

Star Gate 461

Chapter 461: Metamorphosis (IV)

The old man next to Xu Feng frowned faintly and stepped forward.

“Sir,” he transmitted. “Let’s wait for the three great organizations and Silver Moon authorities to make their moves. We don’t need to concern ourselves with this for now.”

Brows furrowed, Xu Feng looked at the old man and nodded. The latter said nothing more. Instead, Hou Xiaochen looked at him, smiled, and turned away. Golden Spear skeptically regarded the old man, finding him a bit familiar, but unable to place the face. Frowning, Golden Spear’s thoughts returned to contemplating Earthturner Sword and Southern Fist.

“Director,” Manager Yu transmitted to Hou Xiaochen. “Why does this person seem... a bit familiar... yet a bit alien? Do they come from Silver Moon?”

“Yes.”

“Does the director know who they are?”

“Yes, but we don’t need to discuss them. They’re very strong, so be careful. There might be another reason for them joining the Xu banner. Since they’ve changed everything about them, they probably don’t wish for old acquaintances to recognize them. Let’s give them space!”

Manager Yu stopped asking, but began pondering to herself. If the director himself was saying that this person was very strong... then he really was very strong. And he was a pure martial master at that. A pure martial master at this level should be well-known to her. Could it be... Northern Fist?

Surely not. That was a very strong and proud person. Would he willingly put himself down as a servant? If not him, then who?

Names flashed through her mind, but the manager couldn't guess who it was. There were only so many candidates. If it was one of them... then it really was an old acquaintance.

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In the distance.

The old man looked at the Silver Moon delegation and inclined his head when Manager Yu glanced at him, but didn't greet the woman. He followed Xu Feng, a complicated gaze at the bottom of his eyes. Everything had changed about Silver Moon. He cast an emotional glance at the city. Earthturner Sword, Southern Fist... Are you unwilling to stay away from the limelight as well?

First Yuan Shuo left Silver Moon, then Hou Xiaochen killed a Nova, then Yu Luocha made her move. Golden Spear and Berserk Blade appeared, and now so were Earthturner Sword and Southern Fist present. Sky Sword and Tyrant Blade in the central region also seemed to be making names for themselves...

Jadelight Sword had fallen behind—who knew if she could catch up? Yuan Shuo went without saying, he surely could. Jadelight possessed too much of a solitary streak, but she had a one-track mind. Perhaps she could quickly catch up thanks to Yuan Shuo's guidance.

And Golden Spear?

The old man looked at Golden Spear—the latter seemed to be stuck in his own world. Was he suffering from what he'd observed? A smirk appeared in the depths of the old man's eyes. Golden Spear deserved his mental turmoil!

He'd insisted on taking a shortcut back in the day. If he'd broken Yuan Shuo's shackles by himself, he'd be so much more than an initial Nova now. He chose to believe Hou Xiaochen's nonsense instead. It was now up to Golden Spear himself whether or not he could break the additional chains that Hou Xiaochen had clapped on him.

Hou Xiaochen was stronger than Yuan Shuo. If Golden Spear could manage the feat, then he would snatch fortune from the jaws of disaster.

The old man looked up at the city wall, at where a new Silver Armor stood. It might be the Black Armor that Xu Feng had just spoken of, that martial master... Various thoughts filtered through the man's mind. Battle Heaven... the eight families... Can that be Yuan Shuo's disciple?

Nostalgia dawned in the old man's eyes, but he quickly dismissed the emotion. He took one final glance at Xu Feng. Power easily obtained is difficult to subdue. Smooth sailing is not necessarily a good thing. I hope Battle Heaven becomes the key to your metamorphosis. If not, you will never compare to the true elites.

Even supernaturals had a chance of surpassing themselves. While the true elites in the central region were supernaturals, not even those such as Sky Sword dared dismiss them in the slightest. It was only a matter of how one used their energy, that didn't represent anything.

The old man suddenly exuded a different aura. Off in the distance, Golden Spear turned sharply. He'd been jarred out of his thoughts to look at the old man with surprise! He keenly assessed his object of scrutiny and wanted to say something, but ultimately chose to remain quiet.

Hou Xiaochen looked over with nothing more than a smile before turning back. Kong Jie stroked his chin, flicking a half smile at the old man. He crossed his arms with the stance of simply enjoying the show. This place was becoming ever more interesting!

It turned out to be a good thing that Ole Hou had openly issued a challenge involving the Battle Heaven ruins. Kong Jie was seeing a lot of old friends here. If Sky Sword, Tyrant Blade, and Yuan Shuo were all here... and Huang Yu and the others gathered as well... Heh, it'd make for a fun Silver Moon martial world reunion!

What a pity that Qimei Staff was dead. That demon Yuan Shuo should stay as far away as possible. How many old friends had he killed by now?

These powerhouses didn't seem fazed by Yellow Moon's death. What was there to be afraid of? They'd witnessed more brutal happenings before. It was just a divine girl of Sky Mountain that'd died. She wasn't even part of the thirty-six. Dead was dead, her death was less than Qimei Staff's. They'd been sad when Qimei Staff died and heartily cursed out Yuan Shuo for randomly killing people again!

They didn't think much of this loss. It was her honor that Earthturner Sword and Southern Fist had killed her together. Ying Hongyue wouldn't be able to say anything even if he was present.

Just as these powerhouses nursed their own thoughts, the Parity King called out, "We cannot delay any longer! We need to join forces in a strong offensive! Otherwise, we should throw in the towel now and just wait for the three days to be over!"

Their numbers would only continue to dwindle at this rate and the situation would become ever more perilous. Some Novas could sniff out the scent of danger creeping in around them.

"Director Hou, do you have any ideas?"

"None," Hou Xiaochen replied calmly. "If we work together, we follow the previous plan. If not, then all of the factions are on their own to enter the inner city. You guys have more people, so what you say goes!"

The rest of them silently cursed him out! They really wanted to just set everything aside and kill him first. That bastard always presented such a coolly composed demeanor, like he really was that much better than them!

"Then we make use of our current momentum and take the gates." Green Moon clenched her teeth. "If we can't or if someone holds back... then we withdraw!"

She was flustered after losing Yellow Moon. Hou Xiaochen smiled and nodded. Currently, he was more curious about what Li Hao's trio was up to. Perhaps some light would be shed soon. Those guys had interfered with his plans again, particularly Hong Yitang... I really want to fight you!

Given the large numbers of supernaturals and Solars that'd disappeared, the remaining wandering cultivators no longer dared strike out on their own. As important as making money was, their lives were even more so. Wandering cultivators went where the wind blew them. Great ambitions or lofty expectations did not motivate them, they just wanted to profit where there were gains to be had.

Not only had they not secured treasure during this expedition, but a lot of them had died. Some wanted to leave, but the door wouldn't be open for another two days. Unless they retreated from the ancient city, they'd still have to move with the pack.

From danger came opportunity, some wandering cultivators still hoped to strike rich in the inner city. What with so many Novas still around, this panicky group still fell in step with fear, worry, and some anticipation.

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On the city walls.

Li Hao saw that the supernaturals were on the move again. Instead of their previous split action, they'd gathered together in a stronger show of unity compared to before. Numerous losses had taught them that joining forces was their best hope of surviving.

There are a lot of Novas...

Li Hao saw three in Red Moon, three in Yama, and three in Celestial. That was nine from just the three great organizations. Silver Moon's official delegation was more frightening—Golden Spear, Hou Xiaochen, Manager Yu, Kong Jie, Qi Gang, Hu Qingfeng... Each and every single one of them was formidable.

The wandering cultivators boasted of Xu Feng, Yuan Xingwu of the Skystar Troops, and three that operated alone...

And considering the dead Yellow Moon, that meant there might be some powerful martial masters lurking beneath the surface.

It was a terrifying contingent that'd entered the ruins as there were more than twenty Novas alone. If it wasn't for the two that'd died in Ash Mountain and vast sums of Solars that followed them, this expedition team would possess more powerhouses than the entirety of the northern provinces.

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Li Hao considered his own side. While the three Silver Armors would be incredibly strong if they reawakened, they might not be able to stand against Hou Xiaochen's people. He Yong and Hong Yitang were equally strong, but there were only two of them.

The young man looked at the inner city. He wasn't able to picture a winning scenario without the presence of the Gold Armor. As strong as three thousand Black Armors were, there were a lot of wandering cultivators and Solars left.

Defeat was inevitable!

Of course, he could try hiding in the city and luring the enemy in. He would repeat his tactics from the outer city and conduct guerrilla warfare from the ancient houses.

How could the Battle Heaven army win?

Behind Li Hao, the three Silver Armors stood so aloofly that it was like they were truly dead!

Three thousand Black Armors gathered beneath the city gates again, forming a black current. Some had been lost in the earlier skirmishes, but not that many. It didn't affect the overall camp that

much. Where there was battle, there would be loss. These troop leaders had experienced countless battles and were unaffected by this.

As Li Hao pondered the next course of action, the three looked at each other in possible communication. They left the young man out of their conversation, probably considering him too green to be worthy of inclusion.

They seemed to complete their strategizing the next second and raised their longswords high! Three thousand Black Armors followed suit with spear and sword. Though completely silent, it was a forebodingly magnificent sight!

Chapter 462: The Battle To Defend the City (I)

A troop leader's voice sounded in Li Hao's visor. It was coldly dignified as it echoed in all soldiers' minds.

"To battle the heavens! Kill the enemy! The Battle Heaven Army has been forgotten after countless years of quiet. Do not forget who we are—it was His Imperial Majesty who bestowed his name upon us! The army once swept the four corners. Although we are just a defending branch, we must establish the prestige that is the Battle Heaven Army!

"How dare these cretins insult us! KILL!!" The roar reverberated across minds.

Li Hao blinked. The other three Silver Armors rose into the air brandishing broadswords, directing the flood of three thousand to pour out!

Thump thump thump!

Footsteps pounded the ground like they were battle drums. A solemn air of killing intent nearly suffocated Li Hao. The three Silver Armors commenced battle without a spot of hesitation as they sought to repel the enemy from the city walls.

The same stifling feeling traveled to the supernaturals in the distance—this was more nerve-racking than the first time! The powerhouses of the three great organizations regarded the situation gravely. It was unbelievable that a long dead army would still possess such battle strength and influence!

“Fight fight fight!”

“The heavens can be broken, the earth can be shattered, the firmament can be severed!” Ringing battle cries resonated in Li Hao’s mind. Three thousand Black Armors rushed out of the city gates and smashed into the enemy camps. This was a group of real warriors, not the decrepit soldiers of Li Hao’s imagination that were limited to defending the city.

Battle Heaven’s defenders were a veteran army unit. At times like these, they were well aware that cowardice and avoidance of battle would just lead to a faster death. They needed to rip an opening into the enemy, massacring them to the point in which they shuddered and lost morale. The strongest enemy would be routed in that sort of state.

Rumble!

The two sides clashed with an eruption of supernatural ability.

“Kill!” Green Moon and the others roared. “Earth types, restrain the soldiers! Wind types, blow them away. Water types, seal them off...”

Multiple powerhouses were directing action on the battlefield. That was unavoidable as this wasn’t one supernatural army, but a joint collective of countless wandering cultivators and the three great organizations. There was only one thought running through the wandering cultivators’ minds—who gives a shit about the commanders. I’m hitting whatever I see!

Collisions and explosions broke through the air; the Novas swiftly set their sights on the three Silver Armors. All three great organizations shifted toward them.

“There’s another on the city walls! That one we leave for Silver Moon!” shouted the Parity King through a transmission.

