

The Eternal 91

Chapter 91: A Fierce Fight

Cang Liqun sucked in a cold breath and stood up from the chariot in horror. Only then did he discover that Yunxiao's two thousand troops were all warriors! He had never seen such a strong force among all the armies in Tianshui!

'How could there be an army like this? What is going on?'

Although he was somewhat surprised, he soon calmed down. No matter how strong a warrior was, he or she could fight ten or, at most, a hundred foes at one time. It was impossible for them to escape from the encirclement of his army of four hundred thousand soldiers. However, if he were to rely on crowd tactics, the losses would be too heavy. Hence, he hesitated for a moment.

Yunxiao threw an arm into the air and shouted at the top of his lungs, "Well done! Now, I want everyone to exercise the Murderous Air Script, form a square, and break through from the south!"

"Understood!"

After slaughtering some of the foes, the students' confidence had greatly increased. Under the effect of the Murderous Air Script, their eyes began to fill with traces of murderous air and thirst for blood, and when all two thousand of them formed a square, a dark purple cloud appeared over them, gradually taking the faint shape of a finger.

"Wha-what is this!" Cang Liqun's eyes grew wide. The penetrating, terrifying murderous air made his heart race. And as he stared at the faint shadow of a huge finger over the square array, he felt something stuck in his chest and an urge to vomit blood.

"Charge!"

At the loud cry, the two thousand students charged toward the south, their spirits high and their eyes red. Very soon, they were inside the army of four hundred thousand soldiers. Wherever they went, their

foes crumbled to the ground like walls made of tofu. It seemed that none of the students had attacked, and the numerous soldiers were actually devoured by just the dark purple cloud alone.

In a fit of rage, Cang Liqun bellowed, "Stop them! Stop them at all costs!" He was horrified to find that the square array of two thousand people was like a meat grinder, killing every soldier who was dragged into it.

Li Yi's eyes widened in horror as well. With a venomous look on his face, he said, "This Li Yunxiao is truly a monster. If we don't get rid of him as soon as possible, he will surely become a major threat in the future! Since the strange square array is following his order, we can destroy it by just killing him!"

Cang Liqun realized that and cried out, "Yes, and we shouldn't delay any further! I'll pin Ji Meng down while you kill that Li Yunxiao!" As soon as he had finished, he leaped down the chariot and took out a saber, slashing it toward Ji Meng.

'What a sly old fox!' Li Yi scolded in his mind. Yunxiao's identity was already made known to Cang Liqun just now. Although they were from opposing factions, if he were the one who killed Yunxiao, Cang Liqun knew he would be flayed by Li Chunyang and Li Changfeng, and even Qin Yang would not be able to save him.

"Senior Brothers, we must kill this guy this time! He is our nemesis, and if he stays alive, not only will we suffer, but it is very likely that Master's plans will also be ruined by him!"

"You are right. I also think this kid to be too evil! Rest here, Junior Brother, just the two of us are more than enough to finish him!" Guang Yuanjia and Yu Yuanwen had also appeared on the chariot, both staring at Yunxiao with gloomy faces.

Li Yi nodded. "In the beginning, I thought only one of you will be enough, but this guy is just too queer. I think it is better for both of you to strike together, only then can we ensure his death!"

"You can count on us. Let's go!" Weapons in hands, both men leaped into the air, heading toward Yunxiao in a very threatening manner.

Ji Meng saw them rushing at Yunxiao right after he had blocked Cang Liqun's attack with his sword, which greatly frightened him. With fierce a killing intent in his eyes, he rushed toward them. But Cang Liqun, being a two-stars Martial Lord and stronger than Ji Meng, would never let him pass, and he did so by swinging his saber and trapping Ji Meng with a burst of attacks.

"Be careful, Young Master Yun!" Since he could not go to the rescue, he could only shout anxiously.

Yunxiao had long discovered both men. "Everyone, charge for the south! Do not let anything distract you!" he cried out. Then, he lightly kicked his foot into the ground and leaped into the air as he began running to the south as well. He was not stupid enough to fight head-on against two Martial Lords. As long as the student army could break through the encirclement and run to the south, they should come upon Chen Dasheng's troops soon, and it would be time to fight back then!

"Trying to flee?" Guang Yuanjia sneered. He lifted his spear and thrust it, sending its pointed end through the air with strings of ice crystals. As a genuine Martial Lord, his attack was so strong that it broke through the void and froze the air, which turned into an ice bridge and fell onto Yunxiao.

"You want to kill me? Hmph! Kill your own men first!" Yunxiao cried out lightly as his figure flashed, "Nether Swap, Moon Walk!"

Yunxiao threw himself into the Golden Lion Army, flashing back and forth in the chaotic crowd. Guang Yuanjia's ice bridge followed and instantly killed many soldiers, but he did not mind at all. With a sneer, he continued to attack without showing any mercy.

Meanwhile, Yu Yuanwen joined the pursuit as well, waving his halberd as he plunged into the army and began slaughtering.

Yunxiao moved with magic steps, flashing relaxedly amongst the crowd. From time to time, he used soldiers as shields, throwing them to the two attackers, and all of them were cut into halves directly. The soldiers of the Golden Lion Army sucked in cold breaths as they ran away from them in horror and glared furiously at the two men.

"What is wrong with you! Stop killing my soldiers!"

Cang Liqun, who was fighting nearby, had also discovered something wrong, and he roared with fury. These men were all loyal subordinates who had followed him for many years. So, when he saw them being killed by someone from his own faction, it instantly broke his heart.

Guang Yuanjia bellowed as he kept killing the soldiers in front of him, "It's all this boy's fault! He's too cunning, using your soldiers as shields! I swear I'll hack him to pieces!" As soon as he had finished, he killed another soldier thrown over by Yunxiao. The spear pierced the man and exploded him into a cloud of blood, which was instantly frozen into ice before falling to the ground and shattering into pieces.

Cang Liqun flew into a rage. "If you kill my men again, don't blame me for being rude to you later!"

"Hmph!" Yu Yuanwen gave a cold snort, but he reduced his aggressiveness all the same, kicking away the next soldier thrown over by Yunxiao.

Yunxiao moved swiftly in the crowd like a fish in the water while soldiers avoided him as if he were a plague. Because of that, and as the student army fought bravely, a breach was soon opened up in the south, allowing everyone to escape the encirclement.

Li Yi watched anxiously from the chariot in the distance. "Kill his companions! Let's see if he will run again!" he roared.

Upon hearing that, Guang Yuanjia glanced at the crowd. After charging out of the breach, as there was no one to command them, the student army plunged into chaos and dispersed, no longer in the square array as they ran messily toward the south. Right outside the breach stood Lin Yu and Bai Chengfeng, who were taking up the rear of the student army. As they both were the only two Martial Masters among their peers, they thought they should shoulder greater responsibility.

"Hmph!" Guang Yuanjia gave a cold snort and ditched Yunxiao before thrusting his spear toward both men. As a result, Lin Yu and Bai Chengfeng immediately felt that they were targeted by a deadly killing intent. A sense of death descended upon them, filling their hearts with dread.

As the stronger one between them, Bai Chengfeng was the first to react. He shouted and hurriedly threw out hundreds of Thunderbolt Beads, then brought his arms together. His vambraces joined as one and transformed into a round stone disk, flying out and hovering before them as a shield.

“Your defense is futile before me!” Guang Yuanjia gave a contemptuous sneer and thrust his spear. One after another, all the beads exploded, and yet none of them could stop his attack!

Clang!

The spear hit the disk, and the vambraces shattered into pieces with a rumble before blowing out in all directions. Meanwhile, the sharp tip of the spear ripped through the air and stabbed hard through Bai Chengfeng’s chest!

Puke!

Bai Chengfeng vomited a mouthful of heart’s blood, and his spirit instantly leaked out of him.

“Chengfeng!” Lin Yu was stunned and then roared while rushing over and holding Bai Chengfeng in his arms. But, he then saw that his friend’s pupils had begun to dilate.

“Die, you ants!” Frustrated by the fact that he had failed to instantly kill a Martial Master with one single strike, Guang Yuanjia raised his spear and thrust it out again.

“Look out, Lin Yu!” A beautiful figure in the distance trembled. Luo Landuo was pale with fear as she screamed desperately, “Run! Run away from there, Lin Yu!” She felt strength was leaving her as she watched the enemy’s spear approach to claim the life of someone she loved.

Clang!

At the critical juncture, Yunxiao suddenly appeared. He swung the sword of Spring Water so fast that it left streaks of light in the void, which then scattered like lotus flowers and swept toward Guang Yuanjia’s head.

“The Song of Blue Lotus Sword!”

Guang Yuanjia felt a chill. He did not understand why an eight-stars warrior could fill his heart with a chill, but that was the most instinctive intuition of warriors. He sucked in a cold breath and decided to give up on killing Lin Yu. Hastily, he pulled back the spear and swept it out, destroying all the lotus flowers.

In the distance, Luo Landuo put her heart back into her chest, which had almost come up to her throat. For a moment, she felt she was completely exhausted. As she watched the figure shrouded in lotus flowers, she had a very complicated feeling.

“Retreat with Bai Chengfeng and find Jia Rong to heal him!” After saying that, Yunxiao was immediately enveloped by the shadows of Guang Yuanjia’s icy spear.

Lin Yu was filled with grief and indignation, but he knew he would be a burden if he stayed. He punched the ground with a fist, sending a small cloud of dust into the air. Then, he carried Bai Chengfeng up and retreated into the student army.

At this moment, everyone’s gaze was at Guang Yuanjia and Yunxiao, as well as Cang Liqun and Ji Meng. Since the army of four hundred thousand soldiers had failed to trap the two thousand student troops, it was futile for them to charge again.

Ji Meng panicked as soon as he saw Yunxiao getting trapped. He kept attacking desperately; his sword techniques were swift and agile, and wherever his sword went, peach flowers blossomed, making it a beautiful sight. Cang Liqun, on the other hand, was depressed and gloomy from the attacks. As he was one star stronger than Ji Meng, he thought he could easily suppress or even kill the other. But as time went by, he found that he was actually struggling to keep up with the attacks.

“Stop moving around, boy! Fight me if you have balls!” Guang Yuanjia was extremely depressed as well. Although he thrust his spear faster and faster, Yunxiao still managed to dodge it every time. He thought it was just luck, but when all his attacks were dodged, he finally realized that it was part of the latter’s strength!

Chapter 92: The God of Slaughter’s Finger

“Can you be more shameless than this?” Yunxiao sneered. “You’re a Martial Lord and I’m just a warrior, yet you ask me to not move around? I think your face is even thicker than a wall!”

Guang Yuanjia’s nostrils flared while his attacks grew fiercer and faster, but all of them were still dodged by Yunxiao.

If truth be told, Yunxiao was smiling wryly in his mind. He was drenched in cold sweat, and he had already exercised the Nether Swap to its maximum level. If the stalemate continued, his defeat was inevitable. The freezing ice energy of a Martial Lord was not something he could resist, and he would be dead if he were hit.

Han Bai and others watched from a distance as their hearts pounded faster and faster. They were utterly terrified by Yunxiao’s risky performance.

In a fit of rage, Chen Zhen bellowed, “Let’s charge over together and save Young Master Yun! Don’t forget who taught you martial techniques, who shared the loots with you, and who brought up the rear at the most critical moment! If you are still men, follow me! Girls can stay here!”

With a look of grief and indignation, Lin Yu raised his spear and roared, “Let’s go! Those who stay back are cowards, and you better not come back to the academy again! Because if I don’t die today, I’ll beat you every time I see you until you are dead!”

Holding the spear with both hands and pointing its tip ahead, he took the lead and charged out. The rest of the students were all boiling with his words, and in that instant, the murderous hearts they had found in the illusion came back to them. Their eyes burned with rage and shot with blood, and a cloud of dark purple murderous air soon gathered over them, which looked clearer than when they were rushing out of the encirclement just now.

“Kill them! Let’s go!”

“Kill these bast*ards! Kill anyone who gets in our way!”

“I’ll fight you to death and kill at least ten thousand men today!”

All two thousand students turned and rushed back with a look of determination on their faces.

The four hundred thousand soldiers shivered as they watched the students charge at them. The suffocating murderous air was even more frightening than the demon beasts they saw in Whitehead Town and Great Python Mountain. Reflexively, everyone began to move backward.

