

Unparalleled 271

Chapter 271: Aren't You Underestimating Us Too Much, Battle Of The Daoists Against the Sword Qi Clone

"I can't believe this pool of water can cleanse our marrow and make our bone structure better!"

"By the heavens, where did the Sect Leader find such a thing?"

"No wonder it's called the Marrow Cleansing Pool."

"This pool is too amazing."

Everyone was shocked.

They had all heard about things that could improve their bone structures before this. However, this was their first time coming across such a thing, let alone experience it firsthand.

On the left side of the pool.

Jun Yi could sense that the energy of the Marrow Cleansing Pool was continuously surging into her body that had been depleted of spiritual power.

Under the effects of that energy, her bone structure continuously improved.

“With our depleted spiritual power and nothing left inside our bodies, we can better receive the Marrow Cleansing Pool’s energy.”

At that, Jun Yi’s eyes lit up with realization. “No wonder the Sect Leader was drilling us until we were so exhausted. So this is what he intended to do.”

“Cough cough...”

A Daoist who had half of her face sunk into the pond suddenly coughed like she had choked on something and gave Jun Yi a weird look. Then, as if Shang Qingxue and the other Daoists had also thought of something, they too began to blush in embarrassment.

Only then did Jun Yi realize that some of the words she said were inappropriate.

“Um... That’s not what I mean.”

“It’s alright, we understand.”

“What are you girls talking about? I don’t get it.”

“Hmph, are you sure about that, Jin Feiyan? You can stop the act now. We all know that you’re the lewdest among us. I still remember the lustful look on your face when I went to your room the other day and saw you hugging a portrait of our Sect Leader.”

“Ah, since you saw it, I’ll have to strangle you now.”

The girls started to mess with each other in the pool, their voices of laughter rang out clearly.

Meanwhile, on the other side of the pool, Nangong Huang, Murong Xuan, and the other male Daoists almost had a nosebleed as they listened to the sound of their female Daoists messing with each other.

Although Chu Kuangren did set up some barriers that restricted the intrusion of spiritual thoughts in the Marrow Cleansing Pool to prevent the guys from peeping, it was not soundproof.

“I can’t believe these girls are so brave to defile our Sect Leader’s image by fantasizing about him behind his back. Hmph, if they’re so daring, why don’t they come after me instead?”

Daoist Zhuo Han softly uttered.

“Geez... In your dreams.”

The other guys shot him a contemptuous look.

“Say, if we can cleanse our bone marrow just by dipping into this pool, what do you think will happen if we take a sip from it?”

Qin Wushuang suddenly pondered.

“So... You want to drink bathwater?”

Weirded out, Murong Xuan asked.

Qin Wushuang went silent for a while. “Forget I said it.”

“Gulp.”

At this moment, a swallowing sound came from beside everyone.

The few of them looked at Zhuo Han in disbelief.

“Well f*ck me, you really did it.”

“That’s badass.”

“I just felt the need to test it out. Besides, this pool is a valuable resource that can cleanse our bone marrow after all. So what If I took a sip from it?”

Zhuo Han grinned.

“So? What does it taste like?” Qin Wushuang asked excitedly.

“It’s sweet. I can feel the energy of the Marrow Cleansing Pool surging within me even more now. It’s as if something’s going to come out of me.”

Gurgle...

A few bubbles then popped out behind Zhuo Han.

Everyone looked at him, stunned, and Nangong Huang said seriously, “Don’t tell me you just farted.”

Embarrassment was written all over Zhuo Han’s face. “I couldn’t help it... I couldn’t help it...”

“My God! I’m going to kill you!”

“That’s it, I can’t soak inside the Marrow Cleansing Pool anymore.”

When Nangong Huang and the others were about to come out from the pool, Zhuo Han reminded them feebly, “Guys, our Sect Leader has ordered us to soak inside this pool for two hours.”

At that, everyone went silent for a while before they quietly returned to the pool.

Two hours had passed by slowly.

Everyone noticed that the originally clear water had gradually turned slightly murky from the impurities that were discharged from their bodies.

...

Chu Kuangren and Lan Yu returned to the Marrow Cleansing Pool after two hours.

As for the others, they were already dressed by then. After soaking in the Marrow Cleansing Pool for two hours, their bone structures had improved, and all of them looked regenerated.

Chu Kuangren glanced at the Marrow Cleansing Pool and saw the slightly murky water. However, he was not bothered by it as the Marrow Cleansing Pool would automatically dispose of the impurities after a short while. It was quite convenient.

“Very well. Let’s continue our special training.”

Then, Chu Kuangren brought everyone to a valley.

He found a large limestone and sat on it.

His fingers snapped.

A sword qi clone appeared, to which he said, "This sword qi clone contains one-sixtieth of my strength. I don't care what you do, but you must defeat him within a month."

'Huh?'

'A sword qi clone with one-sixtieth of his strength?'

Nangong Huang and the others all looked at each other.

After all, they were the Daoists of Black Heaven Sect. To have them defeat a sword qi clone with one-sixtieth of Chu Kuangren's full strength may be a bit of an overkill.

Even those who revered Chu Kuangren greatly also felt that they were being looked down upon.

"Sect Leader, I think you're underestimating us a bit too much."

"Give it a go then."

Chu Kuangren chuckled.

"I'll try first."

Nangong Huang stepped forward. Instead of brandishing his Sacred Deep Pool Rainbow Sword, he immediately raised his hand and unleashed a palm attack towards the sword qi clone.

However, the sword qi clone simply raised its hand and launched a sword attack in return.

That incredibly overbearing sword qi instantly shattered Nangong Huang's Daoist Rhyme and landed mercilessly on his body, blasting him away.

Just like that, Nangong Huang was sent flying as he coughed out blood and broke several of his bones and ligaments as well. Everyone hurriedly went up to him and supported him.

"Are you alright, Nangong?"

"Sect Leader, isn't that attack just now a little too much?"

Jun Yi looked at the sword qi clone and said in fright.

"Even when hunting the rabbit, a lion will always use its full strength!"

"Nangong, you underestimate your opponent too much. I've already told you that this sword qi clone contains one-sixtieth of my full strength, yet you didn't even bother to use your sword. Are you overestimating your strength or are you underestimating your Sect Leader?" Chu Kuangren slowly walked up to Nangong Huang and said.

Nangong Huang's face had turned pale and he was terribly embarrassed. "I was too arrogant just now. Sect Leader, please give me another chance."

Chu Kuangren then raised his hand and cast the Spring Breeze Healing Technique. A soothing gust of wind blew past Nangong Huang's body and rapidly healed his injuries.

A short while later, Nangong Huang was full of vigor again.

That technique was far more effective than most healing medicinal pills or elixirs.

Only then did everyone breathe a sigh of relief.

'So that's why the Sect Leader was so brutal just now, it's because he has this technique to rely on.'

"I can now clearly tell every one of you that with my Spring Breeze Healing Technique, I can save you guys as long as you're still alive. That's why my sword qi clone will not hold back."

Chu Kuangren explained to everyone with a smile.

Having witnessed Nangong Huang's injury earlier, everyone could not help but feel a chill run down their spine when they saw Chu Kuangren's grin.

Although they would not die, they would definitely suffer.

“It’ll attack after ten seconds. Everyone, prepare yourselves. Ten...”

Chu Kuangren started to count down.

“Nine, eight, seven...”

He went back to the large limestone and sat on it. “Six, five...”

With a serious look, Nangong Huang, Murong Xuan, and the others took out their weapons.

“Four, three...”

Daoist Rhyme started to surround their bodies, ready to erupt at any time.

“Two.”

“One!”

The moment the countdown ended, the sword qi clone immediately disappeared from thin air. When it appeared again, it was already in front of Shang Qingxue.

Shang Qingxue was instantly dumbfounded.

'That's bullying!'

'I'm obviously the weakest one here, so why does it have to go after me first?'

Before she could even react, the sword qi clone immediately unleashed a sword qi attack, hitting her unconscious.

"Attack!"

Armed with their swords, Nangong Huang, Murong Xuan, Jun Yi, and the others quickly attacked the sword qi clone.

Chapter 272: Our Sect Leader Must Be A Devil In Disguise, High-Level Spirit Grain

In the valley.

Nangong Huang, Murong Xuan, and the other Daoists were battling the sword qi clone together.

A variety of sword Dao techniques were displayed during that battle. Among them were some Sage Techniques as well, which were extremely powerful and phenomenal.

Despite that, Chu Kuangren's sword qi clone was just too strong. Made purely out of sword qi, its surge of Sword-based Daoist Rhyme completely overwhelmed everyone on the scene, rendering the hundreds of methods that the Daoists tried ineffective.

The sword qi clone unleashed another sword qi attack, with Murong Xuan as its target this time. Along with a terrifying Sword-based Daoist Rhyme, the sword qi went straight towards him.

The force of the attack surprised Murong Xuan as he was no match for it at all. Just like that, his whole body was sent flying tens of meters away and smashed a large crater into the ground. The bones in his body felt like they were all about to shatter.

Murong Xuan immediately coughed up a mouthful of blood while the intense pain left him immobile. As he stared at the seemingly invincible sword qi clone, a thought suddenly popped into his mind... 'It's quite comfortable to just lie here.'

However, a soothing gust of wind that carried a surge of mysterious Daoist Rhyme and the force of vitality suddenly breezed past his body, rapidly healing his injuries.

Not long after, he was more or less recovered.

Chu Kuangren smiled at him from not far away. "Why are you still on the ground? Are you slacking off? That won't do. Carry on now, keep going at it."

Murong Xuan's mouth twitched, but when he glanced at the sword qi clone, he was filled with the intent to fight again. He picked up his sword and rushed towards it.

"Divine Nine Suns Art, Seven Sol Slash!"

With Daoist Rhyme swirling all over his body, a blazing surge of Daoist Rhyme immediately gushed out and formed into seven huge fireballs, as if seven suns were hung in the sky. Then, one after another, he hurled the fireballs at the sword qi clone.

However, the sword qi clone simply raised its arm and unleashed a stream of purple sword rays across the void, destroying the seven fireballs one by one. Engulfed by the sword qi, the majestic flame palm qi swept across all directions like a solar storm.

The storm sent all the surrounding Daoists flying.

“D*mn it, it can do that too?”

