

Sprit Vessel 561

[Chapter 561: The Three Sacred Canons](#)

More than 100,000 geniuses gathered at the imperial palace. Devilish monsters appeared each day so the competition was fierce and laden with difficulties.

These geniuses would become the topics of discussion, and the demonic successor was one of them.

However, the majority only talked about the gambling hall and didn't think that highly of his battle power. He was only among the mid-level.

The hottest characters were still Li Xiaonan, Beiming Potian, Dongfang Jingshui, and Prince Hongye. After all, they were historical geniuses, standing at the very top.

Of course, plenty of them tried to steal the two garments from Nangong Hongyan but failed after several attempts. She then disappeared from the capital completely. As long as she had the cloak, no one could find her unless she wished so.

The spirit stone hall of the Divine River Guard looked abandoned. Inside were several broken walls, more than ten meters tall. The workers there walked into this courtyard and instantly disappeared from sight. It was as if there was an invisible barrier taking them in.

In the last few days, more and more workers appeared. Some had unfamiliar faces, clearly new recruits.

Suddenly, a black glow flashed inside these broken walls. A youth stood there proudly, cloaked in black. His features were well-defined - brows as sharp as a sword. He stood there with a cold yet warm expression.

"Finally made it to the fourth level after nine days. Give me a sword!" Feiyun shouted.

A black sword with strands of blood circling around the edge flew out from one of the houses. It emitted a terrible power - a murderous tool that devours blood.

Feiyun created a palm to capture the sword. It struggled like a wild and disobedient dragon.

He forcefully subdued it and grabbed the hilt before slashing towards the house.

A plume of flame consisting of dozens of firebirds flew out. They looked quite real, more than ten meters long with a long beak as red as a sword. Its claws were as long as spears. The thing was completely covered in scales, blood-red feathers, and a fiery glow.

They were condensed from sword energy and carried a demonic aura like awakening ancient beasts crossing through the sky.

"Boom!" An old man rushed out of the house. His weapon was a treasure bottle. His long, white beard resembled steel strings. The bottle grew to a hundred meter tall, looking like a golden pagoda.

The sword energy slammed into the bottle and exploded.

The old man's hair flew everywhere from the shockwave. He grabbed the bottle forced back to its initial size then kneeled: "Congratulation, Divine King. Your cultivation has improved."

"Elder Mo, rise." Feiyun ordered.

He was in charge of weaponry for Divine River and had prepared this sword, a first-level spirit treasure, for Feiyun. The workers only gave the battle exchange a quick glance before returning to their task.

Feiyun successfully refined two core pills to reach the fourth level, increasing his spirit energy by a large margin. He was a sleeping dragon. When the right opportunity presented itself, he would soar to the sky.

'It's a shame that Myriad Beast Physique hasn't reached completion yet.' He tried to cultivate the art again and refined 9,998 beast souls. Alas, this became another bottleneck.

Myriad was a limiting number. For example, kings all wanted to rule for ten thousand years. There were plenty of proverbs and lines using this particular number in literature due to its symbolism.

"Must I cultivate the first phoenix bone before finishing his physique?"

Feiyun's Immortal Phoenix Physique had two stages. He finished the blood transformation stage but the bone refinement had no result. After all, he had the body of a human, so the difficulty became a hundred times harder than before.

Moreover, the very first bone would act as the heart too. A human's heart was made of flesh, so how could he turn it into a bone?

"There's a problem! A big one!" Ningshuai suddenly ran into the spirit stone hall, wearing red trousers, straw shoes, and a big Buddhist hat.

Feiyun asked: "What's wrong?"

The guy struggled for breath and was happy to see Feiyun: "You're finally out."

"What's happening?"

"After the first round, the one hundred best prodigies became known. The Crown Prince invited them to Supreme Beauty for a feast, acting as the princess' older brother."

"What's wrong with that?"

"Of course it is fine to have a party, but during the party, people made it hard for Miss Nangong. One said that she had killed his Senior Uncle and stole as spirit treasure. Next, another guy said that she had stolen his clan's supreme treasure."

"What a joke, they just want to steal her two garments so they came up with these excuses and crimes. If she really wants something, she just needs to raise her hand and someone will bring it to her."

"Well yeah, but the guys wouldn't give up. They couldn't find Miss Nangong so they decided to capture Xue Wu and Yu Chan in order to force her out. That's why I'm here to get some backup. If you still haven't come out, I would have asked several seniors from Divine River to come help."

Feiyun noticed a red badge hanging on Ningshuai's waist and became surprised: "You also got through?" "Obviously, how would I be at that party if I didn't?" Ningshuai proudly said.

Feiyun grabbed the badge and saw Ningshuai's name on it, realizing that it wasn't stolen. This thief was hiding his skills.

"Your Big Bro was able to get through it thanks to your two core pills, allowing me to get to the next level. I was so damn cool on stage, so many girls became my fans... Hey, wait, I'm not finished! Where are you going?" He shouted at the end.

"Supreme Beauty." Feiyun put on his hat again and started walking in the air while holding his black sword.

"They're very unreasonable, you don't want to bring more people?" Ningshuai also put on his hat and gave chase.

Supreme Beauty was filled today with many cultivators, mostly female - an unprecedented scene.

It's just that the place had the top prodigies present. They would go on to become overlords later on. After a hundred years, they would become the leaders, perhaps even an emperor of a dynasty.

This was an apex gathering, unprecedented and might never happen again.

The crowd suddenly became loud: "The demonic successor and Big-head Buddha are here together."

Ten or so of these prodigies had mysterious backgrounds, such as these two. Though people could recognize their techniques, their true identity was questionable.

The demonic successor and the demonic being behind him instilled great pressure on the clans. This demonic being was on the same level as the ten greatest masters in the contemporary.

More than half of these masters have not shown up for a thousand years or so. Perhaps some have left Jin or died in the wilderness. A few focused on cultivation, rarely showing up in public.

If one were to redo the list, the demonic being would certainly be part of it. Thus, with such a monstrous backer, this successor could do whatever he wanted.

The battle in the underground gambling hall showed off his camp's power even more - completely unstoppable.

Many girls screamed like crazy after seeing these two. Alas, they could only watch from the distance.

"Big-head Buddha is so mysterious. Don't underestimate him because he's short with tanned skin, he has a Dominating Armament so no one can touch him."

"When he was fighting against a young king, he used this one star-shifting technique, teleporting his opponent outside of the stage. A senior said that this technique is from the Dao Scripture. Two thousand years ago, the eighth volume of this scripture was stolen, so this technique was lost."

“Dao Scripture, Grave Palace Treasure-seeking Record, and Golden Silk Scripture are the three sacred canons of Jin, the most profound arts available. I wonder if this Buddha has the eighth volume right now.”

Not only were the cultivators outside moved, but the geniuses inside Supreme Beauty became ready too. Their battle intents surged as some of them looked down the balcony to see the duo.

[Chapter 562: I Will Take Care Of Her Problems](#)

“That’s the demonic successor.” A fiery glow appeared in the palm of a youth with skin the color of candle wax. The hot temperature caused ripples in the air, culminating in a maelstrom.

This was a genius who had won seventy-two matches in a row. He once entered a certain ruin and obtained an ancient legacy.

Everyone became greedy since they knew that this successor had gotten several hundred thousand spirit stones.

Feiyun didn’t climb up the palace right away. He stood at the bottom and coldly uttered: “I heard there are people who want to cause trouble for Nangong Hongyan.”

“So what?” An arrogant voice answered.

“I’ll handle her problems, come to me instead of picking on an innocent woman.” Feiyun stood on a green boulder with his back as straight as a pillar. He slightly pushed down and his hilt went deep inside the rock.

Ningshuai became worried and quietly said: “Don’t act so cool now, they have more people, all geniuses too, none weaker than you.”

Sneers came from inside. One of them was especially pleasant: “Do you even know what she had done? What’s your relationship?”

“I can handle it.” He responded.

A different person scowled: “You think the demonic being is unbeatable? Don’t use him to intimidate us.”

“I alone am sufficient, no need for anyone else.” He asserted.

“You said it, not us.” Someone smiled, waiting for Feiyun to say these exact words. As long as the demonic being was not involved, they could attack without qualms.

The Firebird Garment and Firebird Sword; one was made from the feathers while the others found in the bones. Some began to think that this was the two were related.

Of course, the more crafty people thought that this demonic successor was putting up an act. He simply wanted the garment as well.

Meanwhile, the geniuses were scattered around Supreme Beauty, not in the same palace.