Hou Xiaochen looked strangely at the unmoving Silver Armor up high. Wasn’t that... Li Hao? Leave him to us?

Li Hao still didn’t move. The Seventh Troop leader had told him to watch and observe, to join the battle when the time came. Therefore, he silently peered down from the city gates. Hong Yitang and He Yong were by his side as well.

They watched the army rush into the enemy. They watched as Black Armors were counterattacked. They watched as soldiers toppled over, were sent flying, or even shattered from singular powerful palm strikes. There were Novas among the enemy that could outright break the Black Armors, revealing white bone within. The bones swiftly disintegrated to dust—the last signs that this warrior of the Battle Heaven Army ever existed.

And yet, the soldiers continued to charge, heedless of the carnage of their brethren. When they marched on the four corners of the world and wreaked unparalleled slaughter, they’d faced all manner of strong enemies. Why would they be afraid of these ones?

The three Silver Armors quickly made contact with the Novas. Ringing explosions deafened the ear as the soldiers were quickly surrounded. Their formidable armor granted them tremendous defensive ability, but they were long dead, after all. They were only peak Solars now.

RUMBLE!

Green Moon sent a Silver Armor flying; there was even a handprint left on the armor. And this was only the beginning.

The supernaturals were incredibly powerful and individually stronger than the soldiers. After Black Armors started falling in droves, there were also Bronze Armors that were completely obliterated.

However, they took down supernaturals with them in fiery explosions, seemingly having detonated their armor on purpose. Supernaturals also began perishing in large swathes on the battlefield.

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On the city walls.

Li Hao watched the two sides clash together. He took a breath, then another breath... He saw faces instead of the Battle Heaven Army. Faces with solemn and respectful expressions. These warriors had been human back in the day. After all these years dead, they were still defending the city.

“Martial uncles,” he said softly as he looked at the two powerhouses around him. “You say that I just need to do as I will, that I have support with you here. Then... I will take full advantage of this reinforcement!”

Hong Yitang glanced at him and felt compelled to say, “Um... just don’t pick a target that’s too strong...”

Why do I suddenly feel uneasy?

Li Hao didn’t say anything as he turned his armor black, joining the army with a leap off the walls.

“The Silver Armor has descended!” Green Moon howled from a distance.

Hou Xiaochen inclined his head and walked through the air. He flew toward Li Hao.

“We promised the kid, so we can’t go back on our word now!” Hong Yitang looked at He Yong when he noticed the Night Watcher director’s movement. “Leave this side to me, I can complete my old battle with that guy. You keep an eye on Li Hao!”

He Yong smiled and jumped down, vanishing from sight to catch up to the young man.

Hong Yitang took in a small breath and rose into the air. Bronze Armors normally didn't leave the ground, but he walked through the air and enveloped the surroundings with a majestic sword intent!

Many Novas in the crowd looked at him, as did Hou Xiaochen. The director's eyes widened. Overwhelming sword intent surged as Hong Yitang unsheathed his weapon to cut his opponent down!

Bam!

A spear materialized in Hou Xiaochen's hands and he stabbed it forward. The skies shattered and the earth fractured. It was like a hole had been pierced through the firmament!

Bam!

An enormous explosion rang through the battlefield. All Black Armors around them were sent flying and all supernaturals below Solar exploded. Horrified Solars staggered away with grievous wounds.

Green Moon's face went slack with terror. Now they knew how Yellow Moon had died!

A supreme powerhouse!

There was an unparalleled powerhouse behind that bronze armor. Perhaps it was the disguised Gold Armor!

Earthturner Sword was well known, but he'd stayed out of the public eye for many years. Numerous people could recognize his moves, but not this group of supernaturals. Green Moon, on the other hand, had been a martial master back in the day. She'd been the relatively famous Green Peacock.

The woman found the sword intent somewhat familiar, but couldn't immediately place it. Just whose sword intent was coming from Battle Heaven? Earthturner Sword wasn't a guess that immediately came to mind.

"This person is fierce without equal," Hou Xiaochen proclaimed calmly. "Silver Moon will be in charge of only him. Does anyone have any contrary opinions?"

No one said a word, not even Green Moon and the others. This Bronze Armor might be the disguised Gold Armor—it felt even stronger than a reawakened Silver Armor! What else could they say?

Whether it was Black Armors or supernaturals, everyone on the ground swiftly backed away. The upcoming clash would be terrifying!

Hong Yitang's face was hidden within the armor. He brandished his sword and sealed off heaven and earth. The four directions became barriers as his sword swung—boom!

Another massive collision rang out as a phoenix soul manifested over the Flaming Phoenix Spear.

"Hou Xiaochen, I don't like your expression of holding everything within the palm of your hand. Don't smile at me next time, it's so... aggravating!" Ripples undulated outward as the Earthturner Sword turned everything within one hundred meters into hell. The ground tilted as the city's impregnable city floors fissured! There was only one sword between heaven and earth!

Off in the distance, Manager Yu and the others gaped. Too strong! And yet, this wasn't all!

An even stronger aura rose to the forefront. Hong Yitang's organs ruptured while the skies and earth overturned amidst Hou Xiaochen's shocked eyes. The intent behind his Broken Will Spear was completely suppressed!

A longsword cut through the sky and overshadowed Kong Jie, Golden Spear, Berserk Blade, Manager Yu, Qi Gang, Hu Qingfeng... Everyone was shrouded in a circle, and yet, the sword intent was still growing stronger! It was so overwhelming that it couldn't be comprehended!

Hou Xiaochen looked askance at the Bronze Armor. "What are you doing?" he transmitted. Was Hong Yitang looking to die? He was just here to spar with the man, not to fight to the death.

"What am I doing? Killing you!" Hong Yitang laughed. "As a Silver Moon martial master, to spar is to fight to the death! You've gotten confused in your old age. When I said to leave the Silver Moon authorities to me, I meant to leave them all to me! Hou Xiaochen, Kong Jie, you two can attack together!"

His longsword smashed down like it was overlaid by the earth! Hou Xiaochen frantically jabbed with his spear; Kong Jie's eyes widened as well. He seemed to feel countless Hong Yitangs attacking—the guy was mad! But... he wasn't afraid!

Golden Spear roared and stabbed with his spear! A stern Manager Yu thrust out her palm!

Then fight we shall!

The martial masters made their moves; Qi Gang of the Divine Masters Ranking yelled a battle cry. He materialized a golden sword that was instantly destroyed by another's sword intent. Qi Gang stared at his empty hands with disbelief—his longsword was instantly obliterated!

He snarled and manifested a peculiar black longsword next. It wasn't coalesced out of supernatural energy like before, but an origin weapon!

The powerhouses were bringing their strongest moves to bear as they charged Earthturner Sword—the madman who'd unsealed his organs to fight!

While Hou Xiaochen and Kong Jie didn't understand Hong Yitang's actions, they guessed that he might have the means to control what would happen to him next. They put those eventualities out of mind and made their moves—one with the spear, the other with the fist. Both were incredibly formidable and the strength that they spontaneously erupted with exceeded that of the golden eagle in Ash Mountain.

Those of the three great organizations watched with open mouths! All this for just a Bronze Armor? They'd thought that the soldier was strong, but the battle strength that the Silver Moon authorities exploded with was beyond the imagination. Green Moon was counting her lucky stars that it was these guys up against the terrifying swordsman.

Was that really a dead soldier?

The sword was like heaven and earth. One sword overturned the skies and earth, no one could stand against it in any direction. The Silver Moon authorities had brought so many powerhouses with them, but they were all blocked by one soldier with a sword.

Chapter 463: The Battle To Defend the City (II)

Hong Yitang smiled beneath his visor. Whether it was Hou Xiaochen or Kong Jie, both matched him in terms of strength. But... so what? They didn't dare unseal their power!

In that case, don't blame me for taking advantage of the situation! I've long wanted to take you down a peg or two, Hou Xiaochen. You really think of yourself as a god and schemed after my loot of black armor last time! I was in White Moon City for so many days on my last trip and you didn't even bother seeing me!

Boom!

The longsword cleaved through the air, one stroke after another like the earth rearing up. Everyone could clearly witness each magnificent brilliance, but no one could block it! Even Hou Xiaochen

and Kong Jie could only frown and respectively jab with his spear or punch with his fist. Golden Spear and the others erupted with force.

Tremendous battle strength overawed bystanders on all sides. Whether it was Golden Spear or Manager Yu, the power they brought to bear was so ferocious that even some Novas were shocked.

Most terrifying of all was that all of these people combined could do nothing but steadily retreat in the face of a singular opponent.

Mid Nova Qi Gang, a powerhouse on the Divine Masters Ranking, was armed with an origin weapon and could only hover on the sides. He was forced into continuously backing away, his face flushed and a shocked look in his eyes.

Initial Nova Hu Qingfeng started vomiting blood as the sword descended mercilessly! Initial Novas seemed particularly weak in a battlefield like this. There was only fear in his heart—too strong! Not only was the soldier in front of them strong, but everyone around him was also so much stronger than he imagined. He knew that Hou Xiaochen was powerful, but not that Kong Jie was extremely formidable as well. That punch came with such an aura that Hu Qingfeng felt like he was being ripped into two.

Why were there so many powerhouses among the Silver Moon authorities??

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As battle raged in one corner of the city, Li Hao struck with his sword. He didn't look in the direction of the fighting or even think about how strong Hou Xiaochen and the others were, how strong Hong Yitang was at the moment...

The only thought in his mind was to charge and kill! Multiple supernaturals were cut down at the waist when he slashed with his sword.

"It's that Silver Armor!!" screamed a nearby, horrified supernatural.

Pfft!

Li Hao ran him through, blood spraying everywhere when the young man pulled his sword out. Black Armors charged by his side, gathering together to block supernaturals from converging on their officer. All of them roared soundlessly and fought a bloody battle, centering on Li Hao as the vanguard to pierce through the enemy's battle lines.

As shouts and screams abounded, several Solars stepped forward on the wandering cultivator side. Not only that, but quite a few Novas stirred to action as well. They ripped through the Black Armors around them and forged their way toward Li Hao!

When Xu Feng saw the Silver Armor, he set course for his new target. The old man behind him furrowed his brows, following his ward. His attention was held elsewhere before he could catch up and he looked off to the side, at where a Black Armor seemed to be looking at him.

"Sir, let's just watch first," transmitted the old man as he came to a halt. "Don't do anything yet!"

"I know!" Xu Feng answered absentmindedly and continued pushing his way toward Li Hao.

The old man looked at the Black Armor and sighed softly. "What do you want?" he transmitted.

"Nothing, just stand there and don't move!" He Yong answered. "Your master is strong. He's a mid Nova and on the so-called Divine Masters Ranking. He's renowned in the central region, but I don't care about him! You, you'll stay here! Don't blame me for reacting harshly if you move. I may not be able to do anything to you, but when Yuan Shuo comes back and learns that you bullied his disciple, I'll bet my surname that he beats you to death!"

A formidable powerhouse such as He Yong said that he might not be able to do anything to the old man! The latter remained quiet.

He Yong ignored him; it was just a warning. “Also, martial world rules apply,” he transmitted. “They still apply to you and they also apply to your master. Li Hao is much weaker than him, so I can save him once. You, however, cannot! If your master dies, he dies, understood?”

“He Yong, I’m just visiting home,” the old man transmitted. “I just wanted to take a look at Silver Moon...”

“I don’t want to waste time talking to you! I’ll just put in a little bit of effort to stop you if you insist, but I’ll see if Yuan Shuo will kill you when he returns!”

“.....” The old man was speechless. Yuan Shuo! A martial master with only peak Solar strength at the moment was very, very weak in their eyes. And yet, someone like He Yong was saying if I can’t kill you, I’ll wait for Yuan Shuo to come kill you.