“I can’t believe it used Murong Xuan’s technique to attack us just now. Seeing that it possesses such swordsmanship level, is that really just a sword qi clone we’re fighting?”

“Yet it only contains one-sixtieth our Sect Leader’s full strength...”

Everyone may be shocked, but they once again gritted their teeth and continued to attack the sword qi clone.

That battle lasted up to two hours.

In those two hours, every Daoist was critically injured at least twice, but the number of minor injuries they sustained was countless

After that battle, some of them laid on the ground with their spiritual power depleted.

“Alright, let’s call it a day.” Chu Kuangren looked at the sunset and snapped his finger, dispersing the sword qi clone.

He then looked at Nangong Huang and the others and chuckled. “We’ll continue this tomorrow morning here. It’s alright, I did say you guys have a month to defeat my sword qi clone. Besides, today is just the first day, so don’t fret.”

“There are still a lot of opportunities.”

As they looked at the smiling Chu Kuangren, Nangong Huang and the others wondered whether their Sect Leader was a devil in disguise.

‘Please, give our kind and gentle Sect Leader back to us!’

“Alright, that’s it for now. I’ll see all of you tomorrow.”

After Chu Kuangren and Lan Yu left, the ones who were laying on the floor looked at each other. All they could see before them was darkness before them and deep down, they screamed in pain.

“Guys, this is only the first day and there are still three months left before the championship. This means we’ll have to go through this hellish special training for a least two more months. By the gods, I might as well die now.” Zhuo Han wailed.

“No, we can’t let our Sect Leader look down upon us.”

Jun Yi gritted her teeth.

When Chu Kuangren’s disappointed look appeared in her mind, she made up her mind. “Even if we die, we’ll have to persevere until the end.”

“You can’t even die if you want to. The moment our Sect Leader uses his Spring Breeze Healing Technique, you’ll still have to get up and face the torture again,” Nangong Huang said.

“Hey, do you guys want to head back?”

Murong Xuan asked.

“Nope, I have no strength left at all.”

“Same here. I’ll ask someone to bring us something to eat later, as well as some fresh change of clothes as well,” Nangong Huang said.

Everyone sat there on the ground and began to recover their spiritual power. The moment they activated their techniques, everyone suddenly realized that something strange was happening.

“Have you guys noticed? Our spiritual power recovery rate has become faster,” Nangong Huang commented.

“I have the same feeling as well.”

“It’s because of the Marrow Cleansing Pool.”

Murong Xuan replied as if he had figured something out. “It’s because the Marrow Cleansing Pool has improved our bone structures. That’s why the speed at which we utilize our techniques or recover our spiritual power has become faster and more efficient.”

“I see, not bad at all.”

Everyone nodded and looked at the Marrow Cleansing Pool from afar with awe in their eyes. They were not stupid, so they could naturally understand the Marrow Cleansing Pool’s significance to their sect.

What was the main factor that determined a sect’s potential and strength? The amount of talent they had, of course!

On the other hand, this Marrow Cleansing Pool was able to produce many talents and in bulk!

“I’m afraid this is probably the key to our Black Heaven Sect’s prosperity!”

“This Marrow Cleansing Pool is just too important.”

"I can't believe the Sect Leader casually placed something important like this here. Isn't that a bit too sloppy for him?"

"I suppose there are no restrictions around it as well. Besides, this is something that even the Sages will be highly concerned about. They won't let anything happen to it."

After a while.

Several disciples arrived with some food and fresh clothes.

They could not help but get stunned at the sight of exhausted Daoists lying on the ground as if they were sucked dry of energy.

'What kind of special training has the Sect Leader arranged for them?'

'It's that scary?'

Chu Kuangren and Lan Yu did not return to the Towering Heaven Palace after they left. Instead, they went to a clean pristine valley.

Fairfrost Sage was living in that valley.

"I see you've arrived, Sect Leader."

The Fairfrost Sage's eyes lit up with delight when she saw Chu Kuangren's arrival.

"Yeah, I'm here to check on the growth of the spirit grain."

"It's going well."

The Fairfrost Sage then brought Chu Kuangren to a few acres of rice fields.

Spiritual qi was extremely concentrated in these rice fields.

This was a type of grain that contained spiritual qi within it.

Although the concentration of spiritual qi within the spirit grains was not as good as other Supreme Elixirs, its value was far greater than the Supreme Elixirs. Even the value of some Sage-grade Supreme Elixirs could not match it too.

That was because spirit grains could be grown on a large scale, it had a short maturity period, and compared to Supreme Elixirs, it was easier for cultivators to absorb.

In Firmament Star today, only very few sage orthodoxies possessed a supply of spirit grains and one of them was Thunder Temple.

That was why their fasting rice was hailed as the best in the world.

However, the spirit grains from Thunder Temple were far less valuable than the ones Chu Kuangren had asked Fairfrost Sage to plant.

The spirit grains from the Thunder Temple were only of the normal variant, while the ones Chu Kuangren got from the gacha roll were high-level spirit grains!

It was a Legendary grade item!

“I’ve already harvested them once. The yield we can expect to get per acre is around five hundred kilograms, and I have twenty acres planted here. As of now, there are currently ten thousand kilograms of spirit grains stored in the reserves.”

“How many times can we harvest it per year?”

“Under the buffs provided from Second Wood Qi Essence, I think we can harvest it four times per year, meaning a yield of forty tons yearly,” the Fairfrost Sage explained.

“Forty tonnes huh? That’s far from enough.”

Chu Kuangren shook his head. There were ten thousand disciples in the Black Heaven Sect, so forty tonnes were inadequate.

“I guess we can only give it to some of the True Disciples for now. If we want to use it on a larger scale, then we’ll have to expand our production size.”

“We can increase the scale of production, but my Second Wood Qi Essence can’t facilitate the growth of that much spirit grains at once,” Fairfrost Sage said.

The Second Wood Qi Essence was the main technique that Fairfrost Sage cultivated, which could allow her to hasten the growth rate of spiritual herbs.

However, since Fairfrost Sage was doing all of it alone, her Second Wood Qi Essence could not facilitate the growth of that many spirit grains no matter how strong her technique was.

“It’s alright, you can take your time.”

Chapter 273: Breakfast, Eight Celestial Demonic Chords, Fellow Daoists’ Improvement

On the second day.

Chu Kuangren and Lan Yu came to the valley once again.

Meanwhile, Nangong Huang, Murong Xuan, and the others were still sound asleep on the ground.

“Still pretending, are we?”

Chu Kuangren grinned.

For someone as mighty as Chu Kuangren to walk over without concealing his aura, there was no way Nangong Huang and the others would not notice his presence.

If they truly did not sense his presence, that pathetic level of alertness would have killed the Daoists countless times in the past.

Hence, there could only be one explanation — everyone was pretending to be asleep, taking that opportunity to delay their training as long as they could.

Chu Kuangren looked at them with a hint of pleasure in his eyes. Then, a terrifying energy field was spread from him.

Battle Monarch Domain, activate!

The Daoists who were pretending to be asleep were all extremely shocked. They did not expect Chu Kuangren to start the day off with such a strong technique without waking them up first.

Under the power of the Battle Monarch Domain, everyone could no longer keep up the act. Although they had hurriedly channeled their spiritual power to resist the huge pressure that was coming from all directions, everyone still groaned in pain.

A while after, everyone was laid on the ground, panting breathlessly and their spiritual power. At this point, it was hard for them to even think.

“Still pretending?”

“It’s our fault, Sect Leader.”

Nangong Huang and the others apologized and admitted defeat.

Only then did everyone notice that behind Chu Kuangren, Lan Yu was carrying two wooden buckets that emitted alluring bursts of fragrance.

“What’s that?”

Nangong Huang asked in surprise.

The aroma from the wooden buckets seemed to have stirred up intense, uncontrollable pangs of hunger from his body, which was depleted of spiritual power.

As cultivators, they would rarely have such intense physical needs. It was like they were mortals who had been starved for a few days.

“It’s breakfast.”

Chu Kuangren replied.

Behind him, Lan Yu took off the lids from the wooden buckets and revealed the fragrant white rice to everyone. Its strong fragrance suddenly made Nangong Huang and the others forget their fatigue as they all hurried towards Lan Yu and surrounded her.

“D*mn, what a strong fragrance.”

“Are these spirit grains? But the spiritual qi within spirit grains is just so concentrated. It’s my first time seeing this kind of spirit grain.”

The Daoists huddled around the wooden buckets and gulped. They each picked up a bowl from the side and quickly scooped a large portion of rice from the bucket before they gobbled it all up.

“Delicious, it’s truly delicious.”

“This is my first time eating such delicious white rice.”

“By the heavens, it’s just too good.”

“Hey, don’t take it all for yourself. You’ve eaten such a large bowl.”

“F*ck, how the hell are you guys eating so fast?”

Very quickly, the two buckets of rice were divided and eaten among the Daoists. Even female cultivators like Jun Yi and Shang Qingxue had stopped caring about their graceful image as they gobbled up the rice, for fear that others would have eaten them all if they were too slow.

After they were done eating, dense and overbearing surges of spiritual power once again emerged from their originally depleted spiritual mound. It instantly filled up each of their bodies.

"This spirit grain is truly extraordinary. How great would it be if we can eat this every day." Zhuo Han lamented.

The others agreed as well.

"This spirit grain is grown by Black Heaven Sect, so it won't be a big problem if you guys would like to eat it every day," Chu Kuangren replied.

Everyone was very delighted upon hearing that. "Really?"

"Of course."

Chu Kuangren nodded, and with a raise of his arm, he unleashed a surge of sword qi that formed into a clone. It stared emotionlessly at Nangong Huang and the others.

At the sight of the clone, everyone's body trembled again.

'F*ck, it's here again!'

"Now that you're full, it's time to start training."

Chu Kuangren said with a faint smile.

For Nangong Huang and the others, another round of torture was about to begin!

As time went by.

More than half a month had passed. Throughout that time, Nangong Huang and the others lived through days of suffering and pain.

Chu Kuangren continued to 'torture' them in various ways.

Besides using the Battle Monarch Domain and sword qi clones to train them, he would occasionally have them spar with each other and take them hiking as well.

However, the mountain they hiked was the Sword Mountain!

All the countless swords at Sword Mountain obeyed Chu Kuangren's command without fail, releasing the sword intent to suppress the Daoists who suffered miserably.