Among them was a three-story palace with more than thirty inside. Of course, the majority was cultivating or drinking alone, not caring about anything else. They were smart enough to stay away from trouble.

In this palace, more than ten women were hanging from a horizontal pillar on the ceiling by snakeskin ropes. They were good sisters with Nangong Hongyan.

Their cultivation was sealed, battered by whips hard enough to have ripped marks on their clothes. Some had their pretty arms broken by the trauma.

On the ground were eight female corpses. One would be killed every half-an-hour until Nangong Hongyan shows up.

Ningshuai noticed the gravity of the situation so he came to the spirit stone shop to inform Feng Feiyun.

Xue Wu and Yu Chan were tied up there as well. They were desperate, aware of Nangong Hongyan's personality. She would only show up after they were all dead to kill all of these cultivators. Thus, they were elated to see someone else standing up for them.

Long Shenya sipped his wine. This was his party but the situation was beyond his control now so he pretended as if it was a trivial matter.

He placed his cup on the table and smiled: "This demonic successor is quite wily, doing just about anything to obtain the Firebird Garment."

"Indeed, I'm sure his power will soar after obtaining it, giving him a greater chance of winning the competition and become the next Divine King."

"But he's on Nangong Hongyan's side though."

"That's why he's wily, trying to earn these girls' trust so they can lead him to Nangong Hongyan."

"I see, such a treacherous fella, no wonder why he could take down the gambling hall."

"Just a hypocrite."

These youths debated and laughed. They wanted the two garments so they tried to force Nangong Hongyan out by killing these girls.

After hearing them, Yu Chan and Xue Wu felt much worse. They thought a savior had come for them but now, it seemed that he was just another villain.

'They're right, who would offend these geniuses for no reason?' Xue Wu lamented, thinking that this demonic successor was even more despicable than the rest.

Long Shenya smiled: "Blood for blood, life for life. This is Nangong Hongyan's debts. At least you all are being straightforward and taking responsibility for your actions, unlike this demonic successor, hiding behind the guise of justice."

He flattered them in order to win the support of their backers.

Feiyun's hearing was good enough to hear each word clearly. He laughed heartily in response: "Crown Prince, you're quite good at twisting things, but by doing so, you're throwing away the face of the royal clan."

"Bullying helpless women, killing the innocent, even I don't dare to do something like that, yet you are so proud to admit it. I admire your shameless audacity." Bi Ningshuai sarcastically mocked, making sure everyone outside could hear him.

Shenya's expression soured: "I'm simply stating the truth. Feng Ergou, if you don't want her garment, then why are you here to help her?"

Feiyun pondered for a moment before answering: "I love her."

"Haha, what a joke, have you ever seen her face?" Someone else interjected.

"No." Feiyun replied.

Ningshuai stared at Feiyun with doubts, 'this guy still hasn't seen her face or got her in bed yet?'

He would believe it when someone else said it, but this was Feng Feiyun. The entire world knew of these two's relationship. No way Feiyun had never seen her face before. Plus, the guy's nickname was the nine-dragon pillar and had slept with countless women. No way he would spare Nangong Hongyan.

This was why Ningshuai stared at the guy as if he was staring at a monster.

Feiyun could sense this perplexed gaze from him and answered via telepathy: 'Sex is not true love, only to satisfy one's desire. When you find someone you truly love, just embracing her is already the greatest thing in the world.'

Sleeping with a woman required no further thought, as long as she didn't have any sexual illness.

But when it came to one's true love, this required careful consideration.

"Haha, you haven't even seen her face yet you claim to love her? Who would believe such a thing, you lying hypocrite! Fine, you'll pay the price for being a pretender." Someone in the palace sneered: "If you can withstand three moves of mine, you will earn the right to talk."

Yellow runes and talismans emerged along with ancient chants. Like a rain, they flew out straight for Feiyun. Each rune was immensely heavy, capable of crushing all inhabitants in a region.

Feiyun's sword automatically turned into a black ray. It cut through the yellow barriers and flew straight into this palace.

"Boom!" An explosion resembled two metal mountains slamming into each other.

A corner of the palace shattered. A black-robed youth wearing more than a hundred pieces of bones as ornaments fell out.

These bones still had red strings of blood flowing; all from powerful spirit beasts or Giants, so their toughness was not to be questioned.

These bones managed to stop the sword ray earlier and saved this youth's life.

Nevertheless, blood dripped from the corner of his mouth. He was completely aghast after being injured and nearly killed by a single strike.

“Whoosh!” The black ray started flying again with greater intensity. A plume of clouds with a firebird in the center descended.

“Bones Altar!” This youth was three-meter tall, a member of the Ancient Jiang. He was at the fifth level of Heaven’s Mandate and cultivated the witchcraft arts. The bones around him flew up and turned into a grave-like altar.

“Boom!” The sword destroyed this altar and pierced through the youth. “Poof!” The firebird incinerated the corpse into ashes.

It then flew back to the sheath before Feiyun while still emitting a frightening black glow.

Feiyun asked: “Anyone else thinks I can’t handle her problems?”

[Chapter 563: Going Alone](#)

Those who could make it past the first round were great prodigies, real monsters.

One of them was cut down so easily after two moves. Even his ancient witchcraft art couldn’t stop the Firebird Sword.

The bones on the ground belonged to Giants or millennium beasts. Some were broken by the sword energy and had white smoke coming out from within.

Ordinary bones would have been crushed to dust; only bones of Giants were this tough.

Ningshuai didn’t hold back at all and took all of them. They originally belonged to the priests of the Ancient Jiang, so there was an innate witchcraft power in them. Selling them to wisdom masters specialized in witchcraft would yield a handsome sum.

The entire place was shocked at this development.

The prodigies who were closing their eyes to cultivate opened them, revealing a flash that could see through walls to spy on Feiyun.

Long Qingyang sat on the second floor of this palace, very close to Xiyue Lanshan. The two of them were holding hands, seemingly quite intimate. The latter had his tongue cut off by Long Cangyue but a master from his clan had asked the First Disciple of the Grand tutor to reattach it.

Nevertheless, the scar there would forever remind him of the humiliation.

“Feng Ergou’s cultivation tripled in power in just several days.” Lanshan leaned closer towards Qingyang and whispered.

Despite being a historical genius with strong mental fortitude, he couldn’t resist Qingyang’s charm and became a second “guest” after his uncle. He became trapped quickly after having sex with Qingyang just once. He lost control completely since Qingyang was even more seductive than a woman.

Qingyang asked softly, looking quite beautiful with his pearl eyes and long, thin brows: "So who is stronger, you or him?" [1]

Lanshan's expression became awkward: "My talents is better, surpassing him is only a matter of time..."

"Then what else is there to say? Why should I follow you if you can't even beat him?" Qingyang pushed him away and coolly left.

"Qingyang!" Lanshan was shocked like someone dumped by their girlfriend. He chased after Qingyang but the guy waved his sleeve, causing Qingyang to fall and his head on the ground, bloodied.

His eyes were full of despair. Qingyang was disappearing from his sight without any reluctance.

"Whoosh." Feiyun landed on the second floor and saw the guy crying out of his mind: "A man losing his mind over a woman is called a hopeless romantic; a man disappointed over losing another man is called an idiot."

Feiyun stopped caring since this guy has been ruined by Long Qingyang. So what if he was a historical genius? Declination was inevitable and he'll fall into obscurity.

"Boom!" Feiyun's palm destroyed the three-foot thick wall of the jade and made his entrance into one of the halls.

More than thirty geniuses were drinking. Half of them looked at him while the others kept on drinking, seemingly indifferent.

The place was full of smoke and mists stemming from a lotus pond on the first level, making this hall seem like a scene of the immortals.

The girls hanging on the ceiling were already weak. With their cultivation sealed, they would fall and die just like any mortal woman. The process was excruciating and terrorizing for these courtesans.

A bunch of corpses below had broken bones. Perhaps some didn't die instantly and suffered in agony for quite some time.

"Animals!" Bi Ningshuai also arrived and saw this sad scene.

He ran with all of his speed to find Feiyun but he was still too late, resulting in this tragic scene.

Feiyun's expression turned unsightly. A few of these girls have served him before in Supreme Beauty, personally preparing tea and playing music for him. They were mere corpses now.

"Nangong Hongyan is to be blamed for this, she killed my Martial Uncle and stole our defining treasure. If she doesn't return it, these girls will suffer. This is already the nicest punishment for them." A man wearing white-jade armor coldly said.