Those kinds of words would inspire one to turn up their nose at the speaker, but the old man didn’t treat it as empty boasting. An internal conflict seized him. Even though Xu Feng greatly outmatched Li Hao, what if... something unexpected happened? What should he do if an accident occurred?

If an unwanted development took place and he intervened, would that raise Yuan Shuo’s ire and dissatisfaction? If that guy knew he’d involved himself in a battle involving Li Hao, the old demon would lose his mind and exact retribution! He absolutely would!

The old man took a deep breath and didn’t say anything. He withdrew to the side.

He Yong laughed and casually punched a supernatural to death. “I know a little about your affairs, but don’t forget that you’re still a martial master! You hold yourself with none of the ease of one!”

He vanished from the spot, needing to look in on Li Hao. The only person that he was wary of in the battlefield was this old man. Hong Yitang could handle the rest.

As the old man watched him leave, he turned his sights to Xu Feng close at hand. The young master was approaching Li Hao, wanting to form a plan to study or capture the Silver Armor.

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Pfft!

Li Hao hacked a Solar into two and suddenly sensed a pair of eyes on him. He looked over to see the guy who'd ruined his moment in grasping the water aura.

Xu Feng! Mid Nova and listed on some ranking. He was so strong that Li Hao was sure to be unable to rival him. Therefore, he ignored the young master. If he couldn't match the guy, he would only suffer a beating or even be killed. He wanted to locate an initial Nova for a fight.

Apart from this guy and Yuan Xingwu, there were three more Novas among the wandering cultivators. One of them was a mid Nova, the other two were initial Novas. He had his eyes set on one of the two.

Li Hao didn't want this guy, but this guy wanted him. Xu Feng suddenly darted in front of him when Li Hao next wanted to charge. The mid Nova stood right in his path. Li Hao's expression turned unpleasant beneath the visor; he was in trouble now. He was just a peak Nova, he stood no chance! There might be hope if he'd grasped a fourth aura, but currently he only had three.

Where was Southern Fist? Didn't that old guy say he'd let me do as I wish? He should be stepping forward to stop this guy!

"Give it a try, what's there to be afraid of?" He Yong's voice sounded by his ear. "He's a young master of a large clan, a Heaven Favored who improved rapidly and set foot into mid Nova in recent years. He didn't cross over from marital dao. I think your strength is the equivalent of initial Nova. Even if you can't defeat him, you can get a sense of how strong the supernaturals on the rankings are."

Li Hao cursed inwardly. Fucking hell, that's easy for you to say! That's a mid Nova you want me to fight, are you kidding me? You told me to take a small risk with an initial Nova, is this a small risk??

This was a death risk!

“Go on, have your fight. I'll step in if you really can't take it!”

Li Hao took a deep breath and clenched his teeth, still cursing up a storm. He put everything out of his mind. Fine! I'll do it! What else can I do now? The three sword auras immediately converged as one.

Xu Feng had just wanted to put the Silver Armor through its paces and see if he could activate the so-called reawakened state. He blinked with surprise—was that... aura? Did Silver Armors know aura? And sword aura at that! There certainly were a lot of swordsmen in the Battle Heaven Army.

Li Hao contemplated for a split second and erupted with the Incantation of the Blade of Blood. Blood qi filled the air, prompting a frown from Xu Feng. He seemed to be familiar with this technique, what was it?

Li Hao melded three auras together and deployed the Incantation, striking without hesitation!

Boom!

It was formidably strong. Xu Feng responded with a surge of ice energy. The longsword bit into a massive ice cube. It was so durable that although it split beneath the sword, a strong recoil traveled up Li Hao's arm.

“How interesting!” Xu Feng looked at Li Hao. “Why do I think that you're alive?”

The soldier seemed to be alive, but was that possible?

The young man was quite relaxed. He waved countless ice arrows into existence and charged Li Hao. A smile hung on his face. How fun, this Silver Armor seemed different from the other three. It wasn't really alive, was it?

If that was the case... that was incredible. Was it a living ancient, or was it someone on the expedition team?

Rumble!!

Countless ice arrows exploded on Li Hao. The young man couldn't evade in time as Xu Feng was very fast. Ice arrows condensed in the blink of an eye, leaving him no room to react. The young master was much stronger than the supernaturals he'd met before.

Li Hao didn't make a sound as he jumped up from the ground and stuck with the sword again! The weapon emitted no noise—Ghost Shadow Sword!

Humm!

A sonic boom emitted only after the longsword pierced through the ice. Xu Feng's eyes widened with surprise!

In the distance, three presences suddenly flared and the Seventh Troop leader's voice sounded in Li Hao's mind. "We are about to awaken! If we are unable to defeat the enemy and you live, then you must defend Battle Heaven!"

Li Hao blinked. Boom!

Xu Feng punched with a fist of ice and sealed Li Hao away. Li Hao erupted with internal force and broke out of the ice, but still felt a cold air drape around him. Xu Feng was a mutated water supernatural—an ice supernatural.

There was no time to consider anything else. Li Hao stared at his opponent and transformed his longsword into Stellaris. Silver Armors could use their own weapons—they would be enclosed with the armor's standard issue weapon. From the outside, it still appeared to be the longsword, but the effects would be vastly different.

Chapter 464: The Battle To Defend the City (III)

Li Hao no longer thought about or looked elsewhere on the battlefield. He struck with his sword and erupted with the auras of three attributes. A ferocious tiger roared, the earth overturned, and the metal sword exploded!

Xu Feng shifted as well and abruptly disappeared. Li Hao, however, pushed off his feet and followed right beside his opponent, slashing out with a longsword that was enveloped by killing intent!

Crunch!

A crisp fracture sounded as the ice in front of Xu Feng crumbled away. It'd shattered much faster than he expected. He couldn't dodge in time and took the sword to his chest. And yet, a large impact sounded as a mirror hovered in front of his chest. A Heart Protector!

Xu Feng looked at Li Hao, then at his mirror. His eyes widened as they shot back to the sword in Li Hao's hand. That sword was too sharp! There was a small mark left on his mirror!

Not only that, but there was a shuddering weapon soul inside the mirror. No matter how he commanded it, it refused to emerge. It only used the innate durability of the mirror to withstand the Silver Armor's sword. What in the world was going on?

The soldier wasn't weak—Xu Feng could sense that it was roughly initial Nova. His estimate wouldn't be too far off the mark. Whatever level it was at, it was far weaker than him. And yet, his supernatural technique of the ice shield was instantly shattered!

This was astounding, and what had been that tiger howl? Xu Feng frowned, finding the situation increasingly odd.

Yuan Xingwu also furrowed his brows in the distance and looked in Li Hao's direction. He was confused—had that been a tiger roar just a moment ago? He'd heard many tiger roars before, but that one had been different from his master's. In the martial world, only the Five Styles could emit such a stately tiger roar.

Yuan Xingwu then turned around to look at Xu Feng. The look in his eyes shifted slightly as he registered how strong this person was. He naturally knew of someone on the Divine Masters Ranking. He looked at the Silver Armor—when it cut through the air with the combined might of three sword auras, the resplendent radiance it erupted with was vastly different from the style that the other three Silver Armors battled with!

“Three sword auras... tiger roar... blood qi... Incantation of the Blade of Blood...” Incredulity dawned in Yuan Xingwu's eyes! He was reminded of one person among the information that he'd gathered—Li Hao! The junior brother that he'd yet to meet, Li Hao!

That Silver Armor was a disguised Li Hao, but how??

Li Hao's sword strokes followed one after another. He didn't care if his identity was exposed as he was using not only the sword, but the Five Styles as well. He shifted up and down at an extreme speed, one moment like a ferocious tiger, the other like an ape. Anyone who knew Yuan Shuo would recognize it after a moment—this was the Five Styles discipline!

Off in the distance, Hu Dingfang was not part of Earthturner Sword's encirclement. He looked over, eyes widening as he recognized Li Hao. The lad had somehow entered Battle Heaven and become a Silver Armor! He was fighting a mid Nova, how incredible!

.....

Li Hao didn't care about anyone. All he focused on was producing the water aura! There wouldn't be any trouble with locking it so long as it manifested. His organs were exceedingly strong and he'd be able to contain his fourth aura instantaneously. If he combined four auras together and employed the Incantation of the Blade of Blood in conjunction, he might be able to stand against his opponent!

Li Hao stopped throwing himself against Xu Feng; to be impetuous didn't mean to nurture a death wish. He stuck to his opponent's side like glue instead.

"You're not an ancient..." Xu Feng realized something at this point. "Your moves are more like the fabled Five Styles discipline of Silver Moon. You're... Li Hao!"

He gaped. Li Hao?? A guy who hadn't spent much time in martial dao was on par with a Nova? What kind of fortuitous opportunity had he stumbled upon?!

Li Hao didn't respond. So what if you recognize me? You guys are all gonna die! He darted back into the darkness with his next blow. So what if you're a mid Nova?

BOOM!

Ice sealed off the four corners as a powerful surge of supernatural energy swept the area. The locale that Li Hao stood in froze over.

"I was worried about the so-called reawakening because I thought it was a Silver Armor. You only have your strength because you utilized the Incantation of the Blade of Blood. You won't be able to undergo that reawakening!" Xu Feng declared coolly.

In that case, there was no need to be cautious or hold anything back. He was very curious as to how Li Hao became a Silver Armor!

Ice sealed off the premises and a frosty air permeated the void. As he moved through the darkness, Li Hao was forced to reveal himself. The moment he did so, a fist of frost slammed at his face!

Li Hao wanted to run, but his path was sealed off by ice. He stomped his foot to crack it through flaring the earth aura, but it cost him time. The punch connected!

Bam!

The young man felt an incredible reverberation through the armor. If it wasn't for the strength of his organs and body, he would be like ordinary Solars and shaken to death!

As expected of a genius renowned in the central region.

Xu Feng was surprised to see Li Hao still standing after one of his punches. He continued waving his fists around and deploying ferocious power of ice. He was so domineering that Li Hao had no room to counterattack.

However, strong organs, blood qi, and the Silver Armor ensured that Li Hao could swiftly recover despite being knocked down again and again. Sword energy supplemented his depletion and healed his injuries.

The young man slowly found his footing amid the frozen ground, his eyes glittering with light. This guy didn't seem able to kill him! He thought back to his spars with Liu Long. So long as his opponent couldn't beat him and he possessed sufficient sword energy, then he would win through simple attrition!

Li Hao waved his sword to return the blow. The keen Stellaris was indestructible; Xu Feng had to give way. That created an opening for Li Hao to bound into the air and kick repeatedly with the Nine Forged Force!

He held no reservations, just the thought of demonstrating his strongest force possible. He would exhaust Xu Feng's mysterious power even if he couldn't kill the guy! Supernaturals didn't have a limitless source of power, they required time to recuperate.

Kaboom!

Li Hao's legs kicked toward Xu Feng—they were promptly encased in ice. The ice shattered in the blink of an eye and a sword crashed out, forcing Xu Feng back. Li Hao continued waving his sword, brandishing his fist, and kicking his legs, utilizing the style of a martial master to the utmost.

The more Xu Feng fought, the more infuriated he became. Was it impossible for this guy to suffer injuries?? His force had reverberated through the armor many times. Was the armor so strong that it negated all of his power? He didn't understand! If that was the case, then this armor was an ultimate treasure!

Close by, He Yong grinned and casually punched an approaching Nova back. The horrified supernatural quickly fled. Damn it, why were there so many powerhouses among the Black Armors?? He was a Nova, but the soldier managed to injure him with one blow! This was horrifying!