Chu Kuangren also had them run around the whole mountain to capture a bird that was the shrunken form of the Godly Phoenix. That was a divine beast they were asked to capture!

They went after Lil Red around the whole mountain, often falling for its tricks. Sometimes, they were even burned mercilessly by the Phoenix's Flames as well.

Most importantly, whenever any one of them was injured, Chu Kuangren would always use the Spring Breeze Healing Technique to restore them back to full health and continue to 'torture' them right after.

For twenty-four hours a day except for the six hours used for sleep and meals, the remaining time was spent on training instead.

However, despite Nangong Huang the others' look of suffering, the Sages who were living in the depths of Black Heaven Sect felt that they were ignorant of the blessings they were in.

"These little rascals really do know how to enjoy life? They have spirit grains for food, the Marrow Cleansing Pool for their bath, and they have the little fella's sword qi clone throwing techniques for them as well. These conditions for cultivation can't get any better."

"It's not just the little fella, even the Godly Phoenix is helping them too. They're screaming from the burn, but they don't realize that the Phoenix's Flame is the Essence of All Flames. To be able to train with the Essence of All Flames is a blessing too. After this, they would have built up a strong resistance to Fire-based Dao."

"There's the Sword Mountain's sword intent as well. Withstanding the barrage of sword intent every day will undoubtedly increase their understanding in Sword Dao at a rapid rate."

"How many people in this world are that blessed to have a cultivation experience like this? The little guy has truly given it his all in training all of them."

"I agree, he's also keeping a close look on them every day as well. I guess that he's worried that if something bad happens to any of them, he will be the troubled one."

Within the depths of the Black Heaven Sect, the few Sages conversed.

They had been keeping watch of everything that Chu Kuangren was doing. Besides that, they were also clear about Nangong Huang and the others' progress too.

Apart from lamenting about not meeting a Sect Leader like Chu Kuangren during their younger years, the Sages were quite impressed and grateful towards him.

...

"Congratulations Host, you have received the Legendary Technique, Eight Celestial Demonic Chords!"

Legendary Technique?

It was another Legendary Technique again.

Chu Kuangren retrieved that technique, and in an instant, vast amounts of knowledge immediately rushed into his mind. That surge of understanding he gained was very overwhelming and was way greater compared to when he learned the Tathagata Rebirth Mantra.

The Eight Celestial Demonic Chords was the most remarkable Emperor Technique!

Not only was it more mysterious than the other Emperor Techniques he knew, but it could even approach the realm of the elusive or ethereal Immortal Techniques too.

“This Eight Celestial Demonic Chords is awesome!”

Chu Kuangren opened his eyes fiercely and a hint of joy flashed across his eyes.

The Eight Celestial Demonic Chords was a type of music Daoist Technique. After Chu Kuangren retrieved the Eight Celestial Demonic Chords, it immediately turned him from a tone-deaf person into a never-before-seen Musical Daoist Grandmaster.

However, that was not what he gained the most.

It was the Eight Celestial Demonic Chords instead.

The Eight Celestial Demonic Chords was divided into eight chapters. Each of them was extremely magnificent on its own.

“It seems like I’ll need to get myself a guqin soon.”

Chu Kuangren thought to himself.

Since that was a music Daoist Technique, it would naturally require music to be activated.

Boom!

A terrifying noise suddenly erupted.

It was Daoist Qin Wushuang who had been slammed onto the ground by the sword qi clone.

Like he had done multiple times, Chu Kuangren simply used the Spring Breeze Healing Technique on Qin Wushuang. Without saying another word, Qin Wushuang very familiarly got up, swiped away the dust from his body, wiped the blood from the corner of his mouth, and rushed to attack the sword qi clone again.

"It's almost time," Chu Kuangren mumbled as he looked at Nangong Huang and the others who were fighting the sword qi clone fiercely.

After almost a month of training, Nangong Huang and the others went from not being able to withstand any of the sword qi clone's attacks, to now suppressing it with their joint effort. That was a huge improvement.

Chapter 274: I Won't Give Up, As Long As They Are Alive, They Will Train Until Their Deaths

"Attack!"

Nangong Huang roared as a horrifying sword ray emerged from the Deep Pool Rainbow Sword in his grasp. It was vast like an endless river.

The sword ray locked onto the sword qi clone, making it impossible for it to escape!

Murong Xuan, Jun Yi, Qin Wushuang, and the others all deployed their ultimate technique too, and several different sword Daos erupted all at once!

Under the barrage of attacks, even the mighty sword qi clone was eventually reduced into a burst of sword qi that dispersed.

“We did it!”

Nangong Huang, Murong Xuan, and the others were overjoyed.

“Great, after nearly a month of fighting it, we’ve finally managed to defeat that sword qi clone. D*mn, I’m completely exhausted,” Zhuo Han said as he laid on the ground.

The others were as relieved as well.

At that moment, Chu Kuangren approached them from a short distance away.

Everyone hurriedly bowed to him.

“Greetings, Sect Leader.”

“There’s no need for them.”

Chu Kuangren slightly nodded and then told everyone. "Twenty-nine days. You guys took twenty-nine days to defeat this sword qi clone. Do you guys have anything to say about this?"

"Although I did give all of you one month to deal with the sword qi clone, I didn't expect you guys nearly to really take one month to do so."

Everyone was slightly ashamed at his words.

"Alright, alright, I guess you guys have passed. Now that this training phase has ended, let's proceed to the next one."

Chu Kuangren chuckled.

Everyone then looked at each other.

'There's more?'

Just when everyone was puzzled, Chu Kuangren snapped his fingers.

In a second, nine sword qi clones appeared.

Everyone could guess what it was the moment they saw the sword qi clones and they gulped in disbelief.

“In the next phase, I’ll have every one of you guys deal with a sword qi clone alone.”

Chu Kuangren explained.

Everyone gasped in horror.

‘No way. It really did end up that way!’

It took them nearly a month to defeat a single sword qi clone with everyone’s combined strength, and now they had to face off against one alone?

‘F*ck me.’

‘We’re going to end up fighting it for years!’

“That’s not fair, Sect Leader.”

Nangong Huang smiled bitterly.

“What’s not fair? Do you have anything to say?”

Chu Kuangren glanced at him.

“No, nothing.”

Nangong Huang gulped and quickly shook his head. Even if he had some opinions, it would be better if he kept those to himself. His days would not end well if he were to offend the Sect Leader.

“Then let’s begin.”

Chu Kuangren simply raised his hand to cast the Spring Breeze Healing Technique and fixed everyone’s injuries. With that, they could deal with the clones.

The nine Daoists left one after another.

Only Shang Qingxue was left behind. A little lost, she asked Chu Kuangren, “Sect Leader, what should I do next?”

Each Daoist was given one sword qi clone to fight, but only she had none.

She could not help but feel slightly nervous. As the weakest among the group, she contributed the least against fighting the sword qi clone during the past month.

Was Chu Kuangren going to abandon her like that?

“As for you, I have something else arranged elsewhere. Follow me.”

Shang Qingxue followed Chu Kuangren and arrived at an empty piece of land. All Chu Kuangren did then was lift his hand and a red barrier appeared in the air, enveloping Shang Qingxue within it like an enchanted boundary.

“What’s this?”

“Something that I’ve picked up recently.”

Chu Kuangren replied.

Throughout that time training Nangong Huang and the others, he did not allow himself to fall behind on his cultivation progress. Having refined and sorted through all the techniques he learned, Chu Kuangren then assimilated all of them into his Transcendent Coalescence Daoist Physique.

During that process, he had obtained a lot of understanding and had since developed some new techniques from the ones that he knew.

This red barrier was one of them.

“I shall call this barrier the Scorching Inferno!”

“This barrier will continuously emit a high temperature to burn anyone who’s trapped inside to death. So you’ll need to stay in there and use your Deep Freeze Physique to withstand the searing heat.”

Chu Kuangren had specially devised that method of training for Shang Qingxue.

The intention was to utilize the high temperature to facilitate the growth of her Deep Freeze Physique.

Inside the red barrier.

As the temperature rapidly increased, its scorching heat turned the air within the barrier into heat waves, distorting the sunlight. Even the surrounding flowers and trees on the ground were instantly burned to ashes.

Shang Qingxue proceeded to resist the heat by channeling the cold waves within her body.

“Oh, I almost forgot to mention, the temperature within the Scorching Inferno will double every two hours. After the twelve-hour mark, I’m afraid even an Honorable will be instantly reduced to ashes in there.” Chu Kuangren chuckled.

At that, Shang Qingxue could not help but feel a chill down her spine. “Even an Honorable will die here? Sect Leader, I-I’m just a Nascent Soul cultivator...”

Although her progress these days had been impressive, having reached the Nascent Soul Realm from the Golden Core Realm, her strength was still worlds apart from an Honorable’s.

“Don’t worry, the amount of spiritual power I left within the Scorching Inferno will only last around six hours. It won’t kill you, but I believe it’ll be quite a challenge for you to withstand six hours.”

“Alright, enjoy yourself.”

Chu Kuangren chuckled before he turned around and left.

Shang Qingxue watched Chu Kuangren’s receding silhouette, extremely helpless.

After two hours, the temperature within the Scorching Inferno doubled. Shang Qingxue’s face was already red from the heat and her breathing was heavy. However, there was no sweat on her body as it evaporated the moment it came out.

After four hours, the ground beneath her had begun to dry up and crack. Shang Qingxue continued to squeeze whatever little spiritual power that was left in her body to keep the Deep Freeze Physique activated.

After five hours, although Shang Qingxue had already run out of spiritual power, her Deep Freeze Physique continued to release cold waves due to the stimulation from the high temperature surrounding her. Even so, that process was incredibly slow, it was akin to milking a cow.

When it was close to six hours, Shang Qingxue was already lying on the ground. Almost all the clothes on her body had been completely burnt away, only a few pieces that covered her private parts remained.

Meanwhile, her back, arm, and thighs had suffered severe burns and were scorched black. She laid there like she was on the brink of death.

After six hours, the Scorching Inferno disappeared and a gentle soothing breeze swept past Shang Qingxue, rapidly healing her injuries.

Having almost fainted, Shang Qingxue gradually regained her consciousness and she looked around. "I'm still alive..."

When she was inside the Scorching Inferno, she was almost certain that she would die there. It was a terrible feeling.

"That's right, you're still alive. So do you still want to participate in the training? If you tap out now, you won't need to face this suffering anymore."

