

### Three Realms 381

#### Chapter 381: The Top Geniuses Convene

A tall, strong, and bald young man sat crossed legged in the center of a spacious residence wearing golden colored armor. His features were clearly defined, as if having been chiseled out by blades and axes to the latest detail. He gave others a strong feeling of awe when they looked upon him, and had a naturally imposing aura without exerting himself to any effort.

His name was Lei Gangyang, and he was the most accomplished of the younger generation in the Purple Sun Sect.

Even Long Juxue, who had an innate constitution, didn't dare put herself higher than Lei Gangyang's at the moment. The strength of his aura was thus apparent.

She and Ceng Shi were both standing on his left side. Another three youngsters were standing on his right side. Judging from their postures, they had no qualms about Lei Gangyang's role as the leader of the younger generation in the sect.

These six were ranked in the top six of the Purple Sun Sect.

Therefore, it had been Lei Gangyang's right without a doubt, to call for this meeting this time.

Representatives from the other three sects were all present, with the exception of Tang Hong,. However, one could see that the those from the Precious Tree Sect were all maintaining a distance between themselves and weren't standing close to each other. Just a simple stance was enough to tell that the three from this sect didn't have intentions of sticking together, and had no intention to select one of their companions as a leader.

Lei Gangyang's quick and forceful gaze swept over the Precious Tree Sect side and a hint of a smile leaked out from the corners of his lips. He was obviously happy to see such internal strife break out amongst the Precious Tree sect.

The two girls and one guy from the Flowing Wind Sect was arranged around one girl with an indifferent demeanor and pretty features.

There were also three from the Myriad Spirit Sect who were clustered around a strong young man as their leader. His name was Luo Xi, and he was a martial dao genius of the Myriad Spirit Sect. His ranking in the sky quadrant was now second to only Lei Gangyang.

Even the best amongst the other two sects couldn't challenge the position of number two.

Lei Gangyang's cold eyes suddenly glared as he looked around, his stern voice rang out shortly afterwards.

"Why is there only 15?"

His voice was neither sharp nor low, but those faintly spoken words had the aura of striking lightning, making listeners' blood boil and roil.

Iron Dazhi on the Precious Tree Sect side had an odd smile at the corners of his lips. “Tang Hong from my sect has quite a bearing about him. Perhaps Daoist Lei’s message glyph may not have been enough to spur him to action.”

Traces of disdain appeared in both of the other Precious Tree Sect members’ faces after they heard this. Although they didn’t look Tang Hong in a favorable light, they wouldn’t strike someone of their own sect like Iron Dazhi had done.

Iron Dazhi’s heart was filled with jealousy after he failed to recruit Tang Hong that day. He naturally wouldn’t pass up this opportunity to kick Tang Hong when he was down.

“Tang Hong?” Lei Gangyang rumbled as Tang Hong’s brash image floated up in his mind. His brow wrinkled. As the first seed of the sky quadrant, this Tang Hong had dared not show him any face when he’d issued an invitation?

An ear piercing round of laughter traveled in from the outside at this moment.

“Haha, my apologies everyone. Nature called just now and I dumped a pile of shit outside. I’m late, sorry I’m late.”

Footsteps thundered forth before these words had finished as Tang Hong came striding in.

Tang Hong’s body was at least a head taller than ordinary folk, and he likely towered even higher than that. He walked with the vigor of a tiger, giving one a very barbaric feeling.

When the geniuses present heard such crass words as “dumped a pile of shit”, a domino effect of frowning was set off across the room. However, one of the Flowing Wind Sect female disciples covered her mouth as she laughed softly, seeming to find Tang Hong’s crass words rather funny.

Iron Dazhi shouted when he saw Tang Hong walk in. “Tang Hong, what are you playing at? Aren’t you quite arrogant, making everyone wait for you huh!”

Tang Hong spread his hands out. “What, do I need your approval before I shit now?”

He sauntered over to the Precious Tree Sect side after speaking and sat down, grinning at the other two. “I haven’t washed my hands since shitting, you don’t mind if I sit here right?”

Of the other two in the sect, a skinny young man in a white shirt frowned slightly, “Would it kill you to speak a few words less?”

Another young man in an almond yellow robe smiled, “Come Tang Hong, sit with me.”

The almond yellow robe youth’s name was Xie Yufan, a genius of the Xie family.

The white shirted, skinny youth was Lian Canghai. In terms of cultivation, he ranked first amongst the four great disciples of the Precious Tree Sect and was solidly in the top four of the quadrant.

Lian Canghai however, was the Iron family’s elder, Iron Long’s, personal disciple. He was a genius whom Iron Long had personally mentored all along the way.

His potential was vastly superior to characters like Iron Dazhi.

Since Lian Canghai was one of the Iron family, it forced Xie Yufan to rope in Tang Hong in order to balance things out. He hoped to make use of Tang Hong's strength to form a power that would be a counterweight to the Lian Canghai and Iron Dazhi alliance.

It was a good thing that although Lian Canghai had a cold and arrogant personality, he didn't consult Iron Dazhi for directions in everything, even though he was Iron Long's personal disciple.

He sometimes even disdained being lumped in with Iron Dazhi.

Therefore, it could be said that out of the four sects, the geniuses of the Precious Tree Sect were the least united and had the most estranged relationships with each other.

Lei Gangyang was a bit displeased that Tang Hong had caused his plans to go awry with his buffoonery.

However, he was the person who'd called for this meeting after all, so he had to maintain a certain composure.

"Everyone, there is only one reason in which why everyone has been gathered here today. What attitude does everyone have towards that secular freak?"

Lei Gangyang spoke faintly as he offered a contribution to start the conversation.

He'd thought that everyone would leap at the chance to share their opinions once the topic was open, but after waiting for a while, the geniuses of the three other sects all maintained remote expressions and didn't speak up.

Iron Dazhi twitched his lips and seemed to want to speak, but also seemed to feel that his identity had not yet reached the point in which he'd be first to speak up and thus managed to curb his impulses.

"What? Is it that no one has any opinions?" Lei Gangyang's tone dropped. "Or do you value your status so much that you're unwilling to be the first to step out and be a villain?"

His gaze swept across the faces of all the other geniuses.

Lian Canghai of the Precious Tree Sect retained the look of cold arrogance on his face, as if a normal expression had never crossed it.

The strong young man, Luo Xi, of the Myriad Spirit Sect looked around with vigorous eyes. Not much of an expression could be gleaned from his face, giving one a feeling of fathomless mysteriousness.

The indifferent, pretty girl from the Flowing Wind Sect was Shi Yunyun. She had the faint smile at the corner of her lips, giving one a feeling as ethereal as the clouds embracing the wind.

These three were the representatives of their sects, but no one dared speak without careful consideration.

A cold voice rang out from behind Lei Gangyang. "That guy puts on airs and looks down with contempt on others, possessing not the slightest bit of respect for the disciples of our sects. His crazed momentum is an even further provocation of us. This ill wind cannot be allowed to flourish and must be suppressed."

That was Long Juxue. She was the first to take a stand and express her opinions.

Since someone had taken the initiative, there would naturally be another who followed her. Iron Dazhi from the Precious Tree Sect side also nodded. "I concur with fairy Long's opinions. This fellow is arrogant and bullying. I've seen it with my own eyes and have felt this deeply."

He'd once attempted to recruit Jiang Chen by offering an invite to him after he'd passed the level five exam in the pills area. However, he had gained nothing but thorough humiliation from the encounter.

Therefore, even though the narrow minded Iron Dazhi didn't know that the secular genius was Jiang Chen, he wanted to thoroughly suppress him regardless.

Lei Gangyang was obviously not that interested in Iron Dazhi's opinions. His gaze once again rested on Lian Canghai, "Canghai, what do you think?"

Since Canghai had been personally called out, he couldn't refrain from responding.

"I have no opinion. All of us top geniuses have an accord that no one has brought forth their full strength thus far. His actions have ruined the agreement between us and is forcing us to change our tempo. This is indeed inappropriate."

Lian Canghai's opinion was met with great approval. Many nodded their head slightly in agreement.

They were the preeminent geniuses and had yet to fully bring their strength to endure or challenge the level four and five missions.

It wasn't that they couldn't handle those missions, but that they felt that it wasn't time to take the risk and call upon their reserves just yet.

Lei Gangyang seemed to be quite satisfied with Lian Canghai's words. He turned to look at Luo Xi, first genius of the Myriad Spirit Sect. "Luo Xi, what are your thoughts?"

"Logically speaking, he has indeed impacted our tempo. But from a personal point of a view, I rather admire him. Looking at this from another perspective, if we were in his shoes, would we have the courage and determination to offend a group of top geniuses with no fear, even with his potential and strength?"

His words made everyone sink into deep contemplation.

Tang Hang laughed heartily. "Well said, I feel that no one here present can measure up to this kind of courage and determination!"

Everyone frowned after his words. They all knew that Tang Hong was biased. His butt was firmly seated in the secular genius' camp, and he was even willing to be the latter's follower.

"Tang Hong, you shut your mouth! Just because you're willing to wallow in degeneration doesn't mean you need to embarrass yourself here." Ceng Shi, disciple of the Purple Sun Sect's Master Shuiyue, shouted coldly.

"Yo! Who's that huh? Aren't you full of it? Are some of you filled with righteous indignation only because you want to help your master regain some face?" Tang Hong jeered.

Ceng Shi and Long Juxue's face both grew cold when they heard this.

Long Juxue in particular had a frosted over expression as she looked at Tang Hong. "Silly brute, you better clean up your mouth, or your tongue will be cut out by someone someday."

This kind of threat was obviously completely useless to Tang Hong. He smiled lazily and stretched. "I'm a man and so I won't argue with a wench." nOv£.10-In

Pretty girl Shi Yunyun spoke up at this time. "Everyone, my Flowing Wind Sect has always remained neutral and have not become embroiled in controversy. We will not protest whatever decision is made here. Daoist Gangyang, since you're the one who called for this meeting, please make a decision."

"Yes, senior brother Gangyang, please give the word." Apart from Long Juxue, those on the Purple Sun Sect spoke almost unanimously.

"Does the Precious Tree Sect and Myriad Spirit Sect support my decision?" Lei Gangyang called out.

Lian Canghai responded coldly, "Just a small matter. You make the decision."

Luo Xi sighed softly. "What else can I say?"

#### Chapter 382: Jiang Chen Barges Into the Meeting

When Lei Gangyang saw no objections, he nodded and proceeded in a stern, weighty tone. "Since this is the case, I advocate making a move to suppress him. From today forth, each day our sects will send forth two people to challenge other candidates until we meet him in battle. Everyone knows what to do when they meet him in battle, correct?"

With the four sects sending out two people each, that would be eight total people everyday. Issuing challenges at this pace every single day meant that there was a high chance that they would meet Jiang Chen in battle.

Perhaps not the first day, but the second... third...

They would meet one day, even if it stretched out as far as the tenth or twentieth day.

Everyone sucked in a breath of cold air when they heard Lei Gangyang's words. He intended to brutally deal the killing blow!

Once again, Long Juxue was the first to step out in support. "I support senior brother Gangyang. That fellow is cocky beyond belief and cannot be allowed to continue like this. The time we come across him him will surely come if we take turns issuing challenges. I, Long Juxue, hereby proclaim that should I meet him in battle, I will strive my utmost to kill him in the ring and not allow him to walk out of it alive!"

"I too am willing to participate!" Ceng Shi stood up to say.

Lei Gangyang smiled faintly, "I'm the one who called for the meeting and naturally can't sit idly by. I started this and therefore will also take a stand. What do the other three sects say?"

There were three willing to step out from the Purple Sun Sect, this meant that the way out for the other three sects was sealed off. My Purple Sun Sect is so proactive, are you going to sit idly by and enjoy the fruits of our labor?

Lian Canghai thought momentarily before raising his hand. "Count me in I guess."

Iron Dazhi also spoke up when he saw Lian Canghai express his views. "Me as well."

Lei Gangyang actually wasn't that pleased to see Iron Dazhi join. After all, he was the dregs of the Precious Tree Sect geniuses. He rather wanted to see Xie Yufan come out.

However, he needed proactive people at the moment. Iron Dazhi fit the bill, and Lei Gangyang wasn't quite in a position to turn him down.

On the Flowing Wind Sect side, Shi Yunyun chuckled. "I will do my best and try since Daoist Gangyang has spoken thus. However, I cannot promise how I'll do."