Cang Liqun was panicked as well. Ji Meng had been fighting desperately, almost at the cost of his own life. Although his attacks seemed swift and agile, they were extremely aggressive and crazy. In other words, if he did not defend every attack, the fight between them would immediately end up in an internecine outcome. For someone who had become a Martial Lord and was enjoying such a high status, Cang Liqun naturally would never risk his life, so he was in a rather passive position.

And now, when he saw the two thousand student troops charge back and sensed their towering air of determination, his heart raced even faster.

He who was braver would win when men came into unavoidable confrontation. As soon as Cang Liqun felt discouraged, he began to show signs of losing.

“What are you waiting for, Senior Brother Yu? Quickly help Senior Brother Guang kill that bast*rd!”

A bad feeling was growing inside Li Yi. He did not feel good about that bizarre finger, and there was something else that filled his heart with frustration and uneasiness: over at the horizon in the distance, he saw clouds of dust rising into the air, as if a great army was approaching!

Yu Yuanwen, too, had a vague sense of crisis, and he decided to put his honor aside. The halberd in his hand burst with a light, and then he rushed straight at Yunxiao while leaving streams of cold air behind as he pointed the tip at the latter’s head.

Jia Rong was healing Bai Chengfeng somewhere far away from the battlefield. As his divine sense was stronger than that of average people, he was able to discover that Chen Dasheng’s army was approaching, and that made him roar crazily, “Everybody charge! Reinforcements are coming! The army of four hundred thousand is coming! Kill these bast*rd!”

That immediately gave the student army a tremendous encouragement, and each one of them roared while rushing at Yu Yuanwen. Meanwhile, the soldiers of the Golden Lion Army had long retreated behind him, and no one dared to come forward again. He was about to kill Yunxiao when he suddenly felt an extremely uncomfortable power envelop the sky over him.

He looked up in horror and saw that at some point, the dark purple finger over the student army had erected and was pointing down at him.

“Fu*k! What’s this thing!”

He was greatly horrified, and a monstrous wave rose within him. In that instant, a very strong sense of death washed him over. He gave up on killing Yunxiao and pulled back his halberd, putting all his strength behind it and thrusting it out again at the finger.

As soon as his halberd hit the target, it was forcibly pressed down, and then he felt an unimaginably terrifying power break through all his defenses and smash right at him.

Bam!

Under the terrified gazes of everyone, Yu Yuanwen exploded into chunks of flesh the moment the finger touched him, scattering all over the place.

Every man in the army of four hundred thousand soldiers sucked in a cold breath at the same time, and they all stepped back in horror. Even the two thousand student troops were completely dumbstruck. The finger vanished after it had killed Yu Yuanwen, and every student instantly felt empty inside, as if all their spirit and energy were drained. Moreover, not only had their bloodshot eyes returned to normal, but their strength was gone as well.

“Get away from here now! I don’t need your help!”

Yunxiao cried out in panic as soon as he was safe. He knew the student troops’ state at the moment: the God of Slaughter’s finger had drained all their murderous air and Primordial Qi, which was the reason why it could kill a Martial Lord so effortlessly. If the Golden Lion Army launched an attack right now, the student army would be completely wiped out.

Fortunately, the four hundred thousand soldiers were already frightened by the slaughter just now, and their faces were even paler after witnessing how that strange thing had killed a Martial Lord, which deprived their courage to charge at the student army again.

Li Yi could totally not believe what he just saw. Why did his senior brother, a Martial Lord, die in such an absurd manner?

He rubbed his eyes and went wild. Like a madman, he drew a sword and rushed over while bellowing, "Bast*rd! Fuc*ing bast*rd! I'm going to kill you!"

Both armies stared blankly at the fight between the few men. Li Yi was a Great Martial Master. Although he had lost an arm, he still had his strength. And now, as he had become mad completely and lost his mind, he was even stronger, which made his attack unavoidable for Yunxiao.

"STOP IT! EVERYONE!"

A loud roar suddenly came from the distance, stabbing into every ear and echoing through the field. Everyone was shocked as a result.

"What?" Li Yi woke from his madness by the voice and blurted out in horror, "Xiao Qingwang! Sh*t! Senior Brother, quickly kill this guy!"

His heart was filled with resentment. Yunxiao was like his natural nemesis; whenever they confronted, it was always him being utterly tortured. It was the same this time. Even though the situation favored him, he still lost a senior brother. He decided that he must kill Yunxiao right now and here; otherwise, he would always be suppressed mentally, which would stop him from making further advancement in his martial arts.

"Let's see how you are going to escape this time!"

In the face of the joint attack of the two enemies, Yunxiao finally could not hold on and began to be hit by streams of ice-cold air. Although he had avoided all the vital spots, his situation was getting worse.

Meanwhile, a few figures could be seen running over from the distance. Judging from their speed, they were all experts.

“No one can save you this time!”

Li Yi kicked Yunxiao hard, sending him up into the air. Beneath him, both men smiled hideously as two spikes of ice cold energy pierced out of the ground, shooting upward.

Covered in bruises, Yunxiao suddenly drew a deep breath and threw out his arms and legs. Energy spread out of his palms and soles to form something that looked like a water film, which held his body firmly in midair.

As he did not fall, the ice spikes failed to pierce him. Seeing that, Li Yi and Guang Yuanjia’s pupils constricted in horror.

The three figures running over from the distance were Xiao Qingwang, Luo Yunshang, and Chen Dasheng. Although they did not know what happened, they all saw the fight just now, especially the God of Slaughter’s finger. They were utterly shocked when they watched how it had killed Yu Yuanwen. Now, when they saw Yunxiao facing a crisis of death, their heart burned with panic, and they ran as fast as they could.

Chen Dasheng’s face was gloomy as he bellowed, “Bast*rds! I’ll kill you all if Yunxiao is hurt!”

Yunxiao was his brother’s only grandson, who had also saved his life. How was he going to answer to his brother if Yunxiao was killed? If that happened, he might have to kill himself here to atone his sin. Luo Yunshang, on the other hand, felt a strange fear and unbearable pain in her heart as if someone dear to her was about to leave her. Xiao Qingwang’s face was the calmest, but his eyes were filled with a monstrous killing intent that could not be concealed.

Yunxiao floated quietly in the air. But, because of the excessive loss of strength, he still slowly fell downward. Looking up at the reinforcements coming from afar, he said to himself bitterly, “It’s too late.”

Bam!

The air bubble that helped him float exploded. He pulled back his arms and legs, and he suddenly had about a dozen colorful needles in his hands. With a fierce look on his face, he inserted the needles into the acupoints all over his body.

“What is he doing?”

Everyone was struck dumb. Even Ji Meng and Cang Liqun stopped fighting each other. They exchanged a wary look, and then focused all their attention on Yunxiao.

With the needles inserted into his body, Yunxiao began to emanate a shocking aura, which climbed steadily. Although the air bubble had burst, he still hovered in midair, slowly descending as if he was being drawn by some kind of power.

“Fu*k you! Why can’t you be killed?!” Li Yi screamed. He felt like he was going crazy as a gleam of resolution flashed in his eyes. From his pocket, he took out a golden medicinal pill, before putting it into his mouth and swallowing it.

Guang Yuanjia was shocked, and he cried out involuntarily, “You can’t do that, Junior Brother!”

Li Yi’s face twisted, and he began to pant violently. All of a sudden, his muscles swelled and bulged, and he looked in great pain. In a hoarse voice, he said, “I’ll not stop if I don’t kill him today!”

“Roar!”

With a roar, his body suddenly grew several feet taller, and black hair began to appear all over his skin. In the blink of an eye, he had completely transformed into a huge mountain ape!

“Wha-what... what is going on?”

Everyone was startled. Was Li Yi actually an ape? But, that was just too absurd!

Chapter 93: The Great Wind and Cloud Palm

The few people running over from the distance were stunned as well, and there was one more thing that made their hearts sink—the power that exploded from the ape was almost as strong as a Martial King.

“The demonization pill! I can’t believe he had a demonization pill!”

Luo Yunshang understood at once. She was born in Shexiao Temple, and her Master had told her almost everything about the world.

The demonization pill was a very powerful and special pill, which required the blood and soul of a demon beast to be refined. Once consumed, it could turn an ordinary man into a demon beast and temporarily grant him the power of the demon beast.

But, such a medicinal pill had serious side effects, especially one that was higher than the consumer’s realm. Without being careful, it could kill a man by exploding the body. Normally, those who possessed demonization pills would deliberately strengthen their fleshly bodies, so that they could endure greater power. It was said that someone had once consumed a demonization pill refined with a ninth-tier demon beast during battle, and it catapulted him over two major realms and instantly granted him the strength of a Martial Sovereign.

“Haha! Power...I feel great power! Li Yunxiao, I can finally put an end to the dispute between us! With a hideous smile, the ape, or Li Yi, roared as he threw a huge palm at Yunxiao.

A dark cloud flashed over the sky, veiling the sun and casting a shadow into everyone’s hearts as they looked at each other in astonishment. It was a full-force attack of a Martial King. Under the palm, the air compressed and squeaked, the noise so sharp and loud that it made everyone’s ears hurt.

“Indeed, it’s time to put an end to this.” Yunxiao said indifferently with a calm face. He stared at his opponent with a look that seemed to come from the past in his eyes, as serene as the sky and as deep as the ocean, seemingly capable of encompassing everything in the world.

Suddenly, his body glowed with lights of four different colors, and Primordial Qi of four different colors—blue, red, white, and black—drifted from all directions and gathered in his palms, swirling and gleaming beautifully. For a moment, the energy in the surrounding void seemed to be completely drained by him.

“What? The elements of the Four Quadrants? How’s that even possible?” Cang Liqun was shocked in the distance, his eyes staring woodenly and his jaw hung wide open. Those were clearly the energies of the Four Quadrants that only a Martial Lord could possess. Moreover, from their vivid and bright colors, as well as how they moved familiarly between Yunxiao’s finger, he could tell that the boy’s understanding of the energy was far greater than his.

He, too, had begun to discover the bizarreness of Yunxiao, and a vague fear was growing in his heart. He knew the boy would definitely become a major threat to him if he did not kill the latter today. But, as his eyes gleamed with killing intent, he suddenly felt a gust of cold wind blowing at him, which sent a chill down into his heart and made him shudder.

“What’s going on?” Cang Liqun felt that something was amiss. “Why is the wind suddenly kicking up?” And, even if the wind was kicking up, as a Martial Lord, he should not be feeling cold at all.

Suddenly, a strong wind was gusting over the field, and the clouds in the sky were shifting and rolling. It seemed that a storm was coming. Hundreds of thousands of soldiers looked up in amazement, wondering what force had caused such an unusual phenomenon.

“This...this is...” Luo Yunshang halted abruptly and looked into the distance in horror. Under the shifting clouds, she saw a proud and aloof figure hovering between the heaven and earth.

She was shocked, and her heart trembled with an unspeakable feeling that came from her soul. She felt like crying, and in the blink of an eye, tears began to trickle down her cheeks. For a moment, the proud figure in the distance completely overlapped with the man who came on clouds fifteen years ago.

A great wind came forth, the clouds rose on high!

The wind and clouds rose on high all because of me!

Yunxiao slowly floated up into the air, shrouded not only in wind and clouds, but also flickering light of four different colors which made him look like a mighty god descending from above.

His eyes were deep as the ocean and vast as the sky, trapping anyone who looked into them. With both hands, he lightly performed an incantation gesture, and a great force immediately came rushing over from all around him. Then, he gently lifted his right hand, and with the force of this part of the world gathered in the palm, he brought it down hard.

The wind gusted and the clouds shifted; in that instant, the heaven seemed to have crumbled and the earth shattered. Meanwhile, the surrounding air seemed to start burning, with balls of fire appearing here and there while the clouds in the sky compressed abruptly, all turning into the figures of that man. The whole sky seemed to have gathered under the wind and clouds before falling to the ground.

The army of hundreds of thousands of soldiers, including the few Martial Lords, all had a feeling that the sky was collapsing and the earth shattering.

“Roar!”

In the face of the mighty force, Li Yi suddenly realized that the power he had felt so great just now was nothing. Under the wind pushed down by the palm, his hair stood on their ends, his skin began to crack, and his face was twisted in pain as he kept wailing.

Bam!