He Yong turned back to the battlefield after beating off a Nova. The three Silver Armors seemed to be awakening; their strength was climbing and their presences growing. The leader of the Seventh Troop shook a Red Moon peak Solar to death with one sweep of his sword.

Green Moon and the others gaped with shock. The reawakened Silver Armors were strong beyond belief. They were starting to move beyond Nova to metamorphosis!

“Defense!” someone roared. “Their time is limited after they reawaken. They'll dissipate soon, there's no need to go head to head with them!”

As for retreat... There was likely no way to withdraw now. The supernaturals had to focus on defense and wearing down the soldiers so that the Silver Armors died when their time expired. This

was primarily why they weren't afraid of the soldiers reawakening. Based on the last expedition's experience, the Silver Armors wouldn't be able to fight for a long time.

"Everyone stronger than Solar is to lend a hand, we defend together!" another person roared.

Chaotic action reigned around the battlefield as some Bronze Armors seemed to be awakening as well. They spontaneously ripped through some of the supernaturals in front of them. Two different parties of supernaturals clashed into each other as wails abounded!

.....

Li Hao put everything out of mind. His only thought was to exhaust that little bastard!

Rumble!

Feet and fist struck at the same time—even his tiger roar made a reappearance!

"Roar!!" The berserk roar shook nearby supernaturals to the point where blood streamed out of their orifices. They quickly backed away; Xu Feng was shaken to the point of dizziness. Why was this fellow so strong? Was he an undying existence?

The killing continued. As more supernaturals died, the more Black Armors were rendered obsolete.

.....

At the same time.

Inside the city.

The Gold Armor held the Black Tortoise Seal and hovered in the center of the city lord manor. It looked in the direction of the eastern city gate and raised its head at the old turtle. The turtle was silent, simply watching the battlefield.

“Isn’t that... also a kind of release?” came a ripple from the turtle. Indeed, wasn’t the reawakening a release? It wasn’t that the soldiers couldn’t be saved or stopped from their actions, but that it was torture to be confined within their armors for millennia!

It was the most painful agony! They had no memories, no souls, just a lingering obsession. This revitalization at the last second to remind them of their past—wasn’t that a bequeathment and release?

A ripple stirred from the Gold Armor. “But... we... are... willing!”

Willing to stay and defend! Willing to safeguard the city!

Some emotions gripped the old turtle. “Then go!”

“Understood!” came the mechanical assent. The Gold Armor shot out with extremely dense killing intent!

We are willing. We are willing to endure this loneliness and pain. This so-called release isn’t important.

We protect the city because that was the vow we took when we joined the Battle Heaven Army. Instead of humanity, we fight for this empty city now. Even so, it tastes as sweet as sugar plums!

The Gold Armor swiftly approached the eastern city gate. Meanwhile, a foreign emotion appeared in the hovering turtle’s eyes. So they were willing to continue enduring this pain?

It'd wanted to free them as this torment was too much. Was the Battle Heaven Army not willing to disappear?

Chapter 465: Sword Unsheathed (I)

Battle raged outside the city; Li Hao was the epitome of ferociousness. His three swords were as one and the Incantation of the Blade of Blood freely demonstrated. Sword energy protected his body and nurtured his wounds.

He was frozen again and again, but stood up again and again. He struck with the sword, the sword light violent and ominous!

A Black Armor exploded into pieces near by him. "Out of my way!" Li Hao could no longer hold it in. These soldiers had either received particular orders or were naturally equipped with a certain obsession to protect the army leaders. He'd been knocked off his feet a few times—Black Armors swiftly appeared each time to be a human shield.

However, the Sunderer level soldiers were only on par with Sunflare. They couldn't withstand a single blow from a mid Nova, not even their armor. A Nova's might ensured that they shattered from one strike.

These Black Armors stepped up simply to go to their deaths. One time, two times, three times...

Li Hao didn't think much of it at first. These soldiers were dead to begin with, so it was nice to have such a distraction. The Black Armors could impede his opponent and exhaust some of his stamina.

But as the soldiers tirelessly put themselves forward, heedless of the dangers and unknowing of death, Li Hao grew angry to see them destroyed again and again!

As more Black Armors were broken, a Bronze Armor appeared around Li Hao.

“Kill!” The ripple that emanated was the Bronze Armor’s call.

When Li Hao was next sealed away, the Bronze Armor charged with a handful of Black Armors. He wielded a broadsword and fearlessly rushed forward—kill the enemy!

“Battle Heaven!” An indistinct cry exploded by the ear!

Li Hao instantly shattered the ice, but the Bronze Armor continued undaunted and detonated with a loud roar. The explosion rocked Xu Feng on his heels—he took a slight step back. Though uninjured, he was once more impeded.

Growing irritation nipped at Xu Feng! It was one thing if he was unable to kill Li Hao, but these Black and Bronze Armors were ants that’d been dead for endless years. It was annoying that they kept getting in his way!

What is the purpose of this? What can you change with your actions? You stop me for a second and then what? I’ll keep trouncing Li Hao! There is no point to any of this!

Li Hao shattered the ice and looked at the Bronze Armor that’d just exploded. It was the same set of equipment as the rest, but he seemed to recognize the newly dead.

Hu Xinwu, leading the third company of the Seventh Troop...

A blank look entered Li Hao’s eyes before he immediately regained his calm. These soldiers were long dead! They were just following their instincts. Not even the Bronze Armors possessed much sentience. They were willing to put themselves forward again and again because he was a troop leader. They charged forward to buy time for him, for the Silver Armor.

Strike! My sword shall be the blazing sun!

His killing intent deepened by thirty percent when he struck. Li Hao leapt into the air and struck all around him. Boom!

Some of the supernaturals in the vicinity died, adding to his sword qi! Even Stellaris seemed to grow impatient with a continued failure to kill Xu Feng. Li Hao dashed out with a stern look in his eyes, racing toward the crowds in the distance instead of attacking Xu Feng!

“Trying to leave?” Xu Feng snorted. You know you’re my target, but you still want to leave? In your dreams!

He flashed in front of Li Hao. The latter was so incredibly quiet in his motions that not even his breathing made a side. He sidled past Xu Feng with a twist of his body and struck again, killing another Sunflare.

Supernaturals around them scattered, pursued by a relentless Li Hao.

Accumulating the aura!

Whether it was fury or some other indescribable mix of emotions, Li Hao’s mind had changed from his original intentions. He’d wanted to bring everything he had to bear in a fight at first, that it didn’t matter if he won or lost. He Yong was keeping an eye on things, so he wasn’t afraid.

But now, he just wanted to kill this person!

Boom!

Xu Feng waved another fist, obliterating Black Armors as soon as they jumped to him. He couldn’t be bothered to look at what he destroyed as he gave chase. These metal gnats were so annoying! Another one exploded, giving way for him to see Li Hao run through a Sunflare with one stroke. The latter’s killing intent no longer wafted outward—it was all held within him as he rushed toward another location.

Supernaturals fled before his wake, but the Black and Bronze Armors continued throwing themselves at Xu Feng. The Seventh Troop leader had said that one only needed to charge on the battlefield! There was no need to pay attention to anything else. So long as the Battle Heaven Army existed, there was only the enemy to be found in the front!

Such had been his words spoken so matter-of-factly!

Li Hao hadn't thought much of them before, but now as a mid Nova chased him, Black Armors led by Bronze Armors still presented themselves for sacrifice. Even when he stopped to kill people and Xu Feng was blocked from reaching him, they paid the price of being eradicated to impede the enemy's footsteps.

Bam!

Thirty-two! Li Hao counted to himself. That was the thirty-second soldier that Xu Feng had killed. They were dead to begin with, so why... why was he expending effort to remember the dead? Their skeletons had long turned to dust. They were just lingering obsessions!

Humm!

A sword broke through the air, delivering a bloody hole to the back of the head of a horrified initial Solar. It ran through his head and left his body flopping to the ground!

Aghast cultivators shrieked and ran for their lives. Solars were dying! Killed by one thrust!

"That's not an armored soldier! That's Li Hao, Yuan Shuo's disciple Li Hao! How dare you kill the innocent, Li Hao! We're not of the three great organizations, so what are you doing, you bastard??"

They weren't of the three great organizations and shared no grudge with Li Hao, but the little bastard dared kill them!

Li Hao looked on expressionlessly. You guys were killing Battle Heaven soldiers too. You guys drag their armor on the ground, like you've collected some great treasure. I am the leader of the Twelfth Troop. Once the three Silver Armors die, I am the highest ranking officer here. You kill my men, so why can I not kill you?

Humm!

The longsword broke through the air—he ignored the power of ice behind him because he knew that there would be comrades along to help him block it. Indeed, a loud explosion ripped through the air behind him as a Bronze Armor exploded!

Li Hao didn't look back, but he seemed to know the Bronze Armor's name. He'd joined Li Hao in the guerrilla warfare of the outer city.

“Wu Kaifu, leader of the ninth company of the Eighth Troop!”

“Li Hao!” Xu Feng demanded curtly. “Is it fun manipulating these metal gnats? Is there meaning to slaughtering weak supernaturals? Come fight me, I may not kill you. I might even protect you a bit if you take off that armor and give it to me!”

He wasn't interested in killing Li Hao, he more so wanted that armor! It was fascinating and seemed to be able to control the Black and Bronze Armors. If he could obtain a complete specimen... this treasure would rival a sky grade origin weapon. That sword also seemed indestructible, so it might be an ultimate treasure as well.

The sword of the Lis?

His thoughts touched upon the rumors. If this was the case.. then he would have enormous gains on this expedition!

Pfft!

Li Hao ran through another person; blood splattered his armor when he withdrew his weapon. He didn't turn back to look at the dead Bronze Armor. He didn't even pay attention to the soldiers rushing in from all directions to protect a troop leader... He just forged onward!

He sent a ripple through the earth with a stomp of his foot, throwing someone to him to be run through by his sword. A ferocious tiger roar stunned another senseless, blood streaming down his face. They stopped so that he could cut them down!

He flew through the crowd like a bird and smashed a supernatural to pieces!

In this moment, Li Hao could pierce through the supernatural defensive line because the powerhouses were on the front lines fighting others.

The three Silver Armors were reawakening, bringing incredible strength to bear. As many powerhouses were with the Silver Moon authorities, they were preoccupied defending themselves against Earthturner Sword. The man's sword aura was growing ever stronger, almost to an uncontrollable point. Some weaklings in the crowd were already gravely injured.

An outsider like Hu Qingfeng was covered in blood, despite being a Nova. He was in ghastly condition.

Only Xu Feng continued to chase Li Hao. Some Novas wanted to give chase too, but were quickly scared off. A few that didn't want to give up pursuit were immobilized on the ground. An initial Nova cultivator was being held under He Yong's foot. A frosty look in his eyes, he punched out while stepping on a Nova!

Boom!

The Nova's head was obliterated!

He Yong didn't care for killing these people, but they refused to be biddable after he fired a warning shot. In that case, he would show them no mercy.

"Southern Fist!" Yuan Xingwu's eyes widened in the distance. He recognized Southern Fist, which meant he instantly thought of the other person—Earthturner Sword, Hong Yitang! What a terrifying Silver Moon martial world!

He turned his gaze toward the rampaging Li Hao and Xu Feng hot on his heels. Yuan Xingwu twitched to move, but He Yong's presence locked onto him. "Yuan Xingwu, is it? Whether you want to help him or hurt him... don't go over there! My fists won't stop because of who you are and Yuan Shuo doesn't admit that you're his first disciple. I don't need to show you mercy!"