Lei Gangyang was unhappy about this. You've already thought of the way out before the challenge has even begun, this is obvious non-cooperation.

On the Myriad Spirit Sect side, Luo Xi pointed at two people beside him. "I have no interest in this. Let my two junior brothers participate."

When Lei Gangyang saw that one of them was fobbing him off with an excuse, and the other was just flat out not participating, he was quite ticked off and said coldly, "Is little brother Luo seeking to profit off our labor?"

"Profit off your labor?" Luo Xi smiled faintly. "Elder brother Lei can stop right there. I'd rather like to see where the limits of the secular genius are."

"Humph, his limits end here!"

Although Luo Xi was unwilling to make a move, Lei Gangyang didn't force him. There were plenty willing to take action at the moment, and they were all the top geniuses in the sky quadrant.

Any one of them ought be enough to crush that secular genius.

Tang Hong suddenly started laughing loudly. "Fascinating, how fascinating! Look at all your ugly behaviors. How ludicrous, how hilarious!"

"What a bullshit meeting of the most high. Suppressing all dissidents and thinking only of your own profit. These so-called geniuses are all shit!"

Tang Hong threw his head back in laughter as he walked out the door.

He couldn't hold it in anymore. This so-called meeting was just a bunch of selfish geniuses discussing how to suppress an outsider.

Tang Hong was embarrassed to keep such company.

Lei Gangyang's eyebrows arched when he heard these words and killing intent exploded in his eyes.

"Lian Canghai, is there no one amongst the geniuses of your sect who can subdue that foolish brute?"

Lian Canghai said faintly, "He's always been a loner and does things his own way. I have no relations with him."

"Humph. Since you've said so, if he makes an offense and ends up in my sect's hands one day, don't you go pointing fingers or lecturing me then." Lei Gangyang responded frostily.

"If he gives offense, that's him courting death. What does that have to do with me?" Lian Canghai answered indifferently.

Luo Xi smiled faintly and cupped his hands at everyone. "Folks, you have much to discuss. I am not participating in this and will take my leave now."

"We will be taking our leave as well." Those who hadn't volunteered all excused themselves.

Soon, only the challengers were left on the premises.

Lei Gangyang's gaze swept over everyone's face. "Everyone, since we've decided to make a move, we should not have mercy. Although our challenges will be selected randomly everyday, we will pick him one day. I only hope..."

Lei Gangyang's ears suddenly twitched before he could finish his words and his eyes shot out a beam of light into the air. He shouted, "Who is it!"

"Are you Lei Gangyang?" A nonchalant voice sounded indifferently in the air.

A figure suddenly appeared in the air and sat leisurely on the wall. Its hands were tied around the knees appearing without a care.

"How dare you trespass on my private property?! Get down here to die!"

A cold killing intent shot out of Lei Gangyang's eyes as he waved his large palm. A strong current of qi that seemed like yang energy from the stars themselves charged forth like a dragon.

There were actually traces of electric snakes in this devastatingly masculine blow. It encompassed the dao of thunder within it.

"The Gangyang Thundersnake!" Shu Yunyun exclaimed. "I've heard that Daoist Gangyang possesses the thunder constitution. It looks like the rumors are true!"

When the figure on the wall saw this domineering blow shoot towards him, it smiled faintly and made a grasping motion, as if to catch this blow with its hands.

When Lei Gangyang saw the other was so self-confident, he grinned and laughed coldly coldly.

This kid wants to die alright. Although I've only used fifty to sixty percent of my strength in this blow, it embodies the mighty dao of thunder. Let's wait and see his hand get burned to a crisp when he catches this blow!

"Mm?" This thought had just flashed through Lei Gangyang's mind but his face darkened in the next moment, an incredulous look appearing on it. ~~no~~ ~~over~~ ~~in~~

The other had made a grasping motion, and although his body had swayed slightly, it was as if Lei Gangyang's blow had been swallowed by a formless power when it'd rushed to the other's palm. It was snuffed out like the flame of a candle.

“What?”

Lei Gangyang was stunned. He was very confident in his own strength and looked forward to burning the other’s hand to a crisp with this blow. He hadn’t even imagined that it’d be easily neutralized instead.

The person on the wall was naturally Jiang Chen.

Jiang Chen laughed and spoke indifferently, “Is this the strength of the so-called first genius? It’s only so-so. I’ve heard that all of you are gathered here to take turns in the ring until you meet me in battle?”

“Kid, you’re courting death!”

When had Lei Gangyang lost face in front of his peers? He had indeed underestimated his opponent a bit just now and hadn’t used his full strength, which was why it’d been countered and he’d been mocked instead.

This was an enormous humiliation for Lei Gangyang.

His body flashed as he transformed into a red blur, shooting out like a ball of ferocious flames.

“Watch my blows!”

Jiang Chen raised his arms and shot out two Fire Raven King tail feathers!

“Humph, break!” Lei Gangyang punched out with his left and right hands and swept the two attacks away. The speed of his body didn’t slow down however, and he shot swiftly towards Jiang Chen.

“Kid, you were the one who brought yourself here in search of death, don’t blame me!”

Lei Gangyang leered as his aura billowed once again. He shot upwards and punched out.

Jiang Chen laughed loudly, “Well met!”

Clang

An astonishing blade beam suddenly shot through the heavens as Jiang Chen mustered all the strength in his body. With both hands clasped around the saber, he circulated all his power to chop down viciously.

He hadn’t dodged or evaded, but had met the seventh level spirit realm Lei Gangyang head on!

Of course, Jiang Chen hadn’t acted brashly, but had started making his calculations as soon as Lei Gangyang had made his move. The attacks from the two tail feathers had been a distraction to buy himself some more time to prepare.

The true meaning of the “Vast Ocean Current Splitter” had been incorporated into the blade. Upon meeting a fierce opponent in battle, the potential of the saber had been thoroughly unleashed.

Jiang Chen had been making his preparations all along, deploying the magnetic power to form several invisible force fields, then called upon the power of metal essence and melded it into this stroke.

It could be said that this stroke had completely surpassed the original level of comprehension in the “Vast Ocean Current Splitter” thanks to all sorts of practice and ascension.



The stroke chopped down ferociously, with an unparalleled momentum, at the peak of its power.

Wham!

Lei Gangyang felt his boxing aura suddenly slowed down by a shapeless power.

This slowing decreased his strength to sixty, seventy percent of his original blow.

Jiang Chen's ferocious stroke had also arrived at this moment.

The two great bouts of strength crashed fiercely into each other.

Lei Gangyang was attacking upwards and was in a disadvantageous position to begin with. In addition, with his boxing aura had been reduced to sixty or seventy percent by the shapeless forcefield, not only did he not gain the upper hand when the punch and stroke met, but he was actually momentarily suppressed by that strong blade aura.

The stroke with exceedingly strong piercing powers had actually borne through the clash and was aiming for his vitals!

Lei Gangyang was greatly shocked as his left hand drew out a crescent, protecting his vitals. He hastily backed up and landed on the ground, stumbling a few steps backwards while

Jiang Chen flipped a few times in the air from the power behind the punch. Once again landing on the wall, his chest rose unevenly as he felt his blood frothing.

"Seventh level spirit realm is worthy of its reputation alright." Jiang Chen calmed down his churning blood with several deep breaths, regaining control over himself. He felt some admiration for Lei Gangyang's strength.

Ever since he'd set foot on this path, Jiang Chen had rarely come off worse in an exchange, even when he challenged those stronger than himself.

Today however, he'd used his blade and all his strength to barely manage to dispel one of the other's punches. It looked like geniuses of the seventh level were indeed domineering.

If Jiang Chen was hugely taken aback, then Lei Gangyang was the epitome of shock. He'd never thought that his fierce punch would result in but a draw and wouldn't harm the other at all. Although he'd been attacking upwards and had been in a tough position, this was still hard for him to accept.

If Lei Gangyang was shocked, then Long Juxue and Ceng Shi were also completely shaken. Long Juxue in particular—astonishment shot through her eyes as a hint of fear finally settled in her heart.

Ever since she'd entered the Purple Sun Sect, her cultivation had improved by leaps and bounds as her potential had been tapped to its utmost. After a while, she subconsciously felt that Jiang Chen was destined to roll around and grovel in the mundane world, destined to decadence. As such, she would be able to easily trample him the next time she met him.

It was only at this moment that she clearly realized this had all been just her daydreams.

Chapter 383: Arriving Calmly, Leaving Stylishly

Jiang Chen's arrival this time was only to demonstrate his power, and not to actually harm anyone. After exchanging blows with Lei Gangyang, he laughed coldly and swept his gaze across the faces of those assembled, seeming to want to commit these faces to memory.

"Whichever one of you unafraid of death, come challenge me. I'm waiting for you! Although, let me remind you to be thoroughly prepared to die before entering the ring!"

He laughed loudly and flipped over the wall, vanishing from their line of sight.

His laughter shook the heavens as it transformed into a howl of epic proportions, instantly filling the mountains and plains and carrying throughout the entire sky quadrant.

"What a bunch of trash! I come and go as I will, what can you lot do about it?"

Lei Gangyang was enraged as he dashed out the door. Long Juxue followed in hot pursuit.

However, all was quiet and at peace outside, without the shadow of a single person. As the echoes of his laugh reverberated in the mountain valley, Jiang Chen had vanished without a trace.

Lei Gangyang and Long Juxue looked at each other, reading a stern killing intent in each other's eyes.  
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"That dumb swine is indeed cocky." Lei Gangyang grit his teeth. As the first seed of the sky quadrant, his sense of superiority was very strong.

He'd summoned this meeting to also partially consolidate his position as the first seed and awe the other geniuses.

However, he hadn't thought he'd run into so many obstacles in this meeting.

If Luo Xi and the others had denied him face in not participating in his plan, then the sudden appearance of this secular candidate was a public challenge to his authority and a patent slap to his face!

To trespass onto the residence of another without being invited, that was utter disrespect. Jiang Chen directly appearing on his wall was even more of an absolute challenge.

If Lei Gangyang had been able to forcefully make Jiang Chen stay, then his authority would've greatly increased.

However, both of his moves had been casually dispelled, and the other had been as nonchalant as if nothing had happened. The exchange had seemingly been a draw.

To Lei Gangyang, fighting someone who'd provoked him on his territory to a draw was without a doubt, the biggest disgrace of all. His opponent had even sent out his voice and openly jeered at him after leaving, sending it throughout the entire sky quadrant. This was rubbing salt in his wounds!

To Lei Gangyang, this was an absolute humiliation that would cause his authority to plummet.

"Senior brother Gangyang, now do you know how impudent this dumb swine is?" Long Juxue fanned the flames and asked faintly.

"Junior sister Long, this person is your fated rival. What do you think?"

Lei Gangyang suddenly changed the topic and smiled superciliously, "Don't you think that we've gravely underestimated his strength before?"

Long Juxue could naturally identify the connotations in Lei Gangyang's voice. She said lightly, "Even with all the methods and sinister methods he has, he'll be absolutely crushed when he meets me."

She knew that Lei Gangyang was purposefully testing her, wanting to use these words to sow seeds of doubt in her dao heart. Even though they appeared to be junior and senior on the surface, they were all competition in the end.

Lei Gangyang, in particular, had witnessed Long Juxue's rise and seen how even Ceng Shi in the Shuiyue faction had been replaced by her.

It would be false to say that he didn't feel threatened.

He didn't wish for his own position of eldest senior brother in the Purple Sun Sect to be replaced by Long Juxue as well.

Although he knew, deep down within his heart, that his position in the eyes of the sect heavyweights were likely behind Long Juxue's already, as the current eldest senior brother, his strength at the moment was still ahead.

Even if he was eventually fated to hand over the reins of power as the king of the younger generation, Lei Gangyang didn't wish for it to happen so quickly, and more, didn't want to be so docile about it either.

Long Juxue wasn't a fool. Although she was outwardly respectful, she had long since made her mental preparations for a coup.

When she heard the killing intent in Lei Gangyang's voice, she naturally wouldn't show weakness.

Her counterblow had the subtle shade of hint of mockery .

Her meaning was, I will crush Jiang Chen without a doubt. However you, as the eldest senior brother of the younger generation of the Purple Sun Sect, still let him leisurely leave after two blows and lost a great deal of face.

The others had walked out by now, whilst Lei Gangyang and Long Juxue were still chatting.