Besides him was a woman adorning the same type of uniform - stary eyes, long hair - as pretty as someone in a painting. She said: "Our Martial Uncle suffered a horrific death. His eyes clawed out, skin flayed, and nails all over his body. She crucified him on a tree and incinerated both to a crisp. When we got there, his skin was fastened to a branch, bloodied and fluttering in the wind. One can't get over seeing something like that."

These two were descendants from an ancient sect. This power hasn't interacted with outsiders for nearly a thousand years now. They used to be comparable to the four great clans.

Long Shenya wanted this sect's help so he allowed her to come in. Otherwise, she wasn't qualified to be in this place despite her brilliant cultivation.

"Pah!" Xue Wu sneered: "Your despicable Martial Uncle was overwhelmed with lust so Sister killed him. Taking that treasure is only after-the-fact, but this is the cultivation world. Everyone has done it before."

"Hmph! My Senior Uncle had cultivated for 600 years and is a Giant, if Nangong Hongyan didn't scheme against him, how could she even take him down?" The woman retorted.

Xue Wu coughed out a mouthful of blood due to her injuries, strained by trying to talk: "My Sister needs to scheme? All she needs to do is take off her veil. Not to mention a Giant, even an Enlightened Being would instantly prostrate before her. Unfortunately, no man has been able to see her face, but despite wearing the veil, plenty of people is more than willing to become her slaves. It's too bad that none had earned her good grace."

"You dare to insult my Martial Uncle?! Die!" The woman's hand flashed and a whip as thin as a hair materialized, spanning for a hundred meters.

The swing of the whip looked like a tiny thunderbolt.

Xue Wu knew of this whip's power, capable of punishing someone's soul. She gritted her teeth and closed her eyes.

Surprisingly enough, the pain didn't come. She opened her eyes and saw the demonic successor catching the whip.

"Who do you think you are? Siding with Nangong Hongyan is the same as opposing everyone." Both the man and woman took out a spirit treasure.

They knew just how strong he was and didn't dare to be careless. They worked together to suppress him.

Feiyun unsheathed his black sword and a blinding flame appeared, blowing both the two and their spirit treasures slamming through the wall.

Their white armor engraved with formation runes had gap everywhere and started to crumble. Two more big holes appeared on the thick wall.

They rolled outside to the courtyard paved with bluestones. Several bones were broken while blood dripped from the corner of their mouth.

Just one slash alone was all he needed to defeat these two prodigies. They stood outside, not daring to come back in.

The power of this successor far exceeded their imagination.

Feng Feiyun let the woman hanging on the ceiling down. However, they showed no sign of gratitude, thinking that he was also scheming like the rest.

Feiyun sent a telepathic message to Xue Wu, telling her about his identity. She was the only woman aware of this so her eyes flashed like two stars. She became relieved after finding this out.

“All of you, come with me right now.” Feiyun said.

The unaware women were on guard, afraid that he might do something cruel later.

Xue Wu started to think and knew that he couldn't defend himself right now: “If you dare to do something to us, Sister Hongyan will not spare you, you'll suffer a fate worse than death.”

Feiyun smirked, understanding her intention.

The women followed Xue Wu's lead and followed him. He led them out of the palace but was interrupted by a man riding a red deer. His weapon was a sword as an unreasonably large sword.

Beiming Potian rubbed his deer's head as if he was caressing a lover: “Quite courageous to enter the dragon's lair alone, but you think it is this easy to leave?”

A massive pressure descended, heavier than numerous mountains.

Feiyun remained leisure and smiled: “Your heavy sword dao has reached the “heavy over light” level, but this is only the bare surface. Once you reach the “light over heavy”, then that will be a little accomplishment on this path.”

After reaching the fourth level, Feiyun could finally spot the Potian's sword dao level.

“That's more interesting.” Potian said: “Nangong Hongyan had killed a genius from my clan and took our defining merit law, Northern Profound. Will you shoulder this feud in her stead? Can you actually handle it?”

Feiyun knew this because she had given this merit law and a spatial stone as a first-meeting gift. Unfortunately, this merit law couldn't enter his sight. He gave it to Long Cangyue later, who knows if she had trained it or not?

Feiyun told Ningshuai to take the women away. He waited until they left before replying: “Of course I can handle it. I will take responsibility for all her mistakes and debts. If anyone wants to fight, I'll be waiting. I'll handle her problems until my last breath, my last drop of blood, and will take down anyone who tries to find her.”

[Chapter 564: Catching A Sword Bare-handed](#)

The red deer seemed to have blood flowing on its skin. The two antlers were towering just like two mountains of black steel.

This was Potian's mount, Crimson Deer, an ancient spirit beast with enough power to move a mountain. It had cultivated for nine hundred years, only eaten precious grass given by Potian so its cultivation speed far exceeded other spirit beasts.

Normal cultivators would be intimidated by its aura instantly but Feiyun stood there holding his sword to his chest, opposing the auras without yielding half a step.

More prodigies opened their eyes inside Supreme Beauty. They didn't look at Feiyun but rather Potian. After all, only two or three men right now could compare to him in this generation.

"The demonic successor can definitely be among the top ten, but he should still be weaker than Potian."

"Potian can fight against big shots of the last generation now, no youth can match him."

The cultivators outside were excited as well. Potian was their star, legend, and goal.

"Buzz." The gigantic sword behind his back began to quake, issuing destructive sounds. Who knows exactly how heavy it is? Definitely more than a mountain. It wasn't only his weapon but also his tool for training.

It fell to the ground and created a huge crater. Next, he lifted it up with both hands and unleashed a purely physical strike.

Nothing beautiful about it, just a simple slash.

Feiyun didn't try to dodge, looking like an ant on the verge of being crushed.

"Even Jingshui and Xiaonan wouldn't take this slash from the heavy sword dao directly, I bet the guy will be heavily wounded."

"More than that, he might turn into a pulp."

This sword towered for dozens of meters high without a tip. Nevertheless, sharpness wasn't the killing aspect here.

Not only did Feiyun not try to dodge, but he also didn't even take out his sword and simply reached forward while assuming a strange pose, ready to catch the heaven with one hand. Sure enough, he stopped the awe-inspiring blow.

"Boom!" The sword was held up by Feiyun's hand and started to shake violently.

This shocking scene made everyone's jaw drop to the ground.

Even the geniuses in Supreme Pavilion were shaken. Some slammed on their table and stood up in astonishment. This exceeded all reasons and logic.

Potian's slash was brutal. Even a half-step Giant would find his back breaking if he were to stop it with his hand. No, all of his bones would turn to dust.

But the demonic successor was able to? Was he made from divine stones? His spine is that of a divine dragon?

Feiyun cultivated the Immortal Phoenix and Myriad Beast Physique, two top physical-refinement merit laws. Plus, he had refined Yama's spine in the past and polished his bones and body with the phoenix blood. His toughness was beyond their imagination. Though this move was slightly reckless, the margin of error remained acceptable.

Potian lifted his sword up again and placed it behind him; his expression became serious. Earlier, he saw thousands of beast souls around this demonic successor, only for a split second. That was a scene of the primordial era, truly horrific.

Feng Feiyun was the only one who could do so in recent history, so Potian thought he was seeing things.

He stared at this mysterious man with a tinge of surprise in his eyes: "You are indeed one of the top experts of the young generation, but I only used fifty-percent of my strength just now. Just because you can stop that slash doesn't mean you can stop my heavy sword dao."

"I also didn't go all out." Feiyun responded.

"This sword dao is not my strongest ability. If you wish to observe my true power, we'll do so on stage tomorrow." Potian was confident like an unstoppable general.

"You want to stop here?"

"If you are strong enough, we'll naturally meet during the competition. I'm sure I'll force you to use your real abilities then." Potian answered.

Feiyun lamented in his mind, 'seems like the guy had noticed something, he might be suspecting my real identity.'

It was impossible to hold back against someone of Potian's level. Just one technique and Feiyun had to do it. In a real fight, Potian will know right away after a hundred exchanges or so.

After he left, the ground where he stood started to crack before exploding completely with debris flying everywhere. He had channeled the power of the slash down to the ground. This massive force finally erupted afterward.

"Damn, how did you become so strong?" Bi Ningshuai stared at Feiyun in amazement.

"Beiming Potian didn't go full force." Feiyun answered Ningshuai before turning towards Xue Wu: "Tell me the truth, did Hongyan leave the capital?"

Xue Wu lowered her head in silence, but this was already an answer.

"Where is she now? What does she want to do?" He pressed on.

