

Prodigies 91

[Chapter 91: Pampered Youths](#)

There were nine copper skin puppets in the practice room, each corresponding to the nine layers of the True Martial stage.

It was worth mentioning that copper skin puppets were different from the aeth testing stone. The stone measured a cultivator's aeth power, while the puppets were used to measure a cultivator's martial power.

It was quite simple: a cultivator with a certain level of aeth power might not be able to exhibit a matching level of battle power. The reason behind this was usually related to a cultivator's martial arts, martial understanding, and mastery.

After all, cultivation was merely a power source in battle and martial arts were needed to properly bring out a fighter's power.

Lin Xun walked to a True Martial sixth layer copper skin puppet and lightly tapped its chest.

The puppet buzzed and its eyes flashed red as if awakening from slumber and every inch of its body glowed.

Lin Xun took a deep breath as all of his muscles contracted like highly compacted steel threads. Power gathered in his body, surging through his spine as it roared throughout his body like a dragon.

At this moment, Lin Xun's breath felt like a brewing thunderstorm, ready to unleash its unstoppable wrath!

Rumble!

His right arm suddenly shot forward like lightning and grabbed the puppet's wrist. The long accumulated power poured out like a tsunami, creating a terrifying rippling force!

It was one of the Joint Disruption Art's moves that could instantly dislocate an opponent's joint and scatter their power, rendering them incapable of combat. If sufficient force was released, it could even shatter the target's inner organs and instantly kill them!

Boom!**nOvElnExt.com**

The full-powered blow of the True Martial sixth layer stage struck the copper skin puppet, causing it to explode as if it was as weak as paper. Broken parts fell to the ground, leaving a single arm in Lin Xun's hand.

Lin Xun was stunned by this scene. Isn't it a little too weak?

Lin Xun had originally estimated that his physical power alone was enough to go toe to toe with a True Martial sixth layer cultivator.

After all, he had been entering the Omega Secret-Realm to attempt the trial every three days. Although every try ultimately ended in failure, it greatly strengthened his physique.

Even Xia Zhi had remarked that Lin Xun's physique tempering progress was far swifter than his aeth power cultivation.

However, Lin Xun had not expected a single blow would shatter a True Martial sixth layer stage copper skin puppet.

Although it was merely a measure of martial power, the resulting power from his physique combined with the Joint Disruption Art had exceeded his expectations.

After some thinking, Lin Xun walked to another copper skin puppet. It was a True Martial seventh layer puppet this time.

He changed his approach and threw a simple punch, using the most basic move.

Thud!

The copper skin puppet was blown away, a clear fist imprint on its now caved-in chest.

At the same time, a voice sounded from the puppet with a ding, "Congratulations customer, your martial power can threaten a True Martial seventh layer expert!"

Lin Xun stared at his fist in thought for a long time before turning around and walking out of the room.

However, because he had destroyed a copper skin puppet, he had no choice but to compensate the hall a hundred copper coins.

Although Lin Xun had become quite rich, a hundred copper coins was still a substantial expenditure, making him curse in silence. If he had known, he would have gone straight to the True Martial seventh layer puppet instead!

Despite this, Lin Xun was quite pleased to find out that his physique power could threaten a True Martial seventh layer expert.

Of course, this was merely a measurement of force and real combat was a completely different ball game. A cultivator's battle experience, equipment, combat arts were important factors which would affect the fight.

"My aeth power is around 4900 catties, which is comparable to a peak True Martial eighth layer cultivator. While my physique power can threaten a True Martial seventh layer cultivator. As long as I continue to train, there might be surprising benefits when I advance to the Spirit Dipper stage."

Lin Xun walked out of Donglin Martial Training Hall, evaluating his overall power as he rushed home.

The district exam was tomorrow and he was not in the mood for any leisurely strolls.

When Lin Xun arrived at the 49th residence, he heard people cursing inside.

"How horrible! I'm the Donglin City Xue Clan Martial Dojo's young master. How dare you bully me! You're asking for death!"

"Quickly release us!"

"Just wait, you're already in big trouble. No one in Donglin City can save you!"

Lin Xun raised his brows and pushed the door open. He immediately saw a dozen youths dressed in luxurious clothes tied up on the ground. Their faces had been beaten black and blue and their hair was messily scattered, displaying miserable appearances.

Xia Zhi was seated at the center of the courtyard. She was silently reading a book as if she was unable to hear the threats.

Fatty Diao and Beanpole Ma were also standing by the side. However, they had agonized expressions as if they were mulling over a difficult problem.

“What’s going on?” Lin Xun frowned.

“You two tell him. I’m tired and am going to sleep.” After instructing the fatty and beanpole duo, Xia Zhi closed the book and walked into the house.

Lin Xun glanced at Fatty Diao. He immediately approached and worriedly explained everything.

It turned out that not long after Lin Xun left in the morning, these dozen youths came knocking, claiming they were from Donglin Academy. They had heard from somewhere that Lin Xun was an amazing fighter and wouldn’t stop yammering about wanting to spar with him to see who was better.

Xia Zhi originally wanted to ignore them but who could have expected that they would not relent and instead turn to verbal humiliation and name-calling. In the end, they managed to anger Xia Zhi, who swiftly began to teach them their place.

If Fatty Diao and Beanpole Ma had not rushed over in time, Xia Zhi would have probably killed the Donglin Academy students.

Lin Xun’s eyes narrowed upon hearing about what had transpired. The district exam was tomorrow and a dozen Donglin Academy students had come all the way to his house to challenge him. This affair seemed fishy.

Could it be some kind of scheme?

Lin Xun recalled Lian Fei, who was hiding in Donglin Academy. Lin Xun was certain that even if it wasn’t Lian Fei’s idea, it definitely had something to do with him!

“You’re Lin Xun? Quickly release us! The consequences are not something a brat from the countryside like you can bear!”

“Release me from these bindings!”

At Lin Xun’s return, not only did the dozen Donglin Academy students not cease their cursing, they instead grew increasingly bold and arrogant. Curses endlessly flew from their mouths as if they were unafraid that Lin Xun would dare to touch them.

Ice flashed in Lin Xun’s eyes. A dazzling smile rose from the corners of his lips as he walked over.

“Please calm your anger, Boss!” Fatty Diao hastily followed and cautioned in an anxious voice, “We’ve already done a background check. These people might seem to be Donglin Academy students, but they

also have other identities. Nearly all of them are pampered young masters of various factions and clans in Donglin City. If such people are killed, endless trouble will follow.”

“Mm.” Lin Xun was silent.

Upon seeing this, youngsters grew even more fearless and pleased with themselves.

“Oh? Are you scared now? I knew you wouldn’t dare to do anything to us!”

“Humph! You ignorant trash, what are you still standing around for. Hurry up and untie this Young Master!”

The youngest among the group was only twelve, while the eldest was not even fifteen. Each one was extremely arrogant and had clearly never experienced any difficulties. It was clear that all of them had been spoiled.

Smiling, Lin Xun walked forward and squatted in front of one of them, “Who sent you?”

“What a joke! Who dares in Donglin City dares to command this Young Master? You’d better stop with the nonsense. If you don’t release us, there will be endless problems for you in the future!”

The youngster raised his head like a proud little rooster. However, his swollen pig-like face and black eyes made him look rather comical.

Piak!

Lin Xun slapped the boy, eliciting a scream before his head fell to the side, now unconscious.

This scene made the group turn rigid. They never imagined that Lin Xun would dare to use violence at this juncture.

Was he not afraid of their vengeance?

“Boss, this...this...” Fatty Diao and Beanpole Ma were taken aback.

“This guy’s foul mouth is filled with bullshit. He’s really lacking in manners.” Lin Xun shook his head as if it was a small matter.

Still smiling, he turned towards another youngster, “You there, tell me who sent you guys.”

The youngster was clearly scared by Lin Xun’s methods and fearfully answered, “We...we really came by our own will. I’m definitely not lying!”

Lin Xun frowned and looked towards the other youngsters, only to find that they all had the same terrified faces. He knew that pampered young masters like them, who had never experienced any difficulties, were not likely to lie.

From their expressions, he could see that they could not even hide their emotions. It would be high praise to even say that they wore their hearts on their sleeves.

Lin Xun stood up and thought for a while. He then turned around, called over Fatty Diao and Beanpole Ma and asked in a low voice, “Call some of your subordinates over later and bring these people to Donglin Academy’s doorstep.”

Fatty Diao gasped, "This is a big no-no! If the matter grows too big, the consequences will be unthinkable!"

Lin Xun's friendly face was full of smiles as he unhurriedly said, "We have to make it as big as we can. If we let them go just like this, uncountable troubles will follow."

He thoughtfully stroked his chin and said, "At that time, I need you guys to help act out a little play. If we don't manage to kick up a big enough fuss until the whole city knows, there will no longer be any peace in the future."

From Lin Xun's serious appearance, Fatty Xiao and Beanpole Ma finally realized that their Chopstick Gang Boss wasn't joking!

Chapter 92 Public Opinion Obscures the Truth

Donglin Academy.

With a face filled with fury, Lian Fei finally found Yao Susu and asked, "I heard Yang Qun gathered a group of students to go cause trouble for Lin Xun. Was this your doing?"

Yao Susu seemed unconcerned as she casually nodded, "Although I didn't directly tell them to do so, I did have a hand in this matter. I merely told Yang Qun that Lin Xun is a gifted youngster who constantly looks down on our Donglin Academy students and belittles us. It didn't feel nice hearing such things."

Lian Fei's expression darkened, "And then Yang Qun couldn't take it and went to find Lin Xun to spar with him?"

Yao Susu chuckled, "Yeah, Yang Qun is easily provoked. I didn't even need to say much and he quickly gathered up a group and left in a huff to find Lin Xun."

"Foolish!"

Lian Fei had a headache. He was genuinely angry but could not direct it at Yao Susu. Flustered, his expression turned ugly, "Someone who killed Old Tiger Lu is definitely no ordinary person! Yang Qun and the others will not be his match! Won't they be seeking their own humiliation?" **Novelnext.coM**

Yao Susu said, "I don't expect them to teach Lin Xun a lesson. It's the opposite, the more they suffer the better."

Lian Fei was taken aback, suddenly realizing that this matter was not as simple as he had imagined.

Sure enough, Yao Susu swiftly explained, "Although Yang Qun and the others are boastful and domineering, they are also from various powerful factions in Donglin City. Offending them is equivalent to offending these factions. Isn't this great? It's better than you trying to face Lin Xun alone, right?"

Lian Fei's rage began to dissipate as he connected the dots, "You're trying to sabotage Lin Xun?"

The corners of Yao Susu's lips curled downwards, "If not for you, I would never do such a lowly thing."

Lian Fei hurriedly consoled her, touched by her intentions, "Susu, I was only worried about you. Lin Xun is so ruthless, how can I bear to see you earn his ire?"

Yao Susu smiled, "You need not worry about me, I'm not afraid of Lin Xun. If not for you, I wouldn't even know such a person exists."

Something suddenly occurred to Lian Fei, "How did you find out about Lin Xun and me?"

A pleased smile arose on Susu's face, "No one can hide anything from me if I wish to know about it. Alright, that's enough. Don't think too much about this and just wait for the entertainment to start. The district exam is tomorrow. If Yang Qun and the others are heavily injured and unable to participate, it will most definitely incur the wrath of several factions. When that happens, Lin Xun will only be able to keep hopping around for a few days more."