Apart from Shi Yunyun with her customary faint smile on her face, the expressions of the others were all incredibly grave.

It was obvious that Jiang Chen's warning before his departure had taken effect.

Come challenge me if you're not afraid of dying!

This wasn't an empty threat. Having seen the secular freak of a genius exchange blows with Lei Gangyang, these geniuses all recognized in that moment that they had severely underestimated the secular genius' martial dao strength.

If even a genius of the seventh level such as Lei Gangyang had been unable to gain the upper hand over the secular genius, then just how powerful was this person?

A shadow was cast over the hearts of Iron Dazhi and the others. They all asked themselves, if that'd been me, would I have been able to block two of Lei Gangyang's powerful blows just now?

The answer to this simulation exercise made all of their hearts drop, dejected.

In that moment, they all felt a bit of regret and wanted to retract their previous promise.

"This is a grudge between the Purple Sun Sect and the secular genius. Why do we need to get involved?" There were many thinking the same thoughts as Iron Dazhi.

The two Myriad Spirit Sect disciples looked at each other and cupped their hands in front of Lei Gangyang. "Daoist Gangyang, after due consideration, we feel that our Myriad Spirit Sect should remain neutral in this. Please forget about the earlier matter. We have other things to attend to and will be leaving now."

They didn't wait for Lei Gangyang to respond as they turned and left.

Lian Canghai's pale and remote face also turned to Lei Gangyang. "Daoist Gangyang, I temporarily cannot see through this person's cultivation. Since I cannot see through him, I do not have full confidence. Without full confidence, I too will have to give up on this matter in case I affect your plans."

"Canghai, you're the first genius in the Precious Tree Sect. Can it be that you're afraid of that secular genius as well?"

Lian Canghai said faintly, "Not that I'm afraid, but that I dislike doing things that I'm not confident in. Daoist Gangyang, I bid you good day."

When Iron Dazhi saw that even Lian Canghai had taken his leave, he knew that he'd only be embarrassing himself if he stayed here with his little bit of cultivation. He walked up to Lei Gangyang and stammered, trying to think of how to broach the subject.

Lei Gangyang wasn't interested in Iron Dazhi to begin with, and roared irritably when he saw Iron Dazhi like so, "Get lost!"

Iron Dazhi's body trembled in anger as his expression changed, but he didn't dare erupt in rage, simply glowering and stiffly stalking off. It wasn't that he had no self respect, but he knew that if he dared retort with a single word in front of Lei Gangyang, he'd be beaten half to death.

After all this, apart from the Purple Sun Sect disciples, only Shi Yunyun of the Flowing Wind Sect was left.

"Yunyun, are you planning on leaving as well?" Lei Gangyang sighed when he saw Shi Yunyun walk over.

Shi Yunyun smiled. "Daoist Gangyang, since you want me to stay, then I shall stay. However, I still hold to what I say in that I can't promise anything."

Lei Gangyang sighed. "The geniuses of the Precious Tree and Myriad Spirit Sects are all grass on top of the wall, swaying with the wind. You alone have stayed. A friend in need is a friend indeed, Gangyang owes you a favor."

When Long Juxue saw that Lei Gangyang was purposefully kissing up to Shi Yunyun, her heart filled with disdain. Her eyes flicked over Shi Yunyun's pretty face like a dragonfly skimming the surface of water, and demurely glanced away afterwards.

"Please enjoy your conversation, Juxue will be leaving now."

Long Juxue paid no mind to Ceng Shi behind her, not even bothering to speak to him. It was as if the first disciple beneath Master Shuiyue was just a disposable character in her eyes.

When Ceng Shi witnessed Long Juxue's arrogance, irritation rooted itself in his heart as well.

Lei Gangyang had obviously seen some hints of what was going on and laughed woodenly. "Ceng Shi, to think that you've lost your position as the boss of the Shuiyue faction so quickly. Sigh."

Ceng Shi was incredibly dejected by the fact he could do nothing. He cupped his hands at Lei Gangyang. "Senior brother Gangyang, I too will be leaving now. Count me in for challenging that kid."

Lei Gangyang was speechless at seeing how things had turned out. A perfectly fine meeting and strategy had been completely ruined.

The most depressing thing was that he, Lei Gangyang, a born winner in life, had thoroughly lost face in all matters this time.

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Indeed, word of the examiners once again blacklisting Jiang Chen spread again. He could only request missions seven times in the strength of heart area each month.

However, this kind of blacklisting seemed obviously weak and feeble.

He could challenge the strength of heart area seven times, and the pills area seven times a month. That made for fourteen times in a month.

If he was this accomplished in the comprehensive area, then there would be no meaning to this blacklisting at all.

He could farm points in all areas, so what use was that ban? If it came down to it, he could just split up his focus.

News of the meeting traveled to the examiners' area at first light.

"Well?" The examiner with the cold expression laughed frostily. "The secular genius that you all looked down on barged into the meeting by himself, arriving calmly and leaving stylishly in the eyes of all those geniuses. Lei Gangyang, proclaimed as the first genius, struck out twice but couldn't even make the other leave behind a single strand of hair. Do you think that this kind of genius would be worse than anyone in the sky quadrant?"

This examiner had been against the blacklisting both times, and he'd finally found an opportunity to vent his feelings.

The other examiners were also a bit depressed by his interrogation. They had to admit that they had indeed underestimated the secular genius' martial dao ability.

It truly was as this examiner had said. The secular genius wasn't inferior to anyone.

Perhaps he wasn't the strongest in martial dao potential, but to be able to withstand two of Lei Gangyang's blows meant that he truly wasn't weak.

Someone who was almost on par with Lei Gangyang's martial dao ability, powerful strength of heart, and immense potential in pills—wasn't this kind of genius the type of origin realm seed they were searching for in this selection?

They'd actually blacklisted such a good talent multiple times!

Traces of regret flashed through the hearts of all the examiners present, apart from Master Shuiyue's junior brother.

Chapter 384: Elder Shun and Huang'er Appear Again

They'd been biased towards the top geniuses and blacklisted the secular genius before out of a simple choice.

In their eyes, there was no way the secular genius could measure up to the preeminent sect geniuses.

However, the various talents that the secular genius had continuously uncovered had slowly upended their prejudices.

They'd thought that the secular genius lacked in martial cultivation because he'd kept avoiding that area.

For one lacking in martial cultivation, no matter how strong his other talents were, he was destined to be marginalized in the world of martial dao where the strong reigned supreme. He would never become the main character.

However, the secular genius' actions had once again overturned their understanding!

He'd charged singlehandedly into the meeting of the most brilliant geniuses.

He'd fought first seed Lei Gangyang to a standstill amidst chatter and laughter.

He'd arrived calmly and left stylishly.

Like a malicious blade, the mocking words he'd left behind carved out an internal demon in the hearts of those prideful geniuses.

Indeed, the geniuses had been jeered as trash, but were bereft of the ability to do anything. This kind of psychological pressure would cast a shadow on their dao hearts.

"Ai, this secular genius!" An examiner murmured to himself. "Has he hardened his heart to become enemies with the geniuses? Has he not considered his future path?"

"Indeed! Even if he has great talent, he will need to coexist with the geniuses when he enters a sect in the future. This fellow is truly too arrogant,"

Some of the examiners were truly despondent.

Just as they were sighing, a messenger reported in outside the door. "Report! Examiners, the secular genius has gone to the comprehensive area after being notified of his restrictions in the strength of heart area."

"What?"

"Has he gone to the comprehensive area to farm points now?"

"This... can it be that his talents cover all areas?"

The examiners all surged to their feet when they received the message, incredulity writ all over their faces.

His extraordinary potential in the areas of pills and strength of heart had been already enough to shock them. Now that this freak genius had run to the comprehensive area, did he have astounding potential there as well?

An indifferent smile crossed the face of the examiner who'd been against blacklisting Jiang Chen to begin with. "It looks like our plan of blacklisting him is about to become a complete joke."

The others had nothing to say to these words.

Indeed, if the secular genius could also farm points in the comprehensive area, then their grand plan of blacklisting him was truly an utter joke.

How could one ban him then? If he could only request missions seven times in each area, he just needed to rotate among the various areas to continue his plan to grind out points.

If that was the case, the only way to ban him would be to restrict him from requesting missions entirely and ban him from participating.

But everyone knew that was impossible.

They were well aware that the current restrictions were already quite shameless and in complete violation of the principles of fair competition.

If they restricted him from participating, what could he do next? He might as well withdraw from the selection entirely.

What was more, they'd also tragically discovered that with this candidate's strong potential, he had no true need to keep playing with the four great sects.

Even if this kind of genius youth left the sixteen kingdom alliance and went to a bigger place, he would have no shortage of people interested in him!

The examiner's look had a few traces of mockery in it as his gaze swept across the faces of each of the examiners'.

"Everyone, do you plan on continuing your ban and push such a secular genius completely out of the sixteen kingdom alliance? Or do you cancel the blacklisting and return a fair treatment to him?"

The Purple Sun Sect examiner spoke through gritted teeth, "We should carry this through, no matter the consequences. Since we've already set on our course. If we retreat, he won't feel indebted to us. We might as well greatly increase our suppression."

Even the other examiners looked greatly awkward with these words.

The examiner with the cold look started laughing. "Have you gone mad? Increase our suppression? How? Do you plan on taking the field yourself to oppress him?"

"There's no need for me. I just need to open my mouth and give those preeminent geniuses a chance to challenge him. I trust those geniuses will do the job cleanly and swiftly."

The Purple Sun Sect examiner smiled sinisterly.

The other examiners contemplated his words, but didn't say anything.

What they'd done before was indeed out of line. If they continued down this path, it really would be too unfair to the secular genius.

But on the other hand, if they didn't do so, then this secular genius' insane momentum would be completely unstoppable.

As time went on, all the sect geniuses would be so trampled that they wouldn't be able to lift their heads. This would be an enormous loss to the four great sects.

At the end of the day, the examiners were people from the sects.

They all had their own selfish thoughts and didn't wish for their sect's geniuses to be completely eclipsed by the appearance of a secular genius.

Once a prodigal genius was overshadowed by another and unable to deploy their own potential to their heart's content, then their path of martial dao would become winding and twisted.

"Do so in a concealed manner. Us examiners should indeed not continue to pile up restrictions or bans. If we do so, we really will become the laughingstock of the land."

"Indeed, we should've told them to resolve their own issues before. We did not fully think through our interference."

When the aloof examiner heard that they wanted to go from public suppression to moves in the shadows, he too gave an inward sigh.

He was unable to wrench the situation around with his power alone.

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In a secluded corner in the Eternal Spirit Mountain.

An old man with flowing, long, white hair, exuding an ethereal, detached air, was standing with his hands behind his back, looking down at the mountains and gullies beneath his feet with a furrowed brow and a profound gaze.

His expression was solemn as he seemed to have sunk into an anxious mood.



A young girl in pale green clothes, not too far away from him, was lying on a patch of shrubbery. The girl seemed like a mountain elf amidst the haziness of the mountain mist, as if a fairy in the world of men, giving one an otherworldly feeling.

The old man's gaze would glance at her every now and then, boundless love and anxiety clear within his eyes.

"Sigh. There's been three occurrences in the last year. The healer once said that if they progressed to three times a month, Huang'er's life will be in danger. Villainous heavens! Huang'er is such a pure and kind girl, with no quarrel with the world, why is she the one to be afflicted with such evil luck?"

The old man sighed in his heart, pained by his inability and worried about the girl's sickness.

The old man was naturally the resident expert at the Hall of Healing in the Eastern Kingdom, Elder Shun, and the young girl was Huang'er.

Elder Shun had been keeping an eye on Jiang Chen since the Eastern Kingdom, identifying him as the one the clues in old man Qian Ji's divination pointed to, the one who held the cure to healing Huang'er's sickness.

Therefore, he'd kept his eye on Jiang Chen all along the way.

It had been Elder Shun who'd helped Jiang Chen from the shadows when he'd almost lost his life to Chu Xinghan at the Second Crossing. n)/D)-v/)E(-I)-b-)1(/n

He'd also covertly followed Jiang Chen to the Skylaurel Kingdom when the latter journeyed there.

And now that Jiang Chen had entered the legacy territory of ancient times for testing, Elder Shun had brought Huang'er into the Eternal Spirit Mountain two months ago.