Chu Kuangren's voice rang beside her ears like the whispers of the devil, tempting her to give up.

'Just leave. You'll be free from all this hardship and suffering if you just give up now.'

She had all the time in the world to continue her cultivation slowly. There was no need for her to endure all this inhuman training here and suffer the pain.

"Qingxue, you must remember one thing. In this world, if you wish to be the master of your fate, you'll need to improve and get stronger."

"Put aside the so-called glory that I'm in right now. Although I'm the Shang Clan Leader, that title was merely given to me by Sect Leader Chu, so there are still people in the branch clan who still look down on me. It's only because of Sect Leader Chu's actions that they dare not lay a finger on me."

“Qingxue, I want you to go to the Black Heaven Sect.”

“Over there, you may be able to use your Deep Freeze Physique to its fullest. Only once you’ve stronger would I be able to stand firm in the Shang clan, and no one will dare to look down upon you then...”

In her daze, Shang Qingxue recalled what her father had said to her before she came to the Black Heaven Sect. A determined then look flashed across her eyes.

“I won’t give up!”

“I want to become stronger, so much stronger that no one dares to look down on my parents; so strong that I can control the fate of my life. I won’t back down!”

Chu Kuangren grinned. “Very well, I admire your guts. Let’s add another hour to the training tomorrow then.”

Shang Qingxue remained quiet.

She finally understood that Chu Kuangren only had one principle when he trained all of them... As long as they were alive, they would train until their deaths!

‘That devil!’

‘Our Sect Leader is definitely the devil incarnate!’

Chapter 275: Master Knows How To Play Music, The First Song Of The Eight Celestial Demonic Chords, Boundless Overworld

Day after day.

Under Chu Kuangren's training, every day was suffering for the Daoists, and every day was like a new hell to them.

However, they too noticed that their rate of improvement was so fast that it surpassed their imagination.

Within less than three months, every one of them had broken through at least a small stage in their cultivation, which tremendously increased their combat strength too.

This was especially for Shang Qingxue.

She was only at the Golden Core Realm when she arrived, and now, she was at the Late-Stage Nascent Soul. She broke through one whole realm!

Anyone would no doubt be shocked to death if they learned of this.

On this day.

Nangong Huang, Murong Xuan, and the others were still battling the sword qi clone. One month ago, none of them was a match for it alone, but now, they could each hold their own in a solo fight with it.

Meanwhile, somewhere else.

Shang Qingxue was still suffering as she continued to train inside the Scorching Inferno.

Surges of cold waves surrounded her, isolating her away from the heat. She could now persist in the heat without any injuries for eight hours straight. Her progress was huge.

Far away.

On a mountain peak.

Chu Kuangren was monitoring everyone's training progress from there.

"Although it's a little difficult for them, the results of their training are not bad."

Their training was anything but a little difficult.

Throughout these days, Nangong Huang and others had escaped death several times. It was because of his Spring Breeze Technique did Chu Kuangren dare to train them this way. If it was up to the other sage orthodoxies, would they dare to do this to their Daoists?

They would no doubt be afraid of accidentally injuring their precious geniuses.

“Master, this is the guqin you requested.”

At that moment, Lan Yu came up to him with a guqin in her hands.

“Oh, it’s done.”

Chu Kuangren’s eyes lit up with excitement as he looked at the guqin.

Ever since he had obtained the Eight Celestial Demonic Chords, he had been looking forward to having a guqin to activate the technique. Hence, he requested Elder Ruyan to have one made for him.

Although it took one month to make, the guqin was finally done.

He held the guqin and studied it carefully.

Since Elder Ruyan had to go find someone to specially craft that guqin for him, which took a month to be completed, that guqin was naturally extraordinary. Even the materials and craftsmanship poured into it were all the best.

The guqin looked similar to common guqins in the market. Its body was black and it had a faint glow to it. Although it was made from wood, it had a metallic touch to it.

Chu Kuangren plucked one of the strings and out came a clattering echo.

Its sound was loose but powerful, and it had an appealing charm to it as well. There was no noise to it.

Standing next to him, Lan Yu looked at Chu Kuangren in surprise. Having been by his side for so many years, that was the first time she learned that Chu Kuangren knew how to play the guqin.

“Lan Yu, do you want to hear me play a song?”

“I do.”

Lan Yu nodded.

“Then I shall play one for you.”

Chu Kuangren sat on the mountain peak with the guqin on his thigh. His fingers were placed on the strings of the guqin with his eyes slightly close. It was as if he was feeling or sensing something.

After that, a mysterious surge of Daoist Rhyme started to spread from his body.

The moment he opened his eyes, his fingers moved, and out poured many beautiful musical notes from between his fingers, echoing around him.

The guqin music echoed in the sky like a beautiful melody.

The instant the guqin music rang out, the winds and clouds around him stopped. Besides the sound from his guqin music, nothing else could be heard.

Inside the Black Heaven Sect.

The Black Heaven's Second and Third Forefather softly cried out in surprise.

"Guqin music? Where's it coming from?"

"That little fella's the one playing the music. Wait, he knows music as well?"

"Hold on a second, this guqin music..."

After both Black Heaven's Second and Third Forefather listened carefully to the guqin music, they could not hold back anymore as they immediately rushed out of their cottages and headed towards Chu Kuangren's location.

Even Fairfrost Sage could feel something as well, and she too had left her.

The few Sages and Honorable Supremes of Black Heaven Sect arrived at where Chu Kuangren was to see him playing music. They were all shocked.

That person in white continued to strum the guqin as boundless music echoed all around. More importantly, they could sense that an overbearing surge of Daoist Rhyme was constantly surging within that guqin music.

That surge of Daoist Rhyme was so overwhelming that even the Sages were surprised.

As everyone listened to the guqin music, they could feel that the scenery around them had started to become clearer and a vast feeling welled up in everyone.

Nangong Huang, Murong Xuan, and the others had also heard the guqin music from afar.

They suddenly stopped mid-training.

Even the sword qi clones did not continue to fight as well.

Nangong Huang and the others listened to the guqin music that their minds seemed to be drawn to. It was as if they had merged with the land beneath them and they could feel its vastness.

Towering mountains, endless flowing water, lush forests, wind everywhere... Every single plant, leaf, and flower possessed its own unique musical charm.

As Nangong Huang and the others were immersed in that vast boundless feeling, memories of their training during the past few days started to surface in their mind.

The techniques of the sword qi clones, the sword intent from the Sword Mountain, and even the Godly Phoenix's flames were all converted into pieces of knowledge that fueled their understanding.

At that moment, they entered into a state of epiphany under the guidance of the guqin music.

"I can't believe the little guy can delve into the Dao through music. This is something only a Musical Daoist Grandmaster can do. Besides, a Daoist Rhyme that's so dense is practically unheard of, and I've never heard of any Musician Daoist that could achieve the same thing as well."

"I'm not even sure whether the few elders of the Heaven Chord Sect can pull off something like this. This feat alone is simply terrifying."

"What else does he know?"

The Sages found it hard to believe.

Although they had witnessed a lot of incredible and even magical feats from Chu Kuangren, it seemed like he had endless surprises for them.

It was as if the things he knew were endless.

The musical tune finally ended.

However, melodies of the guqin music continued to reverberate throughout the heavens and earth for a long time.

It was only after a long while did the world around them return to normal.

“Master, what’s the name of this song?”

Lan Yu asked with her mouth agape and in shock.

She too knew how to play musical instruments and could be considered an expert in terms of musical Dao. However, she was only a little river stream, which was basically incomparable to Chu Kuangren’s mighty ocean.

Someone with such skills in musical Dao could be said to have reached the pinnacle of what they could achieve and be a renowned figure in the world!

“Of the Eight Celestial Demonic Chords, this shall be the... Boundless Overworld!”

Chu Kuangren chuckled.

There were a total of eight songs in the Eight Celestial Demonic Chords, and each of them could be deemed the peak of musical Dao. That Boundless Overworld was the first song in the Eight Celestial Demonic Chords

“Boundless Overworld, Boundless Overworld...”

“What an awesome song.”

Lan Yu repeated the song’s name twice and praised it sincerely.

“Would you like to listen to it again? I can still continue... Huh?”

Chu Kuangren was going to say that he could play that song again. However, he suddenly exclaimed and could not help but smile when he looked at Nangong Huang and the others.

“Those guys have reached a state of epiphany.”

Chu Kuangren was slightly surprised.

After some thought, he figured out that it was due to the Boundless Overworld.

Although he did not imbue spiritual power into this song, the Daoist Rhyme contained within it was strong enough to benefit Nangong Huang and the others a lot.

“Heavenly Radiant Sword Art!”

An overwhelming surge of Daoist Rhyme erupted when Murong Xuan opened his eyes and he cast one of the twelve Sage Techniques that Chu Kuangren created for the Black Heaven Sect.

Within the Heavenly Radiant Sword Art, the sword qi of that technique was vast and unmatched!

One sword attack alone instantly destroyed the sword qi clone!

Somewhere else.

Swirls of Yinyang Daoist Rhyme circulated in Nangong Huang's eyes.

After a ray of Divine Yinyang Light merged into the sacred sword in his grasps, he too unleashed a sword attack that was filled with an endless harmony of Yin and Yang Daoist Rhyme.

That one sword attack too instantly destroyed the sword qi clone!

Jun Yi, Qin Wushuang, and the others had also successfully defeated the sword qi clones.

Meanwhile, inside the Scorching Inferno.

Shang Qingxue slowly stood up as she channeled the might of her Deep Freeze Physique to its limit. Surges of cold waves attacked the barrier mercilessly like a raging tide.

Cracks soon started to appear on the barrier before it shattered into countless spots of light. As the cold waves spread out from within, it instantly froze everything within a three meters radius.

Shang Qingxue singlehandedly broke through the Scorching Inferno for the first time!

Chapter 276: Heading To White Tiger Domain, Never Seen A Place Like This, Why Don't We Mental Spar

"This tune has made these Daoists enter a state of epiphany?"

The Black Heaven Sect's Sages were quite surprised.

Who knew that Chu Kuangren's music would have such an effect. However, after they thought about the Daoist Rhyme in that tune, they realized that it actually made sense.

That guqin music was indeed quite indulging to listen to.

It was almost like the sound of nature itself!

