

Prodigies 431

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Chapter 431: Bring up the Past

Anyone but him!

Although the empress' voice was gentle, it contained unquestionable authority.

Hua Xingzi, Lu Zhenyang and Sun Jianhong all looked bewildered. Although Lin Xun had obvious personality flaws, he was undoubtedly a remarkable figure of the younger generation.

Talents like him would have a brighter future if he was allowed to cultivate in the ancient Daoist sects in the Ancient Wasteland Domain.

If given proper training, he could become an authority figure and become above the world!

Why did the empress stop him from going?

"That boy has a special background," the empress gave a vague explanation.

Hua Xingzi and the others weren't satisfied with her answer.

"No matter how special his background is, if he joins my Mystery Yin Sword Sect, I can guarantee that he will have great accomplishments in his cultivation and won't be affected by anything!"

Sun Jianhong was unwaveringly determined. He felt sincere admiration for Lin Xun and couldn't wait for him to join his sect.

Although Hua Xingzi and Lu Zhenyang also admired Lin Xun's talent, they believed that Lin Xun's background had to be very unusual for the empress to refuse them in such a way.

The empress fell silent for a moment and said calmly, "Fellow Daoist Sun, you and I have known each other for decades. To be honest with you, if that boy joins your Mystery Yin Sword Sect, it will be harmful to both of you."

What?

Everyone was baffled. What does Lin Xun have that can indirectly affect the Mystery Yin Sword Sect?

Even Sun Jianhong's expression changed slightly. "This...why?"

He was reluctant to give up on the youth.

"Please make it clear to us so we can completely give up."

Hua Xingzi and Lu Zhenyang also spoke out.

The empress pondered for a moment and no longer tried to hide anything. "His parents and family died at the hands of Yun Qingbai more than ten years ago."

Yun Qingbai!

Like a thunderbolt, the name made the three turn ashen-faced and fell silent. Their hearts shook like mad.

“No wonder...”

After a long moment, Hua Xingzi sighed, “Although we don’t know the full story, it...it is indeed a troublesome issue if Yun Qingbai is involved.”

His voice wavered, but in the end, his voice became firm like he understood.

“Yun Qingbai of the Omega Sword Sect has been known as invincible ever since he embarked on the cultivation path. He is like a legend and stands proudly at the pinnacle of the sky. It’s really unfortunate that the boy’s background is connected with him!” Lu Zhenyang also sighed.

Hua Xingzi and Lu Zhenyang both gave up on the thought of recruiting Lin Xun. All because of Yun Qingbai!

“Fellow Daoist Sun...”

As soon as the empress said that aloud, Sun Jianhong sighed bitterly, “Ahh, I have to give up!”

“Everyone, don’t be disappointed. There are still many other genius talents in the younger generations who have come to my birthday banquet. You can observe them closely. If there’s any whom you see potential in, you can take them with you. After all, it is a rare opportunity for them all,” the empress said gently.

Although Hua Xingzi and the others were reluctant to give up on Lin Xun, they knew that they had no other choice.

They cleared their minds, composed themselves, and redirected their attention to the fierce battles taking place in the arena.

Then, the empress got up and left.

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Suddenly, Lin Xun, who was immersed in his cultivation, felt a tremendous pressure enveloping him. He abruptly lifted his head and looked at the entrance of the hall.

A woman in plain clothes and a tall bun walked in.

Gray hair clustered around the woman’s temples, but she had a transcendental elegance.

Her eyes were gentle, clear, and pure. Her face was bright and full of wisdom, and her demeanor was indescribably graceful.

She was like a piece of jade that had retained its gentle sheen despite experiencing the great changes of the world. Anyone who met her would be compelled to feel awe.

As she walked forward, her every movement resembled a phoenix patrolling the ninth heaven. It made people feel indescribable oppression and fear.

“Lin Xun of Mind Cleansing Peak pays respect to Your Majesty.”

Lin Xun immediately rose to his feet and bowed respectfully. There was no doubt that the woman exuding elegance and authority was the empress!

"We are both cultivators so you don't need to follow the worldly rules," the empress said gently as she sat down at the main seat.

Lin Xun nodded and sat down with a solemn expression. He felt a terrifying pressure enveloping him, so he didn't dare to be disrespectful.

As the saying goes, keeping the emperor company is like living with a tiger.

Lin Xun finally understood the meaning of the phrase.

Terrifying! Too terrifying!

Lin Xun didn't even dare to speculate how frightening the empress's cultivation was.

There's no doubt that she can kill me or control my life and death with one thought!

"I had lost hope of seeing the Sword of Apocalypse restored, but you surprised me," said the empress softly.

It was as though she was chatting with a friend.

However, her friendliness only made Lin Xun more terrified. His entire body tensed up.

It was a cultivator's instinctive reaction to someone stronger.

Lin Xun inhaled deeply and said respectfully. "Your Majesty, you are overpraising me."

"It isn't fake praise, but I know that you are the only one in the world who can repair the Sword of Apocalypse," stated the empress.

Lin Xun was stunned. She thinks too highly of me.

As though she was able to read his mind, the empress sighed softly, "It seems like Lu Boya hadn't told you anything."

The familiar name set off an explosion of emotions in Lin Xun's heart. Mister Lu!

The empress mentioned Mister Lu!

The empress' clear eyes glazed over as she reminisced. "It was on a snowy night one hundred and seventy-three years ago. There were only three days left until my wedding to the emperor. The emperor said he wanted to give me an unparalleled rune armament as a gift."

"That was how I came to receive the Sword of Apocalypse."

"Later, I learned that the emperor had paid a huge price to exchange the Sword of Apocalypse from Lu Boya."

"The Sword of Apocalypse is too mysterious. It has helped me resolve many calamities, and it has become an inseparable part of my life. So I've always been curious what sort of person Lu Boya is."

Lin Xun's heart violently churned. It turns out that Mister Lu made the Sword of Apocalypse...

What a surprise!

"Unfortunately, Lu Boya is a very mysterious character. His origins are unfathomable, and even the emperor is very secretive about him."

The empress suddenly raised her eyes to look at Lin Xun.

"How is he now?"

Lin Xun froze. The scenes from the day he escaped from the mine prison flooded his mind. The giant purple hand that blanketed the sky, the complicated expression on Mister Lu's face when he sent him away—the anxiousness, irritability, anger, helplessness and bitterness.

"Mister Lu...he isn't around anymore."

Lin Xun's voice was low. He had always refused to accept the cruel truth. But deep down, he knew that there was only a very slim chance of Mister Lu being alive.

The empress looked surprised. Then, looking at Lin Xun's upset face, she sighed, "What a pity."

Lin Xun took a deep breath and asked aloud, "Your Majesty, I wonder why you summoned me?"

He didn't want to continue on the topic anymore.

His question seemed disrespectful, but the empress didn't seem to mind.

She thought for a moment and shook her head. "I just wanted to ask you about Lu Boya."

Lin Xun narrowed his eyes as he had a feeling that the empress was hiding something.

But he couldn't ask about it because even if he did, she wouldn't say much.

"You have helped me repair the Sword of Apocalypse and should be rewarded. However, your performance in the martial arts arena just now was too outrageous. If I don't punish you, the world will look down on the imperial family and question our authority."

The emperor suddenly mentioned the incidents in the arena.

Lin Xun inwardly sighed. Then, it was unknown where he summoned the courage from, but he said aloud, "I didn't do anything wrong."

His response startled the empress. She didn't expect a kid to dare challenge her. Immediately after that, she said expressionlessly, "You were wrong to not look at the situation on the whole, and your bad manners and inappropriate behaviors were all wrong. If you don't admit it, it only proves that you are too naive and do not know the rules of the world."

Although her voice was still gentle, it was chilling and full of majesty.

Lin Xun kept silent, unable to see through her emotions.

However, the empress sharply sensed that Lin Xun was unwilling to submit. She had met many fearless youngsters, but she had never seen someone as stubborn as him. After all, he had dared to argue with her..

“Go.”

The empress waved her hand.

Lin Xun hurriedly got up and took his leave.

He felt that if he stayed any longer, the invisible oppressive pressure he felt from the empress would make him completely lose himself.

However, just as he reached the door of the hall, he suddenly remembered something and said aloud, “Your Majesty, I wonder if my reward...”

“You have challenged the authority of the imperial family. If you accept the punishment, I can give you your reward. Are you sure you want it?”

Her face was devoid of emotion, and her voice was no longer gentle like before.

Lin Xun quickly shook his head and turned around.

As the empress watched Lin Xun leave, the corners of her lips quirked in an indescribable smile. It was the first time she had met such a brazen and daring young man like Lin Xun.

Who in the Forbidden City has ever asked me for a reward?

This kid is the first to do so.

The empress suddenly wrinkled her brows. That kid is so showy. Does he not know the truth about the bloody tragedy more than ten years ago?

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Chapter 432: Crisis strikes

The magnificent and grand palace buildings stood tall like immortal warriors.

Lin Xun returned alone along the same path.

His meeting with the empress resulted in neither a punishment nor a reward. Surprisingly, however, Mister Lu’s name had been mentioned. He had learned that Mister Lu wasn’t only a reclusive rune master as he had previously thought.

On the contrary, the emperor had paid a huge price to Mister Lu for him to create a rune armament: the Sword of Apocalypse for the Empress!

“Mister Lu can’t be an ordinary person. Even Her Majesty doesn’t know about Mister Lu’s origin. Why did he...why did he live in the mine prison?”

Lin Xun pondered as he navigated the palace paths.

“Kid, wait!”

A voice rang behind him, snapping Lin Xun out of his deep thoughts.

He turned his head around and saw a chubby middle-aged man in a luxurious robe trying to catch up to him.

“Elder, why are you here?”

To Lin Xun’s surprise, the middle-aged man was Zhao Tailai, the owner of the Sky Martial Arena.

Zhao Tailai was present when Lin Xun dueled Hua Wuyou and when the Ancient Plum Blossom Sword appeared to stop the conflict between Hua Qinglin and Third Old Zhu.

Moreover, Lin Xun suspected that Zhao Tailai was connected to the ‘influential figure’ of the imperial palace. Unfortunately, he had never received a definite answer.

“Nonsense, I obviously am waiting for you kid!” Zhao Tailai snapped.

“Waiting for me?” Lin Xun became even more puzzled.

Zhao Tailai swept his eyes over Lin Xun and said, “Kid, come with me.”

As he was speaking, he led the way. They took several turns and walked for a long time before they came to a secluded garden. “I came on behalf of someone. There is something I have to tell you.”

Lin Xun narrowed his eyes. “Is it the influential figure who used the Ancient Plum Blossom Sword to help me?”

Zhao Tailai waved his hand dismissively. “You don’t need to guess. I can’t tell you who it is. You just need to know that you only have five years left at most.”

“What?”

“What? Don’t you understand your current situation?”

Zhao Tailai frowned. “You know who caused the bloody tragedy on Mind Cleansing Peak over ten years ago, right?”

Lin Xun took a deep breath, and his dark eyes flashed a cold murderous glint before he said, “Yun Qingbai?”

Zhao Tailai assumed a solemn expression. “Since you know about him, you should know what will happen if he knows that you are still alive.”

Lin Xun fell silent.

He had repeatedly thought about that question in the past. Otherwise, he wouldn’t have cultivated so desperately and tried to strengthen Mind Cleansing Peak as much as possible in the past year.

He wanted to prevent the tragedy that had occurred more than a decade ago from happening again!

