

Three Realms 661

Chapter 661: The List of Top Four

The matches on the third day were even more ferocious. The top sixteen competitors met in crazed collision as each battle reached a fever pitch. Sage realm cultivators were no longer protected today, so they were destined to meet each other in battle. Indeed, Jiang Chen drew a sage realm opponent, one from the Walkabout Sect.

This person was a bit similar to Wei Qing. His name was Wei Gong, and he had a similar bearing to Wei Qing, but his strength and cultivation was much stronger than Wei Qing. Even so, he still wasn't as strong as Wang Han. After exchanging a few rounds with Jiang Chen, Wei Gong did not think little of forfeiting. He knew that he'd end up worse off if his opponent went all out. He knew full well that he wasn't Mu Gaoqi's opponent. The fellow had easily taken out even Wang Han, much less than a Wei Gong!

As a result, Jiang Chen smoothly advanced to the top eight. Shen Qinghong was also quite lucky as he drew an opponent at peak ninth level origin realm. His path to advancement was equally easy. Ling Bi'er maintained her good luck and met another peak ninth level origin realm genius. She once again pulled through after a difficult battle and advanced to the top eight.

One had to know that in the top sixteen, there were eleven sage realm geniuses and five peak ninth level origin realm geniuses. She was one of those five, so she only had a four out of fifteen chance to select an origin realm opponent, yet she'd done it. In this regard, an odd situation developed for the list of top eight. Half of them, a full four, were from the Regal Pill Palace. Three spots were taken by the Great Cathedral, and the last was the Dark North Sect genius Lin Hai. Both the Walkabout Sect geniuses had been very unlucky. One had ran afoul of Xiang Qin, and the other Jiang Chen.

The list of the top eight was comprised of Xiang Qin, Yue Baize, Lang Jiuling, Mu Gaoqi, Shen Qinghong, Jun Mobai, Ling Bi'er, and Lin Hai. No one was surprised that there were three from the Great Cathedral, but the four from the Regal Pill Palace greatly astonished everyone. Setting aside dark horse Mu Gaoqi, Shen Qinghong and Ling Bi'er had made it into the top eight purely based on luck. This luck had also been a result of the Sacred Sword Palace withdrawing. If they hadn't, then there wouldn't be that many origin realm cultivators in the top sixteen, and no such luck of the draw to speak of. The Regal Pill Palace's strong luck had gained them a massive advantage in the end!

However, Jun Mobai's performance also slightly startled some. He'd been able to go toe-to-toe and eliminate first genius Yuan Yuan of the Sacred Ape family of the Great Cathedral. Although this genius didn't boast of a particularly strong combat ability, it was still unexpected that he'd been defeated by a newly ascended sage realm genius from the Regal Pill Palace.

And thus, there were many unexpected developments in this list of top eight. No one had thought that the least favored fourth rank sect, the Regal Pill Palace, would in fact become the biggest winner. When they thought back to how the Great Cathedral had wanted to rebuild the Myriad Empire before the matches, and how certain they'd been that they would be the champions, it certainly didn't seem like things were developing in that direction now.

The Regal Pill Palace was a dark horse that looked poised to defeat the Great Cathedral! Folks couldn't help but think whether the Great Cathedral's painstakingly created atmosphere would eventually just benefit the Regal Pill Palace? After all, they'd all voted that the champion of the Myriad Grand Ceremony, the top genius of the Myriad Hidden Dragon rankings, would have the right to control the Imperial Jade Seal and Guardian Dragon Seal. Back then, it had seemed a foregone conclusion that Xiang Qin would reign as champion, but things didn't seem that straightforward anymore.

The most promising challenger, Wang Han, had been forced out of the competition, but an even crueler candidate had emerged in the form of Mu Gaoqi. Mu Gaoqi's strength was unfathomable, and his true trump cards had yet to be revealed even now. It was still unknown whether Xiang Qin would be able to overcome Mu Gaoqi's challenge.

So therefore, the situation could now be summed up as — a mess. It was complete chaos, and the champion's seat was now a royal scramble.

Nevertheless, the matches continued their inexorable march.

The atmosphere for the draw for the quarterfinals was a bit tense. After all, this would determine the top four.

The first name drawn was Ling Bi'er. When her name was drawn, everyone clamored loudly in their hearts, hoping that they would be paired with such an opponent. However, the one lucky this time was one of the Regal Pill Palace. It was Jun Mobai versus Ling Bi'er.

Lin Hai's name was selected next. He was quite unlucky to be matched with Xiang Qin of the Sacred Elephant family. Honored Master Tian Ming pounded his chest in great dejection. How he'd wished that Lin Hai would face Ling Bi'er, the only origin realm genius left in the field. That would guarantee his placement in the top four. What a pity...

'Mu Gaoqi' was drawn again, his opponent selected as Lang Jiuling of the Sacred Wolf family. Shen Qinghong was up against Yue Baize of the Sacred Lion family.

The crowd erupted in a furor when the names were drawn. Each match's conclusion was already certain. Although Lang Jiuling was strong, and even a bit stronger than Wei Gong, he was still far from Mu Gaoqi's level, someone who had defeated Wang Han.

Ling Bi'er was matched against sage realm cultivator Jun Mobai, the one who'd defeated first genius Yuan Yuan of the Sacred Ape family, so there was no doubt about the outcome of the match either. Lin Hai versus Xiang Qin would undoubtedly be a one sided trampling. As for Shen Qinghong versus Yue Baize, the second genius of the Great Cathedral, the outcome seem predetermined as well. After all, Yue Baize's strength was on par with Wang Han and just a tad bit weaker than Xiang Qin's. If Yue Baize and Xiang Qin went head to head, it would be difficult to say who would be laughing in the end.

Indeed, Ling Bi'er immediately forfeited after the results of the draw were announced. It wasn't out of consideration for another peer of her sect, but that she'd felt the opportunity to break through to the sage realm and voluntarily gave up the chance to fight, choosing to focus on the opportunity to break through instead.

In Lin Hai and Xiang Qin's battle, Lin Hai decided to forfeit after probing his opponent a few times and realizing that there was no way he could triumph. As for Shen Qinghong, he had no chance to win at all. He barely managed to put up a fight before Yue Baize hurled him off the stage with a furious barrage of attacks.

Lang Jiuling actually put up a serious posture, as if he would settle the score with Mu Gaoqi. For him, there was no other reason than avenging his junior brother Li Xin. He refused to accept that his junior brother had been beaten so badly by a few punches that he surrendered. Therefore, he wanted to use his own fierce attacks and stunning speed to take on this Mu Gaoqi.

The results showed that he was far too naive. No matter how fast he was or how fierce his attacks, Jiang Chen only needed to use the golden aura to nullify all of his attacks. He hurled Lang Jiuling off the stage just like he'd done Li Xin, with just the power of his bare fists. Jiang Chen's performance once again won him applause from the audience. After all, the attitude that he was displaying wasn't so simple as one of a genius. It was one that caused others to wholeheartedly submit to him. He was always so coolly composed, so dashing. As long as his opponent didn't employ any extreme methods, then neither would he.

Take Lang Jiuling for instance, Jiang Chen could've used the Soldier Rosary Beads to steamroller the other, but he hadn't. Instead, he had used his bare fists instead. He used pure strength to thoroughly convince Lang Jiuling of his defeat. This kind of advancement was more convincing than someone like Wang Han, who would use any method possible to win, and one that won Jiang Chen more support from others as well.

Everyone knew now that the list of top four wasn't important anymore. They wanted to watch the finale of Xiang Qin versus Mu Gaoqi. However, they were also curious if Mu Gaoqi would run into further Great Cathedral disciples as he advanced. Or would the two Great Cathedral disciples run into each other next, and the same for the two Regal Pill Palace disciples as well?

Jiang Chen actually rather wished that his next opponent was Jun Mobai. Ever since the palace head had mentioned him, Jiang Chen had paid more attention to him. He hoped to have the chance to examine Jun Mobai in a battle.

However, the draw results disappointed everyone. The insane collision they hoped for didn't happen. They'd wanted the two Great Cathedral disciples to face their counterpart from the Regal Pill Palace, and the strongest two would advance. However, the draw dictated Xiang Qin face Yue Baize, and Mu Gaoqi face Jun Mobai. It would be an intra-sect battle!

Jiang Chen was rather happy that the draw had followed his wishes. If Jun Mobai truly was as the palace head had said, then he would certainly be hiding his strength. When he thought of how Jun Mobai had defeated Yuan Yuan, the fourth genius of the Great Cathedral, it was an obvious sign that a newly ascended sage realm cultivator was performing above his level.

"Could there really be something amiss about him? That he's been hiding his strength all along?" Jiang Chen was also incredibly curious.

On the other hand, the Great Cathedral was a bit depressed. They'd hoped to avoid the clash and have Yue Baize meet Mu Gaoqi. Mu Gaoqi would then have his strength chipped away, allowing Xiang Qin to

meet a tired Mu Gaoqi in the finals. Only with this double insurance would the Great Cathedral solidly occupy their position as head of the Myriad Hidden Dragon rankings. And yet, it was to be an intra-sect clash. The Great Cathedral could only hold an emergency meeting and finally compromise out of resignation, having Yue Baize forfeit and guarantee Xiang Qin a place in the finals.

“Xiang Qin, this is a chance for us to rebuild the Myriad Empire. You must take the championship no matter what!” Xiang Wentian of the Great Cathedral gave a solemn order to Xiang Qin.

Yue Baize was from the Sacred Lion family, and his family head was equally as solemn, “Baize has sacrificed himself for the greater picture. Xiang Qin, you must acquit yourself well and not make his sacrifice meaningless!”

Xiang Qin nodded firmly and felt a heroic air stir in his heart. “Don’t worry everyone, I will most certainly be the champion of the rankings!”

Chapter 662: Finals, Each Punch Finding Its Target

No one was surprised about Yue Baize announcing his forfeit. It was impossible for the two of them to fight to the death. That would only benefit the Regal Pill Palace. Everyone was now curious, would Jun Mobai do the same for Mu Gaoqi?

The Great Cathedral had held an emergency session, but Dan Chi didn’t give Jun Mobai any pressure over on the Regal Pill Palace side. Even Elder Lian Cheng didn’t give Jun Mobai any advice due to his desire not to see Elder Yun Nie’s disciple gain so much of the spotlight. As for the other elders of the Hall of Might, they wouldn’t bring trouble down on themselves given that their leader hadn’t spoken. They had a certain degree of confidence in their hallmaster’s thinking. He likely didn’t want Elder Yun Nie’s disciple to put on too good of a showing, so they would rather let them fight even if it was an intra-sect battle.

However, Jun Mobai apparently had other thoughts. He had taken a moment to think, but he voluntarily forfeited. “Junior brother Gaoqi, from your display of prowess against Wang Han, it is obvious to me that I’m far inferior to you. I’d simply be inviting humiliation down on myself if I fought you.” He waved a paper fan with a gentleman’s air, giving others a dashing feeling even though he’d conceded.

Jiang Chen was a bit surprised, and slightly disappointed. Ever since the palace head had given him the mission to keep an eye on Jun Mobai, he’d wanted to make use of this fight to gain a better understanding of Jun Mobai. But the fellow had actually gone and forfeited! I wonder if he’s hiding his true strength or really thinks he isn’t up to the challenge.

And so, this theatrical scene happened. With two voluntarily forfeiting in the semifinals, this sent Xiang Qin and Mu Gaoqi directly into the finals.

“Good luck, Brother Xiang.” Yue Baize’s gaze was steady. “All of Great Cathedral is standing with you.”

“Do well, Xiang Qin. Don’t let the sect down,” Xiang Wentian clapped Xiang Qin’s shoulder. All of the other family heads also looked at Xiang Qin encouragingly. It was apparent with how things had developed that everyone knew that they had to unite behind Xiang Qin, no matter what. Even if they had internal matters to take care of, they had to stand together when it came to the overall profits of the Great Cathedral and the greater picture. They had prepared much for the Myriad Hidden Dragon

Trials this time, and had put much into play to rebuild the Myriad Empire. They'd even bribed the small sects to vote for the Great Cathedral as well. Why had they done all this?

For this day. They had been absolutely assured of success in the Myriad Hidden Dragon Trials.

