

War God 151

Chapter 151 – Earth Dan Realm

"Beitang Mo?"

The figure of that cold, stern young man rose in Long Chen's mind.

In the past, Long Chen had actually revered Beitang Mo's terrifying strength, but with Liu Lan's words, he was now desiring the man's life.

"If Lingqing isn't keen, nobody can force her. Not even if you're Beitang Mo."

Though that was what he was thinking, Yang Lingqing was completely powerless as compared to Beitang Mo, an expert who was even above everyone else. She had no right to choose, and if the other party used force, she could only endure silently.

Honestly speaking, when Liu Lan had said this, Long Chen had been very anxious. He even had the urge to charge into the inner faction and take Yang Lingqing away from that place and let her have a good life elsewhere. Now, however, he had yet to reach that level of strength.

"I know you're panicking. If it were my sister, I'd be just as anxious, but Long Chen, you need to understand that power is everything. With the way you are now, you can't be of any help to your sister, and might even pull her down..."

Liu Lan sighed and spoke helplessly.

"... I'd thought that with the beast spirit and crystals, you'd have a chance to enter the inner faction. Once you get in, you'll have the opportunity to gain strength rapidly, and only then will you have a say in what happens to your sister. It's a pity that you've wasted this chance, so I don't know what to do either. I've already done the best I could, so you'll have to make a choice about what you're going to do..."

At this point, Liu Lan had given up.

"Let's go. Go back and prepare well. Five days later, it will be the first day of the eleventh month. The battle of the inner faction selection."

"When the time comes, you can only pray that Beitang Mo will treat your sister sincerely, and that she falls in love with him."

Long Chen took a deep breath and raised his head.

Of course, when he did so, Liu Lan was able to see the sharp glint in his eyes.

She was slightly dazed and wondered, "Under such pressure, is he still so confident?"

Puzzled, she walked ahead of him.

Long Chen clenched his fists and watched Liu Lan leaving, gracefully moving her body. However, his thoughts were not on her at all.

"Lingqing, I've said this before. As long as I'm around, nobody can force you to do anything."

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Back to the Green Willow Residence, Long Chen spoke to Liu Lan nonchalantly, "In the next five days, nobody is allowed to disturb me unless I come out."

In Liu Lan's eyes, Long Chen, who had abandoned the beast spirit, had little hope. She did not have any reaction when Long Chen spoke, taking it as Long Chen's last attempt at a struggle.

"Alright. I'll tell the rest not to bother you."

Having said this, Liu Lan left to deal with her own matters.

Initially, having obtained the Demonic Blood Soul Essence, Long Chen had been extremely excited, but Yang Lingqing's issues had increased his stress levels.

"Long Chen, don't worry. I'm still here. I won't let Sister Lingqing get bullied..."

Seeing the stern look on Long Chen's face, Lingxi immediately consoled him once they returned to the residence.

"I'm fine, Lingxi. Just enjoy yourself. I'm going to use blood transmutation and refine the blood, and then try to reach the Earth Dan Realm."

Seeing him in a bad mood, Lingxi was very anxious, her little face tight and full of concern.

"Don't worry about me. I want to do something so that they can't look down on me."

Seeing the young man's expression so calm as he headed to the basement, it was evident from his tone that he was feeling unresigned. He was clearly planning to make a stand and fight, which left Lingxi in a daze.

At this point, Long Chen was already seated on a mat and took the Demonic Blood Soul Essence out.

"There's still some blood inside the essence, and it's even purer than fresh blood. That makes it even more suitable to perform blood transmutation with."

After refining quite a few level 4 profound-grade demonic beasts, Long Chen was now slightly nearer to the Earth Dan Realm.

"It should be now..."

Opening his mouth wide, he swallowed the soul essence whole into his stomach, the solid quickly melting into a clear liquid that flowed into Long Chen's body.

"Blood Transmutation!"

Under the heaven-defying technique of blood transmutation, this pure energy was quickly absorbed by Long Chen, filling the gaps in his dantian with real Qi within.

Shrouded by crimson lightning and flames, the Human Dan that had condensed with boundless real Qi gradually expanded and strengthened.

"There still lies a huge gap between the Human and Earth Dan Realm. Even if the next stage might seem close, there's still a large difference."

Long Chen wanted to step across this huge gulf, but it was obviously not so simple. However, with the Demonic Blood Soul Essence, things became easier.

Under the powerful devouring of blood transmutation, the strength in the soul essence rapidly revolved towards the crimson Dragon Soul Qi, and continued for a period of time.

The Demonic Blood Soul Essence might not seem big, but the energy held within was not little. While devouring it, Long Chen gradually reached the limit.

"I'm about to break through."

Currently, within Long Chen's dantian, outside the Human Dan was Dragon Soul Qi that had been compressed till it was almost a liquid form. The Dragon Soul Qi was like the Yellow River, constantly rushing and orbiting the Human Dan at the middle.

"The records have stated that when a Human Dan advances to the Earth Dan Realm, it will first be smashed. All real Qi will circle through the dragon veins, and then converge in the dantian again, forming an even more resilient Earth Dan!"

Now, under the pressure from real Qi, the Human Dan, that had already been formed, shattered with a bang. Real Qi gushed out and advanced in the nine great dragon veins, as well as the countless fine channels in the body!

In that moment, Long Chen's skin turned completely red, causing Lingxi to get a huge shock. She was about to make a move, but recalling how she had attained the Deity Dan Realm long ago and how it had been a similar situation, she knew Long Chen was fine.

While this was happening, Long Chen used Dragon Soul Transformation and turned into his dragon form.

Whether it was his scaly armour, flesh, muscles, organs or veins, all of them were much more powerful than before. Long Chen's body was now full of real Qi colliding with each other. Now that he was in his dragon form, it made the process to attain his Earth Dan simpler.

"This dragon form is truly powerful. What's inside my body is real Qi from the Earth Dan Realm, and its quality is ten times better than before. However, I'm actually able to control it!"

Long Chen was delighted. Trying to attain the Earth Dan was the most important part, which was why he was now completely focused.

"That's about it. All the real Qi will now enter the dantian!"

At this moment, real Qi divided into countless channels, making a round in Long Chen's body, nourishing his flesh and muscles. After which, they unified and charged straight towards his dantian!

This was probably how it looked when a hundred rivers gushed into the ocean.

The dust where Long Chen was sitting, flew in all directions from the ground as crimson real Qi spilled out of his frame like a giant bloody cocoon, wrapping Long Chen inside.

"The crucial moment!"

With a rumble, real Qi flowed into his dantian and began to move in all directions violently.

While this happened, the real Qi was beginning to fuse at a lightning-quick rate, and for practically every hundred gaseous particles of real Qi collided, they would form a portion of solidified real Qi!

First, a crimson core appeared in Long Chen's dantian. Following that, real Qi revolved around the core until all the real Qi finished with their haphazard movements, and completely turned into solidified real Qi!

In Long Chen's dantian, within the crimson fog, an Earth Dan the size of a thumb could vaguely be seen.

"I've finally reached the Earth Dan Realm!"

The blood cocoon broke open and Long Chen stood up. He, who had broken through, had experienced a ground-breaking change in his aura. Each movement, each gaze, was filled with something only the powerful possessed.

"The Earth Dan Realm. As compared to before, I've gotten ten or so times stronger than before. With this quantity of real Qi, my Thunder Flame Physique and the Burning Heavens Demonic Sun Fist, do I still have to fear Chu Yunxi?"

After estimating and comparing their strengths, Long Chen laughed.

"I'm sure I'll give you a surprise in the inner faction selection..."

Long Chen had found much difficulty in breaking through to the Earth Dan Realm. Recently, he had been soaring through his cultivation, and only now did he realise the difficulty in this process.

"While cultivating, the heart must be resolute and patient, but I have been in too much of a hurry. Looks like steadying myself is the only way to achieve victory at the end."

"Long Chen!"

Lingxi hovered around Long Chen and circled him as she sized him up and down. Excitedly, she exclaimed, "You've already reached the Earth Dan Realm. I wasn't wrong, was I? That Demonic Blood Soul Essence was useful!"

Since he had broken through to the Earth Dan Realm, Long Chen was feeling lighter and relaxed. From Lingxi's excited expression, he knew that she must have been standing by him, watching on anxiously. She must have been especially worried, and he felt his heart ache at the knowledge. Watching her dotingly, he spoke, "Little Xi, you've been amazing. Looks like I'll have to reward you well!"

"How are you going to reward me? You're so naughty, hehe."

"How about I give up my body to you. Look at all this skin and tender flesh. Are you keen?" Long Chen teased.

"Of course not. You're so ugly and not my cup of tea!" Lingxi's eyes went wide, not going along with Long Chen.

He chuckled in answer, full of anticipation at the thought of the inner faction selection that would take place five days later.

"This time, I must succeed, no matter the price! I can wait, but Lingqing can't wait..."

"But before that, there's something else I need to do."

Long Chen sat down once more in the basement.

"What are you doing?" Lingxi asked.

Long Chen took out all the Thunder Flame Crystals. Lingxi had stolen 47 from Zhao Tianfang, and with the one Long Chen had fused with, it came up to 48 crystals. He had fused with 30 and was left with 18, and with the 10 from the auction, he now had 28 Thunder Flame Crystals.

"Little Xi, do you think I'll be able to attain the level 2 Thunder Flame Physique with this number of crystals?"

Chapter 152 – Level 2 Thunder Flame Physique

From the perfect mastery stage of the Human Dan Realm to the Earth Dan Realm, Long Chen's Dragon Soul Qi had increased in strength by tenfold . The Dragon Soul Qi before had been enough to suppress 30 Thunder Flame Crystals and, now that the quantity of his Qi had increased, Leylin was sure he could fuse with the rest of the crystals and reach the second level of the Thunder Flame Physique!

Honestly speaking, he could somewhat tell he was about to break through .

"Fusion with Thunder Flame Crystals would mean bearing a large amount of pain . If not for my dragon form and Origin Reversion, it would be impossible for me to bear the pain whenever I reached my limit ."

Long Chen knew he was extremely lucky . He had blood transmutation and many heaven-defying techniques, and yet still found the path of cultivation difficult .

"If nothing goes wrong, these Thunder Flame Crystals can help you form the level 2 Thunder Flame Physique, but Long Chen, you can't force yourself too much . That's risky ."

Lingxi was concerned .

In this period of time, she had actually matured a lot .

"The 31st..."

Using his real Qi, he could naturally fuse Thunder Flame Crystals into his body . Blue flames and lightning entered Long Chen's body, and immediately induced the force from the rest of the Thunder Flame

Crystals he had already fused with to attack, resulting in a wild destruction going on inside . After being destroyed, his body would be 'reborn' .

With the effects of Origin Reversion, Long Chen's 'rebirth' was much faster than others .

He found that real Qi of the Earth Dan Realm made it easier to deal with the crystals . With practically no effort, he had fused with this crystal .

Feeling the obvious progress, Long Chen heaved a sigh of relief .

"Next . "

After fusing with 30 or so crystals, Long Chen's body had begun to develop a certain resistance to them . In other words, the harm they caused him was

not like before, and yet still had its body-tempering effects .

"Fusing with Thunder Flame Crystals has become much easier than before..."

Long Chen was surprised .

Time slowly passed . One crystal another was fused into Long Chen's body . The crystals in front of him slowly decreased in quantity, and nearing the end, the time needed for Long Chen to fuse with the crystals increased . However, the longest time was still nothing like before .

"The 49th crystal took me a whole day . Though a day isn't a long time, it really was rather scary just now!"