"He's no match for Xu Feng," Yuan Xingwu answered solemnly. "Xu Feng is listed on the Divine Masters Ranking and is a mid Nova. He will die once he runs out of protection from the soldiers! If the senior wishes to help him, you should fight Xu Feng yourself."

"I don't need you to give me reminders!" He Yong ignored him. Would Li Hao die? Who knew if he wasn't forced to his limits?

Chapter 466: Sword Unsheathed (II)

He Yong considered Li Hao slightly indecisive when it came to battle, but not in terms of executing on his goals. The young man fiercely pummeled the weak, yet was overcautious when it came to the strong. Was there any point in that?

I'll let you play with a strong guy this time!

He Yong was quite irritated that Li Hao was skilled at bullying the weak and cowered in front of the strong. He'd wanted to find an opportunity to knock the young man down a few pegs. Of course, he would naturally lend a hand if it looked like Li Hao really was going to die.

The old man nearby would have nothing to say if he pulled Li Hao out of harm's way just once. The difference in strength between the two youngsters was too great. He would have the right to help even if this was back in the glory days of the martial world. This was a specific assistance offered to the weak to ensure that martial masters wouldn't hem and haw when challenging the strong.

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These concerns were not on Li Hao's mind at the moment. He took a breath after killing another fleeing Solar; the longsword in his hand became ever more withdrawn in terms of presence.

There was no one in front of him anymore. Even if there was, they'd fled to the outer city for shelter. The groups of supernaturals on the battlefield had been forcefully disbanded. He wouldn't find many targets for his sword if he wanted to kill more.

Another explosion sounded behind him.

Thirty-six! Li Hao repeated to himself. Thirty-two Black Armors, four Bronze Armors. The might of a Nova was on full display against these soldiers. Xu Feng's target remained Li Hao all this time, but he'd still killed thirty-six Battle Heaven soldiers.

The young man paused and turned.

Xu Feng was panting slightly; he smiled at Li Hao's motion. "You've finally stopped running huh."

The Black Armors around them were either scattered or dead. The closest ones were several dozen meters away and rushing their way, breaking through the supernatural blockade.

“Li Hao, my words stand from before. Hand over the armor, I have no interest in killing you.” Xu Feng grinned. “It is difficult for martial masters to reach this level of strength. I quite value talent, so you can come help me. Of course, you can also refuse to join me, I won’t be angry. The armor does not belong to you to begin with. I’ll compensate you with some mysterious power stones if you hand it over. What do you say?”

Li Hao had said nothing all this time. “You’ve... killed thirty-six warriors!” he finally broke his silence.

Xu Feng blinked, then smiled. “Don’t be silly, Li Hao, and stop stalling for time. There’s no point to that. The Silver Armors will soon fade after their reawakening. I can let you go, but the three great organizations will not. You still have time to flee after handing over the armor. If not... you won’t have time, even if I decide to show mercy!”

“I want to kill you!” Li Hao replied seriously. “Sadly, your life won’t be worth theirs and you only have one. I rarely say anything to the dead, but I’m not certain that I’ll be able to kill you later. However, I will do all that I can to kill you!”

“Stubborn as a goat!” Xu Feng snapped. “Who do you think you are?! Do you really think martial masters are that formidable? Do you think your teacher Yuan Shuo is very strong? You’re delusional! One of your so-called thirty-six is a servant for my family...”

What a ludicrous fellow! As Xu Feng snorted to himself, Li Hao made his move. He walked on the ground instead of taking to the air. Throwing himself forward, he planted one foot on the earth. Power surged into his body—that of the ancient city.

Li Hao extracted some power from the earth and tore through the air with his sword!

Xu Feng sniffed dismissively at the longsword and erupted with ice energy again. This time, the ice cubes transformed into sheets of mirrors and extended throughout the vicinity, sealing it off.

A world of ice! Only ice cubes could be found within a dozen meters in every direction. Not only that, but Xu Feng waved out a bronze mirror to ensure that Li Hao wouldn't run again and to prevent interruption by Black Armors!

This was his origin weapon—it expanded into a massive barrier that locked onto the four corners.

Xu Feng's long locks swayed in a wind that carried ice crystals within it. "Try and run now, why don't you!" He looked at the charging Li Hao.

Go on, run!

Xu Feng punched with a fist of frost and seemed to freeze the void itself. Li Hao's longsword broke through layers of defenses, but was ultimately frozen by countless ice cubes!

So that's all there is to you!

Li Hao growled and rose up as a ferocious tiger. A gout of flame erupted and shattered the ice. Nine layers of waves erupted on the longsword as it broke free and erupted!

Clang!

A massive collision came from a pair of boxing gloves that'd suddenly appeared on Xu Feng's fists. "I have more than one origin weapon!" He smiled. Do you think that I can't defend myself without the bronze mirror? Li Hao, you know too little of the world.

Origin weapons were precious and rare even in the Xu household, but as the most talented heir and a powerhouse on the Divine Masters Ranking, he'd received two. The Heart Protector was meant for defense, the boxing gloves for offense. Both defense and offense were fully covered!

That was why he'd used the Heart Protector to seal off the premises. Otherwise, he wouldn't dare easily toss out the mirror knowing the keenness of Li Hao's blade. But just as the Heart Protector, the weapon soul within the boxing gloves stayed firmly inside. It made the origin weapon lose some of its supplemental attributes, a development that both annoyed Xu Feng and filled him with more greed.

He could sense that his origin weapons were afraid of Li Hao's sword. That was good! This meant that the sword was very high level and thus suppressed the power of his.

Li Hao once again stabbed with his sword. Xu Feng waved his fists, sending the longsword off to the side with one fist and opening the palm of the other to grab at the longsword! Although the boxing gloves were not reinforced by its weapon soul at the moment, the weapon itself was exceedingly durable. Thus, he wasn't afraid of anything.

After his first fist sent the longsword astray, it continued toward Li Hao's head. This damned little bastard!

The silent Li Hao suddenly opened his mouth and created an opening in his visor where his mouth was. A mouthful of internal force spewed forth as his internal sword erupted!

Bam!

He'd held this breath in for a very long period of time. It avoided his fists and made straight for Xu Feng's head. The latter's eyes narrowed as an ice shield automatically appeared in front of him.

It shattered with a thump, scoring bloody marks across Xu Feng's face with the ice shards. One of his fists hit Li Hao's head. The young man spun dizzily, finding his head gripped with pain, but flashed a smile. He'd finally injured his opponent!

Up to this point, his opponent had made use of the Heart Protector, boxing gloves, and formidable ice shields to emerge unscathed despite being pierced by Stellaris a few times. Only this time, with the explosion of sword qi and ice shield, did he leave blood traces on the other's face!

Xu Feng glowered. He grabbed the longsword with a snort and smashed his fist toward Li Hao. Bastard!

Li Hao shook his head and swung with his other hand as well. The Nine Forged Force erupted—boom!

Both fists collided—Li Hao felt like his hand was about to shatter, even though the armor. He ignored the pain and flooded his body with sword energy. Roaring like a ferocious tiger pouncing, he swung his fist again!

Bam bam bam!

The two exchanged a hundred blows in quick succession. There even seemed to be a fracture developing on the silver armor. Li Hao's hand was a mangled mess inside the armor, but sword energy swiftly repaired his injuries. It could not regrow flesh and blood, but it could swiftly seal wounds for him so that he did not continue to lose blood.

His left hand was starting to lose strength; his right hand continued to wield the sword. Stellaris shook violently, but was unable to leave the other's death grip.

Xu Feng gripped Li Hao's sword and punched with his right hand. His hand within the boxing glove was also coming off worse for the wear. This guy can seriously hold out!

Panting sounded in both of their ears. Li Hao heaved for air while Xu Feng's breathing was also heavier. It was so much harder fighting Li Hao than an initial Nova. What was with this guy?

Li Hao erupted with the Nine Forged Force again and again, punching with abandon. A wave started coming into formation and surged out, slapping Xu Feng's fist back with nine layers of waves!

“The Nine Forged Force, is it?” Xu Feng laughed as he sucked in a mouthful of air. “So the Liu family of Silver Moon have taught you their family method. It looks like Silver Gun’s descendants are truly trash...”

Li Hao was smiling as well. It was a fantastic feeling to fight a mid Nova to his heart’s content! The two quickly exchanged another hundred blows. His arm was about to shatter as well, but it felt so good. Just as He Yong had said, to be brash was to be martial dao!

His longsword continued to vibrate, but it couldn’t break free of the other’s grasp. Li Hao didn’t mind. Stellaris had its own dignity and temper, this was good.

The wave of water grew in volume. The water aura that’d been unable to take shape when he killed Xie Gang was slowly manifesting. Li Hao breathed out gently, almost emotionally. He’d spent the longest time comprehending the water aura out of his four auras.

The earth aura had been the easiest, to think of it was to manifest it. The fire aura had been stronger, but putting himself in the proper frame of mind after observing a ferocious tiger break free of its cage was enough for success. The metal aura had easily come into existence when he broke the Broken Will Spear. Only the water aura had continuously remained out of reach.

He knew how to comprehend it and practiced the Nine Forged Force to its utmost. He’d observed the sea and watched Liu Long deploy it multiple times...

It turned out that purposefully learning was the most difficult for Li Hao!

He’d come in contact with the Nine Forged Force a long time ago. Perhaps it didn’t count as long for other people, but it was what he’d learned when he first set foot into martial dao. It took until today for the water aura to gradually reveal itself.

It’d been too hard!

Chapter 467: Sword Unsheathed (III)

The wave manifested with sea spray around it, like a dragon. The water dragon struck—Xu Feng ignored it as it didn't seem too strong. He punched straight through it with a hint of derision!

Not bad, this aura, it could go against peak Solars. But compared to Li Hao's sword aura... it was very weak. If the sword aura couldn't do anything to him, then the water dragon would do even less!

The water dragon didn't seem willing to dissipate. It reappeared with some determination, but promptly vanished again. A chain unfurled from Li Hao's kidneys and snaked around the water dragon, locking it in place!

Previous installations of auras into his organs had been difficult, but this one today was incredibly easy. His fortified organs and body gave Li Hao a different kind of confidence. The summoning of the spirit was complete in a split second.

Of his five organs, the lungs locked the metal aura, the heart locked the fire aura, the kidneys locked the water aura, and the spleen locked the earth aura. Apart from the liver remaining empty, there were auras in residence in the other four organs.

Li Hao and Xu Feng still pummeled each other with their fists. A frowning old man in the distance wanted to take a closer look, but he suddenly whipped his head back. Even He Yong looked back as a glint of gold sparkled in the distance!

The three great organizations, Hou Xiaochen and his people, paled with horror. A Gold Armor! The Gold Armor within the city was making its appearance!

"This is bad!" gasped the crowd. A reawakened Silver Armor was horrifying enough. The three great organizations could barely keep the three Silver armors contained. They could only passively defend.

They'd thought that only after entering the city and disturbing the Black Tortoise Seal would they elicit a reaction from the Gold Armor. At that time, they would've already eliminated the city's army, so jointly acting against the Gold Armor wouldn't be a problem. But now... no!

Hou Xiaochen's expression shifted dramatically once again. BAM!

A sword descended with the momentum of a collapsing Mount Tai. The skies churned and earth overturned in all directions. Hong Yitang didn't care about the Gold Armor—he slashed down then the group was distracted!

Bam!

Hong Yitang was thrust into the ground. He coughed out a mouthful of fresh blood and looked on with shock and fury. Hong Yitang!

There was a cut on Kong Jie's fist that oozed blood; he also dropped to the ground. Several other powerhouses stirred weakly from prone positions. Golden Spear was vomiting blood, as was Manager Yu.

