

War God 471

Chapter 471 - Seven Demon Kings

Everyone knew the correct answer, so Demon General Typhoon could not even make the audience guess. He smiled in exasperation and said, “That’s right! The sound made by the Heavenly Passage Pillar made it clear that Jiang Cheng’s attack was stronger. That is why the champion of the second round is Jiang Cheng! Zhao Wuji’s performance was, of course, excellent too, so he takes second place. He will receive ten thousand Heavenly Passage Pills, and Jiang Cheng wins thirty thousand Heavenly Passage Pills!”

Thirty thousand! Everyone stared at Long Chen with admiration.

With such a large sum, he would not need to worry about his cultivation or livelihood for a very long time. Heavenly Passage Pills were basically almighty. As long as one had Heavenly Passage Pills, they would have everything else.

Of course, Long Chen had won them using his own capabilities, so no one objected.

“Alright, it is almost the end of our qualifiers. The second round has ended. Everyone else, please leave Ancient Demon Domain using the same path. As for the remaining seven hundred, you all will enter the most crucial round. Once you pass this round, you will be a respected Ancient Demon Domain disciple!” announced Demon General Typhoon.

There was only one round left. All the remaining participants were extremely anxious. But after they gritted their teeth and thought about it, they knew that their lives would change drastically as long as they passed. This was the most important crossroads of their lives. Only one in ten people would advance, so why not give it all they had?

The crowd was filled with battle spirit.

“After the second round, your serial numbers aren’t in sequence anymore, so you must take a new number! I will then announce the rules of the third round!”

A disciple brought out a large box. This box was sealed, but there was a fist-sized hole on top. It was completely black inside.

“There are seven hundred pieces of paper inside, and every piece has a number. Everyone! Take a number! Remember this—you’re forbidden from exchanging numbers with someone else! If you do so, you will be disqualified immediately. The Ancient Demon Domain has thousands of prodigies; we won’t miss you!” Demon General Typhoon warned sternly.

Have we finally reached the last round? The Ancient Demon Domain is indeed a super faction. Even the qualifying event is this elaborate. A regular person really could never join them. Perhaps this event also guarantees a constant supply of prodigies, thought Long Chen.

With his current abilities, he was only somewhat confident he could beat a Fourth Passage Stage cultivator, but cultivators at the Fifth Passage Stage and above were beyond his level. There were thousands of people beyond the Fifth Passage Stage in the Ancient Demon Domain itself.

In an environment filled with such powerful people, victors will rise quickly, but the weak will die or get disqualified. I really need to risk it all this time. Long Chen steeled himself.

This time, it was Huangfu Qi's turn. After she took her number, he took his own. The number "1" was written on his piece of paper.

"Big Brother, mine says '2!' Mine says '2!' What about you?" Huangfu Qi looked up excitedly.

"One," he said truthfully.

"How coincidental! Jiang Cheng, it looks like the heavens aren't standing on your side," said a voice laced with venom.

Long Chen did not need to turn around to know that it was Zhao Wuji.

"What do you mean by that?" asked Long Chen.

Zhao Wuji flashed the paper in his hand, which also showed "1," and said, "You've run out of luck."

There were one hundred number ones in the box, so it wasn't at all unusual for them to get the same number.

Long Chen ignored him. If they really were paired together, he did not mind beating him up.

By now, everyone had their number.

"Now, I shall take you all to a new place—the Martial Arena of the Ancient Demon Domain!" Demon General Typhoon led the remaining seven hundred people away.

Very soon, they arrived in a narrow valley, and after they passed it, the space ahead opened into a flat basin surrounded by medium-sized gray hills.

Upon arrival, Long Chen sensed that there were countless masters hidden within the surrounding hills. These people were likely Ancient Demon Domain disciples here to watch the show, perhaps even people of higher status.

Long Chen and the rest felt a terrifying pressure with so many people present. Long Chen knew that there were many old and powerful people in the Ancient Demon Domain, including the seven Demon Kings, who were at the Earthly Martial Realm.

Cultivators at the three Martial Realms were on a whole different level, far above the four foundational realms.

Then Long Chen saw several black stages in the space ahead. When he counted them, he realized that, like the pillars, there were seven of them. The seven stages were arranged in the shape of the seven-starred big dipper constellation. One black-clothed person stood on each stage, and all of them were of varying ages, gender, and look. The only similarity was the terrifying aura that radiated from them.