Recalling the fusion process, Long Chen was scared witless .

There were still 9 more crystals .

“Luckily, Liu Lan got me 10 more . If not, I still wouldn’t be able to attain the next level of the Thunder Flame Physique, but now...”

Long Chen could feel that he was just a short distance away from level 2 .

“The 50th Thunder Flame Crystal should be the key . ”

At this moment, Long Chen was feeling abnormally calm . The more crucial the moment, the more he needed such a state of mind .

“That crystal was slightly dangerous for you . Long Chen, are you sure you want to fuse with another?”

Lingxi stood amidst the other crystals . Though her body was smaller than the crystals, she could obviously increase her size, but that would consume much soul force .

Taking a deep breath, Long Chen nodded . “Success or failure depends on the next crystal . How can I give up at this point?”

Hearing him speak so calmly, Lingxi began to pity him . She knew that he was shouldering far too much weight on his shoulders .

On one end, there were her issues, and then Lingqing . On top of that, Mo Xiaolang . Many people were not allowing him to live peacefully, and if he was not successful in the inner faction selection, Long Chen was finished .

With no power, whether it was Chu Yunxi or Jin Sheng’en, they could eliminate him easily .

“Little Xi, move away

away . ”

Long Chen picked up the 50th crystal and kept the other 8 .

In these three days or so, he had fused with a total of 19 crystals, and the efficiency was much higher than before .

“I hope I can take care of this crystal before the selection . If even this isn’t enough to reach the next level, I won’t need the rest for now . ”

Long Chen thought mournfully .

Lingxi obediently hid at the side of the room, furrowing her brows . All of a sudden, she suddenly beamed, elated, “By the way, how could I have forgotten this move? It’s a high profound-grade technique, and Long Chen can definitely train in it!”

Long Chen obviously could not hear what she was saying in her mind, and was prepared to try this last crystal .

Raising the crystal, he used his real Qi and began the fusion process .

The Thunder Flame Crystal with lightning and flames twining around it transformed into a liquid after making contact with the real Qi . It mixed into Long Chen’s body, but all of a sudden, his brows furrowed!

“As expected, it’s ten times more intense than before . If I can take it, it’s sure to end quickly!”

When the 50th crystal entered his body, it was as if wind and lightning were rapidly whistling in his body, quickly swirling all the crystals he had already fused with like hurricanes in his body . They spun quickly, and no matter where they went, muscle and bone were churned into powder .

This was just the start, and this was already a level of pain Long Chen had never experienced . His expression immediately began to distort, and it was obvious how much pain he was in .

“Long Chen!”

Seeing Long Chen in this state, Lingxi was suddenly anxious . Just as she was about to approach him, a web of lightning fluttered towards her, fire blazing around it .

Lingxi hastily dodged .

This lightning web of fire had exploded from Long Chen’s body, and accompanying it was Long Chen’s voice .

“Don’t come close!”

Long Chen definitely had to

had to be suffering from the inhuman torture, but he was stubbornly not letting her get close . Lingxi was on the verge of tears .

On one end, she was concerned about Long Chen, but on the other, she had no idea if her actions would interrupt the process .

“Long Chen, are you alright...”

Lingxi’s little face was slightly pale, and it was obvious that Long Chen was not in a very good state .

At this moment, the force of lightning and thunder suddenly exploded from Long Chen’s body!

Rumble!

Crimson flames rose on his body, and the red lightning wound around his body as it leapt . Soon enough, two forces wrapped around him and formed a bundle of crimson lightning with flames . It was then that Lingxi completely lost contact with Long Chen .

How could she not be worried?

She anxiously went to and fro in the room, unsure of whether she should do anything . If she did not act, Long Chen might very well die because of her lack of action . If she did, she still had no idea of what to do, and was afraid it might affect Long Chen's concentration .

“Trust me . I'm fine . ”

At this moment, Long Chen's calm voice sounded by Lingxi's ear . If Lingxi had tears, they would be streaming down her face by now after hearing that .

“You bastard, all you know is to make others worry . If you do this again, just see if I care about your life or death!”

Lingxi was at a loss while watching this young man doing his utmost .

There had been such a huge change in her life, and if not for Long Chen's appearance, she might have died long ago, her traces wiped out from this world .

When it came down to it, Long Chen was her saviour, and having been with him all the time, it was impossible for there not be any strange feelings between them, a male and a female .

“What should I do? Mother... Where is my future...”

Watching Long Chen, Lingxi suddenly felt an emptiness in her heart in her heart .

This feeling left her frightened .

All of a sudden, a bundle of lightning and flames exploded, and it seemed that the room would be destroyed soon!

“Long Chen!”

Under Lingxi’s panicked cries, the flames and lightning withdrew and were swallowed by a figure . Long Chen’s figure gradually became clearer before Lingxi’s eyes .

Long Chen had now undergone a large transformation, compared to when he had just broken through to the Earth Dan Realm . He was still in his dragon form, though, and it was impossible to see his original appearance .

However, just from the flames and lightning that seemed to flow in his eyes, as well as the glint of his body that now had an aura similar to a sharp blade, Lingxi knew that he had succeeded!

The fusion with the 50th crystal had taken a short period of time, but this had almost taken Long Chen’s life .

The fusion this time was incomparably dangerous, but Long Chen had pulled through .

It was because of the faith in his heart .

In front of Long Chen, Lingxi was crying and laughing at the same time while sizing him up and down .

“Girl, after seeing my level 2 Thunder Flame Physique, how many times is your heart beating per minute?”

Long Chen burst out laughing .

“You scoundrel!”

Lingxi glared at him resentfully and hit him a few times . When she herself was in pain, she grumbled for a while more before asking craftily, “Hey, I have a high profound-grade battle technique . Do you want to learn it?”

“Huh? When have you ever had a high profound-grade battle technique?”

Lingxi was beginning to get embarrassed . “It’s from when I was young . My daddy had let me learn it for fun, and I’d thought I’d forgotten about it . Somehow, I accidentally remembered it just now...”

Accidentally remembering it?

Long Chen rolled his eyes, “Cut the bullshit . Give it to your big brother . ”

“What big brother?” Lingxi rolled her eyes at him, pleased with herself, “I’ll only give it to you if you call me big sister . Hmph!”

Chapter 153 – Sword Finger of the Demonic Spirit!

There were two more days till the inner faction selection.

With Long Chen's usual speed, merely two days was not enough for him to completely learn a high profound-grade battle technique. However, since Lingxi was the owner of this technique and had some experience from training in it before, he somehow managed to complete it with his natural aptitude, and her step-by-step guidance.

"The high profound-grade battle technique, Sword Finger of the Demonic Spirit..."

The power of this move definitely surpassed that of Burning Heavens Demonic Sun Fist, and was now Long Chen's strongest attack.

This was a finger technique, as well as a sword technique. Long Chen had once cultivated in the Nine Fingers of the Wind Devil, and also seen the Dark Heavenly Finger of the Bai family. However, these two finger techniques were definitely inferior to Sword Finger of the Demonic Spirit.

It required fusing a powerful sword technique with a finger technique, and was employed with a finger. Though this would somewhat lower its strength, the force it had was definitely powerful.

Though he had not actually used it before, just the activity of his real Qi while he had been cultivating told Long Chen that the Sword Finger of the Demonic Spirit was a first-class technique. It was no wonder that it was a high profound-grade battle technique.

This was also Long Chen's first high profound-grade battle technique!

After he understood Sword Finger of the Demonic Spirit, Lingxi returned to the Lingxi Sword to continue her cultivation. Meanwhile, Long Chen went outside and enjoyed the resplendent starlight alone.

"Now that I'm at the Earth Dan Realm, my real Qi is comparable to that in the initial mastery stage at the Earth Dan Realm after Dragon Soul Transformation. Even the most powerful person in the inner faction selection, Jin Sheng'en, is merely at the initial mastery stage at the Earth Dan Realm. In terms of real Qi, there isn't a large gap."

While deep in thought and watching the starry skies, Long Chen chuckled.

"A level 2 Thunder Flame Physique is comparable to a high profound-grade constitution technique. Would it lose to the Gilding Physique? On top of that, I have my high profound-grade Sword Finger of the Demonic Spirit. Chu Yunxi, Jin Sheng'en, if you want me to kneel before you or kill me in the inner faction selection, then just wait."

Stretching his body while the night air blew, Long Chen felt more relaxed.

"My strength has increased by a large margin. I'll make sure those of you who look down on me will be taken aback. And then..."

Recalling Liu Lan's slim body, Long Chen burst out into laughter. "I wonder if she remembers what she said? As long as I pass the inner faction selection..."

In the night breeze, Long Chen was in high spirits.

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The first day of the eleventh month.

It was a day bustling with noise and excitement, and the day of a rare event.

The Lingwu Family was split into the two inner and outer factions. The inner faction had jurisdiction over the outer faction, with the outer faction depending on them for their existence.

Everyone knew that the true core of the Lingwu Family was the inner faction.

The geniuses of the outer faction would do all they could to make their way into the inner faction. The only means of doing so was through the inner faction selection, and this day, the first day of the eleventh month, was when it would take place.

Out of the twenty seeded participants, only two talented disciples would be able to pass the selection and enter the influential clans of the Lingwu Family.

On this day, Long Chen left his residence early.

There were already many people waiting outside. They were all well-known in the Green Sun Hall, and the person at the front was naturally Liu Yuan, who was at the Heaven Dan Realm. Beside him were the enforcers and elders at the Earth Dan Realm, as well as many other Earth Dan Realm disciples.

These were the peak forces of the Green Sun Hall.

When he had just entered the Lingwu Family, Long Chen might have been fearful of this level of strength, but now, being welcomed by so many people, he felt no pressure. It was obvious how fast his progress was.

Though it was difficult for Long Chen to enter the inner faction, he was the Green Sun Hall's pride for being able to obtain qualifications to participate in the selection.

Honestly speaking, not considering Feng Wutian, who had been the illegitimate child of someone in the inner faction, Long Chen was the second talent who had obtained the qualifications, the first being Liu Lan.

This was more than enough to prove Long Chen's talent.

He might have no prospects of entering the inner faction, but Liu Yuan was extremely content. He watched Long Chen, who seemed full of vigour, and laughed brightly, "Long Chen, it's your big day today. In the outer factions, only 20 out of thousands of young talents obtain the qualification to participate in the inner faction selection!"

Seeing this old man not furious with him, Long Chen knew that Liu Lan had not told him about the matter of him selling the Purple Enchanted Dragon beast spirit.

For this reason, he glanced at Liu Lan. She was now standing beside Liu Yuan silently, and being an eye-catching, elegant beauty.

Feeling Long Chen's eyes on her, she turned. It was obvious that she still held intense feelings of dissatisfaction and disappointment towards Long Chen. It seemed that she was still keeping the matter about selling the beast spirit at heart.

"Go. You shouldn't be late. I'll bring you to see the grand elder of the Green Faction in the Green Emperor Hall!"

It was the big day of the Green Sun Hall. Liu Yuan now had some face in front of the other great elders, and he was practically glowing.

"Escorting the Great Elder!"

"Long Chen, good luck! Bring glory to our Green Sun Hall! Even if you don't enter the inner faction, you have to persevere and get through the first stage!"

"Yes. As long as you're more shrewd and evade your opponent as much as you can, you still have a chance at the Divergent Road."

Those following Long Chen to the inner faction selection battle were only Liu Yuan and Liu Lan.

It made sense that the father and daughter pair were in rich attire. Liu Lan had put effort into her looks, with her skirt fluttering in the wind, hair done up, eyes clear and passionate.