“Yun Qingbai is very powerful. At least, if he were to return to the Ziyao Empire, no one could stop him. Not even the Emperor. Not even the Queen of the Black Glory Sacred Hall. Not even the elder of the

stargazing platform. You just need to know that you won't stand a chance against Yun Qingbai with your current strength."

Zhao Tailai spoke rapidly, but gravely. Lin Xun felt an indescribable suffocating feeling in his heart.

"Of course—"

Zhao Tailai quickly changed his tone, "You have performed very well so far. At least, there are very few people who haven't heard of your name in the Forbidden City. But that's still not enough."

Lin Xun's heart pounded and he patiently listened.

"Didn't I tell you to do what you want and create all the disturbance you want? The greater the noise, the better, especially in Qinglu Academy. It's even better if you cause so much disturbance that the principal takes notice of you. It will only be beneficial to your situation."

Zhao Tailai was only passing along a message. Given his identity and status, he wouldn't dare to so blatantly encourage Lin Xun to stir up trouble in Qinglu Academy.

Then, the message had to be from the 'influential figure' from the imperial palace.

Lin Xun couldn't help but feel puzzled. He had originally thought that the 'influential figure' was the empress.

Now, it didn't seem so!

The empress' attitude toward him wasn't particularly bad, but it also wasn't good either. She wouldn't send Zhao Tailai to pass on such a message.

Who was the 'influential figure?'

"I've already caused such a huge scene just now. I forced the Marquis of Rising Sky to kneel and angered the imperial family. If I continue to do so, I'll become hated by everyone."

Lin Xun smiled wryly.

"Haha, kid are you scared?" Zhao Tailai said disdainfully.

"Elder, can you tell me what benefits will there be to me if I continue to stir up trouble?"

Lin Xun seized the opportunity to ask a question.

"I can only tell you that the empire will not ignore real talents. You must have the strength worthy of the empire's attention. The more outstanding you are, the more the empire will value you. When a calamity descends upon you, the empire will provide a path for you!"

Zhao Tailai's words were simple and direct, and even a fool could understand the meaning.

"Then what should I do?" Lin Xun asked.

"That's something for you to figure out."

After Zhao Tai finished speaking, he exhaled a long breath, as though he had completed an important mission.

“Then...”

Before Lin Xun finished his sentence, Zhao Tailai interrupted, “Let’s make it clear first. I can’t help you either. Everything depends on yourself.”

Lin Xun was at a loss for words. He could only inwardly complain that the chubby man was too slippery.

Lin Xun drew a deep breath and asked, “Fine. Then, Elder, you should at least tell me what you meant by at most five years?”

“Don’t you understand? You won’t need to worry about Yun Qingbai coming back in the next five years. In other words, there will be only five years left for you to cause trouble.”

Zhao Tailai clapped Lin Xun on the shoulder “Boy, make good use of it. If you can demonstrate earth-shaking strength within five years, I believe your situation will change.”

After saying that, he turned around and left without any hesitation, vanishing like a flash of lightning.

It was as though he was worried about getting into trouble if he said another word to Lin Xun.

“Five years...” Lin Xun stood still, contemplating.

After a long moment, he raised his head and stared at the sky. His handsome face bore a look of unwavering determination.

Five years!

It seems like a long time, but it’s also very short.

However, Lin Xun understood that some things should be faced sooner or later, so instead of dragging it out, it was better to deal with it directly!

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When Lin Xun left the imperial palace and returned to Mind Cleansing Peak, it was already deep into the night.

He didn’t know how many marvelous battles had happened in the martial arts arena.

He didn’t know what other storm had occurred during the empress' birthday banquet.

He only knew that he had little time left.

“Uncle Zhong, can you help me ask Qinglu Academy for leave? Tell them I need to go into closed-door cultivation for a period.”

Lin Xun issued some orders to Lin Zhong the moment he returned to Mind Cleansing Peak.

The entire Mind Cleansing Peak showed an extremely enthusiastic response to his return, as did Lin Zhong.

Lin Xun's performance was a surprise to everyone. As soon as he returned and handled some matters, he urgently headed into the training room on the third floor of the Mind Cleansing Hall and went into closed-door cultivation.

Everyone was perplexed.

Spirit Vulture, Xiaoke, and Lin Zhong were keenly aware that something huge must have happened to Lin Xun!

He had never looked so abnormal regardless of what difficult problems he had faced in the past.

What happened?

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On the same night, the news about the empress' birthday banquet spread throughout the Forbidden City like wildfire and caused a sensation!

"Lin Xun received a reward from the empress with just a jade hairpin! He's so damn lucky!"

"Yes, he's also the only one able to receive a reward from the empress. I'm so jealous."

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"What? Chi Cangfeng was defeated? Isn't Lin Xun a rune grandmaster? Why does he have such strong combat power?"

"Not just Chi Cangfeng, even the Marquis of Rising Sky was defeated by him! Also, he was forced to kneel down and apologize. It caused a stir. Even some princes of the imperial family couldn't stop Lin Xun!"

"Damn it! Why is Lin Xun so fierce?"

"Fierce? I think he has a death wish! Although he has stolen the limelight, he has angered the imperial family!"

"No matter what you say, Lin Xun has still forced the domineering and fierce Marquis of Rising Sky to kneel and apologize. How many people in the younger generation can be compared to him?"

"Indeed."

Lin Xun's performance at the empress' birthday banquet had surprised many people. Some praised his performance, and some gloated on his misfortunes.

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"The Heaven Pride Song was inspired by Lin Xun? Heavens, that's so unfair!"

"Could...could Miss Qingyan have fallen in love with Lin Xun? If that's the case, my heart will shatter."

Some people discussed the response toward Liu Qingyan's Heaven Pride Song, and inevitably, Lin Xun was mentioned again.

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That night, Lin Xun's name rang in every corner, every sect, and every area in the Forbidden City.

Lin Xun could be said to be the most eye-catching figure at the empress' Birthday banquet!

He received a reward from the empress for his jade hairpin.

The renowned art cultivator Liu Qingyan had composed a masterpiece song called Heaven Pride Song inspired by Lin Xun.

On the martial arts arena, where heaven prides gathered, the young genius Chi Cangfeng, who possessed the Golden Sea Violet Lotus bloodline, grudgingly accepted defeat against Lin Xun, and the domineering Marquis of Rising Sky was forced to kneel down and apologize.

Each incident quaked the Forbidden City and shook the minds of every cultivator like a clap of thunder!

They were incidents that no one expected to occur at the empress' birthday banquet.

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Chapter 433: Hiding in a Small Building

Lin Xun was once again in the limelight. He became the most talked-about figure in the Forbidden City overnight.

Even ordinary people in other parts of the world knew that the master of Mind Cleansing Peak in the Forbidden City was a remarkable young genius blessed by the heavens.

However, those stirring rumors took a turn on the second day...

"What? Lin Xun wasn't chosen?"

"I know! He was so brazen and so disrespectful and even forced the Marquis of Rising Sky to kneel. It's understandable that Her Majesty didn't give him that opportunity."

"That's his punishment! Although he's powerful, he is too arrogant."

"It's unfortunate."

"Haha, I think the punishment has only just begun. He's so arrogant, and he has offended so many important people. He will no doubt suffer endlessly in the future."

Similar discussions rapidly swept every area of the Forbidden City.

It all started because of some rumors.

Rumor had it that, after a series of marvelous duels at the empress' birthday banquet, Bai Lingxi, Song Yi, and Yuchi Ze caught the attention of three extraordinary masters with their outstanding performance!

At the end of the birthday banquet, the three were taken away from the Ziyao Empire to train in a mysterious sacred cultivation land!

It was a once-in-a-lifetime supreme opportunity!

The vast majority of cultivators in the Forbidden City were unaware that the so-called sacred cultivation land was the Ancient Wasteland Domain.

They also didn't know that the three extraordinary masters who took away Bai Lingdu and the others were from three different ancient Daoist sects of the Ancient Wasteland Domain.

However, that didn't affect the attention the rumor received!

On the contrary, the mystery of the matter made them feel that Bai Lingxi and the others had leapt to the dragon gate and reached the sky in one step!

Everyone also realized that Lin Xun had missed out on such a supreme opportunity despite his dazzling performance at the empress' birthday banquet!

The entire Forbidden City buzzed like never and the rumors stirred up heated discussions.

Many people believed that Lin Xun had missed out on the opportunity due to his arrogance and disrespectful attitude. He had not only angered the imperial family but displeased the empress.

Otherwise, given his abilities and the strength that he had shown by defeating Chi Cangfeng and the Marquis of Rising Sky, how would the extraordinary masters not choose him?

He brought it upon himself!

Many cultivators shared the same view.

Lin Xun is so crazy. From what I remember, since he came to the Forbidden City, he violently beaten up the descendants of the Song and Hua Clans, two high clans, and then he almost killed Hua Wuyou.

This isn't all. During the rune grandmaster verification assessment, Chu Haidong, a genius talent of a rune master family, almost fainted from anger because of him and received the title 'stupid idiot.'

Furthermore, he didn't stop when he entered Qinglu Academy. When Chu Shanhe, the deputy head of the Rune Department, learned that the boy had repaired the Sword of Apocalypse, he stormed home in fury.

Then, at the empress' birthday banquet, he forced the Marquis of Rising Sky to kneel and displeased the empress and the imperial family.

The series of things that Lin Xun had done became more and more daring.

Who wouldn't be glad to hear that he was finally suppressed and lost out on the supreme opportunity to leap to the sky?

"From now on, it likely won't be easy for Lin Xun."

Many people were aware that it was only the start of the oppression that Lin Xun would receive.

"I heard that Lin Xun asked for leave from the Qinglu Academy and returned to Mind Cleansing Peak to train after he left the palace yesterday. It's obvious that he realizes that his situation isn't good and came to the decision to avoid the limelight for a while."

Before long, the news about Lin Xun's return to Mind Cleansing Peak spread out. It confirmed their speculation that the youth no longer dared to act wildly as he did before because of the oppression.

"The wind can't beat the storm. Lin Xun has risen fast, but he is oppressed even faster. This is all because he's too crazy."

Many people had the same view.

As the saying went, the higher the jump, the worse it was when you fell!

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Of course, those who truly understood the situation knew that although Lin Xun might continue to face all sorts of trouble, not many would dare to provoke him anymore!

The fact that Lin Xun had dared to offend so many powerful clans and make a mess of the empress' birthday banquet and was still alive and well proved that he wasn't easy to oppress!

Whoever took advantage of the opportunity to trample on Lin Xun was asking for death. Even the great clans that he had displeased couldn't do anything to him. Ordinary people would be seeking death to anger him!

Although he was arrogant and wild, he had no doubt built a monstrous reputation for himself, and no ordinary forces would dare to provoke him.

They first had to consider whether they could withstand revenge from a young fearless genius such as Lin Xun before they tried to trample on him!

Simply speaking, the huge disturbance that Lin Xun had caused at the birthday banquet was like a double-edged sword. It brought both benefits and problems. But, imperceptibly, Lin Xun's name had penetrated the hearts of many cultivators in the Forbidden City.

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Spirit Vulture, Xiaoke, and Lin Zhong understood why Lin Xun had suddenly chose to go into closed-door cultivation after attending the birthday banquet when they heard the news.

However, they didn't believe that was the root cause of his reason to go into closed-door cultivation.