Off on the Regal Pill Palace's side, they didn't have any bracing words of courage or aspiration. They all knew that Mu Gaoqi's strength was unfathomable. Even Shen Qinghong was well aware that even if he cloned himself, he still might not even be a match for Mu Gaoqi. If it'd been the Shen Qinghong of old, he wouldn't have been able to accept this conclusion at all. But at this moment, his heart was as calm as still water. It might've been difficult for him to accept if Mu Gaoqi was only just a bit stronger than him. But when Mu Gaoqi had utterly trampled Wang Han, it was clear that he was leagues ahead of Shen Qinghong. This actually made Shen Qinghong feel like a weight had been taken off his shoulders. When the gap was that enormous, like an origin realm versus a sage realm cultivator, there was no chance of decreasing the gap at all. At that point, there was no need to think too much about it.

When Nie Chong thought about how he'd jeered at Mu Gaoqi before and said that they should've brought Rong Zifeng instead, he felt the sudden urge to bash himself against a wall.

"Be careful, junior brother." There was a thick sense of encouragement and delight in Ling Bi'er's eyes. It was obvious that she was hoping Jiang Chen would take the championship! This would be the first time that the Regal Pill Palace would take the championship after Palace Head Dan Chi had done so sixty years ago.

Elder Lian Cheng walked up to say some pleasantries. Jiang Chen nodded, but didn't pay attention to anything he said. Palace Head Dan Chi drew Jiang Chen off to the side, "Those of the Great Cathedral fight a crazy battle. You must remember that this match will differ from the one with Wang Han."

"I'll be careful," Jiang Chen nodded solemnly.

"Mm, the geniuses of the Great Cathedral have a few common characteristics. Their close combat ability is quite ferocious, and the power of their bloodlines rather extreme. They also draw power from their totems. These are all points you must be on your guard against."

"I understand the close combat ability and power of bloodlines, but what is the power of their totems?" Jiang Chen was curious.

"The power of their totems is the ancient totem of each family. When each family head nears the end of their lives, they imbue their strength into the master totem of each family and nurtures it, raising its strength. Xiang Qin will certainly have been baptized by his family's master totem and formed his own personal totem. The power of this personal totem is certain to be extraordinary. Not only can it form ephemeral images of the totem, but at a certain level of power, it can also summon the powerful sacred beast of the totem." Dan Chi had crossed paths with experts of the Great Cathedral back when he'd participated in the Myriad Grand Ceremony years ago, so he was familiar with their fighting style.

Jiang Chen nodded. Things would be easier now that he knew the other's fighting style. He'd managed to defeat Cao Jin, so as strong as Xiang Qin's potential was, it was impossible for him to be stronger than Cao Jin. He wasn't overly worried about this battle.

The two walked up to the ring with all eyes on them.

Xiang Qin was dressed in armor unique to the Great Cathedral. Add that to his strongly built body—he appeared quite majestic and grand, boasting an uncommon aura. Jiang Chen, on the other hand, was still dressed in ordinary clothes and hadn't gone through any special preparations. He merely stepped onto the stage, but no one felt that the two sides were in any way imbalanced. They all knew that this was a match between equals. Even the overweening Wang Han had fallen to Mu Gaoqi. Although Xiang Qin was even stronger, it was unknown if he could beat Mu Gaoqi.

Xiang Qin's gaze was deep, and he seemed to be able to peer into the sun and moon. "Mu Gaoqi, to think that you would be standing in front of me. I'd thought it'd be Wang Han!" Xiang Qin's presence seemed to expand outwards as he spoke. "However, it excites me more than it's you and not Wang Han!"

When Jiang Chen saw how Xiang Qin brimmed with confidence, and how unguarded he was even after seeing Jiang Chen defeat Wang Han,, Jiang Chen knew that Xiang Qin was feeling fairly certain of himself. He responded coolly, "I hope you're a bit stronger than Wang Han, otherwise I'd be entirely disappointed."

Jiang Chen was sort of disposed towards Xiang Qin. This fellow was an open and aboveboard sort of man. When Jiang Chen had refined the Longevity Pill and given Xiang Wentian the chance to extend his life, Xiang Qin had shown Jiang Chen some face and had been polite to him in the ancient herb garden. However, Jiang Chen was now appearing as Mu Gaoqi, so none of that was relevant anymore. There was nothing between them. This match was fought for personal ambition, but also for the championship of the Myriad Grand Ceremony. Jiang Chen was representing the Regal Pill Palace, so he had to bring everything he had to it.

"Prepare yourself, Mu Gaoqi!" Xiang Qin bellowed, his voice ringing across the arena.

"No need," Jiang Chen smiled faintly.

"I would strongly recommend you prepare yourself in some way. It'll be too late once I start my attack. I don't want people to think I didn't win fair and square," Xiang Qin had the expansive air of a great hero. He was different from Wang Han. Wang Han's tactics always used an ambush as its foundation. In Xiang Qin's eyes, those tactics were base, too vile for him to consider stooping to. He was quite dismissive of those tactics because he preferred to beat his opponents openly and fairly.

Jiang Chen shook his head. He had many weapons, such as the Ancient Crimson Heavens Sect token that was the nameless blade, and the Moonshatter Awl and Ocean Covering Sword that he'd received from Cao Jin. He'd even held onto Du Lihuang's weapon from the Sacred Sword Palace, but he didn't plan on using any of them.

Xiang Qin chuckled when he saw how resolute his opponent was and didn't mention it again. "Alright, then take a few of my punches first!"

He charged forward, his strides long and powerful, seeming to vanish into the air with his movement. Afterimages filled the air, closing in on Jiang Chen from all sides. In the span of a moment, the afterimages blurred into figures that looked like enormous ancient elephants thundering towards Jiang Chen. Like enormous mountains, these figures were the coalesced form of Xiang Qin's speed, momentum and power!

Jiang Chen's opinion of his opponent rose at the sight of this technique. From this alone, Jiang Chen could tell that Xiang Qin was more frank and forthright than Wang Han, and much stronger as well.

A cultivator at the peak of third level sage realm was indeed astonishing. In Jiang Chen's eyes, Xiang Qin could hold his own against an earth sage realm cultivator. However, since Jiang Chen had trained in the Nine Transformations of Demons and Gods, he really didn't fear close body combat. He leapt up, three meters in the air, with a flicker of his body and summoned his golden aura. With the golden light protecting him, Jiang Chen started throwing punches left and right, filling the air with explosive sounds.

Bambambambam!

Continuous explosions rang out in the air as each of his fists found a target. The very air around the ring began to shudder and quake from the explosions. This was completely different from the match between Mu Gaoqi and Wang Han. There had been almost no close combat there. Here, Mu Gaoqi and Xiang Qin were going toe-to-toe in the manner that Xiang Qin was most well versed in, bodily combat!

The two figures streaked around the ring, pummeling each other fiercely. No matter how fast Xiang Qin's speed was or how strong his fists, he didn't seem to have an advantage in the fight either.

"This Mu Gaoqi is truly well-rounded, he can even hold his own in close combat?"

"What the hell? He can go toe-to-toe with someone from the Great Cathedral with that body of his?"

"This is a true genius!"

The golden body of the Nine Transformations of Demons and Gods was originally meant for close combat, so its defensive abilities needed no boasting. Although Xiang Qin's Sacred Elephant Punch was very strong and his inner power quite incredible, he still wasn't able to form an advantage when faced with the golden aura.

Bam bam bam!

Jiang Chen paid no heed to Xiang Qin's attacks, allowing some punches to slip past his defense in order to sink a couple of blows past the other's defenses. Xiang Qin had been blessed with a strong inherent defensive ability from his thick skin and muscles. He was also further protected by his armor. But even with that protecting him, as multiple punches began to hit his body, he began to feel some serious discomfort. He almost had to suppress the urge to vomit. He'd never thought that Mu Gaoqi's close combat skills would be so perverse! Mu Gaoqi's speed and attacks were completely on par with his! His defensive skills were even slightly stronger!

Xiang Qin was rather depressed. The defensive abilities of the Sacred Elephant family were unparalleled in the Myriad Domain. He'd never thought he'd lose to Mu Gaoqi in defensive ability! He'd wanted to take the initiative through close combat, but he'd ended up putting himself at a disadvantage instead.

Chapter 663: The Power of Bloodlines Shocks the Audience

Everyone of the Great Cathedral was looking at the ring with incredulous eyes, never mind Xiang Qin. They were fully aware of Xiang Qin's close combat ability since they were all of the same sect. Apart from Yue Baize of the Great Cathedral, not a single person of the younger generation of the Myriad

Domain was capable of standing up to Xiang Qin in the arena of close combat. Even Wang Han, the strongest of the lot, was no exception.

Xiang Qin, frustrated beyond measure, punched one last time before clawing at the air, hauling out a peculiar weapon. A long handle ended in two chains, from which hung two golden metal balls. This was a flail; one of the most imposing weapons in single combat, it relied solely on brute force and strength to crush opponents. The flail had its own imposing aura, as if thousands of ancient elephants rumbling forward in a charge, an inexorable and untiring momentum radiating outwards.

This seemed to be the most primitive kind of attack, but it also encompassed an art of the Sacred Elephant family. The heavy golden balls looked like they were being tossed around carelessly, but in fact, there was a profound mystery embedded within them. However, Jiang Chen didn't plan on using any weapons. *You want to compete on basis of brute force and primitiveness? My golden aura will take on all comers!*

This kind of attack wasn't a simple one of physical force. What was more frightening about it was the presence of a devouring power behind it, a type of power that could devour space. This energy would eat away at both the energy in the space as well as the space within the ring, slowly but surely cutting off the opponent's escape routes.

Jiang Chen saw through this, and while he was slightly surprised, he also started attacking furiously as well. Since Xiang Qin wanted to compete on the basis of brute force, then he would help Xiang Qin get a taste of the strength behind the golden aura!

Jiang Chen's body streaked around the ring like a golden beam, darting to and fro across the stage so quickly that no one beneath it could see where he was headed. Xiang Qin's flail seemed to almost hit him a few times, but like a lively fish, the golden balls slid off Jiang Chen's golden aura. To Xiang Qin, it felt like he was using his bare hands to catch a slippery fish, and he couldn't quite get a good grip. It was frustrating almost to the point of helplessness; he almost had the urge to spit blood.

At the same time, although Jiang Chen's boxing aura wasn't as abundant and surging as the one from his flails, each blow that landed almost made Xiang Qin vomit blood. It was apparent that Jiang Chen had increased the power behind his blows. *noVe.LB)1n*

Bambam, bam! After taking a few combos of punches, Xiang Qin's flail technique started to show signs of disorder. Indeed, the Sacred Elephant family was known for their strong defense, thick skin, and their armor. But Jiang Chen had strengthened his boxing aura to the point where his heavy blows were causing serious discomfort to Xiang Qin. Before long, Xiang Qin was forced right to the edge of the ring. Xiang Qin's eyes were staring widely as he huffed loudly for breath.

The flail was trailing on the ground, yet he still held on to them as tight as he could. A wild stubbornness was writ clear across his face, "Good, good! To think that the Regal Pill Palace had someone like you! Someone who could put me at a disadvantage in close combat! However, just because you can triumph over my regular form doesn't mean you can do the same when I'm berserk!" He hadn't just been posturing for effect, as he tapped a few of his major acupoints as he spoke. As his fingers left the last acupoint, small arrows of blood sprang out from all of them.

He reached out and grabbed the blood arrows, using them to send ripples through the air. The ripples soon materialized into strange runes, some of which were definitely of the exotic animalistic variety. These runes shot into Xiang Qin's skin and blood vessels, lighting up his body. Before long, Xiang Qin was covered in a faint light as the runes vibrated and danced just above his skin. Without warning, he suddenly unleashed a bestial roar.

AWROOOOO~!

This savage howl really did seem to be one of an ancient, violent beast stirring awake. The wild ferocity that it encompassed within caused the blood of the young geniuses below to roil. They felt the earth shake and heavens darken, and almost wanted to vomit from the feeling.

It was as if a demon-god had awakened within Xiang Qin's body. The aura that this roar radiated was that of half human and half ancient beast, giving others a terribly violent feeling.

"His bloodline's gone berserk!"

"Oh my gosh! The Great Cathedral is truly frightening! His bloodline could go berserk so easily!"

"Xiang Qin is too impressive, he's the first genius of the Great Cathedral alright!"

"Did you all see? He tapped his acupoints four times just now, that's fourth level berserk!"

"Fourth level berserk? It's possible to go that high? I've heard that it's impressive to just have someone's bloodline go berserk already."