She contemplated for a bit before speaking: "She said she'll be at Steelmountain to wait for you and hope that you will be true to your words."

He couldn't do anything and stopped prying. He then brought them to a secret mansion of the Divine River, arranging several guards to escort them out of the capital today.

There was more news about the current turmoil at the capital. Great powers were on the move, so the uninvolved could sense the danger and began to evacuate.

Everything was shrouded in secrecy; only the upper echelons knew about the incoming events. The weaker cultivators thought that the capital was just fine and that no war would break out as long as the emperor was around.

“The girls from Supreme Beauty have been escorted out of the capital last night by our guards, they’re safe now.” Qu Changyin reported to Feiyun.

Feiyun sat on a wooden chair, a small bronze table next to him had a glazed-tile lamp. The fire inside actually painted a cold atmosphere.

He was reading a jade-scroll depicting the recent movements of the top powers. Occasionally, he would start adding a red banner to important locations on a three-meter-long map above the strategic table.

The map consisted of buildings, streets, gates, secret locations, army garrisons... Ordinary people would have a headache while reading these tiny symbols and markings, but Feiyun kept on for the last three hours.

Changyin stood in front of the table, waiting patiently.

“That old fox, Beiming Moshou, is so influential here. He had begun three days ago with planning.” Feiyun’s eyes became serious.

Changyin responded: “Impossible, we haven’t gotten any information on that. The main branch of the Beiming hasn’t maneuvered.”

Feiyun shook his head: “The fox is crafty and insightful enough. We can’t see his overall strategy, or even know when he’s starting.”

He took out another five marking flags and pinned them down. Beiming Moshou’s dispatch suddenly became clear. He had surrounded the imperial city, ready for a possible usurp.

Changyin saw the hints and became eager to battle: “I will have responses ready.”

“No need, someone else has seen through his plans.” Feiyun said.

“Who?”

Feiyun held another mark with two fingers and pinpointed it at the dragon lake.

“The Yin Gou!”

Feiyun nodded and mused: “If Beiming Moshou dares to surround the imperial city with his troops like this, does that mean the Jin Emperor had left for the royal sacred ground?”

“Impossible! He should be waiting until at least after the groom competition.”

Feiyun shook his head: “When I came out of my own training, I could feel the divine providence of the capital weakening but I didn’t have time to care then. Now, it looks like the emperor is no longer there. Beiming Moshou’s daughter is one of the four consorts, so he’ll be the first to know about the emperor’s absence.”

Nevertheless, he'll certainly leave behind his royal decree and seal. The question was - who has them right now?

Feiyun once again schemed and gave seven letters to Changyin, wanting the messengers to go without rest tonight.

"Tomorrow will be the second round of the competition when the real battles will start." Feiyun put away the map and walked towards the bookshelf. When he turned around, he suddenly froze for a bit, noticing a hot cup of tea placed on the table. The fragrance was distinct with very little steam.

The door was still closed. He only turned away for a moment just now and this cup appeared out of nowhere.

With a faint smile, he sat down and took a sip before closing his eyes.

She was here.

[Chapter 565: Life Is Unpredictable](#)

The second round of the competition also took place in the imperial city. The Three Directors and Nine Ministers would personally preside over this event.

The spectators were limited too; only those at a certain level of cultivation or enough status would be able to enter.

It was also divided into ten stages, a one-on-one elimination style - winner moves on.

The emperor and four consorts would be present. Princess Luofu herself would watch the fights in order to pick her groom.

After all, the one selected by her would have special treatment, an unfair advantage during the competition.

"You think the emperor will actually be there?" Ningshuai asked.

Both Feiyun and Ningshuai have made it to this round. They were resting at a palace with maids waiting on them.

The other prodigies waited at the other palaces. The majority was still cultivating with spirit stones while maintaining the top condition.

Only Ningshuai and Feiyun were this comfortable, being served fine wine by the maids and watching the stages being prepared.

"The emperor might not, but Princess Luofu and Consort Hua will definitely be there." Feiyun sent a telepathic message.

"Haha! True, she'll be crying so fast if the princess has to marry Prince Hongye. Oh, right, who do you think she will pick?" Ningshuai wasn't aware of the fling between Feiyun and Luofu so he nonchalantly asked.

In fact, the one chosen by Luofu wouldn't need to fight until the very end. The others would continue on until one was left, then this person would fight with the chosen candidate.

Feiyun said: "Hmm, under the current circumstances, the princess doesn't have any choice. If I were in her shoes, I would pick either Jingshui or Xiaonan."

"Why those two?" Ningshuai became curious.

"First of all, the two of them are strong."

"Secondly, they will not marry her."

"Thirdly, even if they marry her, she can continue to compete for the throne and would be gaining a strong ally."

Feiyun objectively analyzed. Of course, if she were to know that the demonic successor was him, she would pick him for sure.

Multiple footsteps came from outside. The group wore imperial dresses with well-made hair and ornaments. Consort Hua and a group of princesses have arrived.

She was the birth-mother of Princess Luofu, naturally just as pretty to be able to give birth to a beauty like the princess. Her noble aura even surpassed her daughter.

The geniuses in this palace all opened their eyes and stood up to give her a bow.

She looked around the room before stopping at Dongfang Jingshui: "The Grand Preceptor has talked to me several times about you, Young Noble Dongfang. You are indeed a dragon among men."

Jingshui had scaled gloves on. He cupped his fist and performed the proper greeting: "Excuse me, Divine Consort, when will the competition start?"

The consort smiled: "The Three Directors are finalizing the regulations. They'll inform you soon."

She left and everyone sat back down.

"Looks like Consort Hua has chosen that water-head as the back-up groom." Ningshuai smiled. [1]

Feiyun glanced over at Jingshui and said: "Looks like the consort has come to an agreement with the Yin Gou, perhaps a secret alliance."

More and more people were arriving at the imperial city. Some big shots would occasionally show up, including prestigious sect masters. Two Hall Lords of the heretical faction have arrived too.

Feiyun looked through the window and saw a phoenix carriage being pulled by white cranes coming from the imperial palace. The carriage stopped and a woman wearing a thin green veil came out. Her figure was delicate, seemingly only sixteen or seventeen-year-old. Her complexion revealed an illness, drained of blood.

She adorned a red cloak and was being helped by two palace maids to get down from the carriage. She coughed while standing on the thick snow before wiping with a silk handkerchief. A bit of blood caught on but she folded the handkerchief to hide it from others.

The two palaces quietly consoled her so she forced a smile. Alas, this wasn't enough to hide the sadness in her eyes.

"What are you looking at?" Ningshuai followed Feiyun's gaze and saw the woman. His eyes grew big and bright: "Oh wow! Whose daughter is that, so pretty! How come I've never heard of her before?"

Feiyun replied: "That's one of the four Divine Consorts, Consort Ji, Princess Yue's mother."

Having heard that, Ningshuai slapped his mouth so hard that his face muscles spasmed from the pain: "No wonder why she looks so familiar. Hmm, I feel that she's younger and prettier than her daughter."

Feiyun also agreed. In terms of facial features alone, Ji Lingxuan could be even prettier than Princess Luofu. Moreover, there was an indescribable charm to her, impossible to resist.

This was the reason why Feiyun was afraid to see her.

A young monk in a white robe came over with wooden beads in his hand. His robe was whiter than snow; a Buddhist radiance shone above his head. He stood before Lingxuan and placed his palms together while bowing his head. Who knows what they were talking about?

This was Buddha Maitreya from Southern Heaven Temple. Feiyun suspected that this monk might be from the Ji Clan.

The pale woman continued to cough out blood while speaking. Feiyun saw her palm dotted with blood. It looked like Cangyue's death was quite a blow to her.

This was understandable. Her plans and aspirations were all on Ji Cangyue. Even the toughest woman would become feeble after this.

"I should find time to see her and let her know that Cangyue is alive." Feiyun felt bad.

Jingxuan was downtrodden and lonely, no longer possessing the same confidence as before. Life was unpredictable; people could rise and fall at any moment.

A while later, all the prodigies received a message to come to the stage named Heaven.

Ninety-seven were present. Outside of the witchcraft genius killed by Feiyun, two more had special circumstances and withdrew from the competition.

The Three Directors sat at the highest seats. They had the highest status in Jin outside of the emperor. Despite being present, they were shrouded in fog. Only half-steps and up could see them. Everyone else only saw three foggy clouds floating above.

Nine more old men wearing purple uniforms sat in a line on jade chairs. Their face full of wrinkles; they lacked spirit energy from not cultivating. Nevertheless, their aura was extraordinary; all have lived for more than a century.