"Lin Xun's sudden training has to be related to the empress' summoning rather than due to him being oppressed," analyzed Spirit Vulture.

"He may have sensed some unpredictable danger," said Xiaoke.

"The most annoying thing is that a student in the Qinglu Academy called Zuo Yujing made an outrageous remark. He said that Young Master deserves to be killed for challenging the authority of the imperial family, and he said that he would make Young Master suffer the consequences if he had a chance to duel against him."

Lin Zhong said angrily, "Zuo Yujing wants to take advantage of the situation to stomp on Young Master to increase his prestige."

“The Zuo Clan?” asked Spirit Vulture thoughtfully.

“Correct. I heard that he is one of the top figures in the Rune Department of the Qinglu Academy. He is ranked third on the Spirit Sea Gold Rankings,” explained Lin Zhong.

“His remark caused a sensation in the Qinglu Academy, and it damaged the Young Master’s reputation.”

“The Zuo Family and the Qin Family were the two main culprits who took the Lin Family’s wealth and properties more than ten years ago. And now, the West Creek, Cloud Weight and Flying Peak Lin Clans are working with the Zuo and Qin Clans in hopes of regaining control of Mind Cleansing Peak and turning their situation around.”

Spirit Vulture said calmly, “Under such circumstances, it isn’t surprising that Zuo Yujing dared to make such a remark.”

“But...” Lin Zhong sighed. “Young Master is in closed-door cultivation, and we don’t know when he will make a breakthrough. Should we just sit and do nothing?”

“Yes, we won’t do anything.”

Spirit Vulture smiled slightly. “We can do whatever we need to do. No matter how noisy the outside world is, at least no one can bother us on Mind Cleansing Peak.”

As Spirit Vulture was speaking, he suddenly frowned. “But there is one troublesome thing.”

“What?” asked Lin Zhong.

“There are many enemies who want to target Mind Cleansing Peak. They may not be able to do anything to us, but they can attack the North Light Lin Clan.”

“Lin Zhong, I have a suggestion. I hope you can pay the North Light Lin Clan a visit and inform them of the current situation. If possible, tell them to move their clan to Mind Cleansing Peak.”

Lin Zhong assumed a solemn expression. “Mister Spirit Vulture, don’t worry. Leave this matter to me.”

“As for the others...”

Spirit Vulture thought for a moment and said, “We can only make arrangements when Lin Xun returns.”

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While the outside world was in an uproar, Lin Xun had already entered the Omega Secret Realm.

It was indeed true that Lin Xun didn’t go into closed-door cultivation to improve his cultivation. After all, he had already broken through to the advanced Spirit Sea Stage, so it wouldn’t be very beneficial to go into closed-door cultivation again.

However, it was different with the Omega Secret Realm.

Lin Xun had already been qualified to enter the Omega Secret Realm to challenge the fourth level of the Great Azure Cloud Path as he had reached the Spirit Sea Stage a while ago.

However, he was previously troubled by all kinds of trivial things. It was only now that he was determined to challenge the Omega Secret Realm.

Compared with the crisis of the five year limit, other things weren't as important to Lin Xun. His priority was to become strong as quickly as possible!

The Omega Secret Realm was a great opportunity for Lin Xun to transform his strength!

As before, the Omega Secret Realm was a vast expanse of space with only a straight azure cloud path stretching across the void and the Omega Door standing at the end of the path.

As Lin Xun glanced around, he couldn't help but feel the outside world was changing. Even he was constantly improving and only the Omega Secret Realm was ever so quiet and empty, and without any traces of time.

A familiar cryptic wave of energy swept over Lin Xun before a cold and emotionless voice resounded—

“Dao Seeker, the fourth level of the Great Azure Cloud Path is called Conquering Domain. You have only one chance to pass. The longer you remain inside, the greater your reward. Do you want to challenge the level now?”

Lin Xun was taken aback. The condition for passing the level was different from the previous levels, so he couldn't help but ask, “What will happen if I fail?”

Immediately, he realized that the other party might not answer his puzzlement. Otherwise, he would have received answers to the many questions he had when he challenged the first level.

To Lin Xun's surprise, he got an answer!

“The level can't be failed.”

That cold and empty voice was still devoid of emotion.

But the unexpected change surprised him. In the many times he had entered the Omega Secret Realm before, it was the first time the mysterious voice had answered his question, which indicated that the other party had real consciousness!

Who was the other party?

Was it a wisp of consciousness left by the owner of the Omega Secret Realm?

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Chapter 434: Ancient Spirit World

“Dao Seeker, are you going to challenge the level?”

While Lin Xun was in shock, the ice-cold voice rang again.

“Elder, is there a time limit for this level?” asked Lin Xun after taking a deep breath.

No one answered.

Lin Xun looked a little disappointed. He was certain that the other party possessed intelligence and consciousness, but for some reason, it was unwilling to converse with him.

Shaking his head, Lin Xun said calmly. "I will take the challenge."

Whoosh—

A strange wave of energy suddenly rippled at his feet, engulfing his body and pulling him into a place of nothingness.

Lin Xun felt everything blur in front of him like he was traveling through time and space and even his consciousness was becoming hazy.

Boom!

An unknown amount of time had passed, but he felt his body shake before his feet touched the ground and his consciousness became clear.

He glanced around and saw vast mountains and an infinite sky. It was a primitive wilderness-like scene.

A clear cry rang in the sky before a tremendous shadow was cast over Lin Xun's body.

Startled, he hurriedly looked up, and his body went stiff.

A tremendous beast that was a thousand feet long and with a body like a floating continent was whizzing across the boundless sky.

It looked like a giant fish, but a pair of large brown-blue wings extended out of its back and its eyes reflected the sky like lakes!

As it opened its mouth and roared, it looked like it could devour the sun and moon and produce a noise that could shake the sky, pierce the ears, and terrify one's soul.

That...

Lin Xun felt a chill run down his spine. The beast is so tremendous and so terrifying. Its body obscures the sky, and it bears a resemblance to the legendary ancient beast Kunpeng!

In contrast, I am like a tiny ant, as insignificant as a speck of dust!

Fortunately, the fierce beast soared beyond the ninth heaven and vanished into the vast void.

Lin Xun breathed a sigh of relief, but he still felt uneasy. Where the hell am I?

Was the fierce beast that looks like a giant fish with huge wings just now the legendary Kunpeng?

"You have entered the Ancient Spirit World. The challenge starts!"

An ice-cold voice resounded in his mind-sea. "Dao Seeker, during the challenge, if you're in critical danger, crush the jade plate and you can return to the real world."

"Remember, in the Ancient Spirit World, if you are killed you will die in real life!"

Before the voice faded, a jade plate suddenly emerged in Lin Xun's palm. The jade plate was pure white and marked with peculiar rune patterns.

Lin Xun's eyes narrowed. He seemed to have guessed something as he brought out the Violet Soul Blade from the Little Xumi Ring.

As he glanced around, he found that he was situated in the depths of an ancient mountain covered with towering trees.

A damp earthy smell lingered in the air, mingled with the aroma of wild plants and flowers.

He lifted his head and saw dense clouds rolling across the sky, the scorching sun hanging high, and wisps of aeth qi spiraling between heaven and earth!

Such a discovery surprised him again. In the Ziyao Empire, aeth qi was only found in aeth veins.

However, aeth qi was everywhere in the Ancient Spirit World!

"Could it be...that I have come to another world?"

Lin Xun suddenly remembered that the cold voice mentioned the place was called the Ancient Spirit World. His speculation was very likely to be true!

Lin Xun stood there, stunned. He had never imagined that the fourth level of the Great Azure Cloud Conquering Domain wasn't an illusion but instead a real world.

It was such a surprise!

After a long moment, he drew a deep breath and carefully put away the mysterious jade plate.

It was his only hope of leaving the place alive!

"It's impossible to fail this level, but if I die here, I will die in real life."

"However, according to the mysterious voice, many opportunities are hidden here. I wonder how much I can grasp..."

Lin Xun tried his best to maintain a calm state of mind as he quickly formulated a plan.

Boom!

At that moment, a dark shadow darted out from the bushes. Its giant sharp claws glinted with silvery light before it slashed towards Lin Xun.

Danger struck!

Instinctively, Lin Xun brought his blade up, and the violet blade released a fierce beam of light.

Bang!

An ear-splitting clang rang in his ear. Lin Xun felt his right arm go numb before he stumbled back three steps.

His expression suddenly changed. What strong power!

It was also at that moment when Lin Xun saw his attacker's face. It was a green-spotted leopard. Its fur was a vibrant green as the grass, its eyes were blood-red, and its body exuded a bloodthirsty aura.

Lin Xun had seen a green-spotted leopard before, but it was the first time he had encountered one as fierce as the one before him.

It released a power similar to that of a Spirit Sea cultivator!

It was unbelievable!

Roar—

The green-spotted leopard unleashed a roar before it kicked its rear legs against the ground and soared into the air. Its body shone a silvery light before it charged toward Lin Xun again.

The void couldn't bear the terror of the green-spotted leopard and set off a blast of wind that pulverized everything within a radius of several dozen meters.

The leopard was terrifying even when it was merely pouncing forward!

How would Lin Xun dare to let his guard down? He swung his blade and fought with all his strength.

Rumble—

Divine light suffused the area, and roars echoed endlessly. The two were locked in a fierce battle. Cobweb-like cracks split the nearby ground and whirled up dust and smoke.

A moment later.

Following a clear and resounding blade cry, the Violet Soul Blade drew across the air in a mysterious arc and slashed the throat of the green-spotted leopard.

Immediately, scarlet-red blood jetted out, dyeing the void red. The green-spotted leopard's ten-foot-long body collapsed to the ground with a thud.

Immediately, Lin Xun sheathed his blade and stepped forward toward the leopard corpse.

Although the fierce beast had died, Lin Xun didn't lower his guard since it was very abnormal that a green-spotted leopard possessed a power comparable to the advanced Spirit Sea Stage!

Lin Xun wouldn't believe it if he hadn't seen it with his own eyes.

Pu!

Without hesitation, Lin Xun unsheathed his blade and started to dissect the leopard corpse. He was curious to find out how such a beast possessed such terrifying power.

Before long, Lin Xun made a discovery.

A sparkling bead in the leopard's heart caught his eyes. It was round, bright, and beautiful like a pearl. Wisps of incredibly concentrated aeth power circulated the surface of the bead.

Monster Core!

Lin Xun drew a deep breath. As I thought, the green-spotted leopard has already developed spiritual intelligence and knows how to cultivate. It shouldn't be called a beast but instead a monster beast!

Many rumors regarding monster beasts had circulated in the Ziyao Empire. They were said to exist in some dangerous places, but they were extremely rare and almost extinct.

Lin Xun had never expected to encounter a monster beast the moment he arrived in the Ancient Spirit World, let alone one with strength comparable to an advanced Spirit Sea cultivator!

It was a danger-ridden world.

Soon, a thought struck Lin Xun's mind. His eyes blazed with excitement, and he carefully stored away the green-spotted leopard's monster core.

It was a rare treasure that could be refined into a first-class elixir or directly consumed for significant improvements to one's cultivation base!

It was considered an invaluable treasure in the Ziyao Empire.

Suddenly, some rustling in a distant place caught Lin Xun's attention. It was as though a fierce creature was heading his way.

Lin Xun's eyes narrowed. He had no time to speculate and just darted into the ancient forest.

As soon as he disappeared, a golden figure rushed across the ground like a tidal wave.

It was an army of ants!