"Mm. Anyone who can incite their bloodline to go berserk is a genius. To complete it to the second level is a first rate genius. I've heard that Xiang Qin and Yue Baize had completed it to the third level, but who would've thought!"

"Who would've thought that Xiang Qin can already reach fourth level berserk!"

All of the geniuses below were struck speechless for a moment. They knew that they would be hard pressed to fight against a regular Xiang Qin, much less a Xiang Qin who had gone fourth level berserk. The Sacred Sword Palace was watching off in the far corner. Wang Jianyu had to admit that even Wang Han would have had no chance going up against a berserk opponent, not to mention that this likely wasn't Xiang Qin's strongest form.

"Gaoqi, be careful, he's fourth level berserk!" Palace Head Dan Chi couldn't help but call out a loud warning.

"Berserk?" The corners of Jiang Chen's mouth twitched. He could tell that Xiang Qin's strength had absolutely reached fifth level sage realm after he'd gone berserk. This was several folds stronger than the strength he usually had. Jiang Chen had to look upon Xiang Qin's rampaging strength with respect. However, he had yet to feel fear at this development. On the contrary, he suddenly remembered a brother he'd made during the selection process of the four great sects, named Liu Wencai. Jiang Chen had felt a yet sleeping power in Liu Wencai's body. Thanks to Xiang Qin, he now recognized what kind of power it was. It was the power of a bloodline, and it seemed the depths of the one brewing in Liu Wencai's body was equally fathomless. Jiang Chen guessed that Liu Wencai had the same ability to cause his bloodline to go berserk as well.

“I heard that his Myriad Spirit Sect had the ability to ally with the Great Cathedral last time. I wonder why he isn’t part of the Great Cathedral’s entourage?” His thoughts took another spin and Jiang Chen remembered that Liu Wencai had only been a spirit realm cultivator back then. Even if he’d broken through to the origin realm by now, he still wasn’t strong enough to participate in this ceremony. However, Jiang Chen believed that given enough time, the depths of Liu Wencai’s potential wouldn’t be any less than that of Xiang Qin’s.

I just wonder if the Great Cathedral will be able to excavate his full potential.

Jiang Chen was no stranger to causing a bloodline to go berserk. This was an art of the beast tribes. As a family of sacred beasts, the Great Cathedral not only had the various human bloodlines, but had also assimilated numerous sacred beast bloodlines throughout the generations. Therefore, it wasn’t a surprise that they possessed this ability.

This was actually quite common in the martial dao world. Jiang Chen himself had assimilated the bloodline of the ancient golden cicada and refined the blood of a true dragon. As he watched the berserk Xiang Qin, Jiang Chen could tell that his opponent’s aura had taken a noticeable jump in power. He was struck by a sudden thought. *You want to compete on power of bloodlines? Then let’s compete!*

Jiang Chen had refined the dragon crystal and blood in the forbidden area of the Ancient Crimson Heavens Sect, so he now possessed the evolutionary bloodline of the dragon tribe as well.

The dragon race was the royal tribe of old, and unquestionably one of the strongest bloodlines in existence. Their aura, defensive skills, and evolutionary abilities of their bloodlines were extraordinary. One could say that all cultivators lusted over their bloodlines. The notable exceptions were superb experts who had no need to use a bloodline to enhance their own strength. But, if one had to use a bloodline of another race, then the bloodline of a dragon had no peer. It wasn’t the only choice, but one of the very best.

It was a testament to the dragon’s bloodline that even if Long Xiaoxuan hadn’t awakened much of his heritage, as the descendent of a true dragon, the purity of his bloodline was enough to enable any cultivator to ascend to the emperor realm. Even if Jiang Chen hadn’t had any other fortuitous occurrences or the memories of his past life, the dragon crystal and blood alone would’ve propelled him into the emperor realm.

This wasn’t an exaggeration—it really was that amazing.

Xiang Qin was also quite strong to have entered a berserk state. The Sacred Elephant family actually counted as an ancient family as well. The bloodlines of the sacred elephant race wasn’t that much lower than the ancient dragons. However, the Great Cathedral family was obviously not of the most orthodox bloodline. So although Xiang Qin’s bloodline was currently fourth level berserk, it still wasn’t enough. He’d have to go reach ninth level berserk to be able to enter the emperor realm. As for Jiang Chen’s dragon bloodline, he didn’t need to think of going berserk at all. He’d be able to reach the emperor realm as long as no accidents happened.

When those watching beneath the stage saw Jiang Chen simply standing there and not preventing Xiang Qin from entering his berserk state, they all felt it to be a great shame. If he’d made a move to prevent his opponent from finishing the process, then the odds of victory would’ve been much greater.

“Mu Gaoqi is underestimating his opponent far too much.”

“Right, there’s no way he doesn’t know what fourth level berserk means!”

“Hmm? Wait, look at Mu Gaoqi...”

“He... is that the power of a bloodline?” The voice trembled, astonishment causing his voice to break.

“Eh, I think so. Those ripples of energy are indeed ones from a bloodline.”

“Right, it’s the power of a bloodline. But he doesn’t seem to be going berserk. The power of his bloodline seems to be more pure and peaceful.”

“Yeah! Why do I feel that although he hasn’t gone berserk, his bloodline seems to exude more of an awe-inspiring feeling?”

“It’s an aura! This is absolutely the aura from his bloodline!”

Those watching beneath the stage all started yelling from surprise. There were simply too many bizarre things that Mu Gaoqi seemed capable of, and every new occurrence was more shocking than the last. He’d already been quite ridiculous in that fight against Wang Han, but to think that he still had trump cards in his fight against Xiang Qin! What kind of endless supply of trump cards did he have? Also, he was simply too tricky of an opponent. He seemed to be able to respond in kind whenever his opponent pulled out an ultimate move. Was he doing all this on purpose?

Chapter 664: A Physical Battle to a Civil One, A Battle of Grace

“Look, what’s that?”

“Are... are those scales?”

“Oh... my... defensive scales are appearing around Jiang Chen. Are those... dragon scales?”

“What does this mean?”

“What does this mean? Dragon scales! Mu Gaoqi has the bloodline of the dragon race?!”

“Dragon bloodline? How’s that possible? Does the Divine Abyss Continent even have dragons?”

The audience instantly boiled over with excitement. Not even the old fellows amongst them could keep calm anymore. Their vision was naturally better than the youngsters, so they were able to confirm that it was indeed dragon scales that appeared around Jiang Chen.

Dragon scales!

That meant he possessed the bloodline of the dragons! The heritage of the dragons was very broad, and all their descendants would have immense potential even with the slightest, most diluted dragon bloodline. Even the Great Cathedral had never possessed a real dragon bloodline. Thus, when they saw the sparkling dragon scales materializing around Jiang Chen at that moment, they were all struck dumb with shock.

Xiang Wentian was also swaying slightly. "This... Mu Gaoqi, why does he have the bloodline of the dragons? How is this possible?"

"This child is too stunning!" The family head of the Sacred Lion family exclaimed with astonishment.

"Elder brother Xiang, we must bring this child to our Great Cathedral no matter what the cost. With the bloodline of the dragon race, our Great Cathedral can absolutely dominate the Myriad Domain and even become a third rank, possibly second rank sect!" The family head of the Sacred Ape family couldn't help but speak up agitatedly.

Everyone of the Great Cathedral were on their feet in incredulous agitation. In the face of a dragon bloodline, all talk of the Imperial Jade Seal and Guardian Dragon Seal paled in importance. Those two items were just tokens that conferred legitimacy for rebuilding the Myriad Domain. However, a genius with a dragon bloodline was a potential that could step into the emperor realm without a second's doubt.

With such a genius, why would they need to worry about rebuilding the Myriad Empire at all? They could even found their own dynasty! Over on the Regal Pill Palace side, Elder Lian Cheng's face had changed greatly. He knew Mu Gaoqi was of a high rank innate wood constitution, but when had he gained the bloodline of the dragons as well? They hadn't seen this when they'd tested him last time!

However, something like a bloodline may truly not be identified properly when testing for potential. Shen Qinghong murmured to himself, "Incredible, truly incredible. I really was a frog at the bottom of the well before. To think that junior brother Mu Gaoqi has had such fortuitous occurrences!"

Jun Mobai wasn't one to speak much normally, but he laughed ruefully now. "This kind of fortune truly makes one envious. Good thing I didn't try to put myself forward just now; he would've trampled me into the ground!"

Although Ling Bi'er didn't say anything, waves of shock were still crashing in her heart. She knew that Jiang Chen was amazing, but she was still rocked by astonishment when it came to a dragon bloodline.

Palace Head Dan Chi had also not anticipated this scene either. He'd never thought that Jiang Chen would possess a dragon's bloodline! This was an unanticipated delight! The purity of Jiang Chen's bloodline looked extremely high as well. It was magnificent and imposing, obviously no ordinary dragon race bloodline. It could possibly even be one from the true dragons!

What were true dragons? They were the proper and noblest bloodline of the dragon race! Their heritage had been carefully guarded and passed through the generations to ensure no losses in purity! Even the coolly composed Huang'er was shocked to her core as she watched Jiang Chen. "Elder Shun and I were both mistaken. Sir Jiang's secrets are far deeper than Elder Shun had guessed. Elder Shun's eye for talent is truly astonishing."

Huang'er smiled as she looked at Jiang Chen, a slight smile appearing on her face. A few stray thoughts crossed her mind and an unknown trace of anticipation grew in her heart. With Jiang Chen's bloodline and potential, she couldn't help but think of a few things; things that allowed her to feel a few hints of sweetness in her heart. Some things that she hadn't dared think of before suddenly seemed to dip towards the realm of possibility.

Up on the stage, Xiang Qin had completed his advance into fourth level berserk and once again started his furious assault. Jiang Chen drew deeply on his dragon bloodline and raised his strength by several times over in an instant. The two figures madly collided against each other on the stage to give rise to an astonishing momentum. They seemed to be akin to two rampaging demon-gods.

A fourth level berserk of the Sacred Elephant family attacked with abandon, shaking the heavens and earth with the force of the ancient sacred elephants. On the other side, although the dragon bloodline had only barely awakened, the immense and magnificent presence it exuded, as well as that tremendous aura, was able to fully suppress the opponent's momentum. This development nearly made Xiang Qin spit blood in frustration.

He was already performing above and beyond his usual abilities in going fourth level berserk. He'd thought it to be but a matter of minutes before he'd overwhelm his opponent. But, who would've thought that his opponent would have a dragon bloodline! The bloodline of the sacred elephants was strong, but there was a noticeable difference between that and one from the dragon race.

Not only had he not gained the advantage after going fourth level berserk, but now he was even worse off than before. He couldn't break through the other's dragon scale defenses at all. In addition, the offensive capabilities of the dragons were nothing short of heaven-defying. Jiang Chen seemed to be able to break through the very air with any random swipe, and any careless punch seemed capable of obliterating the sun, stars, and moon. Xiang Qin could just barely manage to take Jiang Chen's blows before they'd called upon their bloodlines, but now he didn't even dare to do so.

Bambambam!

The crazed battle began to lean in a certain direction as Xiang Qin's attacks started dwindling in exchange for more time defending. Pretty soon, his offense was completely sealed as he desperately focused all his efforts on evasion, slipping past Jiang Chen's punches by the skin of his teeth.

This scene left the audience slack-jawed with shock. Now that the match had progressed thus far, they finally believed that Mu Gaoqi was truly an incredible heaven defying genius. Judging from the situation, unless Xiang Qin had an equally heaven defying ability, there was no possible way for him to emerge victorious.

Although Xiang Qin was on the defensive, he didn't fall into a panic. He could still hold onto his position, but he was just quite anxious at the moment. He was in a dilemma. Do I use the power of the totems? Or do I stop here?

"Do I really have to use the power of the totems?" Xiang Qin hesitated. However, the fire and spirit of a cultivator made it impossible for him to forfeit calmly. He gritted his teeth and decided to go for it. He would win this time even if he exposed the power of the totems!

"Mu Gaoqi!" Xiang Qin roared loudly.

Jiang Chen smiled slightly and jumped backwards in a show of good grace. "What's up?"

The crowd beneath the stage erupted in noise when he did this. Mu Gaoqi was too cute, wasn't he? Why had he backed off in the middle of a pitched battle just because the other had yelled at him? Was

he giving his opponent the chance to catch a breath by taking a step back!? One didn't need to be quite so generous with a show of good grace, did they?