These were the most influential scholars in Jin. After taking in alchemy materials, they could still live up to 180 years without cultivating. Together, they were known as the Nine Ministers: the Minister of Ceremonies, the Supervisor of Attendants, the Commandant of Guards, the Minister of the Imperial

Clan, the Minister of Coachmen, the Commandant of Justice, the Grand Herald, the Minister of Agriculture, and the Treasurer. [2]

Among them, the Minister of the Imperial Clan was in charge of these matters. He represented the group and held a jade scroll: "We have 97 geniuses with us today, all top members of Jin Dynasty, the leaders of the future. Thus, the second round will not have death. Those who dare to do so will lose their qualification."

A man with a pair of black wings coldly uttered: "May I ask, Minister, have you ever fought someone? In a fight between two experts, no one can hold back and must go all out in order to stay alive. If we aren't prepared to die, then the whole thing is a sham."

The minister responded: "Each stage will have a Giant standing by as a judge. They will stop the fight at the right time before any fatal blow."

"Haha, I hope they can." A skinny youth sarcastically said.

These geniuses were all arrogant with monstrous backing. Ordinary Giants couldn't get into their sight because they would exceed this level in the future, or so they thought.

Feiyun didn't care for these rules. He looked around the place and sure enough, the emperor wasn't here. However, the four consorts and more than a thousand members of the concubine palace were present in order to watch this competition in person.

The minister stood before a bronze cauldron with ninety-seven balls shrouded in flame: "Princess Luofu will be drawing lots for the bracket."

[Chapter 566: Luck](#)

The cauldron stood at seven feet tall with three thick legs in the shape of a dragon tail. Crimson gems decorated the surface. Inside were ninety-seven plumes of star-like fire. Even a Giant couldn't see through this concealment.

The princess wore a ceremonial outfit, golden with ribbons. Below her feet were draconic runes. Her royal aura was in full swing, overshadowing the crown prince standing nearby.

Not all members of the royal family would have the aura of a dragon king. Only those meant to be kings would be able to cultivate this golden aura. Luofu was one of them; her aura was three times stronger than the crown prince, dividing themselves into forty-five visible strands.

A golden veil still covered her face but this wasn't enough to deter her beauty. The prodigies on stage became fixated. All men wanted to conquer such a noble and beautiful woman.

Standing before the cauldron, she flipped her sleeve and the first fireball flew out. She easily crushed the flame and read the first name: "Beiming Potian, of the Beiming Clan."

Next, the second ball flew out. She announced: "Qian Mohen, of Grand Sword Palace."

The minister confirmed: "The Heaven stage, Beiming Potian versus Qian Mohen."

She continued to take out more balls until she found Dongfang Jingshui. She glanced over at Consort Hua before speaking: "Dongfang Jingshui can skip the initial rounds and fight the final battle."

Jingshui - still with his signature red cloak - protested: "Why can't I fight in the initial rounds?"

The princess strongly replied with a sharp glare: "Because I have chosen you to be a groom candidate, so you may skip to the last fight."

He didn't give her any face: "I don't care much about being the imperial groom and only joined this competition to fight my heart out, so stop thinking otherwise. I want to fight everyone, so come, be brave and fight like men on stage."

Who knows how exasperated the princess was right now behind the veil? Anyone else would be ecstatic for this opportunity, but someone as arrogant and lawless like Jingshui was a different story.

"I guess he really took in too much water as a baby or something, if I were in his shoes, I would be kissing the princess right now to thank her." Ningshuai quietly said.

Feiyun replied: "Unfortunately, she doesn't care for men, only the throne."

"Be honest now, Feiyun, if you win this competition, will you marry her?"

"Obviously, but only if she is willing to become my concubine."

The two gave each other a stare before laughing together.

Due to the odd number right now, if Jingshui accepted this, then the rest could be one-on-one. Alas, if he must fight, then one person would be left out.

This was naturally a good thing. All the participants were prodigies. Skipping one round would increase the probability of winning the whole thing.

Who will this lucky person be?

Fewer fireballs were left in the cauldron. These prodigies knew their first-round match and began to think about battle plans, advantages and disadvantages for the match-up.

Ningshuai's opponent was a young king at peak fourth-level Heaven's Mandate, just a tiny bit more and he would be at the fifth level.

"So much pressure.." Ningshuai murmured and decided to change the topic: "Oh right, who is your guy?"

Feiyun said: "I haven't been chosen yet."

A while later, only one ball was left but Feiyun still hasn't been called.

"Damn, don't tell me you're this lucky?! So unfair! The heaven is blind!" Ningshuai gritted his teeth, thinking that a good guy like him should deserve this chance.

Sure enough, the princess took out the last one and read: "Feng Ergou."

The minister added: "A vagrant cultivator of Grand Southern, Feng Ergou will move on to the next round."

"Such dogshit!" Ningshuai complained again.

Feiyun didn't care much about fighting so he was naturally happy: "I'll be cheering for you, friend."

"Don't, your opponents will be Potian and Hongye. Since you have time right now, you should be watching their fight. Knowledge is power, so do it to win and take Princess Luofu as your concubine." Ningshuai joked.

A proud princess like her would never become someone else's concubine. But he was also right about the first half. The others certainly prepared plenty of ace cards to win, so this was a good time to find out more.

Two hours later signaled the end of the first round. 48 have been eliminated, so there were 49 left including the lucky Feiyun.

He sat inside a palace and enjoyed his wine and fruits, served by two maids.

This was a resting place for the participants. Numerous recovery pills were laid out and ten alchemists stood ready. Even the heavily-injured could be cured within an hour back to their peak condition.

Ningshuai rolled in, charred completely without a single strand of hair remaining. He cried out: "Help me! I'm gonna die!"

Feiyun and two alchemists rushed over and helped him on a stone bed flowing with spirit liquid. The two alchemists checked his wounds and became relieved: "Just an external burn, one second-ranked pill is enough."

One of them took the pill out.

Feiyun said: "It's nice to be alive, don't worry about losing."

"Who told you that I lost? I won." Ningshuai got up to retort but he screamed again. His behind was especially burnt so when he sat down, the pain was excruciating.

"Who burned you then?"

The guy lay back down and sighed: "A Netherfire Talisman."

Feiyun's expression changed: "Hmm, that talisman should contain a flame similar to a Second Dark Underworld Flame. Even a half-step will be injured from carelessness. Your opponent had something this strong? Looks like cultivation alone isn't enough to win, maybe some Dominating Armaments will show up too. Oh, how did you defeat this talisman?"

"... Cough... cough... I was the one who used it but misjudged the power so I burned myself..."

"..."

This fella is unfathomable. First, he had a technique from the Dao Scripture, now, a Netherfire Talisman? Ordinary people couldn't possess these means.

He was afraid Feiyun would pry further so he changed the topic: "Yeah, did you go watch Potian, Hongye, and Xiaonan? What did they use?"

Feiyun shook his head: "The so-called devilish geniuses can't last a single move before them, so they didn't reveal anything."

"That's why they're at the top of the young generation, worthy of their fame." After taking the pill while bathing in the medicinal liquid, his burned skin healed at a visible rate.

Just a second later, he jumped out of bed and started to stretch while laughing: "I can fight again now, no problem. My next guy is a fifth-level genius, so much pressure again! What about you?"

"Another free win." Feiyun said.

"You're joking, right?" Ningshuai almost jumped from disbelief.

The second round had another drawing ballot but Feiyun got lucky again?

The chance was so low yet the guy stole it twice. Ningshuai almost went crazy just like all of the other jealous geniuses.

"The balls are sealed by flames created by Giants, so no one can see the names. Cheating isn't possible or I would think that you are conspiring with Princess Luofu." Ningshuai thought that he had to risk his life to make it to the second round while this guy sat there and drank wine. So unfair!

After another two hours, only twenty-four geniuses were left, and Feng Feiyun.

He didn't need to fight at all and still got placed in the top twenty-five.

"Help! Save me!" Ningshuai screamed and crawled into the palace while vomiting blood. The blood contained icy powder; parts of his body were frozen too.

Feiyun and the two alchemists came over again and lifted him back on the stone bed.

[Chapter 567: Purification Rime](#)

Bi Ningshuai was grievously injured with extraordinary frost powders everywhere. Just one grain alone could freeze a mortal's bloodstream completely.

Ningshuai shuddered and screamed: "Can you save me?!"

The two alchemists checked before frowning. The older one stroked his beard and said: "Purification Rime ails you. Normal cultivators would freeze to death from a single strand."