That was when Jiang Chen had entered the sky quadrant.

This territory was heavily guarded, and there were four origin realm cultivators in residence. Logically speaking, the defenses were supposed to be so strong that a water splash would be unable to make it in.

However, Elder Shun had used some sort of amazing ability to enter this area as easily as walking into his own backyard, and he'd followed Jiang Chen all the way to the Eternal Spirit Mountain.

The four origin realm cultivators were present here, but they couldn't sense this duo at all.

It was as if the latter two were part of the mountain.

Many matters weighed heavily on the old man's mind. Huang'er's sickness seemed to be occurring with increasing frequency in recent years. This made Elder Shun feel an increasing sense of urgency.

"Jiang Chen, ah Jiang Chen. If you're not the clue in old man Qian Ji's divination, then you really will have killed me, and Huang'er's life will have been put in danger because of you. Even though this is just my one sided yearning, I really do hope that you're the one in the divination."

Elder Shun sighed lightly in his heart. He was caught between a rock and a hard place now, and could only hedge his bet on Jiang Chen.

“This selection is simply too long. Three years, I need to wait a full three years, but who knows what’ll happen to Huang’er’s sickness in the meantime? Huang’er can’t afford the wait, and neither can I.”

Elder Shun had the urge to just grab Jiang Chen, but with his understanding of Jiang Chen’s personality, he knew that this would likely backfire on him if he did so.

There was an enormous power hidden within this young man’s body, a type of power that no amount of domineering force could subdue.

Elder Shun admired that trait, and knew that he would never succeed with force.

Even though Elder Shun had been a bystander, his understanding of Jiang Chen was like the back of his hand!

Jiang Chen was wearing a mask, specific robes, and his face and voice had been altered.

Even the four great origin realm forefathers didn’t recognize him, while even people beside him like Dan Fei had been unable to confirm his identity at first. However, Elder Shun had identified Jiang Chen as soon as he’d arrived in the sky quadrant.

He’d watched all of the various suppression tactics that had descended on Jiang Chen’s head as he’d streaked forward in the sky quadrant.

“From the four origin realm practitioners down to the examiners in the sixteen kingdoms—all idiots. They cast aside and ignore such a wonderful genius, yet hold this kind of boring selection. They reject those within reach and seek that which is far away. How idiotic. What’s even more idiotic, the sky quadrant examiners weren’t overjoyed at discovering the treasure that was this genius, but instead decided to harshly suppress him. Are their brains made of bean curd dregs?”

Elder Shun didn’t know whether to laugh or cry. He was speechless at the people of the sixteen kingdom alliance.

“I truly cannot wait three years. Jiang Chen, don’t blame me for ruining your tempo. I can wait for you for half a year at most. Huang’er’s sickness cannot be delayed.”

Elder Shun murmured to himself, feeling slightly apologetic when he mentioned Jiang Chen’s name.

He too knew that with the advantages of the Eternal Spirit Mountain, this was the best timing for Jiang Chen to cultivate and progress immensely. He shouldn’t ruin Jiang Chen’s rhythm. If he could cultivate for a full three years, Elder Shun firmly believed that Jiang Chen would crush all the so-called geniuses of the four great sects.

At that time, the only one who could barely pose a threat to him would be that girl with the innate constitution.

If it wasn’t for Huang’er’s illness, Elder Shun would’ve been willing to wait a decade or two, much less three years.

He also wanted to witness how this young genius rose to power.

It was a pity that time waited for no one!

## Chapter 385: The Foundations of the Eternal Spirit Mountain Shakes

A trace of apology flickered within Elder Shun's eyes, but it was quickly smothered by determination, as if he'd made up his mind on something.

"Elder Shun, you've stood there for so long, at times frowning and at times pursing your lips--what are you thinking about?"

The girl in the pale green clothes had slowly walked over at an unknown time, holding a little pure white animal in her hands. "Elder Shun, who would've thought that a spirit creature such as a snow fox could be found on this mountain. Look at him, his left leg has been injured. I'm going to dress his wounds."

It was as if the spring rains had graced Elder Shun's cold face as boundless love and affection appeared on it.

"You little girl you, always so kind. The snow fox looks soft and docile on the outside, but it's full of devious tricks. Huang'er, be careful of it turning on you."

Huang'er flashed her teeth in a slight smile, as pure as the mountain valley after the rain.

"I'll be careful."

Elder Shun nodded. He was only speaking a word of warning, and wasn't truly worried that the snow fox would harm Huang'er.

"Huang'er." Elder Shun called out as she turned to leave.

"Hmm?" Huang'er turned, her graceful brows arched in question as she lightly came to a halt.

"Huang'er, I'm planning on intervening, will you blame me for being a busybody?" Elder Shun was a bit hesitant. He was afraid of nothing under the heavens, but he was afraid that Huang'er would be unhappy if he made a move.

Huang'er's clear, limpid eyes darkened slightly as her brows lifted. She asked softly, "Elder Shun, it's Huang'er who has dragged you down, and moreover, you're doing so out of consideration for Huang'er. How would Huang'er possibly fault you? Except... in this legacy realm, you..."

"Don't you fret about that. I naturally have my ways. This legacy territory is strong, but these people of the four great sects are too mediocre. I only need to slightly exert myself to ensure that they sink into a great panic."

A mischievous smile flitted across Elder Shun's face, but in that smile was also a hint of disdain towards the four great sects.

It was obvious he didn't think much of them at all.

.....

Reports of the events that had transpired in the sky quadrant continued to pour into the upper levels of the four great sects. The four forefathers in particular paid considerable attention to the happenings of this quadrant.

All of their hopes were pinned on the sky quadrant.

To be honest, the other quadrants were just for show. It would be nice if some talents rose out of them, but it didn't matter if none did either.

Only if the geniuses of the sky quadrant lived up to their hopes and quickly progressed, would there be hope for the future of the four great sects.

Therefore, the forefathers were willing to let a great many things slide in the sky quadrant.

Sunchaser of the Purple Sun Sect was especially happy to see an environment of suppression form after he'd deduced that the secular genius was Jiang Chen.

He didn't want this secular genius to become an obstacle in the rise of his sect's geniuses.

At his age and cultivation level, Sunchaser's dao heart was cold and cruel indeed. He took an exceedingly dim view of the life and death of others.

If someone couldn't become one of his, then there was nothing untoward in destroying them. Otherwise, he'd be cherishing a snake in his bosom and allowing that person to become an obstacle. This was something Sunchaser never wanted to see.

As for the other three forefathers, Icemist of the Flowing Wind Sect had an aloof personality. She always occupied the center ground when handling matters, being neither radical nor conservative.

Thousandleaf of the Precious Tree Sect conducted his own investigations and had come to understand that the secular genius had very complicated relations with the geniuses of his sect.

Apart from Tang Hong, the others seemed to be quite fearful of him.

Due to this matter, Thousandleaf was also hesitant. He felt that if he didn't kick up a fuss, this was letting the Purple Sun Sect have a free hand.

But if he did, he might not be able to change the situation.

It was Ninelion of the Myriad Spirit Sect who was hopping up and down with rage. He cursed loudly at the examiners of the sky quadrant, condemning them vociferously as piles of dog turd to be openly breaking the rules like this.

His enthusiasm was set on fire when he learned that Jiang Chen had singlehandedly charged into the meeting.

He didn't conceal his admiration for the secular cultivator, and was quite pleased with how his sect's genius, Luo Xi, had performed.

Luo Xi hadn't submitted to Lei Gangyang and joined his plan of oppression, but had chosen to place himself outside of things and not become involved instead.

To forefather Ninelion, this was a attitude filled with backbone and grace.

After all, the Purple Sun Sect was perpetually domineering, a trait shared by Lei Gangyang. Ninelion was very pleased that Luo Xi had managed to stay true to himself and not compromise.

“Mm. If the secular genius could join my Myriad Spirit Sect, Luo Xi and he would shine like twin suns, and form the grandest occasion for the sect in the last millennium. I must protect this candidate at all costs.”

Ninelion could no longer sit still when his thoughts reached this point. As such, he began to take some action.

He first approached venerated Thousandleaf. To begin with, the latter’s attitude had been ambiguous. He too wanted to recruit the secular genius in the depths of his heart.

When Ninelion convinced him that only the Purple Sun Sect would benefit in the end if the secular genius was suppressed, he decided to join the camp of protecting Jiang Chen after a moment’s thought.

However, the two of them thought that it’d be best if they brought the solitary Icemist as well in the face of such a headstrong Purple Sun Sect.

Icemist had always remained neutral, but had to give face after the two spent quite a while speaking to her, and only then joined their cause.

Sunchaser seemed to have been long since prepared when he saw the three of them arrive together.

He only laughed coldly no matter how they tried to persuade him.

“I’m not involved in the affairs of the examiners’ area. But if the sect geniuses want to challenge him and take him down a peg, this doesn’t seem to be against the rules?”

Sunchaser’s tone was indifferent as he seemed completely at ease.

The other forefathers were equally speechless at such a shameless response. Indeed, candidates could challenge each other and receive points. This was a clearly delineated rule in the sky quadrant.

Ninelion laughed coldly. “It is indeed fair competition for candidates to challenge each other, but do you think that those ridiculous restrictions from before were logical?”

Sunchaser’s tone was aloof. “That was a group examiner decision. What did that have to do with me? Do you think I told them to do so? Don’t forget that members of our four sects are present among the examiners. As much face as I have, I don’t think I have enough to affect the people of your sects?”

The other three were completely speechless. As shameless as Sunchaser’s words were, they also weren’t without reason.

The matters of the examiners’ section had been a group decision. All three of them had people amongst the examiners.

Sunchaser made use of their speechlessness to suddenly say, “I’m rather of the opinion that it’s not a good thing for a secular candidate to agitate people’s hearts and make a fuss in the sky quadrant. It’s not necessarily a bad thing for the geniuses to teach him a lesson. Isn’t he a genius? Don’t they all slowly rise through various violent clashes? Which one of us didn’t slowly reach our peak through stepping on countless peers and corpses?”

In the path of martial dao, the rise of a genius was indeed filled with light from blades and shadows from swords, mountains of corpses and oceans of blood.

The four forefathers suddenly trembled as they were speaking.

The Eternal Spirit Mountain suddenly started shaking as they spoke. The skies shook and the earth rose up in that moment.

“What?!” Their expressions changed as they dashed outside.

That such drastic actions had occurred meant that something had happened.

RUMBLE!!

The immense trembling made the Eternal Spirit Mountain howl. Everyone on the mountain was alarmed and began swaying with the mountain.

“What’s going on?”

“What’s happening?”

All the candidates ran out of their residences, shock writ all over their faces.

Jiang Chen had been sitting cross legged in his residence when he felt the disturbance. He too dashed out like lightning.

He looked down with a furrowed brow and summoned the Goldbiter Rat King, bading it to explore belowground and see if it was an earthquake.

However, the shaking stopped after a few breaths.

The degree of the tremors was as if a mountain god had sneezed. All was calm after it’d ceased, without the slightest trace of something out of the ordinary.

However, the four forefathers weren’t that optimistic and kept investigating.

They all focused on the foundations of the mountain. If it’d been a slight bit of internal shaking, they wouldn’t have minded it.

However, things would be greatly different if something had gone wrong with the foundations.

They’d used immeasurable wealth and spirit power to open up the Eternal Spirit Mountain. If something had gone wrong with the formation, then the mountain would forever close.

Once it closed, they would all be forever sealed inside, unless someone else opened it from the outside.

Otherwise, none of them would be able to make it out.

The forefathers shot over to the formation holding the entrance open.

Sunchaser was the fastest, closely followed by the three others.

“How does it look?” Icemist asked Sunchaser.

Sunchaser's face was livid and full of incredulity. He looked around the formation for quite a while, the muscles twitching on his face. He felt a bitter taste fill his mouth as he murmured, "The formation's been partially destroyed." n07e-lb-1n

The other three forefathers hastily took a look, their expressions changing greatly when they saw the destruction.

"Damn it, who did this?!" Ninelion started cursing loudly. "We paid such a high price to open this mountain, and then we could only maintain it for three years. Half of the formation's been destroyed. At this rate, the formation can only be maintained for another half year!"

The four present were all the strongest amongst the sixteen kingdom alliance, but when they looked at each other now, their expressions were filled with wariness.

It was obvious that anything that could destroy the foundations of the formation was an existence they had to be cautious of.