Palace Head Dan Chi also smiled ruefully. He didn't understand why Jiang Chen had given Xiang Qin the chance to breathe either. He should've kept his current momentum and hurled his opponent off the stage. Otherwise, Xiang Qin still had trump cards! The power of the totems were the Great Cathedral's fiercest strength, the strongest trump card that raised their battle strength to its pinnacle.

Xiang Qin likely hadn't thought that his opponent would allow him a chance to speak by taking a step back either. The bold fellow felt a bit awkward in the moment. He'd never been one to take unfair advantage of a situation, so when he saw the other back away, he felt that he was benefiting unfairly. He raised his hand to scratch his head, "Mu Gaoqi, I'm surprised by your strength. I have one last trump card. If you can face it as well, then I'll concede." Xiang Qin was benefiting from a small advantage, so he issued a reminder to the other to allow him mental preparation as well.

Jiang Chen smiled, "I've heard that your Great Cathedral can draw power from the ancient totems."

"Exactly, it's the power from the ancient totems. I've also borrowed the power of the Sacred Lion, Sacred Wolf, and Sacred Ape family totems. This means you'll face all four of them at the same time." Xiang Qin was as straight as an arrow, but the degree of his candor made all the Great Cathedral folks shake their heads.

This battle was different from the shrill screaming match with Wang Han. These two sides were very friendly, a battle between gentlemen. Although the audience felt this to be quite the novel development, they had to admit that only this battle between two top Myriad Domain geniuses was worth watching. Even when lives were on the line and genuine emotions running high, they still stayed above petty trickery. This was a true genius!

The elders of the various sects all held this as a standard by which to educate their disciples. The young geniuses of the Myriad Domain were also conquered by their actions and words. Mu Gaoqi had been quite honorable in stepping back, and Xiang Qin's candor in admitting that he was going to use the power of the totems from all four Great Cathedral families was no less honorable.

There might be a bit less blood and gore in this final match, but it was a heartwarming match. Sparring between geniuses shouldn't be such a bloody, messy affair. This was the proper attitude to have. Even the leaders of the sects unconsciously nodded in this moment, quite approving of this situation.

Jiang Chen was silent for a moment, then flicked out the Soldier Rosary Beads. Six mortal sage realm golden-armored warriors hit the ground at high speed, dropping into a battle stance.

Xiang Qin shook his with a slight smile, "That's not enough."

Jiang Chen nodded, still smiling, and flicked his fingers again. Another three earth sage golden-armored warriors hit the ground and materialized.

Xiang Qin could only stare in astonishment before he could recollect himself. "Perhaps... this might be enough... to create a draw." **nOvE**(ℓb-1n

Jiang Chen laughed heartily and flicked his fingers again, sending forth a sky sage realm warrior. He had three sky sage realm warriors; this was just the weakest. And yet, however weak it was, it was still a sky sage warrior. Jiang Chen didn't want to reveal the two stronger ones just yet.

"How about this? If this still won't do, then I'll have to forfeit," Jiang Chen smiled.

The entire scene was silent for a moment, so still that even a pin drop could be heard.

Chapter 665: Forfeiting with Frankness

The silence was deafening. Not a word was uttered; people couldn't even begin to form a reaction to what their eyes told them. Jiang Chen's never-ending series of trump cards had brought everyone's minds to a stuttering halt.

Exactly who is this person?

Setting aside everything he'd displayed when he'd beaten Wang Han, this child also had a dragon bloodline as well? Not only that, he also had the Solder Rosary Beads with the six mortal sage realm warriors that everyone had seen before. By itself, that was incredible enough already. But he could then also summon three earth sage realm warriors, and when that wasn't enough, he had more!

The limits of everyone's common sense had been tested again and again, and they were almost numb by now. But when Mu Gaoqi summoned the sky sage realm warrior, they'd been instantly petrified. They no longer had words to describe him. When had such a heaven defying genius appeared in the Myriad Domain? Just what was Mu Gaoqi's background?

The heavyweights over on the Great Cathedral's side were all wearing rueful smiles. There were no words to express how much the Great Cathedral valued Xiang Qin, as they'd even lent him the personal totems of the other geniuses. However, the opponent's moves were blatant evidence of even greater wealth. This gave them a completely helpless feeling. At this point, Xiang Qin also had a wry expression on his face as well. He may have been ambitious, but he was an honest and generous fellow. He was full of confidence about the totem's power, but that didn't mean he would stoop to lying.

When he saw that Jiang Chen summon a sky sage realm warrior, his heart sank, but a massive feeling of relief flooded his body in the next moment. He suddenly felt that the burden on his shoulders had been completely lifted. He had indeed come in pursuit of the championship, and he'd borne the pressure of his sect with equanimity, but he now felt that pressure to be meaningless. What was the point of pressuring oneself to become the champion in front of such an outstanding opponent? There was nothing about his loss that he couldn't accept. He shook his head, a rueful taste in his mouth, and sighed, "I forfeit."

No one there was surprised by his words. The forefathers of the Great Cathedral all shook their heads wryly as well. They didn't feel downcast at all about their loss. What they'd seen today had been simply too, too amazing.

Xiang Qin raised his hands in a cupped fist salute to Mu Gaoqi. "Brother Gaoqi, I've never bowed before anyone, but I truly accept my defeat to the Regal Pill Palace today. You first have a Jiang Chen, and now a Mu Gaoqi. I, Xiang Qin, have only known today that our Myriad Domain lacks not for geniuses!"

Jiang Chen chuckled, rather liking Xiang Qin's attitude. After all, this fellow clearly delineated his grudges from his debts of gratitude. He was someone who was able to put down his high emotions just as easily as he could pick them up. This kind of attitude was necessary for a genius to rise. To grow jealous after losing one match and be unable to recover from it, well, that was a fake genius.

Thunderous applause sounded from beneath the stage in unrehearsed accord. All of the geniuses who were present started clapping. They had been conquered by this match, and felt genuine admiration for both participants. Almost everyone in the audience, with the exception of the Regal Pill Palace, was applauding loudly. It didn't look like they were going to stop anytime soon either. Although they hadn't witnessed the power of Xiang Qin's totem, and didn't see the ultimate battle, this match that hadn't happened had left a deep impression in everyone's minds.

Xiang Wentian of the Great Cathedral sighed, "What need do we have to worry about the Myriad Domain not achieving anything great with such geniuses? When our geniuses are so, what right does Great Scarlet have to live with their noses in the air? Why must we fear them and live in terror after our kin have been slaughtered?"

"Palace Head Dan Chi, will you possibly let go of someone as beloved as Mu Gaoqi given that he has a dragon bloodline?" Xiang Wentian asked probingly. "Just let me know what your conditions are."

Palace Head Dan Chi smiled, "Ole brother Xiang, this isn't someone you can steal."

Xiang Wentian scratched his head, "Dan Chi, I'm really not speaking out of personal desire right now. I just feel that it's a bit of a pity for Mu Gaoqi to be in the Regal Pill Palace. He seems to be more suited to my Great Cathedral?"

Dan Chi looked at Jiang Chen and saw the latter nod at him. Dan Chi knew what Jiang Chen was thinking of, "Ole brother Xiang, you already tried stealing him away at the Pill Battles. Didn't he turn you down then?"

Wang Jianyu of the Sacred Sword Palace walked over before Xiang Wentian had a chance to respond. "Dan Chi, the martial competitions are over now. I'm curious just what kind of fortune Mu Gaoqi has run into? I don't think he's a simple character, is he?"

"So what if he isn't?" Dan Chi said faintly when he saw Wang Jianyu.

"Hmph. who knows what ambitions and scheme your Regal Pill Palace has in hiding Mu Gaoqi for all this time? In my opinion, we need to investigate Mu Gaoqi's background and see if the Regal Pill Palace has colluded with any outside influences. We already have the example of the Tristar Sect, who's to say that you weren't involved as well?" Wang Jianyu was absolutely eaten away by jealousy at the moment. He could see that the Sacred Sword Palace was mere moments away from being crushed underfoot by the Regal Pill Palace, so he chose to step forward and muddy the waters at this moment. He had to, no matter how chaotic the situation was.

"I say, Wang Jianyu, you've lost your mind, haven't you?" Dan Chi laughed coldly. "My Regal Pill Palace collude with external enemies? Show us your evidence, and shut up if you don't have any!"

Xiang Wentian also rolled his eyes. "Wang Jianyu, now's not the time for personal grudges. Set aside your personal goals in the face of the greater picture of the Myriad Domain."

Wang Jianyu responded without a trace of emotion in his voice, "Ole brother Xiang, I know you treasure talent, but you need to think carefully as well. What if Mu Gaoqi is actually a pawn of the enemy? Wouldn't we be sleeping with wolves?"

These words were quite blatantly pointed. Even Elder Lian Cheng from the Regal Pill Palace grew enraged. Although he didn't wish to see Elder Yun Nie's disciple be so extraordinary, it was all too clear that Mu Gaoqi would be able to change the fortunes of the Regal Pill Palace. He would lead the Regal Pill Palace into a new age of glory. Therefore, the sect would suffer the greatest loss if he were targeted. And so, Elder Lian Cheng suppressed the jealousy in his heart and finally spoke up, "Wang Jianyu, at the end of the day, you're an esteemed sect head. How do you have the face to act so ridiculously shameless? You lost, deal with it. A genius like Xiang Qin forfeited as well! Your words are no different than the resentful baying of a rabid dog!"

Elder Lian Cheng had a bad temper as well as a foul mouth, a fact well known by all. Wang Jianyu was enraged by these insults from Elder Lian Cheng. "What, can I not take a loss? Which of your eyes has seen that? Can't I be thinking for the greater picture of the Myriad Domain as well?"

"Greater picture? And are you worthy of talking about the greater picture?! You're a typical case of trashing something just because you're jealous! You can point to anyone here and say that they're an enemy pawn. Even you yourself wouldn't be able to prove your own innocence! Bring out your evidence if you want to slander others. Otherwise, stop running your mouth. If you can accuse others, so can they accuse you. If that's what you want, let's just all do nothing and spend our days running our mouths off at each other!"

One had to say, in spite of his foul mouth, Elder Lian Cheng was very eloquent. Many were nodding in agreement after all of this.

Honored Master Tian Ming also walked up. "Ole brother Wang, I feel like we can't speak of something like this so easily. Everyone has proof that the Tristar Sect betrayed us. All the rest of the sects are all sitting here, and it's difficult for anyone to prove their innocence. After all, it's difficult to explain what happens in private."

"Honored Master Tian Ming is right, if the Regal Pill Palace and Ninesuns Sky Sect really are in cahoots, then that Sky Sect true disciple wouldn't have gone to attack the Regal Pill Palace!"

Everyone started speaking up, and it was apparent that no one was on Wang Jianyu's side. The facts were clear. The Great Cathedral had lost the finals and hadn't complained, nor had they taken the chance to make any trouble. It was apparent from this that Wang Jianyu wouldn't be successful in stirring up any trouble at this time.

Xiang Wentian chuckled and looked at Dan Chi, "Old brother Dan Chi, I did try to lure someone away from you at the Pill Battles, but that was Jiang Chen. This time it's Mu Gaoqi. Don't be in a hurry to reject me; we promise to not make use of his pill dao at all. That's still the resource of the Regal Pill Palace. I just feel that with his dragon bloodline..."

Dan Chi waved his hand. "Ole brother Xiang, you'd have to ask him about this."

Xiang Wentian looked at Jiang Chen, "Sage nephew Gaoqi, my proposal..."

Jiang Chen smiled faintly and raised a cupped fist salute, "Family Head Xiang, I am a disciple of the Regal Pill Palace and don't have any thoughts of joining any other sects for now. Besides, the Great Cathedral has an enormous amount of geniuses. Brother Xiang Qin, Yue Baize, Lang Jiunling, and Yuan Yuan will all certainly be pillars of the sect in the future." He paused here, "And to be honest, there's something I must come clean about. I'm actually not Mu Gaoqi."

"What?"

Everyone was taken by surprise when he said this, and even Wang Jianyu was first stunned before quickly turning overjoyed. "What did I say? I said this kid was a bit strange! Well now? I was right wasn't I?"

The others were all looking on with faces of stunned astonishment. Even the Regal Pill Palace folks were at a loss as they stared dumbly at Jiang Chen, not knowing what his words meant. If you aren't Mu Gaoqi, then who are you? Can it be that after all this time and winning the championship, you're not a Regal Pill Palace disciple?! Then all our rejoicing was pointless!