"I'm finished, finished! I got struck by more than ten strands, even an iron man would turn into frost powders." Tears started to drip. The blood near his lips was frozen by this point and became shiny rubies.

"Purification Rime is considerably stronger than Netherflame Talisman. According to the records, the Jin Dynasty doesn't have this level of frost since it exists only at the bottom of the Purification Sea.

Obtaining it is especially difficult. I can't believe someone is actually using it here, is it a devilish genius from Purification Sea?" Feiyun had read the library of the Feng. Though it wasn't as comprehensive as the older clan, it contained many mysteries and tales.

Ningshuai nodded with a funeral-like expression: "Yes, that sea is countless miles away from here at a different continent, few could actually reach it."

"Just who defeated you then?" Feiyun had a serious stare, thinking that it was quite strange for someone else to bring a foreign item to Jin. These continents might be connected, but they were separated because of certain barriers. Even Enlightened Beings would have a hard time. One of them was called the Ancient Forest, inhabited by monstrous beasts. Another was the Endless Desert Of Death, so much bigger than Jin. Dark Realm was another one, the congregation of evil and monsters. They were not places for humans to tread.

Humans only lived in small areas, similar to islands among the vast ocean. Feiyun still didn't have a good idea of the five dynasties' location on the grand scheme of things.

Feiyun has been to the great kingdoms of humans in the past and had never heard of these five dynasties. He speculated that they were located in a remote and desolate region.

Compared to these great kingdoms, Jin was comparable to a primitive village, a drop in the ocean.

Purification Sea was naturally far away. An Enlightened Being flying nonstop for several hundred years would be able to make the distance, if they didn't die in the sky ruins or treacherous marshes, or becoming food to monsters. Teleportation portal was crucial for long-distance traveling.

More amazingly, even this expanse was only a corner of the human's kingdoms. Some cultivators from Purification Sea have traveled here before and left behind writings.

'Just who the hell traveled through that expanse to reach this competition?' Feiyun thought. This was akin to an ant crawling from one city to another a thousand miles away.

"No one beat me! I got him good!" Ningshuai said.

"..." Feiyun didn't know what to say again: "Don't tell you're the one who used this chill energy again and hurt yourself in the process?"

Ningshuai became awkward: "I didn't... think that this Purification Rime was so powerful..."

"Where did you get it?" Feiyun almost kicked him off the bed.

"An old man gave it to me."

"As if something good like that will happen for no reason. I'm about to throw you out." Feiyun lifted the frozen guy up.

"No, No! Alright, fine, I stole it."

"From whom?" Feiyun dropped the guy down.

"O an old man I saw worshipping a statue by the Jin River. He wore something strange, clearly an outsider, an easy target, ya know? So I couldn't help checking a little bit and found this bottle, nothing

else, so I thought he was just a poor old man. I pitied him enough to think about returning it, but I looked back and he was nowhere to be found.” Ningshuai sighed and shook his head.

“Which statue?”

“The massive goddess outside of the convent.”

Shui Yueting!

A hush fell over. If Ningshuai was telling the truth, then this old man was a cultivator on a pilgrimage to experience the toughness of life. Someone like this was definitely a great sage, never stopping in one place and rarely appearing in civilizations.

Why would this old man stop to worship Shui Yueting’s statue? Could her statues also be in faraway continents? A Buddhist would still worship Buddha at a different kingdom and stop to pray at a temple or shrine.

Feiyun became disappointed at not being able to meet that old man. His cultivation was surely incredible so he wouldn’t be around any longer. Perhaps he had crossed through the treacherous plains for another land. Jin was only a short stop.

Nevertheless, the injuries were external for Ningshuai and didn’t touch his organs and bones. He just needed a third-ranked pill before the ice melted away and the pink returned to his face.

“Haha! Something good will come after a disaster, I’m in the top twenty-five now, although the next fights will be tough.” Ningshuai laughed.

It was noon when the two of them left the palace named Heaven. The gentle sun rays melted the snow in the city, illuminating them with a golden glow. Not a single speck of dust stained the air. While standing on the steps made out white jade, one could see the old architecture in the capital.

A rainbow crossed the sky just like a divine bridge. It has been a while since the weather was so nice after the start of winter.

Twenty-five geniuses gathered at the stage. They were ready to fight and have convinced the crowd of their supremacy. The only exception was Feng Feiyun who didn’t participate at all.

“People are staring at you.” Ningshuai said.

“Let them then.” Feiyun chuckled.

He was really too lucky today after getting two free wins, so becoming public enemy number one was inevitable. Nevertheless, no one questioned his power because he caught Potian’s sword with his bare hands not long ago. People enjoyed talking about this and wanted to see his full power.

Some familiar faces were seen, such as Long Qingyang, the beautiful crossdresser. His fights always had a full crowd.

“Oh god, don’t let me fight against that guy or I’ll just give up right away.” Ningshuai murmured.

Unfortunately for him, the minister announced: “Heaven Stage, Big-head Buddha versus Long Qingyang.”

Feiyun had to contain his laughter.

Ningshuai turned and met Long Qingyang's stare. The guy gave him a charming smile, causing his thighs to shake like crazy, nearly dropping on the ground.

Feiyun was going to get another free win. This time around, someone finally objected. Qingyang spoke with a voice more pleasant than any woman: "Why is it always Feng Ergou? His luck is ridiculous."

"Getting to the top ten without fighting? That's too unfair." Another added.

The princess stood in front of the cauldron and solemnly said: "The balls are taken out under the supervision of the Three Directors, so no one can cheat. Plus, choosing a candidate in the beginning was meant to avoid this situation, but Dongfang Jingshui demanded to fight, resulting in this dilemma. I don't wish for this either."

Potian said: "He can't get it again. Someone with a fortuitous providence won't win the final battle if he's not strong enough. Since people are unconvinced, Princess, you can pick another person."

"Yes, yes, do it!" Bi Ningshuai shouted, not wanting to fight against Long Qingyang.

[Chapter 568: Best Defense](#)

The princess wasn't an emperor so she lacked the same imperious temperament. Nevertheless, someone of her status wouldn't lie.

"This cauldron is personally created by our dynasty's founder, representing its authority. The balls taken out are also his will, no one can change it." She stood proudly with forty-five strands of draconic energy around her: "This is the bracket for the third round, the next dissenter will be construed as questioning the founder."

No one dared to say anything since the princess had brought the founder into the fray. If anyone was dumb enough to do so, it would be a crime of disrespecting the royal prestige.

Feiyun walked leisurely around the different stages during the third round. The fights became fiercer since everyone had to go all out, unable to win as easily as before.

On the Heaven stage were Big-head Buddha and Long Qingyang, so it shouldn't come as a surprise that many spectators were present.

In the previous fights, the mysterious Buddha used two destructive moves and became known as a dangerous and treacherous person, a danger to himself as well.

Qingyang was as beautiful as ever. Many cultivators have never seen such a pretty "woman" before so they became his loyal fans.

Feiyun stood beneath the stage, shrouded in black. His aura made everyone stay the hell away.

Ningshuai and Qingyang were on stage, far away from each other. Ningshuai's battle presence was inferior. He stood next to the edge as if he could jump off at any moment.

Feiyun noticed several big shots being around - a supreme elder of the Xiyue, the seventh vice lord of Senluo, Furious Marquis... These were bosses of their areas. Six or seven of them came to support Qingyang with a strange look in their eyes.

'This Qingyang fella is something else, only here for several days yet he managed to seduce these big shots already. If he were a woman, the world would fall into chaos.' Feiyun could judge from their expressions that they have been conquered by his "beauty".

A woman knowing how to use her beauty to conquer men was definitely frightening. A man knowing how to do so? Even scarier.

No one was at fault here. Who was to blame for him being more attractive than the number one beauty in Qianlong? Plus, he understood men better than the fairer sex.

"Hey handsome, why don't you take off your hat so I can see you?" Qingyang quietly asked while walking closer.

His steps were soft; draping black hair and snow-white skin, his eyes filled with sadness and emotions in a titillating manner.

"Don't, don't come over here or I will jump off right now!" Ningshuai staggered closer to the edge with half of his foot hanging in the air, not daring to be closer to Qingyang.

The guy's charm was unreal. Several Giants have fallen for him so Ningshuai had no confidence about staying in control.

Qingyang didn't stop and smiled, revealing his cute dimples: "Don't jump or I'll be very sad."