"She's put so much effort into her looks. Is she trying to send me a signal?"

Long Chen slandered and bid the others of the Green Sun Hall goodbye. With Liu Yuan's enthusiastic lead, they left the Green Sun Hall.

After Long Chen had left, the other elders and enforcers stopped waving their arms and exchanged gazes.

"Everyone, do you think Long Chen will be able to create a miracle?"

At the thought of the strength of the other participants, they shook their heads. "It's glorious enough that he's obtained an opportunity to participate. I just hope he can preserve this glory and not be defeated too miserably. Only then would Great Elder's attempts at nurturing him not be in vain."

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"By the way, Long Chen, have you already refined the beast spirit?"

Not long after leaving the Green Sun Hall, Liu Yuan, whose long beard was flowing in the wind couldn't hold himself back and asked.

Long Chen was surprised and took a look at the cold Liu Lan. Confidently, he answered, "Don't worry, Great Elder. How could I let you down?"

From Long Chen's words, it meant he'd already refined the beast spirit. In that case, Long Chen might not have a good chance at the selection, but as long as he could display an extraordinary performance and give Liu Yuan a better reputation, Liu Yuan was satisfied.

Long Chen was brazenly lying to Liu Yuan, and Liu Lan found this behaviour shameless.

"What's the point of lying to my father now? When you're under attack and can't even use your beast transformation, how embarrassing would it be for you, Long Chen?"

Liu Lan could not comprehend why Long Chen, who had once stunned her, needed to lie in order to maintain his reputation as a genius.

At this thought, Liu Lan stood ahead of Long Chen, a cold smile on her face.

"Is that so? Does that mean you're done with it? Long Chen, why don't you try transforming now? Let me admire the beast transformation of the Purple Enchanted Dragon and see how it is."

Long Chen laughed in embarrassment, "Grand Elder, there's no need for that. You bestowed the beast spirit to me, and if I use it in the inner faction selection and defeat my opponent, you'll feel more accomplished!"

Long Chen was now practically a treasure in Liu Yuan's heart. Since Long Chen had spoken, he did not want to lose his demeanour as a grand elder despite his curiosity, and waved his arms elegantly, "Do as you like!"

"Thank you, Grand Elder!"

Upon hearing this, Liu Lan, who was walking ahead, could only remain silent.

While she wanted to turn back and scold Long Chen, she pondered over it and realised there was no need to.

"Since this is the type of person he is, let him die on his own. What's the point of caring about him?"

Shaking her head, Liu Lan maintained her cool look.

Behind her, Long Chen watched her as she swung her hips while walking. How could he not know what she was thinking?

"When the time comes, let me give this idiotic woman a surprise. How dare you use me as a shield. It's not my style if I don't teach you a lesson!"

At this thought, Long Chen smirked inside and asked Liu Yuan, who was beside him, "Grand Elder, what is this Divergent Road?"

"I was going to speak to you about the inner faction selection, and you ended up asking first. Don't worry and let me explain it to you slowly."

Liu Yuan cleared his throat, "The inner faction selection is no different from before. There are a total of two stages, and they are the Divergent Road, and Nest of Life and Death."

"Divergent Road and Nest of Life and Death?"

"Yes. The inner faction selection will not be held in the Lingwu City nor in the Sky Martial Realm. It will be held to the west of the Yuanling City, and at the border of the Yuanling Region, in the mountains of the Nine Devil Mountain. More specifically, the Devil Mountain of Life and Death within the Nine Devil Mountain."

"So it's not in Yuanling City?"

Long Chen was surprised. The scale of the inner faction selection was so enormous, that the location was even at the borders of the Yuanling Region, within the Nine Devil Mountain.

"The Devil Mountain of Life and Death reaches as high as over ten thousand metres and is vast, reaching the heavens and is unusually tall. At the peak, there exists countless devil nests, and are known as the Nests of Life and Death. This is a ruthless training area for life and death experiences. Not only are there vicious demonic beasts there, the terrain is also very treacherous. That's why the inner faction selection is held there."

A peak of over ten thousand metres! Long Chen had never heard of it before. This showed how powerful the Lingwu Family was.

Just an inner faction selection required one to head to a place with a name that would inspire terror.

"Now, I shall explain the two stages, the Divergent Road and Nest of Life and Death. First, the Divergent Road!"

Liu Yuan looked solemn, and this serious attitude was probably so that Long Chen would take this inner faction selection more seriously.

Chapter 154 – Divergent Road

If he'd known there were so many rules in the inner faction selection, Long Chen would have asked Liu Yuan earlier, which would leave him more prepared.

The reason why Liu Yuan had not searched for him and told him these rules was probably because he had told Liu Lan not to let anyone disturb him, right before he shut himself in seclusion.

However, as long as he had strength, he could take on any sudden changes. Long Chen wasn't worried.

"Long Chen, you've taken part in the outer faction selection before. There's not much difference between the inner and outer faction selection, though the format has been reinforced."

"The Divergent Road is a pathway up the Devil Mountain of Life and Death. In a way, it's a pathway to the heavens. On the Divergent Road, not only is the terrain treacherous, with demonic beasts wandering around and poisonous bugs spanning across the area, there's also the obstruction from opponents. It's extremely dangerous. On top of that, the weather is terrible on the Nine Devil Mountain, and there are hurricanes, storms, lightning and thunder from time to time. That's why you need to be especially cautious on the path."

Having said all these, Liu Yuan took a slight rest and continued, "After getting to the Divergent Road, you'll be divided into ten groups of two. Before embarking on the path, you will be given two items."

"The first is a firework signal. I'm sure you can understand what that is. If you meet any danger that you can't handle, or you're being forced in a situation where there's no way out, you can use it. There are people of the inner faction stationed nearby, so as long as you set it off, you can basically save yourself."

"However, so long as you set it off, you're basically forfeiting yourself out of the selection. Use it only as a last resort. If you really can't handle it though, then set it off. That way, you can ensure your safety."

"What's going to happen if the other party doesn't let me off even after I set off the signal? What happens if they try their utmost to kill me?"

"That's impossible."

Liu Yuan chuckled, "The others know the rules better than you do. If the firework signal is released and the other party still acts, they will be killed on the spot if the inner faction finds out. Don't ever try to push your luck, because there is nothing that the inner faction doesn't know."

At the thought of how powerful the inner faction was, Liu Yuan could only sigh ruefully.

Remembering the firework signal, Long Chen asked on, "Great Elder, what was the second item you spoke of?"

"The second item is a jade bangle. It's a rather unusual item, and it's so solid that even I can't damage it. Once you wear it, it will be able to detect how whole your body is. If you're seriously injured, it will automatically drop off, and others will be free to take it."

"The battle on the Divergent Road is actually a battle for the jade bangles. Everyone will have one, which means there's a total of 20 bangles. The one who obtains more bangles will have a higher chance of passing through the first stage— Divergent Road."

"There are two objectives that must be fulfilled on Divergent Road. One, passing through the Divergent Road and reaching the Nest of Life and Death in a day. Two, while completing the first objective, the four pairs which have more jade bangles, which make up eight people, will have the qualifications to participate in the second stage. Of course, there's another crucial requirement. If one person in a pair does not reach the Nest of Life and Death, then that pair will lose their chance of continuing in the competition."

Long Chen understood the rules easily.

To obtain the qualifications to participate in the next stage, one had to pass through the Divergent Road within a day, and be in one of the four pairs to obtain the most jade bangles. The other six pairs would be disqualified.

There was another requirement. If a person had obtained the most jade bangles but their partner had gotten lost, died or withdrawn, then they, too, would lose the qualification to participate in the second stage.

The first stage of the inner faction selection tested not just individual battle power, but also adaptability to terrain, getting along with others, fighting side by side, the ability to work in a team, one's temperament, and many others.

Long Chen really admired the inner faction for being able to come up with such a testing method.

"Long Chen, there's something else I need to make clear to you."

At this point, Liu Yuan looked stern, though hidden within was some helplessness.

"Great Elder, please speak."

"For the Divergent Road, you can choose any partner you want. Besides the Gold and Silver factions, the rest all have two people who can form pairs within their faction. However, the Gold faction has three people, two of which are twins who will be paired together. That leaves the most powerful Jin Sheng'en, and he's likely to pair with Chu Yunxi, who he has a good relationship with. Your fallout with Chu Yunxi is really..."

It was Liu Lan's fault for causing hostility between Long Chen and Chu Yunxi. Liu Yuan knew full well that Long Chen was the innocent party, which was why he felt apologetic.

"In general, I believe the person you'll be paired with is some talent of the Silver faction. There are a total of three coming from the Silver faction, one of which has directly obtained the qualifications to participate. Her name is Yin Mengyao. The other two are a couple, which means that if nothing goes wrong, you and her will be a team. Long Chen, you need to understand this. For Yin Mengyao to have directly gotten the qualification to participate, she must be extremely arrogant, and a weak partner would pull her down..."

"Great Elder, you mean she'll look down on me?"

"I don't know for sure, but she'll probably protest. Long Chen, if she doesn't give you any face at all, you need to endure. If you can do it until the Divergent Road, she'll definitely think of ways to protect you. Otherwise, she wouldn't be able to pass this stage either!"

Long Chen understood everything Liu Yuan was saying.

"In other words, even if others ridicule me to my face, I should just take it until I enter the Divergent Road and shamelessly get her to protect me?"

Long Chen wondered inside.

"I don't know what kind of person Yin Mengyao would be, but if she is that sort, I'll make sure she suffers for it. Ha, for me to be ridiculed... If Little Xi were to see this, wouldn't she laugh at me?"

Long Chen knew pretty much everything about the Divergent Road. In general, he was quite excited for it.

"Great Elder, I understand the Divergent Road already. What will the format be like for the Nest of Life and Death?"

"Do you remember the second part of the outer faction selection?"

Long Chen nodded, "Of course I do. It was the duel."

"The Nest of Life and Death is actually a more powerful version of the duel, and is held at the peak of the Devil Mountain of Life and Death. There are nests of various sizes, and the environment within is vile and exceptionally treacherous, especially with the unknown dangers within. I don't know very much in detail, so I think the Grand Elder shall tell you."

"For the battle in the Nest of Life and Death, the pairs will all be disassembled from the eight who have come from the Divergent Road. Everyone will then be split into two groups, with four in each. There are a total of two places for those successful in the selection, which means there will be four people vying for that one place. They will fight to be number one. If you are lucky to be one of the eight, you will need to go through two life and death battles in succession. Only if you achieve victory in both, will you be able to enter the inner faction."

"Two rounds of life and death battles. For these, you will have to enter a nest with your opponent and, under these dangerous circumstances, strive for victory. During the battle, you will need to deal with both your opponent, as well as unknown dangers. It's basically impossible to succeed..."

The difficulty in being the most impressive two out of twenty people was obvious.

After hearing these frightening rules, Long Chen could tell that they did not have very high expectations of him. It was to be expected.

"Firstly, I have to make haste on the dangerous terrain of the Divergent Road while fighting with enemies, seizing enough jade bangles and ensuring the safety of my partner. That means it's difficult to obtain the qualifications unless a team has more than four bangles."

"Then, I'll have to enter the Nest of Life and Death with my opponent and go through with two back-to-back battles. Only if I achieve victory will I have the qualifications to enter the inner faction selection. If it were me of five days ago, I would have no chance at all, but now..."

This time, Long Chen's strength had improved by leaps and bounds. Whether in terms of the realm he was at or his offensive and constitution battle techniques, he was much stronger than before.

"I, Long Chen, will give you a huge shock!"