Under Chu Kuangren's days of training, these few people had already accumulated a lot of insight. Now, with the guidance of the guqin music, their brains seemed to have gone into overdrive and entered the state of epiphany. Their strength might have improved by leaps and bounds.

"Lan Yu, I'll play this guqin again for you in the future."

Chu Kuangren let out a smile and stashed away the guqin.

Not long after that, it was as if something had popped up into his mind, and he said to Lan Yu, "Right. Do you think I should give this guqin a name?"

“The Lingering Song, this guqin is called the Lingering Song.”

Lan Yu answered swiftly, “This name was picked by Elder Ruyan.”

She vividly remembered the time when Elder Ruyan passed her the guqin. She pronounced this name to Lan Yu in all seriousness, reminding her not to let Chu Kuangren name this instrument.

She was not about to take any chances in Chu Kuangren’s naming ability.

“Oh? Inspired by the saying that a melodious tune would remain lingering around the beams of a room for days on end? It really is a nice name. What a shame, I wanted to name it the Stinging Rumble.”

Chu Kuangren sighed in disappointment.

Stinging Rumble?

Did it sound like a rumble?

Lan Yu could not help but let out a snarky roast.

After defeating the sword qi clones, Nangong Huang and the others gathered and immediately discussed the guqin music they had heard earlier.

“Do you guys know where that guqin sound came from just now? It’s so abstruse. I immediately entered a state of epiphany when I listened to it.”

“Yes, it’s too amazing.”

“I have never heard of such a vast Daoist Rhyme. The person who played that guqin tune must be an incredible Musical Daoist Grandmaster.”

“But why would a Grandmaster show up here?”

“He even helped us gain epiphany.”

“The Sect Leader must know what’s going on. Let’s ask him later.” When Nangong Huang said, he immediately saw Chu Kuangren and another person towards them from afar.

The few of them quickly went up to them.

“Sect Leader, you’re here. Do you know how that guqin music came about just now?” Murong Xuan went straight to the point and asked.

“Of course, I do.”

"I wonder which Musical Daoist Grandmaster played that. Can we ask for your permission to meet the Grandmaster? We'd like to thank him in person."

Nangong Huang said.

"This person may seem far away from you, but he's right in front of you," Chu Kuangren replied.

Upon hearing that, the group of them turned to look at Lan Yu in shock.

"Lan Yu, it was you who played that song?"

Chu Kuangren was stunned.

'Why would you guys relate it to Lan Yu? Was it not obvious that it was me, your almighty Sect Leader, who had played the song?'

"I've heard Lil Bing said that Miss Lan is adept at playing the guqin, but all this while, I've never had the opportunity to listen to it. What I heard was really beyond my imagination."

Murong Xuan said admirably.

Jun Yi looked doubtful on the other hand. "I've heard Lan Yu's music before. It's great, but not as great as this."

“It wasn’t me, it was Master.”

Lan Yu pointed toward Chu Kuangren.

“Sect Leader, you can play the guqin?”

“Why? Is that surprising to you?” Chu Kuangren said.

“No, I’ve just never heard that you can play the guqin, Sect Leader,” Nangong Huang replied in astonishment.

“There are many things that I can do. Do I really have to tell you everything?”

Chu Kuangren rolled his eyes and said.

“No, you don’t have to,” Nangong Huang scratched his head and said.

Nobody had any doubts when Chu Kuangren said that he played the guqin because after all, Chu Kuangren had showcased too many extraordinary abilities. It was not at all baffling for him to add Musical Daoist Grandmaster to his name.

“Right, Sect Leader, now that we’ve defeated your sword qi clones, I wonder if you have any more training regimes in store for us?”

Nangong Huang asked.

“That’s it. There are only seven days left until the championship. What more training do you need? We’ll leave for White Tiger Domain tomorrow.”

Upon hearing what Chu Kuangren said, everyone stared at each other.

“Why do I not feel delighted about this?”

Murong Xuan said.

On one hand, they felt relieved, because such a tormenting ordeal had finally come to an end. However, on the other hand, they noticed that they have made progress, and they hoped that this training would never end.

“Are you all hooked on being tortured? If so, I shall give you a new, more vigorous training regime the next time we return.”

Chu Kuangren swept a glance at Murong Xuan and said.

At that, the group of people felt a cold shiver trickling down their spine. The current training was already hell to them, what would a more vigorous one be to them?

“No, Sect Leader, I’m just kidding.”

“Only Murong Xuan said that. We never said that we wanted it.”

“Yes, exactly. If you need someone to train, just take Murong Xuan with you.”

All of them made a fuss for a while.

After that, Chu Kuangren let them go to make the necessary preparations.

The next day.

Chu Kuangren took out the Illusive Mirage.

As the Illusive Mirage floated atop of the Black Heaven Sect, its gigantic vessel made everyone present feel its domineering aura.

“Best wishes, Sect Leader.”

At the mountain entrance.

Elder Ruyan and the few others bid Chu Kuangren and the group of Daoists farewell.

They would be representing the Black Heaven Sect in the Sky-Pride Championship this time, so each one of them had a huge burden on their shoulders.

“Alright, we shall be on our way then.”

Chu Kuangren followed the group of Daoists up to the Illusive Mirage.

Soon after, two blasts of enormous airflow gushed out of the Illusive Mirage’s stern, propelling it forward and leaving two white trails on the clouds. Just like that, it blasted the rest of the disciples off their feet in a shambolic fashion.

“This Illusive Mirage is so awesome!”

“Tsk tsk, I’m happy to have sat on it once.”

...

On the Illusive Mirage.

It was Nangong Huang and Qin Wushuang’s first time on the Illusive Mirage, so they looked at the buildings, structures, fake mountains, and greenery all around them in bewilderment.

‘So this is a Fairy boat?!’

'This Is almost like a floating city all by itself!'

In contrast to Nangong Huan and the others, Murong Xuan's reaction was normal. He had been on the Illusive Mirage once, even though that experience was not the most pleasant one.

When he recalled what happened to the Murong clan, his eyes turned dark.

However, when he shifted his gaze to Nangong Huang and the others who were still exploring the Illusive Mirage, a smile was inadvertently etched at the corner of his lip.

He walked up to them and gave them a side-eye. "Pfft, look at you guys. You're like someone who has never seen the real world before. How embarrassing."

"The Illusive Mirage is truly magnificent."

Nangong Huang continued to say. He feared that he would not be guaranteed to find another fairy boat like this one even if he had flipped the entire Firmament Star over.

"Alright, find a room for yourselves here. I estimate it would take at least two or three more days before we reach the White Tiger Domain."

Chu Kuangren ordered them. Amongst the four domains, the Azure Dragon Domain was located the furthest from the White Tiger Domain. The Four Domains Sky-Pride Championship this time would be held in White Tiger Domain's First City, where even traveling by the Illusive Mirage would take them some time.

“Yes, Sect Leader.”

With that, Nangong Huang and the group went to look for their respective places to stay.

Meanwhile, Lil Red, who had broken out in her true form was having her fun time on the Illusive Mirage. She swooped in and out in between the numerous pagodas.

“Lil Red, be careful. Don’t destroy anything.”

“Got it, Brother.”

Chu Kuangren glanced at Lil Red once before he ignored her.

When it was nighttime, Nangong Huang, Jun Yi, and the few others gathered together. They stared at the moon and fetched out some drinks and snacks, admiring the moon while savoring some good wine.

“How about we do some mental sparring?”

Suddenly, Murong Xuan announced this idea out of nowhere.

“Sure.”

“I had the same thought.”

The few others did not reject the idea.

Only Shang Qingxue silently walked to one side and did not participate. Her cultivation base was too weak. If she had gone forth with the mental sparring, it would do her more harm than good.

Nevertheless, she might just gain some insight by watching them.

The few people began their mental sparring, and none was more superior than the other.

Then, they suddenly turned their gaze at Chu Kuangren. After taking a glance at each other, they aligned their respective Daoist Rhymes at Chu Kuangren and charged it towards him.

Chapter 277: The First City, Only One Can Lead The Sky-Prides, Kuangren Of The Black Heaven It Shall Be!

“Sect Leader, please enlighten us.”

Nangong Huang, Murong Xuan, and Jun Yi unleashed their Daoist Rhymes together towards Chu Kuangren. They really did want to mentally spar with him.

Meanwhile, Chu Kuangren raised an eyebrow when he saw that unfold.

“Rude.”

After he gave that remark, an incredibly terrifying Sword-based Daoist Rhyme started to emanate from him.

In face of such magnitude of Daoist Rhyme, the Daoist Rhyme from Nangong Huang and his group could not even exert any effect at all and it shattered almost instantly.

The group of people exchanged glances with shocked expressions on their faces.

“Just because you guys have beaten one of my clones, you guys now think you have the ability to take me on already? You guys still have a long way to go and so much more training to be done.”

Chu Kuangren smiled faintly.

The few of them could do nothing but respond with a bitter smile.

They believe that no matter how much training they get, they would never be on Chu Kuangren’s level.

Two days passed by very quickly.

Chu Kuangren and his crew had now arrived at the First City of White Tiger Domain!

“Is that the First City? It looks magnificent.”

A distance away, they could see that incredibly majestic fort. There were even a few floating isles atop of it.

There were also a myriad of exotic strange beasts flying in the sky. Meanwhile, the streets were filled with people, and all kinds of tall buildings and palaces stretched as far as the eyes could see.

This was the First City.

The First City's name itself was enough to explain its extraordinariness. It was the most spectacular fort known in all of Firmament Star. It was the base for many different forces and organizations, and with that itself, it was like a country on its own.

Even the Capital City of the Royal Azure Dynasty could not compare to this city.

The First City was buzzing, especially on days like these. Besides the local forces from White Tiger Domain itself, sage orthodoxies from the other three domains had come here to participate in the Four Domains Sky-Pride Championship.

The First City was currently amongst the headlines, grabbing much attention for organizing the event, and had gathered the world's best elites all in one place.

Four Seas Inn.

This inn was the biggest in the First City. There was not one empty seat inside this inn at the moment as numerous cultivators from all the great orthodoxies were gathered here, chatting in camaraderie.

“I can’t believe Tempest Mountain is taking part in the championship this time too.”

“Hah, how can we be absent from this grand occasion?”

“I heard that the strongest sage orthodoxy in White Tiger Domain would be amongst the participants too. I think they have a good chance of winning.”