Unlike usual, each one was around half a foot long and seemed to be cast from gold. Their limbs resembled sharp blades as they moved.

Where the army of golden ants passed, the trees collapsed, the grass crumbled, and the ground became scorched.

They caused complete destruction.

Soon, they came to the green-spotted leopard's corpse and started to devour it. Within seconds, the corpse had vanished without a trace.

Lin Xun shuddered from the treetop of a giant tree. Golden ants!

It was a monster beast species that had long disappeared from the Ziyao Empire!

They traveled in groups and could devour metals, crystals, and rocks. Once fully grown, they could possess power capable of slaughtering Heaven Ascension cultivators.

It wasn't until the golden ants disappeared that Lin Xun retracted his gaze. He leaned against the tree, falling into contemplation.

The Ancient Spirit World is no doubt extremely dangerous and inhabited by unimaginably terrifying monster beasts. Average cultivators wouldn't dare to come here because of the unpredictable dangers.

However, at the same time, many opportunities are concealed in this world.

For example, the green-spotted leopard monster core was an astonishing harvest for Lin Xun.

"It seems like I have to be extremely careful if I want to survive here..."

Lin Xun exhaled a breath of turbid air.

He indeed felt an unprecedented sense of danger that he couldn't shake away.

However, it only made him excited for what was ahead. He believed that there were more opportunities!

Quickly, Lin Xun chose a direction and started walking forward.

He had to familiarize himself with the environment as much as possible. The sooner he adapted, the safer he would be.

However, in less than an hour, Lin Xun came to an abrupt stop and his face became overcast.

This doesn't feel right!

It's so quiet in this ancient forest like there is no life inside.

I haven't seen an insect, let alone a monster beast ever since I entered the forest.

The unusual situation made his heart tremble, and a chill ran down his back.

It was at that moment when whimpering and sobbing-like noises rang out from the dark and quiet forest.

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Chapter 435: Wood Charm Spirit

Woowoowoo~

The noise was horrifying. It sounded like a sobbing baby in the pitch-black silence of the forest.

Lin Xun's heart shuddered violently.

Before he could investigate, a gray blur swooped out of the darkness with a swoosh, moving at an inconceivable speed!

The gray silhouette suddenly revealed itself to be a little girl. She timidly stood there and softly asked, "Big Brother, are you lost? Why are you here alone?"

Lin Xun was terrified to find that the little girl looked strikingly similar to Xia Zhi. Her brows were perfectly drawn, and her little face was the pinnacle of beauty. It was beauty that could not exist in the mortal coil and made the surroundings appear dim in comparison.

The little girl softly asked, "Big Brother, why aren't you talking?"

Her voice was clear, and there was a peaceful expression on her little face. Even her mannerisms and voice were exactly the same as Xia Zhi's.

"I..."

Lin Xun was stunned.

“Don’t say anything, let me guess.”

A slight smile rose from the corners of the little girl’s mouth. It was a smile that would take anyone’s breath away.

She slowly stepped closer as she said, “It’s your first time coming to Mount Luohou, and you must have many questions, right?”

Lin Xun subconsciously nodded.

The little girl’s smile grew wider. “Big Brother, I can help you. As long as you listen to me, all of your questions will be answered.”

There was an unexplainable softness and illusory allure in her voice that made it impossible to resist.

Lin Xun looked hypnotized as if his mind was no longer his own.

Upon seeing this, the little girl quickened her footsteps. She stopped a step from Lin Xun, raised her little face, and softly said, “Big Brother, follow me. I will bring you to the answers you seek.”

As she spoke, she raised her little hand and reached toward Lin Xun’s wrist.

At this moment, a smile suddenly rose from the corners of Lin Xun’s mouth.

Bang!

He instantly moved and grabbed the little girl’s neck.

“Big Brother, what are you doing?”

The little girl was greatly alarmed. Gray light rose from her body and surged toward Lin Xun.

Faint blue divine light rose around Lin Xun, causing his aura to rise rapidly as the gray light was smashed apart and swallowed.

Smiling, Lin Xun asked, “What are you trying to do?”

The little girl’s face paled, realizing the situation was taking a turn for the worse. She displayed a pitiful look and said, “Big Brother, please let me off. I didn’t mean to do this. Please be merciful.”

“No can’t do.”

Lin Xun smiled and shook his head. “As far as I know, a wood charm spirit is a trickster that will never beg for forgiveness.”

“You...”

The little girl’s expression changed drastically as she released a piercing baby-like howl. The sound wave viciously thrust toward Lin Xun like a spinning drill.

Bzz!

Despite being on guard, Lin Xun felt a piercing pain in his ears as a strange, terrifying, and ice-cold power stabbed at his mind-sea spirit!

Charm spirit howl!

No matter how strong a person's cultivation was, they would be seriously injured in an instant if their spirit was not strong enough.

The little girl smiled strangely. She was certain that the young man had been hit by her attack. The thought of soon consuming a spirit filled with such abundant vital energy caused a sinister and smug look to surge in her eyes.

However, they soon widened in shock.

The young man grinned as he looked at her, his clear black eyes frighteningly composed. There was no indication of him sustaining any injury.

Lin Xun chuckled and said, "Trying to hurt my spirit? Your cultivation isn't strong enough. Do you have any other tricks? If not, let me send you on your way."

The little girl's expression changed drastically as she released another piercing howl.

This time, her appearance also changed. Her skin became pale green, her eyes became white, hollow, and vicious, and tiny sharp teeth sprung up in her mouth. It was an extremely terrifying appearance.

Lin Xun did not move. Stars swirled in his mind-sea, easily neutralizing the spirit attack.

"You..."

The monster shrieked, clearly realizing that it was fruitless as she struggled to escape.

Bang!

Lin Xun raised his hand and swung it downwards. Dreadful power spewed from his fingers as he firmly grabbed the monster's head and squeezed.

Rumble~~

Faint blue divine light blazed as it instantly engulfed the monster. Lin Xun did not relax his grip no matter how it shrieked and wailed.

Moments later, the wailing abruptly stopped. A gleaming green skull-shaped crystal was left in Lin Xun's hand.

Inside it, one could faintly see what seemed to be a frantically struggling spirit.

Lin Xun carefully turned it in his hand as admiration was revealed in his eyes.

A wood charm spirit!

It was a rare nature spirit that was deceitful and vicious by nature. It was adept at the art of transformation and possessed a secret art that could peer into a person's heart. It loved to feast on spirits, and any place it appeared would soon become devoid of life and be avoided by the wildlife.

This explained why not even a worm could be found in the old and silent forest.

It was because this was the territory of a wood charm spirit!

Lin Xun had not been certain until he saw it take on Xia Zhi's appearance and try to entice him.

Hence, he acted as if he had succumbed and swiftly captured it at the critical juncture!

"This is a great treasure to use in crafting a rune armament. During the spirit accumulation process, it can be used to bolster the success rate by roughly thirty percent!"

Lin Xun clicked his tongue in amazement.

He knew about wood charm spirits because he had seen one in the bestiary Mister Lu had shown him when he was younger.

There were four main types of spirit entities: earth spirits, charm spirits, sprites, and fairies. There were several subcategories in each branch.

The wood charm spirit belonged to the charm spirit category.

These spirit entities were excellent and invaluable materials for crafting rune armaments. However, they were also very difficult to catch.

This was because they were intelligent and cunning. They would avoid the strong, bully the weak, and immediately flee the moment they sensed danger.

If Lin Xun had not acted as if he had been charmed, it would have been impossible to catch the wood charm spirit.

He had no other option; these spirit entities were too quick, could easily hide in the forest, and were near impossible to track.

The wood charm spirit was also quite unlucky to have assumed Lin Xun was easy pickings due to his age and Spirit Sea cultivation.

It never expected that Lin Xun had already seen through everything and was unafraid of its charm spirit howl attack due to his strong spirit power and the Little Divine Meditation Art.

Even someone with a higher cultivation would have likely fallen to the wood charm spirit's ruse and end up with their spirits devoured.

"A green-spotted leopard's monster core and a sealed wood charm spirit crystal. What an unexpected haul given it's been less than four hours since I arrived in the Ancient Spirit World..."

Just as he was about to keep the crystal, the sound of rushing wind sounded far away.

A cultivator's aura!

With his powerful spirit sense, Lin Xun instantly detected cultivators approaching from afar.

There are others here as well?

Lin Xun's heart trembled in joy. This was great. He could learn about the Ancient Spirit World through them.

While Lin Xun was weighing his options, three figures appeared from the forest.

They were led by a young man wearing a yellow crown and dressed in a feather coat. He also wielded a golden spear and gave off an aura unique to the Spirit Sea stage.

He's no ordinary person!

Lin Xun instantly sensed a frightening power hidden in the young man's body. His powerful presence rivaled even the likes of the Marquis of Rising Sky.

The young man was followed by a girl wearing a purple dress and a gallant middle-aged man with sharp, eagle-like eyes.

They were clearly taken aback when they saw Lin Xun.

Upon seeing the object in Lin Xun's hand, the girl could not help but excitedly blurt out, "Senior Brother Wei Jun, isn't that a wood charm spirit crystal in his hand?"

The young man called Wei Jun acknowledged it as he quickly looked Lin Xun up and down. "Friend, I don't care who you are. We discovered the wood charm spirit first so kindly hand it over."

There was a compelling tone in his voice.

The joy in Lin Xun's heart instantly disappeared as he smiled and said, "It belongs to you because you discovered it? If I say I fancy the young lady beside you, are you going to hand her over?"

"Impudent!"

The girl in a purple dress angrily shouted, "Do you know who we are?"

Lin Xun could not help but roll his eyes. "Do you guys know who I am?"

"You..."

The girl ground her teeth.

Wei Jun waved his hand and said, "Junior Sister Ren, allow me to handle this."

Wei Jun indifferently gazed at Lin Xun and said, "Friend, I understand your unhappiness. How about this, I won't make things difficult for you. Leave the crystal behind and we shall leave this matter be. Take it as a chance to make some friends. What do you think?"

Although there was no coercion, his tone was commanding and arrogant as if it was Lin Xun's honor for him to have to say this.

"Sorry, I don't plan on making friends with you people. If there's nothing else, I shall take my leave."

Lin Xun smiled dazzlingly, waved goodbye, and turned around to leave.

"Think you can leave without leaving the crystal behind? In your dreams!"

The girl in purple was enraged by Lin Xun's rudeness. With a wave of her hand, red light rose like a cloud of fire and loomed over him.

The terrifying power instantly incinerated the nearby flora to ashes and even the air seemed to burn. It was horrifying.

Attacking to kill without warning!

This was true arrogance.

Lin Xun immediately stopped as his deep black eyes gleamed icily.

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Chapter 436: The Chase

Boom!

Lin Xun swung his hand backward without hesitation.

Faint blue light surged like an angry sea and instantly extinguished the fire cloud.

Without skipping a beat, the palm-force viciously swatted the girl in purple away.

Lin Xun had used his true power and had not held anything back.

The girl had gone too far by suddenly attacking with lethal force from behind. How could he possibly show mercy to such a person?

More importantly, Lin Xun had already sensed that the other party was hell-bent on obtaining the wood charm spirit crystal, and it was impossible for them to let him off!

A cry of surprise and alarm rang out.

Wei Jun immediately moved and caught the girl. Her pretty face had become pale, and there was blood frothing at her mouth. A single palm strike had gravely injured her!