Lian Fei was a little shocked. Yao Susu appeared to be an innocent young lady, so who could have imagined she would possess such cunning?

However, Lian Fei also could not help but feel a surge of excitement at the thought of Lin Xun falling into a dangerous predicament. After all, Lian Fei had not forgotten the sullenness and defeat he had felt a few days ago.

An uproar suddenly sounded from far away, causing Lian Fei and Yao Susu to instinctively look over.

A group of students were running towards the academy entrance and people were shouting along the way.

"Come quickly, our fellow students have been beaten up by someone, tied up and delivered to the academy entrance!"

"How horrible! Who dares to bully our Donglin Academy? I'm interested to find out which arrogant bastard is the culprit!"

The shouts stunned Lian Fei and Yao Susu. How had things reached this stage? To think that Lin Xun would be that ballsy; not only did he beat up Yang Qun and the others, but he even brought the conflict to the school.

The couple exchanged a glance before heading towards the academy entrance as well to find out more.

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Although it was the afternoon, the entrance to Donglin Academy was exceptionally lively. Heads bobbed up and down as numerous busybodies crowded around, creating such a tight blockade that even water wouldn't be able to seep through.

A dozen figures were lying on the empty ground in front of the academy, their arms tied up together behind them and linked to their necks like criminals. Their faces were swollen and bruised, their hair messily scattered, and dirty rags had even been stuffed into their mouths, creating a very pathetic sight.

They were naturally the pampered young masters who had tried to cause trouble at the slum's 49th residence today.

There were also a dozen shabbily dressed white-haired elders kneeling beside them, who looked as if they had half a foot in the grave. The grandpas and grannies were currently wailing loudly.

Fatty Diao and Beanpole Ma could also be found amongst the group.

Fatty Diao took a deep breath and angrily hollered, "My fellow citizens, we've been left with no choice but to come here and demand justice! Some things need to be said even if we end up being beaten to death by Donglin Academy!

"The Donglin Academy degenerates on the ground went to the slums today to wreak havoc, saying they wanted to polish their martial arts and cultivation in preparation for tomorrow's district exam. They beat anyone they came across, injuring many of our family and friends. They were cruel, vicious and had zero regard for the people. I'd like to ask right here and now: are there no longer any laws in this world?"

Fatty Diao appeared as if he was filled with indignation and passion. Everyone in the vicinity could clearly hear his words, eliciting several gasps from the crowd.

"Their bullying has gone too far this time!"

Tears began to gather in Fatty Xiao's eyes as he pointed towards one of the old grannies who was toothless, "Everyone look, that's my neighbor's, Gou Sheng, mum. Although she's already so old, she was nearly sullied by someone!"

The entire place exploded at these words. Sullied? Which blind idiot would try to touch an old granny?

However, Fatty Diao was clearly overwhelmed by grief. He gritted his teeth, walked to one of the tied-up youngsters on the ground and emotionally said, "Everyone might not believe me, but I swear to the heavens that this imp...he might be young, but his tastes are...repulsive! If I didn't arrive at Gou Sheng's house in time, his mother would have been raped by this pervert!"

The youngster's eyes bulged from their sockets as he struggled to try and say something. However, he had been gagged and could only make whimpering noises.

The old granny very cooperatively began to bang her head against the ground until it began to bleed. It was a heart-stirring sight that made the crowd begin to suspect that it was real.

Without giving anyone time to think, Fatty Xiao thumped his chest and wailed at the sky, "My fellow citizens, we're already the lowest class citizens who live in the slums. If these degenerates didn't leave us with no other option, how could we possibly have the courage to come to Donglin Academy's doorstep to shout our grievances?"

The crowd secretly nodded in agreement. That was right, these people were clearly from the lowest level of society. Normally speaking, such people would never dare to cause a fuss at Donglin Academy even if you gave them the courage to.

There is definitely a reason for this!

By this time, several students had already gathered at the entrance. Anger rapidly filled their faces when they saw their fellow students bound up and lying on the ground.

However, they were just too young and had never experienced something like this. After hearing Fatty Diao's bitter and despairing cries, the students could not help but suspect his story was true.

Some students tried to go forward to save Yang Qun and the others but were doggedly obstructed by the granny and grandpa group, making it seem as if the only way to get past was over their dead bodies.

The grannies and grandpas had no cultivation and were just ordinary people. Moreover, they already had half a foot in the grave. Things would become very troublesome if they were injured while the crowd was watching.

It would also hurt Donglin Academy's reputation and people would say the students only knew how to bully the elderly. That would be far too shameful.

Fatty Diao began to shout again, "I demand justice even if I lose my life today!"

"Right! We want justice!"

Beanpole Ma also began to yell, "I heard these degenerates mention that they were sent by a student called Lian Fei to cause trouble in the slums. He said those who live in the slums are less than human and their pathetic lives are worth less than papers so no one cares if they're killed. Isn't this a complete disregard for human life?"

The fact that Beanpole Ma could even name the mastermind convinced the crowd even more.

Lian Fei and Yao Susu arrived just in time to hear this, which immediately stunned Lian Fei. Since when have I ever said such a stupid thing?

Lian Fei's expression darkened. He knew at a glance that this was Lin Xun's revenge!

"Despicable!" Lian Fei felt as if he was about to explode from anger. He hadn't even done anything but he was receiving all the blame. Worst of all, he didn't know how to explain himself on the spot. This was probably what public opinion obscuring the truth was like.

Yao Susu's expression was also rather ugly. She never imagined that Lin Xun would be so devious and respond so quickly. Not only had he given Yang Qun and the others a beating, but Lin Xun had also weaved a convincing lie and brought the mess all the way to Donglin Academy.

Even if they somehow proved in the future that it was just a bunch of lies, who would believe them then?

In fact, Yao Susu could already foresee many people adding on to the story once it spread!

Rumors were often grown from groundless accusations. As more and more people added their own little tidbits into the story, it would swiftly be spun into an unimaginable tale. The more you tried to explain, the more the people would suspect it was real.

Fatty Diao and Beanpole Ma were still angrily crying out their grievances. At this point, they knew that the bigger the commotion, the safer they would be. Hence, they used every bit of talent they had to continue pouring shit onto Lian Fei.

More and more people gathered as time passed.

Lin Xun watched everything transpire a thousand feet from the academy. In the end, he silently chuckled and turned to leave.

The matter was already blown up enough. Regardless of the outcome, the controversy caused by this affair was sufficient to give the factions behind the pampered young masters a headache for a long time.

If they still dared to go after him regardless of the cost, it would instead prove that everything was true. This result was certainly not what the influential figures behind the spoiled young masters would want.

Fatty Diao's and Beanpole Ma's acting skills are pretty good. It's a stroke of genius that they also came up with the idea of finding some elderly to play along as well. The Donglin Academy cultivators have no choice but to hold back and act with caution. However, the acting duo will definitely be hated in the future and will no longer be able to stay in Donglin City. It looks like I need to plan an escape route for them...

Lin Xun pondered as he walked, feeling very composed.

Today's skit had indeed been his work. Although it had temporarily staved away the danger, the truth that he was the mastermind would be found out sooner or later.

However, Lin Xun could care less about such things. When the district exam was over, he would naturally leave Donglin City and head to Qingfeng County where he would begin preparations for the prefectural exam.

Chapter 93 The Various Factions' Reactions

After Lin Xun left, the commotion in front of Donglin Academy grew bigger and bigger as more and more people arrived. Just as the situation was about to spiral out of control, a Donglin Academy instructor finally appeared to begin damage control.

The instructor was a veteran Spirit Dipper stage expert and was quite reputable. He immediately declared to the crowd that he would seek justice for Fatty Diao and the others.

Fatty Diao knew that they had to back down now because it would only be detrimental if they continued. Hence, he quickly left with the granny and grandpa group.

Yang Qun and the other pampered young masters were quickly untied and brought into Donglin Academy.

Although the affair was finally over, news of it swiftly spread across the entire city, drawing several uproars and plenty of laughs.

Lian Fei, Yang Qun and the others had become a topic of laughter in the city.

Of course, no one cared about the validity of the rumors. Even if it wasn't true, rumors were rumors and why would the unconcerned majority care enough to find out the truth?

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Golden Jade Hall.

When Gu Yanpeng heard the rumor, it only took a brief moment for him to figure everything out. He could not help but chuckle, "Lian Fei tried to sabotage Lin Xun but probably never imagined the counterstrike would be fierce. This scheme has ended up backfiring in Lian Fei's face."

Gu Liang listened in astonishment, “Lin Xun was the mastermind? But isn’t doing so a little extreme? Although it might appear that he has won, those Donglin Academy students and factions behind them would definitely view him as an eyesore in the future. Overall, the disadvantages outweigh the benefits.”

Gu Yanping praised his son, “Liang’er, it’s good that you managed to take these things into consideration. However, if you were Lin Xun, what would you do to neutralize the danger?”

Gu Liang instantly understood that this was a test for him. His thoughts swiftly swirled as he answered, “If it were me, I would definitely not fight those young masters. I can always avoid them first and find a chance to even things in the future.”

Gu Yanping nodded, “Although your method is reserved, it is the most appropriate approach. However, you’ve overlooked one problem. These young masters are arrogant and unreasonable bullies. If they are determined to find you, it will be impossible to avoid them.”

He paused for a moment before continuing, “That’s why although Lin Xun’s method was a little extreme, it was the wisest option to resolve the matter. Only by creating a big enough commotion until the entire city knew about it would his enemies be forced to hold back for the time being. No matter how much they hate him, immediately going after him would only prove everything was true and hurt their reputation.”

“Even if these Donglin City factions do bad things in secret, they are still very concerned about their image.”

Gu Liang frowned, “But what about the future? Once the storm passes, the people will no longer care. What will stop the factions from going after Lin Xun then?”

Gu Liang suddenly froze as if he had realized something. He slapped his hands together and excitedly blurted out, “I understand! Lin Xun does not plan to stay in Donglin City! After passing the district exam, he will definitely be going on to participate in the prefecture exam. Since that’s the case, no matter how big of a commotion he creates today, he can just leave and no one will be able to do anything.” **NOVELNEXT.COM**

Gu Yanping smiled and praised, “Not bad. That’s Lin Xun’s decision. The fact that you managed to figure it out shows that you’ve matured.”

Gu Liang felt ashamed as he shook his head, “I’m nothing compared to him.”

Gu Yanping sighed, “Lin Xun already has superhuman intelligence despite his young age. It’s pointless to compare yourself with someone like him.”

Gu Liang suddenly said, “Father, if Lin Xun leaves, it will become very difficult for our Golden Jade Hall to obtain more aeth tools from that mysterious rune master.”

Gu Yanping seemed to have considered this problem long ago. “Liang’er, a true merchant group will never place all of their hopes on others. If you wish to become a well-known merchant cultivator, you must possess sufficient capital and power to establish a place for yourself in this world!”

Gu Liang’s heart shook. He took a deep breath and said, “I understand.”

Gu Yanping chuckled, "You're of similar age to Lin Xun and currently have a good relationship. If he encounters any difficulties in the future, you should try to help him out. Friends are also something you need to invest in. Don't always wait to receive but learn to take the initiative and be the one to give first."

Gu Liang nodded.

He did admire Lin Xun and desired to be good friends with such a person.

However, Gu Liang also had his own views. He did not wish to maintain a relationship based on mutual benefit with Lin Xun. Gu Liang wanted to use his capability and power to gain Lin Xun's acknowledgement!