"Can it be that a strong being lives in the legacy territory?" Icemist asked.

"Impossible. Even if there was a powerful being here, they wouldn't be awake. From ancient times until now, those powerful beings would either have fallen or be deeply asleep without the presence of sufficient energy to sustain them. It's impossible that they would be active." Ninelion denied Icemist's speculation.

"Was this manmade?" Thousandleaf sucked in a slight breath, his tone guarded.

Manmade?

When the four forefathers thought of this possibility, their expressions became even graver.

#### Chapter 386: Unexpected News

Jiang Chen had been perplexed when he felt the shaking slowly subside, but he wasn't afraid.

After a few life and death experiences, his strength of heart had been raised to the point where it wasn't affected by outside interference.

The Rat King hopped out before long.

"Young master, there are no oddities below ground. It shouldn't have been an earthquake. Perhaps it was ripples from the restrictions in the formation outside the mountain?"

The Rat King patently knew of the wonders of the mountain and understood that there were many ancient and powerful restrictions in the Eternal Spirit Mountain. He hadn't dared drill about randomly.

Jiang Chen mused briefly in his yard and felt that if this had been triggered by the restrictions in the formation outside of the mountain, then there was nothing he could do about it.

"These aren't things I should worry about. No need to pay any attention to them. I need to focus on cultivation. Even if the sky were to cave in, the four great sects will be there to shoulder it."

Jiang Chen entered his residence and continued sitting down cross-legged to proceed his cultivation.

Ever since breaking through to the fifth level spirit realm, it was as if the doors of boundless inspiration had opened. His comprehension of martial dao was simply geysering forth.

In addition, countless suppressions he'd faced from both examiners and geniuses during this period, all of which had turned into an outside source of motivation that prompted further improvement from him.

It was now two months since he'd entered the sky quadrant and his score had reached an astonishing 3,300 points.

This score was enough to make it into the top ten. He was only three to four hundred points away from top scorer, Lei Gangyang.

At this rate, Jiang Chen had absolute confidence in surpassing Lei Gangyang in the remaining twenty, thirty days of the current cycle and reaching the top of the sky quadrant lists!

"The path of martial dao is similar to paddling upstream. Failure to advance means going backwards. With my speed, Lei Gangyang and the others will not resign themselves to their doom and wait for me to surpass them. They will certainly retaliate heavily against me after this, and the greatest of reactions will be in the challenges in the rings!"

Jiang Chen had experienced Lei Gangyang's strength during his solo disruption of the meeting of the most high last time.

One had to admit, Lei Gangyang lived up to his reputation of seventh level spirit realm. Jiang Chen felt that there was almost no way for him to beat such a person.

However, if they met in the ring, Jiang Chen had many trump cards and thus great hope to force the fight to a draw.

"Lei Gangyang commands the other geniuses as if he were the head of a dragon. Although Long Juxue possesses an innate constitution, she has yet to surpass him. Her cultivation level is on par with him at best. Even if this is the case, I must continue to work hard."

Although Jiang Chen valued Lei Gangyang, he didn't see the latter as a fated rival.

Long Juxue however, was different.

With her innate constitution, all of the Purple Sun Sect's fortune and resources were funneled in her. She was the true thorn in his side.

If he couldn't kill her in the ring, then he wouldn't have the opportunity to do so before he entered the origin realm.

It wasn't that he underestimated himself, but that her sect simply valued her too highly.

Old-monster Sunchaser was a domineering person without reason. Judging from his personality, he would harshly suppress whoever made a move against Long Juxue, showing no mercy at all.

Therefore, the match in the ring was Jiang Chen's only hope.

However, it wouldn't be that easy to kill Long Juxue in the ring.



Her advantages over him were obvious. An innate constitution and limitless resources—these two alone were something that Jiang Chen couldn't currently measure up to.

If it weren't for the memories of his past life and the gains from some of his great adventures, he likely really would've been left behind in the dust by this person.

"Cultivate, I must furiously cultivate!"

Jiang Chen realized with great urgency that if he were to kill Long Juxue within the ring, he had to give himself a higher chance of success.

To him right now, what he had to raise the level of most urgently wasn't his techniques, but his cultivation level.

Although he was at the fifth level spirit realm, this kind of level was at most mediocre in the sky quadrant.

There were at least four or five people like Lei Gangyang at the seventh level spirit realm in the sky quadrant, and as time went on the sixth leveled ones would naturally increase.

Although Jiang Chen felt no pressure at challenging someone above him, the fifth level was two levels below the seventh, and thus he would always be at a disadvantage.

Furthermore, the higher these top genius' cultivation level was, the more likely it was that they would have some trump cards up their sleeves. As the highest level of existence within the sects, it was impossible that they didn't have some aces as a last resort.

Therefore, Jiang Chen was deeply motivated to cultivate.

If it'd been someone on par with his level, he could've absolutely looked down on them and destroyed them effortlessly. He would've been unafraid even if they had quite a few trump cards.

"That woman Long Juxue is already at the peak of the earth spirit realm, the sixth level. If she breaks through the shackles of the earth spirit realm and enters the seventh level, it will only be more difficult to kill her!"

A beam of light shot in through his window as he contemplated. It was a message glyph.

"All candidates, convene at the sky quadrant public square!"

This was an order of the highest level. All candidates had to hurry to the square immediately without a trace of delaying.

Jiang Chen thought momentarily. Did something happen due to the earth shaking just now?

His body had already exited his residence with this thought, and he shot towards the public square.

All of the candidates had gathered as soon as possible.

The examiners all had grave expressions on their faces, seeming to have met something great.

The heavyweights of the four sects also filtered in. Even the four forefathers arrived soon afterwards. Everyone's facial expressions seemed to be concealing their thoughts.

“Everyone, the four venerated ones have an essential matter to announce. Be quiet.”

An examiner stood in front and pressed down with his hands, indicating for everyone to be quiet down.

The four venerated ones had something to say? And an essential matter at that? All the candidates quieted when they saw that the forefathers too were wearing grave expressions.

Sunchaser was the first to speak. “Everyone, enormous ripples occurred in the Eternal Spirit Mountain earlier. I trust that you have felt them as well.”

All of the candidates nodded. Something big must have happened? Why would the forefathers have been alarmed otherwise?

“We don’t wish to conceal this matter either. According to our observations, the formation beneath the Eternal Spirit Mountain has been attacked by someone. The spirit stones and spirit power we have supplied should have kept the mountain open for three years, but that the formation has been attacked, the time allotted to keeping the mountain has been halved, or even more. According to our speculations, the mountain entrance can only be maintained for another half a year.”

“What?” The candidates were stunned as a hubbub of discussions broke out.

“The formation was attacked? Then don’t we have to cut our cultivation short and leave early?”

“No way? The environment here is so good, I really don’t want to leave.”

“Yeah, I’d wanted to train for a full three years and try to assail the sky spirit realm! Could it be that my plan is about to be toast?”

Mournful wails permeated the air. It was obvious that they’d been impacted by this news.

Even the faces of the top geniuses such as Lei Gangyang and Long Juxue changed slightly upon hearing this. They were incredibly astonished by the sudden news.

Even Jiang Chen was hiddenly surprised. “The formation was attacked? Is there a more powerful being in the Eternal Spirit Mountain? If this is the case, who can guarantee our safety after today’s attack?”

However, these questions only flashed through his mind, remaining unvoiced. He knew that his word didn’t carry much weight, and that he didn’t have much of a right to speak in the first place, so he decided that he couldn’t be bothered with it.

Whether it was three years or one and a half, the four great sects would be there to shoulder the skies should they cave in.

Sunchaser spoke loudly. “After discussion with the forefathers, we announce to everyone that the plan of a three year selection must be modified. The original timeframe will be shrunk to one year.”

“What?! One year?!”

“Three years turning to one, this is too much of a change! Didn’t you say you could hold out for a year and a half?”

“Indeed, a year is too short. It’s already been eight months or so, that means we would only have three or four months left here?”

The candidates all started yelping and complaining.

“Silence!” Forefather Sunchaser suddenly roared, his aura domineering as he exerted himself, bringing it crashing down like the tides and drowning the hubbub beneath.

All the candidates quailed and shut up nicely.

“There is naturally logic in our decision to shrink things to one year. There is only half of the effects of the formation, perhaps even less, left. Therefore, we can allow you only one year before we must select 64 candidates and then compete for the final 16.”

The finals for the final 16 required time as well. This was the big act, and the four great sects naturally wouldn’t hastily gloss over this.

Therefore, the rest of the time would be left for the final selection.

After all, the point of the selection was for the finals to select the best origin realm candidates.

“From now on, you only have three to four months left. There will be another cycle left after this one. We will select the strongest 64 after that to conduct the final selection.”

Forefather Sunchaser’s tone was domineering. “This is the how things are now. You can go back and make use of every second and minute to train if you can accept it, or get the hell out if you can’t.”

No one dared say anything when an origin realm cultivator was raging. Even though many were unhappy, this was the greater picture. If even the four forefathers could do nothing, what could they do?

Jiang Chen thought deeply after hearing this. “Accidents just keep happening. I’d thought that I lacked sufficient time before, but time is even more of the essence now. Everyone will be cultivating furiously in the next three to four months. I need to step up my plan.” Jiang Chen too felt pressure descend on him when he heard that three years had shrunk to one.

He had been confident that he could make it to seventh level spirit realm or even higher in three years.

But now that he’d received news of the reduced timeframe, and with the finals taking place right afterwards, he felt pressure stare at him in the face.

#### Chapter 387: The Plan to Assail the Sky Quadrant

The four forefathers obviously had no interest in explaining anything. When one reached their level, they could completely disregard the thoughts and feelings of those beneath them.

What they had to do was to act in a way that was best for the greater picture.

What those beneath them could do was to provide absolute, absolute obedience.

Jiang Chen listened to them for a bit and he understood that there was nothing that could be done. He didn’t tarry as he silently retreated from the crowd and sped towards his own residence.

He felt that time was of the essence, and he no longer had any time left to waste.

Jiang Chen leisurely looked in the direction of the earth quadrant when he reached his door and sighed lightly. "Liu Wencai and Fatty Lu, if you've acquitted yourselves well, this cycle is your last chance. If you're still unable to make it into the sky quadrant in this cycle, then you'll have no chances to do that in the future."

It was now the end of the third cycle, with only twenty to thirty days left.

If the earth quadrant candidates couldn't make it into the top ten, they wouldn't make it into the sky quadrant for the fourth cycle.

Since the three year selection had been compressed into a year, the fourth cycle would be the last cycle in the selection.

Jiang Chen refocused his mind when he returned to his residence and he began laying out his plans.

"The final matches are coming up in three to four months. I trust that the sky quadrant candidates will be furiously cultivating starting from today."

The unexpected news from today put tremendous pressure on Jiang Chen.

"It looks like I need to adjust my plans again. I need to take some risks apart from building that slow and steady foundation." He quickly shuffled through some plans in his mind.

What he needed most now was to raise his cultivation level, and the quickest shortcut to that was continuously absorbing boundless spirit power, forging and strengthening his spirit ocean.

What Jiang Chen lacked the most now was a source of spirit power, and that was why he'd set his sights on entering the Precious Tree Sect.

Out of the four great sects, the Precious Tree Sect had the most resources — precisely what he needed.

"Compared to the premier geniuses, I simply don't have enough resources. Although the cultivation environment of this quadrant is extremely superior, I'm still unable to close the gap without good resources in my hands. It looks like I need to make use of those two items..."

Jiang Chen searched around his storage ring and took out two crystal cores with abundant spirit energy within them.

Both of them were red throughout and they sparkled with a radiant light, like they were the most splendid jewels.

One of them was bigger and it obviously had more spirit power within it. It was the core of the Redscaled Firelizard.

The other was a bit smaller and a bit dimmer, it was the core of the Fire Raven King.

"These cores embody the essence of the heaven and earth. The so-called spirit stones in the world of martial dao are mostly the cores and bones from spirit creatures of ancient times, having transformed into spirit stones with the passage of time. These cores have yet to lose their spirit power and their essence still remains. Their spirit qi is more plentiful than those of those old spirit stones."

Jiang Chen thought for a moment and he still decided to make use of the Fire Raven King core.

“The Raven King was the peak of the spirit realm and it’s core is comparatively easier to refine. With my current cultivation level, it would be nearly impossible refine the Firelizard’s core in three to four months!”