Only Dan Chi still had a smile on his face. He was exchanging looks with Jiang Chen and knew very well what was on his mind. There was no need to keep concealing the matter anymore. After all, the aftereffects of this battle were too great. If they still didn't reveal the truth, then Mu Gaoqi would be in for a world of trouble. Besides, now that the match was over, Jiang Chen had fewer concerns about everything. He'd pretended to be Mu Gaoqi before so that he wouldn't be discriminated against along the way, and to avoid the inevitable interrogation from affecting his participation in the Grand Ceremony. Now that it was over, he didn't need to worry about that anymore. He'd shown his strength and sufficiently awed everyone present. Even the leaders of the sects would have to think first before questioning him. And so, there was no need to continue to keep his identity a secret.

Chapter 666: Jiang Chen Reveals Himself, Astounds All Present

What was going on? Mu Gaoqi was saying that he wasn't Mu Gaoqi? Then who was he?

All eyes were on him and scanning furiously, full of curiosity and speculation. This change was simply too ridiculous. He'd put on such a show and fight, overcoming all obstacles, but was turning out not to be Mu Gaoqi? One had to say, the sudden changes to this script made those watching feel that they couldn't mentally keep up.

Huang'er down beneath the stage had a faint smile on her face. She had also guessed that Jiang Chen was about to reveal his identity. After all, it wouldn't do to continue in this manner. Mu Gaoqi didn't have this kind of strength. It wouldn't be good for him to have this kind of reputation. With Jiang Chen's personality, he would never create trouble for his friends.

Palace Head Dan Chi raised his hands in a cupped fist salute and ignored Wang Jianyu taking delight in his misery. He spoke sincerely, "Everyone, we shouldn't have kept it a secret from you, it was just that..."

Wang Jianyu roared angrily, "Stop talking, Dan Chi! Answer truthfully! Do you dare say that your Regal Pill Palace has nothing wrong with it now?"

Dan Chi smiled faintly, "And what's wrong with us?"

“This fellow’s background? Dare you say where he’s from?” Wang Jianyu felt that he had finally grasped onto the Regal Pill Palace’s secret.

Dan Chi looked at him as if he were looking at an idiot. “I was going to tell everyone anyways, do I need your reminder?”

Xiang Wentian smiled wryly, “Come on, out with it ole brother Dan Chi.”

Even Honored Master Tian Ming didn’t speak up on behalf of the Regal Pill Palace this time. After all, everyone would feel a bit of doubt before his identity was revealed.

“He may not be Mu Gaoqi, but he’s someone you’re all familiar with. Jiang Chen, show yourself!”

Jiang Chen? The faces of those assembled all changed enormously again when they heard this name. Jiang Chen? Had they heard wrongly? How could it be Jiang Chen? Shouldn’t Jiang Chen be within Mt. Rippling Mirage? He might’ve even perished within it after all these years. What was he doing here?

Jiang Chen smiled faintly and ripped off his disguise with a shake of his body, revealing his true form. His confident smile and sharply defined features gave everyone an enormous visual impact. There was the air of a victor in his smile, making the other geniuses somehow feel a bit ashamed of themselves.

Ling Bi’er’s heart trembled the moment Jiang Chen revealed himself. When she saw that familiar face that had haunted her dreams, she too felt an irrepressible surge of emotion. Which girl didn’t have dreams? Which girl didn’t hope for the prince of her dreams to appear in front of her in a position of utmost superiority? Jiang Chen was satisfying almost all of her daydreams in this moment, and Ling Bi’er felt herself completely sunk in his attraction.

Huang’er also seemed to detect Ling Bi’er’s emotional ripples, but she didn’t grow jealous. Her smile was still that generous and open beneath her veil. With his display of such glory and prowess, he sits firmly on the seat of top genius in the Myriad Domain, doesn’t he? Elder Shun would be quite gratified if he knew all this. To be honest, Huang’er also knew that Jiang Chen’s potential was astounding, but she had to admit after she witnessed all of his methods that this man from the Eastern Kingdom was imprinting himself ever further into his consciousness.

Jiang Chen!

Xiang Wentian smiled ruefully, at a loss for words. He had indeed tried to tempt Jiang Chen at the Pill Battles, but the Regal Pill Palace and Jiang Chen had turned him down. He finally understood Dan Chi’s words now. He had indeed been rejected once, so how would he possibly succeed now?

Xiang Qin was in great spirits when he saw Jiang Chen. “Hahaha! Jiang Chen, it’s you! Good, good, very good! I feel so much better all of a sudden! I was thinking how the Regal Pill Palace would have not one, but two disciples who could heartily defeat me! Now that I know it’s all the same person, I feel so much better!” This fellow had a straightforward personality and said whatever was on his mind.

Shen Qinghong was also greatly surprised. “Jiang Chen? Then junior brother Mu Gaoqi...”

“Gaoqi should still be cultivating in the Regal Pill Palace,” Jiang Chen smiled. “I’m worried of making trouble for him with my impersonation, this is why I’ve revealed myself.”

Shen Qinghong nodded and sighed, “Jiang Chen, I really do bow down to you.”

Jun Mobai walked over speaking in a very friendly tone, "Jiang Chen, I haven't had the chance to invite you to my residence, and had thought I wouldn't have the chance to in the future. But to think..."

Elder Lian Cheng's bit of jealousy towards Elder Yun Nie vanished when he saw that Mu Gaoqi turned into Jiang Chen. He was in a great mood that it wasn't Elder Yun Nie's personal disciple. As for Jiang Chen, this kid had been ridiculous already when he'd been in the Regal Pill Palace, so he could actually accept Jiang Chen being even more heaven defying now. However, Wang Jianyu obviously wouldn't let them off the hook so easily. He called out loudly, "Well isn't this even more interesting! Everyone knows that Jiang Chen should be in Mt. Rippling Mirage. What's he doing here for no reason? Do I have reason to think that this is an imposter?"

This matter was simply too bizarre, no one couldn't make sense of it at all. Why had Jiang Chen suddenly appeared here? This didn't make any sense at all!

Jiang Chen looked remotely at Wang Jianyu. "What? how do you want to play this time? Do you want to test my bloodline? Or accuse me of being planted by the Sky Sect?"

Wang Jianyu snorted coldly and spoke arrogantly, "I don't need to do anything. I only ask this, how are you possibly here if you're in Mt. Rippling Mirage? Do you take all of us for idiots to be played around by your Regal Pill Palace?"

Everyone flung curious looks over at Jiang Chen. They were also curious and wanted an answer from Jiang Chen.

Xiang Wentian chuckled, "Indeed, Jiang Chen, I've heard of your exploits in the ancient herb garden as well. You didn't emerge from Mt. Rippling Mirage."

Wei Wuying of the Walkabout Sect also spoke up, "Indeed, we've all seen this matter with our own eyes."

Jiang Chen smiled, "And this matter is precisely what I'm afraid that you lot are still harboring a grudge about!"

Xiang Wentian responded faintly, "You had no wrong in that matter. Everyone was fighting for the sky rank spirit herbs in the ancient herb garden on basis of their own strength. It's not all you. Besides, you refined the antidote and saved everyone. As much as some might still hold a grudge, they swore a heavenly oath to not make trouble on basis of that matter."

"I will thank everyone then since that's the case." Jiang Chen smiled and cupped his fists, raising them in the four directions as a gesture of thanks. n))0v**ELb**1n

"Hmph, Jiang Chen, are you playing dumb? Everyone's asking how you got out, do you think you can get by with this smoke and mirror?" Wang Jianyu took threatening steps forward and wouldn't allow Jiang Chen to evade the question.

Jiang Chen shrugged, "I don't think I have an obligation to explain myself to you, hmm?"

Wang Jianyu burst out laughing, "Look at that everyone! He's feeling guilty! I don't think he could've walked out before the formation cycle was up. If there really is a problem with the Great Formation, then why is he the only one out and not Elder Chen of my Sacred Sword Palace either?"

Wang Jianyu's words still ended up having some effect. Suspicion was written all over everyone's faces and they were also curious, was this young man really Jiang Chen? Or was he yet another imposter? There was a risk to pretending to be Mu Gaoqi, but none whatsoever for Jiang Chen since he was locked away in Mt. Rippling Mirage. There was no witness to accuse him otherwise!

Xiang Wentian too felt this matter was too important. "Sage nephew Jiang Chen, if you can, please explain yourself."

Wei Wuying also remarked, "You must explain. The Great Formation of Mt. Rippling Mirage has to do with the ancient herb garden. Anything to do with it has to do with the source of all spirit herbs in the Myriad Domain. This is very important."

Even Honored Master Tian Ming couldn't speak for the Regal Pill Palace this time. He only looked at Jiang Chen, waiting to hear his explanation. Jiang Chen smiled frankly, "It's actually very simple. A crack formed in the formation and I happened to find it. That's all."

"What?" Everyone was flabbergasted. How could there be a crack in the formation? The Great Formation had been passed down for thousands of years. They'd never heard of any crack! Was Jiang Chen talking sheer nonsense? [1]

Wang Jianyu guffawed loudly. "Do you hear that, do you hear that everyone? He can say something so ludicrous as this! A crack in the Great Formation? Do you all believe this? Ole brother Xiang, you're a ninth level sage realm cultivator. Have you ever felt this?"

Xiang Wentian had a solemn expression on his face as well as he stared at Jiang Chen. Jiang Chen however, remained perfectly at ease. "Wang Jianyu, I have no need to be polite since you are an elder with no virtue. You can simply find a time and take a walk with me to the Great Formation to see if there's a crack! I walked out from there, what can you do about it? You want proof? Easy!" He made a grasping motion with his hands and summoned forth various sky rank spirit herbs. "I trust no one's unfamiliar with these?"

They were the spirit herbs that Jiang Chen had taken from each sect back then. No one would be unfamiliar with them. Elder Wu Hen of the Walkabout Sect smiled ruefully, "It really is him."

He'd made up his mind not to fight against Jiang Chen when he left the ancient herb garden, and was now both frightened and relieved. What a good thing he'd done in not continuing to fight against Jiang Chen. This child was absolutely insane! His strength hadn't been enough to measure up to the elder's in the ancient herb garden and so he'd escaped, but now Elder Wu Hen was well aware that five of himself wouldn't be enough to withstand against the bombardment from Jiang Chen's golden armored warriors, not to mention his dragon bloodline...

The sky rank spirit herbs were the best evidence. Those of the other sects all shook their heads with rueful smiles. They had once possessed these herbs, but they'd been taken away. Now that they saw the herbs again, they did so with mixed emotions. Elder Xiang Gan of the Great Cathedral was also extremely dejected. He also knew that even Family Head Xiang Wentian would have to treat Jiang Chen with caution now, much less himself!

Translator's note, I really wanted to write: Was Jiang Chen talking out of his ass?

Chapter 667: Sacred Sword Palace, All Of You Come At Me Together!

These sky rank herbs were the best evidence of who he was. It wasn't something that people could fake. Yet, Wang Jianyu was quick to try and refute, "Don't forget everyone! Jiang Chen could've handed these spirit herbs over to Elder Yun Nie in the beginning, and had the elder bring them out! That's not impossible either, don't be taken in by them!" n)-Ovelbn

Jiang Chen had thought that the sky rank herbs would be enough to dispel everyone's doubts, but these words awoke another train of suspicion in their minds. Indeed, Jiang Chen could've handed these spirit herbs over to Elder Yun Nie and had the elder bring them out! Bringing them out now might not mean anything. If the Regal Pill Palace really was up to something, they could easily pull the wool over everyone's eyes in bringing out these spirit herbs. The doubts that had been dispelled grew once again.

Jiang Chen had been contemptuous of Wang Jianyu to begin with, but now his temper had been completely roused by this sect head's insistence on creating trouble for him time and again. He rolled his eye and stared straight at Wang Jianyu, "Wang Jianyu, you're doing this on purpose, aren't you?"

Wang Jianyu laughed, "I have a clear conscience. My only intention is the good of the Myriad Domain. What proof do you have that you're actually Jiang Chen?"

"Proof?" Jiang Chen laughed heartily. "Why don't I tell you how we all killed Elder Chen? That was rather exciting; I wonder if you want to hear it?"

