkable was it to slaughter the torch dragon? Sever the dragon's feet and chew the dragon's flesh. Make night disappear and time stand still!

The influential and powerful people were most moved by the verse 'How high is the azure sky, how deep is the amber ground? But only the cold moon and warm sun come to fry life.'

The word 'fry' was able to express so much loss, struggle, helplessness and bitterness?

For Governor Liu Wujun, Wei Lingzhen, the principal of Haze Academy, and Du Dongtu, the head of the Violet Plume Army, cultivators who had already reached a high cultivation level, the most stirring verse was no doubt the last. 'Bones lay in piles and formations on the great way, why is the way not of complete emptiness?'

The higher one's cultivation level, the more one could see the dust of bone remains scattered across the vast great way. It was unknown how many cultivators with great remarkable powers were filled with regrets for not being able to ascend the great way!

It made people wonder whether the way was just a falsehood in the end?

A song moved everyone in the hall in different ways and resonated with them differently. Only an art cultivator like Liu Qingyan would have such magical musical skills.

Many people were sure that the song Flying Light would cause a sensation in the world and would be widely and enthusiastically talked about!

Liu Qingyan had already got onto her carriage and left Stone Cauldron Alms. She only performed the song to fulfill her invitation.

She couldn't help but feel a little disappointed knowing that Lin Xun gave the invitation to someone else and didn't attend.

"Granny, everyone who was invited had come to the celebration but I didn't see Young Master Lin Xun. Do you think he's still angry at me?" Liu Qingyan suddenly asked.

"Why would that bastard be angry at you, Miss?" Granny Feng frowned in puzzlement.

"He had to duel with Huang Jianchen last time. The entire city knows about it. If it weren't for me, how would he be drawn into that matter?"

Liu Qingyan pursed her lips, her heart weighing heavy with guilt. Lin Xun was helping her repair the Ancient Law Ocarina but his relationship with her dragged him into disputes with the aristocratic clan descendants. She had been looking for a chance to make it up to him.

She originally thought that if Lin Xun attended the celebration, she could find a chance to apologize to him. Who would have thought that he didn't come?

Liu Qingyan couldn't help but wonder if Lin Xun was still upset because of what happened last time.

Granny Feng disagreed, "Miss, you are overthinking. That kid won against Huang Jianchen. He is now enjoying a resounding reputation in Haze City."

Liu Qingyan shook her head. "That's a different matter. If Young Master Lin Xun was defeated, his reputation would be ruined. If that happened, who would bear the consequences for him?"

Granny Feng raised her eyebrows. "Miss, what's the matter with you?" She could tell that Liu Qingyan seemed very troubled.

"I want to talk to Young Master Lin Xun and apologize to him in person. Otherwise, I will feel very bad," Liu Qingyan explained after a thought.

Granny Feng said suspiciously, "Is there really nothing else?"

Liu Qingyan was taken aback at first and then she shot an annoyed look at Granny Feng. "Granny, you are overthinking."

Granny Feng was very worried. She knew that Liu Qingyan was upset. If she's entangled with that bastard Lin Xun, something perhaps may happen in the future!

In this world, emotion is the most complicated thing. Often, an inadvertent little thing leads to a relationship.

Granny Feng was most worried about that.

The only thing that made her feel at ease was that Liu Qingyan hadn't shown any unusual behavior, at least for now. Otherwise, she would have immediately taken Liu Qingyan away and stopped her every interaction with Lin Xun!

Is this a joke? What kind of person is Liu Qingyan? She is one of the best art cultivators in the empire and is known all over the world. Countless nobles and wealthy men admire her. How would that bastard Lin Xun match up to her?

Granny Feng had decided that she wouldn't let something like that happen as long as she was around!

"Granny, what do you think?" Liu Qingyan looked at Granny Feng pleadingly.

"This...it's already so late now. How about tomorrow?" Granny Feng seemed hesitant.

"Let's do it tonight. I have nothing to do anyway. I can also take this chance to visit Master Xun and ask when the Ancient Law Ocarina will be repaired," Liu Qingyan said seriously.

Granny Feng pondered for a moment, but she gave in when she saw Liu Qingyan's pleading face. "All right."

Immediately, the carriage changed direction and headed towards Lin Xun's residence.