After all, Gu Lian was fifteen this year. He was also a proud young man who was filled with aspirations!

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Stone Cauldron Alms.

Mu Wansu's expression turned stranger and stranger as she listened to Wang Lin's report. In the end, she could not help but break out into laughter, making her beautiful face even more enchanting.

She laughed until tears were nearly streaming down her face. After a long time, she finally bit her lip and said, "That brat Lin Xun is so bad. To think...to think he would accuse a youngster of trying to rape an old granny. Only he could think of such a thing!"

After a pause, she suddenly frowned, "He's already decided to leave Donglin City?"

Wang Lin regretfully said, "Yes. Once he leaves, I'm afraid it will be impossible for us to build relations with the mysterious rune master in the future."

Mu Wansu blankly stared into space. Rationally speaking, she should be celebrating if Lin Xun left. After all, she was always wishing for the little punk to disappear.

However, when it did happen, Mu Wansu suddenly felt an unexplainable sliver of melancholy. It wasn't a good feeling.

A little bastard who had repeatedly made her suffer was going to leave all of a sudden. It somehow made her feel a little sad, but what was she sad about?

Mu Wansu frowned. After a long time, she gently bit her lip and softly mumbled, "Humph! Even if he leaves, there's still unfinished business between us! I will make sure to one day subdue that little punk!"

She suddenly saw Wang Lin's strange expression and immediately returned to her senses. She looked slightly dejected, seemingly unconcerned about the mysterious rune master as she waved her hand, "You are dismissed."

Confused, Wang Lin cupped his hands together and took his leave.

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The Wu Clan.

Clan Leader Wu Qun inwardly gasped as he read the report in his hand. His expression slightly fluctuated, "What a vicious little thing. To think he has learnt how to incite the majority and counterattack with slander!"

Wu Qun was thankful that the Wu Clan had held back from targeting Lin Xun over the past few days. Otherwise, being implicated in this matter would be a huge loss of face.

Someone said, "Clan Leader, that little trash's methods were too extreme this time and he has completely offended many factions. This is good news for us."

"Wrong!" Wu Qun's eyes flickered in thought as he coldly said, "The district exam is tomorrow. Do you think that little shitbag will wait for his death in Donglin City after passing? Since he dares to do such a thing, he clearly plans on leaving!"

"So that's why. We cannot let that shitbag leave like this! Otherwise, how will we regain our pride?"

"Agreed, we're only holding back for now and will slowly deal with him in the future. But what's the point if he leaves?"

The crowd grew agitated.

Wu Qun took a deep breath and rose to his feet, "Calm yourselves. I will go visit the Donglin Academy Principal later. Didn't that little shit want to participate in the district exam? I'll make sure he fails to achieve his goals. It won't be so easy for him to have his way!"

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Donglin Academy.

Lian Fei and Yao Susu stood in a long corridor which led to the principal's office.

Lian Fei had an ugly expression as he recalled everything that happened in front of the academy. He felt as if his heart was about to burst from rage and sullenness.

So ruthless!

Lin Xun's slander counterattack had made Lian Fei lose face and hurt his reputation. Moreover, no one would believe him even if he tried to explain.

This was the terror of rumors.

For instance, the youngster who had been accused of trying to rape an old granny had been given the nickname 'perverted granny lover'. It was malicious to the max and shook the entire academy.

The only consolation was that there was no proof until now that Lian Fei was the mastermind.

Unfortunately, an academy instructor had already found out that Yang Qun and the others had been manipulated by Yao Susu, leading to everything that had happened today!

Lian Fei could not help but look at Yao Susu, only to find that she was calm as could be. It was as if she was not worried about any punishment.

In fact, Yao Susu even tried to console Lian Fei, “Don’t be too stuck up on this. Lin Xun is too vicious and crafty. If there’s a chance, I will not let him off!”

Lian Fei chuckled bitterly. He had nothing to say in response.

The door at the end of the corridor was pushed open and a stern middle-aged man in a long purple robe walked out.

Donglin Academy Principal Yu Canglin!

Lian Fei’s body turned rigid as his expression tensed. Yu Canglin was a famous Spirit Sea stage expert, and one of the few Spirit Sea stage experts in Donglin City!

Lian Fei and Yao Susu had been summoned here to wait, and he was surprised that the matter had alarmed the principal. Was the principal going to personally mete out his punishment?

If that was so, the consequences would be far too dire!

Hence why Lian Fei could not help but worry when he saw Yu Canglin appear.

To Lian Fei’s surprise, the usually old-fashioned, strict and never-smiling Principal Yu Canglin smiled and beckoned towards them, “Susu, come over. Your father is waiting for you.”

Lian Fei’s eyes nearly popped from their sockets as his mind went blank.

Yao Susu seemed to have anticipated this long ago. She smiled and nodded before dragging Lian Fei towards the end of the hall.

From start to end, Yu Canglin smilingly watched them approach and did not try to stop them. This made Lian Fei feel increasingly shocked as a certain question finally dawned upon him.

Principal Yu Canglin’s behavior seems to be related to Yao Susu’s father...

But who is Yao Susu’s father?

Lian Fei frantically tried to figure it out. When they were about to enter the hall, a name that had recently been the hottest topic in Donglin City finally rose in his head—

Yao Tuohai!

[Chapter 94: District Exam Begins](#)

Lian Fei’s back was drenched in sweat when they walked out of the hall.

Although the conversation with Yao Tuohai had lasted less than fifteen minutes, it allowed Lian Fei to understand the pressure of a powerful expert.

Yao Tuohai had a scholarly appearance and a soft, friendly demeanor. Although he had merely been casually sitting there, facing him had made Lian Fei feel like an ant looking up at a majestic mountain.

This was the invisible pressure produced when a person’s cultivation reached a certain level and was not something Lian Fei could neutralize.

Yao Susu asked in concern, “Are you alright?”

Lian Fei shook his head and tried to smile, his face still a little pale, "I never imagined that your father would be Lord Yao Tuohai. It's honestly a surprise."

Yao Susu offhandedly replied, "I never hid it from you. You just never asked."

Lian Fei chuckled bitterly. When he recalled his conversion with Yao Tuohai, Lian Fei's heart began to beat faster in excitement. If he married Yao Susu in the future, wouldn't that mean he could borrow Yao Tuohai's influence and power to fly all the way to the sky?

Yao Susu suddenly asked, "Did you mean what you said earlier?"

Lian Fei was taken aback but immediately returned to his wits and responded with a determined expression, "Susu, how will I be worthy of you if I can't personally avenge my father's death?"

In the earlier conversation, Yao Tuohai had said that he already understood the grudge between Lian Fei and Lin Xun and clearly expressed that he would not help Lian Fei.

Lian Fei was even more direct. He immediately swore that he would personally take revenge, earning a little admiration from Yao Tuohai.

Yao Susu acknowledged his reply and said, "Although my father said he will not help you directly, you should know that the Yao Clan can provide you with various types of support. Don't waste this opportunity. You must pull yourself together and try to earn my father's acknowledgement."

Lian Fei took a deep breath and solemnly said, "Don't worry Susu, I will not only earn Uncle Yao's acknowledgement but also make you my wife!"

Yao Susu smiled sweetly and did not say anything else.

Lian Fei was overjoyed and proud. With Yao Tuohai backing him, what was there to worry about?

As for Lin Xun, he was merely an ant in Lian Fei's path which would be easily crushed once he rose to power!

"Look, that seems to be the Wu Clan Leader."

Yao Susu suddenly stopped and turned her head.

Lian Fei followed her gaze and saw Principal Yu Canglin walking toward them with a middle-aged man wearing a black hat. The middle-aged man was the current Wu Clan Leader, Wu Qun.

Lian Fei's expression immediately turned frosty. He didn't have a good impression of the Wu Clan.

"Susu, you guys are done?" Yu Canglin also caught sight of them and approached with a smile.

Yao Susu nodded and bowed, "We're done."

"Lian Fei, you're here as well." Wu Qun called out to Lian Fei, displaying a friendly expression.

Wu Qun had just found out about Lian Fei's and Yao Susu's relationship from Yu Canglin, who had also revealed that Yao Susu's father was the famous Yao Tuohai.

Wu Qun was rather surprised by this revelation. Lian Fei must be the luckiest son of a bitch in this world. Life really is fickle.

Lian Fei's expression was slightly cold as he acknowledged him before leaving with Yao Susu.

Wu Qun's expression instantly turned somewhat ugly as he inwardly ground his teeth. What an arrogant brat, if not for my support, you won't even be here today!

Meanwhile, Lian Fei was also sneering inside. You old dog Wu Qun, you can keep dreaming if you're thinking of using me as a spearhead again!

Yu Canglin spoke up at this moment, "I have mostly understood your matter. With Lord Yao Tuohai personally overseeing this, I believe you will receive a satisfactory answer."

"I'll have to trouble Brother Yu." Wu Qun smiled and cupped his hands together as he inwardly breathed a sigh of relief.

Yu Canglin waved his hand and disdainfully said, "No need to be courteous. Since Lin Xun tried to bully Donglin Academy, as the principal, I naturally will not allow such a vile person to continue running amok."

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The next morning.

Lin Xun got up at dawn. After washing up, he had breakfast with Xia Zhi.

Today marked the start of the district exam. However, Lin Xun seemed the same as usual, displaying no hint of excitement or anticipation.

Xia Zhi asked, "Are we leaving after the district exam is over?"

Lin Xun nodded. After some thought, he added, "I've offended many people in the city and it's become a problematic place. It would be best to leave as soon as possible."

Xia Zhi regretfully said, "Only half a month more and I'll have devoured all the gangs in the slums."

Lin Xun was speechless.

He finished his breakfast and was just about to leave when Xia Zhi suddenly said, "I want to go with you."

Lin Xun was stunned, "You're worried?"

Xia Zhi nodded. She opened her pitch-black, crescent-shaped eyes and earnestly said, "I feel that your enemies will not let you pass the district exam so easily."

She knew what had happened yesterday in front of Donglin Academy and understood how big of a commotion Lin Xun had caused.

Lin Xun chuckled. "The district exam is a very important event in the empire. Who would dare to cause trouble during the exam? Not to mention a bigwig like Yao Tuohai will be overseeing the exam. There shouldn't be anyone who would dare to obstruct me from participating."

Xia Zhi said, "I want to go and watch. I've not left the slums since we arrived in Donglin City."

Lin Xun's heart softened and agreed without hesitation.

Indeed, Xia Zhi very seldom showed herself. Even when wiping out the gangs in the slums, she only did so at night.

Since she requested to accompany him to Donglin Academy, how could Lin Xun possibly turn her down?

As such, Lin Xun left holding Xia Zhi's small hand. They walked out of the slums and headed to Donglin Academy.

The streets were busy despite the early hour and numerous people could be seen converging in a certain direction.

The district exam was today and it was one of the biggest events in Donglin City. It drew the entire city's attention and was naturally exceptionally electrifying.

When Lin Xun arrived at Donglin Academy, he found the place already flooded with people. A black mass of heads bobbed up and down like the sea, creating a majestic scene.

The majority was here for the entertainment, but there were also families here to support the participants.

Lin Xun retrieved his participation token and smoothly brought Xia Zhi into Donglin Academy. They did not encounter any obstructions.

They followed a wide paved path and their view soon opened up to reveal a giant plaza which could hold ten thousand people.

The plaza was already filled with figures, nearly all of which were teenagers. There were several thousand participants, their faces filled with anticipation.