With a loud rumble, the power of the Four Quadrants crashed down and threw Li Yi to the ground. A tremendous force bounced back from the earth, and a blinding strong light burst forth from the center of collision, forcing everyone to close their eyes.

Yunxiao, on the other hand, was knocked flying away by the powerful counterforce, spinning uncontrollably in the air like a leaking balloon.

Ji Meng bolted out instantly, chasing after him.

Plumes of dust rose into the sky from where the Great Wind and Cloud Palm struck, obscuring everything within forty to fifty meters from all eyes. Meanwhile, the hundreds of thousands of soldiers felt the oppressing aura had finally faded away, and the sky was clear once again. However, the earth seemed to have been seriously damaged, and as the air was thick with dust, everyone was coughing violently.

“Are you all right, Yunxiao?”

Xiao Qingwang, Luo Yunshang, and Chen Dasheng finally arrived. Looking at Yunxiao, who was in Ji Meng’s arms, they breathed a sigh of relief. However, there was still a look of shock on their faces. The palm that shook the heaven and earth just now had deeply imprinted in their hearts, and it was very likely that they would never forget it for the rest of their lives.

Yunxiao’s face was extremely pale. The ten or so needles inserted in his body had all turned white, showing signs of breaking and no longer containing any energy. He glanced at the few people, then rested his eyes on Yunshang as he smiled and said, “Teacher Luo, why don’t you hold me in your arms? I think I will be fine if you do that.”

Yunshang’s face blushed. She wanted to scold him, but she suddenly had a strange feeling which caught her words in her mouth. After pausing for a brief moment, she said crossly, “Watch your mouth!”

Xiao Qingwang gave her a surprised look, and then a hint of a strange smile appeared on the corner of his mouth. Meanwhile, Chen Dasheng laughed. “Since you can still flirt with your teacher, it seems to me that you are fine.”

After saying that, his smile began to fade, and a murderous look gradually emerged on his face. He turned and looked at the Golden Lion Army, then said in a dark voice that sounded as if it was coming straight from hell, “Now that you are fine, it is their turn to taste my wrath.”

The dust kicked up by Yunxiao’s palm lingered in the air for a long time. By the time it finally settled down, everyone was horrified to find a big hole in the ground, which measured about ten meters wide. What was even more shocking was that there was a bloody body lying in it; but instead of Li Yi, it was Guang Yuanjia.

“What happened? I thought it was the ape who was hit by the palm? How did it become someone else?”

“Where is the ape? Did he run away?”

“I don’t think so. I saw him enveloped by the palm and fall to the ground. How could he get away?”

The crowd was still in shock when they thought of what just happened, and the big hole in the ground and Guang Yuanjia’s body astounded them further. Everyone was talking with one another, their faces incredulous.

Cang Liqun was stunned as well. He, too, had no idea how Li Yi escaped, and why it was Guang Yuanjia’s body in the hole. But, it was not the time for him to ponder over these questions, because a few terrible murderous auras had targeted him, and the cultivation base of each one of those people was stronger than his.

He swallowed hard; he knew he was in big trouble this time. Looking at the cold, gloomy faces of Chen Dasheng and the others, he felt his heart keep sinking.

The four hundred thousand soldiers of the Central Army marched across the land, and soon they were facing the Golden Lion Army. The atmosphere between them grew intense. However, the Central Army was high in morale while the men in the Golden Lion Army were pale after everything they had just gone through.

After taking a few medicinal pills, Yunxiao walked over with the help of Jia Rong.

The inside of him was completely destroyed. The needles had brought out all the potential in him, allowing him to have the power of a Martial Lord. But, the consequence was extremely serious. His meridians and flesh were almost ruined, and he was actually hanging on with his last bit of life force.

“Yunxiao, how do you want us to deal with this man?” Chen Dasheng asked in a deep voice.

Cang Liqun's face flickered. He knew he was likely to suffer greatly today, but he still argued, "I'm the commander in chief of the Golden Lion Army, and I was tracking down the men who robbed the City Lord Mansion of Yangpu! You have no right to judge me!"

"We have no right?" Yunxiao smiled, his face pale. "Tell him what right do we have!"

Ji Meng's eyes flashed with a trace of murderous air. He leaped forward in an instant, throwing a punch hard at Cang Liqun's face.

Cang Liqun's expression changed drastically, and he was about to resist when he suddenly felt that he was targeted by a killing intent from someone far stronger than him. At that moment, he saw Xiao Qingwang squint at him with his eyes gleaming coldly. He trembled with fear and did not dare to move anymore, but watched blankly as Ji Meng's fist grew larger and larger in his eyes.

Bam!

The fist hit squarely in his face. He spat out a mouthful of blood mixed with teeth as the punch threw him away, leaving a trace for tens of meters on the ground. Then, with just a light kick at the ground, Ji Meng flashed over Cang Liqun in an instant and fell with his elbow pointed downward.

Bam!

The elbow struck Cang Liqun directly at the chest. It was so powerful that his eyes almost popped out of their sockets, and all his internal organs were seriously wounded. As a result, he spewed out a mouthful of blood mixed with bits of organs.

Bam! Bam! Bam!

Ji Meng continued to beat him with punches and kicks. Each one of them struck at his vital spots, but the force came with it was carefully measured so that he would stay alive while suffering great pain.

Chapter 94: Incorporate The Army

“Stop...Stop beating me...Please stop...” Cang Liqun pleaded in pain as he realized that he had made a mistake by taking things too superficially. This group of men did not even want to reason with him.

Only then did Yunxiao speak coldly, “Stop! Do you know what rights we have now?”

“Yes! Yes!” Cang Liqun answered hurriedly.

When the soldiers and officers of the Golden Lion Army saw their commander in chief, who had always been so aloof and behaved like an emperor, plead in front of someone with such a humble attitude, they all gaped and felt their hearts filled with grief, indignation, and contempt while their morale dropped to the lowest level. One after another, they drooped their heads.

Yunxiao sneered. “As a man who has lived in this world for so many years, don’t you know that the reasons are always with those with bigger fists? I really wonder how you managed to become a Martial Lord. In any case, it’s good that you understand this now, because you can finally die in peace.”

His voice turned extremely cold as he said, “Kill him.”

“What!” Lying on the ground, Cang Liqun trembled and cried out in disbelief. “Kill me? You want to kill me?” His eyes filled with horror and shock as he said furiously, “I’m a courtier and a general who guards the border of the state! You will violate the laws if you kill me without permission! Do you have His Majesty’s decree?”

Yunxiao looked at him as if he were a fool. “You’ve committed a capital crime when you nearly killed me! Laws and imperial edicts are nothing in my eyes. When I want you to die, that’s the law and the imperial edict!”

The contempt on Yunxiao’s face made Cang Liqun feel like he was really just an ant, and that his biggest advantage was suddenly gone. By now, he was really afraid as he said with a pale face, “Don’t kill me! I’m a Martial Lord! You will find me very useful if you keep me! As long as you spare my life, I will remain faithful to you until my death!”

Chen Dasheng and the others remained silent. After all, Cang Liqun was a Martial Lord, and that made him one of the few mighty experts in Tianshui. If he could surrender to them, he would definitely become a great help.

“A Martial Lord?” Yunxiao scoffed. “In my eyes, a Martial Lord has not even stepped into the door of martial arts. Just die when I ask you to and stop wasting my time! Kill him!”

A Martial Lord had not even stepped into the door of martial arts!

All the Martial Lords present, including Xiao Qingwang, were stunned by that. A Martial King could control the lifeblood of a nation, and a Martial Lord could at least influence a power in a nation. But in Yunxiao’s eyes, such a strong force had not even stepped into the door of martial arts. However, they did not feel offended even in the slightest bit. Instead, they agreed with what he said.

With a soft, wet sound, Cang Liqun’s neck was cut open by Ji Meng. Blood spurted out, blooming like a firework before death descended. Just like that, Cang Liqun, one of the important figures in the military and the commander-in-chief of the Golden Lion Army, died worthlessly in the wild outside the city of Yangpu.

What came after that did not require Yunxiao’s attention, so he was helped into the commander’s chariot to rest.

Chen Dasheng’s eyes gleamed with joy as he glanced at the four hundred thousand soldiers of the Golden Lion Army. With a cold face, he cried out, “Cang Liqun had abused his power to seek personal gain and colluded with our enemy! He had committed crimes deserving death ten thousand times! Now that he is executed, justice has been served! Who is your deputy commander-in-chief? Steps out of the rank right now!”

Two middle-aged generals walked slowly out of the troops. Their faces were flickering, and they seemed to be struggling. But, when they walked past Cang Liqun’s body, they breathed a long sigh at the same time, as if they had made up their minds.

“The deputy commander-in-chief of the Golden Lion Army, Huang Hong/Hua Man, offers greetings!” Both men said in unison, their voices booming like a great bell.

“A two-stars Martial Master?” Chen Dasheng gave Huang Hong a surprised look. “To be promoted as a deputy commander-in-chief with such a weak cultivation base, you must be either from a powerful family or an intelligent and resourceful man. But, as far as I remember, there is not a Huang family in Tianshui’s court. So, you must be a wise man.”

He immediately attached greater importance to Huang Hong. What they lacked now was not troops or high-end fighting forces, but a strategist who knew everything about Baizhan. Although Chen Dasheng was a genius of the art of war, as he was sick and had been dwelling in seclusion for so many years, he did not know much about the current military affairs of the two states.

“That is correct, my lord!” Huang Hong thundered. The deputy commander-in-chief, on the other hand, was filled with admiration for Chen Dasheng’s sharp judgment. He was indeed the brains for the Golden Lion Army, and it could be said that since the army was formed to the present, he had personally presided over almost all the major affairs.

His colleague, Hua Man, was a Great Martial Master, which meant he was promoted purely because of his strength.

“Very good!” Chen Dasheng looked at both men as a murderous air poured out of his eyes. “You’ve seen how Cang Lique colluded with the enemy. Now, I will incorporate and reorganize the Golden Lion Army. Do you have any objections?”

Shocked, they answered in unison, “We have no objections and will follow my lord’s orders!” Their palms were wet with cold sweat. If they did raise an objection now, they would never have the chance to voice out again. When they walked past Cang Lique’s body, they had already decided to yield.

“Good! The Golden Lion Army will keep its structure and is now under Huang Hong’s command!” Chen Dasheng took out a token and shouted aloud, “Huang Hong, step forward to receive the commander’s token!”

“Yes, my lord!” Huang Hong boomed as he strode forward and took the token, his face beaming with great joy. He did not expect that Chen Dasheng would appoint him, a surrenderer, as the commander-in-chief of the army; at the same time, he admired his way of using talented people.

'If you use a man, don't suspect him; if you suspect a man, don't use him! This is the way of a great general!'

After that, Chen Dasheng took a deep breath, bringing it down to his dantian, and then shouted out at the top of his lungs, "All four hundred thousand of you fled without putting out a fight and abandoned a military stronghold! This is a capital crime! But now, I will give you a chance to atone for your crime by meritorious service. Return to the front line and protect our nation!"

Huang Hong echoed aloud, "Atone for your crime by meritorious service, protect our nation!"

The soldiers and officers of the Golden Lion Army looked at each other in bewilderment, but soon many picked that up and began to shout as well. Eventually, their cries were uniformed and their voices shook the field and sky.

"Atone for the crime by meritorious service! Protect our nation!"

...

As the soldiers were shouting outside the city, Wu Liantian, the City Lord of Yangpu, was pacing anxiously in his mansion.

"Do you think that General Cang can recover all my things?"

Those were the wealths he had accumulated through years of sucking the people's life-blood, regardless of his honor and integrity.

The swollen-headed Wu Guang mumbled, "Of course! General Cang is the commander-in-chief of the Golden Lion Army! He's a Martial Lord!"

"I was not asking you!" Wu Liantian scolded. He knew his son's intelligence, so that answer could be ignored. "What do you think, Commander Ban?"

Looking at the father and son, Ban Bingbai sighed helplessly and said, “Cang Liqun should be able to recover everything, but it is unlikely for him to spit it all out.”

“I knew it!” Wu Liantian wailed. “But, it’s still better than losing everything.”

While fuming, he said, “It would be best if he could capture the few bast*rds and bring them to me! I’ll definitely rip them to pieces!”

At that moment, a city guard ran hurriedly into the hall and reported, “My lord, the Golden Lion Army is back!”