“Not necessarily. I heard that the Overlord Sage Tribe from Black Warrior Domain has sent their delegation here too. It seems like they’re set on not going home empty-handed this time.”

“Overlord Sage Tribe? They are indeed a strong contender for the first place.”

“The championship will be quite lively this time. Aside from Sky Emperor Palace and Overlord Sage Tribe, Heaven Chord Sect has also sent their delegation.”

“Heaven Chord Sect from the Scarlet Phoenix Domain?”

“Surely.”

Inside the inn, everyone was engrossed in discussions about the championship.

Just then, one of the waiters inside the inn looked out the window and his jaw suddenly dropped. His face was full of shock. “What... what is that?!”

The people at the inn looked in the direction of his gaze.

All they saw was that in the air above the First City, an enormous black Fairy boat was descending from the clouds. Wherever it passed by, the clouds would be stirred into turbulence.

Most of the people who saw that were dumbfounded.

They had never seen this kind of Fairy boat before.

“Oh my gosh, is that a Fairy boat?”

“Which sect or organization is this?”

“Hah, that’s the Illusive Mirage.”

At this point, an old man in a cloak who sat by the window suddenly said.

The people looked at him, puzzled at what he just said.

“The Illusive Mirage? What’s that?”

“Legend has it that a long time ago, there was a dynasty called the Qin Dynasty. To appease the fairies, the Great Qin Emperor ordered the entire nation’s workforce to build a one-of-a-kind, peerless Emperor Weapon Fairy boat, which was then named... the Illusive Mirage!”

Everyone gasped upon hearing that.

“This Illusive Mirage is an Emperor Weapon?”

“Not exactly. The Illusive Mirage had long been lost. This current version we see here is a duplicate,” the old man in the cloak said with a laugh.

This made the crowd even more baffled.

If a mere duplicate was already so majestic, then what would the real and original Illusive Mirage look like then? All of them could not help but shrug at that thought.

“As compared to the Illusive Mirage’s origins, I think the person on it now should bring more interest. I believe all of you have heard of him,” the cloaked old man suddenly added.

“Who?”

“The most talked about person in the world today.”

“Most talked about person?”

Everyone frowned.

It was currently the Era of Great Battles, and there were many famed elites and sky-prides. There were too many people who fit that description of the 'most talked about person'.

"Only one can lead the sky-prides, Kuangren of the Black Heaven it shall be!"

The cloaked old man then added enthusiastically.

With this word of his, surely everyone would know by now who he was talking about.

"It's him!"

"I can't believe that he's actually here."

"He's participating in the championship? Does he still plan to leave everyone else mercy?"

"Don't worry. There is a rule stating clearly that a Sect Leader would not be allowed to participate in the Sky-Pride Championship. I heard that this regulation was even highlighted in red ink on the rulebook and that this regulation was specially set for Chu Kuangren."

"The most talked about person at the moment. Heh, I should've known that it's this guy. In this day and age, I don't think there's anyone who doesn't know Chu Kuangren!"

One of the cultivators lamented.

Then, he looked toward the cloaked old man. Something told him that this old man in front of him was not just anybody, so he asked curiously, “May I ask for your name, dear Sir?”

The cloaked old man replied with a mysterious smile. “Divine interventions are not to be revealed simply.”

The reply alone was enough to scare the cultivator to wits. When he realized this old man’s identity, he wasted no time in giving him a respectful bow.

“Greetings, my respected Divine Predictor.”

...

Atop of the First City’s sky.

A few people glided past the sky and landed in front of The Mirage. These few people were the organizers of the championship this time — the administrators of the First City. When they arrived in front of the Illusive Mirage, they too were shocked at the sheer magnificence of this Fairy boat.

Soon after, one of the people announced loudly, “I am the First City’s Admin Wang Yue. I’d like to cordially invite the Black Heaven Sect Leader to show himself.”

Chu Kuangren walked out with Nangong Huang and the rest of his crew.

With just one look, Admin Wang was able to identify who amongst them was Chu Kuangren. It was no wonder because Chu Kuangren's appearance was too extraordinary. His looks were another level above the likes of Nangong Huang and Murong Xuan.

"Sect Leader Chu, nice to meet you. We've prepared the accommodation for all the sage orthodoxies who are participating. Please, follow us."

Admin Wang said.

"Alright, thank you."

Chu Kuangren smiled gently before he deposited the Illusive Mirage back into his Yin and Yang Ring.

They followed the few administrators to a cluster of pagodas and buildings, where they pointed at a few of the pagodas and said, "This region will be the accommodation for the Black Heaven Sect. We have our First City servants on duty in there. If you have anything, just order them to help you."

"Many thanks."

"You're welcome."

Chu Kuangren and his group of people entered the pagoda, then looked for their respective spots to take a break.

In the meantime, news of Chu Kuangren's arrival at the First City had swiftly reached all parts of the city, and numerous forces had received this intel very quickly.

Some of the forces even went straight to the organizing committee to repeatedly confirm whether Chu Kuangren would take part in the championship.

Their minds could only be at peace when they had obtained a clear answer.

"Phew, as long as Chu Kuangren is not participating in this championship, there's still hope for us to win it all."

"Luckily the Sect Leader is not allowed to participate in the championship. Otherwise, there's nothing to compete. Everyone would be better off just surrendering to the Black Heaven Sect."

"Chu Kuangren... The Illusive Mirage, this fella really did make a grand entrance. His arrival has drawn everyone's attention in the whole city."

On the very next day, the Divine Predictor's remark on Chu Kuangren had also rapidly spread throughout the city, although that remark was merely doggerel... Only one can lead the sky-prides, Kuangren of the black Heaven it shall be!

Just this one sentence alone drove Chu Kuangren's name to the very top over all other sky-prides.

Chapter 278: The Participant Name List, Two Ladies In A Musical Duel, Fire Spirit Crystal

The next day.

Chu Kuangren walked out of his room door sluggishly and did a stretch.

On a tree beside the courtyard, Lil Red, who had morphed into a little bird let out a couple of chirps before it perched onto Chu Kuangren's shoulder.

"Brother, you're up."

"Yes. Have you been on that tree the whole night?"

"I've absorbed one night's lunar essence."

Divine beasts were very unique. Aside from being able to absorb heavenly and earthly spiritual qi, they could absorb solar and lunar essences for cultivation.

The latter had much better quality than the former. Normally, unless certain unique techniques were cast, a usual cultivator would not be able to absorb those.

"Master, the organizing committee has sent us this. It's the championship rulebook and the participant name list." Lan Yu walked up to him and said.

She was holding a copy of the rulebook in her hand.

Chu Kuangren took that over to have a look. Documents like the rulebook had already been sent by the organizing committee to the Black Heaven Sect last time, so he had actually seen it already.

He was more interested in the participant name list for the championship.

“Oh, it says here that a total of twenty-four sage orthodoxies are taking part in the championship this time. I see a few from the Azure Dragon Domain, such as School of White Lotus, Black Heaven Sect, Serene Wisdom Sect, Thunder Falcon Tribe, Yasha Tribe...”

“There are five from the Azure Dragon Domain which is not a small number. I wonder how many familiar faces we will bump into.”

Chu Kuangren laughed. Not all sage orthodoxies had come to participate in the championship this time, and it was normal for some sage orthodoxies not to participate due to certain reasons.

Nonetheless, being able to gather twenty-four sage orthodoxies in one place was already a big feat. This was already well over half of all sage orthodoxies of the four domains. It was surely a grand occasion.

Chu Kuangren skimmed through the participants’ name list before turning his gaze onto the street outside and said, “This First City is regarded as the finest city in the entire world. I reckon it must be a buzzing metropolitan. Lan Yu, why don’t you accompany me out for a walk?”

“Sure.” Lan Yu nodded.

“Brother, I’d like to join too.”

"I'll allow that, but you're not allowed to morph into your true form. Conceal your aura properly."

"I got it."

Just like that, Chu Kuangren brought Lan Yu and Lil Red out with him.

When they walked out of their door, the two humans covered their faces in a faint layer of a spiritual veil, blurring the looks on their faces.

The two of them were too good-looking, and this was especially true for Chu Kuangren. He did not want to draw any unnecessary attention, which would disrupt his joy of traveling.

Many others emulated what he did too.

He strolled along the street. Occasionally, he would pass by several cultivators who, like him, had their faces covered with a spiritual veil as well.

Some of them were sect masters from various forces, some of them great sky-prides...

The First City truly lived up to its name. It was truly filled with hustle and bustle, but at the same time, the streets were spacious, so it did not seem congested at all. Sometimes, they would see cultivators riding on different kinds of rare strange beasts to pass by the city, as though they were trying to show off that they had a unique ride.

Along the way, Chu Kuangren also heard quite a few people talking about him.

“Only one can lead the sky-prides, Kuangren of the Black Heaven it shall be... This Divine Predictor is not even good with poems. How dare he compose such a doggerel and spread it out there. So embarrassing.” Chu Kuangren pursed his lips and said.

“But I think that what he said is true.”

At his side, Lan Yu let out a soft smile and said, “Amongst all sky-prides in this current world, aren’t you the best of them all, Master?”

“Yes, as for this fact, I do not disagree.”

Chu Kuangren nodded his head, agreeing to it.

“Quick, let’s pick up our pace. I heard that Lady Snowflake from Heaven Chord Sect is about to duel with Dame Dou Qin.”

“There are so many people there. Let’s go check it out as well.”

“Tsk tsk, they say that Lady Snowflake’s guqin music has reached the peak of perfection. If I can listen to her play a song, it would be the luckiest thing to ever happen to me, what more to see her have a musical duel with someone else.”

“That’s right. This is an incredibly rare opportunity.”

“Quick, let’s go and watch.”

On the street, cultivators hastily ran towards the venue where the musical duel was about to happen. In no time, the same street was deserted.

“Musical duel... Now that’s interesting.”

Chu Kuangren smiled to himself. After obtaining the Eight Celestial Demonic Chords, his level of musical Dao was unmatched by anyone in this current world.

He too was curious as to the prowess of this sky-pride who came from Heaven Chord Sect, which was famed all over the world for their musical Dao.

“Lan Yu, shall we go and join the crowd too?”

“Alright.”

The two of them arrived at the venue of the musical duel.

That place was a tall building.

On top of the building stood two women — one was dressed in white and the other in red; one had a cool temperament while the other exuded nobility.