Jiang Chen weighed things up and he decided not to be greedy, starting with the Raven King’s core first.

Although the Firelizard was a saint rank creature and its core was far greater than that of the Raven King’s, because the the spirit power within it was too strong, Jiang Chen couldn’t master it currently.

Putting the Firelizard core away, Jiang Chen tossed the Raven King’s core up with his hand a few times.

“This is the one!”

A light sparkled in Jiang Chen’s eyes. He knew that even when it was the Raven King’s core, it wouldn’t be that simple to refine it.

However, he was still more confident about the Raven King’s core than he was about the Firelizard’s.

He wasn’t an ordinary cultivator after all. If an ordinary cultivator had brashly tried to refine a core that was at the peak of the spirit realm, it was highly likely that the immense spirit power would invade their bodies and consume them instead.

However, Jiang Chen had many ways of controlling the backlash — part of the many opportunities from his memories of his past life.

He had too many methods to choose from in this regard.

“The Raven King’s core has sufficient spirit power, so if I fully refine it, it’s a guarantee that I can make it into the sixth level spirit realm. Let’s see if I can make it into the sky spirit realm in three to four months.”

Jiang Chen’s ambitions and goals were enormous.

His goals was to reach the seventh level spirit realm.

He was well aware that if he entered the sixth level, his chances of victory when fighting Lei Gangyang were fifty-fifty. If he fought Long Juxue, who’d broken through to the sky spirit realm, his chances of winning were about forty percent.

But if he could make it to the sky spirit realm, things were greatly different.

He could absolutely crush someone in the same level!

Even if Long Juxue was a favored daughter of heaven and had combined the fortunes of the entire Purple Sun Sect, Jiang Chen was confident that he would be able to destroy her with no doubt whatsoever.

After all, once their cultivation level’s were the same, Long Juxue’s so-called advantages were all lackluster, and the advantages of Jiang Chen’s immense martial dao knowledge, with techniques far in excess of anything in the sixteen kingdoms, would be completely demonstrated.

“Three to four months... seventh level spirit realm...” A resolute look shot out of Jiang Chen’s eyes. “I’ll put it all on the line for that goal!”

Indeed, just as he’d thought, when the selection timeframe had been compressed to a year, the atmosphere in the sky quadrant changed immediately.

The geniuses who’d thought about how to farm points all returned to their residences and began to concentrate on cultivation.

There was no more point in grinding out points. The key thing here was to increase their strength.  
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Becoming stronger was the true way!

The final selection wasn’t based off on points, but rather, it was based on martial strength and cultivators fought for it with each punch and kick.

Therefore, the amount of people in the mission area greatly decreased almost overnight. Apart from those with lower rankings and needing points to advance, almost no one else paid the mission areas a visit.

Jiang Chen’s score was now solidly in the top ten, so he naturally didn’t need to mind his rank.

However, although he was focusing on his cultivation, he would occasionally make some time to farm some points to ensure that his ranking didn’t fall too behind.

The last twenty to thirty days of the third cycle passed by just like that.

The last ten of the sky quadrant were brutally eliminated after the fourth cycle, and the top ten of the earth quadrant had successfully made it into the sky quadrant.

What surprised Jiang Chen was that Liu Wencai had indeed made it into the sky quadrant, and he’d even ascended the identity as the champion of the earth quadrant with fierce momentum!

“Brother Boulder, we finally met again!”

Liu Wencai’s eyes were red when he saw Jiang Chen, and he found it hard to conceal his emotional state.

Jiang Chen sized up Liu Wencai and he discovered that in these three short months, the changes that had occurred in the latter could only be described as transformative.

“Good going, it looks like you haven’t been lazy in the past three months, well done!”

Liu Wencai felt extreme gratitude towards Jiang Chen. He felt that he only achieved his current accomplishments because of Brother Boulder. If it wasn’t for the small vial of beast blood from Brother Boulder and his pointers, he never would’ve improved so rapidly.

It could be said that Liu Wencai had grown into a miracle in the earth quadrant over the past three months.

He'd risen with the irresistible force of a thunderbolt in the earth quadrant and he had swept past all his opponents, charging fiercely into the sky quadrant.

The miracle of Liu Wencai was second only to the legend of Jiang Chen in the earth quadrant.

"Brother Boulder, I owe you the gratitude of being reborn again. I have my accomplishments of today not because I joined the Myriad Spirit Sect, but because I know you. I don't know how to voice impressive words, but if Brother Boulder wishes me to charge into mountains of blades and oceans of fire in the future, I won't even furrow my brow."

"Wencai, all I've done is to enable you to take fewer winding paths. The key point still lay with your immense potential that was locked within you, and it is even rare amongst the geniuses of the sixteen kingdom. I've been in the sky quadrant for three months and I have yet to see anyone with potential to rival yours. It's a pity that there are only three months left until the selection, or you would rise up like the wind and rain in the sky quadrant and raze those geniuses so badly that they would discard their armor."

Jiang Chen clapped Liu Wencai's shoulder and encouraged him.

He wasn't voicing pleasantries, but he was truly surprised at Liu Wencai's potential.

"Wencai, the road is beneath your feet. You must believe that even now, the potential within your body has yet to be fully tapped. I don't know how much potential you have either, but what I'm certain is that the power within your body hasn't been fully uncovered yet."

Liu Wencai was deep in thought after hearing these words and nodded.

"Brother Boulder..."

Jiang Chen spread out his hands and suddenly looked outside. "A friend is coming, you guys can get to know each other today as well!"

Tang Hong's brass voice sounded as soon as Jiang Chen had finished speaking. "Boss, we're moving to new places today based on our rankings. Your residence likely needs to be vacated."

Tang Hong walked in with large strides and he slightly halted when he saw that someone was already present in Jiang Chen's yard. He scratched at his head full of messy red hair.

"Boss, who's he?"

"The new champion of the earth quadrant, he just made it here earlier today. His name is Liu Wencai, one of my brothers in the earth quadrant."

Tang Hong's eyes rolled around as he sized up Liu Wencai and chuckled oddly, suddenly stepping forward to reach out a hand and made a grasping motion towards Liu Wencai.

Liu Wencai was surprised, but he reacted quickly. He probed with his right hand and made a flicking motion, dispersing the force behind Tang Hong's grab.

When the two forces bumped together, they both took a step backwards.

“Eh?” Candidates in the lower quadrants have this kind of power to them? Tang Hong cocked his head, the light of disbelief shining through his eyes.

Tang Hong was a straightforward person and he thought the most highly of people with true ability to them, particularly when Liu Wencai was Jiang Chen’s brother!

He hadn’t had any malicious intent behind his move, he just wanted to probe the other. After testing, he discovered that the other did indeed deserve his reputation and he was quite overjoyed.

“Haha, boss’ brother alright! Come, let me introduce myself. I’m Tang Hong, boss’ new follower in the sky quadrant.” Tang Hong put his fan-like hand out and smiled a bit bashfully.

Jiang Chen smiled and said to Liu Wencai, “He’s Tang Hong, a straightforward guy and my brother.”

Liu Wencai’s angry expression turned happy when he heard this and he also put his hand out. “Nice going, nice moves!”

Tang Hong grinned, “You’re quite strong as well and you have the right to be my brother.”

Liu Wencai wasn’t a small guy to begin with, but he only reached Tang Hong’s shoulder. When he looked at this bashful and honest big guy, Liu Wencai’s first impression of him was rather good.

The three of them had become good friends after the initial clash and smiled as they entered the house, chatting happily.

#### Chapter 388: Long Juxue’s Breakthrough

Liu Wencai was honest and loyal, whereas Tang Hong was good-natured and honest. When two honest folks were put together, it made for a rather interesting sight. They actually got along fabulously.

After drinking a few cups of wine, Tang Hong suddenly thought of something and slapped his thigh.

“Boss, I almost forgot. I’m here to remind you to hurry up and move. If you miss the move out time and delay the other person moving in, you could get docked points if they tattle on you.”

Jiang Chen smiled. “No worries, he won’t rat on me, don’t worry.”

“How would you know? You haven’t met them.” Tang Hong was a bit skeptical.

“Haha, who says I haven’t? What seems far away is actually close at hand; Liu Wencai is the champion of the earth quadrant and has been assigned residence number 91. Wencai, will you rat me out?”

Liu Wencai also started laughing.

Tang Hong paused and then realized what was going on here. He chuckled in a silly manner and scratched his hair. “I hadn’t wrapped my mind around it yet, haha. Boss, you came here as the champion of the earth quadrant, and now younger brother Wencai is the new champion of the earth quadrant. This is a legacy of championship!”

Everyone burst out laughing.

“Wencai is truly strong. Tang Hong, you should spar with him every now and then if you have the opportunity to.” Jiang Chen looked at Tang Hong in a calculating manner.



That gaze put Tang Hong's hairs on end. "Boss, I'm not a chick, what are you checking me out for?"

Jiang Chen paid no attention to him and just examined him for quite some time, finally nodding. "Tang Hong, your body is tall and stocky, you should actually have an interesting bloodline heritage on you as well. It's a pity that you haven't received the best resources from the Precious Tree Sect. Wencai, remember the beast blood I gave you last time?"

Liu Wencai's tone turned solemn when he heard this, "Brother Boulder, it's that beast blood that allowed me to be reborn. How could I ever forget?"

"Mm. Tang Hong is my brother and I can't treat him poorly. I also plan to gift him a portion of beast blood. However, he doesn't have the methods of your sect and likely lacks some knowledge in beast blood refining. I'd like you to give him some pointers and help him refine the blood."

Tang Hong started, "Boss, what beast blood?"

Jiang Chen mused silently, light flashing through his eyes as he said in a low voice, "There's no one else here, so I won't keep this a secret from you guys. This blood is the blood of a saint rank creature."

"What?!" Disbelief shone in Liu Wencai's eyes as he trembled.

He had guessed that this beast was most likely at the peak of the spirit realm, but had never imagined that it was the blood of a saint rank creature!

Tang Hong's mind felt a bit fuzzy; it was a rather indescribable notion. However, he knew very well what a saint rank creature meant.

"No need for theatrics." Jiang Chen waved his hands to contain their exaggerated reactions. "Wencai, do you think there'll be difficulty to this?"

Liu Wencai said resolutely, "We're all brothers here, what's the difficulty in these small matters? Not to mention that refining beast blood isn't anything to do with the secret arts of the sect."

Tang Hong scratched his head, "Boss..."

"Tang Hong, to draw the biggest picture possible, you should be completely remade just like Wencai. Its smallest effects will also be enough to change your potential and remove the impurities within your body, greatly increasing your martial dao potential. This is something no medicine in the Precious Tree Sect can achieve."

Tang Hong nodded woodenly, seemingly understanding Jiang Chen's words, but also seemingly not. He knew that Jiang Chen was speaking of great matters, but he didn't quite understand how.

Jiang Chen broke things down more clearly. "Let me put it this way. I met Liu Wencai in the mystic quadrant and became friends with him in the earth quadrant. In the earth quadrant, he'd been worrying that his cultivation was insufficient, and as a result be sent back to the mystic quadrant. But now, he's arrived in the sky quadrant with great momentum, all within three short months. Tang Hong, tell me where you think Wencai's current strength would rank in the sky quadrant."

Tang Hong thought for a moment. "Ole brother Wencai's strength is a bit less than mine, but there shouldn't be much of a problem for him to rank in the top 30."

Jiang Chen smiled. "I'm going to bet that he's going to make it into the top 16 in three months, and keep going even higher than that!"

"That strong?" Tang Hong found that a bit hard to believe as he cocked his head and cast his gaze across Liu Wencai, skepticism writ all over his face.

"Tang Hong, you must believe that everyone has their own way. Wencai has found his path now, and I hope you find yours as soon as possible."

Jiang Chen had some hints of encouragement in his tone. "Your strength now is a bit stronger than Wencai, but the potential in Wencai's body is now far in excess of his peers. He wouldn't be worse off at all when placed amongst the preeminent geniuses. Your potential is also quite good, but I feel that you're a treasure vault yet to be fully excavated as well."

Jiang Chen took out a vial of the Firelizard blood.

"You must refine a saint rank creature's blood. You should consult Wencai on the best way to absorb things. He's a Myriad Spirit Sect disciple and will have a great many ideas in this area."