There was a tall stage at the front of the plaza which had an excellent view of the entire place. When the district exam officially began, the examiners would be stationed on the stage, accompanied by various VIPs.

Two stone tablets stood a hundred feet away. Each tablet was a hundred-feet-tall and gave off different aeth power undulations.

These two tablets were the Bone Measurement Tablet and the Cultivation Measurement Tablet which measured a person's age and cultivation respectively.

When the exam began, the participants would go measure their age and cultivation in front of the two tablets. No one could cheat under the crowd's watching eyes, making it fair for everyone.

Xia Zhi chose a spot on the outer perimeter and softly said, "I'll wait here for you."

Lin Xun nodded. He was not worried about Xia Zhi. The little girl possessed exceptional intelligence and knew not to cause trouble in such a place.

Xia Zhi silently stood in a remote corner as a gentle breeze blew past, ruffling her clothes. No one noticed the peerless and breathtakingly beautiful face concealed under the little girl's hat.
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Although the world was huge, her gaze only had room for Lin Xun alone.

As she watched Lin Xun walk into the giant plaza, Xia Zhi's brows furrowed as a sliver of unexplainable irritation surged in her heart.

She had been feeling this irritation since last night and strongly believed in her intuition. Hence why she had specially followed Lin Xun today.

She did not know what was going to happen but she would be watching. She feared nothing as long as she was with Lin Xun.

There was still an hour until the district exam started, but the plaza was already filled with numerous cultivators, who were conversing with each other.

Lin Xun stood by himself, gazing at the empty stage in the distance. He knew that the district exam was the last chance for his enemies. All that was left was to see whether or not they dared to cause trouble under the watching crowd.

The district exam was an important event for the empire and was simultaneously held in all the cities today. No one in their right mind would dare to cause mischief because the consequences would be dire if the empire's higher-ups found out.

Lin Xun was not worried about his safety but whether or not certain people would allow him to pass smoothly.

After all, the nine thousand participants would ultimately be culled to a thousand. All it took was the examiner to make up some excuse to eliminate him!

Did they dare?

Lin Xun was not certain.

Lin Xun suddenly sensed something and turned his head to find Lian Fei coldly staring at him with unconcealable hatred.

Beside him was a well-dressed Yao Susu.

Lin Xun helplessly chuckled and approached them, "We meet again, friend. Didn't I say a few days ago that there's always a reason behind coincidence? I feel that we are quite strongly bound by the strings of fate."

Lian Fei was slightly stunned, seemingly not expecting Lin Xun to approach at this juncture. Lian Fei's expression swiftly darkened, "Is that so? Well, I don't feel the same!"

Yao Susu curiously looked Lin Xun up and down. Soon after, she softly chuckled and said, "I can see a lingering darkness between your brows. I'm afraid that you will be quite unlucky today."

She then pulled Lian Fei's arm and led him away.

Lin Xun's eyes narrowed, falling into thought as he watched them leave.

[Chapter 95: Undercurrents](#)

A group of figures appeared on the tall stage, immediately drawing everyone's attention.

"Look in the middle! That must be the famous Yao Tuohai, who is highly regarded by the prime minister!"

"Thirty years ago, Lord Yao passed the district, prefecture and provincial exams in a single year. Such an unrivaled demeanor is something we should all strive towards."

"Agreed, I've heard Lord Yao has already reached the Heaven Ascension stage. That makes him a top-tier individual even in the empire!"

"Look, even Donglin Academy Principal Yu Canglin, Wu Clan Leader Wu Qun, Stone Cauldron Alm's Black Rose Mu Wansu and other influential figures are merely supporting actors to Lord Yao. This is the embodiment of true power and influence!"

On the plaza, the nine thousand participants excitedly gushed over Yao Tuohai.

Lin Xun also looked up and saw a scholarly man seated at the center of the tall stage. He wore a long black robe with wide sleeves and had a well-groomed fu manchu style moustache and beard. He was the very picture of a dao practicing immortal.

Although he was merely sitting there, he gave off an invisible pressure and made others feel he was connected to the heavens. His eyes seemed tranquil and kindly, but when his gaze swept across the crowd, it made everyone feel a heart-palpating oppression.

This was Yao Tuohai!

An influential figure who rose to fame thirty years ago during the national exam! The only person in the southwest province who could rival the Southwest City Governor Liu Wudiao!

The Heaven Ascension stage huh. I wonder how much power such a cultivator wields... Lin Xun sighed deeply.

The more he cultivated, the more he understood how difficult it was. It was akin to climbing a mountain with only your bare hands, with each successive mountain growing taller and more dangerous.

An ordinary cultivator would be lucky to reach the Spirit Dipper stage, let alone the amazing Spirit Sea and Heaven Ascension stages. **NoVeLnext.COM**

Meanwhile, Lin Xun also took notice of the Wu Clan's Wu Qun. The middle-aged man wearing a black hat seemed like an honest person at first glance and had no outstanding features. However, the more ordinary someone of his status looked, the more extraordinary they usually were.

The fact that he was the Wu Clan Leader and a VIP at this event were clear indicators of his status. After all, ordinary people would never have a chance to ascend this high stage.

Mu Wansu was also present but Lin Xun only glanced at her before withdrawing his gaze.

Clang!

The clear ring of a bell echoed in the sky, like a signal which announced the start of the district exam.

The atmosphere grew solemn as all the chattering died down.

Donglin Academy Principal Yu Canglin rose to his feet. He explained the significance of the district exam in a loud and clear voice before giving a simple description of the rules. He then passed the time over to Yao Tuohai.

As the chief examiner, Yao Tuohai got up with a chuckle. His gaze swept across the place as he said, "Everyone present will eventually become pillars which support the empire so I hope to see you guys perform well today. Fight for the chance to serve the empire and create your own glorious success!"

His voice contained a power that made others feel respectful as it clearly echoed in every corner of the plaza.

Thunderous cheers and clapping immediately followed.

The young participants felt their blood boil with excitement, but Lin Xun found this rather meaningless. Such cliché words could only trick immature youths.

The district exam was certainly an important event to the empire, but in the end, it was merely the most basic test among the empire's exams. Even if someone passed, it would only mean that they had some talent and could not possibly have anything to do with glory or honor.

There were thirty-four provinces in the empire and countless cities in each province. Countless talented youths would pass the district exam each year, but only a small handful would be able to reach even greater heights. The majority, on the other hand, would soon fade back into mediocrity.

Fortunately, the boring introductory phase quickly passed and Donglin Academy Principal Yu Canglin finally announced the start of the district exam!

The exam was simple. Each participant would go forth to be probed by the Bone Measurement Aeth Tablet and Cultivation Measurement Tablet which would reveal their age and cultivation.

Subsequently, the top one thousand performing participants would pass while the others would be eliminated.

It was honestly very simple. There was no sparring, no life or death trials, and no other strange tests. It was merely a simple measurement of age and cultivation.

"Fang Xuanzhong, age fourteen, True Martial second layer!"

"Liu Gangshan, age fifteen, True Martial fourth layer!"

"Shi Hong, age eleven, True Martial first layer!"

.....

The results of every participant would be announced after the measurement. No one could cheat with everyone watching.

The exam progressed rather quickly: more than three hundred participants had their measurements taken in fifteen minutes. The results were varied but none were attention-drawing.

Lin Xun could not help but feel somewhat bored and decided to do some calculations: there were 9300 participants; at a rate of 300 per 15 minutes, it would take nearly 8 hours!

At the thought of having to stupidly stand around for eight hours, Lin Xun felt a wave of helplessness. Why is there only one set of measuring tablets? It would be much more efficient if there were more.

Regretfully, Donglin City was a remote city on the empire's southwest border and could not have more sets of measuring tablets.

"Wu Feichong, age nine, True Martial fifth layer!"

While Lin Xun was thinking about random things, a certain result drew his attention.

He was not the only one. The entire place seemed to stir at this announcement as an uproar quickly swept through the crowd. Nine-years-old! True Martial fifth layer cultivation! This was basically an extremely rare cultivation genius!

With such results, there was no need to wait for the final outcome. This outstanding participant was obviously going to pass.

"Wu Feichong? I heard he's a genius from the Wu Clan who was born with strong spirit power. He's the hope of the Wu Clan and they've declared their intention to nurture him into an excellent rune master at all cost!"

"The Wu Clan is so lucky. When Wu Feichong grows up, the Wu Clan's status in Donglin City will definitely increase!"

Amidst the discussions, Wu Qun's face was practically glowing with pride on the tall stage because Wu Feichong was his grandson.

Wu Qun felt especially happy when he heard Yao Tuohai praise 'what a rare talent'.

Oh, so he's from the Wu Clan. I wonder how much it will hurt them if I cripple him.

Lin Xun rubbed his chin in a thoughtful manner. If Wu Qun were to know the teenager's thoughts, he would have immediately murdered the kid!

The testing continued. It was not long before an eleven-year-old boy called Xiao Hen and a ten-year-old girl called Yu Miao caused uproars again with their True Martial seventh layer and sixth layer cultivation.

Although they could not compare to Wu Feichong, their talent was already considered top-notch.

One thing to note was that Xiao Hen was Boundless Treasure Pavilion Manager Xiao Yuanzhong's nephew, and had been enrolled into Donglin Academy at a young age.

Yu Miao's identity was even more impressive. She was the Donglin Academy Principal Yu Canglin's granddaughter!

Lin Xun was not surprised by any of this.

Although Wu Feichong, Xiao Hen and Yu Miao might be quite talented, they were, more importantly, from powerful factions. They had teachers to guide them from a young age and had access to plentiful cultivation resources. Their cultivation education was far better than any of the underprivileged disciples.

At the very least, although nearly four hours had passed and more than four thousand participants had been tested, not a single underprivileged cultivators' results had caused a stir in the crowd!

It was not that Lin Xun looked down on the underprivileged. After all, he also came from a poor background.

He knew that even if these underprivileged cultivators had amazing talent, due to the lack of cultivation resources, it would already be too late for them once they formally began their cultivation journey. This was undoubtedly burying their talent.

This was the cruel reality. It might be unfair to say the poor could not produce talent, but compared to the privileged disciples, it was honestly much more difficult for the underprivileged to succeed.

Moments later, Lin Xun put aside his thoughts. His turn had finally arrived!

Swish!

When Lin Xun arrived in front of the measuring tablets, Mu Wansu, who had been bored out of her mind, suddenly sat up. Her eyes were tinged with conflicting emotions as she looked over.

Upon observing Mu Wansu's reaction, several influential figures on the stage secretly wondered if this boy had some relation to Stone Cauldron Alms.

Wu Qun's eyes narrowed as an almost undetectable hint of iciness flashed in his eyes, Little shitbag, you won't be able to escape this time no matter how well you do!

There was no reaction from Yu Canglin and Yao Tuohai.

Meanwhile, Lian Fei and Yao Susu also looked over. Lian Fei's expression darkened while a sneer rose from the corners of Yao Susu's lips.

In a lonely corner far from the plaza, Xia Zhi, who had paid no attention to the exam since the beginning, abruptly raised her gaze to look at Lin Xun.

A familiar feeling of irritation soon rose in her heart, making her instinctively shift her gaze to the academy entrance. However, there was nothing noteworthy there besides a few guards.

This frustrated Xia Zhi, causing her to frown.

Lin Xun was oblivious to all of this. He stepped forward and did his measurements before returning to the plaza. He remained composed from start to end, not even glancing at the tall stage.