Wang Jianyu's face changed greatly as Jiang Chen's words hit him, and he unconsciously reached for the hilt of his sword. Undeterred, Jiang Chen continued on with great gusto, "That old man Elder Chen used sword butterflies to split everyone into two directions, having that idiot Elder Xi take another bunch of little idiots to lure away the Great Cathedral and Tristar Sect. He then followed me all the way back to the island..."

Jiang Chen described the battle with great enthusiasm, obviously with some creative modifications to what had happened. He naturally wouldn't reveal Long Xiaoxuan's presence, but described Elder Chen's demise at the hands of his golden-armored warriors instead. No one knew when he'd gotten them anyways; he could say whatever he wanted. The audience was enthralled by his story, growing more astonished at each twist in the story. Who would've thought that the earth sage realm Elder Chen would be so despicable? And then die in such an ignoble manner?

Silence, dead silence prevailed.

Every detail from Jiang Chen was a perfect match with what had happened. Of that, the Great Cathedral could bear witness because they'd wanted to follow Jiang Chen then too. They'd wanted to benefit from a fight between Jiang Chen and the Sacred Sword Palace. Xiang Qin called out, "I don't care if you all believe it or not, but I do, absolutely. He's Jiang Chen, there's no doubt about it. The Regal Pill Palace had already left by then; there's no way they could describe this."

A rueful laugh suddenly sounded from the Walkabout Sect side. It was Elder Wu Hen. "Everyone can stop being suspicious. I can confirm that this fellow is Jiang Chen."

Jiang Chen started. He'd never thought that Elder Wu Hen of the Walkabout Sect would step forth to bear witness. After all, they'd fought to the death for that sky rank spirit herb, and he'd chased Jiang Chen only to fail. It looks like Elder Wu Hen's thoroughly bowed down to me?

"Don't ask me why; I just want to say that it'd be insane if he wasn't Jiang Chen," Elder Wu Hen smiled wryly.

There were people stepping forth from the Great Cathedral and Walkabout Sect. Honored Master Tian Ming also stepped forward at this time, "Since everyone thinks there's no problem, then there's definitely no problem. It's easy to fake being someone, but all of this evidence isn't easy to fake."

Wang Jianyu gritted his teeth. It filled him with a deep sense of helplessness to see everyone choosing to believe Jiang Chen. At the same time, he knew that his window of opportunity had closed. Anything he said now would be for naught. He looked at Jiang Chen with a sinister look. "Not bad, you little scum. You've such a glib tongue that everyone's convinced and vouches for you. My Sacred Sword Palace however, doesn't believe you!"

"Do I need you to?" Jiang Chen smiled faintly.

The Sacred Sword Palace? It was nothing in Jiang Chen's eyes. He wouldn't think much of it in ordinary times, never mind the chaotic times that the Myriad Domain was in now. He'd even killed Cao Jin, so he didn't mind a Sacred Sword Palace at all.

Wang Jianyu looked at Xiang Wentian, "Ole brother Xiang, if I said that my Sacred Sword Palace would like to take care of private grudges with the Regal Pill Palace, would your Great Cathedral agree to it?"

The assembly erupted into an uproar when these words were said. Did the Sacred Sword Palace want to erupt into open hostilities? The atmosphere immediately turned into glass, fragile, but deadly. Dan Chi held up a hand as the Regal Pill Palace bristled from behind him, each of them radiating hostility and ready for anything.

Xiang Wentian looked at Wang Jianyu, "Wang Jianyu, are you looking to rebel?"

Wang Jianyu started. He hadn't thought that the Great Cathedral would oppose him fighting with the Regal Pill Palace! Wouldn't such an action be to the Great Cathedral's benefit? He'd thought that they'd agree wholeheartedly, but he'd actually run into opposition from Xiang Wentian!

Jiang Chen smiled faintly, "Wang Jianyu, are you sure you want to settle the score?" He suddenly grinned and looked over the Sacred Sword Palace entourage. His lips curled indifferently as he said, "Then how about this? No matter how many you've got with you, come at me. I'll take you all on myself."

"What?!" These words were even more explosive than the last. Once again, people began to disbelieve their ears. What did Jiang Chen mean? Him alone against all of the elites of the Sacred Sword Palace? Although their strongest, Wang Jianyu, was only eighth level sage realm, his strength was still rather impressive. It wasn't an empty boast that the Sacred Sword Palace's strength was second only to the Great Cathedral. Was Jiang Chen so arrogant as to take on all of the Sacred Sword Palace by himself? You may be genius enough to crush Wang Han underfoot and force Xiang Qin to forfeit, but that's

limited to the younger generation! Now you want to face the entire Sacred Sword Palace, and all those old monsters hundreds and thousands of years old? This Jiang Chen really did dare run his mouth off.

Dan Chi spoke up noncommittally, "There's no need for this, Jiang Chen. Those of our Regal Pill Palace are all brave warriors. None of us will flee on the eve of battle. His Sacred Sword Palace wants to try and win using a numerical advantage? What does my Regal Pill Palace fear?"

Jiang Chen waved his hand, "Palace Head, allow me to handle this." He'd made up his mind this time. You Sacred Sword Palace fellows keep challenging my bottom line time and time again. I'm no saint to keep endlessly enduring. He'd decided, to hell with everything. It was time to settle this once and for all. If he could fell the peak of ninth level sage realm Cao Jin, what was there to be scared of in just a Sacred Sword Palace? As strong as they were, they wouldn't be stronger than Cao Jin's group of three. Their strongest combatant was an eighth level sage realm Wang Jianyu. In terms of strength, he was miles from Cao Jin. Therefore, Jiang Chen knew that if he were to use formations, he would be able to easily destroy the entire Sacred Sword Palace. He wasn't blindly confident. He was well aware that the Sacred Sword Palace wasn't the Great Cathedral.

Jiang Chen wouldn't have contemplated this if his opponent had been the Great Cathedral. Their ability to make their bloodline berserk was terrifying enough, let alone their totemic power. If Xiang Wentian went berserk and used the immense power of the totems, he might even be on par with an initial stage emperor realm cultivator. Jiang Chen may not be afraid of that level of strength, but he'd find it tricky as well.

However, the Sacred Sword Palace was different. They just weren't as strong as the Great Cathedral, even with trump cards. Although Jiang Chen hadn't digested even one tenth of the heritage he'd received from the Ancient Crimson Heavens Sect, it was more than enough to handle the Sacred Sword Palace. He wouldn't even have to bring Long Xiaoxuan into the battle!

Jiang Chen's current posture alone was enough to make those of the other sects all look at each other askance. After all, even if he had displayed an overwhelming strength, it wasn't at the level where it could back up his words. Yet, the forefathers of the Great Cathedral were also looking at each other speechlessly. They'd discovered that Jiang Chen was truly unfathomable. It looked like he hadn't displayed the true depths of his strength yet in previous matches. This meant that he still hadn't brought out his final ace when Xiang Qin had forfeited!

"Just... what kind of fortune does Jiang Chen have?"[1] Xiang Wentian of the Great Cathedral experienced a complicated mix of emotions at that moment. He really wanted to take Jiang Chen away from the Regal Pill Palace, but knew that even if he did so, Jiang Chen wasn't the least bit interested in joining the Great Cathedral. Right now, it looked like he wanted to take on the entire Sacred Sword Palace in single combat! With Xiang Wentian's understanding of Jiang Chen, this kid likely wasn't speaking frivolously. Does he really have that much confidence? Just how frightening is his strength?

Even Xiang Wentian himself wouldn't be willing to take on an entire sect alone. Although he had the strength to, he wouldn't have the attitude to say it so boldly!

"Everyone, might we borrow the premises for a battle?" Jiang Chen smiled faintly and raised a cupped fist salute in all directions, speaking quite politely. All of the sect heavyweights were taken with curiosity at this point and subconsciously had their people back away.

Honored Master Tian Ming smiled wryly, "Sage nephew Jiang Chen, must you really do this?"

Jiang Chen smiled, "Since they wish to settle old scores, then let's settle it all here and now!"

Xiang Wentian's heart trembled. He stared fixedly at Wang Jianyu, "Wang Jianyu, are you sure you want to settle the score between the two sects right now?"

Wang Jianyu laughed coldly, "Let this kid try his luck. His arrogance is praiseworthy, if nothing else."

Xiang Wentian nodded, "Alright, then the situation is clear. Your Sacred Sword Palace is acting alone to destroy the greater picture of the Myriad Domain. This isn't just making an enemy out of the Regal Pill Palace, but of the entire Myriad Domain as well. Are you sure?"

Wang Jianyu's heart sank, "What do you mean by this, ole brother Xiang?"

"These are tumultuous times for the Myriad Domain. Not only are you not thinking of the greater picture, but you also constantly stir up internal conflict. I feel that your intentions are damnable. Therefore, I call upon us of the Myriad Domain to unite and suppress the Sacred Sword Palace!"

The faces of all those in the Sacred Sword Palace changed when they heard this. This wasn't a crime that they could shoulder. Things would go from bad to utterly dire if everyone started gunning for them. As arrogant and fierce as Wang Jianyu was, he was also stunned silent at this moment. He could tell that Xiang Wentian wasn't just saying this! It was rather Jiang Chen who sighed inwardly. He knew of the family head's intentions behind this move.

Chapter 668: Opening of the Myriad Domain Paramount Realm

Xiang Wentian might've looked like he was publicly censuring the Sacred Sword Palace, but in reality, he was protecting them. The Sacred Sword Palace wouldn't dare stir up trouble after this display of dominance, and he wouldn't have a reason to suppress the Sacred Sword Palace either. Jiang Chen looked at Xiang Wentian meaningfully, but didn't reveal the latter's intentions. It looked like Xiang Wentian had guessed that Jiang Chen really had enough strength to off the entire sect. Otherwise, he wouldn't have thought to do something like this. Hidden in his words were also a hint to the Sacred Sword Palace to back down. Of course, Jiang Chen was also guessing that Xiang Wentian's actions weren't targeting him, but rather took into consideration the greater picture of the Myriad Domain. The Tristar Sect had already betrayed them and chipped away at their battle power. If the Sacred Sword Palace was also destroyed, then the Myriad Domain would really be hurting then.

Beams of light exploded out of Wang Jianyu's eyes, but died down. After a long tense moment, he snorted coldly. "Good, good! Since ole brother Xiang has said as much, then I must show you this face today."

In reality, apart from Wang Jianyu, none of the others from the Sacred Sword Palace wanted to battle the Regal Pill Palace either. They were firmly underfoot at the moment, and had no assurance of victory if they went toe-to-toe against anyone else. Jiang Chen was also quite the odd kid. They couldn't help be a bit wary of him. It seemed like he'd even killed Elder Chen. Who was to say that he didn't have a method to kill them too?

Wang Jianyu was very strong, but things would be uncertain if Jiang Chen had an even stronger backup plan up his sleeve. Even if the elders could save themselves, Jiang Chen could very well take out half of

their geniuses. That would be an unmitigated disaster for the Sacred Sword Palace. Therefore, no matter what benefit was dangled in front of them, they weren't willing to take this fight.

There was no honor in winning as a sect over one young man, and great shame in losing. Not only would they suffer great shame, but they might also incur enormous injuries, possibly even ones that were impossible to recover from. No matter what angle they looked at things from, there was no need for this match. Therefore, they were rather relieved to see Wang Jianyu give up, even the arrogant Wang Han. He'd already been thoroughly cowed by Jiang Chen. He just wished for this harbinger of bad luck to not appear in front of him anymore. He could hide from Jiang Chen, even if he couldn't win in a fight! Although he hated Jiang Chen with a passion, Wang Han had tragically discovered that he would likely never surpass Jiang Chen in this lifetime.

The Walkabout Sect was actually feeling slightly dejected that the Sacred Sword Palace had backed down. They wanted to watch a good show and see how this situation of one person against an entire sect would play out. But Wang Jianyu had actually shrunk back at the critical moment!

Xiang Wentian however, breathed a sigh of relief. From his perspective, he didn't wish for the Myriad Domain to clash and take any more losses in civil war.

"Ole brother Dan Chi, show me some face and settle your grudges later, alright?" Xiang Wentian looked towards Dan Chi.

Dan Chi responded remotely, "We naturally have to show ole brother Xiang some face, however, there won't be a next time. I'm sure you have all seen that Wang Jianyu always steps out to make trouble whenever a matter involves my Regal Pill Palace."