This shocked and angered Wei Jun. He had not expected the young teenager to be so vicious.

"You've gone too far, young man!"

The gallant middle-aged man, who had not said a word from the start, loudly shouted as he charged at Lin Xun.

Swish~

Lin Xun's figure had already leapt into the air and darted away.

He did not fear Wei Jun or the girl wearing a purple dress. However, Lin Xun felt mortal danger coming from the middle-aged man.

It was why he chose to leave earlier.

Rumble!

A frightening pressure spread from the middle-aged man. A clear, red glow steamed around him, pulsing with dreadful power.

He seemed to turn into a god of fire who wielded flames that could burn the skies, giving off a presence that was terrifying to the extreme.

The nearby trees, vines, and grass were instantly burned to ashes as the ground turned charred and cracked.

All of this was solely caused by the pressure from the middle-aged man!

Heaven Ascension stage!

Fire Imago Power!

In the distance, the fleeing Lin Xun gasped. He did not need to look back to know that the gallant middle-aged man was a real Heaven Ascension expert!

It was no wonder that Wei Jun and the girl were so arrogant. They were accompanied by a Heaven Ascension expert!

Enraged, Wei Jun commanded, "Qian Huai, capture him and seize the wood charm spirit crystal!"

"Young Master, you don't need to worry. Leave it to this old servant!"

Boom!

Before his words could fade, the middle-aged man called Qian Huai had already transformed into a flash of terrifying fiery light as he disappeared into the distance.

Trees were burnt black in his wake as devastating flames raged around him. It was like a sea of fire galloping through the area.

Lin Xun's expression could not help but change slightly. It was not a good feeling to be chased by a Heaven Ascension expert.

Uuoo~

Mist-like light suddenly surged out around Lin Xun as a horned ice dragon phantasm appeared. It raised its head at the sky and howled.

Lin Xun's figure abruptly sped up, becoming fleeting like lightning. He was now more than twice as fast as before.

Horned ice dragon step!

It was the first level of the Tribulation Dragon Nine Transformations.

From a distance, it looked as if Lin Xun's figure was hidden within the icy mist, shuttling within it like a hornless ice dragon.

Eh?

From behind, Qian Huai's pupils shrank. Fast. What a strange movement art!

With his Heaven Ascension power, he would usually only need a few breaths to catch up to a Spirit Sea cultivator and capture them.

In comparison, if he didn't use his true power now, he might not even be able to catch up!

"Hmph!"

Qian Huai coldly snorted. His aura rapidly rose as he abruptly sped up like a bolt of fiery lightning.

He would become a laughing stock if he allowed a Spirit Sea youngster to escape from his hands.

In the short span of a few breaths, Qian Huai shortened the gap to ten thousand feet!

"Damnit, that Heaven Ascension expert is so fast!"

Lin Xun's heart jumped in alarm. He gritted his teeth and pushed the Hornless Ice Dragon Step to its limit as his figure accelerated through the air like a Hornless Ice Dragon.

Despite this, Qian Huai's figure was still gradually closing in from behind.

He's too fast!

There was an entire greater cultivation stage of difference between them. It was impossible to breach this huge gap no matter how amazing the Hornless Ice Dragon Step was.

"Little chump, if you stop now, I might decide to spare you. Otherwise, it's only a matter of time before I'll burn you to ashes!"

A confident smile rose from the corners of Qian Huai's lips. There was nowhere for his prey to escape, and he was not worried about any hiccups occurring.

"You can talk after you catch up."

Lin Xin gritted his teeth as his fighting spirit blazed. His entire body shone with a divine azure brilliance, a sign that he was pushing his cultivation to the limit.

"Hmph! Stubborn resistance. You're asking for death!"

Qian Huai icily snorted as his voice boomed like thunder. With a wave of his sleeve, a string of blinding fire shot forth.

Screeeee!

The fire string looked nothing special, but its speed was horrifyingly quick. It tore through the air in an instant and stabbed at Lin Xun's back.

However, Lin Xun suddenly tucked in his legs and rolled in the air, narrowly avoiding the fire string.

Bang!

The string of fire splashed onto the ground like mercury, creating countless fire flowers. In an instant, all the vegetation and rocks within a thousand feet radius were incinerated into nothingness!

Hiss!

Lin Xun gasped. The attack clearly contained fire imago power, giving it destructive capabilities that surpassed his imagination.

On Mind Cleansing Peak, Lin Xun had once asked Spirit Vulture and Lin Zhong about the Heaven Ascension stage. Lin Zhong said one thing that had left the deepest impression on Lin Xun.

In a Heaven Ascension expert's eyes, everything below them is grass they could step on as they pleased!

Although it sounded exaggerated, it properly described the terror of a Heaven Ascension expert.

Lin Xun had finally experienced this for himself today.

If not for the Hornless Ice Dragon Step's strange and miraculous powers, it would have been impossible for Lin Xun to survive till now!

"Oh? I'm surprised you managed to avoid my attack. Hehe. I'm interested to find out how long you can continue to do so!"

A murderous look flashed across Qian Huai's brows. He waved his sleeve, sending out strings of fire that swiftly shot through the air like ghosts.

For a time, fire seemed to rain from the heavens. It was magnificent, overwhelming, beautiful, and terrifying to the extreme.

This was the secret art that Qian Huai was terribly proud of—Omni Fire Rain!

At the perfect stage, it could summon a rain of fire that could evaporate lakes, boil the sea, and melt mountains. Its power was tyrannical without equal.

Lin Xun was immediately surrounded by strings of flowing fire that rapidly wove together into torrential rain.

"If even this doesn't kill him, then...eh?"

Qian Huai was already chuckling to himself when his pupils abruptly shrank and a confused expression appeared on his face.

Lin Xun's figure left behind countless afterimages as he flickered amidst the fire rain.

His figure became a mix between smoke and illusion, seemingly phasing in and out of reality as he avoided one fatal attack after another.

This...

Qian Huai's eyes flickered in thought. He quickly identified that Lin Xun was using some kind of mysterious top-tier movement art!

This movement art would be top-tier even in Qian Huai's sect!

If this kid knows such a secret art, could he have some kind of astonishing background?

This thought rose in Qian Huai's head as a surprised look appeared on his face.

Soon after, resolute killing intent surged in his eyes. He had already offended the other party, so what use was there in thinking such things?

I'll kill him first then think about it!

Rumble~

Qian Huai made a hand seal and more strings of fire shot forth like lightning. Although the attack seemed erratic, they overflowed with killing intent and were aimed at Lin Xun's vitals.

The pressure Lin Xun felt instantly multiplied!

Clang!

He could not afford to continue dodging. His figure stopped as he pulled out the Violet Soul Blade and ferociously swung it at an unavoidable fire string.

Lin Xun jerked as searing explosive power slammed into his body like a wave, causing his qi and blood to churn as his internal organs shifted.

Despite this, he succeeded in borrowing its momentum to extract himself from fire rain.

Without looking back, he frantically fled again.

Eh?

Qian Huai's expression finally changed for real. He never imagined that an advanced Spirit Sea youngster would be able to survive a direct attack from him.

What's more, there was no sign of the youngster sustaining any heavy injuries.

It was incredible.

"He must die!"

Killing intent flared in Qian Huai's heart. He was already certain that someone like Lin Xun was an outstanding heaven pride.

Moreover, the youth possessed an outrageous movement art and was very likely a core disciple of some powerful old sect!

If he was not killed discreetly, there would surely be endless troubles in the future!

Rumble~

Qian Huai cast aside all hesitation and rose into the air. His aura pulsed terrifyingly like a fire god descending as he began to pursue Lin Xun.

To Qian Huai's surprise, however, Lin Xun suddenly stopped running.

"Old man, you're like a ghost that refuses to leave!"

Lin Xun frostily said as he flung a Sky Suppressing Bead!

The black bead the size of a pigeon's egg quickly transformed into a big ball of lightning. Viscous lightning swirled and a thunderous boom sounded. Inside the ball, dazzling lightning arced and flickered.

Qian Huai coldly snorted and disdainfully said, "Futile struggling!"

With a thrust of his palm, berserk flames surged out like a burning cloud and grabbed at the lightning ball.

Boom!!

The lightning ball looked tiny and insignificant to Qian Huai. However, an earth-shaking explosion occurred upon contact!

In the blink of an eye, terrifying lightning scattered across the skies!

Unable to guard himself in time, Qian Huai was instantly engulfed by the explosion.

The Sky Suppressing Bead was a trump card that had been personally made by the azure turtle and only nine beads had been produced within a span of several thousand years. Its power could seriously injure a Heaven Ascension expert!

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Light rippled in the explosion as loud booms rang out like firing cannons. The light was too intense and blinding, making it impossible to see what was happening.

However, Qian Huai's angry and hate-filled roar soon rang out...

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Chapter 437: Mud Addict

Lightning rippled, creating a blinding brilliance as Qian Huai's angry and resentful roar echoed in the background.

The sight made Lin Xun's heart flutter with exhilaration.

In the Sky Martial Arena, the Heaven Ascension expert Hua Qiancheng had interfered just as Lin Xun was about to kill Hua Wuyou, nearly resulting in him being killed instead.

The Sky Suppressing Bead had fended off Hua Qiancheng back then!

Today, Lin Xun had merely re-enacted that scene. However, the effect was clearly much more significant due to Qian Huai's carelessness.

"You little mongrel, I'm going to kill you—!"

Qian Huai's figure suddenly charged out from the churning maelstrom. However, his appearance was completely different.

His clothes were in tatters, his skin was scorched black, his hair was frazzled, and half of his face was a bloody mess, making him look exceptionally frightening.

A mighty Heaven Ascension expert was a dignified and dazzling existence. It was a huge humiliation for someone like him to be forced into such a miserable state!

Qian Huai was nearly about to go mad with rage as he murderously charged at Lin Xun.

“Hand over your life!”

Qian Huai resembled a sinister demon god. He had become an incarnation of brutality whose only desire was to slaughter Lin Xun.

Unfortunately for him, the youth had fled again, turning it into another chase.

“Little mongrel, you can’t escape. I will not stop until even your bones are crushed to dust!”

Qian Huai’s eyes were red with rage, showing that he was genuinely angered.

He had been careless earlier and assumed that Lin Xun could not possibly possess anything that could injure him.

Who could have anticipated that the Sky Suppressing Bead would possess such terrifying power? Qian Huai was caught off guard, resulting in him sustaining severe injuries.

How could he not feel angry?

It was like being viciously slapped by an ant, which made him feel extremely shitty.

Qian Huai was undoubtedly exceedingly frightening in his enraged state. It only took a few moments for him to catch up to Lin Xun again.

Before he could attack, the youth stopped again and made a throwing motion.

Whoosh!

A black blur shot through the air.

Eh?

Qian Huai’s pupils shrank as his heart shuddered, instinctively recalling the earlier events. He immediately jerked his body to the side to avoid it.

It was at this same moment that he finally saw what the black blur was.

It wasn’t the Sky Suppressing Bead he was on guard against but...mud?

Bang~

The mud ball exploded mid-air, splattering dirt as if mocking him.

Veins bulged on Qian Huai’s forehead. His lips twitched violently as uncontrollable rage boiled in his heart.

That trash mongrel had actually dared to trick him!!

Qian Huai’s lungs nearly burst from anger as he released a bestial roar and charged at Lin Xun again like a raging fire.

“Little shitbag, you’re finished! You’re finished! If I don’t make you beg for death today, I’ll change my surname to yours!”