"Lin Xun, age thirteen, True Martial sixth layer!"

The announcement of the results immediately made several people gasp.

Chapter 96 The Human Heart is the Most Difficult to Predict

The gasps were few and scattered among various areas in the plaza.

This proved that having True Martial sixth layer cultivation at the age of thirteen was not very impressive. It was merely better than average and thus did not cause a commotion.

However, those that knew the name Lin Xun were unable to keep calm. It was not because Lin Xun's results were amazing but because they knew this name!

To many people present, Lin Xun was an unfamiliar name. However, those that knew him felt hatred and resentment at the mention of his name.

For example, some of the gasps in the crowd had come from Yang Qun and his group. They were known pampered young masters in Donglin City who had been beaten up and captured by Xia Zhi yesterday. They were subsequently brought to the entrance of Donglin Academy and made into the most miserable clowns. How could they not hate Lin Xun after all that?

Donglin Academy Principal Yu Canglin suddenly raised his head and thoughtfully glanced at Lin Xun, who was returning to the plaza, as he recalled the talk he had with Wu Clan Leader Wu Qun yesterday.

However, Principal Yu Canglin also recalled the commotion in front of the academy yesterday, causing him to frown and fall into thought.

Yu Canglin did not notice Yao Tuohai also quickly scanning Lin Xun's figure. Yao Tuohai's expression remained unchanged but he could not help but feel a little skeptical. What was so special about this True Martial sixth layer stage youngster for his daughter and Lian Fei to have suffered at his hands?

The corner of Wu Qun's eyes twitched without anyone noticing. He clearly remembered the report stating that Lin Xun had been at the True Martial fifth layer a month ago when he entered Donglin City. Who could have anticipated that the kid would advance to the next cultivation stage in a single month?

With such potential, cunning and ability at this young age, he will certainly become a huge threat once he grows up!

Wu Qun's expression remained composed but he had already begun thinking about killing Lin Xun.

Mu Wansu had an even more complicated expression on her face. If her memory was right, Lin Xun was only at the True Martial third layer the first time they met in Feiyun Village. In fact, it was through First Young Master Shi Xuan's four seasons brew that Lin Xun managed to step into the True Martial fourth layer.

It had only been a few months since then but Lin Xun's cultivation had already reached the True Martial sixth layer. Such rapid progress shook Mu Wansu's heart. For the first time, she realized that she had been too focused on making sure she would not lose out to the brat and had failed to notice his amazing cultivation talent.

Lin Xun was unaware of everyone's thoughts. He returned to his original position, lowered his head, and silently waited for the exam to be over.

He knew that announcing his name was akin to drawing blood in the woods, instantly drawing the attention of all the hidden hungry wolves.

However, he was not worried about them causing trouble during the exam.

Sure enough, it was exactly as Lin Xun had predicted. His appearance did not cause any interruptions and the exam proceeded as usual. One by one, each hopeful participant nervously went forward to get measured, obtain their results and return.

Some were happy with their results, some sighed in sadness, and some did not know what to make of it; each person displayed various emotions.

When it was nearly noon, all 9300 participants were finally done with their measurements. However, no one left since the final results had yet to be announced. In contrast to the boring waiting from before, the atmosphere of the plaza turned tense.

Everyone braced themselves and looked towards the tall stage; their faces were filled with desire, nervousness and hopefulness.

The final results would soon be announced. Those who were eliminated and those who passed would be known shortly!

On the tall stage, the chief examiner Yao Tuohai did not let everyone wait for long. He rose to his feet and his gaze swept across the crowd, "This district exam has been an eye-opener for me and I've discovered several good seedlings. Regretfully, only a thousand people will be able to pass. I hope that the young friends who fail will not be discouraged but work harder and participate again next year. As for those who pass, do not become proud and satisfied. The district exam is only the first step and there are still many challenges awaiting you..."

After giving his speech, Yao Tuohai's expression turned solemn as he instructed, "Dao Friend Canglin, please announce the results."

As he spoke, he passed a scroll to Yu Canglin.*novElnext.cOm*

Yu Canglin felt a surge of energy and accepted with a smile. However, his expression quickly changed to a serious one when he got up and unfurled the scroll.

"Age fifteen and cultivation lower than True Martial fifth layer, eliminated!

"Age fourteen, cultivation lower than True Martial fourth layer, eliminated!

"Age thirteen, cultivation lower than True Martial third layer, eliminated!

"Age twelve and below, cultivation lower than True Martial second layer, eliminated!"

He did not speak too quickly or too slowly. Each word boomed across the plaza like thunder, especially the word 'eliminated', which made several participants' hearts jump and made them unable to compose themselves.

The eliminated youths' faces paled as misery and an unwillingness to accept the results was revealed. Several of them even began to cry.

Although others might laugh at them for crying, this showed that these boys and girls were still children who had yet to properly experience life and its hardships. An experienced adult would not show tears no matter how badly he or she was unable to accept the result.

“It is time for the eliminated cultivators to leave the plaza!”

The mood in the plaza was heavy and filled with emotion, making it very easy for things to spiral out of control. If the eliminees did not leave, they might cause a ruckus upon hearing the names of those who had passed.

More than seven thousand disappointed people soon left, disappearing from the plaza.

Many felt pity for these eliminees. After all, quite a number of them had pretty good results and would have easily passed the past year’s district exam.

Regretfully, this year’s district exam was different because of a single Yao Tuohai. His presence had caused a massive influx of participants, with many cultivators even making a special trip here from other cities. As a result, the competition was crueler and the passing requirements much stricter than previous exams.

Lin Xun did not feel this was a big deal but he could not help but ponder at this juncture. The exam results are already being announced, are those fellows still not going to act?

Of course, it would be best if he could smoothly pass the district exam. However, Lin Xun did not believe such a thing would be allowed to happen.

There were roughly two thousand participants left in the plaza. In other words, at least a thousand more would soon be eliminated!

It was not long before Yu Canglin began to speak again, “There are now two thousand participants left. Most of you are of similar ages and possess similar cultivation levels, making it very difficult to make a decision. For the sake of fairness, Lord Yao Tuohai has decided to add in another round of testing!”

Another round of tests!

The entire place erupted. No one had expected that there would be another stage of selection at the most critical juncture. This was far too rare.

Of course, similar situations had occurred before in the empire’s district exams and had ultimately been resolved through an additional round of tests.

However, it was the first time something like this had happened in the Donglin City district exam!

Lin Xun’s eyes narrowed. He suddenly had a feeling that the additional round would not go smoothly for him.

“Of course, I have a list of names to announce before the additional round. The cultivators whose names appear on this list have the most outstanding results and need not go through this second round to pass!”

Yet another uproar swept through the plaza. However, it did seem fair after thinking about it. Top performers like Wu Feichong, Yu Miao and Xiao Hen, who had caused big commotions earlier, would definitely pass anyways. It was meaningless and a waste of everyone's time for them to go through another round of selections.

As the commotion died down, everyone in the plaza could not help but hold their breaths and look up in anticipation. The remaining participants hoped that their names would appear on the list so they need not go through the second round.

Yu Canglin quickly began to announce the names, "Wu Feichong, Yu Miao, Xiao Hen..."

About six hundred names were announced one after another, drawing wave after wave of reactions. Some were envious while others sighed in disappointment.

When Lin Xun ascertained his name was not on the list, he could not help but inwardly sneer. As expected, they will not let me pass so easily!

Although Lin Xun had seemed inattentive during the exam, he had actually memorized every cultivator's name and age. Hence, he had a rough idea about his relative performance.

Quite a number of participants on the name list were of similar age and cultivation to Lin Xun. There was clearly something fishy going on since they were given a pass and Lin Xun was not.

After all, there were only six hundred names on the list, meaning there were still about four hundred unfilled slots. So why was his name not there?

Lin Xun did not expose this because he knew it would be useless. No one present would help him seek redress for this injustice anyways. Moreover, although the list might seem biased, strictly speaking, it did not break any rules.

It was not the final list of passers but a portion of them! Yu Canglin still had more than sufficient room to explain everything!

In Lin Xun's opinion, this might be an attempt to incite and provoke him into giving them a valid reason to eliminate him.

Lin Xun would not allow them to have their way.

However, something unexpected soon happened. Lin Xun did not plan to expose this, but someone else stood up for him. Moreover, it was a very unexpected person—

Mu Wansu!

However, Lin Xun's heart could not help but sink at this scene as he inwardly swore.

[Chapter 97: Against the World](#)

Mu Wansu had clearly also sensed the unfairness in the list. After briefly hesitating, she spoke up to point it out, "Principal Yu, Lin Xun seems to also fit the passing criteria."

Her words were sufficiently courteous and she believed Yu Canglin could tell.

However, Yu Canglin's expression turned strange. He glanced at Mu Wansu and said, "I know."

Mu Wansu was taken aback. A sliver of unease rose in her heart as she observed Yu Canglin's expression.

Her gaze scanned the surroundings and immediately discovered that there was something off about Wu Qun's and some of the nearby influential figures' expressions. They seemed to gloat as if they had long waited for this moment.

Mu Wansu's heart sank, realizing she had not only failed to help Lin Xun but instead caused some trouble for him.

Sure enough, Yu Canglin's expression turned solemn and cold as he said in a deep voice, "I believe everyone is curious about why Lin Xun is not on the list despite his notable results."

The other VIPs on the stage silently nodded.

Seated at the center, Yao Tuohai displayed an interest in hearing the reason.

On the plaza, the waiting participants could not help but be stunned and puzzled by this development. What is going on with this Lin Xun person?

They did not understand the reason behind this.

However, Lian Fei, Yao Susu, Yang Qun and the others instantly knew, causing them to feel a surge of excitement. They looked toward Lin Xun with pleased gazes as if waiting for the show to begin.

Lin Xun inwardly sighed. Sure enough, his enemies' revenge had begun!

He did not blame Mu Wansu and even felt a little happy when she tried to stand up for him. Although she detested the sight of him, it was still rare for her to do such a thing when it came to a matter of principles.

At this time, Yu Canglin had already stood up and righteously said, "I shan't hide the truth from everyone. Although Lin Xun is pretty talented, he has numerous questionable qualities. Not only does he have bad conduct and no sense of morality, but his methods are also vicious and sinister. Someone as evil as him does not deserve to participate in the district exam!"

Yu Canglin's words were blunt. Although no foul language was used, these words seemed especially biting and oppressive when they came from the Donglin Academy Principal.

The entire place erupted.

The bigwigs of Donglin City were not the only ones who were present, there were also numerous academy instructors and the two thousand remaining participants. It was easy to imagine how shocked they were upon hearing Yu Canglin say such atrocious things about a mere youngster.

This must be true. Why would someone of Yu Canglin's status and position need to slander a mere youngster?

No sense of morality; vicious and sinister methods? What an excellent choice of words!

If not for the inappropriateness in this setting, Lian Fei would have praised the principal out loud. It was as if Yu Canglin had taken the words straight from Lian Fei's mouth, nearly making him pump his fist in excitement.

Yao Susu also had a wide grin on her face. She said in a low voice, "I did say there was a lingering darkness between his brows and disaster will definitely befall him today!"

Lian Fei could not help but laugh, feeling extremely pleased with this development. As the Donglin Academy Principal, Yu Canglin's words were worth their weight in gold while Lin Xun was merely a small fry from the slums. This was basically akin to the death penalty for him in the district exam.