As simple as Tang Hong was, he knew that this was an immensely fortuitous occurrence as he accepted the beast blood. He spoke to Liu Wencai, "Ole brother Wencai, it's not that I don't trust in your strength, but that I really must see if this beast blood is that strong. Heh heh, if I can be like you, then I'll really have made it! I'm going to step on all those bullshit geniuses!"

Tang Hong's grudge against those preeminent geniuses wasn't just a typical one.

"Tang Hong, Wencai can't help you for free. You need to help him assimilate into the sky quadrant as soon as possible. Accompany him in farming points and help him make it into the top 64 at least."

Tang Hong nodded ardently. "Heh heh, no problem at all. Ole brother Wencai, come! Have a seat in my residence."

Jiang Chen also said, "Hey Wencai, this residence is yours now. I'm going to my new quarters."

Jiang Chen's score had risen crazily in this cycle, and he'd made it into the number eight spot. Therefore, his residence now had changed accordingly.

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What he hadn't anticipated was that Liu Wencai and Tang Hong had felt like old friends at their first meeting, and they'd become the most intimate of friends after a few days.

Liu Wencai helped Tang Hong refine the beast blood, and Tang Hong helped him farm points. Their smooth cooperation became a new scene in the sky quadrant.

Although Tang Hong's changes weren't as ridiculous as Liu Wencai's after refining the beast blood, his transformation was still quite astonishing.

They first started with his body.

He was big and stocky to begin with, with a tiger's back and bear's waist, but his figure became even bigger, even more robust, after refining the beast blood. His muscles looked like they'd been cast from liquid bronze, giving off a sense of explosive power.

Refining the beast blood also enabled Tang Hong to add a few traces of a wild beauty, which was fully demonstrated on his frame.

Even Liu Wencai had to sigh. "Ole Tang, you shouldn't have been a disciple of the Precious Tree Sect. You seem more like one of ours."

Indeed, the ferocity exhibited by Tang Hong's body was something that Liu Wencai very rarely saw even in Myriad Spirit Sect disciples.

As for Jiang Chen, he dearly wished that he could split each day into two for his use.

Refining the Fire Raven King core was indeed an enormous task.

It was a good thing that Jiang Chen had a great deal of knowledge and many methods that enabled him to slowly and tangibly break through as time went on.

He successfully broke through to the sixth level spirit realm, three days after Liu Wencai entered the sky quadrant.

However, the sixth level was no longer enough to satisfy Jiang Chen. His goal was the seventh level, the sky spirit realm!

The Raven King core held the essence of a lifetime of the Raven King's cultivation. The abundance of its spirit power was far beyond Jiang Chen's expectations.

Jiang Chen had many refinement methods and ideas to ensure that as little spirit power as possible would be wasted. He made great use of every drop of essence.

It was a good thing that Lei Gangyang's previous plan of suppressing Jiang Chen was completely upended with the development of this accident.

No one had the time to spare for something like that now. n/)(v.e)(l.-b--l//n

As time went on, the importance of the points would decrease more and more. Naturally, their interest in suppressing Jiang Chen decreased greatly.

However, Long Juxue was an exception.

That day in her residence, a pillar of splendor suddenly pierced the clouds, accompanied by the cry of a phoenix.

Long Juxue's beautiful eyes opened, brimming with confidence as an aura of "I alone am supreme in this heaven and earth" flowed around her being.

An unforeseen radiance circled around Long Juxue, as light as smoke and as hazy as mist, making one feel minuscule in comparison.

The radiance slowly took the form of a wondrous air current, soaring and hovering over her head as if an azure phoenix.

“Is this the sky spirit realm?” Long Juxue slowly breathed out a mouthful of putrid air as her entire demeanor changed.

Her eyes became even more icy as her bearing became even more aloof.

There was a strong power in her phoenix eyes, as if she could freeze someone instantly.

The sky spirit realm!

When Long Juxue’s clarion phoenix call sounded throughout the entire sky quadrant, many candidates in cultivation were disturbed.

When they looked towards the source of the sound, they saw a patch of frosty power, and an aura soaring up to the stars.

“Mm? Spirit power soaring to the heavens, this is the aura of a sky spirit realm expert!” Shi Yunyun of the Flowing Wind Sect murmured softly to herself as she gazed at that aura.

“That direction, this clear whistle. Can it be that Long Juxue of the Purple Sun Sect has broken through?” First genius Luo Xi of the Myriad Spirit Sect had a grave look in his eyes, and didn’t speak for the longest time.

Lian Canghai of the Precious Tree Sect wore a look of shock on his gaunt and pale face. “The second sky spirit realm has been born in the Purple Sun Sect. Is this sect destined to claim all the glory in this selection?”

Lei Gangyang watched the icy splendor rise to the sky, a gravity present in his expression that had never been seen before. The muscles of his face also twitched slightly.

“Long Juxue, although you’ve broken through to the sky spirit realm, you’ll have to defeat me first if you want me to give up the title of first genius in the sect!”

Ceng Shi, the first disciple under Master Shuiyue, was dejected and heartbroken. “An innate constitution, the best sect resources, and the strongest fortune. I’ve followed the honored master for so many years but was replaced in a night by this woman. The path of martial dao is cruel indeed.”

Only Jiang Chen, standing in his residence, understood what was going on when he saw the commotion. “That b\*tch Long Juxue, strutting around and flaunting her power. She’s trying to awe the other geniuses, isn’t she?”

Jiang Chen naturally knew that such a display wasn’t present when breaking through to the sky spirit realm. All of this was naturally something that Long Juxue had purposefully put on.

Her goal was more than obvious.

Chapter 389: Long Juxue’s Mind Games

Long Juxue had made an immense show of her strength, as if she were a sovereign descending upon the sky quadrant.

One had to say, she had succeeded in her goal with that performance. Her strong breakthrough had given birth to a deep feeling of resignation, of being unable to compete with this enemy within the top geniuses of the four great sects.

It wasn't that they were doubting themselves, but that everyone knew that once an innate constitution broke through to the sky spirit realm, none of their peers would be able to hold their own in front of this cultivator.

Even someone as strong as Lei Gangyang wouldn't be able to do so.

As deep as the potentials of the others were, they were even less likely to be able to successfully challenge Long Juxue.

Only Jiang Chen felt quite disdainful of Long Juxue's actions.

The more of a mysterious front she put on and the more she wanted to awe others, the more Jiang Chen felt that she was afraid of being found out.

The entire sky quadrant had sunk into a resigned depression, but Jiang Chen remained unmoved. His dao heart was scarcely affected as he continued to cultivate at his own pace.

Not a single misstep would be tolerated now that refinement of the Raven King core had reached this step. n()0velb1n

It was a pity that he was still a bit short on time. After some quick calculations, Jiang Chen came to the conclusion that, at his current speed, another month of training would increase his hope of breaking through into sky spirit realm to sixty, perhaps seventy percent.

But the deadline of a year was fast approaching, and time grew ever short. He only had a twenty, thirty percent surety of breaking through at the moment.

However, the Raven King's core didn't just increase Jiang Chen's cultivation level, it also brought noticeable overall improvements to Jiang Chen's strength.

He could now control eighteen lotuses of the Bewitching Lotus of Fire and Ice.

The fire lotus in particular was something that Jiang Chen could now deploy as easily and adroitly as a fish's fluid movement in water.

The Raven King's core had an undeniable effect on Jiang Chen's fire attribute spirit vein.

As the days passed by, there was only a month left until the year deadline. Jiang Chen was also counting off the days as well.

"At this rate, it will be very hard for me to reach the sky spirit realm within a year. Time is of the essence now, if I continue to strive for a breakthrough, my chances of success are likely only thirty percent. Using this entire last month in pursuit of this thirty percent isn't the best move."

The fact of Long Juxue breaking through to the sky spirit realm was already an incontrovertible truth.

"If I were to break through, I would absolutely crush Long Juxue. However, given my current rate, I should use this last month to hone my techniques. In the ring matches, my sixth level spirit realm

cultivation shouldn't meet with any difficulties if I challenge a seventh level candidate. If I possess an undeniable advantage in the area of martial techniques and methods, then it won't be impossible for me to win out over Long Juxue!"

These were his current thoughts and plans.

If he didn't further hone his techniques and spent the last month in pursuit of the sky spirit realm, he would be at a disadvantage if he failed since his techniques hadn't received the proper attention.

On the contrary, if he spent this last month in further sharpening his techniques and using them in tandem with each other, then this might have the greatest benefit before the final battle.

Jiang Chen was well versed in the "Vast Ocean Current Splitter" and the "Divine Aeons Fist". There was no need to further refine anything in that regard.

It was rather "Moonshatter Flying Daggers" that Jiang Chen had only practiced up to the first two techniques. He had yet to master the remaining two— "Brilliance Form" and "Lightning Form".

He decided to learn these two first.

Of course, his original layered feather throwing daggers were a bit inadequate for the task now. That level of throwing daggers were enough to attack someone in the small spirit realm, but his opponents this time were the geniuses of the sky spirit realm!

Therefore, the layered feather throwing daggers weren't up to the task anymore.

He took out seven of the Raven King's tail feathers and decided to make a batch of Fire Raven throwing daggers out of them, using his original set as a guideline.

Crafting the Fire Raven throwing daggers would require the use of the power of metal essence. He would have to meld the essence of metal and fire together, making these new throwing daggers at least ten times better than his old set.

With the layered feather daggers as a prototype, it was easy for Jiang Chen to craft his new set.

He quickly forged seven new throwing daggers. The killing aura of the Raven King was embodied in their form, emanating a formidable killing intent even when they were just held in hand.

Jiang Chen had trained the four accompanying arts of the "Moonshatter Flying Daggers" to the required level, so he didn't run into any problems when practicing the "Brilliance Form" and "Lightning Form".

He'd grasped the core mysteries of these two techniques after seven or eight days and unwavering experimentation.

The "Brilliance Form" centered around "speed".

The "Lightning Form" centered around "uncanny".

Although the two forms seemed similar at first glance, their underlying mysteries were completely different, and thus their power would be completely different as well.

“The Moonshatter Flying Daggers are quite useful, but they may not be effective against a sky spirit realm cultivator. To crush someone in that realm, my trump cards are still the magnetic golden mountain and the Bewitching Lotus of Fire and Ice.”

The Lotus was something that Jiang Chen had continuously viewed with high importance. He would increase the level of and continuously evolve the Lotus’ strength whenever he achieved a breakthrough.

The mountain, that great treasure trove however, Jiang Chen had barely tapped into its abilities. Apart from using some of its metal essence power to train the “Nine Transformations of Demons and Gods”, Jiang Chen had barely used it.

He would occasionally manipulate some of the magnetic power, but only up to a certain degree. The mountain had yet to become a true trump card.

“I still don’t have enough time at the end of the day. It hasn’t been a year since I’ve arrived at the Eternal Spirit Mountain for the selection. I’ve needed to rack up my score, face oppression from all sides, and raise my strength. I really haven’t had time to properly study the magnetic golden mountain.”

Jiang Chen was also a bit frustrated. He had an immense amount of treasure, but had been limited because of time and had been unable to fully tap into all of them.

Particularly the magnetic golden mountain. Jiang Chen decided that he’d make good use of it in the time remaining.

He didn’t have any goals as lofty as summoning the Lord of the Golden Seal. As for the golden, weapon shaped monsters, there wasn’t much use for them if he couldn’t summon them on a large scale.

There was great use for the Evil Golden Eye, but he wouldn’t be able to practice using it before he reached the sky spirit realm.

The only thing he could make use of was the magnetic power.

After such a long period of exploration and familiarization, Jiang Chen had actually formed quite a few reflections in regard to controlling this power.

However, he’d never been able to spend too much time on it.

“Mm, I should thoroughly train in the magnetic power for the last twenty, thirty days. My control of it is at most the first level. I could just barely manage to produce some weak force field ripples. But if I want to make use of this level of control to affect sky spirit realm cultivators, it would truly be a difficult endeavor. If my control could rise a few levels, then there would be no problem in restraining the sky spirit realm cultivators. At least, I would absolutely have no problem affecting their speed and rhythm.”

Jiang Chen didn’t dare think of materializing a magnetic storm in the short amount of time he had left. That was a ludicrous thought, closer to a daydream.

If he could really call upon the magnetic storm, then he’d be able to sweep all the matches at this level. He would have the confidence to even fight someone at the peak of the sky spirit realm.