Exulted, Wu Liantian grabbed the man’s arm and asked, “Did you see the few bast*rds?”

The guard blinked and thought for a moment. “Yes, I saw them among the crowd. But...”

“Haha! Great! I’m going to break their bones one by one!” Not waiting for the guard to finish, Wu Liantian jumped up happily and started for the door. “Guang’er, Commander Ban, come with me to meet the army!”

“Don’t bother!”

A derisive voice came in through the door as a bundle wrapped in cloth flew over and fell on the floor, from which a round object came rolling out and stopped beneath Wu Liantian’s feet.

At the glance of the object, the smile on his face froze—it was Cang Liqun’s head. He looked up in horror and saw Yunxiao and others standing at the door and looking coldly at him.

His heart sunk in an instant. “Little brother, this is a misunderstanding, a mis...”

Before he had finished, he found that his body was departing from him and the world spun around him. It was then he realized that it was his head that was flying up into the air. A brief moment later, he fell on the floor with a thud, sitting right next to Cang Liqun’s head.

Soon, they were joined by another head, but this one was much larger, as it was Wu Guang's swollen head.

"You will temporarily be in charge of all the affairs in Yangpu." After giving Ban Bingbai a casual glance, Yunxiao disappeared from the hall.

Ban Bingbai's face was extremely pale, and he did not even dare to breathe too loud. There were several auras out there that filled him with apprehension, so he stood quietly and blankly in the mansion, not daring to move and just listening to the sound of the army marching through the city.

It was after two hours that the rumbling sound of the marching finally dwindled into the distance. Only then did Ban Bingbai breathe a sigh of relief. He rested his gaze at the three heads on the floor, his face flickering.

...

Chen Dasheng and the few others had too many questions to ask Yunxiao, including the God of Slaughter's finger and the Great Wind and Cloud Palm. But, Ji Meng and Jia Rong were guarding outside the tent on the chariot with serious faces, stopping anyone from disturbing him.

"What do you think?" The few people sat in a circle in Chen Dasheng's tent, their faces thoughtful. Chen Dasheng broke the silence first.

"Is this boy still a human? He's too over the top!"

There was a look of terror in Chen Lin's eyes as he said, "I've been in the army for decades, and I've only seen the dark-purple murderous air emanated from the two thousand student troops on some extremely bloodthirsty killers, and they were far fainter. These two thousand students are simply gods of slaughter!"

Chen Dasheng glanced at the few people and saw everyone was sunk in deep thoughts with a look of puzzled, except Yunshang, whose eyes were slightly glazed and face calm.

Chen Dasheng's face grew serious. His eyes seemed to look into the past as he said in a deep voice, "There is an ancient legend that if the killing on the battlefield is too violent, it will attract the God of Slaughter to the world. It is said that the God of Slaughter was covered in scales, shrouded in dark-purple air, and no one can look straight at it."

Chapter 95: An Astonishing Speculation

Han Qianfang asked in awe, "Could there really be gods, my lord?"

The rest of the people looked over, waiting for the answer. On this continent, it had always been those Martial Sovereigns standing at the pinnacle and holding sway of the world. At some point in their lives, everyone had heard of the legends and stories relating to gods, but most of them were just too absurd to be believed.

Chen Dasheng's eyes were deep as he explained, "Gods are unreal. The so-called God of Slaughter actually refers to this kind of dark-purple murderous air. On the battlefield, it has a very ancient name, Ramayana, which means the power to kill everything!"

"Ramayana..." Everyone repeated the name under their breath.

"The martial arts are too vast for us mortals to know everything," Chen Dasheng sighed. "This murderous air is actually a kind of power. Rumor has it that there are experts who specialize in cultivating it. When facing the enemy, they are full of murderous air that not only greatly increases their strength, but also weakens their opponents' spirits."

Han Qianfang's face became slightly confused as he asked while frowning, "It is a very rare cultivation technique. How did Yunxiao learn it then? Moreover, such a mystic technique must be extremely valuable, and yet he had passed it to over two thousand people. Although he increased the overall strength of the army by doing so, it's also very wasteful."

Every cultivation technique was a precious treasure, and no warrior would simply pass it to others. It was a custom for warriors to keep the best things to themselves and only pass them to those who were

close to them. It was plain that the Murderous Air Script was an advanced cultivation technique, so Han Qianfang naturally felt that it was wasteful to pass it to so many people.

Xiao Qingwang's eyes gleamed as he said with great certainty, "There must be an expert behind Yunxiao! Ignoring the Ramayana for now; he is only fifteen years old, and yet he is already a second-tier alchemist and an eight-stars warrior, with his real fighting strength almost as good as a Great Martial Master. I'm sure he has a Master!"

"You're right!" Chen Dasheng's eyes lit up, as if all doubts were solved. "I wonder who is the expert behind Yunxiao? Since he can cultivate such an excellent disciple, he is definitely someone extraordinary!"

"A Martial Lord has not even stepped into the door of martial arts!" At the thought of the remark, Xiao Qingwang's heart filled with awe. "One thing I know for sure, his cultivation base must be far above ours!"

"Could he be a Martial Grandmaster? Chen Dasheng said shockingly.

Xiao Qingwang made no answer, but suddenly turned to look at Yunshang and said with a smile, "You should also have some speculation, right? If my eyes didn't deceive me, the martial technique Yunxiao used to kill Guang Yuanjia should be the Great Wind and Cloud Palm of the Martial Sovereign Vanquisher, Lord Gu Feiyang!"

Yunshang's heart trembled. Although she already knew Yunxiao could use the Great Wind and Cloud Palm, seeing it with her own eyes was another story. Besides, she had seen that magnificent figure descend from the sky fifteen years ago, and both of them were so alike.

She felt her heartstrings plucked, and she could no longer remain calm.

While smiling, Xiao Qingwang said, "It is said that Gu Feiyang had five disciples. His first disciple, Hua Qianshu, had broken through and become a Martial Sovereign several years ago, and is currently in the Holy City of Lanxue."

“His second disciple, Mo Xiaochuan, is from the Mo Family of the Blackiron City, and there has been no news about him for the past decade.”

“Jun Ruyun is his third disciple, who is said to have become the son-in-law of the Guwu Empire, a super empire in the west.”

“His fourth disciple, Haolian Shaohuang, is fighting for the title of the Mercenary King with the leader of the Blazing Mercenary Group in the City of Mercenary, and he still hasn’t succeeded so far.”

“And all of us are very familiar with his fifth disciple, Yang Di. In recent years, he jumped directly to become a fifth-tier Alchemy King from a third-tier Alchemy Grandmaster and become someone very influential in the Firecrow Empire. I think everyone here knows what happened to him, and because of that, Tianshui may have lost its best chance to become an empire, and it will probably never have another chance. I heard that he is now a seventh-tier Alchemy Emperor, but I can’t confirm it. If it is true, he’ll probably have gone to the Sea of Soul Formation.”

There was a look of fascination on Chen Dasheng’s face as he sighed and said, “Each of these names is well known and belongs to an existence who has a great impact on the world. Even Lord Yang Di, who is the weakest among them, has most likely broken free of his ties with the secular affairs and is soaring freely in the clouds over the Heavenly Martial Continent.”

After listening, Chen Lin made a careful analysis. “Lord Yang Di can’t be Yunxiao’s Master. He had vowed that he would never step into Tianshui again in his life after the incident of Mo Xuan’er. And we are not sure whether he has the cultivation base of the Six Directions Realm.”

Han Qianfang drummed his fingers on the table and said, “The City of Mercenary, Softsong Woodland, is one of the most complicated places on the continent. The situation there is changing so quickly that it is impossible for Haolian Shaohuang to leave the place and come to this tiny state of Tianshui to be Yunxiao’s Master.”

Xiao Qingwang was reckoning as well, “The Guwu Empire is one of the three transcontinental super empires and is located in the western part of Heavenly Martial Continent. If Jun Ruyun wanted to cultivate Yunxiao, he could just give out an order. With that, even the Firecrow Empire would not dare to make a sound, not to mention Tianshui. And the city of Blackiron is tens of thousands of miles away from here. Unless Mo Xiaochuan has stepped into the realm of Martial Sovereigns and can break through the void, he would not travel so far.”

After listening to their analysis, Chen Dasheng said, "So, the man behind Yunxiao is most probably Hua Qianshu? Are you kidding me? His Master is a Martial Sovereign?"

He could hardly believe that, while the others had doubts about the conclusion as well. After all, a Martial Sovereign was an existence too far away and out of reach for them.

Xiao Qingwang suddenly smiled and asked, "What do you think, Yunshang? None of us here know more about Gu Feiyang than you."

Yunshang's face flushed slightly with shyness. During the banquet in the imperial palace, she had announced that the man she loved was Gu Feiyang, and now everyone in the state knew about it.

Chen Dasheng also asked hurriedly, "Commander Luo, who do you think is most likely the expert behind Yunxiao?"

At this moment, Yunshang's thoughts seemed to return to the lonely and cold Snowfall Peak. That night, he came like a god who looked down upon all mortals, stepping on the wind and clouds, and all the beauty between heaven and earth was only a touch of his lonely back.

No one knew what Yunshang was thinking. Her eyes gleamed like stars, and suddenly her lips curved into a smile. "Why must it be between these five men?"

Everyone was struck dumb, while Chen Dasheng asked in shock, "Is there anyone besides Gu Feiyang's disciples who also knows the Great Wind and Cloud Palm?"

"Of course!"

There was a determined look on Yunshang's face, as if she had confirmed something. "Although I never met these five great men, I'm sure that Yunxiao didn't learn the martial technique from them!"

Xiao Qingwang's pupils constricted slightly. "Who is it then?"

Yunshang's eyes flickered with light, and then she smiled softly, making everyone feel as if a warm spring breeze was blowing in the tent. "He is none other than Lord Gu Feiyang himself!"

The men in the tent sucked in a cold breath in an instant. One moment ago, they were feeling the warm breeze, but now they were feeling an intense chill. "How's that even possible!" Chen Dasheng cried out. "It is known to all that Gu Feiyang had fallen in the Tiandang Mountains fifteen years ago!"

Yunshang smiled softly, seeming very happy at this moment. The eyes that shone like stars, and the figure that looked as mighty as a god, had once again appeared in her mind.

Yunxiao's Great Wind and Cloud Palm was exactly the same as that of the man she saw fifteen years ago. She was convinced that only that man could have cultivated such an excellent disciple.

'I knew there is absolutely no one in the world who could kill him!'

She guessed Gu Feiyang must have suffered a serious injury fifteen years ago even though everyone thought he was dead, and then he had come to Tianshui for some reason and become Yunxiao's master.

'Yes, it must be!'

She lightly wiped away her tears and smiled happily, "He must be Lord Gu Feiyang. I can feel that. Other than him, who else in the world can teach Yunxiao that look when striking out an amazing attack and the domineering spirit?"

Chen Dasheng, Chen Lin, and Han Qianfang kept shaking their heads in disbelief. The speculation was just too terrifying and shocking.

Xiao Qingwang was stunned as well. "You mean Gu Feiyang is not only alive, but also hiding in Tianshui?"

Yunshang had a dreamy look on her face as she said, "It must be!"

Chen Dasheng had a hard time accepting the speculation. He smiled wryly and said, "A Martial Lord has just stepped into the door of martial arts...If this really came from Lord Gu Feiyang, then a Martial Lord is truly a piece of shit."

Suddenly, Xiao Qingwang's face grew dark, as if he had just thought of something really serious. He glanced at everyone in the tent and said, "If this speculation is true and got spread out, and then was heard by Gu Feiyang's enemy who had injured him in those years, it is very likely that the whole Firecrow Empire would be wiped out, not to mention Tianshui."

Everyone's expression changed drastically. It was indeed an extremely terrible speculation.

For someone who could injure Gu Feiyang, wiping out the Firecrow Empire was probably as easy as lifting a hand, not to mention Tianshui, a mere dependent state of the empire.

Almost one-third of the top fighting forces of Tianshui was here in this tent. Even so, the enemy could most probably kill them all with just a breath.

The atmosphere in the tent suddenly became extremely depressed. Everyone felt a great pressure and even a little out of breath.

"This is the end of the topic!" Chen Dasheng said in a deep voice. "No one is allowed to discuss it again. No matter who is behind Yunxiao, as long as he did not harm him, we don't have to worry. Besides, with that man's strength, it is useless for us to worry about it."