Demon General Typhoon hurriedly knelt on the ground and said with a sincere look on his face, “Greetings, Your Majesties the Seven Demon Kings!”

“Greetings, Your Majesties the Seven Demon Kings!” When other people saw his greeting, they quickly knelt as well. Long Chen did not want to stand out like a stork among chickens, so he also pulled Huangfu Qi down to kneel.

“Seven Demon Kings, these are the seven hundred candidates who showed great potential after the filtering process. After this final round, we will be able to choose seventy excellent candidates to join your pavilions!”

One of the Demon Kings said, “Typhoon, you may get up. Everyone, get up. The seven of us are only here to recruit disciples. We won’t interfere with the selection process, so just follow the standard procedures.”

Then they all retreated and left the seven black stages.

Behind the stages were eight extravagant seats made of black metal. There was one empty chair in the middle, and the seven Demon Kings sat in the seven chairs on either side of it. Long Chen guessed that the center seat belonged to the Demon Emperor, Jiang Wuxie.

With the permission of the Demon Kings, the crowd stood up and Demon General Typhoon brought them to the stages. He leaped onto one stage and surveyed the seven hundred young faces. “It was difficult for you to make it to this point. First, I would like to congratulate all of you; you all have done well. But the world is forever cruel! You must endure another ten-to-one elimination before you can reach your final goal and pass the most important test of your lives!

“First, let me explain the rules. Every person has a piece of paper with a number that matches a stage. There are seven stages, so there will be a hundred people on each one. The rules are simple. When there are only ten people left standing on your stage, and you find that you are one of them, you will be an Ancient Demon Domain disciple! Young ladies and gentlemen, everything depends on the last test!”

Demon General Typhoon’s words fanned the flames of passion.

“Ten people will remain on each stage, so the seventy of you will receive the most important reward—becoming an Ancient Demon Domain disciple, and also a thousand Heavenly Passage Pills!”

A thousand?

The crowd erupted with excitement. The top three of the first round had only received two thousand Heavenly Passage Pills each. If they passed this round, they would receive a thousand! It was clear how rich the Ancient Demon Domain was.

“Of course, since the past two rounds had three top places, then the third round will have the same format! However, those who end up in eighth to seventieth place will receive a thousand pills. Fourth to seventh place will receive five thousand Heavenly Passage Pills each! Third place, ten thousand Heavenly Passage Pills. Second place,

thirty thousand Heavenly Passage Pills. First place will receive sixty thousand Heavenly Passage Pills!”

The highest reward was sixty thousand Heavenly Passage Pills. This meant that if Long Chen came out in first place on the last round, he would win a total of one hundred thousand Heavenly Passage Pills today!

Everyone drooled over the rewards!

“Of course, the Heavenly Passage Pills are only part of the reward. The top seven will become the direct disciples of the seven Earthly Martial Realm Demon Kings!

“The seven Demon Kings are also the Pavilion Lords of the seven pavilions in the Ancient Demon Domain. All of them are ranked just beneath the Demon Emperor, and ranked above ten thousand people. Becoming their disciple guarantees great success, so everyone, take this seriously!” Demon General Typhoon said excitedly.

“Lord Demon General, won’t the battle royale merely produce seventy winners? How will you determine the top seven and top three?” a teenager asked, puzzled.

“That’s simple!” Demon General Typhoon smiled. “Once the ten winners of each stage are decided, they will have another free-for-all until only one person remains on the stage. That person will be one of the top seven! The winners will become their respective stage’s sole finalist, and all finalists will become the seven Demon Kings’ direct disciples. There will then be a final battle, so the third to last to leave will come in third, the second to last to leave will come in second, and the final person remaining will be the champion!”

Luck seemed to play a huge part with this ruleset. However, only a strong person would be able to remain standing.

Out of the seven hundred people, the final person standing would be the absolute champion!

Long Chen smiled. So, the last round was a battle royale. It was no wonder Zhao Wuji had said that Long Chen was going to die. But who would die in the end?

He looked up at the seven Demon Kings behind the stage.