"Fuck it, I'm jumping!" Ningshuai closed his eyes and shouted. However, he still didn't jump, unwilling to give up after getting this far.

"You would be cruel enough to leave me all alone on stage? How heartless." Qingyang was next to him. His figure had no flowing spirit energy and was as soft as can be, seemingly harmless. He emitted a sweet fragrance like a night orchid, looking just like a budding, young miss.

Ningshuai squatted down and gritted his teeth: "Fuck it, you win, I'm done!"

"Bam!" Ningshuai jumped off the stage and ran for his life. After making a safe distance, he crouched down and panted heavily as if he had just gotten away from an army.

Feiyun came over and laughed: "You gave up just like that?"

Ningshuai glared in response: "What else can I do? Fighting against that crossdresser will be even worse."

Feiyun consoled: "You made the right choice. Come, let's go to Black."

This stage named Black had a raging battle. The entire place was enveloped in cold energy, even the hundred-step stairway.

One could hear a tiger roar amidst the snowy gales.

The snow was limited to the stage, clearly created by the battle.

“Beiming Potian is using Northern Profound Law to create an ice armor. This is the number one defensive technique, no one at the same cultivation level as him can break it.”

One of the combatants was Beiming Potian. His foe was a mysterious genius, shorter than five feet, seemingly made up of mud. Even his eyes looked like stones, lacking a luster.

“His opponent’s name is Niren Mu who killed a fifth-level cultivator with a single palm strike, turning him into mud.”

“It’s an ancient technique not seen in a very long time. His background must be something.”

Despite being a silly guy, Ningshuai was also very knowledgeable: “Niren Mu’s offensive power is considerable, among the top ten even, but he can’t get through the ice armor.”

Potian cultivated in the heavy sword dao but offense wasn’t his forte. If one couldn’t break through his defense, he would stand undefeated.

As for Feiyun, he was best as speed, then offense, and lastly - defense.

If Potian had the best defense among the young generation, Feiyun would have the best speed.

“How certain are you in breaking that ice armor?” Ningshuai asked.

Feiyun shook his head: “I don’t know how strong it is without actually fighting him.”

“True, at your level, there are other factors to consider, it’s hard to predict a winner.”

Numerous horrific techniques from these two top geniuses ravaged the stage. Potian seemed to be invulnerable and continuously forced Niren Mu back.

In terms of destructive power, they were on the same level. However, Mu could only push Potian back with a palm strike while Potian could injure him with the heavy sword.

“Niren Mu will lose within ten moves.” Feiyun confidently said.

Sure enough, Potian used a sword variation resembling a rolling mountain and blew Niren Mu off the stage.

His muddy body fell on the ground with blood mixed inside. The guy couldn’t get up.

Suddenly, auspicious clouds appeared with a shade of gold; a massive statue was inside.

This statue was majestic just like a deity. It reached out and lifted Niren Mu up before flying towards the horizon. These top geniuses always had hidden masters as their protectors.

After the tough fight, Potian still looked gallant and imposing, unstained by a single speck of dust.

He walked off the stage and the servants of the Beiming came to meet him. However, he headed for Feiyun and stood before the guy: “Three free wins, quite lucky, aren’t you? Looks like the princess favors you, so I’m 70% certain that you have feigned your death.”

Feiyun stood there, still nonchalant: “What are you talking about, Brother Beiming?”

“Hmph! You and Princess Luofu can fool others, but not our clan! Even if you can get into the top four, we’ll meet and I’ll force you out.” Potian declared.

“Haha, then good luck to you, Brother Beiming. Maybe I’ll really be lucky enough to get to the top four without fighting.” Feiyun chuckled.

Their exchange attracted the attention of the crowd.

“I hope you won’t lose too badly then, or Princess Luofu will be mine.” Potian left with his red deer in order to rest inside one of the palaces.

[Chapter 569: Top Thirteen](#)

“What’s he talking about?” Ningshuai stared at Potian’s tough departing figure before turning back at Feiyun with gleaming curiosity: “Your relationship with Princess Luofu?”

“We’re just friends.” Feiyun responded. Potian’s intelligence was not to be underestimated and had figured out some clues. ‘Looks like I have to kill him.’

The three free rounds didn’t happen by chance; the princess had done something in secrecy.

This all went back to last night. Because Feiyun figured out that the Beiming has been summoning forces to surround the capital, he wrote seven letters, one to the princess. Thus, she knew of his identity and they have prepared the plans for today.

For example, there were ninety-nine participants but two couldn’t come. This was Feiyun’s doing. One was assassinated by the Divine River Guard, while the other grievously wounded, unable to join the competition.

If there were ninety-nine participants, Feiyun would be able to skip the first round but not the second since there would be a total of fifty, including him. Skipping one round alone wasn’t that beneficial but because of this plan, he would be able to skip until the semifinal.

In this case, he would have plenty of time to study his opponents’ techniques and habits, allowing him to come up with sufficient counter-strategies.

Furthermore, the princess could have picked a groom candidate, but she couldn’t pick him because it would expose his identity. They had to settle on Dongfang Jingshui because Feiyun believed that this guy would refuse for sure, the only person who would do so.

Next, Princess Luofu couldn’t see through the fire shrouding the balls inside the cauldron, but he had the Heavenly Phoenix Gaze, capable of seeing through this visual barrier. He told her each time, allowing her to pick the right ball with his name.

Of course, doing this before the Three Directors was risky. They didn’t dare to use telepathic communication, only unique code words to inform the princess of the ball’s positioning. Because of this restraint, he couldn’t affect the bracket as much or he would have let Beiming Potian and Li Xiaonan fight already.

Feiyun was never one blessed by fortune, so without cheating, he would be bloodied and battered by now getting to the next round.

Nevertheless, the free rounds still made Potian wary of his identity.

The next round was finished; thirteen participants were left.

Ningshuai gave up so Long Qingyang was one of the winners. The list included Feng Feiyun, Beiming Potian, Dongfang Jingshui, Li Xiaonan, Prince Hongye, Long Qingyang, Mu Xingzi, Gu Cuo, Ji Feng, Yan Ziyu. The remaining three were unknown to Feiyun, but they were quite powerful.

Why didn't these strongest geniuses fight in the early rounds? There seemed to be a hidden force purposely spreading them out - this was their divine providence protecting them from injuries and bad luck.

These so-called "geniuses" were naturally favored by the high heaven. All were powerful and some have never lost before. In a fight between two tigers, one would fall. This would be decided by their own strength. Unsurprisingly enough, Feiyun got another free round.

The competition was heating up, same with the excited crowd. The six stages were filled with people. The combatants were arrogant and confident about their victory.

The biggest fight was none other than Li Xiaonan versus Long Qingyang. One was considered the number one expert of the Jin Dynasty, the other was the most "beautiful" in Qianlong Dynasty.

Ten thousand cultivators waited even before they made it on stage. Not even a fly could get past this thick crowd. One-third of all members in this imperial palace were present.

On the contrary, Feiyun didn't care too much and walked over to the Earth stage, where Yan Ziyu faced Prince Hongye.

The two have fought back at the Yin Gou and Ziyu lost within thirteen moves. This was his toughest defeat, nearly shattering his confidence.

"How many moves will Ziyu be able to hand?" Bi Ningshuai followed Feiyun as well.

"Ziyu was the number one of Wanxiang, able to reach the eighth level of Immeasurable Tower to become a historical genius. In terms of battle power and wits, he's not inferior to Potian and the others by much. There is a reason for his defeat last time." Feiyun analyzed.

"Which is?"

"Weapon."

"..." Ningshuai's expression became unnatural.

Feiyun went on: "For cultivators, the spirit weapon's grade, to a large degree, affects their overall battle power. This is even truer for an even fight. Back then, the prince had a third-ranked spirit treasure, Heaven-raising Rod, while Ziyu's most suitable spear, the one he trained with his whole life, White Swallow, got stolen by you. No wonder why he lost so badly."

"Ahem... I have returned White Swallow to him, I only... borrowed it to play around." He felt quite bad because Ziyu was humiliated and disgraced before the crowd.

"He didn't try to kill you?"

“Scholar Heaven Calculating gave it back to him for me.” Ningshuai had also stolen a millennium root from Ziyu before and was chased for a long time. So if he were to return the spear in person, it could have been a fatal event.

Feiyun held his weapon essence even tighter right now. If this thief were to steal it, he would chase the guy forever as well.

Ziyu was the number one of the Hundreds’ List at Wanxiang, representing this holy ground. Only he and Ji Feng were left in the top thirteen, so the members of the school came to support him. Feiyun was here for that as well. He saw several familiar faces.