Yunshang felt she had said too much, and she regretted it. Her eyes grew cold as she glanced at the men around her and said, "I must warn you beforehand. If any of you leak this and jeopardize the safety of that man, I swear I'll kill you even at the cost of my life!"

She had firmly believed that Gu Feiyang was the man behind Yunxiao; therefore she was extremely regretful and blamed herself for her carelessness. She should have just kept the speculation to herself.

Chen Dasheng said solemnly, "Rest assured, Commander Luo! Both the Han Family and the Li Family are my friends who have sworn to live or die together. They are even closer than my own brothers. Yunxiao saved Xiao Qingwang's life, so naturally he won't leak this to any outsider either."

Chapter 96: Getting Rich Along The Way

"No wonder he has such a high degree of medical skill and even knows the way to get rid of the cold poison in our bodies." Xiao Qingwang came to understand suddenly. "Don't worry, Yunshang, we're all in this together."

Yunshang nodded lightly, but her heart could not calm down whatsoever at the thought that Gu Feiyang was still alive.

Suddenly, someone shouted from outside the tent, "My lord, we are approaching the city of Shuichang. Shall we enter the city or march around it?"

Chen Dasheng frowned as he folded his arms over his chest and considered for a moment. "The City Lord of Shuichang, Zhuo Hongguang, is Prince Qin Yang's man. He will not show us any courtesy if we enter the city. We will march around it. There's a town called Mingkou some one hundred miles ahead. We will stop and strike camp there."

"Yes, my lord!" the man answered and was about to leave.

"Hold on!" A voice rang out suddenly. Meanwhile, Ji Meng walked into the tent as he cupped his fist and said, "My lord, Young Master Yun said since the City Lord of Shuichang is Prince Qin Yang's man, he would like the army to stop for a while so I can ask for some provisions and fodder together with the student army."

"Ask for provisions and fodder?" Chen Dasheng did not understand. "Do we not have enough?" He had not been informed about Yunxiao's plunder of Yangpu's City Lord Mansion.

Ji Meng gave him a rare smile. "It means borrowing some money from Prince Qin Yang's man to aid our cause."

By now everyone understood what Yunxiao wanted, and Chen Lin said angrily, "We are a regular army of the state, not some robbers! How can we..."

Chen Dasheng suddenly stopped him with a gesture. After pondering for a brief moment, he said, "The princes are fighting each other now, so it is good to weaken the enemy and strengthen ourselves. I'll give you enough time for an incense stick to burn. Be quick about it!"

Then, he gave out an order, "The army will rest for the time for an incense stick to burn outside the city!"

Ji Meng laughed. "We don't need that long. We'll be back within fifteen minutes!" When he had finished, he lightly kicked at the floor and leaped into the air.

Both Chen Lin and Han Qianfang were speechless. They thought their commander-in-chief had pampered Yunxiao too much, allowing him to carry out such an illegal deed. It would have been unthinkable in the past.

Soon, the great army of eight hundred thousand troops halted outside the city while Ji Meng rushed into the city with the two thousand student troops. At the sight of such a mighty force, the soldiers guarding the gate did not dare to stop them.

The two thousand students were well-disciplined. After entering the city, they ran straight toward the City Lord Mansion without causing any trouble. What surprised them was that the City Lord, Zhuo Hongguang, was marrying his twenty-seventh concubine today. The mansion was packed with people who came to offer their congratulations with handsome gifts while the bridegroom, clad in a bright red gown, was going through the ceremony with his fourteen-year-old bride.

...

A servant, sweating all over, trotted into the hall and whispered into Zhuo Hongguang's ear, "Something is not right, my lord! There is an army outside the mansion!"

Zhuo Hongguang was taken aback. "An army? Could it be some general comes here to offer me his congratulations? But, I don't remember any army being stationed nearby."

Even as his mind was filled with questions, Ji Meng's voice came into the hall. "We are the Eastern Expedition Army, and we come here to borrow some provisions and fodder. Please carry on and pay us no mind, my lord. We will leave as soon as we have taken whatever we need."

Before very long, all two thousand students barged into the mansion, and about a dozen of them came to the hall where the ceremony was being held, taking away all the gifts in the face of the people who came to offer congratulations.

By the time Zhuo Hongguang finally realized what was going on, the student troops were already prepared to leave with happy faces. He instantly flew into a rage, but when he was about to order an attack, Ji Meng swung his sword, causing the tallest building in the City Lord Mansion, a moon-gazing tower, to collapse with a boom.

A tower was destroyed with just a sword strike!

That frightened everyone and froze them to the spot. The strongest commander in the city was just a nine-stars Great Martial Master, who had hidden somewhere as soon as he saw what happened to the tower. And none among the rest of the people dared to make a sound as they watched the two thousand student troops leave with all the loot.

As he had said, Ji Meng was back with everyone in less than the time for an incense stick to burn. With a big smile on his face, he came alone to the commander's tent and said, "We can continue our march now, my lord!"

"By that look on your face, you should have gotten quite a handsome gift, right? How many gold coins did you find?" Chen Dasheng asked.

"Although Shuichang is not as prosperous as Yangpu, it is still one of the main cities of Tianshui," said Han Qianfang with a faint smile. "I guess you have at least found hundreds of thousands of gold coins, even millions."

Chen Lin was shocked. "Millions? So much!" He looked regretful as he said, "I should have gone with you!"

Ji Meng smiled happily and said, "Not much, less than a tenth of what we got from Yangpu."

"Fu*k! You robbed Yangpu as well!" Chen Dasheng's eyes grew wide. "No wonder you seem so experienced in this. How much exactly did you get from here?"

Ji Meng counted on his fingers and thought for a moment, then said, "We haven't counted them carefully. There are only about thirty million gold coins, and the other treasures are probably worth about one to two hundred million gold coins."

"What? Thirty million gold coins? Treasures worth about one to two hundred million gold coins!" Han Qianfang bit his tongue as he said that, and then he cried out in pain.

Chen Dasheng's eyes grew so wide that the eyeballs seemed about to almost pop out of the sockets. "The state's annual military expenditure is only one billion gold coins! How could a city have so much money?"

Chen Lin almost went crazy as he asked fiercely, "Did you just say that this is less than a tenth of what you got from Yangpu?"

As Xiao Qingwang and Luo Yunshang did not attach great importance to money, they just smiled and remained silent after a moment of shock.

"Let's turn the army around, my lord! Let's visit Yangpu again!" cried Han Qianfang.

Chen Dasheng stood transfixed. A moment later, he lifted the tent flap and looked out at the two thousand students; each of them beaming with joy and excitement, and their faces covered with happy smiles.

Ji Meng smiled. "I need to leave now and report back to Young Master Yun." He leaped into the air and fell onto Yunxiao's chariot in the distance, then walked into the tent.

“Dad!” Chen Lin wailed. “I’ve never seen so many gold coins in my life! We are going to fight the same war and this is his first time, yet when we return, he is likely to become the richest man in the whole state! Why are we still so poor after warring for so many years?”

“He’s right, my lord!” Han Qianfang’s face was sad as he complained, “I’ve been a general for many years, but apart from the soldiers’ wages, I’ve never seen so much money either. When can I retire as a rich man?”

Frustrated, Chen Dasheng slapped his hand on the table and shouted, “Bring me the map!”

A sergeant immediately took out a map and unfolded it over the table. Chen Lin did not understand the meaning of this. “Dad, why are we looking at the map?”

Chen Dasheng waved and began to study the map carefully. “I wonder how many cities ahead of us are under Prince Qin Yang’s faction...one, two, three, four...”

Looking at him counting the cities, Chen Lin and Han Qianfang felt their heads reel. But very soon, they got excited too and seemed to see gold coins flying in their eyes.

“Only five?” Chen Dasheng was not happy. “That’s not enough!” He paced back and forth in the tent, then slapped on the table again and said, “If we make a detour and arrive two days late, we can pass by three more cities. I’m sure Li Changfeng can wait two more days!”

“Great! We agree!” Han Qianfang and Chen Lin stood up and said excitedly.

Soon, the army of eight hundred thousand soldiers immediately changed its planned course and began to make a detour, visiting one city after another. Whenever they left a city, everyone was smiling happily, with the City Lord alone crying and weeping miserably inside the emptied mansion.

There were thirteen main cities and over thirty smaller cities in Tianshui, and the City Lords were the highest-ranking officials in them. They were almost like local despots, and they could hold their offices for lives and even pass it to their heirs. As a result, in some of the cities with a long history, the City Lords were extremely rich.

Soon, one report after another was sent back to the capital and submitted to the court. The same reports were also being passed into Qin Yang's mansion, because those who were robbed were all his men.

Bam!

Another messenger was killed by Qin Yang with a kick. In a fit of rage, he roared in his mansion, "Xiao Qingwang, Chen Dasheng, we will remain at daggers-drawn to the end of our lives!"

"They robbed another city?" Gao Feng asked calmly behind him.

"It is only with the financial resources provided by these City Lords over the years that I was able to develop my forces to what they are today!" Qin Yang bellowed. "Now, not only are my income sources cut off, but I've also lost the Central Army and the Golden Lion Army! I've lost all my edges almost overnight! How can there be such a ridiculous thing!"

Gao Feng had the same feeling that things had changed too quickly in recent days. With a cold, gloomy face, he said, "It seems that Li Yi is right about that Li Yunxiao. He's truly a monster! Since he suddenly showed his power and joined Qin Yue, Your Highness's forces have begun to break apart, and those men have begun to submit to Qin Yue."

Qin Yang's eyes burned with rage as he said, "That Li Yunxiao really deserves to be killed! Now, even Li Yi is missing, and we've no idea whether he's still alive or not! And a few days ago, I was told that sly old fox Lan Hong has chosen a side—he sent the bitch Lady Xiang a birthday gift worth tens of millions of gold coins! One by one, they have all left me! Did everyone lose hope in me?"

There was a look of determination in Gao Feng's eyes as he said in a deep voice, "Don't panic, Your Highness! We still have the strongest trump card, and when we reveal it, there is nothing Qin Yue can do to change the situation, even if the whole world is on his side!"

Only then did Qin Yang calm down slightly. His eyes flashed fiercely as he said to Gao Feng, "Yes! That is my strongest trump card and the only trump card! Commander Gao, you are my most trusted confidant, so you must do it well for me! When I ascend the throne, you will be placed in a lofty position, second only to me!"

Gao Feng bowed and said, "Rest assured, Your Highness, it is almost done. I will speed up and make sure nothing goes wrong!"

"Excellent!"

Qin Yang finally collected back the lofty air of a prince. With a strong killing intent in his eyes, he said coldly, "Just you wait, all of you! One day, I will torture you to death!"

...

After all the detours and marching, the Eastern Expedition Army finally arrived in the city of Anyong eight days later. Kunjin was just a few dozen miles further on.

Anyong was a small city that served only as a buffering hub strategically.

Chapter 97: Doubts

If Baizhan's army were to march west, its first stop would be Anyong. Therefore, almost all the residents in the city had fled with their possessions, leaving behind only an army of five thousand city guards, who spent their days in dread.

So, when the City Lord, Yuan Zijin, got the news that the Eastern Expedition Army was approaching, he quickly brought all his men and waited at the city gate. At the first sight of the army, everyone cheered and applauded while breathing a heavy sigh of relief.

With this army of eight hundred thousand troops, it would be extremely difficult for Baizhan to capture Anyong. And when the troops arrived, all the defenses and the command of the city were handed over to the army, so the City Guards and the City Lord no longer had to bear any responsibility.

When the army reached outside the city, every soldier was in high morale and grinning from ear to ear. This sight struck Yuan Zijin as being very strange. Normally, the faces of soldiers who were about to go to the front lines were grave, but why were these soldiers smiling so happily?

'The Central Army is indeed extraordinary, with its soldiers behaving completely differently from other armies,' the City Lord thought.

Chen Dasheng was in a pleasant mood, as he had made a lot of money along the way. In the later part of their journey, all the officers and soldiers got so addicted to the act that they visited every city they came across, regardless of whether they were part of Qin Yang's faction. Nevertheless, they maintained very strict discipline, as they only went for the City Lord Mansion and left immediately after getting what they wanted, never causing any trouble to the common people.

After glancing at the military deployment order showed to him, Yuan Zijin finally breathed a sigh of relief. "Please follow me into the city!"