Those Earthly Martial Realm cultivators radiate an arrogant and immense power, while Ling Xi’s family radiated an energy that is mysterious and terrifying. This means that her grandmother is stronger than them. However, the seven Demon Kings still look quite scary. They live up to their reputation as the top cultivators of the Divine Martial Empire!

Under Demon General Typhoon’s instructions, everyone started to climb onto the martial stages.

They would also be performance stages.

Chapter 472 - Red Ghost King

Since he had pulled number one, Long Chen ascended the first stage. He realized that the black stage felt much larger when he stepped onto it. About a hundred people stood cautiously on it, all dispersed, but there was still a lot of space left.

Long Chen was standing on one of the corners.

As for Huangfu Qi, she was on stage number two, though he was not worried about her. No one in her group was a match for her, so she would definitely enter the top seven. The most anticipated group was the first group because Long Chen and Zhao Wuji were both there.

That was why even though the round had not begun, most of the people were already watching them. Even the seven Demon Kings had their eyes on them.

Long Chen suddenly felt his whole body tingle. He did not turn around, because he knew it was due to the seven Demon Kings eyeing him from head to toe. He was the champion of the first and second rounds, so he was the dark horse of dark horses. Dark horses always attracted the most attention, so they were all studying the person who had defeated Zhao Wuji.

After a long time, the tingling sensation finally disappeared.

These are legitimately powerful people! Their gazes alone are enough to place so much pressure on me! Long Chen was privately shocked.

Among the crowd, he spotted Zhao Wuji, who was also looking at him. Zhao Wuji's glare was malicious, and anyone could see the intent to provoke in his eyes.

Long Chen and Zhao Wuji were the most attention-grabbing people of the qualifiers. Everyone knew that both were powerful, so no one dared to provoke them and stayed far away.

Demon General Typhoon looked around, then he announced the official start of the battle.

A battle royale like this was already a cruel situation, plus the drawing process was very random, so almost no one had someone they could trust by their side. When Demon General Typhoon announced the start of the round, no one moved at first. They all peered at the other participants cautiously.

Every person on each stage was actually fighting ninety-nine other people!

Suddenly, one person attacked. This was a sufficient trigger, and almost everyone on stage started to attack too. Cries, whooshes, and curses rang across the entire martial arena along with all sorts of lights. Even Demon General Typhoon was overwhelmed by the view.

Every person who collapsed or was knocked off the stage was considered to have lost. One by one, people collapsed or were thrown off, and the number of people standing on all seven stages rapidly decreased.

So far, no one had dared to attack Long Chen. There was a large empty space around him. He was happy to have nothing to do, and he studied his surroundings closely with an exasperated smile on his face. The third round of the qualifiers truly depended on one's strength. It was the most terrifying and cruelest. So far, he had witnessed quite a few people being killed.

Anyone who had been killed or incapacitated were quickly removed by Ancient Demon Domain masters. The number of people on the black stages was decreasing. Long Chen's group was also

thinning quickly, and after about thirty minutes, only around ten people remained. The other groups were the same.

The crucial moment that would decide who would enter the Ancient Demon Domain had arrived.

Still, no one had dared to attack Long Chen. Of course, no one touched Zhao Wuji either. Both of them would be able to enter the top ten just by standing in place.

The people who remained were mostly at the Fourth Passage Stage. They started to exterminate the Third Passage Stage cultivators, and after a while, Long Chen counted that there were exactly ten people left. This meant that all ten of them were qualified to enter the Ancient Demon Domain!

Everyone other than Long Chen and Zhao Wuji was ecstatic!

Squeezing into seventy spots from the initial eighty thousand people was no easy feat. They were all content with this result, and were over the moon.

The top ten winners soon emerged on every stage.

The people who would enter the Ancient Demon Domain this year were finally confirmed. Next, they would be fighting for the top seven and top three spots.

Everyone who stayed behind heaved a sigh of relief, while the people who had left the stage were all dejected. They were so close!

“Life is like that. Some people will succeed, but that means that someone else will fail. When you fail, do not give up. As long as you do not give up, there will be more chances waiting for you,” Demon General Typhoon said in an attempt to comfort the sad teenagers.

“Making it to this level proves that you all are truly powerful. Do not give up. Come again next year; there will be more chances!”

Then Demon General Typhoon instructed the disciples to escort them away.

After that, his eyes fell on the seventy remaining people.