Lin Xun did not say anything and ignored the uproar around him. He looked towards the tall stage and could not help but seethe with hatred upon seeing the loathsome appearances of Yu Canglin and the other influential Donglin City figures around him, who were showing various expressions. Using these pathetic excuses to tag me with unfair labels, these old bastards are vicious!

Once these insidious comments spread, Lin Xun's image would be affected even if he manages to participate in the prefectural exam in the future! *novelnext.cOM*

In other words, if he failed to debunk the slander, even if he achieved success in the future, others would use this slander to mock and ridicule him. He would have to carry these vile labels for life!

"Principal Yu, what do you mean by these words? It is inappropriate to so harshly criticize a participant in this public setting." Mu Wansu could help but question before Lin Xun could react. She had already made a mistake earlier and naturally refused to make a second one.

However, Yu Canglin merely waved his hand and said, "Miss Wansu, please calm yourself."

His sharp gaze scanned the crowd and ultimately locked onto Lin Xun, "Since I dare to make such statements, I have sufficient evidence to prove them. Someone of my status has no need to frame a mere youngster."

The noise immediately died down. From the crowd's expressions, they seemed to be convinced even before Yu Canglin brought out any evidence.

This was the power of influence. Unlike Lin Xun, who was not known by many, Yu Canglin was one of the most well-known figures in Donglin City. He was not only the Donglin Academy Principal but also one of the city's few Spirit Sea stage experts!

Who would dare to doubt the words of such a person?

"Lin Xun, let me ask you this. Are you the boss of the Chopsticks Gang?" Yu Canglin's shout boomed like thunder.

Chopsticks Gang?

Many people were bewildered but those who knew the name felt their hearts shake and quickly spread the information. Everyone was quickly made aware that it was a gang in the slums. Moreover, the Chopsticks Gang had become rather famous recently because it had successively devoured a dozen underground societies!

These underground societies were usually known to engage in activities which could not see the light of day and they were naturally not good people.

Several people present understood how chaotic and dirty the slums were. Although everyone was aware that there were many of these underground societies, there was a difference when the topic was openly talked about.

Under the crowd's eyes, Lin Xun was silent for a moment before he nodded, "Indeed."

The entire place stirred as if unable to believe that Lin Xun had actually admitted it! Wasn't this proof of Yu Canglin's words?

Even Yu Canglin had not expected Lin Xun to admit it so easily. However, Yu Canglin did not give this much thought.

In his view, Lin Xun was far too young and naive. He had responded truthfully because he had been intimidated and no longer dared to resist. At least the kid understood his current circumstances.

"Then let me ask you again, were you the one who secretly instigated those gang members to cause a huge ruckus in front of Donglin Academy yesterday?" Yu Canglin loudly shouted again. His piercing stare and oppressive aura made it seem as if he was questioning a criminal.

Numerous people, who had not known the truth, could not help but gasp. Yesterday's commotion in front of Donglin Academy had spread to the entire city. Who could have imagined that the mastermind was such a young boy?

If this was true, didn't it mean that the charade was actually part of a ploy?

No panic was visible on Lin Xun's face. He looked Yu Canglin in the eye and said, "That's right."

Upon seeing Lin Xun admit again, even Mu Wansu could not sit still any longer and became very worried. The punk is usually so cunning, why has he suddenly become such an idiot today? Doesn't he know that once he admits to everything, let alone passing the exam, he won't even be able to walk out of Donglin Academy today!

The flustered Mu Wansu did not know what to do. There were many influential figures present, making it impossible to suppress the situation even with Stone Cauldron Alms' backing.

In contrast to Mu Wansu, although Wu Qun's expression was still strict and serious, there was an unconcealable look of satisfaction in his eyes. Lin Xun was still far too young, how could he possibly match wits with veteran individuals like them?

Yu Canglin withdrew his gaze from Lin Xun and said, "Everyone, I believe all of you now understand why I said those things earlier. This is why I objected to putting his name on the passing list."

The other influential figures with the exception of Yao Tuohai in agreement. Although he did not express anything, his silence was in itself a form of acknowledgement.

Yu Canglin suddenly sighed deeply, "Originally, Lord Yao and I were going to allow Lin Xun to participate in the additional round, and would have given him a chance if he performed well. After all, he is still

young and has a chance to repent in the future. Regretfully, I think many people present will no longer agree.”

A strong feeling of disgust rose in Mu Wansu’s heart. Yu Canglin had clearly planned everything but was now acting as if he was so magnanimous and righteous. The fakeness of it all was just too nauseating. She honestly never expected the Donglin Academy Principal to be such a person.

It didn’t matter what Mu Wansu thought. After Yu Canglin’s speech, an angry clamor burst from the crowd.

“Absolutely not! He clearly has no morality and is full of evil thoughts. We cannot allow him to continue participating in the district exam!”

“That’s right! What an evil imp. To think he’s already so vicious at this age. If he grows up, he will definitely spread his poisonous influence and bring disaster to everyone!”

“We cannot let him continue participating in the district exam. In fact, we should capture him and make him pay for his crimes to set an example for others!”

The young were easily incited after all. Their shouting grew increasingly bold and unrestrained since it was someone who had no relation to them.

Endless curses and scolding flooded the plaza.

The youths in the plaza quickly moved away from Lin Xun as if they found it disgraceful to be anywhere near him, creating an empty space where he stood all alone.

At this sight, Mu Wansu felt both powerless and hopeless as she inwardly sighed. Why has Lin Xun become so stupid today?!

What should have originally been a district exam had devolved into an angry mob. Who would believe that this was a coincidence?

It must have been all planned in advance. How could someone as smart as Lin Xun not see this?

Lian Fei laughed excitedly while Yao Susu proudly stuck out her chest. This outcome is far too perfect.

On the stage, Wu Qun and Yu Canglin looked at Lin Xun as if he was already dead. Yao Tuohai remained silent and stoic, making it impossible to read his thoughts.

On the plaza, the angry mob continued to lash at Lin Xun.

It felt as if the world was against him.

[Chapter 98: Struggle](#)

Accused and spurned by everyone!

Lin Xun never imagined that he would one day receive such treatment.

He looked around, seeing the gazes that wished they could swallow him whole. He looked at the crowd’s angry faces, then at the smug and righteous old fellows on the stage and suddenly smiled.

It was a very dazzling smile.

The smile on his friendly face looked ever so glaring under the sunlight; as if he was laughing at everyone.

“Why are you smiling!” Yu Canglin suddenly shouted as his expression turned frosty.

In his mind, Lin Xun should be like a prisoner walking to the gallows. He should have been angrily shouting to try and refute everything or weeping and kneeling to beg for forgiveness. Yu Canglin couldn't have imagined that Lin Xun would still be able to smile in such circumstances.

Moreover, his smile was so carefree, so fearless and so offensive! Yu Canglin could not help but fume and bellow at this sight.

Why are you smiling!?

His voice echoed across the plaza, stunning the crowd who were just moments ago still furiously scolding, ridiculing and blaming Lin Xun. Their gazes pivoted towards the boy.

Sure enough, they found the youngster smiling!

The sight gave everyone a bizarre and absurd feeling, which was soon replaced by endless boiling rage. The evildoer dares to smile at such a time?

Although Lin Xun was all alone in the large empty space around him, he seemed completely unfazed. His gaze swept across the crowd and ultimately landed on Yu Canglin, “I’m amused by how blind and ignorant all of you are; unable to tell right from wrong or differentiate between black and white. You hear a few baseless rumors and judge me as an evil, unscrupulous person. If this were to spread to the Forbidden City, all of you here will be viewed as jokes and disgraces of the district exam!”

His voice was clear and his words were ruthless; he was directly scolding everyone present!

The entire place flew into a rage. This little bastard isn’t showing even an ounce of repentance at death’s door. He definitely deserves death!

The faces of the influential figures on the stage also darkened substantially. Being scolded by a youngster in front of everyone was undoubtedly an infringement upon their dignity.

Even Yao Tuohai, who had been watching like a bystander since the beginning, frowned slightly.

In contrast to the others, Mu Wansu was utterly shocked and alarmed by Lin Xun’s gall. Is the punk’s counterattack finally beginning?

“How dare you?!” Yu Canglin’s expression was stern, cold and oppressive. His eyes shined with an intense light as if he wished he could incinerate Lin Xun on the spot.

An ordinary thirteen-year-old would have been intimidated and scared witless, but Lin Xun was the picture of calm and displayed no fear.

His expression did not even waver as he looked straight at Yu Canglin without backing down, “How dare I? Well said! Dare I ask Principal Yu Canglin what crimes have I committed?”

What crimes have I committed?

Everyone found this ridiculous. Lin Xun had clearly admitted to everything earlier. Is he planning to take back his words? How despicable!

Before Yu Canglin could reply, Lin Xun continued, "I admit that I'm the boss of the Chopsticks Gang, but have any of you seen me bully the innocent? Has anyone seen me do anything evil?"

"Never!"

Lin Xun stepped forward, his voice charged with emotion, "Instead, after I established the Chopsticks Gang, I restricted my subordinates from doing any more wicked things. Feel free to go and verify this in the slums! If I said a single lie, I will take my own life as an apology to the world!"

The entire place was silent as everyone watched Lin Xun finally retort with an unyielding spirit. Several people's expressions changed slightly as they began to waver.

This was a vicious oath to make!

Of course, mere verbal promises weren't worth much. However, Lin Xun looked far too composed and did not try to take back his admission of being the Chopstick Gang's boss. Instead, his words seemed to hold a convincing power.

On the stage, Yu Canglin's expression darkened, realizing Lin Xun's earlier silence was not a sign of him giving up but instead accumulating his power for the counterattack.

However, before Yu Canglin could say anything, the Wu Clan Leader Wu Qun could no longer hold himself back and shouted, "Preposterous! To think the leader of an underground society would dare to try and make himself look innocent. What a joke!"

Lin Xun's gaze shifted towards Wu Qun. Instead of showing any timidity, a sneer rose from the corners of Lin Xun's mouth, "This must be the Wu Clan Leader. I actually have something to ask you. Who contacted the Black Tiger Gang Boss Old Tiger a few days ago to arrange a night raid on me with a few hundred men?"

An uproar erupted. The crowd was in disbelief.

Lian Fei's expression turned gloomy, a stark contrast to the smugness he was feeling earlier. He had already realized that Lin Xun was planning to drag the Wu Clan down with him. Once that happened, Lian Fei would not be able to escape either!

He could not help but become somewhat anxious and agitated. Why were these influential figures still childishly bickering with Lin Xun? Couldn't they capture him to prevent further complications?

"Relax, there is no evidence. With my father around, Lin Xun will not be able to save himself no matter how eloquent he is!"

Yao Susu seemed to read Lian Fei's thoughts and consoled him, "Moreover, today is the district exam and the entire empire is observing the situation in each city. Even Principal Yu and the others would not dare to risk going against the rules and subdue Lin Xun. Otherwise, if news of it got out, the repercussions will be problematic to say the least."

Lian Fei hatefully said, "That shitbag Lin Xun definitely knows this. That's why he dares to act so fearlessly!"

Although that was how it was, Lian Fei knew that only the higher-ups on the stage could decide whether to subdue Lin Xun. This was not a matter Lian Fei had any say in.

On the stage, Wu Qun's expression darkened and he furiously yelled, "Don't try to slander me! If you dare to speak any more nonsense, I will kill you right here and now!"

Lin Xun sneered, "How mighty of you. Today is the district exam and I'm a participant. As long as I manage to pass, I will become a future pillar of the empire. If you dare to kill me to hide the truth, go ahead! It doesn't matter if I die, but the Wu Clan will not have an easy time either once the empire hears of this!"