The city was empty, with all its people having fled. Although it was still not enough to accommodate an army of eight hundred thousand soldiers, it could fit about four to five hundred thousand men. The rest of the troops would strike camps outside the city.

The high-ranking officers, including Chen Dasheng, took the City Lord Mansion as their temporary quarters. But before they settled in, a meeting was called between all the officers and Yuan Zijin to analyze the current situation.

Yunxiao attended the meeting as well, accompanied by Jia Rong and Ji Meng. It was the first time he walked out of his tent after he was wounded. Although he was not brimming with energy, he had a healthy color on his face, and it seemed that his injuries were completely healed.

The eyelids of Chen Dasheng and several others twitched as they were shocked once again. 'A nine-stars warrior!'

But, when they thought of the man behind him, they quickly came back to their senses. With such a mighty expert guiding him, it was not something strange for Yunxiao to break through so fast.

“Are you well, Yunxiao?” Yunshang was the first to stand up and ask with a look of concern on her face. “Go back and continue to regulate your breath if you haven’t fully recovered. There’s nothing you can help with here anyway.”

There was a funny look in the eyes of Xiao Qingwang and a few others as they smiled and remained silent.

Yunxiao was taken aback, and then he laughed. “As the chief logistics officer and the commander of the student army, how could I not attend the meeting? Although I have not fully recovered, I’m not far from that.”

Yunshang patted him kindly on the shoulder and said in a soft voice, “Don’t work too hard. Your health matters the most.”

Her thinking was simple, that since Yunxiao was that man’s disciple, she would do her best to protect and care for him while that man was away. But, her words made Yunxiao break out in a cold sweat and be at a complete loss. He stared in horror at her and thought, ‘Does she know who I am? But that’s impossible! No one would believe me even if I told them myself, let alone pure speculation!’

While everyone tried to cover their grins with their hands, Chen Dasheng called out, “Yunxiao, come over here and join us!”

Relieved, Yunxiao hurried over and sat down beside him.

Yuan Zijin was slightly surprised that such a young boy was also a military officer. But, he knew many nobles in the court were fond of sending their heirs to the army. These young men did not have to do anything in the military, and when they were discharged, they would be conferred with noble titles.

At Chen Dasheng’s signal, the City Lord began to explain the current situation.

“The army of Baizhan has surrounded and trapped Kunjin for twenty-seven days, and no news ever came out of the city. Although they have not moved westward, they have occupied three towns ahead of Anyong. I am worried that once Kunjin falls, they will march for Anyong immediately.”

“The towns are Fengshan, Feifeng, and Yangsan. The scouts I sent had discovered that each town is stationed with about twenty thousand men. As we can’t break through these three towns, we know nothing about the front. The exact number of soldiers in Baizhan’s army is still unknown, but according to my estimation, they should be numbered at eight hundred thousand.”

Everyone was lost in thoughts after listening to him.

“They haven’t captured the city after trapping it for almost a month, and yet they are still here. It seems to me that they intend to starve the men inside,” said Chen Dasheng. “But, here’s the biggest question: we have been on our way for half a month, and they should have already received the news and taken countermeasures. But so far, there has been no action at all. In other words, they are not afraid that we will attack them, or even wipe them out together with our men in the city.”

Han Qianfang said, “Yes, this doesn’t make sense at all. If I were the enemy general and received the news that an army is marching at me, under the condition that I only have an army of eight hundred thousand soldiers, I would have ordered an attack of the city and tried my best to capture it as soon as possible, or marched west to occupy a favorable terrain. Or maybe, I would fall back to Baizhan. But so far, we see none of that...They just sit there and wait. This is really strange.”

“Tell us what you think, Huang Hong.” Chen Dasheng pointed the man out.

Everyone turned and rested their eyes on the commander while Huang Hong was slightly nervous. After all, he was still in a rather embarrassing position now. But, he managed to recover himself quickly. “I’ve secretly observed the army of Baizhan when they marched through Whitehead. Yes, they numbered about eight hundred thousand, and no more than a million. As for whether they sent more troops after the Golden Lion Army fell back, I do not know. But, when we were retreating, they did not occupy the town. They just marched through it. So, I guess they don’t have any reinforcements, and there should be about eight hundred thousand men trapping Kunjin right now.”

Chen Dasheng nodded, approving of Huang Hong’s wits. “If they really have only eight hundred thousand men, then what is their intention?” he said, puzzled. “Do they really just want to lure us out here, so Prince Qin Yang can do whatever he has planned in the capital?”

Xiao Qingwang said, “It might have been possible a month ago, but Qin Yang’s forces have basically fallen apart now. Even if he makes some big moves in the capital, he would not be able to change anything. Therefore, this reason doesn’t hold water.”

“It’s really puzzling. It seems that we need to send someone to break through the blockade of the three towns and find out the situation over there.”

Chen Dasheng’s eyes moved from one person to another, then an idea suddenly came to him. “What’s your views on this, Yunxiao?” He no longer dared to underestimate this young junior.

Yunxiao smiled. “I know nothing about marching and warring, but I felt strange about the three options Uncle Han said our enemy has. Maybe they are just waiting for us to arrive so that they can destroy us together with the men in the city?”

All the generals had strange expressions on their faces, and some almost burst into laughter. Chen Dasheng shook his head and said with a wry smile, “It seems you really don’t know about wars. They are trapped between us now, and their number is smaller than ours. Even if they are greater in number, they would not be able to run when they are being attacked from both ends. They would only do what you said if their troops are a few times more than us.”

Yunxiao frowned and said coldly, “My lord has only taken the quantity into consideration, but what about the quality? What if they are eight hundred thousand warriors?”

“Eight hundred thousand warriors? I can’t believe you can come out with that!” Han Qianfang laughed. “Your two thousand student troops are a rare exception in the military, if truth be told.”

Xiao Qingwang arched an eyebrow and said, “What he means is that we need to consider high-end warriors.”

Yunxiao gave him a look and chuckled. “Exactly. In the eyes of common people, an army of eight hundred thousand soldiers is an extremely powerful force, but not in the eyes of martial warriors. Xiao Qingwang alone can already fight a hundred thousand soldiers like these. If there is a Martial Grandmaster in the enemy army, he alone can destroy an army of a million troops.”

Everyone fell silent. Although they did not think the enemy had a Martial Grandmaster, the situation would become difficult to handle if there were just a few Martial Kings or Martial Lords.

“This is just one of the possible situations, and in fact, it is not likely to happen,” Yunxiao laughed. “Because if it is true, they would have long captured Kunjin. Actually, I think there is only one possibility, that is, Baizhan’s purpose is not to attack the city or occupy a territory.”

That gave Chen Dasheng a pause. His eyes lit up in a moment later, and he cried out, “What Yunxiao said is reasonable! Baizhan has sent such a great army into our state, but what is their ultimate purpose if they are not here to attack a city or occupy a territory? The most important thing for us now is to find out their ultimate purpose! Is Ding Bai here?”

“Yes, my lord!” A military officer quickly stepped out of the ranks.

“Pick three hundred best soldiers and find me all the intelligence about Baizhan. Report back at once when you get anything!”

“Understood!” Ding Bai took the order and left immediately.

Chen Dasheng gave another order, “Yuan Zijin, you will lead the City Guards to take care of food, accommodation, and logistics for the army. The rest of you will return to your temporary quarters and wait for orders. We will discuss again when Ding Bai brings back any intelligence.”

After the meeting, everyone found a place to stay at temporarily. With the city emptied, they could choose any houses they liked. Yunxiao had already asked Ji Meng to occupy a mansion of a big family, which was large enough for the few of them.

When he arrived at the mansion, Yunxiao felt somewhat awkward. He turned and said, “I’ve arrived, Teacher Luo. You don’t have to send me into the mansion.”

Yunshang studied the mansion as she pushed a lock of hair away from her cheek and said lightly, “I haven’t found a place to stay. I think I’ll just stay here, since this place is large enough.”

“Ah?” Yunxiao was taken aback. “I don’t think this is a good idea...The mansion is fully occupied, not enough for...”

At that moment, Meng Wu walked out of the mansion and heard their conversation. "It's alright, Young Master Yun! Teacher Luo can stay with me," she said happily. "I have a very large bed in my room."

Yunxiao gave her a fierce look and said angrily, "Oh, you have a large bed? Do you want me to squeeze in with you? It happens that I don't have a place to stay either!"

Chapter 98: Nine Yang Sacred Technique

Meng Wu blushed and stomped away angrily.

Yunshang's eyes grew cold and her face darkened as she said in a cold voice, "You look like you don't welcome me here?"

"No, I'm just worried that the place is too simple and crude, so Teacher will find it difficult to rest. Please come in!" Yunxiao quickly gestured her in, and then ordered someone to prepare a room for her.

Yunshang nodded slightly and said, "That's better! Come with me, I've something to ask you."

She walked straight into a room, which happened to be the one Yunxiao had chosen for himself, and closed the door. Then, as if she felt that it was not secure enough, she performed an incantation gesture with her fingers and threw several seals at every corner.

Yunxiao knew those were eavesdropping prevention seals. With them in place, the whole room was now a completely isolated space, and no one would hear anything from outside. He was nervous when he saw the way Yunshang was looking at him, and he thought, 'What is she trying to do? Don't tell me she is going to rape me?'

Looking at her beautiful face and unique charisma, as well as smelling the faint scent of a maiden wafting out of her body, Yunshang felt his heart flutter. 'Well, what can I do? With such a big gap between our cultivation base, all my resistance will be futile. If this is what she wants, I'll just give it to her then.'

He closed his eyes and waited excitedly for the happy moment.

“Why? Too shy to look at me?” Yunshang chuckled. She had a very attractive smile. It was a pity that she did not smile often.

Yunxiao took a deep breath and opened his eyes. “No, I was just nervous. It seems that Teacher Luo is well-prepared mentally.”

“Yes,” she said in a soft voice, “I thought for a long time before I decided to come to you.”

Yunxiao flexed his arms nervously as he rubbed his palms against each other, then smiled and said, “Hah, I forget that you are a teacher! I’m too nervous. Well, let’s waste no more time.”

He began to take off his clothes.

That gave Yunshang a pause. “Yo-you... what are you doing?” she asked blankly.

“Taking off my clothes. How are we going to do it without taking off...Oh!” Yunxiao slapped himself on the forehead. “I totally forget it. As a gentleman, I should remove the clothes for you first.”

With his clothes hanging loosely on him, he walked over to remove Yunshang’s belt. But all of a sudden, he sensed a burst of murderous air that was stronger than Ramayana!

He trembled as a chill ran from the bottom of his feet up into his head, and his hand stopped before Yunshang’s belt and could no longer move further, as if he was completely frozen. Meanwhile, a towering murderous air poured directly into the depths of his mind, and he felt like he was plunging into an abyss.

‘What’s going on? Does Teacher Luo want to play it rough?’

Bam!

A huge axe appeared in the air, shining brilliantly and filling the entire room.

'What!' Yunxiao was shocked. 'Isn't this too over the top? Who can endure it?'

Boom!

Even as his head was filled with anxiety and doubts, the axe came crashing down like a mountain falling from the sky. Fortunately, it came with its back facing down. Yunxiao threw both hands up to stop it, but in the next instant, he was slammed into the ground.

When the dust settled, a dark, bottomless pit was opened up in the center of the room while Yunxiao was nowhere to be found.

Yunshang's face was livid and she was trembling with rage as she bellowed into the pit, "Li Yunxiao, had it not been because you are his disciple, I would have killed you today!"

She reached out a hand, and the huge axe in the air immediately shrank and flew into her palm. Then, she spun and left the room.

Covered in blood, Yunxiao lay at the bottom of the deep pit while muttering to himself with a bitter smile, "I thought she wants to play it rough? What does she really want? Why can't she just tell me?"

Then it suddenly dawned on him. "His disciple? His disciple... Oh, I see! She didn't find out who I am. Instead, she thought I am Gu Feiyang's disciple! No wonder!"

Ji Meng and the others rushed over quickly. When they saw Yunshang, whose face was so dark and seemed to be covered with a layer of frost, walking out of the room, they trembled and felt a chill run down their backs. Then, they jumped into the pit one by one to bring Yunxiao out.

With a bemused expression, Meng Bai asked, "Why is Teacher Luo so angry, Master?"