“Yan Ziyu, I love you! Bring glory to Wanxiang!” A girl and her friends from Pill Tower organized a rally.

Wang Meng was present as well with his Junior Brothers from Martial Tower. They made their way to the front of the stage and pinned two spears on the ground with a banner in the middle, “One thrust for Hongye’s blood and screams!”

Wang Meng was crazy and started shouting: “Ziyu, Ziyu, I love you! One thrust for Hongye’s blood and screams!”

“Ziyu, Ziyu, I love you! One thrust for Hongye’s blood and screams!”

Feiyun was speechless, this guy was something else, chanting such nauseating words. Ningshuai also shook his head, wanting to dig a hole and hide.

Another exceptional student was there - Scholar Heaven Calculating, dressed in a white robe, hair tied with a white ribbon. He hid his hands in his sleeves, looking leisurely with a faint smile.

Su Yun sat next to him. If he wasn’t blind, he would be in this competition right now. Alas, he had a new perspective in life, satisfied with spending a carefree life with his companion.

“Whoosh! Whoosh!” Two figures finally jumped on stage.

The prince was unreasonably tall; his legs looked like two pillars, hands as tough as steel. He wore a battle gown, showing off his muscular chest filled with hair. His skin had a black luster, brimming with explosive power.

This was a monster in the shape of a man. One punch from him could split the earth.

Yan Ziyu looked fragile in comparison. White daoist robe, long ribbons tying up his hair. This time around, he held his white-jade spear, seemingly one with his weapon - full of confidence.

“A loser like you dares to fight me again?” Prince Hongye’s head was three times the size of a normal man, his eyes four times the size. Just a glare could scare beasts away.

Ziyu didn’t lose his confidence and declared: “If you can beat me within thirteen moves again, I will kneel and kowtow.”

The princes sneered: “I didn’t go all out last time, so just ten will be enough. Get ready to kneel...”

“Ziyu, Ziyu, I love you! One thrust for Hongye’s blood and screams!” Wang Meng ordered the crowd to roar again.

Ziyu stood there with his spear resting on his shoulder, shrouded with a white glow. He looked like a jade statue; his power became pure and had no openings.

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Prince Hongye's aura became purer. Each of his pores emitted a golden radiance as he gripped his fists resembling two large hammers.

His power created fluctuations in the air. The spectators instantly retreated for they felt a heavy pressure on their chest as if a boulder was pushing down on them despite the sealing formations on stage.

One could easily imagine the pressure Yan Ziyu was feeling.

It seemed that the prince wasn't exaggerating when he wanted to defeat Ziyu within ten moves.

"Boom!" The hair on his fists have turned yellow, seemingly cast from gold. A single punch created multiple ripples that eventually formed a golden wall.

The thunderous punch made the weaker cultivators bleed from their ears.

The students from Wanxiang were scared and backed off, no longer chanting.

Meanwhile, Yan Ziyu stood there, unmoving. His spear traveled like a flood dragon and pierced through the golden wall.

The prince wore a pair of ancient gauntlets. They allowed him to catch the tip of the spear, resulting in a metallic clanking.

Seven spirit stones were carved on each of the gauntlets, positioned in an astronomical order. The spear didn't leave a single mark on it.

"Boom!" The prince gathered power again. This time around, his bones started cracking. The second fist slammed directly on the spear.

A massive power traveled from the spear to Ziyu's hands. He had no choice but to spin his spear around six times in the air to dispel this force.

This prince was as strong as a bull; no one among the young generation could match him physically.

"This brute is super strong, I think he can break a mountain with a single punch." Ningshuai said.

"His offensive power is matchless because of the Golden Sacred Scripture on top of drinking the blood of spirit beasts growing up. If I'm correct, millennium beasts' blood at least seven times too. He also used Stargold Liquid refinement for his body, so his bones and muscles are reaching the limit." Feiyun said.

"Stargold Liquid? What's that?" Ningshuai's eyes flashed after hearing about a treasure.

"A precious liquid in the stars, perfect for body refinement. Even Enlightened Beings can't just get them."

"I see..." Ningshuai was even more interested.

“Stargold isn’t actually the stars in space. Pieces are just floating right above the sky. Some are as big as a fist, floating about one meter above the ground, while others can have a radius of tens of thousand miles, way high up in the air, not much different from a real star.”

“Well, wouldn’t one that big blot out the sky, it must be majestic.” Ningshuai said.

Feiyun nodded: “It is known by several other names, such as Earthstar, Mundane Star, and Gemstar. It is exceedingly rare. Not to mention a big one, even a fist-sized one is considered a supreme treasure. You won’t see one every few million miles, only the luckiest person could randomly find them. It can also produce a liquid, a fist-sized one for a single drop. Prince Hongye probably used that much, so I suppose Qian Dynasty found one in the past.”

Ningshuai’s eyes almost left their sockets after hearing this.

Feiyun continued: “in fact, this prince has a better offensive game than Beiming Potian. I wonder if Jingshui can match up with him.”

“Wait, he still isn’t number one?” Ningshuai asked.

Feiyun gently shook his head - who knows if he didn’t know or just didn’t want to explain?

The two on stage have fought for nearly twenty moves. One white and one golden ray were slamming at each other; few could actually see their moves.

The prince was brutal but Ziyu didn’t let up since he had improved in the last few days.

Though the prince had the advantage, he felt embarrassed for not beating the guy within ten moves.

“Golden Sacred Scripture - Elephant God!” The prince’s blood boiled like gushing springs. He grew from three meters to seven meters tall. His arms became golden pillars, looking just like a god.

His ears became flat and big, almost like a palm-leaf fan. He got on all fours with gigantic hooves. Even the Giant watching the stage became startled as if this was a primordial beast coming into being.

“Boom!” The prince stampeded over, easily crushing the techniques unleashed by Ziyu.

His spear nearly got knocked away; his hands started bleeding with deep gashes.

The elephant finally made contact with an unstoppable momentum and continued pushing him into the barrier, even breaking it in the process.

Ziyu was stomped by the hoof indenting a hole into the ground with dust clouding everyone’s vision. Cracks started to emanate from the impact point. Two cultivators were too slow so their legs broke, rendering them stuck in the crevices.

Ziyu’s armor was cracked, on the verge of breaking. Once this final layer collapsed, he would be stomped to death.

“Let’s go!” He gritted his teeth and mustered his remaining strength for one last thrust. The spear managed to penetrate the golden glow of the elephant and struck its stomach. Blood poured down.

The elephant god became furious and roared, causing more than ten spectators to bleed from all orifices and fainted.

It raised its frontal hooves with a blinding glow, ready to stomp its opponent into meat paste.

The students from Wanxiang screamed and covered their eyes, not wanting to look. The female cultivators also turned away.

“Killing is forbidden!” The Giant on stage saw this and rushed forward.

However, someone was even faster than him.

He was too far away and wouldn’t make it on time. Feiyun was the closest so he had no choice but to dart over beneath the elephant and raised both of his hands.

9,998 beast souls rushed out at the same time. His body ignited with fire and issued countless roars. His hands made contact with the hooves and unleashed their massive power.

“Boom!” The ground beneath him got crushed, leaving a waist-deep pit.

The elephant also got blown back, needing dozens of meters of stabilization before coming to a halt. The ground was filled with large hoof marks now.

This was essentially an even exchange but Feiyun managed to save Yan Ziyu.

The crowd stared at him, petrified, unable to believe their own eyes.

Not because he was strong enough to stop the prince, but because his veil has been blown away by the impact, revealing his face.

A man presumed dead was standing before everyone as a cold wind swept by.

Feiyun got out of the pit and patted away the dirt. He touched his face - sure enough, he was exposed.

Nevertheless, he remained calm, unlike the spectators.

“Boom!” The golden glow dispersed and the prince assumed his original form. He stared at Feiyun in disbelief.

“That’s... that’s not the demonic successor...” A young girl became slack-jawed; her eyes agape.

“That’s clearly Feng Feiyun.”

“Wasn’t he burned alive by that heavenly formation in his mansion? Why is he alive?”

An old cultivator rubbed his eyes to make sure: “The Divine King is alive. He hid his identity to join the competition.”

“The Divine King is back now!” This news spread like a plague across the capital.

Numerous cultivators ran for the Earth stage for verification.

“Feng Feiyun, this monster had climbed out of hell. Even Yama can’t take his life?” Many didn’t wish to see him again, especially the Grand Chancellor and Long Shenya. They felt something ominous.