Long Chen clenched his fists and smiled faintly.

Seeing his look of confidence, Liu Yuan was startled, thinking Long Chen was trying to console himself. He could do little but shake his head, "Long Chen, don't feel down. You grew up in a small place like Poplar Town. Now that you've come to the Lingwu Family, you've only just started unearthing your potential, and you still have ways to go. Even if you can't enter the inner faction, it doesn't matter. With your talent, you can still shine in the outer faction, and it's not as if there aren't anymore chances for you to enter the inner faction..."

While listening, Long Chen continued walking without saying anything.

Liu Lan was constantly ahead and had not turned back at all. Watching her back, Long Chen knew that he would make her do so. Just like before, she would watch him with disbelief in her eyes.

The grand elder of the Green Faction was the previous great elder of the Green Emperor Hall. He was born of the Green Emperor Hall, and naturally took care of the Green Emperor Hall. Even his residence was in the Green Emperor Hall.

Long Chen recently found out from Liu Yuan that the grand elder's name was Chu Tianxiong, and was one of the uncles of Chu Fengqing, and therefore somewhat related to Chu Yunxi and Chu Yunyao. It was likely that Chu Tianxiong thought of them as his blood grandchildren.

A little more than an hour later, Long Chen arrived outside the Green Emperor Hall, at one of the independent residences of the grand elder. When they were about to get closer, a guard asked in a stern voice, "What are you doing here?"

Liu Yuan was the head of a hall, and he was obviously humiliated at being berated by a guard. Coldly, he exclaimed, "I am the great elder of the Green Sun Hall, Liu Yuan, here to bring my disciple Long Chen to participate in the inner faction selection!"

"So it's you?"

The guard snickered, "The grand elder stated that you were late, and being tardy is against the rules. They've already left!"

Upon hearing this, Long Chen was instantly enraged as he scolded, "Those bastards. I came here bright and early in the morning, and he's already left? And he said I was tardy? Did he leave in the middle of the night?"

Chapter 155 – Nine Devil Mountain

Never did Long Chen expect he would be treated like this .

He'd known that it the selection would be during noon, and Long Chen had rushed here early in the morning . It was still a long time away from noon, and the grand elder, Chu Yunxi and the others had long since left . What did that mean?

It meant they thought nothing of Liu Yuan and Long Chen . It meant they wanted to play tricks on them .

Being so evidently scorned, Long Chen actually laughed instead, in his anger .

Liu Yuan was also feeling very uncomfortable . Though the other party was the grand elder, he was a great elder of a hall . If word got out that he had been belittled, Liu Yuan would be utterly humiliated .

He had now turned ashen, and did not stop Long Chen while he scolded . Instead, he was rather pleased . All the fury he was feeling dissipated with Long Chen's words .

When it came down to it, Long Chen was the first person to dare curse at Chu Tianxiong .

Upon hearing, the two guards' turned red and scolded, "How dare you shame the grand elder! For being so rude, you deserve the death sentence . We'll take you down and wait for the grand elder to return and deal with you himself!"

Having said this, they actually made their move and advanced towards Long Chen!

"You're just dogs guarding the door who've only just entered the Earth Dan Realm . You dare touch me?"

Long Chen sneered, and rather, darted forward to meet their attack!

When those guards had made their move, Liu Yuan and Liu Lan was stunned .

Long Chen was about to participate in the inner faction selection, and he could not get injured by the hands of these guard dogs . Just as they were about to stop these guards, Long Chen darted from their side .

"You're seeking death!"

Seeing Long Chen moving so quickly and doing the completely opposite of what they expected, they struck with their fist, enraged . The punch from the Earth Dan Realm was on a whole different level . These two consecutive punches would also prevent Long Chen from being

able to escape .

“I’ve heard this kid’s only at the Human Dan Realm, and he wants to participate in the inner faction selection? What a joke! If we brothers defeat him today, our reputation will surely spread!”

At this thought, the two guards mustered all their strength .

“Trying to kill me?”

Long Chen smirked, raised his arms and dashed forward, creating afterimages .

“Huh? So fast?”

The two were momentarily shocked, because even they could not handle Long Chen’s speed .

At the next moment, two palms slapped onto their faces, and they immediately screamed, blood and teeth flying . The two fell to the ground with a loud thud, yelling in pain .

Long Chen did not stop just there . He dashed forward and, with a person under each foot, he stepped on their faces, leaving behind a large footprint on top of the bloody mark of his palm from before .

Suffering from such a vicious attack from Long Chen, the two’s facial features were destroyed . At this point, they were vulnerable to all attacks, faces full of blood as they cried out in pain and rolled on the ground, full of regret .

“Who said Long Chen was a pushover? He’s methods are so ruthless . The two of us are done for...”

While groaning, they were inwardly cursing the people who had given them this information .

“Long Chen, you- ?”

Seeing that Long Chen had successfully taught them a lesson, Liu Yuan was obviously astonished . After all, these two were experts at the Earth Dan Realm, and while their potentials were meagre and had thus been appointed to be guards . However, they were considered at a higher level than Long Chen .

Liu Yuan was slightly surprised at how easily Long Chen had defeated them .

Similarly, Liu Lan was amazed at how Long Chen had had the upper hand so easily .

“Looks like he really did progress in these few days of cultivation...”

Long Chen had been merciless and beaten them up until they could not retaliate . Liu Yuan and Liu Lan were slightly hesitant, because these two were the grand elder’s subordinates, and being too vicious was excessive .

“Long Chen, stop . ”

Liu Lan spoke unenthusiastically .

Long Chen kicked the two of them away and exclaimed in

in a bright voice, “Watchdogs, don’t forget your status . No matter where you go, you’d just be dogs guarding the door . The person standing in front of you is the great elder of the Green Sun Hall . How dare you treat him with disrespect? Today, I’ve taught you a lesson on behalf of the great elder . I hope you remember this and know what to do!”

Using Liu Yuan as a shield, Long Chen pushed the responsibility away .

Having beat these two up, Long Chen was feeling much better .

When he looked towards Liu Yuan and Liu Lan, he noticed the helplessness in their gazes .

“Long Chen, you were really too impulsive...”

Liu Yuan was about to guide Long Chen and apologise to those two, but Long Chen interrupted him, “Great elder, they’ve already late . What should we do? We can’t just not go, can we?”

That was the most pressing issue . Liu Yuan shifted his attention from Long Chen beating others up for a moment, and frowned, “The grand elder was really going too far, but Long Chen, you are the pride of our Green Sun Hall . You managed to qualify for the inner faction selection, and it makes no sense for you not to go . I know where the Nine Devil Mountain is, so we’ll return to the Green Sun Hall and ride the Wind-Splitting Deity Roc and head there!”

“In that case, we can’t waste more time . Let’s go!”

Honestly speaking, Long Chen was rather gloomy at being made fun of in this way . He laughed coldly, “No matter who it is, I’ll make sure you pay the price for doing this to me!”

The grand elder of his own faction had left him behind in the Green Faction, stating the reason for it as him being late . If word of this spread, Long Chen would be considered a joke .

If he did not do well in the inner faction selection, his name would go down in history .

Deciding to return, the three wasted no time and left . Liu Yuan was still worried about Long Chen injuring the grand elder’s subordinates, but they were in a hurry, and there was little he could do .

“Long Chen, I don’t want

don’t want to say this, but being so impulsive won’t do you good in the future...”

“I know, great elder . I won’t do this again!” Long Chen pretended to be like an obedient child .

In actuality, he hadn’t been impulsive . He wanted to have an astonishing beginning now .

“It feels weird hearing you call me great elder . If you don’t mind, then just call me Uncle Liu . ”

Liu Yuan stroked his beard, sighing ruefully .

“Why would I mind? How could Long Chen not know how well Uncle Liu treats him?”

While this old man had some power, he was still a good man . Since he was willing to disregard his status and let Long Chen call him ‘uncle’, Long Chen was not going to let him lose face .

“Calling him Uncle, and getting a level 6 profound-grade beast spirit in return . This deal is quite profitable . ”

Long Chen was feeling good .

Liu Yuan and Long Chen were now hastening on in front, while Liu Lan was behind . This time, she was no longer lowering her head while walking, and instead, occasionally looked up at Long Chen’s figure, eyes full of doubt .

“He’d sold off that beast spirit, but from the looks of what had just happened, he seemed to have gotten much stronger?”

Long Chen was just full of wonders . This situation was the most pressurising one that Long Chen had ever been met with . Would he be able to create a miracle once again?

Though Liu Lan knew how difficult this was, she still held some anticipation towards the inner faction selection .

Soon enough, the three of them had returned to the Green Sun Hall . Uncaring of the looks of confusion from others, Liu Yuan summoned the most majestic Wind-Splitting Deity Roc, and they got on . The deity roc began to flap its wings and headed towards the west!

This marked a new beginning and left behind people of the Green Sun Hall, looking at each other .

“Even with the Wind-Splitting Deity Roc, it’ll take a day to reach the Nine Devil Mountain from Yuanling City . It’s morning now, and I think we’ll reach before it gets dark!”

Sitting at the head of the roc, Long Yuan used his real used his real Qi and separated the winds while covering his own body, allowing him to sit securely on the back of the Wind-Splitting Deity Roc .

“Actually, from the grand elder’s place, it’d take only half a day to get to the Nine Devil Mountain by using a profound-grade demonic beast as a means of transformation, but... Sigh, the grand elder was too biased this time, which is unbecoming of him . If he wanted us to be late though, there’s nothing we can do...”

At this thought, Liu Yuan’s expression turned dark .

Seeing the expression on her father’s face, Liu Lan was slightly upset . Liu Yuan was the weakest out of all the eight great elders, and the reason why he was still in the Lingwu Family after so long was mainly because he had no desire for power .

However, that meant he would be bullied, and from Liu Lan’s earliest memories, Liu Yuan had been bullied countless times already .

“Uncle Liu . ” Long Chen suddenly spoke up .

“What is it?”

Long Chen laughed, “Don’t think too much of this matter . Once we’re at the Nine Devil Mountain, I won’t let you down . Honour and respect are obtained with one’s own actions . What is the grand elder to me? Who knows, he might be grovelling at my feet in the future . ”

“Long Chen, shut up!” Liu Yuan was slightly enraged . “Remember, once we’re at the Nine Devil Mountain, you can’t say things like that . I won’t be able to protect you!”

Long Chen chuckled, not answering, and closed his eyes to get some rest .

Liu Yuan shook his head at Long Chen's arrogance, unsure if it was the right decision to let Long Chen participate in the inner faction selection .

Liu Lan had been watching their conversation, and upon hearing his egotistical words, she began to laugh sarcastically, ridiculing him . However, seeing Long Chen not arguing at only calmly resting, she was gradually shaken .

"Judging from his confidence, does he have something that will decide the outcome?"

In the midst of her suspicions, the sun shifted from the east to the west . At the west of the Yuanling region, the sky was filled with dark clouds, and the rumoured Nine Devil Mountain looked gloomy...

Chapter 156 – Gu Batian

"Long Chen, looks like we have bad luck during the selection. The Nine Devil Mountain is having bad weather today."

Watching the desolate mountains shrouded by dark clouds, Liu Yuan wrinkled his brows, looking worried.

Long Chen glanced in the direction of the legendary Nine Devil Mountain, seeing the dark clouds ahead and traces of lightning flashing in the clouds. Occasionally, the dull rumbling of thunder could be heard, similar to the low growl of a beast.

Within the dark clouds, nine mountain peaks that were like claws thrust into the clouds, a gloomy, cold, aura pouncing towards them.