Chen Zhen's eyes lit up as he said in shock, "Young Master Yun, why are your clothes untied? Oh, you can't be thinking of..."

He covered his mouth with a hand, his eyes widened as he stared at Yunxiao in disbelief. Then, he held out a thumb and said admiringly, "Amazing, you're really amazing! Although your recent performance had been extraordinary and shocking, I've never admired you as much as today!"

Han Bai's forehead was covered in beads of cold sweat. "Young Master Yun, I know it is a tough and boring job to lead an army to war, but you still have Meng Wu. You don't have to go so far as to..."

He shuddered suddenly, as if Luo Yunshan was staring at him from behind, and he did not dare to finish what he wanted to say.

Yunxiao only smiled wryly.

"What are you talking about?" Meng Bai blinked and asked with an innocent face. "Why did you mention my sister?"

Meng Wu was just outside and was about to jump into the pit when she heard their conversation. She felt her face burn with shame, and she quickly turned and ran away.

...

In the next few days, Anyong was rather calm and quiet.

Luo Yunshang did not leave, but stayed in the mansion. Too embarrassed to see her again, Yunxiao gave a random excuse and shut himself in his room after he was brought out of the pit.

His body was in a ruinous state after he had stimulated his potential with the needles outside Yangpu, and he had been using all kinds of medicinal pills to stabilize his condition. Had it not been because he had cultivated the Tyrant Body Tempering Technique, he would be dead with his body blown apart.

Now, although he was seriously wounded again by Yunshang, his Glazed Body had absorbed all the pure Yang energy that came with the attack. After slowly digesting the energy, it actually provided much help in the healing of his previous injury.

“Nine Yang Sacred Technique is indeed magical, and is truly the treasure of Shenxiao Temple! No wonder Chen Dasheng and Xiao Qingwang have recovered better than I expected. Hehe, I wonder who will get the big prize in the end?”

Qu Hongyan had once told him the secret of the technique, that was, when a girl cultivating the technique had sexual intercourse with a man for the first time, she would pass the trace of purest energy in her to the man, and then she would lose her Nine Yang True Body.

It brought tremendous benefits to both sides. After receiving the trace of purest energy, the man’s cultivation base would increase significantly, and after the girl lost her Nine Yang True Body, a trace of pure Yin energy would be born in her, which would then soften her pure Yang body. With Yin and Yang reaching a balanced state, her cultivation base would improve by leaps and bounds as well.

That was why the technique was a rare treasure. Unfortunately, girls with pure Yang bodies were very rare, and as a result, only a few had cultivated the technique in the past thousands of years. However, those who did had all become peerless experts and held sway over the world.

“I didn’t expect this Glazed Body to be so strong...It has developed resistance against Thousand Birds pills, which even a Martial King finds hard to endure. Now it is basically ineffective for me. What should I do? Do I really need to begin refining some Nine Orifices pills? But, can I endure such powerful medicine? Moreover, I have to become a third-tier alchemist to refine it, though it is still very difficult...”

“Anyway, I think I better start gathering the ingredients. The five main ingredients are Scaled Stick, Skywolf Rock Orchid, Pure Sacred Crystal, Darkthunder Blood, and Phantomjade Fruit. I only have the Scaled Stick now, and I need to find the other four, which are all very expensive. Although I’ve looted so many City Lord Mansions, I didn’t even see one...Most probably, I can’t find any of them in the whole Tianshui.”

He pondered for a moment, then said decisively, “When I am done here and have helped Qin Yue ascend the throne, I’ll go to the Sea of Soul Formation. Even if I don’t reveal my identity, I should be able to improve my cultivation base there as quickly as possible.”

After making up his mind, he began to meditate.

His injury had begun to gradually heal after his body absorbed Yunshang's pure Yang energy. As he entered the meditative state, his flesh slowly turned transparent, revealing his Glazed Body.

In the Divine Realm Tablet, his soul-form was constantly tempering his soul power while his true-self was repeatedly absorbing natural Primordial Qi in the room to temper his dantian and meridians.

As he was cultivating his body, Qi, and soul at the same time, the amount of energy required for Yunxiao to break through to the next level was enormous. The energy that could allow other warriors to advance a few stars was not even enough to make him advance by a star. But, this also made him almost invincible among the warriors of the same level.

All of a sudden, his soul-form in the tablet felt a rush of anxiety and restlessness, which woke him from his meditation. He had never experienced such a feeling before. Abruptly, he threw his head back in shock and looked at the sky.

The golden texts of the Great Expansion Divine Technique that filled the sky vanished in an instant; the sky was cloudless, bright and clear. Suddenly, a pillar of flame towered into the sky in the southern part of the Divine Realm Tablet and began to burn like clouds.

"What's going on?"

It was the first time he saw such a strange phenomenon in the Divine Realm Tablet. However, his weak soul power had restricted him from exploring further, so he could only watch as the flame seemed to transform into a golden phoenix and dance gracefully in the sky, before slowly fading away.

"A True Spirited Fire Phoenix!"

Yunxiao was utterly shocked. As he watched the flame gradually vanish, he murmured with a serious expression, "Is there a True Spirited Fire Phoenix in this Divine Realm Tablet? But, how is that possible? The phoenix is a divine being between heaven and earth, and I had never seen it even in my previous life!"

As he was distracted, he could no longer calm down. He flicked open his eyes and was lost in thoughts in the room.

“No, that should be the phantom of a Fire Phoenix. In the legends, all True Spirits can travel through the void, so how can it be trapped in a mystic artifact? But... why did the phenomenon appear now?”

He thought for a long time with no conclusion.

Suddenly, he heard Ji Meng’s voice coming from the door, “Young Master Yun, the commander-in-chief has ordered all generals and military officers to attend a meeting in the City Lord Mansion at once.”

Yunxiao sighed. “Got it!”

He put all the questions aside as he stood up and went to the City Lord Mansion.

Chapter 99: Strange Phenomenon

The atmosphere in the City Lord Mansion was somewhat somber, and everyone inside was grim-faced and silent.

Yunxiao came slightly late, so he asked with a frown, “What happened?”

Chen Dasheng gave him a look and said in a heavy voice, “We’ve sent five batches of scouts, but all of them vanished quietly! A total of one thousand and five hundred men each were equipped with a cloud-piercing arrow, which they could release if they come across any danger, and the last two batches set out almost at the same time. But, they are all gone!”

Yunxiao was shocked. “Do you mean every batch of scouts was killed in an instant, so they couldn’t release the cloud-piercing arrows?”

With a puzzled look on his face, Chen Lin explained, "It seems that way, but in fact, it's not that simple. Each time we sent three hundred scouts, they were divided into many small teams of five to six men, and each team acted separately. It is impossible for someone to kill them all at once without alerting others."

All the officers looked distressed and confused.

A hint of irritation crept into Chen Dasheng's voice as he said, "There has been no news at all! After all these years, this is the first time I have encountered a situation like this!"

Yunxiao's eyes flickered as he walked to a chair and sat down. "It seems that the situation is likely to be as I mentioned earlier. They have no fear of us and are actually waiting for our arrival!"

Chen Dasheng's pupils constricted as he said in horror, "You mean they have deployed many experts in the three towns?"

"Not only experts," said Yunxiao calmly, "but there must be a formation that covers a huge area. I suspect that all the three towns are under the formation's coverage, and it explains why the none of the one thousand and five hundred men who entered sent out a signal."

"A formation!"

Everyone present was taken aback, and they fixed their eyes on Jia Rong in horror one after another. In their minds, only alchemists could have constructed something so magical as a formation. Most people only knew that he was a second-tier alchemist following the army, and had no idea about Yunxiao.

After such an analysis, Yunxiao and several others, who had been dispensable, became even more important.

"What should we do, then?" asked Chen Dasheng, his face grim.

Suddenly, a voice came from outside the door, "My lord, there is a strange phenomenon in the southern sky!"

“A strange phenomenon?”

That gave everyone a pause and reminded Yunxiao something. He lurched to his feet and bolted out of the door.

As soon as he was out of the mansion, he saw streams of flaming clouds hanging over the southern sky, within which, a golden light flashed and flickered. Suddenly, they transformed into a fire phoenix and danced gracefully in the sky, before plunging down from the clouds and vanishing from the sky.

It was exactly the same as the phenomenon he saw in the Divine Realm Tablet!

Astounded, Yunxiao asked loudly, “Lord Zijin, what is the place the Fire Phoenix fell just now in?”

Yuan Zijin was stunned by the phenomenon as well. When he heard someone shout his name, he thought for a while and then said, “The town of Feifeng. All three towns are located under Mount Phoenix. Legend has it that there are phoenixes in that mountain, but I don’t know if it is actually true!”

“Mount Phoenix?” Yunxiao’s pupils constricted and his face grew solemn. “That explains it!”

“What is it, Yunxiao?” asked Chen Dasheng.

“Let’s talk inside.” Yunxiao waved as he turned around and walked toward the City Lord Mansion. Soon, everyone sat down according to their ranks and then turned their eyes on him.

“I finally know what is going on. The strange phenomenon in the sky just now is actually the sign of a precious treasure about to be born, which is certainly related to the phoenix. Baizhan’s operation this time is not necessary to invade Tianshui. I think their target should be this treasure.”

Xiao Qingwang’s pupils constricted slightly. “A treasure that can trigger a strange phenomenon...I’ve only heard of such things in the legends, but I didn’t think they are real! Since it is a treasure born in Tianshui, we can never let it fall into the hands of Baizhan.”

“Yes!” Chen Dasheng agreed. “The fact that they sent an army of eight hundred thousand soldiers as a cover-up tells us that the treasure must be an extraordinary one! We can’t just sit here and wait any longer. We need to send the army to attack the towns! I don’t believe a formation can trap an army of eight hundred thousand soldiers!”

Yunxiao did not express his opinion, but he thought in his head, ‘I’ve even seen a formation that can trap eight billion men, not to mention one that can trap eight hundred thousand. And these formations will keep killing anyone who runs into them until they are destroyed.’ But, Baizhan would not have the strength to construct such a powerful formation. He considered a moment, and then said, “I think we need to handle this matter with great care. Since they dare to do it so blatantly, they must have something they can rely on. I think we better investigate the actual situation there first.”

“Investigate?” Chen Dasheng’s eyes grew wide, and he said with a wry smile, “How are we going to investigate when all our best scouts are gone?”

Yunxiao smiled. “Let me do it.”

“You?” Chen Dasheng fell silent. If truth be told, Yunxiao was the best candidate. But in Chen Dasheng’s mind, his safety was more important than the whole army.

“No!” Luo Yunshang said coldly. “I don’t agree!” For the first time in so many days, she finally spoke.

Yunxiao looked over in astonishment, but when his eyes met the blade-like gaze, he quickly looked away.

“I’ll go with Young Master Yun then. We should be fine,” Xiao Qingwang said while smiling. “I also wish to see with my own eyes the treasure that can trigger a strange phenomenon.”

But, Yunxiao rejected him. “No, you need Teacher Luo’s pure Yang energy to suppress the cold poison in you. You will become a burden if the poison loses control when we are out there. Ji Meng can come with me.”

Luo Yunshang stood up suddenly and bellowed, “Li Yunxiao, are you turning a deaf ear to what I said? We are at war here, and this is no place for you to play the hero!”

Although it was a rebuke, her concern for him was plain to hear. Everyone was silent.

Yunxiao smiled and moved his lips slightly, transmitting his voice directly into her ears. Luo Yunshang’s angry look immediately melted away, replaced by an incredulous expression. “Really?” she asked doubtfully.

Yunxiao nodded with a smile.

Only then did she sit down while frowning, but did not say another word.

The crowd was struck dumb, and everyone was looking at each other, wondering what the two had said in secret and how did they come to terms so quickly.

Chen Dasheng was still worried though. “You’ve really decided to go, Yunxiao?”

“Of course!” Yunxiao laughed. “It is such a rare opportunity. How can I miss it?”

“Since you insist, I’ll not stop you. But remember, safety first!”

“Just wait for my good news here.”

In the blink of an eye, both he and Ji Meng disappeared from the hall. There was deep concern in Luo Yunshang’s eyes as she watched the figure vanish outside the door.

...

They ran at full speed, which was several times faster than the fastest horses. The distance between Mount Phoenix and Anyong was only about one hundred miles, so they already saw the vague shape of Feifeng after an hour and slowed down.