“Please don’t, I don’t want an unworthy descendent like you!”

Lin Xun’s loud laughter sounded from the distance.

Qian Huai’s expression turned increasingly ugly. He took a deep breath as he tried to restrain the erupting-volcano-like rage in his heart before gritting his teeth and giving chase once more.

He was already thinking about the cruel ways he would torture Lin Xun once he was captured.

When had a mighty Heaven Ascension expert ever suffered such humiliation at the hands of a trash Spirit Sea expert?

Never!

Qian Huai no longer cared if the youth had some kind of crazy background. The humiliation and anger Qian Huai felt could not be sated until he killed him.

“Die!”

Qian Huai soon caught up again. Fiery light pulsed from his body as his hands rapidly filled with dazzling light.

This was his killing move, and he was confident that it would turn Lin Xun to ashes, leaving not even bones behind!

“Old dog, prepare yourself!”

Lin Xun swung his hand backward without turning his head, sending out a black blur.

Again!

Does this little shitbag think I will be tricked again?

But what if...

What if it’s real this time?

Qian Huai suddenly became incredibly conflicted, making him feel frustrated and sullen.

However, there was no time to think. In his helplessness, he dodged to the side again.

He did not dare to take the risk. The earlier blow had already left him with substantial injuries, and he would certainly be incapacitated if he were to get hit again.

Bang!

A ball of mud exploded nearby, spreading dirt in the air...

“I...I’m going to slaughter you!”

Qian Huai nearly coughed blood out of anger. His face burned in embarrassment, and he felt humiliated like never before.

As he teetered on the edge of craziness, Qian Huai immediately gave chase again.

This time, he swore to himself that he would never ever be tricked again!

The first and second times might be excused by carelessness, but if he was tricked a third time, it would no longer be a matter of carelessness but shame!

Chase!

Chase!

Chase!

Qian Huai maintained absolute calmness, firmly suppressing all of his anger, sullenness, and shame.

To ensure a one-strike kill, he became cautious and started to accumulate power while he was still several tens of thousands of feet from Lin Xun.

When there were only ten thousand feet between them, Qian Huai finally made his move!

Clang!

He took out his weapon: a flaming sword with a silver snake-like handle.

The sword swung through the air, crossing ten thousand feet in an instant as it slashed.

The strike showed the numerous years Qian Huai had invested in mastering the sword. It was fast, precise, ruthless, and ferocious without equal.

However...

Lin Xun's figure flickered bizarrely and avoided the attack as if he knew it was coming. He then continued to flee.

Swish! Swish! Swish!

Qian Huai controlled the silver sword to repeatedly hack at Lin Xun, forcing him to begin dodging. This in turn slowed him down and put him in a precarious situation.

"Little shit, why aren't you running anymore? Eh? Hahaha, I've decided. When I catch you, I will first sever your tendons and skin you alive. Then, I will extract your spirit and slowly burn it with nine yin fire, making you wish you were dead!"

Qian Huai laughed loudly, releasing his resentment.

His attacks grew increasingly fierce as he laughed, making it increasingly difficult for Lin Xun to dodge.

All of a sudden, Lin Xun yelled, "Old shithead, eat this!"

Qian Huai immediately stopped laughing.

God damnit, not this again!

Soon after, he roared, "Bring it on. I'll see how long you can keep up your tricks!"

Swish~

The familiar black blur appeared again.

No longer intending to dodge, Qian Huai gritted his teeth. With a deep breath, he slashed at the approaching black blur.

Pff!

Sure enough, another ball of mud exploded into dirt.

Qian Huai immediately laughed. "Little shit, that must have been the only lightning bead you had. How laughable of you to try and trick me!"

His silver sword crazily slashed as he spoke.

One of the sword qi attacks finally struck Lin Xun, leaving a long wound on his back that nearly reached his internal organs. Blood flowed like a waterfall from his torn flesh.

Despite this, Lin Xun acted oblivious, laughing as he continued to dodge. "Old shithead, have another try."

He flung his hand again, sending out yet another black blur.

Bang!

The black ball was immediately chopped, revealing that it was another mud ball.

Qian Huai laughed maniacally. "Still trying to bluff? You're quite a wonder, still so stubborn even at death's door!"

"Try it again."

Yet another black blur shot forth.

Bang!

Another ball of mud.

"Idiot, is that all you know?"

"Again."

Bang!

Mud.

Bang!

Mud.

In the process, Lin Xun's situation grew increasingly grim. No matter how hard he tried to dodge, wounds continued to accumulate on his body. He was soon covered in injuries and was drenched in blood.

He had no choice but to admit that a Heaven Ascension expert was absolutely terrifying, especially in an enraged state. Such power was impossible for a Spirit Sea expert to face.

No matter how outrageous Lin Xun's talent was or how enormous his foundations were, there was an entire greater cultivation stage between them so the power they wielded was on a completely different level. It was hopeless to try and face an opponent that was one greater cultivation stage higher.

In contrast to Lin Xun's situation, Qian Huai seemed to be having the time of his life. He laughed like a maniac as he released all of his anger, hatred, and frustration. In fact, he even began to feel a little reluctant to kill the youth too quickly.

Qian Huai hated Lin Xun too deeply to allow him to die so easily!

"Little shit, come on! Show me how many more mud balls you have!"

Qian Huai laughed sinisterly. It looked exceptionally terrifying because half of his face was a bloody mess.

"You're an interesting person. Have you become addicted to playing with mud?"

Lin Xun laughed scornfully.

His disdainful expression immediately triggered Qian Huai. A runt at death's door was mocking him?!

What would others think if they found out?

"I'm going to murder you!"

Enraged, Qian Huai cast aside all hesitation and executed his killing move.

"Is that so? Have a taste of this mud ball first!"

At the same time, another black blur was thrown by Lin Xun.

Qian Huai had already lost count of how many mud balls he had slashed. Hence, he instinctively slashed again without any concern.

He had already determined that Lin Xun was out of tricks and could only continue to bluff, feeling that it was nothing but comical at this point.

However...

Qian Huai's heart shivered unexplainably as he slashed, and his expression soon changed drastically.

He had seen that the black blur wasn't mud this time, but a bead that cackled with lightning...

Crap!

Qian Huai's soul nearly left his body as he turned rigid in fear. Without any hesitation, he immediately jerked his body to the side.

However, he was already a step too late. An earth-shaking noise rumbled around him as a sun seemed to rise before him. Light blinded his eyes as a terrifying power instantly swallowed Qian Huai's body...

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Chapter 438: The Terrifying Pill

Lightning pulsed as thunder boomed.

Qian Huai's heart-rending scream rang out from the blinding brilliance, indicating that he had sustained terrible injuries.

Lin Xun stood far away as he watched unblinkingly.

His body bore countless sword wounds and was drenched in blood as if he had just soaked in a pool filled with it. It was an exceptionally bloody sight.

Despite this, Lin Xun seemed oblivious to the pain, his expression remaining extremely calm and cold.

In Blood Kill Camp, he had been bloodied in training countless times. No matter how severe his injuries were, he would not allow any pain to affect him as long as he could still draw breath.

Qian Huai's screaming rapidly weakened. Unlike before, he did not charge out this time.

It was only when the light finally faded that a figure dropped from the sky and crashed onto the ground.

It was naturally Qian Huai. However, the Heaven Ascension expert was now on the verge of death.

His body was a bloody mess, and his injuries had worsened to an unrecoverable state. All he could do was gasp for air as he lay on the ground.

This was the terror of the Sky Suppressing Bead. Even a Heaven Ascension expert like Qian Huai had succumbed after being struck by the full force of two beads!

Upon seeing this, Lin Xun approached without hesitation. He raised his blade and swung at the older man's neck!

Qian Huai failed to muster any resistance from start to end. He could only watch in anger, confusion, and fear.

Only after the blade fell did his gaze finally turn dull, empty, and lifeless.

Qian Huai would never have imagined that a mighty Heaven Ascension expert like himself would ultimately die at the hands of a Spirit Sea youngster.

Lin Xun silently stored his blade before he retrieved Qian Huai's storage ring and his silver sword.

He then turned to leave.

Although he was still bleeding profusely, there was no time to tend to his injuries. He dashed forth like a lone injured wolf, advancing with the strong will to live.

From the outside, no one would be able to tell that Lin Xun was at his limit. Moreover, he was in danger of collapsing at any moment due to his grave injuries!

Although the earlier chase might not have appeared taxing, only Lin Xun could understand the overwhelming pressure he had experienced in the face of Qian Huai's terrifying onslaught.

It was not an exaggeration to say that his only hope had been the two remaining Sky Suppressing Beads.

To ensure the beads struck a fatal blow, he had gambled on an extremely high-risk and dangerous method.

For Qian Huai, Lin Xun's repeated bluffs were laughable.

But for Lin Xun, it had been his only option!

Fortunately, he had succeeded in the end. The two beads had not been wasted and were able to subdue Qian Huai, ending the heart-pumping chase.

.....

Rustle~

Seven minutes after Lin Xun left, two figures appeared in the area: Wei Jun and the girl wearing a purple dress.

Upon seeing Qian Huai's headless corpse, Wei Jun turned rigid as he involuntarily cried out, "Qian Huai!"

The girl's expression also changed drastically as her hands and feet turned ice-cold.

Both of them had never imagined that a Heaven Ascension expert like Qian Huai would be killed while chasing a mere advanced Spirit Sea youngster!

After a long time, Wei Jun roared in anger, "Who did this? Who?!"

Qian Huai was an old servant who had always silently protected him with utmost loyalty.

The girl clenched her jaw and said, "Senior Brother Wei Jun, it must be him!"

"No matter who it is, I will make him pay a hundredfold!" Wei Jun howled with a sinister expression.

The girl shivered. She knew that Qian Huai's death had fully infuriated Senior Brother Wei Jun, who was highly regarded by the clan and came from an extremely distinguished background!

"Junior Sister Ren, send out messages to gather our fellow Fire Refining Sect disciples that are scattered in Mount Luohou so we can hunt down that little shit!"

Wei Jun took a deep breath before he ordered with an ice-cold expression, "Tell them that whoever manages to kill that little shit will be awarded a Soaring Dipper Pill and a hundred high-grade aeth crystals!"

The girl gasped.

Soaring Dipper Pill!

It was a priceless pill that could aid a Spirit Sea expert in attacking the Heaven Ascension stage!

Even in the Fire Refining Sect, only core disciples would own such an invaluable pill!

There were also an additional hundred high-grade aeth crystals! It was an irresistible reward for any Spirit Sea expert!

That kid is finished...

The girl in purple instantly realized that it no longer mattered if Lin Xun was the culprit or what his identity was. The moment he had angered Wei Jun was the moment he could no longer leave Mount Luohou!

.....

The final rays of the setting sun shone on the vast and endless mountains.

On a mountain grassland, golden grass was spread out like an ocean, gently swaying in the wind. Everything was dyed a magnificent red by the setting sun.

A lone figure advanced through the grass. The setting sun's rays shone on his body, making it impossible to tell which was redder, the reflection of the rays or the blood on him.

Lin Xun did not know where he was, but his survival instinct urged him to continue walking.

His body had already become numb and he could no longer feel any pain. Although his wounds had stopped bleeding, they continued to worsen as time passed.

Worst of all, his stamina was rapidly reaching rock bottom.

Any random cultivator would be able to easily kill Lin Xun in this state.

He had to stop!