This joint collective of powerhouses had been struck from the sky! Hu Qingfeng was in the worst state—one of his arms had exploded. White as a sheet, he ran for Qi Gang. The latter was also trying to prevent himself from vomiting all of the blood in his system.

What are you running toward me for?? he cursed inwardly. I should've stayed away from this forsaken place! I'm someone on the Divine Masters Ranking, but I'm just a placeholder here and nearly lost my life. I'd probably be in pieces if that guy really wanted our lives!

Silver Moon was too dangerous.

He caught sight of the Gold Armor flying their way and looked urgently at Hou Xiaochen and Earthturner Sword. Hou Xiaochen coughed gently and spat out some blood. "Satisfied now?" he breathed heavily as he looked at Hong Yitang.

“You sound like you’re asking a child if candy tastes good,” Hong Yitang said calmly. “Hou Xiaochen, you can strut around in front of others, but in front of me... Unseal your organs if you have the nerve to! I’d like to see which one of us will kill the other when you’re fully unsealed!”

“Is there a need for that?” Hou Xiaochen looked at him with a wan face—a sign of his internal injuries plaguing him. “I rarely made trouble for you over these years and only moved against the Sword Sect last time because unrest had come to Silver Moon. I needed some help—you’re going to fight me to the death for that?”

“Enough is enough, Hong Yitang,” said Kong Jie as well. “We are indeed no match for you if we do not unseal ourselves. But even if we don’t, the gap between us is not that big. There is no need to make a fool out of ourselves in front of others...”

Color drained from the faces of Hu Qingfeng and the rest of the delegation from the official authorities. These words... were quite blatant in their meaning, and that meaning was horrifying. Unseal? What did that mean? Could it be... that Hong Yitang was shockingly powerful and that both Hou Xiaochen and Kong Jie were on the same level?

If that was the case, that was astounding!

Hong Yitang wanted to say a few more words, but his eyes quickly darted elsewhere. He was annoyed by Hou Xiaochen and wanted to cause more trouble for the man, but he now frowned at the distance—not at the Gold Armor behind them, but elsewhere.

Hou Xiaochen and Kong Jie also followed his gaze a split second later. The others were slower.

.....

In the distance.

Li Hao had secured his fourth aura. The water aura flowed into his longsword with a shake of the weapon. The old man watching the Gold Armor whipped his head back and thought of something when he looked at the young man—Summoner of Spirit!

Summoning the five auras!

The old man immediately set one foot through the air and teleported. At the same time, raging blood qi exploded!

He Yong appeared, punching his own heart. The heart chain almost snapped into two, followed swiftly by the lung and liver chains. An incredibly formidable presence surged forth, one that exceeded his eruption at Ash Mountain!

He'd only broken one supernatural chain then, but for the old man, he broke three! He Yong punched with a fist amid the old man's furious glare!

BAM!

The earth and sky shattered, making Hong Yitang and the others in the distance pause with surprise. Hou Xiaochen ached from the implications of the move. Was Southern Fist... crazy? He was less than Hong Yitang and the rest of them, he might not even be on par with Manager Yu...

Indeed, this was a regular show of strength for a mid Nova. Manager Yu was even stronger than regular mid Novas. But after breaking three supernatural locks in a row, fearsome blood qi enveloped the world. A massive fist hovered in the void when He Yong punched out!

Tyrannical, cold, and crazy!

"He Yong!" howled the old man. "You're crazy!"

A longsword threaded through the land, its sword light illuminating the void and projecting into the firmament. The entire ancient city seemed to be flooded with light. Sword intent threw light on the world when the longsword appeared!

“Light Sword... you’re the crazy one!” He Yong snorted. “I’d like to see if the number three of the Seven Swords is stronger than Hong Yitang!”

BOOM!

Fist met sword; the fist broke through the void and smashed the longsword shadow to pieces. The old man roared angrily and reached out with a hand, manifesting an even stronger sword of light beneath the heavens!

He Yong, you bastard, Xu Feng can’t die yet...

Meanwhile, He Yong flew into an utter rage to see the old man summon a more powerful sword. Were the Seven Swords supposed to be strong? It was one thing if he was less than Earthturner Sword, but Light Sword was just number three! Did he think himself as number one of the Seven Swords??

In the Record of Heroes, both Sky Sword and Earthturner Sword had been ranked above Southern Fist. But the third of Light Sword only rivaled Southern Fist. How dare you defy me when I’ve snapped three locks?!

“You court death!” He Yong snarled as another chain snapped amidst a loud rumble. The fourth chain dangled, almost completely broken. Another surge of power rose; Hong Yitang sucked in a sharp breath in the distance. This was bad! This madman was completely ignoring the consequences now that his ire was completely roused.

Snapping four chains... even if they weren’t fully broken... would easily give rise to a chain reaction throughout his body. Li Hao may not be able to repair everything. Three is the limit, why do you seek to gain more?

The old man's eyes widened with dismay.

KABOOM!

The longsword was obliterated into particles of dust. He Yong punched again, as if concentrating thousands of fists into one...

Even the void ruptured!

Countless swords of light appeared around the old man, but they exploded one after another. The incomparable He Yong was thirty percent stronger than when he fought the golden eagle. He was almost exceeding Nova—or one could say that he pretty much had.

The old man was likewise formidable, but couldn't evade being struck when his opponent was a rampaging He Yong! He flew backward, bones broken and blood spurting out of his mouth! He crashed heavily into an ancient house, shaking the indestructible structure.

He Yong hovered in the air, indomitable and aloof! Light Sword was indeed very strong—he might not be able to triumph over the old fart if he didn't break four locks. Do you dare do the same? I dare! I smashed you out of commission with absolute strength in one punch. It's your fault for being so damn arrogant!

To the rear, Kong Jie and Hou Xiaochen grappled with migraines. Another one?! He Yong was the weakest out of them all if they fought a fair fight without unsealing anything. But at the moment... the madman had gone crazy and unsealed four of his organs. The two of them would probably be sent flying even if they fought him together. He was too brutal!

Hou Xiaochen said nothing now. Keeping a low profile was the name of the game. Hong Yitang wanted to say something, but didn't. Stop the act and hurry your ass over to Li Hao! If you don't seal the four locks again, you'll die instead of becoming a supernatural. Your organs will explode!

He Yong's sudden eruption distracted people from their earlier observation. A streak of sword light flared when Light Sword was defeated!

"Sever!" Li Hao roared, ignoring everyone else on the battlefield. What did Light Sword or He Yong have to do with him? His enemy was the bastard in front of him!

Xu Feng's face slackened with shock as the hand that was gripping the longsword split apart. Cracks crawled up the boxing gloves, revealing a terrified weapon soul appeared. The gloves suddenly flew away!

The Eternal Sword!

Chapter 468: Sword Unsheathed (IV)

Xu Feng panicked when he lost the boxing gloves. Mysterious power blasted forth as he roared in fury. He wanted to dodge Li Hao's blow, but he'd already sealed off the premises and used the Heart Protector to reinforce the icy blockade...

There was no time to run and no place to run!

Off in the distance, Light Sword staggered to his feet and threw himself into the air. "Li Hao, a thousand mysterious power stones..." he shouted in resignation and anguish.

Li Hao's momentum continued unabated, as if he hadn't heard the incomplete sentence. He struck with a blow that held four combined auras and deployed the Incantation of the Blade of Blood to the utmost! All of the sword energy within Stellaris surged out as well, transforming into strength. He struck!

What mysterious power stones?

Do you think I care?

Go to hell!

BOOM!

Countless ice cubes exploded when his sword descended. Stellaris also seemed enraged that this person had continuously suppressed it. The sword erupted with heretofore unseen resplendence!

The sword descended!

The Gold Armor that'd just reached the city walls looked in the sword's direction with a keen glint in his eyes. That was the legacy of the Sword Sovereign!

Xu Feng roared, flaring his mysterious power once more. It flooded out of his body to form an ice shield, wanting to stop the sword stroke.

Boom!

Blood poured out of Xu Feng as the shield of ice exploded. The sword continued to descend. Xu Feng punched at Li Hao, but his arm disintegrated when it hit Li Hao!

Incredulity dawned in Xu Feng's eyes and he looked at Li Hao. "You do know... that I am from the Xu Clan!" he said after a moment. Pieces of flesh were falling off his face, as did the rest of his body. However, he didn't cry out with pain or despair. He was only taken aback. "Do you... know the Xus??"

The person in front of him was killing him! Not everyone dared provoke the Xus, even in the central region. Neither the nine ministries nor the royal family dared to easily kill a Xu. Not even the three great organizations dared! Where did this guy find the balls to do so??

“Cough cough cough...” Li Hao spat out a mouthful of blood and punched with a final rumble that completely broke his opponent into pieces! He swung with a punch, and another punch! He punched thirty-six times until Xu Feng was a pulped mass. Li Hao spat derisively. “The Xus huh? Are they as glorious as my Li Clan?”

Pah! Who do you think you are? I haven’t boasted about my family background yet, how is it your turn? Do you know who the Lis of the eight great families are? Do you know how strong my ancestor was?? Wanting to compete in family background with me... Pfft, up yours! Your family ain’t worth shit unless you’re the imperial majesty or the Human King’s family!

Dead silence reigned. Xu Feng was dead. His body had been desecrated by his furious opponent and minced to a pulp!

Li Hao dismissed the armor and revealed his true form. He smiled at the supernaturals around him and waved at the three great organizations. “Nice to meet you. I am Li Hao of the Lis in Silver City, Li Hao of the Five Styles discipline. Greetings to all!”

No one answered him. He Yong grinned in the air—well done! His expression immediately changed drastically—shit, I can’t hold this! He immediately landed next to Li Hao. The ice cubes had vanished and the Heart Protector had fallen to the ground. He ignored all that and grabbed the young man’s hand, transmitting, “Save me!”

On the surface, however, he yelled, “Are you alright, Li Hao? What bullshit Xu Clan—I’ll chop all of their heads off if anything happens to you!”

Formidable blood qi raced through the clouds! It was so domineering that Light Sword paled and halted in the middle of flying over. Southern Fist was too strong!

Those of the three great organizations also looked at each other with dismay. Damn it, what kind of forsaken place is this! Why are these martial masters each more terrifying and shocking than the last!

Some supernaturals in the distance felt that they were about to pop from the pressure. They nearly crashed into each other in their haste to get away.

He Yong glowered in all directions, but continued his rapid-fire transmission, “Save me, hurry and save me, quick! Li Hao, I’m done for, hurry!”

Li Hao took his hand, but his expression soon shifted. “That energy... is depleted!” he transmitted back.

All of the color drained out of He Yong’s face beneath the visor. Are you kidding me?!

BOOM!

Blood qi roiled, along with some supernatural strength. The valiant Southern Fist was the most eye-catching existence on the battlefield. He eclipsed the three Silver Armors and the Gold Armor approaching the outsiders!

“Battle Heaven Army, kill!” he roared despite his wan complexion.

BOOM!

He grabbed Li Hao and jumped into the air, punching at Hou Xiaochen...

The director’s mouth twisted as he swiftly evaded, but couldn’t dodge the blow. The fist sent a furious man flying and coughing up blood. What have I ever done to you??

He Yong leapt up the city walls with Li Hao in tow and vanished without a look back. Help! He’d gone overboard!

He left a mystified crowd in his wake, but a golden broadsword promptly smashed down from above. It landed on the Red Moon delegation and obliterated all of its Solars! Peak Solar Violet Moon made it to safety thanks to the efforts of Blue Moon and Green Moon. The remaining Red Moon Nova could only watch the other three escape. Their difference in status was clear to see in this moment. He was less important than Violet Moon. The sword landed with a giant boom!