Yunxiao narrowed his eyes and looked up at the sky in the distance. A moment later, beams of divine sense shot crazily out of his body, all heading toward the town.

His divine sense was much stronger than those second-tier alchemists. Soon, they were over the town, but were immediately stopped by a strange force that prevented them from going further.

He gave a cold snort. "Eye technique, Demon Moon!"

His pupils transformed into two blood-red crescents, and before very long, the situation in the town began to emerge in them. There were rows of houses, but they were all deathly still and lifeless. Corpses were scattered in the streets, some belonging to soldiers, and some to common people.

Sure enough, all the scouts were dead in the town, and the local people were completely slaughtered as well. The town was in a ruinous state without a living thing. There was a strange force exuding and spreading out from Mount Phoenix outside the town.

Yunxiao's pupils returned to normal, but his face was slightly flushed, showing that he had exhausted quite a significant amount of soul power.

"How is it, Young Master Yun?" Ji Meng asked.

Yunxiao took a few moments to regulate his breath, then opened his eyes and said calmly, "All dead. There is no one alive in the town."

Ji Meng's eyes flashed with a trace of fury as he said in a grave voice, "Could it be that everyone had entered Mount Phoenix?"

Looking at the strange town ahead, Yunxiao said slowly, "Not necessarily. The situation here is more complicated than I expected. Those people in town all died in a very strange way. We need to be extra careful."

They raised their vigilance to the extreme and began to walk step by step toward the town.

Soon, they seemed to have walked through a layer of rippling force, and they felt as if something had swept past them. They knew they were inside the formation now.

The sight before them was exactly the same as what Yunxiao saw through the eye technique, only more dreadful and startling. Meanwhile, the air was thick with a foul stench. Had it not been because of their strong cultivation base, they would have long vomited. Even so, what they saw still put deep frowns on their faces.

"This is simply a mass grave!" Ji Meng said in a dark, furious voice. "The people of Baizhan are too malicious! How can they kill all the common people who are defenseless!"

As they walked past all the horrifying scenes, Yunxiao's face grew heavy and serious. "They killed common people to prevent the news from leaking. What concerns me the most now is how did these people die? Look at their wounds, those are not the works of humans."

Shocked, Ji Meng studied the corpses. Sure enough, all the wounds were messy, as if these people were snapped and torn by some wild animals. "Could it be..."

Yunxiao halted suddenly as he sensed weak auras coming in their direction from all over the place, growing stronger and greater in number as they approached. His face turned dark as he said coldly, "As I expected, demon beasts!"

Ji Meng glanced around in horror. All of a sudden, a burst of buzzing noises rang out from the surrounding houses as tiny faint light dots appeared out of nowhere. In the blink of an eye, both of them were completely surrounded by these things that looked like fireflies.

Chapter 100: Avici Beetles

Those light dots kept buzzing like bees, but they looked like fireflies with light flashing on their tails. Each of them was large as a fist, and the face was ugly as a housefly.

Ji Meng's hair stood on their ends. He would not be so afraid if he came across one or two such things, as he could just kill them with his sword. But, in just the blink of an eye, there were already thousands of them, which veiled the sky and completely enveloped the whole town.

"What are these things, Young Master Yun? I can't believe each of them is as strong as a warrior!" He felt his flesh creep. From the aura emanated from these thousands of demon beetles, he could tell that each of them was as strong as a warrior of the Origin Realm.

"They are Avici Beetles, a kind of first-tier demon beast that grows on the nutrition from corpses. They are not strong, but they always come in great numbers. It is very easy to breed a swarm of them in a place filled with corpses."

Looking at the beetles that kept popping out of the corpses around them, Yunxiao said in a cold voice, "No wonder they turned this place into such a dead place, so they can breed these beetles...I can see many of them have just hatched, so they are not that strong. But, there are also some old beetles, which are likely as strong as peak-level warriors."

"Even though they are only as strong as warriors, their numbers..."

Yunxiao drew the cold sword of Taiyin and sneered, "Don't worry. These beetles have no intelligence and are not controlled by anyone. They are just ugly and disgusting. And they are easy to kill. Watch me!"

He raised the sword and slashed it down hard, sending a beam of cold energy through the air.

As if they could sense the danger, the beetles buzzed and retreated. However, as there were too many of them, a dozen were cut by the sword energy, frozen into ice cubes in the air before falling and smashing into pieces on the ground.

The attack seemed to have provoked the beetles. One by one, they turned around and swarmed toward the two men angrily.

Ji Meng calmed down slightly, but at the same time, he was smiling wryly in his mind. Yunxiao, too, only had the cultivation base of a warrior, and yet he just killed a dozen demon beasts of the same realm with just one sword strike.

But luckily, he had already gotten used to all the surprises thrown at his face by Yunxiao. So, he gathered himself very quickly and pulled out his soft sword before swinging it fiercely. Peach flowers bloomed wherever his blade went, and with the birth and death of each flower, a beetle was ground to pieces.

“I don’t need protection, so you just kill as many beetles as you can. Don’t use techniques that are too fancy, and save your strength for later.” Yunxiao said as he kept moving, dodging, and slashing out his sword casually, killing a dozen beetles with every strike.

Ji Meng was shocked, and he understood that at once, changing his attacks to simple cuts and slashes. Immediately, more beetles were killed.

Soon, dead beetles piled up like hills around them, the buzzing noise in the air grew faint, and there were only a few hundred beetles left, who were still attacking them like moths darting into the fire. Suddenly, a dark cloud drifted over the sky, veiling the sunlight and turning the town into night. Yunxiao and Ji Meng looked up and were startled by what they saw.

It was not a dark cloud at all, but four enormous Avici Beetles who had joined with one another, each as large as a millstone. Soon, they swooped down at both of them.

The strength of the four beetles was at the Two Forces Realm, which made them the kings among the rest of the beetles.

The reason Yunxiao and Ji Meng were startled was because of their disgusting appearances that made their stomach tumble and feel like throwing up.

These four kings of the Avici Beetles seemed to have some intelligence and could tell the difference in strength between the two men, as they all went snapping at Yunxiao. Terrified, Ji Meng was about to

rush over when he saw a flash of cold light, and then several ice lotus flowers bloomed one after another in the sky.

“The Song of Blue Lotus Sword!”

A total of seven huge ice lotus flowers appeared in the sky and then fell onto the ground, turning into a work of art that was extremely pleasing to the eye. Meanwhile, all four beetle kings were frozen within four of the lotus flowers.

After turning into a work of art, the disgusting beetle kings no longer looked so nasty, but had a rather unique flavor to them.

Ji Meng’s eyes lit up, as if he had a sudden enlightenment. He slashed out his sword like Yunxiao, and with that, seven huge peach flowers appeared in a row over the sky. Then, with the blowing of the wind, the petals broke into pieces, falling like snowflakes and sweeping toward the remaining beetles.

‘The fallen petals are not heartless things. Although turned to mud, they would nurture flowers next spring...’

Bits of broken petals blotted the sky as they darted through the air like specks of gold, piercing through the remaining hundreds of beetles that were still in the air and throwing them to the ground.

Yunxiao watched with a smile, and then he said approvingly, “Not bad! Your sword intent is much better than before. I bet you will make a breakthrough soon.”

Indeed, Ji Meng had an enlightenment, but it was plain that this was not a place he could stop and meditate, causing him to sigh.

All the dead beetles around them and the green fluid that covered the ground made them sick and queasy, so they quickly left the town, running toward Mount Phoenix.

...

In front of a huge cliff wall in Mount Phoenix, a group of people was focusing on the changes of a pattern on the wall. It was a flashing six-pointed star in a circle, with eight straight lines of unknown tiny characters crawling out of it, and a smaller pattern of a fire phoenix dancing inside the star.

A red-haired middle-aged man was controlling the changes of the pattern with a serious expression. He looked very labored and confused, and would ponder for a long time before throwing out each incantation seal. Most of the unknown characters on the pattern already shone with silver light, and only a few were still dark gray.

Suddenly, the expression of a man riding on a lion changed. He took out a jade pendant from his pocket and found it broken to pieces. His eyes narrowed, and he clenched his palm into a fist, crushing the pendant into powder.

“What’s wrong, Pinghong?” asked an old man, his eyes flickering.

The man riding on the lion said faintly, “Someone killed the four Avici Beetles I placed in Feifeng.”

“Did someone finally break in?” the old man said in a cold voice.

“Hehe...Senior Brother Xu, your beetles are just some rubbish at the Two Forces Realm. I thought it’s normal for someone to kill them?” said a seductive woman, whose forehead leaned against the shoulder of a man like a gentle, understanding wife.

The old man said in a serious tone, “We can’t be careless. Which one of you will solve it?”

The seductive woman said in a gentle voice, “It’s just some little mice. Let me go with Senior Brother Li.”

Xu Pinghong gave the woman and the man beside her a cold glance. “They killed my beetles, so let me go. I can do it alone.”

As soon as he had finished, he turned and rode the lion down the mountain.

A man who constantly emanated cold air said, "I heard Xiao Qingwang is here as well. If he is one of the people in the town, I fear Junior Brother Xu will not be a match of him."

The old man frowned and considered a moment, then said, "Xiao Qingwang had been wounded by your extreme cold energy for five years. Even if he has recovered, his cultivation base would be greatly reduced, so he is not to be feared. Moreover, Pinghong has a Darkthunder, so he will not be defeated even if he encounters a Martial King. Let's wait and see. I'll send someone again if need be."

The man shrouded in cold air was none other than Yi Xiaoshan, the Martial King from Baizhan. He said respectfully to the old man, "Understood, Uncle-Master!"

The old man's name was Qi Zhenzi, and he was the deputy palace master of the Supreme Palace in the Firecrow Empire.

The seductive woman's name was Sun Xiumei, a fellow disciple and also wife to the man beside her, Li Wenshi. The man who was focusing on solving the formation was Huyan Ming, and another man, who was sitting cross-legged and meditating with closed eyes, was called Song Chengtian. Together with Yi Xiaoshan and Xu Pinghong, they were called the Supreme Six!

With an affectionate smile, Sun Xiumei said, "Senior Brother Yi, you've been in Baizhan for too many years. Come back with us to Supreme Palace when we are done here. Master is missing you a lot."

There was a lonely look on Yi Xiaoshan's face as he sighed and said, "The emperor of Baizhan had done me great kindness in those years, and I need to repay him. Over the last ten years, I've been working very hard to turn Baizhan into an upper-rank vassal state, but my effort was fruitless. The qualifying match, which is held every five years, is coming soon, and this is the biggest chance. I'll have no regrets after the match is over, and then I'll return to the Supreme Palace, cut my ties with all the secular affairs, and focus only on martial arts."

Song Chengtian, who had been meditating, flicked open his eyes and said, "Senior Brother Yi, after you left, I've never found anyone who can be a match for me. Come back, or I'll be very lonely."

"Junior Brother Song, you are already an eight-stars Martial King, and I'm no longer a match for you." Although he answered in a lazy voice, there was not a hint of admitting defeat in his eyes. Instead, they were burning with a fighting spirit.

...

Yunxiao and Ji Meng came to the end of the town, and ahead of them was Mount Phoenix. As they were about to step into the mountain, they felt a faint pressure coming at them, and when they looked up, they saw a middle-aged man riding on a lion waiting quietly at the foot of the mountain.

Xu Pinghong seemed impatient with the wait, and he said lazily, "I thought some big mice had broken in, but it turns out only a two-stars Martial Lord and a nine-stars warrior." He scoffed disdainfully, "Rubbish!"

Yunxiao smiled faintly. "You don't have to tell us your name. We are not interested."

"You have a glib tongue, boy! Well, I'll send you to hell now and then use your corpses to breed two more Avici Beetles."

There was a flicker of anger in Xu Pinghong's eyes, but it was quickly replaced by a killing intent. Without saying another word, he leaped into the air and threw out a punch at Ji Meng. He planned to kill the Martial Lord first, because the warrior was too weak for him to consider a threat.

Yunxiao did not move, but stared at the lion. "A Darkthunder?" He laughed. "Oh well, just when I was wondering where do I find some Darkthunder Blood, the heavens immediately send me a Darkthunder beast. Ji Meng, hold that guy and let me deal with the demon beast."

Xu Pinghong was shocked when Yunxiao called out the name of his mount, but then he broke into laughter immediately when he heard the boy say he would deal with the demon beast.