Kill me to hide the truth!

The corners of Wu Qun's mouth twitched at this phrase. He had finally experienced Lin Xun's cunning wit. The way he randomly pinned crimes on others was devious to say the least.

If Wu Qun did kill Lin Xun, it would only validate everything the boy had said!

Numerous people's expressions also turned strange when Lin Xun said he was a future pillar of the empire.

It was such an arrogant thing to say and more importantly, it had been taken directly from Yao Tuohai's speech before the district exam. No matter how much they didn't want to, the crowd had to admit that Lin Xun's results were pretty good. Hence, no one could dispute it no matter how uncomfortable it made them feel.

The corners of Yao Tuohai's lips also twitched at these words but he ultimately did not say anything.

Upon realizing that the situation was beginning to spiral out of control, Yu Canglin frowned and solemnly said, "Silence! Today is the district exam, not a criminal proceeding!"

His words returned the crowd to their senses. How did the topic suddenly shift to the Wu Clan? Lin Xun is so devious, this was clearly his intention!

Lin Xun immediately said, "Principal Yu is right, today is the district exam! Dare I ask what everyone's earlier criticisms of me have to do with the exam?"

Yu Canglin's expression darkened, "How can there be no relation? Your questionable character, lack of morality and treacherousness are huge causes for concern. Allowing you to pass the exam will be a failure on our part as examiners!"

Before Lin Xun could open his mouth again, Yu Canglin waved his sleeve and commanded, "Take him away. We will deal with him after the district exam is over!"

A Donglin Academy instructor immediately moved, his gaze brimming with killing intent as it swept towards the plaza. He was a stern-looking middle-aged man and Spirit Dipper stage expert.

Evidently, Yu Canglin was not going to give Lin Xun any more opportunities to rebut!

Lian Fei and Yao Susu breathed sighs of relief and began to smile again. On the stage, the expressions of many influential figures on the stage relaxed as icy lights flashed in their eyes.

However, Lin Xun suddenly faced the heavens and laughed, "I can already tell that you, Yu Canglin, are the same as those who seek to silence and humiliate me! Fine, allow my sacrifice today to show everyone in the empire how twisted and evil all of you are!"

He acted as if he would rather die than lower his head.

This was called advancing through retreating. Go ahead and kill me if you guys have the balls. As long as news of what happened today spreads, none of you will be able to escape either!

Lin Xun's reaction made the crowd begin to doubt. Could there really be something more to this matter?

Yu Canglin's heart sank. Lin Xun's words were far too sinister and put Yu Canglin between a rock and a hard place.**novelnext.com**

He couldn't help but feel regretful. If he knew this would happen, he would have ordered Lin Xun to be taken away earlier and deny him any chance of speaking!

However, it was useless to regret at this juncture.

Wu Qun's and the other influential figures' expressions also turned ugly. The district exam was an important matter to the empire. There would certainly be repercussions if it was known that they had forced a participant to his death.

Lian Fei's teeth itched as hatred swelled in his chest. Lin Xun's undaunted appearance looked far too disgusting in Lian Fei's eyes!

The atmosphere turned stiflingly silent.

Every gaze directed at Lin Xun contained a mixture of feelings: confusion, bitterness, hatred, bewilderment, gloating and admiration, although most were filled with hatred.

Lin Xun seemed completely unconcerned because it was already do or die for him. He was very weak and no match for any of these old fellows. He needed to acknowledge this truth. A person must first clearly understand his or her own power before trying to fight against the unfairness of reality.

The current reality was that no one could help him. Only he could help himself!

There was no way he would be able to leave safely without risking it all at this moment. The district exam was already no longer of any concern.

This was the sorrow of being a small fry.

No matter how self-deprecating it was, Lin Xun had to admit that he was only a small fry.

The power he currently possessed was still far too weak compared to the influential figures present. Hence, he could only risk his life on a bet!

Even if he died, he would drag them down with him!

[Chapter 99: The Rage in a Desperate Situation](#)

This district examination was indeed different from those in the past.

A scheduled additional test was already a first for the district examination in Donglin City. But the fact that Lin Xun's name didn't appear on the list of those who successfully passed stirred up another storm.

No one expected something like that to happen.

However, Lin Xun knew that this was unavoidable. The people who he had formed enemies with wouldn't easily let him pass the district examination and leave Donglin City.

And everything that had happened demonstrated that his prediction was correct.

Lin Xun had no time to be angry, had no time to hate anyone, and had no time to feel upset or indignant. He had to do everything he could to save himself.

His reasoning told him that anger, hatred, sorrow, and indignation were useless in such a situation. His priority now was to save himself.

His present situation had become extremely tense, and even though there were no swords or spears in sight, there was great danger laying low everywhere. The slightest carelessness could lead to a serious accident.

It was just that, although Lin Xun was gambling everything, he had overlooked one person—

Yao Tuohai!

At that moment, Wu Chaoqun and Yu Canglin were weighing up the pros and cons of slaughtering Lin Xun, but Yao Tuohai, who had been watching on the side, finally spoke up.

As he sat up straight, his graceful expression was still as gentle as before, but his voice was full of majesty and entered straight to the heart. "This district examination had been dragged on for far too long. Let's capture this boy first and take him out of the examination venue. I will report the matter to the empire later."

The sentence that he said in a nonchalant manner was simple and direct. It was as though he was saying that it didn't matter who was right or wrong. He would take Lin Xun away first and he would personally explain to other people if anything happened in the future. He was going to take full responsibility for the matter.

His move was equivalent to sentencing Lin Xun to death!

This was Yao Tuohai! Once he opened his mouth and spoke, it was akin to a devastating thunderbolt—there was no room to turn around at all.

Lin Xun's heart suddenly sank to the bottom of his chest. He had been in constant conflict with Yu Canglin and Wu Chaoqun, fighting battles of wits and courage. But the only person who he couldn't see through was Yao Tuohai, who hadn't uttered a word.

He originally thought that since Yao Tuohai was an external chief examiner and he was well-known, he didn't want to be dragged into the storm and he showed this through his silence. Who would have thought that he launched a fatal blow at Lin Xun the moment he opened his mouth!

He had completely caught Lin Xun off guard!

Upon hearing Yao Tuohai's final decision, Yu Canglin and Wu Chaoqun immediately breathed a sigh of relief and a mocking and cold gleam came to their eyes as they glanced at Lin Xun. Little trash, you think you stirred up towering waves, but in the end you can't even survive the suppression of a big shot! So pitiful!

To the rest of the people, the words of Yao Tuohai, the chief examiner, was like a divine needle that stabilized the sea and determined everything!

Excitement.

Commotion.

Smugness.

Cheering.

The still and silent atmosphere suddenly seemed to explode. Everyone knew that Lin Xun was at the end of the road and couldn't reverse the situation!

Lian Fei also smiled. He was so excited that his face was flushing. He hated the fact that he couldn't throw his head back and roar to the sky. After all, it hadn't been easy to get rid of Lin Xun!

"What did I say just now? He can't escape death as long as my father is around!" Yao Susu said smugly and the corners of her lips curled upwards.

"Hurry up and capture that boy!" Yu Canglin roared on the platform.

A teacher of Donglin Academy who was already called out and was waiting on the side assumed a chilling murderous look upon hearing those words.

"Wait!"

Mu Wansu sprang up, her beautiful face bore a look of panic but also a hint of determination. She gritted her teeth and said, "Everyone, please calm down. Lin Xun is someone who the First Young Master of my family regards highly of. He is definitely not a bad person."

Everyone on the platform was dumbstruck. They immediately realized who the First Young Master that Mu Wansu spoke of was and their expressions uncontrollably changed.

Shi Xuan!

The son of Fortune God Shi!

Lin Xun actually caught Shi Xuan's attention!

Would Mu Wansu dare to lie? She wouldn't dare to. At least she wouldn't dare to lie using Shi Xuan's name. So what she said is definitely true.

It was also because of this that Yu Canglin and Wu Chaoqun felt aggrieved. The boy is about to be captured, how could there be such a sudden change?

However, Yao Tuohai furrowed his eyebrows and said displeasedly. "It doesn't matter who is behind this boy. He has to be severely punished for today's matter. As the chief examiner of this district examination, I don't need anyone to tell me what to do!"

What kind of person was Yao Tuohai? He was already highly regarded by the minister of the empire thirty years ago. In the entire empire's southwest province, only Liu Wujun could be compared to him. Although he didn't have absolute authority, he was a leading figure and wouldn't be frightened by one sentence.

No matter how powerful Shi Xuan was, he was still just the son of Fortune God Shi. Yao Tuohai would only give him face if he came in person.

However, they shouldn't even think about it if they wanted Yao Tuohai to take back what he said!

Mu Wansu's beautiful face turned deathly pale. She was out of her wits and had lost all hope. It indeed bode ill rather than well for Lin Xun. It would be difficult for him to reverse the situation.

However, Yu Canglin and Wu Chaoqun were completely relieved. They incessantly smiled coldly. It's useless even if you bring out the name of Fortune God Shi. Lin Xun, Lin Xun, who in the world can save you now?

Boom!

Suddenly, Mister Xi, a teacher of Donglin Academy, took action. He was a stern middle-aged man but also a Spirit Dipper Stage expert. Without a word, he made a move. He took a step forward and charged straight towards Lin Xun like an exploding rainbow. His movements were swift, fierce and imposing.

As for Lin Xun, he drew a deep breath, and determination filled his eyes. He knew that he had been driven to a desperate situation, but he wouldn't give up so easily.

However, just when Lin Xun was about to do something, a sharp whistle pierced the air and stung everyone's eardrums.

A bone spear appeared out of nowhere. It was flowing with fine silvery starlight that reacted with the air to release a terrifying power. It aimed straight for the middle-aged man.

The stern middle-aged man's face suddenly changed as he fiercely swatted it away.

Boom!

A terrifying collision instantly rang out and indescribable shock waves swept out like hurricanes in all directions. The nearby cultivators were blasted away before they could even react, and a sudden commotion broke out.
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The stern middle-aged man reeled back a few steps, his face alternating between blue and white. He was both shocked and furious that someone dared to use violence in Donglin Academy!

Not only did the stern middle-aged man act that way, but Yao Tuohai, Yu Canglin, Wu Chaoqun and others on the platform also all simultaneously shifted their gaze to next to Lin Xun.

There stood a little girl in a black windproof robe. A wave of qi during exchange had lifted the hat that covered her face, revealing her beautiful little fair face that made the world dim in comparison.

She held a two-foot bone spear in a tight grip as she stood quietly beside Lin Xun. If one hadn't seen it with their own eyes, one would find it impossible to imagine how such a little girl could take on the stern middle-aged man at the Spirit Dipper Stage!

However, soon, everyone's attention was shifted elsewhere. They couldn't help but feel captivated by the little girl's stunning face.

The clamorous square suddenly fell silent and still, and even Yao Tuohai looked stunned.

Too beautiful!

She was perfect like a masterpiece from heaven. Her beauty seemed to not belong to the human world, yet she was only a little girl of around five to six years old. That impact of her beauty was enough to turn all living beings upside down!

Lin Xun sighed. He could see no one else but Xia Zhi. "You should leave first. Even if I unfortunately die here, you can avenge me in the future."

Xia Zhi shook her head. "If you're gone, my world will be dark forever. I won't even have any meaning to live."