The Nova was smashed to pieces—not slashed, but smashed!

“Run!” Yama and Celestial’s powerhouses fled. Not only that, but a Hou Xiaochen who’d been bowled off his feet by the fallout also called for retreat.

BOOM!

Countless sword shadows appeared when the broadsword landed and smashed supernaturals to death like they were mountain peaks!

“Army of Battle Heaven, charge!” emitted a voice with ancient flair from the Gold Armor. “How dare insignificant robbers and bandits strut around in borrowed might!”

These trespassers were nothing more than bandits! How dare they invade Battle Heaven! If it wasn’t for the fact that the soldiers shouldn’t easily reawaken, the Gold Armor would’ve exterminated them long ago!

The remaining Battle Heaven soldiers struck with a ferocious surge! Under the Gold Armor and three Silver Armors’ leadership, Black Armors charged like dark tidewaters. Ghastly shrieks rang unceasingly wherever they struck.

The supernaturals were swiftly defeated; it wasn’t enough for them to retreat to the plaza. No one considered that they would have to take the second passageway again if they exited the city. They all pelted for outside the city!

The Gold Armor stopped only when he reached the edge of the plaza. A vicious glint shone in his eyes as he looked at the scattering supernaturals. What a pity that the passage of time was merciless and the army was long dead. This turned the city outskirts into a haven for bandits instead!

What a pity, what a pity...

Losing his physical body and soul meant losing everything. Even he could not walk out of the ancient city's range. He could only watch as the trespassers celebrated surviving a calamity.

"Return to your posts!" The remaining soldiers withdrew upon this order to defend the inner city.

Powerhouses outside the city gasped for air, all of them slightly terrified. The sudden change in situation and the Gold Armor's strength exceeded their expectations. Red Moon was suddenly down to only their three leaders. All of their Solars and one Nova had died to one sword stroke. Before that, the army's greatest battle accomplishment was killing a mid Solar. Was this city truly alive again?

Hou Xiaochen breathed out silently and looked at the inner city with resignation. He'd been beaten several times in a row today! He Yong and Hong Yitang... you bastards!

.....

Fear and horror suffused the perimeter of the ancient city. Although the powerhouses had run fast enough when the Black Armors charged at the behest of the Gold Armor and three Silver Armors, most of the wandering cultivators and weaker supernaturals weren't that fast.

Nearly two thousand were initially present on the expedition team. Several hundred had died in the first round of battle, Li Hao killed more than one hundred through his guerrilla warfare, and the last battle had caused another round of deaths. By now, the supernaturals were thoroughly routed and the casualties too many to count.

When the Gold Armor stopped near the plaza and returned to defend the city, Hou Xiaochen couldn't help but sigh inwardly as he looked around him. People died in the pursuit of riches!

A sizable portion of the expedition team was supernaturals, but now there were at most five hundred left. Their losses had been heavy and the surviving supernaturals seemed scared out of their wits. Making it out of this particular encounter alive didn't mean that they'd continue to do so!

Once superhumans were terrified to the point where their mentality collapsed, it was hard to take another step forward. Besides, was exiting the ruins that straightforward?

It'd been only one day since the expedition started—the doors wouldn't be open until tomorrow night at the earliest. It would also require those on the outside to facilitate the opening. They'd already said that they would not open the doors before then. If the third day dawned, the doors would open themselves even if there was no help from outside.

There were two more days of this hellish torment to come!

Hou Xiaochen looked around him; it'd taken such a short period of time to further whittle away at their Novas. Red Moon had just lost another, leaving Blue Moon, Green Moon, and the horrified peak Solar Violet Moon.

The Parity King was still present on the Yama side, but he seemed to have lost a certain group of people that normally served under his banner. Thank goodness he still possessed two more Novas. That meant all three Novas in his group were alive.

On the Celestial side, they'd lost an elder, leaving two remaining. No one knew if the dead elder had fallen prey to one of the Silver Armors.

On the wandering cultivator side, there'd been Xu Feng, Yuan Xinwu, and a total of five Novas. It was a decent number, but now there were three. Xu Feng was dead and another one fell victim to one of He Yong's fists.

Light Sword was standing by himself not too far away. The look in his eyes continuously shifted; no one knew what he was thinking.

Chapter 469: After the Battle (I)

Manager Yu and the others were badly shaken from the various displays of might, but they quickly recovered themselves. The manager studied someone not too far from them and exclaimed, “He’s Light Sword?”

As one of the thirty-six, she’d found the old man familiar and guessed at several possibilities. Light Sword was the only one that didn’t enter her mind. Northern Fist or even Tyrant Blade had been on her list of candidates, but not Light Sword!

It was normal for an old acquaintance to alter their appearance and conceal their identity so others wouldn’t recognize them. However, that didn’t extend to the point of a woman turning into a man, did it?

Indeed, Light Sword was the only other female swordsman among the Seven Swords. The other was Jadelight Sword.

Sky Sword, Earthturner Sword, Light Sword... She was third among the Seven Swords and very strong. It wasn’t out of the ordinary that she possessed her current strength, though it did eclipse many of the other fellow thirty-six. Manager Yu just hadn’t thought that the old man would be Light Sword!

She’s changed even her gender?

Hou Xiaochen looked over and shook his head. “It hasn’t changed!”

“Then...”

“Don’t ask,” Hou Xiaochen interrupted. He knew some of the inside story, but wasn’t at liberty to say much. It also appeared that Light Sword was rather despondent at the moment, so he didn’t want to say anything else.

There was likely quite a backstory to Light Sword joining the Xus. Manager Yu didn’t ask further either.

The remaining powerhouses of the three great organizations swiftly gathered together. They still possessed seven Novas—those congregated first. There were more than twenty Solars left, they quickly formed another group.

Theirs was the strongest faction out of the survivors. Not only that, but Green Moon barked at the remaining wandering cultivators. “What are you waiting for? All of this might be a scheme! Look at how many are dead, especially Novas!

“Yellow Moon is dead, Xu Feng on the Divine Masters Ranking is dead. Southern Fist and Earthturner Sword have hidden themselves well all this time, but choose to expose themselves today. Hou Xiaochen and the others have incredible battle strength. Do you still not understand the situation?!”

She didn’t need to put it more plainly after that. There were three Novas left among the wandering cultivators. Two of them immediately drew closer to the three great organizations. Yuan Xingwu frowned, but didn’t move.

The three great organizations accumulated nine Novas within the blink of an eye. There were another dozen Solars among the wandering cultivators that moved with the Novas. That side was immensely bolstered.

Apart from the unmoving Yuan Xingwu at the head of his Skystar Troops, only Light Sword continued to look inside the city. She was distracted, unheeding of the two camps that the entire outskirts had divided into. It was the Silver Moon authorities versus the three great organizations.

On the side of the official authorities, Hu Qingfeng was gravely wounded and horrified by the development. Qi Gang brooded as he silently recovered from heavy injuries as well. Both of them

felt a deep sense of danger. If it wasn't for the circumstances, they'd want to run. Indeed, some things could not bear further consideration—that would be too terrifying.

Why had so many veteran Silver Moon martial masters suddenly appeared in the Battle Heaven ruins? And none of them were weaklings. They were all too powerful to be imagined. So this was how strong martial masters were!

The two camps were clearly delineated and stood on opposite sides from each other. The three great organizations would likely leave immediately if the entrance was open. But they didn't dare depart now. What if the other side immediately colluded with those inside the city as soon as they left!

There was also the possibility that there were some disagreements between Hou Xiaochen and Li Hao. Why else would Earthturner Sword keep them preoccupied for so long? Without Earthturner Sword... No, it would be incredibly frightening if the other side allied with Earthturner Sword. Southern Fist was also a terrifying existence.

Green Moon looked at Light Sword standing apart from them. "Light Sword, you can only join us if you want to save yourself. Otherwise..."

The old man turned toward Green Moon and seemed to briefly come back to his senses. He looked at her for a while and smiled in an ugly fashion, "Peacock, you guys probably won't be leaving either!"

Green Moon's expression shifted drastically! What did he mean? Was Hou Xiaochen going to murder them all in the ruins? But there were multiple Novas on their side and numerous Solars on their side. If it came down to a fight to the death, the other side wouldn't get off easy either.

"Don't start stories," Hou Xiaochen said calmly after a glance at Light Sword. "We have no such intentions or interest. I'm more interested in whether the three Silver Armors will fully perish? I saw the Gold Armor take them into the city!"

There were currently no Silver Armors or Gold Armor on the city walls. The inner city seemed to have returned to quiet. Hou Xiaochen was indeed considering the fates of the three Silver Armors. There might be a chance yet if they were completely dead. But if they lived and could continue to reawaken... that would make them the equivalent of three peak Novas. They would be difficult opponents, particularly with Southern Fist and Earthturner Sword on their side, not to mention the even more horrifying Gold Armor.

Light Sword ignored him and continued to peer into the city. Where were Southern Fist and Earthturner Sword? Were they not afraid of opening their supernatural locks? Or was there something inside the city to help them recover?

Green Moon and the rest were on high alert. Most of the wandering cultivators drifted to their side, each horrified beyond belief. They'd come here to get rich quick, who knew so many other matters would be involved instead??

The Silver Moon martial masters boggled the mind and seemed impossible to defeat. Some of them had even joined the Battle Heaven Army, an incomprehensible fact! The more they knew, the more dangerous their situation was! Everyone was well aware of that. In that case, could they successfully make it out of the ruins?

Despair shrouded many hearts—their chances of survival looked dim.

On the other hand, if a powerhouse like Light Sword joined them... Hu Qingfeng and Qi Gang also seemed to be wavering on the Silver Moon side. They might choose to rebel. If that was the case, then they might stand a chance!

The two Novas among the wandering cultivators were respectively a mid Nova and initial Nova. Well, they weren't true wandering cultivators in the sense of the term, as how could Novas appear among wandering cultivators?

One of them was a young man from the Lius of the Ministry of Finance. He was an initial Nova. The other was a mid Nova from the Director General Office of the neighboring Near River province. He was a powerhouse under the director general's banner and an exceedingly famous executive in the province.

There'd been a distinct lack of Novas in Silver Moon on the surface until Hou Xiaochen made his move. That was when everyone learned that he was a Nova. After Manager Yu and Golden Spear also revealed their capabilities, the general public came to know that Silver Moon did possess Novas, and strong ones at that.

Near River had always displayed strength greater than Silver Moon's. Currently, however, the general from the Director General Office reeled with shock. How would he ever think again that his home province was stronger than Silver Moon? None of these people were what they seemed!

Some of the Solars among the wandering cultivators also hailed from major factions. They'd simply concealed their identity. This wasn't an optimal time to reveal it, so they could only fall in line with the three great organizations and hope to obtain protection that way. They would make a report of the updated situation as soon as they left the ruins.

Reality was intensely frightening! Hou Xiaochen and Kong Jie of Silver Moon were ferocious beyond belief, and was that it? Were there more powerful existences out there?

Earthturner Sword and Southern Fist blew the group away with their strength, and apparently Li Hao was only a peak Solar who could kill Solars. Bullshit! Could a peak Solar kill someone on the Divine Masters Ranking?

Everything was fake! Silver Moon martial masters were treacherous little snakes that'd hidden their true strength!

At the moment, the two sides barely managed to maintain peace. No one knew if anyone would be making it out alive. But so long as the ones inside the city didn't ally with the Silver Moon contingent, then the other side may not be afraid of the Silver Moon authorities. If those two worked together, however, then the three great organizations were doomed.