"Is this Nine Devil Mountain, which mean nine devilish mountains?"

Long Chen was speechless.

"I'm afraid it's going to rain. The rain of the Nine Devil Mountain is boundless and is always accompanied by crazed lightning. The difficulty in your selection is probably going to amplify..."

In terms of his strength, Long Chen could not match up to anyone. In such terrible weather, Liu Yuan was certain that the odds of a good outcome were low.

"Don't worry, Uncle Liu. With such bad weather, I'm not the only one in trouble. Perhaps this sort of environment is the most suitable for me."

Long Chen didn't seem to mind at all as he laughed.

Seeing Long Chen so optimistic, Liu Yuan could only shake his head helplessly.

Upon reaching the Nine Devil Mountain, the Wind-Splitting Deity Roc did not dare move forward. When it went nearer to the Devil Mountain, it landed on the ground automatically, pulling back its head and not daring to move.

Long Chen and the other two jumped off the roc.

"The Nine Devil Mountain is gloomy and dark, and the Wind-Splitting Deity Roc isn't used to such an environment. It's not too far from the Nine Devil Mountain Manor, so we can just walk over there. It's getting dark now, and it's best we get to the manor before it gets dark."

The Nine Devil Mountain Manor was a base set up by the Lingwu Family at the mountain. At basically every inner faction selection, it would be held in the Life and Death Mountain in the Nine Devil Mountain, and they found it convenient to just set up a base here.

"The inner faction selection is tomorrow. I think they're about to split up the groups already. Long Chen, Lan'er, let's hurry up!"

After taking care of the Wind-Splitting Deity Roc, Liu Yuan brought Long Chen and Liu Lan towards the manor.

This devil mountain was an expansive mountain range, and the Nine Devil Mountain was made up of the nine tallest mountain peaks. Long Chen and the rest were now already in the range of the devil mountains.

The ground and trees were dyed a dark colour, dead trees set up in strange shapes and looked very strange.

Long Chen strolled around here and found it very quiet.

"Ignore those dead trees here. The Nine Devil Mountain is covered with dense forests. While hastening forward, all the roots under you make it impossible for you to set your feet on firm ground, and fighting in such terrain will definitely affect you."

Every time he thought of this, Liu Yuan got worried.

On one hand, up to this point, he could tell the worth of young Long Chen. On the other hand, the Green Sun Hall had spent a lot of effort on him, and if Long Chen were to die young here, Liu Yuan would definitely feel extremely uncomfortable.

"Remember, Long Chen. Once there's danger, don't bother with whether your teammate will lose the qualifications. Just use your firework signal and that will keep you alive!"

Liu Yuan was very serious, and Long Chen could do little but nod in answer.

On the road towards the Nine Devil Mountain, Long Chen turned to the side to take a look at Liu Lan. She was particularly alluring today, with her pinkish, tender skin and devilish curves, giving people the urge to go forward and give her a bite.

Seeing the lack of worry in Long Chen's eyes, Liu Lan felt he was hopeless and spoke indifferently, "Don't be so hard-headed. Listen to my father. You can't treat the inner faction selection as a game. If you die, our Green Sun Hall is going to suffer a loss."

"Just watch."

Long Chen didn't seem to mind as he peeked at Liu Lan's body, "You look pretty good today, huh. Are you already preparing yourself?"

"What preparations?"

Liu Lan had her suspicions, especially after noticing the strange look in the kid's eyes. She had always been intelligent, and quickly recalled her previous words that as long as Long Chen entered the inner faction, she would let Long Chen do as he liked.

"With just your current strength, you want to enter the inner faction and possess me?"

Liu Lan snickered. This side of Long Chen really made her despise him.

"The most important thing as a person is humbleness and honesty. I suddenly have a feeling that you've never had any of these two qualities, which is why you'll forever be a loser."

Liu Lan spoke coldly, passing by Long Chen and going in front.

A smile quirked at Long Chen's lips.

"Is that so? But why do I have to be humble?"

Liu Yuan had no idea what Long Chen and Liu Lan were saying, but seeing these two at odds, he wondered, "Lan'er seems to have something against Long Chen. They're already so old, and yet they're still saying these things out of their anger? Could she really like Long Chen?"

Liu Yuan had had much experience, and immediately had an inkling.

However, he merely buried this in the back of his mind. This matter was rather difficult to handle, and if they really had feeling towards the other, it was a good thing, but only if Long Chen could return alive.

With Long Chen's temper, even surviving would be an issue.

At this moment, they reached the Nine Devil Mountain Manor.

"Ahead is the manor. Remember, don't speak a word about what happened at the grand elder's entrance. Don't refute him, especially you, Long Chen..."

Liu Yuan watched Long Chen sternly, "Though they've gone too far, they have high statuses and are powerful. After all, they're at the perfect mastery stage at the Heaven Dan Realm, which is why we can only endure. We can only accept whatever they say, and if you spout nonsense out of dissatisfaction, then dying is probably your just desserts!"

Long Chen nodded at Liu Yuan's stern warning.

"That old man? It seems like he's humiliating me. Though Liu Yuan has already emphasised this, anything can happen."

Pushing aside some trees, a gigantic building appeared in a valley, on a larger scale than the Green Willow Residence by several times.

There were only around 40 or so people coming to participate in the inner faction selection, and yet, they took such a huge place as a transferring point. It was evident that the Lingwu was rich.

The Nine Devil Mountain was extremely dark. In order not to stand out, its main hue was also black.

Night was gradually approaching, and quite a few lamps had been lighted. In the dark pavilion, red lanterns were like countless ferocious beasts lying in wait in the night, the lanterns as their eyes.

"Enter."

Based on the situation, all who were supposed to be there had already arrived. Liu Yuan took in deep breaths and, bringing Long Chen and Liu Lan along, headed towards the manor. Not long after, there were quite a few cultivators in black armour surrounding them.

These cultivators were all at the Earth Dan Realm and were powerful. Each and every one had a dense bloody aura that indicated their experience.

"At this moment, this is the base of the Lingwu Family from the Yuanling Region at the Nine Devil Mountain. Who are you? Report your names, or you will die!"

Cold voices were sounded from these people's mouths.

"I am a great elder of the Green Faction's Green Sun Hall, Liu Yuan. I am here to bring my disciple here to take part in the inner faction selection!"

Liu Yuan spoke clearly, intentionally speaking louder and hoping to attract the attention of those in the manor. As long as they had an audience, things would be easier.

"The inner faction selection? What rubbish! Those participating in the inner faction selection are brought in by the grand elder. Even if you're a great elder, so what? All I see is you trying to create trouble. Brothers, take him down!"

These black armoured guards did not see to reason. No matter how Liu Yuan tried to explain, they just wouldn't listen. In that moment, ten or so Earth Dan Realm cultivators at the initial mastery stage made their moves!

"Damn it!"

Eyes narrowing, Liu Yuan was truly angered. In this situation, even the most amiable person would be enraged!

Though he was a cultivator merely at the initial mastery stage at the Heaven Dan Realm, there was a large disparity between the Heaven and Earth Dan Realm. Even ten Earth Dan Realm cultivators at the initial mastery stage were not his match!

The reason he had not attacked was because once he did so, things would get complicated. There were people of the inner faction here, and if he did not deal with this matter aptly, he could easily lose his life if anyone took the opportunity to frame him.

Liu Yuan speaking so loudly before finally had an effect.

"Stop!"

A hoarse yet powerful voice transmitted over. The few Earth Dan cultivators at the initial mastery stage were about to attack, but found that they were trembling so much and had lost power in their legs as they fell to the ground.

An old man who was almost two metres long in a purple robe appeared at the entrance to the manor. With the black armoured guards taken care of, he took a look at Liu Yuan and spoke loudly, "So it's Liu Yuan. I can vouch for them. Let them in."

Upon hearing that, the black armoured guards no longer dared to speak and withdrew quietly, and then disappeared into the forests.

Seeing the tall old man, Liu Yuan was elated as he spoke respectfully, "So it's the grand elder of the Purple Faction, Senior Gu Batian! I never thought senior would remember me!"

"I have a great memory! Come to think of it, it's been four or five years since I've last seen you, and it's a surprise that you're still looking as pitiful as always, for even these young things to bully you."

The grand elder of the Purple Faction did not hold back while speaking, his voice resonant.

"Senior Gu Batian has seen the worst in me..."

Liu Yuan sweated nervously, and then introduced to Gu Batian.

"Senior, this is my daughter, Liu Lan. She's participated in the inner faction selection before, but her skills weren't enough. Here's Long Chen, a disciple at my Green Sun Hall. He's here to participate in the inner faction selection. The two of you..."

With Liu Yuan's reminder, Long Chen and Liu Lan exchanged a gaze and immediately bowed.

The grand elder of the Purple Faction might look boorish, but he was very easy-going. If Chu Tianxiong ignored them or even bullied them, having Gu Batian being the judge of the matter was a very good thing.

Chapter 157 – Chu Tianxiong

"I saw your daughter then. She was cute and small and as tender as ever. Looks like she's just as alluring as beautiful as before and is a good doll. Long Chen..."

Gu Batian's eyes scanned Long Chen, taking a few looks and then laughing, "Mm, he's not bad. I've heard that you've defeated an inner faction disciple at the Earth Dan Realm. I'm looking forward to your performance..."

Long Chen knew that Gu Batian had probably guessed that Long Chen had already reached the Earth Dan Realm.

Gu Batian seemed to be quite confident in Long Chen, which had Liu Yuan and Liu Lan scratching their heads in bewilderment.

They merely took this as a polite compliment from Gu Batian and did not think too much into it.

"Since you're here, then go in."

Gu Batian waved his arms, and Liu Yuan quickly followed. Though he was not young, he was at least twenty years younger than Gu Batian, and did not dare put on airs in front of Gu Batian.

Following him, they headed to the discussion hall in the manor.

"Everyone is now waiting for the people from the inner faction to appear. I was wondering why only one person came from the Green Faction and came out to get some air, and then heard you shouting outside. Tell me, what's going on?" Gu Batian spoke matter-of-factly.

Liu Yuan looked agonised as he spoke, "It's all my fault. I'd initially wanted to take Long Chen to the grand elder's place, but we were somehow late, and they had left first. The three of us could only come by ourselves, which is why we're late."

Gu Batian chuckled after hearing this.

"What rubbish. With that old man, Chu Tianxiong's pettiness, he must have definitely noticed the conflict between his genius grandson and Long Chen, and so, tried to make things difficult for you. When I reached in the afternoon, that old man had long since reached. I imagine he must have left even before the sky had brightened. He's doing something like that even at his age. How disgusting!"

Gu Batian criticised Chu Tianxiong from beginning to end, and Long Chen felt better than ever inside. Liu Yuan and Liu Lan exchanged glances.

Gu Batian was no fool. Noticing one person less had arrived from the Green Faction, he immediately thought of the gossip of the little genius from the Human Dan Realm in the Green Faction, which was spreading like fire. He could pretty much guess what had happened.

The discussion hall was the largest building in the Nine Devil Mountain Manor, which was also where the meetings for the inner faction selection took place. The nine great factions were already seated accordingly, and were only waiting for the people from the inner faction to appear. Then, they could begin to discuss the related arrangements.

In front of each seat, delicacies were spread all around.

A group of people were conversing joyously, but never did they expect Gu Batian, who had left earlier, to bring three others back.

Most of the people here did not recognise the three.

In this group, the older ones were considered the elites of the previous generation, while the younger ones were the elites of the current generation. This was quite a large group, and despite standing like this and attracting the gazes of everyone, Long Chen had no fear.