She didn't say anything about dying together, but her words still made Lin Xun's heart tremble and complex emotions swirled in his heart.

"You have to go!"

Lin Xun suddenly gritted his teeth and uttered in a voice that only Xia Zhi could hear. "You say you won't have any meaning to live? Remember the faces of everyone on the platform except Mu Wansu and kill them all. Then, I can die content!"

Xia Zhi frowned, lifted her head and ran her eyes over everyone on the platform. A coldness flowed out her clear and dark crescent-shaped eyes.

Before Xia Zhi said anything, Yao Tuohai fumed, "You broke into the examination venue without authorization and disrupted the district examination. Don't even think about leaving here today!"

His voice quaked the entire place.

Lin Xun could no longer contain the anger that he had suppressed for so long. It flooded his body like bubbling lava and burned his whole body to the point it was about to erupt.

He didn't care about himself but when Yao Tuohai said he wouldn't let Xia Zhi leave, he lost control of his rage and it made all the indignation that he suffered today burst out from the bottom of his heart.

He had also gone berserk when he saw Xia Zhi suffer severe wounds while slaughtering Old Tiger Lu. This time, an endless rage burned like a flame in his heart and made him completely lose his rationality.

No one noticed, but blood-colored vortexes as deep as an abyss emerged in his eyes.

Only Xia Zhi noticed it. Panic-stricken, a rare nervousness surfaced on her little face. She subconsciously reached for Lin Xun's hand as she urged, "Don't."

Lin Xun's heart trembled and he snapped awake from his endless rage. He looked perplexed at Xia Zhi and then glanced around to see smug and cold looks on everyone's faces. "I will do everything I can to create a chance for you to escape. You must run away and not care about anything else. This is an order! Do you understand?"

Xia Zhi stared blankly at him for a long moment. Then, her eyes misted over and she nodded.

On the platform, Yao Tuohai couldn't help but frown. He sprang up and uttered coldly, "You want to escape? As long as I am around, don't even think about it!"

No one knew why Yao Tuohai would be filled with murderous intent. He had lost the calmness and composure that he usually had.

Only Yao Tuohai knew that a desire to possess suddenly surged in his heart when he saw Xia Zhi and he couldn't control or suppress it at all!

It was an instinctive desire. It was as though Xia Zhi possessed some kind of power beneath her incomparable beauty that made him want to do everything he could to possess it!

[Chapter 100: The Dark Night's Arrival](#)

Yao Tuohai's abnormal behavior made the entire audience raise their eyebrows.

The entire audience was stirred up when he strolled down the platform.

Does Lord Yao want to take action himself?

His action had stirred excitement in everyone. Yao Tuohai was a well-known expert in the southwest province of the empire. Thirty years ago, he had already made a name for himself in the empire's national examination and since then the current minister had treated him respectfully.

A few years ago, someone had speculated that Yao Tuohai had already set foot into the Heaven Ascension Stage and the only one who could compete with him in the entire southwest province was Great Commander Liu Wujun!

The fact that such a prestigious expert had come to Donglin City to preside over the district examination had already caused a great sensation. But now, he wanted to personally deal with Lin Xun and the little girl. This undoubtedly made the people even more excited.

Would it be a great honor to see a top expert in action?

The countenance of Yu Canglin, Wu Chaoqun and others on the platform had also changed. They were a little surprised and didn't understand why Yao Tuohai did that.

Given his identity, how would he need to personally take action?

But regardless, no one could stop him.

Yao Tuohai clasped his hands behind his back, his manners akin to strolling idly in a courtyard. But his scholarly face was full of disdain like a king patrolling his territory.

Everyone was still and the atmosphere was somber. Everyone fixed their eyes on Yao Tuohai; their faces filled with excitement and anticipation.

No one cared about whether Lin Xun and the little girl would live or die. They only wanted to see how Yao Tuohai, who was well-known all over the southwest province, would capture the two!

Lin Xun felt a terrifying pressure. The suppression came from Yao Tuohai, who was strolling towards him. Every step that Yao Tuohai took made Lin Xun feel as though a boulder from Mount Tai was crushing down on him and his spirit, blood, flesh and aeth power were imprisoned.

Lin Xun's face blanched but there was a fierce glint in his eyes. He felt a huge weight bearing down on him that made him unable to budge an inch and almost sank to his knees.

Xia Zhi's black robe billowed wildly around her. Her transcendently beautiful face had a detached indifference and only her crescent-shaped eyes were shimmering with pale silvery light.

She was also bearing the terrifying pressure.

After all, Lin Xun, who only possessed a cultivation base of the sixth layer True Martial Stage, and Xia Zhi, who could at most go up against Spirit Dipper Cultivators, were far inferior to Yao Tuohai, who was strolling towards them.

Suddenly, Lin Xun quivered and a streak of blood overflowed his lips. His face had also turned deathly pale.

Xia Zhi's heart throbbed with pain when she saw him like that. She subconsciously reached to grab his hand to share the pressure with him.

Yao Tuohai's eyes lit up, and he lifted his right hand and made a grabbing motion in the air.

Buzz!

A giant invisible hand suddenly took shape in the air. It was bright and blazing with raging black flames, resembling a claw emerged from hell to absorb the life of the world!

The entire world seemed to be quaking at that moment and an indescribably terrifying power was released from black flame hand. It stifled even the audience and made their blood run cold like they had fallen into an ice cave.

But to Lin Xun and Xia Zhi, it resembled a sea of black flames descending upon them and drowning them. They couldn't evade or escape no matter what they did.

Too terrifying!

Such a mysterious and terrifying power was beyond imagination. It was the power unique to the Heaven Ascension Stage—the power of imagination!

The two of them will no doubt be finished!

Everyone shared the same thought. Even a Spirit Sea cultivator would find it difficult to survive such a terrifying attack.

A look of shock washed over the face of Yu Canglin, one of the few Spirit Sea cultivators present, and his eyes went wide with fear.

It seemed slow but everything happened in the blink of an eye. The speed was so fast that it would make a person feel despair.

Lin Xun subconsciously exhausted all his strength to wrap his arms around Xia Zhi to protect her.

Xia Zhi instinctively struggled but she instantly calmed down when she felt Lin Xun's warmth. Only the terrifying silvery light continued to burn in her eyes.

Suddenly, the world suddenly plunged into darkness. It was so abrupt and so fast that it felt like eternal night had come.

Almost at the same time, a drop of crystal-clear water silently emerged before the giant black flame hand.

The seemingly insignificant tiny drop of water caused Yao Tuohai's pupils to constrict and an intense feeling of unease surged to his heart.

Bang!

The drop of water suddenly disintegrated and gathered to form a black flower. Its pure black color made it seem like it was picked from the eternal night and the cold petals exuded the aura of death through its beauty.

Yao Tuohai lost his usual calmness and composure when he saw the black flower bloom. His scholarly face dramatically changed and a cold stream rose in his heart.

The Black Glory Flower!

Why would it appear here?

Could it be...

Boom!

As the black flower blossomed, the beauty and glamor of the world went away. Yao Tuohai felt pain shoot through him like he had been severely wounded before he was sent flying across tens of feet and was slammed into the ground.

At the same time, the eternal night that shrouded the world faded and the black flower was gone. The heaven and earth restored its brightness and clearness, dazzling the eye.

Everyone looked perplexed. At that moment, they had experienced the darkness of eternal night, which felt like a fleeting nightmare, and they inexplicably shuddered with fear and panic.

What just happened?

Everyone peered around and saw Lin Xun protecting Xia Zhi with his body. But to their surprise, Lin Xun and Xia Zhi hadn't been captured.

Their gaze shifted further and they saw Yao Tuohai fall on his buttocks more than tens of feet away. As though struck by lightning, they almost couldn't believe their eyes.

Disheveled and ashen-faced, Yao Tuohai was filled with fear and panic. His imposing manner was completely gone and instead he looked distressed.

What actually happened?

The entire audience was dumbstruck and the atmosphere had become even more still. Even Yu Canglin, Wu Chaoqun and other influential people in Donglin City looked blank and their minds seemed to have drifted from them.

Lin Xun slowly lifted his head and glanced around. A hint of puzzlement came to his eyes. I'm not dead?

Xia Zhi also raised her little face and surveyed the surroundings. It was unknown what she had noticed but a rare nervousness crossed her beautiful little face and a familiar fretful feeling reappeared in the depths of her heart, only that it was much stronger than before.

At that moment, footsteps rang from afar, sounding particularly clear in the still and silent atmosphere.

Everyone subconsciously looked up and saw sixteen men in the empire's black court attire. They were lined up in twos and bore solemn expressions as they came their way.

Even if they were walking, they maintained an extremely disciplined stance. Their every little movements were coordinated and orderly!

As they assembled on the square, everyone felt a terrifying pressure assaulting their faces. It was as though they weren't facing sixteen people but an invincible army.

The people in their way seemed to be shrouded by an invisible force and moved aside without them realizing. It wasn't until a good moment later that they noticed that they had changed spots and they trembled all over and sweated profusely.

Shua!

Meanwhile, Yu Canglin, Wu Chaoqun and other influential people from Donglin City got to their feet at the same time, aghast by the scene.

Yao Tuohai's gaze turned complex when he saw the scene. He pushed himself up but his heart felt incomparably heavy.

Black Glory Envoys!

Which important person has come?

Lin Xun and Xia Zhi turned their heads at the same time.

.....

Behind the sixteen men in black was a black carriage pulled by four mysterious black one-horned beasts.

The black carriage seemed to be constructed from the curtains of the eternal night. A complex starry sky scene akin to a rune pattern was floating on its surface.

The moment the peculiar army of people appeared, an invisible force stilled and silenced everyone.

No one knew how they entered Donglin Academy, why they came, or why no one stopped them.

An old man got up in the carriage, slowly opened the door, and bowed slightly. His manners were flawless.

A woman came out of the carriage. Her hair was tied up in a high bun and secured with a black hollowed-out phoenix wood hairpin. She looked very young, and her fair and silky skin seemed very delicate. Her sky-blue eyes gave off a coldness and detachedness unique to those who were superior.

She wore a perfectly tailored gorgeous black set of robes that highlighted her slim figure. On her slender and fair pinky was a ring with black gems embedded. The ring was shaped like an open eye and was extremely frightening.

She was a traditional, graceful, noble and beautiful woman, but she exuded an aura of solitary, darkness, coldness and majesty that belonged to the superior.

However, almost no one could see her. They only saw a graceful and slender figure that seemed like a figure from the endless darkness. Apart from that, everything else was boundless darkness.

That kind of darkness seemed capable of devouring the soul and drowning everything in the world!

At that moment, fear surged in everyone's hearts and everyone was as silent as cicadas in winter. The atmosphere grew increasingly deathly still and even the people on the platform felt a chill run down their spines like they had fallen into an ice cave.

Yao Tuohai's expression was extremely complicated. He came to Donglin Academy to act as an external examiner of the district examination but his real purpose was to wait for the arrival of an important person!

However, he didn't expect the important person to stop him when he was trying to capture Lin Xun and Xia Zhi!

Why?

He couldn't understand.

But it was enough to make his heart pound with fear and unease.

As though she sensed that Yao Tuohai's emotions were fluctuating, she swept a glance over him after getting off the carriage and said in a unique, charming husky voice, "Given your strength, you don't deserve to touch what doesn't belong to you."

Yao Tuohai's face blanched.

The woman paid no more attention to him but she shifted her gaze to Xia Zhi...