“Mm, I will focus my efforts on the magnetic power in the time remaining.” Jiang Chen had decisively made up his mind.

His timeline for assailing the sky spirit realm wouldn't change, but his focus had to change as he couldn't place all his bets on breaking through to the sky spirit realm.

If the time came and he had yet to break through, then he'd be caught in a very awkward position.

The heart of a gambler was very dangerous and not the path of martial dao. Jiang Chen didn't want to place all of his eggs in one basket.

Time flew.

Half a month later, Jiang Chen was continuing to train the magnetic power. His diligent training had paid off in dividends, visibly improving his level of control.

His control of the magnetic power was at least at the third level by now.

The magnetic power that he could call upon could form noticeable magnetic force fields. Although he lacked an opponent to test its power, he was certain that if he suddenly used this in battle, it would absolutely throw his opponents into disarray.

There were still seven to eight days left. Jiang Chen decided to make use of this time to consolidate all of his training.

Suddenly, an arrogant voice sounded outside his door.

"Jiang Chen, don't think a mask will hide your identity. You are incapable of keeping secrets hidden from the just eye of Long Juxue. Since you refused to take the easy path to heaven and insisted on barging into the doors of hell, the sky quadrant will be your grave. Don't worry, I won't let you die too easily. I'm going to make an example out of you and begin my reign over the younger generation of the sixteen kingdoms. Remember, you are the one destined to be the stepping stone of my path as a genius!"

Arrogant, discourteous, and an unconcealed sense of superiority. It was as if she was issuing her final judgement of Jiang Chen.

She had sent this message silently, so no one apart from the two of them could've heard, and she wouldn't have to worry about the examiners taking her to task for disturbing others.

Jiang Chen hadn't thought that this woman would be so shameless.

A low voice escaped Jiang Chen, and his eyes turned hard. He compressed his voice and shot it out like lightning. "As if a defeated opponent is worth talking about! If it wasn't for the protection of your master, you would've been reduced to a heap of bones a long time ago. You should remember well, if I could kill your brother and father that day, I can also kill you in this sky quadrant. The crimes of your Long family are inextinguishable; you all are destined to be reunited in the underworld. Why don't I send you there now and see if you meet them along the way?"

Jiang Chen wasn't frightened at all as he gave tit for tat.

How would he not understand her devious schemes? She was trying to pressure him before the matches and use a strong aura to suppress him, making him fall in defeat without a battle.

One had to say, although this looked pointless, it was an attack that would deeply pierce the heart.



If Jiang Chen really did fear Long Juxue, then he might really have been defeated by this attack.

However, she had underestimated his strength of heart. Instead of a negative effect, it only provoked an even greater will to battle from him.

Long Juxue had wanted to make use of this opportunity to suppress Jiang Chen and destroy the defenses of his dao heart. However, not only had she failed, but she'd suffered a fair share of jeering.

And, the other hadn't minded admitting to his identity at all!

What did this mean? It meant that Jiang Chen didn't fear Long Juxue at all, that he was still unafraid even after she'd broken through to the sky spirit realm!

"Jiang Chen, this isn't the Eastern Kingdom. Do you think you can pass by the skin of your teeth, just through a witty tongue? This is still a stage for geniuses, and only favored geniuses like me are the true rulers. You are just an ant beneath my foot. Do you think you can affect me by attacking me with the matters of the mundane world? I'll be honest, I need to thank you in helping me sever all the ties that bound me to the ordinary world and enabling me to focus on martial dao. As a gesture of my gratitude, I'll send you on your way and then refine everyone surnamed Jiang in the Eastern Kingdom, whether they be young, old, male or female. I'll make them all die enduring sheer agony and forever regret they have the same unlucky surname as you!"

Long Juxue's tone was full of hate and violence.

Chapter 390: The Arrival of the Final Match

Jiang Chen laughed coldly when he heard these words.

It looks like although Long Juxue enjoyed all the resources and fortunes of the Purple Sun Sect, her brains hadn't improved at all.

She was as arrogant and idiotic as usual.

He didn't even want to exchange verbal barbs with her.

"Long Juxue, go and take your time being a harlot shrieking in the streets if you wish, I'm not interested in keeping you company. Your plan does sound quite vindictive, but I have to remind you that you won't get the chance to commence."

Jiang Chen shut off his consciousness after speaking and didn't bother wasting time arguing with her.

This kind of crude mind games wouldn't even tickle him.

As time went on and the moment of the final battle approached, Jiang Chen's dao heart became firmer and firmer, it was as unshakeable and steady as Mt. Tai.

"Alright, the sixteen kingdoms have confined me for so long, it's time I took to the skies." Jiang Chen's chest was filled with lofty sentiments.

He was full of anticipation and expectation for the impending battles.

He'd seldomly set foot outside in the past three months. On the other hand, Tang Hong and Liu Wencai interacted quite a bit, becoming as close as brothers.

Tang Hong couldn't help but stick his thumb up at Liu Wencai's potential.

Although Liu Wencai hadn't replicated Jiang Chen's speed in farming points, his momentum had also been quite ridiculous.

He'd made it into the top 64 within a month and a half.

Making it into those ranks meant that he'd already obtained an entrance ticket; But for insurance's sake, Liu Wencai still continued to request missions.

He purposefully wanted to temper his strength and so requested more missions from the martial dao and strength of heart areas, going at things with a style different than Jiang Chen's.

His missions were mostly level one through three, with an occasional level four.

In the last couple days, his ranking had made it into the top 30, a very solid position.

Apart from the missions in the martial dao area, Liu Wencai and Tang Hong also sparred enthusiastically everyday.

Of the two, Liu Wencai was a genius of the Myriad Spirit Sect and the descendant of generations of hunters. Having absorbed and refined beast blood for long periods of time, this added a few traces of wildness to his personality.

Tang Hong had the nickname "Barbarian" amongst the four great sects as well, the wildness on himself was even fiercer than Liu Wencai's. He was a berserker who lived to fight.

When the two of them were lumped in together, their spars were naturally quite intense.

This kind of crazy training continuously improved their strength, quite noticeably advancing both of them.

Tang Hong was sixth level spirit realm and Liu Wencai was fifth level spirit realm.

As such, logically speaking Tang Hong should've held the upper hand since he was a level higher. But during the last month of their sparring, Tang Hong had discovered that he was finding it difficult to take Liu Wencai's blows.

Fortunately, the beast blood Jiang Chen had gifted him continued to display its energy the more that Tang Hong's potential was tapped.

As the two sparred, Liu Wencai had come off worse in the beginning, then had grown to being on par with Tang Hong, before finally the latter needed to muster all of his strength to barely force a draw.

Of course, Tang Hong had an additional secret art he could deploy after refining the blood and he could use it to manipulate the strength of his bloodline and body.

Under normal circumstances, Tang Hong's strength was similar to Liu Wencai's. Should Liu Wencai used his full strength, Tang Hong might come off a bit worse for the wear.

But once Tang Hong went on a rampage, his body would suddenly increase by a third and his strength would increase by fifty percent.

He called this kind of rampaging his “berserk mode”. Once this mode came out, even Liu Wencai found it hard to hold up beneath Tang Hong’s attacks.

The two of them sparred like this everyday and gained quite a great deal. They admired each other greatly as they continued to fight, appreciating each other immensely and becoming brothers for life.

Their friendship had transcended the boundaries of the sects after a few months, making them forget that they belonged to different sects.

To be honest, Liu Wencai saw a trace of himself in Tang Hong. In his own berserk mode, Liu Wencai felt that it was a tapping into his own potential and making his bloodline go berserk, ascending in quality.

However, Tang Hong’s berserk mode was expressed more apparently, especially when it came to his physical body.

Time passed by day by day.

Finally, it was the evening before the final battle.

The three friends were gathered together in Jiang Chen’s yard.

Any one of them now was an existence that couldn’t be ignored in the sky quadrant. When the three of them formed a tight rope together, that made them an enormous existence that no one dared underestimate.

Jiang Chen had participated less in the past couple of months because he had been training hard. He too was greatly gratified when he saw the changes in the two of them.

“Indeed, the path of martial dao necessitates sparring with each other. The two of you must have done your fair share in the past couple of months. I can even see a bit of the other in the two of you.” Jiang Chen laughed.

“Well? Are you confident in placing in the top 16?”

Tang Hong laughed uproariously. “My ranking has never been lower than 12th. After daily sparring with ole brother Wencai the past couple months, I may even be able to make it to top 8 if I’m lucky.”

Liu Wencai wasn’t as open as Tang Hong, but didn’t conceal his thoughts in front of people he trusted either.

“Boss, my goal is to make for the top 12.”

Jiang Chen laughed. “As long as there are no accidents, that won’t be a problem at all with your strength. Don’t overthink it. The path of martial dao is thus magnificent and tempting because of the boundless unknown. Perhaps, you might be caught up in the placement of top 16 today, but after a decade or a century, you might look back to see just how small and humble your mentality was today.”

If one made great strides in martial dao in a decade, or a hundred years and entered the origin realm, they would indeed find their mentality quite laughable and childish if they looked back on this day.

However, Liu Wencai and Tang Hong were different from Jiang Chen. They didn't have his experiences from his past life, and didn't have his breadth of vision. They naturally wouldn't have that depth in thought.

It was a good thing that they didn't have an inferior mindset. Tang Hong was a rough-and-ready person to begin with and had no idea what it meant to be nervous.

As for Liu Wencai, although he had a lot of thoughts and wasn't quite confident, his bearing had changed in this half year as his strength rose.

Confidence was always crafted from strength and enhanced by it.

When the dawn of the second day arrived, almost all candidates opened their eyes in the moment the first ray of sunlight streamed in through their windows.

The final matches were finally here!

All of the candidates in the sky quadrant were gathered in the sky quadrant's great square. The rankings had been tabulated and were shown to the public.

Jiang Chen hadn't maintained such a fierce momentum in the past couple of months and so his ranking hadn't continued to shoot up.

There wasn't much point to scores now anyway.

Of course, they weren't completely meaningless. At least, the placements for the final match would be determined based off rankings.

The further ahead one's placement was, the more one would have some intangible advantages.

Jiang Chen's ranking was 6th, Tang Hong was 9th, and Liu Wencai had made it to 22nd after some furious point farming.

After the final rankings were announced, the top 64 had all made it into the final matches.

The rest of the candidates were finished with the selection.

A great hubbub broke out. Those who were unable to participate in the final matches were all depressed beyond belief, particularly those with rankings close to the top 64. They pounded their chests and were quite dejected.

The four venerated forefathers and heavyweights of the sects quickly arrived.

Time waited for no one; Since the formation had been damaged, the amount of time everyone had left within the Eternal Spirit Mountain was only two to three months.

To prevent any further accidents from happening, the final matches had to commence as soon as possible.

"Everyone, those who can remain here now are without a doubt, the preeminent geniuses of the sixteen kingdom alliance. I must congratulate you. Even if you don't make it into the final sixteen, that will not chip away at your advantage within your sect. You are the future of the sects and will become their

pillars one day. I hope these final matches become a valuable experience for you, and are an opportunity to see you walk further down the path of the martial dao.”

“Alright, let’s cut a long speech short. You will be assigned numbers according to your rankings, and eliminations will occur via matches. First ranked will fight against the sixty fourth, second against sixty third, and so on and so forth. The top 32 will be chosen after the first round, and the final 16 after the second round. We will conduct further testing on the final 16 and take you as our personal disciples.” n--  
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“Of course, those who don’t make it into the top 16 shouldn’t think too little of themselves. If you acquit yourselves well or have unique talent during battle, you may still have the chance to become a personal disciple of the origin realm forefathers. All is up to you!”

“It’s said that there is no final champion in the civil subjects, and there are no runner-ups in the martial subjects. A champion must be determined in the path of martial dao. Therefore, when the list of the final 16 is announced, another ranking match will be held. The higher your final ranking is, the more value will be placed on you. Therefore, I hope that you will treasure this stage and deploy your potential and talents to their utmost!”

Sunchaser’s voice rang out like a bell, reverberating in everyone’s ears, seemingly able pierce through a cultivator’s soul and set their blood boiling, making all of the candidates sink in fervor.

Only Jiang Chen remained as unmoving as a mountain, his heart as calm as a mirror, without a single ripple.

The promise of being a forefather’s personal disciple had no attraction to him at all. The origin realm forefathers had never been his goal for participating in the selection in the first place!