This was true, something that everyone had borne witness too. Indeed, if anything whatsoever came up with the Regal Pill Palace, the Sacred Sword Palace would always be the one to create the most trouble. No one could deny that.

Xiang Wentian looked at Wang Jianyu, "Ole brother Wang, you should more or less think of the greater picture when we are faced with a great enemy, shouldn't you? If disaster truly befalls the Myriad Domain, what meaning do you think there will be in the grudges between the two sects?"

How would Wang Jianyu not know of this? However, when faced with his mortal enemy, he'd rather be bullied by an outside enemy than see his rival grow stronger. "Old brother Xiang, I'll show you face and not make more trouble at this time's ceremony. However, the grudge between the Sacred Sword Palace and Regal Pill Palace does not end here. The mountains are high and the rivers long, this matter will not end just like this." Wang Jianyu huffed and waved his hand, "We go."

"Go?" An elder of the Sacred Sword Palace was taken aback.

"What else can we do other than leave? There's no spot for the Sacred Sword Palace in the Myriad Domain, so do you want to stay and watch them strut around?" Wang Jianyu retorted angrily.

The Sacred Sword Palace made their way away from the ceremony, but an elder spoke quietly when they'd put a few miles between them and the rest of the Myriad Domain sects, "Palace Head, are we really leaving?"

Wang Jianyu leered, "Leave? How could it be that easy? We'll hide in wait first and wait for them to emerge from the Paramount Realm. Then we'll ambush the Regal Pill Palace when they separate. If we don't kill that little cretin Jiang Chen now, we won't have the chance to in the future."

After all, Jiang Chen's strength was rising too quickly. He'd just stepped forth to challenge their entire sect by himself. Not only did this deeply offend Wang Jianyu, it also made wariness grow in his heart for the first time. Even if the kid was boasting, he must've had some confidence in his ability to defy the Sacred Sword Palace. He wouldn't have been so arrogant otherwise. Therefore, the best way to handle Jiang Chen now wasn't through a match in the ring, but a sudden ambush that would catch him off guard. Everything would be much easier if they could injure him in an ambush. The Sacred Sword Palace wasn't ranked second in strength among the sects for nothing. Naturally, it had some of its own trump cards.

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Now that the Grand Ceremony was over, the rankings were posted for all to see, and Jiang Chen's name was on prominent display at the top. He had the honor of being the champion of this year's Grand Ceremony. The Regal Pill Palace was delighted and congratulated Jiang Chen enthusiastically. Even the previously rebellious Nie Chong acknowledged Jiang Chen's prowess. He had no ability to do so otherwise, because the strength that Jiang Chen displayed gave him no reason not to submit. To be honest, he didn't even have the strength to be jealous of Jiang Chen. Much less him, Shen Qinghong didn't have the right to either. Only a genius on the level of Xiang Qin would have the right to envy Jiang Chen.

There were three major areas in the Paramount Realm, with nine levels in total. Three were in the transcendent region, three levels in the inner region, and three levels on the outskirts. According to previous ceremony rules, the top sixteen of the martial competition had the right to enter the transcendent region. The top thirty two could enter the inner region, with those ranking thirty third and beyond with only the right to stay in the outskirts.

The Paramount Realm would be open for nine days, allotting one day per level. There were many geniuses who'd entered the Paramount Realm after the previous Grand Ceremonies, but very few had found any fortune in the transcendent region. Barely any of them had made it to that area to begin with, and those who did came back out empty handed. Those who returned all said that there was nothing in the transcendent region at all.

"Disciples, you all are top sixteen and have the right to enter the transcendent region. However, I'll be frank and say that when I had the chance to explore the transcendent region, I didn't get anything for my time there. There simply doesn't seem to be anything there. The heritage I obtained was from the inner region. Your fate is in your hands this time, and it's up to you if you would rather head to the transcendent region or stay within the inner region to seek your heritage." Dan Chi gave his disciples some sincere advice as someone who'd gone through the process before.

It was possible to have great gains in the transcendent region, but even more likely that one would receive nothing at all. Competition would be high in the inner region, but there were many legacies left in the inner region and a high possibility of obtaining treasures. Dan Chi was leaving the ultimate choice up to the youngsters. He might be the sect head, but he couldn't make the decision for them.

“How are you choosing, Jiang Chen?” Shen Qinghong asked curiously.

“Let’s go in first, nine days really isn’t much time. It’s an unknown if we’ll even make it to the transcendent region.” Jiang Chen smiled.

Jun Mobai nodded with a slight smile, seeming to agree very much with Jiang Chen. Ling Bi’er looked at Jiang Chen. It was obvious that she would choose whatever Jiang Chen chose. When Shen Qinghong and Jun Mobai saw her thus, a wry feeling crept into their hearts. They understood that Ling Bi’er’s heart had made its choice already. In the end, this icy beauty had opened her heart to Jiang Chen. As for Nie Chong, he hadn’t made it into the top sixteen, so he wasn’t faced with this dilemma. It was already quite a feat that he could enter the inner region. If things had gone as expected, he was supposed to have been eliminated in the first round, but had made it into the top sixty four thanks to the additional spots that had opened up. He’d then been lucky in the draw to make it into the top thirty two and received the chance to enter the inner region. Otherwise, he wouldn’t even have that to look forward to.

“Alright, there’s not much time left. Everyone, go make your preparations. The Paramount Realm will be opening soon.”

The Paramount Realm was sealed shut, a seal that even the Great Scarlet Mid Region hadn’t been able to break through when they’d invaded. After all, this place was a culmination of all the emperor realm cultivators in the Myriad Domain’s history, and even had the life essences of the Titled Great Emperors from ancient times. Unless the invader reached that level of strength, they would have almost no hope of breaking through the seal by force. Therefore, the invaders had unsuccessfully made several attempts before leaving without anything gained.

Fortunately, every region had a place like the Paramount Region. It wasn’t a phenomenon unique to the Myriad Domain. When all was said and done, it was a cemetery of experts. The Great Scarlet Mid Region had a similar place, containing even stronger inheritances. Therefore, although the Great Scarlet Mid Region wanted to gain access, they didn’t want it too badly. They might not even find anything worth the trouble if they’d gone to the effort of breaking through the seal.

“Remember, you only have nine days. You must crush the jade transportation token in your hands after nine days or you’ll be trapped inside. The Paramount Realm is a place of rebirth, and the energy of life is very weak there. I can’t guarantee that you’ll be able to survive the thirty years within until the next ceremony.” Xiang Wentian swept his eyes across everyone’s face in solemn warning.

Chapter 669: The Ming Tuo Relic *nOvE(L&.ln*

Jiang Chen waved to Palace Head Dan Chi and Huang’er, also sending a message at the same time, “Be careful Palace Head, I don’t think the Sacred Sword Palace will rest their case this easily. I even feel that something else will be happening during the Myriad Grand Ceremony.”

Dan Chi smiled faintly, having been prepared for something like this beforehand. “Remember what I reminded you about.” He was referring to keeping an eye on Jun Mobai. Jiang Chen nodded and looked at Huang’er. She had the sudden urge to enter along with Jiang Chen, despite her usually indifferent mindset. However, her cool logic quickly triumphed over this momentary impulse. She knew that if she wanted to go in as well, this would place Jiang Chen in an exceedingly difficult position. She thought for a moment and still decided to wait outside.

“Miss Huang’er, I hope you’ll take care of the Regal Pill Palace some if anything happens in the outside,” Jiang Chen didn’t put on airs either. He knew the person who’d chased off Cao Jin last time was Miss Huang’er. There were no other such experts around, and how would anyone else in the Myriad Domain chase off Cao Jin with such good intentions towards the Regal Pill Palace?

It was almost impossible for it to be anyone other than Miss Huang’er.

Huang’er smiled faintly and nodded slightly, but didn’t say anything.

The Paramount Realm was an area of rebirth, and no one could tell just how large this area was. It was an area that’d been created since the ancient times and held within it the profound mysteries of space. What looked like a boundless world would possibly not even exist in the blueprint of the Myriad Domain. Therefore, the hundred from the rankings of the Myriad Hidden Dragon Trials were as if flinging a hundred pebbles into the ocean. It was immensely difficult to give rise to any large ripples.

Ling Bi’er had planned on traveling with Jiang Chen, but discovered that they’d landed in completely different areas despite entering through the same door. There was no sign of Jiang Chen at all.

At the same moment, Jiang Chen himself had landed in the Paramount Realm and noticed that there wasn’t a sign of anyone in a span of a few miles around him. He’d seemed to enter a region that was desolate beyond belief, a place that’d seemed to be abandoned by the outside world. The sky was heavily overcast, and there seemed to be no life in this dreary world.

And yet, there was flora all over the ground, and growing quite lushly. There seemed to be no difference between the vegetation here and in the outside world. But for some reason, the plants here gave one an exceedingly sinister feeling. There wasn’t the slightest sign of life to them.

“My gosh, what kind of place is this? Is this a land of despair after armageddon?” Jiang Chen looked around and laughed wryly. A place of rebirth was a place where experts passed on, so it being full of the air of death was no surprise. But in this Paramount Realm, even plants that were alive looked to have the same characteristics. They seemed to be without life, without vigor, and deathly still. This place quite surprised Jiang Chen.

He travelled according to the instructions in the jade token, picking up the general direction and moving forward. The scenery in front of him didn’t change even after a dozen miles. There were mountains and rivers, grass and forest. It seemed to be a picture of a world. Stagnant and devoid of life.

“No wonder Family Head Xiang Wentian gave us such reminders. This Paramount Realm is indeed a place devoid of the energy of life. However, it’s a suitable place for rebirth.” Jiang Chen finally understood why Xiang Wentian had emphasized that everyone had to leave within nine days. Once the seal closed and they were unable to leave, they would never survive here for thirty years and await the arrival of the next ceremony. The energy in this life was enough for a few months at most, and this was the best case scenario. “I can’t be overconfident this time. I must leave within nine days. Otherwise, I wouldn’t last thirty months here, much less than thirty years.”

This place was different from Mt. Rippling Mirage. The mountain was another forbidden zone, but it was a place full of life no matter what. It was only sectioned off from the outside world through use of formation, a way of carving out its own territory. This place however, was obviously a patch of dead

land. The vitality of the outside world wouldn't be able to enter at all, and the life energy within this place was very weak. It wasn't enough to sustain long-term life at all.

Jiang Chen saw no clues along the way, much less any fortune that would be his making. They all said that the Paramount Realm was the place of rebirth for all emperor realm cultivators, but this didn't happen just anywhere in the region. Each spot was carefully selected, and it wouldn't be noticeable in one easy glance. At the heart of it all, even if the experts had moved on, they still liked to play some smoke and mirrors. They wouldn't throw their legacy in here for free for someone to just pick up. Therefore, Jiang Chen's leisurely tour of the area didn't immediately gain him any expert's legacy.

There were many who came into the Paramount Realm, and not a small number of people who really did receive a legacy. Each time someone received one however, that meant there was one legacy less. The legacies weren't endless and infinite. There had been no new emperor realm cultivators as time went on, so there wouldn't be any new legacies appearing in the Paramount Realm. That meant each one taken was being drawn off of a dwindling supply. It was an extinct resource. That meant that all the legacies would be exhausted one day.

"Hmm, there's something odd about this place." Jiang Chen suddenly discovered a place that was a bit odd as he walked forward. He used his consciousness and detected that there was actually a small formation in this area. When he entered it skillfully, he discovered that it was a place of rebirth. There wasn't anything special about this place, and it was a rather clever formation. However, he noticed that there wasn't anything left in this place other than a stone inscribed with a message. There was a body, and all of the cultivator's legacy and reflections were completely gone.

Jiang Chen smiled ruefully when he saw this and sighed, "Brother, I don't know how strong you were when you were alive, but you were an emperor realm cultivator alright, just by the fact that your body hasn't rotten after all these years. But you ended up just a bit too tragic. The reflections of your martial dao have all been taken from your stone tablet, and your legacy has been seized. However, they've left your body exposed out here. Just which black-hearted fellow stole your legacy?" He really couldn't let it slide any longer. This was simply out of hand. Inheriting a legacy usually meant inheriting someone's mantle. Even if the heir didn't express anything, they should at least bury the body. It was simply too selfish.