He glanced through the area once, knowing who the younger talents were at a single glance.

As expected, all of them were at the initial mastery stage at the Earth Dan Realm, ages all not more than twenty.

A lot of them were not any weaker compared to Chu Yunxi. Jin Sheng'en was here as well.

The seats were allocated according to Gold, Silver, Red, Orange, Yellow, Jade, Green, Blue, and Purple, and Long Chen quickly found where the Green Faction was seated. There were now four people looking over, startled, and their expressions immediately turned cold.

These four people naturally included Chu Fengqing, his son and daughter, Chu Yunxi and Chu Yunyao, as well as one with the smallest stature. Those eyes were filled with a piercing intelligence, and he donned a green robe. He was similar to a sharp blade, and Long Chen did not dare meet his gaze.

"Is that the grand elder of the Green Faction, Chu Tianxiong? As expected, he's terrifying!"

Long Chen was slightly afraid, but that did not mean that he was afraid of the man. Though he had never seen Chu Tianxiong, the man had already humiliated him once.

Beside Chu Tianxiong, Chu Yunxi saw the appearance of Long Chen and Liu Lan, and he looked practically murderous. His sister, Chu Yunyao, was the same.

Now that he had brought Long Chen and the rest along, Gu Batian laughed, "Old Chu, I just went to relieve myself, and found myself bringing the other genius from your faction here. Come here, Long Chen, and sit with your faction. Let your grand elder take care of a genius like you!"

Gu Batian spoke, and practically chased them to the Green Faction. There were enough chairs prepared, and they were thus able to sit comfortably.

Seeing Long Chen and Liu Lan about to sit beside them, Chu Yunxi and Chu Yunyao looked ashen as they made way.

"What are you shifting away for? Do you think an old man like me is gross? Old Chu, your grandchildren are simply outrageous. Sit there. Don't move."

Gu Batian acted as if he were furious, and Chu Yunxi and Chu Yunyao were so frightened that they did not dare move, glancing towards Chu Tianxiong for his help. Chu Tianxiong merely looked at Gu Batian and said, "Sit down. Stop fidgeting and moving around."

"That's the way. Alright, I won't bother you anymore."

Having taken care of this matter and settling Long Chen and the others, Gu Batian smiled at Chu Tianxiong proudly and returned to where the Purple Faction was seated.

It looked like Gu Batian and Chu Tianxiong were the type who were eternal rivals.

They were probably trying to compete, even in this inner faction selection.

At the Green Faction, besides those like Chu Fengqing, there were two other young men. One gave around the same aura as Chu Yunxi. The two were probably the genius cultivators from the Purple Faction participating in the inner faction selection, and were both staring at the newly-arrived Long Chen with interest.

When Gu Batian headed in the direction of the Purple Faction and the discussion hall had returned to the quiet from before, everyone's eyes went straight to Long Chen as they began to gossip. What they

were discussing was the love triangle between Long Chen, Liu Lan and Chu Yunxi, and some even began to evaluate Long Chen's past battle achievements.

The way Long Chen had arrived was also being discussed.

Long Chen hid as much as he could and began to size up everyone, especially the grand elders of the nine outer factions, as well as the other genius cultivators who were participating in the selection.

There were too many people, and it was difficult to remember so many of them within such a short period of time. However, the Gold Faction, which was seated the closest to them, garnered Long Chen's huge interest.

The one seated right in front should be the grand elder. However, compared to the others, he was much younger, and was probably around the same age as Chu Fengqing.

This person looked quite similar to Jin Sheng'en, but compared to Jin Sheng'en's boastful ways, this person looked mature and cold, gaze like a sharp blade. Compared to Chu Tianxiong, he induced much more fear, and seemed like a huge tyrant.

"This should be the rumoured grand elder of the Gold Faction."

Long Chen put up his guard, finding that while this man was lowering his head and drinking tea, his gaze was on Long Chen.

Honestly speaking, Long Chen was supposedly the genius cultivator of the Green Faction, but had only just arrived. There had to be something off, and someone began to ask soon enough, "Brother Chu, why's this little guy so late? Did he fall off the roc?"

This was another grand elder.

In the Yuanling Region, rocs were demonic beast with a high endurance and large body that was suitable for long-distance travels. Hence, most large organisations would raise or domesticate roc-type demonic beasts. The Green Sun Hall's Wind-Splitting Deity Roc was one kind.

This person made a little joke and livened up the atmosphere. However, Chu Tianxiong's expression turned grim as he turned towards Liu Yuan, "I told you to reach at dawn, but you were a whole hour late. Do you not have any respect for me?"

Chu Tianxiong was making all of this up, and was now blaming Long Chen's lateness on Liu Yuan. Liu Yuan could only hold back his anger and answer, "No, I would not dare do that. It's all my fault, grand elder. Once we're back at the Green Faction, please punish me!"

"Let's not bother with punishment."

Chu Tianxiong spoke indifferently, "But in so many years, you haven't made any contributions. If you make another fundamental mistake like this again, don't even think about keeping your status as an elder.

Though Chu Tianxiong did not speak loudly, the words were heard in every person's ears. Everyone had various expressions.

Gu Batian, who knew what had actually happened, sneered at Chu Tianxiong and made a few shapes with his lips, which meant: Chu Tianxiong, the longer you live, the more backward in your thinking you get, for you to even bully those younger than you.

Of course, only Chu Tianxiong alone understood what Gu Batian was saying.

Chu Tianxiong clenched his fists, and then calmly relaxed.

"Grand elder, I wouldn't dare do something like this again. Thank you for not punishing me!"

Finally getting through this, Liu Yuan heaved a sigh of relief and answered agreeably.

"There's nothing better than being aware of your mistakes and wanting to make amends. There's nothing more for you to say here, unless you want to be ridiculed by the experts from the other factions."

Chu Tianxiong lowered his head and drank his tea as he spoke nonchalantly.

Long Chen noticed all of this.

Quirking his lips in a slight smile, he suddenly noticed a few figures were flashing deep within the discussion hall with Lingxi's reminder. Noticing there were people about to enter, he suddenly had an idea and stood up suddenly.

Thud!

Long Chen's sudden actions immediately resulted in confusion, and Liu Yuan and Liu Lan were even more startled as they pulled at him trying to get him to sit. Who knew, Long Chen could not be moved as his eyes were coldly on Chu Tianxiong, unwilling to concede, "Long Chen has, from long ago, heard that the grand elder of the Green Faction is a man of noble character who can distinguish right and wrong. Today, what I see is only a biased, nasty character who cares nothing for right or wrong and only knows to bully the weak. I have truly expanded my horizons today!"

Chapter 158 – Lord Xuanxiao

When Long Chen spoke up, it became deathly quiet . Everyone stared at him in shock, and even the grand elders of the eight outer factions were startled .

Here, those with the most entertaining expressions belonged to none other than the two siblings, Chu Yunxi and Chu Yunyao .

In their eyes, this expert was practically a godly existence, and yet, their god had been disrespected in this manner . In their opinion, Long Chen had to die, and he had to die right now!

Liu Yuan and Liu Lan merely drew a blank at this point . Liu Yuan knew that Long Chen did not have a high tolerance, which was why before they had entered, he had warned Long Chen not to act recklessly . He'd assumed that Long Chen had remembered his words, and yet, Long Chen had done this .

After speaking, Long Chen did not lower his head and continued to watch Chu Tianxiong, who had a mild expression .

He was out to make things difficult for Chu Tianxiong . Now, within the sights of the grand elders of the eight outer factions, Chu Tianxiong's great reputation might crumble as he became the laughingstock if he did not handle this well .

Hence, everyone was watching Chu Tianxiong closely on how he would deal with this .

“You little bastard, you're looking for death! A mere Human Dan wants to participate in the inner faction selection, huh . Just see how I defeat you!”

Chu Yunyao shouted in a piercing voice, charging towards Long Chen .

Out of everyone around, the one who was most disapproving of Long Chen participating in the selection was Chu Yunyao . He was obviously at the perfect mastery stage at the Human Dan Realm, so why did Long Chen get the qualifications to participate, and yet she could had to make use of her connections just to be able to come and watch?

On top of that, Long Chen had humiliated Chu Tianxiong in front of everyone . That was unforgivable .

She had even taken the initiative ahead of Chu Yunxi and made to attack Long Chen .

“Die!”

Withdrawing the Zenith Crystal Blade, she pierced in Long Chen's direction!

Most people watched on nervously .

They wanted to see

how capable Long Chen was and whether he could defeat Chu Yunyao . At this time, however, Chu Tianxiong had personally made his move, disappearing from his seat and reappearing, holding Chu Yunyao's sword .

“Third Grandfather, I want to kill him! He should be punished with death for his unfounded ravings about you!”

“Stand down . ”

While Chu Yunyao seemed fierce, Chu Tianxiong's tone and expression did not change at all as he gently pushed her behind him, and then glared sharply at Long Chen expressionlessly . It was as though Long Chen was not a person but a tree, or rather, a mere rock .

“This old guy's mentality has long since become unfathomable . Just a verbal attack for me isn't enough to enrage him, but I'm curious to see where his bottom line is... I, Long Chen, and old Liu aren't to be trifled with!”

Long Chen was already furious to the extreme from being left behind at the Green Faction and seeing Chu Tianxiong spouting a whole bunch of nonsense and bullying Liu Yuan here .

His anger aside, he was no fool . To dare say such things in public, he was still somewhat confident .

Otherwise, he wouldn't take such a big risk and humiliate Chu Tianxiong!

He observed Chu Tianxiong closely once more and spoke coldly, “Everyone is aware that I'm not on good terms with Chu Yunxi, and as his third grandfather, you left ahead even though the three of us reached your residence bright and early in the morning . Even after we arrived, you continued to humiliate Elder Liu and spouted nonsense . Grand elder, such petty methods seem unbecoming of someone of your status, hm?”

These words had everyone more shocked .

“Long Chen, you've gone crazy . Stop saying all this nonsense!”

Liu Yuan finally managed to react and pulled Long Chen to him .

“You- You’re talking rubbish! Bastard, how dare you tarnish my third grandfather’s name? What are your intentions?”

Chu Yunyao could not wait to skin Long Chen .

“You’re really seeking death!”

Chu Yunxi stood up .

Most were focused on Chu Tianxiong’s next actions .

To be honest, most knew about Chu Tianxiong . With his status, it was no big deal for him to tease another elder, but it was a little too embarrassing for

for the man for Long Chen to say this in front of so many people .

Many now had amused grins on their faces, especially Gu Batian . Chu Tianxiong’s eyes twitched slightly, and his expression turned darker, revealing a hint of killing intent . Long Chen reckoned he was already affected .

Long Chen knew the importance of knowing when to stop . He had humiliated Chu Tianxiong, though it was to speak up for himself and for Liu Yuan . Now that it was done, Chu Tianxiong was in a difficult position .

Long Chen knew the turmoil that was currently in Chu Tianxiong’s mind . Long Chen was appointed by the inner faction to participate in the inner faction selection, and no matter the reason, it was difficult to give a good reason if he were to kill Long Chen in this situation .

However, how could Chu Tianxiong take this embarrassment of being teased by an ant?

He glared at Long Chen icily, lips moving slightly as he spoke with a hoarse voice .

“Everyone, I’m afraid I’ll let loose today . I hope that, on account of our acquaintance all these years, as well as our statuses as leaders of the outer faction, you can speak well of I, Chu Tianxiong, to Lord Xuanxiao . ”

Everyone could tell Chu Tianxiong’s underlying intent of killing Long Chen .