These two women had the prettiest faces among the whole realm, and they both had their respective strengths and talents. A lot of male cultivators could not help but had their eyes hooked on the two ladies when they saw them.

“Is that the famed Lady Snowflake? What they say about her is true.”

“The lady in red must be the Sky Emperor Palace Dame then. Rumor has it that there’s a dame from Sky Emperor Palace called Jing Nian who is adept at musical Dao. If I’m not mistaken, this should be her.”

“Yes, it’s indeed her.”

The crowd was engaged in their discussions.

What they said spread to Chu Kuangren’s ears, but he did not put too much heart into what they had said. Instead of the two females’ gorgeous appearances, he was more interested in the crimson red crystal that was situated between them both.

Fire-based Daoist Rhyme flowed within that crystal, and it contained an extremely strong spiritual qi. It was a very rare Fire-based treasure of at least Boundary Sage quality.

“Brother, that thing looks quite tasty!”

The Godly Phoenix, Lil Red, looked at Chu Kuangren and said.

She was a divine beast that was inclined towards fire attributes, so she had an unusual draw towards Fire-based treasures.

“It’s okay. Brother will help you look for one in the future.”

Chu Kuangren replied calmly.

Lil Red was standing on top of his shoulder, where Chu Kuangren could almost hear the sound of her gulping down her saliva.

“It seems like this little fella really likes that crystal. Shall I figure out a way to get it for her?” Chu Kuangren thought to himself.

Robbing it would be out of the question because as a great Black Heaven Sect Leader, how humiliating would it be if he had grabbed some other sect’s belongings by force?

“I can’t believe you’ve taken out such a precious Fire Spirit Crystal just for this musical duel with me.”

Just then, Lady Snowflake remarked.

“I’ve heard that Lady Snowflake from the Heaven Chord Sect has an unparalleled musical Dao, and I’ve always wanted to witness it with my own eyes. I’d like to see if your Divine Snowflake is better, or if my Empyrean Valor Tune is better,” Sky Emperor Palace Dame Jing Nian said.

After she said that, she took out a guqin.

It was a guqin that was crimson red through and through, and it flowed with an extraordinary Daoist Rhyme. It exuded a similar kind of regality as its owner.

“Initially, I did not want to accept this duel, but looking at this Fire Spirit Crystal, it wouldn’t hurt me to deliver you a defeat.”

Lady Snowflake took out a guqin as well. It was a delicately designed guqin, which looked like it was crafted out of fine jade.

The two ladies then began their musical duel.

Lady Snowflake took the lead and delivered the first song.

Her guqin music was as cold as the person she was. The crowd too could feel that the temperature surrounding them had decreased by several degrees.

Following that was Jing Nian’s guqin music. Her music was grandiose, vigorous, and powerful, just like a royal emperor and it sent shudders across the entire landscape.

Two types of music, two distinct Daoist Rhymes, two different tunes echoed around everyone like true ripples in the atmosphere.

“What amazing music.”

“She truly is a sky-pride from Heaven Chord Sect.”

“This dame from the Sky Emperor Palace is not too bad herself.”

The people could not help but sing praises as they watched the musical duel.

Amongst the crowd, Chu Kuangren stared at the two dueling guqin players and suddenly frowned.
“These two women’s musical skills sound... ordinary.”

To normal people, the musical Dao of these two ladies was already inch-perfect, but to him, it could only be considered as competent. Even the word ‘extraordinary’ would not befit to describe them.

Chapter 279: Are You Selling This Bird Or Not, How Could There Be Such A Guqin Music Daoist Rhyme In This World

The guqin music reverberated in the air.

Chu Kuangren and Lan Yu were both watching from the crowd. As compared to the shock and admiration from the other people, the two of them looked much calmer.

To Chu Kuangren, the level of these two ladies was just ordinary. It was not impressive enough to warrant any compliment from him.

As for Lan Yu, ever since she had listened to the guqin music that Chu Kuangren had played, there was no one else in this world who could wow her with guqin music.

This musical duel slowly reached its conclusion.

A sharp zing was heard.

Jing Nian's guqin music suddenly became incredibly resounding. Guqin melodies kept hitting Lady Snowflake like a heavy downpour.

Gradually, Lady Snowflake's guqin music started to show signs of not being able to hold itself up. Following a loud zing sound, her guqin strings snapped!

The guqin music which encompassed the entire place was halted almost instantly.

Lady Snowflake stared at the snapped string on her guqin with a doomed look on her face. Had she just lost a musical duel?!

"How did this happen?"

Lady Snowflake was overwhelmed with a taste of defeat that she had never felt before. She had cultivated musical Dao for so many years, even the elders in her sect could not compare to her. This was her first time losing to someone about her age.

“According to the agreement we made, this guqin of yours now belongs to me.”

Jing Nian walked before Lady Snowflake and gave her an arrogant stare, then took away the guqin in her hands.

Seeing this scene unfold before her, Lady Snowflake looked even more devastated.

“Snowflake, don’t be sad, it’s just one guqin. When we get back, I’ll order someone to get a better one for you.” At this moment, a man suddenly walked up and consoled Lady Snowflake.

Lady Snowflake took two steps back and replied, “Many thanks, Bachelor Sage Chang Yuan, but we have professional guqin crafters back in our Heaven Chord Sect. You wouldn’t need to trouble yourself to find me a new guqin.”

“Oh, I see.” A gleam of disappointment flashed across Bachelor Sage Chang Yuan’s eyes. He had wanted to use this opportunity to get closer to Lady Snowflake.

He had fallen for this woman ever since he first laid his eyes on her. He was willing to disregard even his identity as the Overlord Bachelor Sage and gave up everything in trying to please her. Despite that, Lady Snowflake never reciprocated, and she ignored him instead.

“Who would’ve thought that an almighty Overlord Bachelor Sage would be such a sucker for love? It’s a shame that the feelings are only one-sided.”

Jing Nian let out a chuckle before she turned around and prepared to leave.

“Sigh, my tasty snack is gone now.” Watching as Jing Nian took the Fire Spirit Crystal away, the Godly Phoenix Lil Red could not help but said.

However, to the other people, what they heard from her were only chirping sounds.

Jing Nian, who was initially on her way out, heard this sound and traced it back to its source. Her eyes lit up when she saw Lil Red who was on Chu Kuangren’s shoulder. She walked up to him in big strides.

“I have to have this bird. Name me a price.”

When Chu Kuangren heard that, he fell silent.

The guys all around them looked puzzled as well.

Nevertheless, Jing Nian did not think too much of that. In fact, she just kept staring at Lil Red with an inexplicable adoration in her eyes.

She had seen pictures regarding the Godly Phoenix in the ancient archives. This bird in front of her looked about seventy to eighty percent similar to that Godly Phoenix in the lore.

Of course, she did not think that this could be the Godly Phoenix because after all, that was a divine beast and there was no way she could have to coincide into one right here.

She just thought that since this little bird bore such a resemblance to the Godly Phoenix, she might as well buy it and bring it back home as an item of prosperity.

“Apologies, this bird is not for sale.”

Chu Kuangren said nonchalantly.

“A hundred thousand Top-tier soulstones,” Jing Nian replied. In her mind, buying a little bird with a hundred thousand soulstones was already quite a steal for Chu Kuangren.

It was not just her as the people around them felt the same way too.

They gave Chu Kuangren envious looks.

A hundred thousand soulstones for a bird?

This was like free money falling from the sky.

Meanwhile, when Lil Red heard what Jing Nian said, she started to chirp non-stop in her direction while atop Chu Kuangren’s shoulder.

“Are you kidding? A hundred thousand soulstones to buy me, a Godly Phoenix?”

“Evil lady, just leave us alone. It’s not going to happen.”

“I’ll never leave my dearest Brother.”

However, this bout of chirping and cursing made Lil Red look more adorable to Jing Nian.

“Such an energetic bird, it would be even more fascinating to play with it on any given day. How about this? I’ll add on another hundred thousand soulstones.”

Jing Nian spoke as if she was extremely wealthy.

As a Sky Emperor Palace Dame, she really could not be bothered with these soulstones.

“I’m not going to sell you this bird, but I’m not saying that there’s no other way for you to try and obtain this bird.” Chu Kuangren smiled gently.

“What is the other way?”

“You, me, another musical duel. If you win, this bird will belong to you. If you lose, I’ll have your Fire Spirit Crystal,” Chu Kuangren said.

The people present at the scene were stunned at those words.

“This Daoist brother wants to have a musical duel with Jing Nian?”

“Pfft, do you not know any better? Even Lady Snowflake was not Jing Nian’s match. I don’t know where the heck you came from, but you don’t even look like you have half the ability.” Bachelor Sage Chang Yuan, who was at the side, mocked him.

To be fair, most people present there had the same thought as he had.

Of the entire Firmament Star, the people from Heaven Chord Sect were the most skilled in musical Dao, and now, even Lady Snowflake who was from the Heaven Chord Sect had been beaten by Jing Nian.

Yet this unknown fellow who came from nowhere thinks that he could beat Jing Nian in musical Dao?

Nobody would believe that.

“I think this guy knows a thing or two, but shame that his opponent is a musical Dao cultivator like Jing Nian. I’m afraid he would only end up losing.”

“Tsk tsk, he has no idea who he’s dealing with.”

“Let’s see how badly he’ll lose.”

Jing Nian glanced at Chu Kuangren with a ridiculed look. "You don't have to do this even if you wanted to gift me this bird for free."

"Try me."

Chu Kuangren was not bothered at all by the doubtful looks from the crowd around him.

He sprang himself into the air and onto the tall building.

Jing Nian too had positioned herself right across him and took out her guqin.

"I'll let you go first," Jing Nian said.

"No, I suggest that you go first. Otherwise, I don't think you'll have another chance to." Chu Kuangren remarked modestly.

"What madness. I said I'll let you go first, and you shall do just that."

Jing Nian locked her eyebrows, looking a little agitated now.

When the rest of the people saw that, they also felt that Chu Kuangren was being too pretentious.

"The bolder he acts, the more humiliating his defeat would be later."

“Exactly.”

Chu Kuangren did not pay any heed to the snarky remarks around him.

Instead, he took out the Lingering Song.

Once the Lingering Song was revealed, the eyes of Lady Snowflake, who was standing amongst the crowd, suddenly lit up as she inadvertently praised, “That’s a fine guqin!”