.....

At the same time, inside the city.

He Yong put down Li Hao and quickly took out everything in his storage ring, including the storage ring that Li Hao hadn't had a chance to collect when he killed Xu Feng. He Yong had also grabbed the boxing gloves that wanted to run away and the bronze mirror that'd clattered to the ground.

The Nova he'd killed before also owned a storage ring, as did all the people he killed previously. He Yong dumped out everything in the rings and piled all of the mysterious power stones together. There were more than six hundred pieces, primarily from Xu Feng and another Nova. There were also the two origin weapons from Xu Feng. The other guy didn't have one.

"Will that do?" He looked urgently at Li Hao and turned to Hong Yitang when the man landed. "How about you? The storage rings you got from when we killed people in the streets and the one from Yellow Moon—hurry and take them out!"

Hong Yitang greeted him wordlessly. Weren't you extremely cocky just now? The man shook his arm and produced a rain of mysterious power stones. There weren't as many as the ones in front of He Yong—just four hundred at most. It made for one thousand stones for Li Hao to draw from.

"And that big one!" He Yong said urgently. One thousand stones was a lot, but he and Hong Yitang had consumed eight hundred stones before. The two of them had snapped more locks today, would one thousand be enough?

"Hurry... please... don't be unwilling to share. Ole Hong, big brother, Master Hong... I can't hold on!" He Yong was on the verge of tears. He'd had a fantastic time beating people up earlier, but was paying it back in spades now. He'd broken four supernatural locks! If it wasn't for fortifying his organs recently and Li Hao helping him once, then the bath in the hot spring, he'd already be dead.

Hong Yitang cursed inwardly, but still took out a big piece of stone. It was the one he'd cut into by the spring. He couldn't bear to bring out the other two flawless pieces. The broken one he was handling was likely only the equivalent of three thousand pieces, but its quality was much higher than that. He offered his head to anyone who could buy this rock for three thousand pieces!

Li Hao promptly stuck the sword into the largest piece of stone. His sword energy was completely depleted. Hong Yitang raised a hand to stop the young man, but dropped it with a mournful sigh. “You could’ve started with the small ones...”

Why go straight to the top!

Chapter 470: After the Battle (II)

“We don’t have enough time!” Li Hao said urgently. “The small ones convert too slowly. We need big ones like these that are pure enough!”

Indeed, they didn’t have enough time. Well, they were fine so long as He Yong could control his body, it was the little sword that couldn’t wait. For the treasure that could barely bother with mysterious power stones before, this was its first time tasting anything so delicious. It was the first occurrence of something that could be repeatedly feasted upon, so it’d champed at the bit. It guzzled mysterious power as soon as it was thrust into the large rock!

The little sword trembled from delight. Everything it’d eaten before was trash! Origin weapon souls were good enough, but those were snacks. It’d been starved of a main meal for so long, all the snacks did were prolong its suffering.

Dense sword energy bloomed in the blink of an eye. The little sword grew rapidly—it’d already been the length of a forearm before. It started growing longer again.

Li Hao swiftly drew on the sword energy and sent it into He Yong’s body; he also absorbed some in the process. The sword energy seemed to be of higher caliber this time. The young man had suffered grave injuries in his last fight and was finding it difficult to control four melded auras.

He’d been able to kill Xu Feng partially because the guy had been too arrogant. Xu Feng had depleted from the earlier chase, his boxing gloves ran off, and he’d ensured his own death through sealing off the four corners. Otherwise, Li Hao wouldn’t necessarily kill a mid Nova even through an ambush—despite melding four auras together.

He might be able to match his opponent, but killing Xu Feng? That was in all likelihood difficult to do.

Li Hao swiftly drew power from the large mysterious power stone. The three sat down cross-legged to furiously absorb energy. He Yong finally breathed out with ease while Hong Yitang remarked, “Remember, you owe me three thousand mysterious power stones now. I’m not charging you too much as this large piece can’t be had for that sum!”

“.....” He Yong could say nothing to that. “You... absorbed some energy too...”

“I just need a little, I don’t need that much. I’m not like a certain someone who broke four supernatural locks to put on an impressive showing. Why would we be consuming so many stones otherwise??”

Exhausting nearly four thousand stones in one go—of which three thousand came from a large stone that was worth more! Even the three great organizations would go bankrupt at this rate! Granted, they were as good as nearly bankrupt after the last battle.

It’d been a fabulous fight with an equally fabulous price tag. Hong Yitang glared viciously at He Yong. This madman had no money, so he shouldn’t have been so brazen! That hadn’t been a fight, that was just setting money on fire!

Breaking three locks was sufficient against Light Sword—even one would be just barely enough to stop her. This guy had snapped four so he could put on an awe-inspiring performance. How else would he have sent the swordswoman flying with one punch, and Hou Xiaochen as well? But was there a point to that?

If I’m willing to waste my money like you, I’d put on an even better show! Hong Yitang cursed to himself. I didn’t do anything, but here you go with guns a-blazin’. The key thing is, you’re spending my money to do so! I should’ve just let him die at Ash Mountain and not let him borrow anything!

He Yong looked on sheepishly, knowing that now wasn’t a good time to talk. “I did so to protect Li Hao...”

“Shut up!” Hong Yitang couldn’t be bothered to entertain that argument. What protect Li Hao? You didn’t need to go to the extreme! One thousand stones would be sufficient for an eruption like last time.

Hong Yitang blinked in the middle of castigating He Yong and looked to the side. Sword energy and mysterious power stones were being depleted at a fast rate and the key thing was, there seemed to be someone else here apart from the three of them absorbing the energy.

He jumped with shock when he turned his head. A black dog had appeared at some point, one that was almost skin and bones. Its tongue lolled and excitement filled its eyes as it took in sword energy like the energy was delicious fare that it hadn’t seen in many days.

How was there a dog in the city? Hong Yitang looked around alertly. An ancient dog? His look turned to skepticism when he glanced at Li Hao. The young man remained directing energy with his eyes closed and also sent some to the dog.

How surprising!

As surprising as this was, Li Hao didn’t have the capacity to dwell on it. Panth seemed to be starving; since they’d run into each other here, he’d feed it some. He was being generous with someone else’s wealth anyway, it wasn’t his money.

Well, some of it was since a portion of the mysterious power stones on the ground had belonged to Xu Feng. But compared to what they were absorbing, those stones were just a paltry tip.

What surprised Hong Yitang was none other than the dog seemingly operating the Breathing Method of the Five Styles. He Yong sensed it as well and turned for a look. He was dazed by the sight and blinked with incomprehension. A... dog had suddenly appeared and it knew the Breathing Method of the Five Styles!

Both of them raised an eyebrow at each other. The dog also seemed very strong! A martial master dog? There didn't seem to be supernatural ripples coming from it, but it'd approached them soundlessly and wasn't discovered until it started absorbing energy. It was clear to see that the dog was very skilled at concealing itself.

Now that was terrifying! Where did this major monster spirit come from? This dog spirit could compare to those ones at Ash Mountain. Of course, it was hard to determine anything without a fight.

When the two men saw Li Hao send energy over, they guessed that Li Hao knew the dog. They didn't say anything; only He Yong looked mournfully at the young man. This is energy that I'm taking out a loan for! Use it sparingly!

Three humans and one dog absorbed sword energy. The Gold Armor suddenly landed with the fading Silver Armors and glanced at the gathering. "Leader of the Twelfth Troop, head to the city lord manor when you have a moment!" it said mechanically and swiftly left with the three Silver Armors.

Hong Yitang looked in their direction with a strange look in his eyes.

"The three Silver Armors seem to be dying!" He Yong transmitted. Hong Yitang inclined his head, he could feel it too. The Silver Armors were about to perish.

Li Hao opened his eyes and looked thoughtfully in the Gold Armor's direction. Were they... about to dissipate?

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The city lord manor, below the Tortoise Pagoda.

The Gold Armor stood still and waited with the three wavering Silver Armors. “Please show them mercy, Guardian!”

“Are you... certain you wish to do this?” asked the old tortoise.

“I am certain!” The Gold Armor answered emphatically. “They are surely willing as well to become weapon souls like me. They will be the weapon souls of their armor until the day the Battle Heaven Army and the Human King returns...”

Weapon souls! To fully refine the fragments of their souls and lingering obsessions into the armor. This meant that they would fully become part of their equipment, just like the origin weapons.

Origin weapons were unique byproducts of a great war between humans and monster spirits in the ancient civilization. Monster spirits were killed in an exceedingly cruel way and their souls extracted to be made into origin weapons. After the war was over and their emissary determined, the method of creating origin weapons was destroyed and banned.

Even monster spirits found it cruel, much less humans. To become part of the weapon meant that one would never die, only gradually lose some memories and the remaining fragments of one’s soul.

“Guardian... we... are willing!” came one of the three Silver Armors’ thought ripples. “We... are not willing to fade away like this! There was insufficient power within the city when the leader of the Tenth Troop faded away, so he could not entertain this particular hope... We have killed more than one thousand practitioners of the path of energy... The city’s reserves should be sufficient... Please grant us our wish!”

The Silver Armor on the last expedition had chosen to brandish his sword against the heavens because the city’s reserves were very low at the time. He wouldn’t have been able to become part of his armor even if the chance had been offered to him. It was possible today. The Silver Armors wished to remain in this world because they had too many wishes left unfulfilled. It was fine to take even one glimpse of what they hoped for.

The old tortoise's mind shifted with a soft sigh. The Silver Amors vanished and reappeared at the top of the pagoda. A peculiar flame wafted over them, raising agonized shrieks inside the armor. The refinement process was exceedingly cruel, which was why origin weapons had been banned.

The old tortoise had once undergone it as well, but it had been so long ago that it'd forgotten.

The Gold Armor breathed out in relief beneath the pagoda. This was good. At least, it wasn't any worse than their situation now. Becoming a soul of the weapon and continuing to manipulate their armor wasn't necessarily a less ideal outcome than their current straits.

"The people at the gates..."

"We don't need to pay attention to them for now!" responded the tortoise. "I have observed all of the events of the day. We will take heed of their actions first, then their hearts. The Battle Heaven Army will not carelessly recruit even the heir of the Sword Sovereign. We have enough Silver Armor troop leaders at the moment!"

"Understood!" affirmed the Gold Armor as he vanished on the spot.

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At the same time.

Three humans and one dog devoured large quantities of energy. When all of the mysterious power stones on the ground were shattered, that meant they'd consumed more than four thousand pieces. Their injuries were completely recovered and their organs slightly stronger again.

He Yong raised a proud head!

“Remember, three thousand stones,” Hong Yitang reminded. “Interest is ten percent every month!”

He Yong’s face dropped. “You...”

“Cut the bullshit and just try dodging your debt!”

“.....” He Yong was highly aggrieved and dejected. This fight had not only bankrupted him, but saddled him with infinite debt! It’d been such a thrill, but also so tragic that all his years at the royal family hadn’t provided him enough wealth to repay his debt!

Li Hao had recovered from the aftereffects of four auras erupting at once and the consequences resulting from the Incantation of the Blade of Blood. His injuries were all healed.

The young man placed the two origin weapons on the ground into his storage ring. There were now four origin weapons in his possession. There was the wind chime from the Revolution King, the boxing gloves and Heart Protector from Xu Feng, and the yellow armor from Xie Gang of Yama. Heart Protector, the wind chime, and boxing gloves were of a high level; the yellow armor looked to be a lower level.

Four origin weapons! He also had quite a reserve of mysterious power stones and his rations of ten pure stones. He’d also collected some from the last battle, but he hadn’t had time to take an inventory.