It was no surprise . If any grand elder were to be shamed in such a manner by a little child, they would probably kill Long Chen as well, not to mention Chu Tianxiong, who had always possessed a strange temperament .

“This guy is rather talented, but he’s an airhead . ”

“If he could endure for a while longer, he could even become the pillar of the outer faction . What a pity . ”

Two of the grand elders exchanged a glance and sighed while shaking their heads . Hearing Chu Tianxiong wanted to do this personally, Chu Yunxi and Chu Yunyao’s anger dissipated, transforming into excitement and satisfaction . Smirking at Long Chen, Chu Yunyao spoke, “After obtaining the qualifications to participate in the inner faction selection, you don’t know your limits and even dare offend my third grandfather . You deserve to be killed!”

Just as she spoke, Chu Tianxiong glared coldly,

glared coldly, and an ell-encompassing pressure pressed on Long Chen . In that moment, he felt as if the sky itself was falling .

“This old guy is really powerful . With this level, he can beat me into minced meat with just a casual punch!”

At this thought, Long Chen was rather depressed . As expected of the perfect mastery stage of the Heaven Dan Realm, considered to be the top experts in Yuanling City . Long Chen facing up to Chu Tianxiong was like how he had been with his grandfather of the Yang family while he was at the fourth dragon vein . This disparity here was even larger .

“It’s about time those inner faction people arrive .”

Long Chen was relaxed .

Previously, Lingxi had told Long Chen that in the depths of the discussion hall, two people were walking in slowly . One had an aura comparable to the grand elders, and might be even stronger . He was definitely of the inner faction, and was the host who would be in charge of this inner faction selection .

With the host around, would Long Chen be killed?

Even the grand elders could do little against the inner faction, which was why just as Chu Tianxiong was about to make his move and impose a life-threatening pressure on Long Chen, a low, hoarse and charming voice was sounded from the depths of the hall, “Chu Tianxiong, stop .”

Chu Tianxiong’s expression immediately changed after hearing this . He obediently withdrew his hand and, without looking at Long Chen, turned to the other side .

Now, everyone’s eyes were focused on the depths of the discussion hall and standing up respectfully, including all the grand elders .

Long Chen had just walked out from the brink of death and was still slightly afraid . Liu Yuan and Liu Lan had complicated expressions, but just when they were about to ask why Long Chen was acting this way, they could only stand respectfully at the thought of this person’s identity .

Under the audience’s gazes, two walked out . One looked imposing, handsome and emanating a threatening aura . This was Dongfang Tianyu, who Long Chen had met at the Sky Martial Realm .

Dongfang Tianyu was evidently here to cheer for others . for others . The other person was the main host .

Long Chen narrowed his eyes . This was a man in his thirties, with a fair face with no facial hair . He looked slender, his hair like a waterfall as it draped over his shoulders, all the way to his waist . He wore a white, loose robe, eyes unfathomable and profound, and people could easily get lost in his eyes with a single look .

“This guy is pretty handsome...”

Seeing someone even more good looking than himself, Long Chen was speechless . He usually did not praise others this way, but if he ever did, then the other party must be incomparably handsome .

Mo Xiaolang was handsome too, but seemed to tender .

Even the grand elders had to lower their heads in front of this man, cupping their fists deferentially, “We greet Lord Xuanxiao!”

Xuanxiao?

The Eastern Green Dragons should be in charge of this selection . Dongfang Tianyu was part of the Dongfang clan, and if Long Chen was right, this man’s name should be Dongfang Xuanxiao .

Honestly speaking, even these grand elders and Jin Sheng’en’s father did not give Long Chen this feeling . This man did not have the aura of the strong and seemed rather dull, but that was what made him terrifying and difficult to get close to .

“Alright, take a seat . ”

Dongfang Xuanxiao’s expression did not change as he waved his arms . With his instructions, everyone sat obediently, and even Chu Tianxiong was the same . After the arrival of Dongfang Xuanxiao, he seemed to have forgotten about Long Chen, and it was proof of how capable Dongfang Xuanxiao was .

“This Dongfang Xuanxiao seems awesome . ”

Long Chen sighed ruefully as he quickly took a seat .

Usually, with the conflict between him and Chu Tianxiong, the other party would take a look at Long Chen, even if it was all a farce . However, his eyes were only forward, and he did not look at anyone .

After everyone was seated, they began to wait for Dongfang Xuanxiao’s directions .

“All disciples of the inner faction selection are to come out . Team up in pairs . I’ll hand the jade bracelets and firework signals to you . ”

Chapter 159 – Yin Mengyao

"What a cold person."

Long Chen thought inside.

He stood up and, with the other nineteen, stood in the middle of the hall. It was large enough, and they were thinly spread out.

Long Chen swept his eyes over the other nineteen, and found that they were about the same age as he was. However, from what Lingxi told him, they were all at the initial mastery stage at the Earth Dan Realm except for Long Chen, at the Human Dan Realm. Long Chen had no idea why this was the situation, when he had been at the peak of the Human Dan Realm when he had obtained the qualifications.

"These genius cultivators are all amazing."

Long Chen sighed ruefully.

Just from their clothing and appearances, Long Chen could not tell which faction these geniuses were from. At this moment, based on Dongfang Xuanxiao's directions, they were all beginning to stand in pairs.

Long Chen clearly saw Chu Yunxi smirking at him and then standing together with Jin Sheng'en.

Behind Jin Sheng'en was a pair of tall and sturdy twin brothers, who were probably from the Gold Faction.

Chu Yunxi was from the Green Faction, and after standing with the Gold Faction, he was leaving Long Chen high and dry. There were only 20 people, and soon enough, all were in their groups, forming an orderly line in front of Dongfang Xuanxiao.

Everyone's eyes were fixed on the hot-headed young man who mentioned to escape death, Long Chen. Chu Yunxi had gone to the Green Faction, leaving Long Chen alone. On the other side, there was also a girl isolated.

"As I was saying, Mengyao really has the worst luck!"

In the Silver Faction, a beautiful woman shook her head. Beside her was an old woman, who looked extremely youthful and rosy cheeks. She was also an expert, and the grand elder of the Silver Faction.

"It's not like you don't know Mengyao's strength. As long as she endures through the first round, she'll definitely be able to shine in the second round. I just hope that Long Chen won't pull her down."

"How could he not?"

The beautiful woman rolled her eyes. "If this kid's cowardly, he might use the firework signal at the first encounter of danger. That would cause Mengyao to lose the qualification to participate, and her hard work throughout so many years would only be wasted!"

"Don't say more. Luck is a huge part of power, and if she can't succeed because of that, there's no one she can blame."

Though they were not speaking very loudly, everyone in the hall heard their words clearly, including Long Chen.

"Pull her down?"

Long Chen had nothing to say when he was being thought of in this manner.

From everyone's eyes, it was evident that anyone who teamed up with Long Chen would be extremely unlucky in the stage of Divergent Road.

The rule not only tested one's strength. No matter how powerful one was, a teammate who was like swine meant a huge tragedy.

"Then let's see who will be the one dragging down the other." Long Chen's expression was indifferent, able to withstand the mocking and contempt.

At this moment, Dongfang Xuanxiao's eyes were trained on Long Chen.

"Go." He pointed in Yin Mengyao's direction and spoke.

Long Chen could only carry out this guy's order dejectedly, walking to the Silver Faction's Yin Mengyao's side.

Yin Mengyao had directly gained the qualifications to participate in the competition. She was probably not any weaker than Jin Sheng'en or Chu Yunxi.

When Long Chen had first entered the discussion hall, he saw that there were two females and a male at the Silver Faction. A male and a female had been huddled together, while he had guessed that the other was Yin Mengyao.

Whether it was her appearance or temperament, both were exceptional and very similar to Dongfang Xuanxiao. Her good looks were peerless, and should be around twenty years old, any childish nature like Lingxi's long gone, and was very lovely.

In terms of her beauty, she was on about the same level as Liu Lan, though her cordialness was rather different from Liu Lan. Though Yin Mengyao could not be said to be cold as ice, her indifference and apathetic temperament made her hard to comprehend.

Long Chen had initially worried that she would chase him away after he approached her, but her expression was the same as Dongfang Xuanxiao, unchanging and unwilling to look at Long Chen. It was as if she was not the one in the same team as him.

Now, ten groups had been perfectly formed. The round of the Divergent Road would leave four teams remaining, before the final battle.

"These two are a match made in heaven."

Long Chen wondered depressedly.

His gloominess must be contributing to this thoughts, because Dongfang Xuanxiao looked to be around thirty, but his real age must be around forty, making him old enough to be Yin Mengyao's father.

After the teams had been divided, Dongfang Xuanxiao did not say more and instead, took out firework signals from his cosmos pouch and getting Dongfang Tianyu to hand them down.

"As long as you infuse real Qi into the firework signal, it will work."

Dongfang Xuanxiao narrated the usage of the firework signal.

At this point, Dongfang Tianyu finally winded around and came to Long Chen's front. He suddenly realised that Dongfang Tianyu's eyes were full of malicious intent towards him.

"Kid, when I saw you in the Sky Martial Realm, you seemed to pretend to be harmless. For you to dare touch Chu Tianxiong and make my Yunyao angry, could it be that you don't care for my existence at all?"

Having said this, he placed the firework signal in Long Chen's hands and continued on to the next person. In the meantime, he turned back and sneered at Long Chen.

Taking care of the Chu family would result in Dongfang Tianyu's hostility towards him. Long Chen had long since considered that. However, he was now at risk, and there was no other choice but to do this. Because of Liu Lan, the enmity between the Chu Family and him was already at the limit.

After Dongfang Tianyu handed out all the firework signals, Dongfang Xuanxiao produced twenty glistening jade bangles. This should be the mystical jade bangle and, with a wave of his arm, they automatically flew out and winded around Long Chen and the others' wrists.

Gazing at this bangle, Long Chen was astonished.

"This is the jade bangle. With your strength, it's impossible to destroy. Once your injuries exceed a limit, the bangle will automatically drop, and others can then retrieve it."

Dongfang Xuanxiao was expressionless as he continued, "You must know the rules of the Divergent Road well. I won't say more nonsense. It's already late, and you'll need to return and prepare. Early in the morning tomorrow, we will head to the Divergent Road."

"Yes, Lord Xuanxiao!"

Following the others, Long Chen spoke deferentially towards Dongfang Xuanxiao.

After speaking, Dongfang Xuanxiao had little to say and left.

From start to end, he had not said anything about Long Chen and Chu Tianxiong, but Long Chen knew that by handing the identity jade piece to Long Chen and securing it, that in itself was a soundless warning to Chu Tianxiong. In this situation, Chu Tianxiong would not dare do anything to him.

Once Dongfang Xuanxiao left, Gu Batian patted his thigh and stood up, smiling at Long Chen, "Young man, looks like you're Green Faction isn't all that safe. How about you come to our Purple Faction and rest? Let me receive you properly!"

Long Chen had not wanted to be together with the Chu Family, and Gu Batian had helped him out of this issue. This was the best situation for him, and he quickly thanked the man, "Many thanks, Senior Gu!"

Seeing Gu Batian and Long Chen colluding together, a cold glint flashed in Chu Tianxiong's eyes.

"Third Grandpa, don't be in such a hurry. At the Divergent Road tomorrow, Jin Sheng'en and I have already planned it all out. Long Chen won't be able to survive."

At this moment, Chu Yunxi leaned over Chu Tianxiong's shoulder and spoke.