Lin Xun suddenly stopped all of a sudden. He had reached his limit and was about to lose consciousness.

He immediately sat down and gritted his teeth to remain calm as he retrieved a crystal-clear jade bottle.

The bottle was sealed by a mysterious and cryptic rune. He had obtained it as a reward from the empress' birthday celebration, and it contained a single pill.

Lin Xun's shaking finger pried the seal open. A cold fragrance immediately surged out, jolting him awake.

A mere whiff had brought unimaginable effects!

He quickly tilted the bottle and a pill the size of a longan fruit rolled out. It gleamed brightly like a sapphire gem and gave off a faint blue glow. If one were to take a closer look, one would see clouds swirling in the pill.

A single glance would tell anyone that this was an extraordinary pill! It was at least a heaven-grade pill and was very possibly even a higher grade than that!

Lin Xun did not know what function it had, but he had no time to think about such things at this moment. He quickly opened his mouth and popped it in.

His mouth was instantly invaded by a bone-piercing chill, causing his entire body to tremble uncontrollably.

When the pill reached his stomach, the bone-piercing chill abruptly exploded as a terrifying and torrential surge of energy began to spread in his body.

The energy was too enormous and unimaginably terrifying. In an instant, Lin Xun felt as if an army was charging about in his body, causing intense pain to his organs, channels, and every fiber of his being.

Rumble~

When the ice-cold energy rushed into his almost empty qi sea, it seemed to have finally found its home as it rapidly spread out with a loud rumble.

Lin Xun was horrified.

What kind of pill is this? Why is its medicinal power so frightening!?

He did not dare to delay a moment longer and immediately took a deep breath as he began circulating the Mystery Grotto Devour Wilderness Scripture. He quickly entered a meditative state.

However, Lin Xun's heart was soon filled with shock. He had still grossly underestimated the pill's power. The berserk ice-cold energy seemed endless as it transformed into a violently churning ocean in his qi sea. Moreover, it was not stopping and was growing increasingly volatile...

The Mystery Grotto Devour Wilderness Scripture was barely able to keep up with the rapidly growing energy!

Rumble~

This trend continued until a storm rose from his qi sea and began working together with the Mystery Grotto Devour Wilderness Scripture to refine the terrifying medicinal power.

Lin Xun's four heart acupuncture points also began to resonate, forming a storm grinder with the storm in the qi sea.

Only then was he barely able to control the rapidly rising power.

This showed how terrifying the pill was. Even the Mystery Grotto Devour Wilderness Scripture and Storm Grinder operating together at full power were barely able to control the pill's power!

The cultivation and body of any other Spirit Sea cultivator would have likely been destroyed by the frightening medicinal power.

However—

After the time it took to brew a cup of tea passed, Lin Xun's expression changed again because the pill's power was still rapidly rising!

It was like an untamable volcano that had suddenly erupted!

Boom!

Lin Xun felt as if his body was on the verge of bursting as volatile power rapidly pumped into his body.

He instantly lost control and fell unconscious as his body crumpled to the ground.

The golden field was soon covered by the darkness of the night.

A youngster lay on the ground unconscious. When night arrived, however, a terrifying aura suddenly pulsed from his body.

It was an aura akin to the deep, bottomless abyss!

It shakily rushed into the sky, turning into a storm that rippled the air and scattered the clouds!

Rumble~

An astonishing rumble shook the darkness, twisting the light of the stars. On the ground, the grass was ruthlessly uprooted by a giant invisible hand, rapidly disintegrating as they flew into the air.

Woowoo~

The wind howled. With Lin Xun at the center, all the grass, rocks, and life within a ten-mile radius were obliterated from existence.

Far away, numerous beasts roared and hissed in fear and agitation. They fled and hid in a panic as if afraid of being affected. It was a chilling sight in the ink-black darkness.

From a distance, it looked as if the entire area had turned into a large abyss from which the mother of all storms charged out as if to devour the sky!

All of this came from the aura released by Lin Xun's body.

In his unconscious state, he was unaware of an illusory aeth artery slowly emerging from his four heart acupuncture points...

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Chapter 439: Absurd Opportunity

Qiu Wen stealthily moved under the night sky.

He was dressed in black and had a strong, healthy figure. His cultivation was at the intermediate Spirit Sea stage, and he belonged to the Qingyun Sect.

Like the disciples from the other sects, Qiu Wen had gone to Mount Luohou in search of opportunities and to polish his martial dao.

It was rumored that an ancient Luohou Monster-Beast King had been buried in the Luohou Mountain Range, and there was an ancient ruin hidden in his burial grounds. Although it would contain untold dangers, it was also a place with numerous opportunities.

Hence why Spirit Sea cultivators in the Ancient Spirit World would opt to train in Mount Luohou.

Qiu Wen had spent nearly a month in Mount Luohou and had encountered many dangers. However, he had yet to find anything of real value.

This made him feel rather helpless.

"If there's still nothing in the next three days, I will leave this god-forsaken place and return home!"

Qiu Wen gritted his teeth and made a decision.

Boom!

It was at this moment that a thunderous boom sounded far away.

A terrifying storm soared into the sky, ripping apart the night and scattering the clouds. It caused the hidden beasts in the vicinity to howl and hiss in terror and panic.

The magnificent scene was especially attention-grabbing in the darkness and stupefied Qiu Wen.

A chance!

Qiu Wen quickly returned to his senses as his eyes shone brightly. Such a grand phenomenon must be the sign of something big!

Swoosh~

Without hesitation, Qiu Wen's figure dashed forward, sprinting toward the site at full speed.

.....

"What a terrifying sight. Could it be the appearance of an amazing treasure?"

"Quick, let's go and look. Such a phenomenon descending at night is definitely proof that something big must be happening!"

"Go!"

Meanwhile, other cultivators nearby were also excited like Qiu Wen after discovering the astonishing phenomenon.

As such, everyone rushed toward the origin of the storm in unison.

Swish! Swish! Swish!

Resplendent and gorgeous lights appeared in the night, leaving streaks of light in the darkness.

Those that could fly were clearly experts with at least Spirit Sea cultivation!

Qiu Wen grew anxious when he saw this. Damnit, why did so many competitors suddenly appear?

Although such opportunities were desired by everyone, not just anyone had the strength to obtain them.

It was especially true in Mount Luohou, which had been chosen as a training ground by the disciples of the many great sects. Thus, it was easy to imagine how many experts would be drawn to vie over such an astonishing phenomenon.

A grassland soon appeared.

When Qiu Wen arrived, he was shocked to find that there was no longer any trace of the magnificent storm.

It was as if everything he had seen had merely been an illusion.

It was no illusion!

Qiu Wen quickly noticed that the middle of the grassland had been devastated as if it had been ravaged by a giant hand.

That must be where the storm came from!

“Over there!”

“The phenomenon has faded. This must mean that a treasure has appeared. Quickly search the place!”

“Hurry up and move!”

The traveling lights arrived nearby, revealing the figures of numerous cultivators. Like Qiu Wen, they had also realized that the strange phenomenon had originated from this grassland.

F*ck!

Qiu Wen secretly cursed as he hurriedly dashed to the center of the grassland.

However, Qiu Wen and the other experts were soon stunned.

They had found the figure of a youth lying on the ravaged and scorched-black earth at the center of the grassland.

This...

Everyone was confused and bewildered.

They had thought that there would be some kind of amazing treasure here. Who could have expected that all they would find was a youngster instead?

Who is he?

It was naturally Lin Xun.

“This kid must have taken the treasure!”

A man wearing a scarlet robe suddenly dashed forward like a phantom in an attempt to approach and subdue Lin Xun.

The others immediately returned to their senses and angrily roared.

“I am Young Master Fu Linguang of the Dragon Tiger Sect, who dares to snatch the treasure from me?”

“Who cares who you are? Hurry up and scram! This is not something your Dragon Tiger Sect can afford to get involved with!”

“Charge! No matter who it is, kill anyone who dares to compete with our Golden Light Sect!”

The situation immediately descended into chaos. Everyone became crazy and desperate as they began to fight over the ‘treasure.’

Just as they began charging forward, however, they heard a loud noise. The man in the scarlet robe, who had been the first to approach, had been sent flying.

His body flew backward as if he had been struck by a giant hammer, screaming as he arced through the air.

The chaotic scene was immediately replaced by a deathly silence. Everyone stopped what they were doing as their gazes looked toward the same direction in bewilderment.

The youngster on the ground was slowly rising to his feet!

His clothes were in tatters and stained with patches of blood. He seemed oblivious to the sword wounds all over his body, and his handsome face appeared exceptionally cold under the moonlight.

His eyes, in particular, looked like bottomless abysses. They seemed to surge with a horrifying storm-light gleam that sought to devour everything.

Several cultivators could not help but shiver when they met his gaze, feeling as if they were not facing a human but instead a volcano in the deep abyss that was about to erupt and destroy everything.

That first man had evidently been knocked away by this youngster!

A white-clothed man brandished his sword and shouted, "Kid, did you take the treasure that appeared here?"

Lin Xun remained silent as he looked at the white-clothed man.

The man's expression immediately changed drastically as a chill filled his body. The youngster's gaze felt as terrifying as a primordial beast opening its eyes.

The white-clothed man took a deep breath and sternly said, "Impudent! I asked you a question. Why aren't you replying?"

Lin Xun suddenly thrust his hand and a dazzling storm of light appeared.

Bang!

The white-clothed man could not even react as his body abruptly exploded. Chunks of flesh splattered everywhere, causing the nearby cultivators to instinctively dodge in horror.

"This..."

"What a terrifying power!"

"Who is he? I can't believe he dares to just kill without warning."

"That was Li Jiannan, one of top younger generation experts of the Six Direction Sect. He was at the intermediate Spirit Sea cultivation but was unable to withstand a single blow!"

An uproar swept over the surroundings as the expressions of numerous cultivators involuntarily changed.

Lin Xun sighed. "You guys are too weak. Don't come rushing to your deaths again."

He turned around and began walking away.

Under the darkness of the night, his lone figure gave off an unexplainable sensation of bleakness and solitude.

“Trying to leave? Do you think it’ll be so easy? Leave the treasure behind first!”

A valiant youngster dashed forward and swung his spear at Lin Xun.

“Thousand Fantasy Gate’s Zhou Kongxiu! To think that he came as well!”

Several people gasped, recognizing the valiant-looking youngster. He was a famous heaven pride of the Thousand Fantasy Gate.

“What are you guys still standing around for? Let’s kill that kid together!”

“Quick! We cannot let him escape. An opportunity like this is worth risking our lives!”

With Zhou Kongxiu leading the charge, the other experts also began to shout as they rushed toward Lin Xun.

Rumble!

Lin Xun abruptly turned around, his face filled with cold indifference as a terrifying storm-like aura suddenly surged around him and soared into the sky.

“Since you guys wish to die, I’ll play a bit!”

He took a big step forward, caught the approaching spear, and lightly jerked it.

Zhou Kongxiu was jolted upward as a tsunami-like power slammed into him, causing him to cough blood as his body was knocked into the air.

Schlick!

While in the air, he was pierced by a spear, sending out a spray of blood into the night sky!

His spear had been seized by Lin Xun.

“You...”

Zhou Kongxiu could only utter one final word before he died. His face was still filled with confusion as if he still could not believe that a heaven pride of the Thousand Fantasy Gate like himself had been slain in a single move...