“Lady Snowflake likes this guqin.”

“No matter the material or the craftsmanship, this guqin is indeed an exquisite masterpiece. It’s even better than the one I made before this.”

At this, Bachelor Sage Chang Yuan delved deep in thought.

“Since you insist that I go first, I shan’t hold back then.”

Chu Kuangren laid the guqin across his lap, strumming it with all ten fingers.

The moment the music started to play, a shocked expression etched out on Jing Nian’s face. Then, her eyes widened as she could not believe what she was witnessing.

The crowd that was initially noisy had turned into pin-drop silence as well.

The guqin music contained a vast Daoist Rhyme which reverberated outwards, seemingly pulling everyone's heartstrings towards that endless sky and sea.

This especially held true for Jing Nian. She was so affected by the Daoist Rhyme inside the tune that her whole body seemed to have plunged into ethereal heaven and earth. The incredibly tremendous and majestic Daoist Rhyme poured onto her continuously, just like torrential waves, rendering her indefensible.

It was too scary.

Such guqin music and Daoist Rhyme was way too terrifying.

Trembling, Jing Nian lifted one arm and attempted to play the guqin in her hand to fend off the guqin music from Chu Kuangren. However, the moment her fingers strummed the guqin strings, she realized that she had failed to produce any sound.

Her musical Dao had been completely suppressed!"

/strong>

"How could there possibly be such a guqin music Daoist Rhyme in this world?!"

Chapter 280: Two Ladies Competing For A Guy, Was That Really The Godly Phoenix?

“This isn’t possible. How can there be such guqin music Daoist Rhyme in this world?!” Jing Nian stared at Chu Kuangren in disbelief.

In face of Chu Kuangren’s guqin music, she could not produce any intent of having a musical duel with him. She had been defeated, utterly defeated!

After playing the Boundless Overworld song, Chu Kuangren picked up his guqin, looked at Jing Nian, and said, “It’s your turn now, take it away.”

Jing Nian was extremely anxious now.

‘My turn, you say?’

‘What do you mean my turn? Can I even continue the musical duel like this?’

“I concede defeat!”

Jing Nian took out the Fire Spirit Crystal and tossed it over to Chu Kuangren. She then inquired curiously, “May I ask if you’re a Musical Daoist Grandmaster?”

“Musical Dao is not my specialty. I’m merely doing it to pass time. I don’t think I’m worthy of being called a Grandmaster.”

Chu Kuangren said indifferently once he took the Fire Spirit Crystal over. Meanwhile, the audience who had just come back to their senses from that guqin music earlier now looked baffled. Even Lady Snowflake who usually remained icy cool could not help but twitch her lips.

The almighty Musical Daoist Grandmaster Realm that she and all other cultivators of her Heaven Chord Sect worked all their life towards, was to their utter shock, just another leisurely activity for somebody else.

Was there still any logic left in this?

Did this man speak any reason at all?

“Since you do not wish to reveal your name, I will not push you either. Nonetheless, I’d like to invite you over to my place tonight, so we can practice some music and perhaps do some mental sparring.”

Jin Nian said with eyes full of passion.

Was it to practice music and mental spar?

Or did she mean a date?

All the male cultivators surrounding them looked at Chu Kuangren with jealousy. After all, she was the Sky Emperor Palace Dame. To receive an invitation from her was certainly one of the things that countless male cultivators dreamed of.

/strong>

If things were to develop any further, it would be the greatest fortune of their lives. God knew how many people there wished that they were in Chu Kuangren's shoes instead.

Just then, Lady Snowflake, who was standing not far away, walked up to the scene too. She said to Chu Kuangren, "Daoist Brother, the level of your musical Dao is undoubtedly high, and I truly admire your abilities. I, too, would like to invite you to my place for an overnight study tonight."

Even someone as cold-hearted as Lady Snowflake could not resist her feelings when she saw Chu Kuangren's otherworldly musical Dao mastery.

Not even her teacher had such a high level of musical Dao prowess.

If she could get on good terms with a great figure like him, maybe she could obtain a pointer or two. Either way, it would surely be extremely beneficial for her.

The moment Lady Snowflake announced her intentions like that, the jaw of every single male cultivator at the scene dropped, their faces filled with shock.

'What the h*ck!'

'Lady Snowflake, what happened to that coldness and dignity of yours?'

'You had to stoop so low!'

Bachelor Sage Chang Yuan was all the more envious as he glared at Chu Kuangren. He had painstakingly tried to win Lady Snowflake over for so many days, yet she never batted her eyes at him. Now, she even had the audacity to invite a mere male stranger back to her place!

For a godd*mn overnight study no less!

“Finders keepers, it is I who invited this gentleman first.” Jing Nian swept a glance at Lady Snowflake and said with hostility in her tone.

“Hah, for certain things, it doesn’t matter who was first. Sometimes, fate is the thing that matters. Perhaps this Daoist Brother wishes to have a mental spar with me more than with you.”

“You just lost to me. What makes you think you have the right to compete with me?”

“I have been humbled, thus I now know where I must do better at. It’s precisely because of my defeat that I need to cherish this opportunity more, to learn from this Daoist Brother here and improve myself.”

Lady Snowflake and Jing Nian were two women whom many men could desire but never get. Yet, here they were, competing for a man!

Both ladies were sharp in their speech, not willing to let the other have an edge over them. Although there was no involvement of violence, everyone at the scene was able to sense the tense atmosphere which developed over this matter.

The crowd had now developed a sense of envy towards Chu Kuangren. They all wanted so badly to answer for him... 'Stop this catfight, only kids would make a choice between two. Men would take them all! Let's all get in love together! Oh, no, I mean, get into music!'

"I really appreciate the invitations from you both, but as a lowly person with a simple life, I still have some other things to attend to. I shall rest this case right here then, farewell."

Chu Kuangren said nonchalantly, but his words meant, "Sorry, I don't really know you that well, see you!"

When the people around them heard his words, they were all close to losing their minds.

He had rejected it!

The madman had rejected the invitations from two goddesses!

Oh god, such an incredibly rare chance — an opportunity that many could only dream of, and this crazy fella rejected it without any second thought!

Even Lady Snowflake and Jing Nian were surprised.

Nevertheless, Chu Kuangren did not care about the ladies' feelings. After retrieving the Fire Spirit Crystal, he was prepared to leave the place with Lan Yu.

Bachelor Sage Chang Yuan who was standing beside could not press on any longer. He shouted, "Stop right where you are!!"

However, Chu Kuangren ignored him as he continued to stride forward. Bachelor Sage Chang Yuan's expression turned glum, and he dashed forward to try and grab hold of him.

Before he could even reach Chu Kuangren, Lan Yu, who was at his side, immediately reacted. She lashed out a fist and unleashed a boundless Daoist Rhyme that turned into a ray of brilliance, surging at Bachelor Sage Chang Yuan. It instantly blasted him off his feet and sent him flying about a hundred meters back.

The crowd gasped as they saw the scene unfold. They did not expect that the woman, who was kept by Chu Kuangren's side quietly, had such capability!

Bachelor Sage Chang Yuan's face was full of shock too.

He knew clearly that although he was not amongst the most powerful individuals amongst the younger generation, his strength was still only second to those Young Emperors.

For a person like him to be blown off with just a single fist attack!

How terrifying were this girl's powers?!

At the thought of this, his envy-fogged mind of his slowly cleared up. He would not dare to attack people in such haste again.

Meanwhile, Lady Snowflake and Jing Nian seemed deep in thought as they stared at Chu Kuangren and his companion's receding silhouette.

These two people may have had spiritual veils covering their faces, but their voices sounded very youthful. Could they be one of the sky-prides who came here to participate in the championship?

The more they pondered about it, the more likely they thought it was. Hence, they decided to return to their place and send someone to investigate further.

At this moment, after Chu Kuangren had departed from the crowd, he handed the Fire Spirit Crystal in his hand to the Godly Phoenix Lil Red. The phoenix pecked onto the crystal surface, chipping off a tiny hole on it.

Just like drinking water, she continuously absorbed the Fire Spirit Crystal's spiritual qi into his body, and the feathers on her body emitted a faint glow.

Chu Kuangren was worried that if she kept absorbing it like this, Lil Red would surely not be able to contain herself and morph back into her true form. Thus, he took away the Fire Spirit Crystal and deposited it into his Yin and Yang Ring. "I think that's it for now. It's all yours when we get back."

He and Lan Yu toured the city for a good half of the day before they returned back to the accommodation venue that was specifically arranged for the many sage orthodoxies.

The instant they got back to the place, several glances landed right on them.

Chu Kuangren glanced back at that but did not give it any more heed. Instead, he immediately returned to the zone that was catered for the Black Heaven Sect.

Those few people quickly left too when they saw him leave.

Inside a room, Bachelor Sage Chang Yuan was astonished. "Are you sure that they're from Black Heaven Sect?"

"Yes, one guy and one girl, and they brought along a red bird. I can't be mistaken. They definitely stepped into the Black Heaven Sect's area."

"Since they're from the Black Heaven Sect, good thing that things did not go too terribly earlier today." Bachelor Sage Chang Yuan breathed a sigh of relief and said.

Although the Overlord Sage Tribe was powerful and had a strong backing, they were still rather fearful of Black Heaven Sect's Chu Kuangren.

"Speaking of which, since when did Black Heaven Sect have a Musical Daoist Grandmaster amongst their younger disciples?" Bachelor Sage Chang Yuan felt a little puzzled.

Meanwhile, on the other side.

The scouts that Lady Snowflake and Jing Nian sent to spy on them had also returned.

"They really are sky-prides who have come here for the championship, but never did it cross my mind that they're from Black Heaven Sect," Jing Nian muttered under her breath.

Suddenly, it looked as if she had just recalled something. "Rumor has it that Chu Kuangren had tamed a Godly Phoenix before. That bird that I saw earlier today resembles the Godly Phoenix for almost seventy to eighty percent. Could that really be the Godly Phoenix itself?"

The more she thought of it, the more eerier she felt.

If that was really the Godly Phoenix, the mysterious identity of the Musical Daoist Grandmaster that she had met today would also be solved.

"I can't believe that was him!" She felt rather fortunate, or rather relieved that she did not pull off any over-the-top stunts.

Otherwise, she was not sure if she could still be here, standing and talking.