"Mm. Xi'er, it's all up to you now. Do as Grandpa told you," Chu Tianxiong's voice was icy.

"I know. Before he takes out his firework signal, will smash his body to smithereens."

Their quiet conversation could only be heard by Lingxi, who was unbelievably bored. She repeated the words for Long Chen to hear, her tone full of fury.

"What's the hurry? I'm not going to lose to him." Long Chen laughed as he spoke softly.

At this point, he had dragged Liu Yuan and Liu Lan along. The rest slowly left the hall, and Gu Batian was preparing to bring Long Chen and the other two away.

All of a sudden, Yin Mengyao, who had not spoken at all, said, "Long Chen, right? Can I have a word?"

This icy beauty was actually looking to speak to him voluntarily. Long Chen was surprised.

Gu Batian wasn't young anymore, yet very energetic. After hearing her words, he teased, "Girl, could you really have taken a liking for this kid?"

Yin Mengyao did not have any change in expression even after hearing these words. She answered calmly, "Senior Gu, I would like to discuss the arrangements tomorrow."

"Oh." There was no fun in messing with this girl, and Gu Batian stopped speaking.

Long Chen nodded and headed to a corner of the hall with her. The closer he got to Yin Mengyao, the more he felt that she was mind-blowingly beautiful. That cold feeling she gave off was something regular girls could not even learn.

Watching Long Chen, she spoke, "My grand elder of the Silver Faction has told me that you've reached the Earth Dan Realm, so I'm at ease. For the battle tomorrow, try to hide as much as you can, and I'll take care of the opponents. You'll just have to take care of your jade bangle. Is that alright?"

In actuality, Yin Mengyao was not despising him. Long Chen did not have much of an impression of her, and even if she did seem to be looking down on him a little, that would not affect Long Chen's good impression of her.

"She's just worried that if I'm not powerful enough, I'd lose the jade bangle, which would make things complicated. That's why she said that."

Long Chen didn't mind at all and nodded. "Alright, don't worry. I'll do what I can."

From what Long Chen had said to Chu Tianxiong, he was very hot-headed, but never did Yin Mengyao expect that Long Chen would agree so easily, and seemed rather sincere.

That was better and required lesser effort on her part at convincing him. She nodded, bid him farewell, and left.

Long Chen followed Gu Batian and trained at the Nine Devil Mountain Manor for a night. On the morning of the second day, everyone followed Dongfang Xuanxiao and arrived at the bottom of the Devil Mountain of Life and Death.

Chapter 160 – Toxic Beast

Though they had mentioned they would leave when the skies brightened the next day, the sky did not brighten.

Nine Devil Mountain's reputation with terrible weather was not mere talk. When Long Chen estimated the time and headed out of his room, he found that the skies outside were completely black. Though it wasn't to the point that it was pitch-dark, it was almost to that extent.

Dark clouds loomed over the area, and they were all situated very low and halfway up the Nine Devil Mountain. There, lightning flashed continuously.

Rumble!

Occasionally, these gloomy sounds of thunder could be heard, and the piercing nature of it had chills running down everyone's spines.

This was the darkest daytime Long Chen had ever experienced.

"It's already morning, but it's still so dark. Seems like the weather today will change."

When Gu Batian arrived, he frowned.

That night, Long Chen had been together with Gu Batian and the others, and thus met with the two young talents. Both were at the initial mastery stage at the Earth Dan Realm, and one was Gu Cheng, Gu Batian's blood grandson, who had directly obtained the qualifications to take part in the selection. The other paled slightly in comparison, and was called Liu Gui.

"If any of the three of you really meet with danger, remember to take care of each other. Such weather today means there's a higher level of difficulty for Divergent Road, in comparison to a day with clear skies."

Before leaving, Gu Batian reminded.

"Grandpa, we know. If Brother Long Chen meets with danger, we'll help him."

Here, Long Chen was the youngest, and Gu Batian was clearly trying to get the two of them to look after Long Chen. They naturally agreed.

"Then I shall thank all of you ahead of time."

Knowing of their good intentions, Long Chen immediately thanked them.

After all, they were all strangers coming together by chance, and yet, Gu Batian had kept taking care of Long Chen. He was immensely grateful.

Though it was because Gu Batian and Chu Tianxiong were at odds that he had a favourable impression of Long Chen, this was still help, and Long Chen appreciated it.

Behind him were Liu Yuan and Liu Lan.

They did not know what to say in response to his actions. After all, there was no point crying over spoiled milk. Long Chen had already started a feud with Chu Tianxiong, and if Long Chen could not pass the inner faction selection, he was done for once he returned to the Green Faction.

Thankfully, Gu Batian seemed to think well of Long Chen. With his help, Long Chen probably had a way out of this predicament.

Liu Lan was as radiant as always and a wonderful sight in the darkness. With the inner faction selection right ahead of him, Long Chen recalled what Liu Lan had agreed to before and admired her, heart stirring restlessly.

"What are you looking at?"

Liu Lan could feel the tips of her ears go warm from the heated gaze Long Chen had on her.

"I'm just wondering if you're prepared. Let me think... it's regarding what will happen tomorrow night...?"

Others naturally had no idea of what Long Chen was talking about. Liu Yuan himself was puzzled.

Within the Lingxi Sword, Lingxi had no idea what Long Chen kept bringing up, but with experts around him, she did not dare ask.

He was already at death's door, and yet still did not realise it. Instead, he was thinking of all sorts of strange things. Liu Lan was humiliated, but at the same time, disappointed.

"Impulsive, no regard for the results, reckless... When did Long Chen end up like this..."

Thinking of his future, Liu Lan could not help but begin to worry on his behalf.

The inner faction selection would affect Long Chen the most. His success or failure was his own matter and had nothing to do with Liu Lan.

After teasing Liu Lan, Long Chen followed the rest and began the journey.

In the discussion hall, Long Chen and the other nineteen participants met up. Under Dongfang Xuanxiao's lead, they came under the Nine Devil Mountain.

The rest seemed to have followed the Heaven Dan Realm grand elders who were at the final mastery stage and gone through the Divergent Road, and arrived at the Nest of Life and Death. The Lingwu Family had set up a base there already.

Though Chu Tianxiong was around, there was Gu Batian around to take care of Liu Yuan and Liu Lan, and Long Chen was therefore at ease. At the base of the Nine Devil Mountain, with the dim line of sight, he raised his head and looked at the peak of the precipitous mountain that reached the heavens.

"This is the Mountain of Life and Death?"

Long Chen was full of reverence. Currently, the mountain had been cut into two parts by the clouds.

The peak above the clouds could not be seen at all. Below the clouds, there were dark forests everywhere, fog twining around the woods. Long Chen could not see anything clearly. On the Mountain of Life and Death, there seemed to be large beasts hidden in sight everywhere, frightening mouths wide open in wait for them.

"Once we're on the Divergent Road, there's a fine line between life and death. Young people, begin your journey."

After reaching the base of the mountain, Dongfang Xuanxiao did not utter more nonsense and announced the official start of the first stage of the inner faction selection, the Nest of Life and Death.

With Dongfang Xuanxiao's arrangements, teams began to head in varying directions, entering the Devil Mountain of Life and Death from different angles. This was to prevent them from meeting too early and killing each other.

Long Chen and Yin Mengyao were placed at the very end. As soon as he arranged for the teenagers from the Red Faction to go up the mountain, they were quickly brought to another area.

"From here, go 500m straight ahead. What happens next is in your control."

Listening to his directions, Long Chen and Yin Mengyao shared a gaze and stepped forth on the dark Devil Mountain of Life and Death.

"Those kids from the Red Faction seem to have their eyes on you."

Just as Long Chen and Yin Mengyao were hurrying forward, Dongfang Xuanxiao's voice resounded in their ears. Everything was still around them though.

"The Red Faction?" Yin Mengyao's expression was indifferent. "They're not hard to deal with."

What Long Chen found strange was that Dongfang Xuanxiao seemed to be taking care of them.

They had now gone a distance into the Devil Mountain of Life and Death. There were dark flourishing foliage around them, the branches and leaves weaving in and out. They were extremely thick, and Long Chen had even seen a leaf that was akin to a little boat.

"The trees in the mountain should be 'devil trees'. Their bark is extremely firm, and the sturdiness is comparable to steel."

Long Chen was astonished by these thick devil trees.

They were everywhere, and tree roots were crisscrossing on the ground. It was difficult to find a large area with just soil to stand on.

The devil trees were a specialty of the devil mountain, but Long Chen knew that there was something else that was especially terrifying here— toxic beasts.

"Toxic beasts are a mutated version of demonic beasts. They're under the category of demonic beasts, but in comparison to them, the toxic beasts are even more terrifying, because they release toxins. If unlucky, even an expert at the perfect mastery stage at the Heaven Dan Realm could be poisoned to death in an instant!"

The night before, Liu Yuan and the others had passed on this information to Long Chen.

Long Chen knew that the reason why the test of the Divergent Road was so terrifying was because of the toxic beasts. Now, they were still at the base, and there were naturally few of them. However, once they really got onto the Mountain of Life and Death, it would probably be filled with toxic beasts and bugs. That would be a terrifying sight!

"When faced with the attack of toxic beasts, I still have to prevent people from stealing my jade bracelet. The difficulty of this is like heading to my death..."

It was extremely humid in the mountain, and there was water on the leaves and grass. Soon enough, Long Chen was full of grime.

However, because Yin Mengyao was female, she deliberately tried to maintain cleanliness and looked better.

Ever since they had entered the Divergent Road, Yin Mengyao stayed ahead of Long Chen. She wore tight clothing that was suitable for battle, and showed off her alluring lines.

"Long Chen, do you remember what I told you before?"

At this moment, Yin Mengyao, who was walking ahead, spoke while hurrying on.

"Yes. If there are any opponents, I'll try my best to hide and not try too hard." Long Chen spoke without strength. She did not have any ill intentions, and couldn't be bothered to bicker over it.

"Of course, that's only if I can save my own life. It's best not to stray too far from me."

"Mm."

Long Chen seemed to know himself well. After Yin Mengyao mentioned this once, she did not say more.

The higher up they got, the more humid it became. The sounds of thunder could be heard closing in, and the surroundings were pitch-black. Only when there were flashes of lightning could he see the distressing scene ahead.

"The toxic beasts should be about to appear."

Noticing some traces left behind by toxic bugs or wild animals on the tree bark and leaves, Long Chen was more vigilant.

"Toxic bugs and beasts are all a type of demonic beast, but they're even more difficult to handle than beasts of the same level. Once poisoned, it's difficult to survive this Divergent Road."

"Long Chen, there's someone heading in your direction." After entering the Devil Mountain of Life and Death, Lingxi had also become more attentive. With her immense spirit sensing abilities, Long Chen's was slightly safer.

"Hey, stop. Someone's heading over." Long Chen halted his footsteps, glaring at the direction Lingxi had pointed out.

Yin Mengyao froze. She had not found anything strange in that direction, but Long Chen had found out someone was incoming? Just when she was about to ask, she suddenly frowned and, with a quick movement, stood in front of Long Chen.

She had heard the sounds of leaves crinkling, as well as the sound from stepping on tree bark.

Not long after, two teenagers appeared in the darkness. Once closer, they could see their opponents.

"Looks like they only know which direction we came from and guessed their way here."

Long Chen knew who these two were. They were the two talented cultivators from the Red Faction that Dongfang Xuanxiao had warned them against. They had entered the mountain before Long Chen, and had been able to estimate Long Chen and Yin Mengyao's position.

The moment they appeared, they exchanged glances and, without another word, charged towards Yin Mengyao!