Rumble~

The other experts arrived at this moment. Blades, spears, swords, halberds, and other weapons glowed with deadly energy as they struck Lin Xun from all directions.

It was a horrifying scene. After all, it was naturally very terrifying when an entire group of Spirit Sea experts was attacking a single person.

Swoosh!

However, before any of them could reach Lin Xun, he swung the spear. A resplendent, faint blue glow shimmered on the spear as it swung through the air like an unstoppable ocean.

Plop!

Plop!

Plop!

Explosions of blood occurred in rapid succession as random body parts flew into the air.

Every individual in the spear's path instantly lost their life! It spared no one and not a single person survived!

More than a dozen cultivators had forfeited their lives in an instant.

The bloody scene caused the remaining cultivators to involuntarily cry out as they immediately stopped their charge with horrified expressions.

"How can this be?"

"Who is he? How can he be so powerful?"

They finally felt fear, realizing how terrifying Lin Xun was!

A young teenager had effortlessly slaughtered more than a dozen Spirit Sea cultivators from various sects. It was inconceivable!

Lin Xun merely shook his head and turned around to leave again.

His expression had not changed from start to end. It was cold and indifferent as if he had no emotions.

The remaining experts hesitated as they watched him slowly walk away.

To chase or not?

They had been deeply shaken by the earlier scene and did not dare to risk attacking. However, they did not want to just give up like this as well.

The most comical part was that they still didn't know what the strange phenomenon was earlier and if a treasure had appeared.

They still believed that the 'treasure' must be with Lin Xun.

An elderly voice suddenly rang out, "Youngin, such a treasure isn't something a mere Spirit Sea cultivator like you should touch. It will be best if you leave it behind!"

[The Prodigies War](#)

Chapter 440: Fierce Battle

Swoosh!

Resplendent light descended from the sky, illuminating the night as it loomed toward Lin Xun.

A Heaven Ascension expert!

The crowd in the distance was shocked.

Lin Xun abruptly raised his head, revealing an expression of indifference. Only his black eyes surged with a horrifying light like a devastating storm from the abyss.

He horizontally swung the spear. Although it was a simple attack, it was filled with great power that shattered the blinding light with a loud bang.

Whoosh!

Lin Xun's figure disappeared from the spot. He brandished the spear as he sprinted in the air like a Hornless Ice Dragon and fiercely thrust toward a certain spot.

"Eh!"

A surprised cry sounded from the exact area. The hidden expert had clearly not expected to be instantly discovered by Lin Xun.

At the same time, a mountain-like figure appeared and punched.

Boom!

The spear seemed to wail as it violently trembled. The ear-piercing sound rang out across the area, causing the crowd of cultivators in the distance to shiver as their expressions changed slightly.

From the clash, it was clear that the large figure possessed terrifying power.

Tatata~

Lin Xun was forced several steps backward, but he charged forward again almost immediately. His relentlessness surprised everyone.

He was merely a teenager that was covered in blood and injuries. No matter how heaven-defying his combat power was, he was still only an advanced Spirit Sea expert.

Despite this, he was not only unafraid of a Heaven Ascension expert but even took the offensive. It was just shocking that he displayed no hesitation from start to end.

Isn't he afraid of death?

A battle erupted in the sky. Lin Xun brandished his spear as a faint divine azure glow burned around him, making him look as if he could devour even mountains and rivers with his aura alone.

His expression was coldly indifferent. Although he was repeatedly being pushed back, he did not incur any injuries and instead grew fiercer and fiercer, causing the onlookers' jaws to drop.

His opponent was a large, muscular elder whose body was covered in golden scales that seemed to be forged from gold. They gave off a dazzling gleam as his oppressive aura suffocated the surroundings, and his blood and qi rumbled like thunder. It was a sight that would make anyone's soul shiver.

Someone recognized the elder and could not help but cry out, "He's the Heaven Ascension expert Daoist Bear from the Thousand Monster-Beast Palace!"

Daoist Bear was a monster-beast cultivator. His true form was a Herculean Gold Bear, and he had been cultivating for a thousand years!

"I can't believe it's Daoist Bear. Why is he here? Have the Thousand Monster-Beast Palace disciples also come to Mount Luohou?"

Numerous people were bewildered.

Thousand Monster-Beast Palace was an enormous faction where monster-beast cultivators gathered.

Although Daoist Bear only had initial Heaven Ascension cultivation, his true body was a Herculean Gold Bear with strong bloodline power. Hence, his combat power far surpassed any cultivator of the same stage!

Everyone was shocked once more by how Lin Xun could put up a fight against Daoist Bear. They could not imagine nor understand how this was possible.

Boom!

In the sky, Daoist Bear used his secret art, causing golden light to flow over all his body. Despite fighting bare-handed, every strike was accompanied by a sonic boom that rippled the air, showing its devastating power.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Lin Xun's figure zipped about like a Hornless Ice dragon. A faint azure glow burned around the spear as it swept through the air with deadly force.

In the end, he was sent hurtling into the ground, creating a big crater and a cloud of dust.

"As someone who can exchange blows with me, you can consider yourself a genius among the humans. I will spare your life if you hand over the treasure, kneel, and acknowledge me as your master!"

Daoist Bear's voice boomed like thunder as he oppressively strode toward the crater. It felt terrifying as if a giant mountain was descending.

Rustle!

Before he could approach, however, Lin Xun charged out and thrust his spear at Daoist Bear's throat.

Hiss~

The crowd gasped, unable to believe their eyes. Lin Xun had clearly been beaten down, and they had all thought he was dead meat. Who could have imagined that he would charge out again!?

Did he have an undying body?

It was inconceivable. After all, Lin Xun had already been covered in wounds before the fight began.

Any other cultivator would have died long ago after being repeatedly crushed by Daoist Bear's almighty power, but Lin Xun...still had the power to fight back!

How is he doing it?

“Eh?”

Daoist Bear was also bewildered, but his expression soon darkened. With a loud rumble, golden light surged wildly around him and swallowed the surroundings.

It was humiliating for a Heaven Ascension expert to fail to kill a Spirit Sea youngster.

He used his true power and his best techniques. The mighty aura of a Heaven Ascension expert spread, turning Daoist Bear into a golden monster-beast god that could startle the heavens.

Rumble~

The sky shattered and crumbled as the land split open. An oppressive killing intent unfurled, sweeping away dirt and rocks as everything rippled around him.

Lin Xun was swiftly swallowed. He was like a lonely little boat in a stormy sea that was constantly at the mercy of the waves and could capsize at any moment.

However, what surprised everyone was that even at this juncture, the youth was still stubbornly holding on. He clearly looked as if he was about to be crushed at any moment, and yet he always miraculously survived.

It was incredible and shocking!

Someone with a serious expression remarked uncertainly, “Have you guys noticed? His power is growing stronger and stronger. It’s like every defeat is raising his combat power.”

Numerous cultivators immediately noticed the same thing!

“How is this possible?”

“Could there be some sealed power in his body that needs to be unlocked layer by layer?”

“It makes no sense!”

Everyone was astonished. Lin Xun’s miraculous performance had stirred their hearts. Although there might be other Spirit Sea experts who could face Heaven Ascension experts in this world, there was only a small handful of them!

Lin Xun was all the more extraordinary even among them. Despite being injured, he grew increasingly ferocious and stronger as the battle continued. He was like an undying zombie, a thought that was unimaginably terrifying.

“Die!”

Daoist Bear roared as he shone brightly. Golden light rushed forth as a punch smashed through the air.

The spear in Lin Xun’s hand abruptly shattered as he was mercilessly knocked away, causing him to repeatedly cough blood.

However, a frightening aura soon erupted from his body again, and he rushed forward again with even greater power than before.

“This...”

Daoist Bear was taken aback. The human youngster was way too tenacious. Why wasn't he dead after being defeated so many times?

Daoist Bear shouted, “Kid, tell me your name!”

He had a feeling that the youngster must come from an astonishing background and might be the successor of a powerful, hidden sect.

Boom!

Lin Xun's expression remained indifferent. He did not reply but instead attacked with the Nine Heavenshaking Destructions Arts.

He had not said a single word since the start of the battle, making him seem like a cold-blooded, single-minded killing machine.

“You're asking for death!”

Daoist Bear was enraged by the youth's nonchalance. With a wave of his sleeve, a golden curved blade appeared and slashed at Lin Xun.

Rumble!

Fist-wind and curved blade collided, creating an earth-shaking noise.

Lin Xun's relentless aggression made the group of cultivators in the distance shocked and speechless.

Daoist Bear had used a weapon!

On the other side, Lin Xun was now fighting bare-handed. It was...pure brutality!

The clouds rippled, and the night sky seemed to crumble as the crazy battle dragged on.

Daoist Bear displayed his full ferocity. Every swing of his golden blade made the onlookers' souls shiver in fear, and many of them retreated even further away to avoid the terrifying battle.

The battlefield had expanded far too much and not just anyone could withstand a Heaven Ascension expert's power.

Boom!

Boom!

Boom!

Lin Xun was repeatedly beaten back, but he always managed to avoid a fatal blow with the Hornless Ice Dragon Step.

The most terrifying part, however, was that his aura continued to climb as he fought. He was like an erupting abyss that was intensifying with every passing second.

The grasslands had been thoroughly ravaged. The ground was cracked and broken, many patches of grass had been turned to ashes, and space warped chaotically. It was a horrifying scene.

“Die!”

Daoist Bear’s roar exploded like thunder. Torrential golden light spewed from his golden blade like the waves of an ocean that rushed toward the shore with terrifying momentum.

The two battled into the sky and down to the ground. Several hills on the grasslands had been shattered, causing gravel to spray everywhere.

The closely following experts were stupefied as their bodies trembled. The might of the Heaven Ascension stage was horrifying, to say the least.

Every attack seemed capable of crushing mountains and overturning the sea.

However, they were not shocked by Daoist Bear but instead by the young man who was covered in blood and wounds.

How the hell is this Spirit Sea cultivator still resisting?!

It was not just them. Even Daoist Bear’s heart was filled with bewilderment. The more he fought, the more he realized that the human youngster was not just tenacious but growing more powerful with each passing moment!

How the hell is this a Spirit Sea expert?

He is an abnormality that was beyond comprehension!

.....

Kill!

Lin Xun’s long hair danced around his indifferent face, his black eyes akin to a stormy abyss.

No one knew that power was erupting in his body like a volcano. It wreaked havoc in his body and was nearly about to burst him from the inside.

He had lost control after consuming the mysterious pill given to him by the empress, and even the joint efforts of the Mystery Grotto Devour Wilderness Scripture and Storm Grinder had failed to rein in the pill’s berserk power.

Lin Xun had originally believed it was because of the mysterious pill.

The moment he awakened, however, he realized that the source was not the pill but something above his four heart acupuncture points!

Above his four heart acupuncture points, an illusory aeth artery was phasing into existence little by little at a rate that could not be observed by the naked eye.

Its existence made all the power in his body explosively skyrocket.

It was as if the illusory aeth artery was an immeasurable abyss that was awakening from its deep slumber and manifesting into the world!

The mysterious pill from the empress was merely a trigger that had awakened it.

Origin Aeth Artery!

Grand Abyss Heaven Devourer!

Lin Xun realized that his body was changing. If the change succeeded, he might be able to regrow a new Origin Aeth Artery.

But if it failed, his body would explode and he would die!

Lin Xun's current predicament was both filled with danger and the potential of an unimaginable blessing.

The battle was currently his only way to neutralize the danger!