Jiang Chen was resigned. This had nothing to do with him, but since he'd come here, he should at least do them the honor of burying them. After all, the dead commanded respect, and Jiang Chen wasn't that shameless to do otherwise. He dug a pit and moved the corpse into it. He was about to shift the dirt to bury the deceased when something suddenly rolled out from it. It exceeded a faint, golden hue. It was a relic the size of a lotus seed. [1. This is actually a sharira, a Buddhist concept of a small relic from the body of a holy figure, usually a small, crystalized/solid form of part of the body or its ashes.]

"An emperor level relic?" Jiang Chen rubbed his eyes as he couldn't believe what he was seeing. When he took a closer look, he discovered that it was indeed an emperor realm relic that contained strong life force.

An azure light suddenly flashed from it and a coalesced message glyph over it shattered, projecting a voice out. "Whoever buries me will receive the Ming Tuo relic."

The Ming Tuo relic? As Jiang Chen hefted the azure relic in his hand and felt its strong energy ripples, he didn't know whether to laugh or cry. He found it funny because he'd only happened to do a random act of kindness, and hadn't thought that the benefits would be so great! He'd only wanted to keep the cultivator's body from being exposed in the wilderness. This was a mentality that any normal person would have. At the same time, he couldn't help but pity the fellow who'd received the martial dao inheritance. He was lucky in that he'd found a place of rebirth, but the fellow had only received the inheritance. The essence of the owner however, was in this relic.

This was a relic that held all of the life-force of the emperor realm cultivator. Most emperor realm cultivators wouldn't be able to condense their life's essence into one relic without the help of immense methods and strong pills. One would have to have a Embalment Pill in order to condense one's life-force into a relic. Only an Embalment Pill can absorb a cultivator's vitality and contain it. There were other methods and arts that were needed as well, and the cultivator needed to seal off all of their acupoints when they were about to lose all their cultivation to prevent the loss of life-force.

Each step of this process was exceedingly difficult, and one slight mistake would cause all previous efforts to be a waste. Jiang Chen could understand these experts' good intentions. Most experts would be worried at the end of their lives that others would destroy their bodies in order to absorb the last bit of vitality. Therefore, they'd rather choose their own place of passing so they could go through the final steps alone. They wouldn't want anyone to see their ugly struggles at the end of their lives.

This was how this tradition formed after a while. Many experts were willing to choose their final resting place when the end of their lives were coming. Not all of them were like this. Some of the great sects with legacies had experts who were willing to straightforwardly pass on their life essence to the next generation. Of course, there were also those who weren't willing to accept the end of their lives. They would enter the Paramount Realm to hunt for opportunity to save their own lives. This was another reason why many entered the Paramount Realm.

Chapter 670: The Transcendent Region

"Even an expert can't help but feel the passage of time when they reach the end." Jiang Chen lamented as he stared at the pile of dried bones. He could very much imagine this person as an expert who'd moved unhindered in the Divine Abyss Continent countless years ago. At the very least, he must be a reputable person in the Paramount Realm.

However, those who were not acknowledged by the heavenly dao would only live limited lifespans, even if they called themselves emperor cultivators. Those who were not acknowledged by the heavens were only mortal, no matter how long of a lifespan they possessed. If one was mortal, it was inevitable for their lifespan to have an end.

Jiang Chen put away the Ming Tuo relic and said sincerely, "Senior - well, it's not like I'm losing anything by calling you a senior. I have received your Ming Tuo relic, and buried your body. I hope that you have successfully entered the cycle of reincarnation and will be reborn."

Jiang Chen pushed down the mound of soil to fill in the pit and buried the old corpse.

He had spent quite some time sidetracked by this, so he didn't dally, continuing on his way without further ado. Although it was but a tiny episode in his life, one he'd profited from, Jiang Chen couldn't

quite shake the melancholy that had gripped him. Seeing that body had caused him profound sorrow, one that only a likeminded person would share. The powerful memories of his past life and the millions of years he'd lived through elicited a thick sense of discrepancy in Jiang Chen.

It was only now he realized what an unnatural act his father had done in his past life. The Celestial Emperor had somehow managed to prolong his son's life for millions of years, even though Jiang Chen was unable to cultivate. One couldn't describe just how much of a defiance of the natural order this act was. "The cataclysm must have occurred because Father prolonged my life for over millions of years, despite possessing a disabled body. He must've deeply angered the heavens."

It was only now Jiang Chen finally remembered this particular question. He'd been but a mere mortal in the past, but a mere mortal like him had somehow lived for millions of years. How was this possible?

It'd all been thanks to his father engaging in skullduggery, harnessing the very powers of creation to forcefully prolong his son's life. Although his father had been the Celestial Emperor who'd ruled over the heavens, the heavenly dao couldn't be overcome easily even by the Celestial Emperor. Even further, his act of defiance had bought Jiang Chen millions of years.

Jiang Chen's heart brimmed with regret and pain for his father. He might not know how the cataclysm had appeared, but there was no doubt that his millions of years of life had also brought his father ill fortune. It was something that had never occurred to him in his past life. But, faced with that old emperor realm cultivator's body, the realization had finally struck.

A mortal would always have a limited lifespan. In life, that body had been an emperor realm cultivator. He might even have been a Titled Great Emperor. But in the end, he was just a mortal. The final destination of a mortal was simply a pile of white bones. Jiang Chen reminisced about his past life as he thought about those bones. He was supposed to have transformed into a pile of white bones a long time ago, but he'd somehow managed to live for millions of years.

"Father..." All sorts of indescribable feelings welled up in his heart. His father was the only person who could have been this amazing and selfless in the entire world. For his son, he had been willing to defy the heavenly dao. He had even been willing to suffer the cataclysm. For a long moment, Jiang Chen experienced an unspeakable pain in his heart.

He walked for an entire day before he finally felt a bit better. He also reached the second level of the Paramount Realm. There, he discovered another presence around him, a Walkabout Sect disciple. Rather than showing himself, Jiang Chen chose to evade the other, continuing deeper in the Paramount Realm.

As he shook off the negative feelings, Jiang Chen quickened his footsteps and followed the directions from the jade token, arriving at the third level of the Paramount Realm several hours later. The third level wasn't that much different from the previous two levels. However, there were obviously more areas of rebirth and many more legacies in this place.

Jiang Chen had already run into two such places along the way. However, both spots had obviously been dug up. Nothing of value had been left behind, and even the tombstones on which teachings had been etched had been destroyed.

“Sigh, human nature is ultimately selfish. They got what they wanted, but they weren’t willing to share it with someone else. It looks like there were at least three tombstones that expounded on martial dao, but not a single one has been left intact. They had all been destroyed by their inheritors.” Jiang Chen sighed softly. He too understood that this was just human nature; the normal state of the world of martial dao.

The fewer the inheritors, the more valuable the inheritance. On the other hand, the more legacies there were, the less valuable they actually became. After all, why should they share what they’d obtained with someone else? It was obvious that preserving one’s own inheritance as their exclusive secret was better than sharing it with the world. Even if the heir’s talent was average, and they might not be able to plumb the depths of what they’d acquired, it was still better to have the inheritance die in their hands than passing it to someone else.

No matter how frustrating it was for Jiang Chen, there was nothing he could do about it. This was the black mark that plagued humans, the despicable underbelly of human nature. It was fortunate then, that Jiang Chen wasn’t interested in legacies. He had plenty of secret techniques in his memories. But he never cultivated his techniques blindly. He always took his current cultivation into consideration when choosing the techniques he needed to cultivate. Recklessly choosing techniques to cultivate would only result in wasted time, let alone the possibility of successfully cultivating it to begin with. Given the pile of divine arts lying around in his memories, he would only consider an inheritance if it was particularly attractive. Otherwise, he had no interest.

In fact, Jiang Chen liked things like the Ming Tuo relic even more. It was tangible, useful, and contained the life essence of an emperor realm expert. If a sage realm expert could refine this relic, they could absolutely directly ascend to the emperor realm. This was the best shortcut available to rise to the top in a single step.

Of course, Jiang Chen wasn’t interested in this type of shortcut. After all, the power he could obtain from refining the relic was ultimately not as attractive as the power he could cultivate himself. Moreover, there was a certain amount of risk in refining a relic. If the energy of the relic was too powerful, it was possible that it might create a backlash for the sage realm expert. It wasn’t as if Jiang Chen had no hope of ascending to emperor realm. In fact, he had absolute confidence that he could break through, so there was no need for him to use such a method to pursue the emperor realm.

“Likely not even Palace Head Dan Chi would be willing to use such a method to ascend to emperor realm.” With Jiang Chen’s understanding of Palace Head Dan Chi, he understood that the palace head was a man of great ambition. He would rather desire to cultivate his own way to the emperor realm. On the other hand, for those such as Elder Yun Nie who were destined never to ascend to the emperor realm might find this kind of item to be extremely attractive. Of course, those were just Jiang Chen’s assumptions.

Relics like these might not necessarily be relegated just for ascending to emperor realm. If one slowly absorbed and refined the life energy within the relic, a cultivator would still be able to enrich themselves. That is, if they weren’t looking to ascend to emperor realm. However, it would result in an excessive loss of spirit energy if used that way. It was a rather wasteful use of a precious resource.

Jiang Chen arrived at the edge of the outskirts two days later. Going any further and he would arrive at the inner region. It was obvious that he was the fastest among all those who had entered this place. No one else had reached the entrance of the inner region yet. Without a moment's hesitation, Jiang Chen entered.

After entering the inner region, Jiang Chen could sense that the amount of life-force inside the inner region had deeply fallen. It had already been quite weak in the outskirts, but the inner region was almost completely bereft of life force. Even Jiang Chen experienced a slight sense of discomfort. Thankfully, a cultivator's powerful life-force enabled them to acclimate to this change easily. It wasn't a problem to hold out here for a few months.

"No wonder this horrible place is called a place of rebirth. It's obviously no place anyone would easily come into." Jiang Chen said knowingly. This was how a place of rebirth should be. If anyone could enter a place of rebirth, then it was almost unavoidable that the dead's eternal slumber would be disturbed.

For some reason, Jiang Chen recalled Palace Dan Chi's words soon after he entered. "You may be able to find an expert's place of rebirth and inheritance in the inner region. However, you may not find anything in the transcendent region."

Jiang Chen laughed wryly, "It would seem that Palace Head Dan Chi took the chance to linger in the transcendent region before. It's just that he found nothing there."

When it came to the inner region, it wasn't exactly littered with inheritances either. The chances that one might find an inheritance weren't high. From past experience, there wouldn't be more than ten people out of a hundred who would find an inheritance. Sometimes, there would even be just two or three people who came out profitable. There were plenty of empty places of rebirth. At least half the people who entered this place would find those bare places of rebirth instead.

An empty place of rebirth naturally had had their inheritances taken by someone else already. Since someone had already inherited the legacy, there would be nothing else left behind. Therefore, as the number of inheritances dwindled, it became harder and harder to find one as well. After all, it was a nonrenewable resource. The more it was used, the less it became until it was ultimately depleted. However, no one could tell exactly when it was going to be fully depleted.

Jiang Chen's consciousness was powerful, and his perception was at least several times stronger than the other geniuses. However, even with his consciousness, he still wasn't able to find a true place of inheritance so far. This showed just how difficult it was to find an inheritance.

Jiang Chen had been walking in a straight line all this time, without dilly dallying for too long in any place. He hadn't searched through the place very thoroughly either. If he were to thoroughly search, it was very likely that he might discover a place of two with his level of consciousness. However, deep inside Jiang Chen's mind, he thought that his final destination should be the transcendent region. In his personal experience, the stranger a place was, the likelier that a secret was hidden somewhere inside it. Palace Head Dan Chi had told him that there was nothing in the transcendent region. In that case, Jiang Chen was certain that there must be something inside this transcendent region. Otherwise, there was no way the Paramount Realm would have a place called transcendent region or something. It looked noticeably more impressive than the outskirts and inner region.

The fact that Palace Head Dan Chi had found nothing didn't mean that there were nothing there. It might just mean that Palace Head Dan Chi simply didn't possess enough skill to spot it back then. That was the line of thinking Jiang Chen was following, whether or not it was actually the truth.

"There might be some inheritances inside the inner region. However, while it would be nice to gain one, it's not an insufferable loss to me if I missed out. On the other hand, there must be some kind of secret hidden inside this transcendent region. Since I'm already here, I must check out this region." Jiang Chen had made up his mind not to search inside the inner region. Instead, he headed for the transcendent region straight away. Following the directions, he moved through the inner region at full speed. On the fourth day, he arrived at the outer limits of the transcendent region.