“Congratulations, everyone! From now onwards, you all are the disciples of the Ancient Demon Domain! This means that you all are fated to be one step above the regular person! If you choose to become an Enforcer for the Martial Alliance, you will start out at a higher rank than a normal person. You will also receive far more resources than other people your age! This means that your lives are about to change drastically!”

There was no need to elaborate on the benefits they would get upon entering the Ancient Demon Domain. Everyone was very emotional.

However, the qualifiers had not ended yet.

“But there is still one very important thing to do, which is to determine the top seven and top three candidates among all of you! The top seven and top three will receive rewards far exceeding the rest. And if you get a Demon King as your mentor, your

future will be limitless. Of course, if you're not strong enough, do not force it. If you get killed, you're wasting your chance to enter the Ancient Demon Domain! It's not worth it for you guys!"

Demon General Typhoon's words were mainly directed at the top ten of stage number one because there were two strong fighters there, Long Chen and Zhao Wuji. Based on the second round, their offensive capabilities far surpassed those of other people. If they fought each other, it would likely end with death!

Some of the people smiled in exasperation when they heard him.

Very few people from the other stages gave up, but most of the participants on stage number one stepped down as soon as Demon General Typhoon announced the commencement of the round. Long Chen, Zhao Wuji, and the other two Fourth Passage Stage cultivators remained.

They looked at each other, then they all charged at Long Chen!

Their logic was to go for him first since he was at a lower cultivation level than them.

Long Chen dared not let his guard down against Fourth Passage Stage cultivators. He quickly used the Dragon Soul Transformation, so his strength skyrocketed. Since he was about to enter his final fight against Zhao Wuji, he did not hold back!

"Demon Seed Planting Technique!"

This was an initial Heaven-tier technique, so it was still effective for Long Chen. Starting with the Qi boost he received with his Dragon Soul Transformation, his Qi increased until he had almost as much as a Third Passage Stage cultivator. With the addition of his tough dragon body, his strength was undeniable.

"Demon Seed Planting Technique? Isn't that the Red Ghost Pavilion's combat technique?" Six of the Demon Kings looked at a red-skinned, tall, but somewhat ugly middle-aged man. This man's eyes were of different sizes and his face had many craters. He looked like a ghost.

"Who knows where the brat stole the Demon Seed Planting Technique from? But he only has the second stage. It's the equivalent of an initial Heaven-tier technique, so it won't do much good!" The Red Ghost King coldly laughed.

Then Long Chen disappeared.

"Traceless Demon Shadow? Isn't that the Clear Shallows Pavilion's technique?"

Everyone looked at a pretty lady, who nodded slightly. "It is indeed an initial Heaven-tier technique from the Clear Shallows Pavilion. He used it decently well."

Long Chen launched the Supreme Demon Sword technique at the two Fourth Passage Stage cultivators. Thanks to the various boosts he had in his arsenal, his strength had been elevated to a terrifying level!

He even knows the Supreme Demon Sword technique? Is the brat related to the Ancient Demon Domain? The seven Demon Kings were all wondering the same thing.

“Many of our disciples have been killed outside our domain throughout the years. I’m guessing this brat got lucky and killed disciples of the Ancient Demon Domain. Then he robbed them of their secret scriptures! And he dares to use them in front of us too! He must have a death wish!” said the Red Ghost King, gritting his teeth.

Long Chen’s powerful attack threw the two Fourth Passage Stage cultivators off the stage. This was his second most powerful attack. He had launched two strikes of the Supreme Demon Sword technique with the perfect amount of power, resulting in them being eliminated but not hurt.

Of course, no weakling could have made it to this point. It would not have been this easy for him to kill them.

Long Chen’s move had won praise from a lot of people!

Judging by that display, they could tell that Long Chen was the most powerful participant in this event!

The fights on the other stages had come to an end by now. The fastest to end was Huangfu Qi’s stage. She had won first place and was jumping for joy. She shouted in Long Chen’s direction, “Big Brother, I got first place! Let’s go! Beat that jerk! Make him infertile! Infertile!”

Everyone was speechless.

Huangfu Qi’s words made Zhao Wuji’s face twitch. He glared at her angrily and roared, “You bitch! Shut your mouth! We’ll see who gets beat up later! You wait and see!”

To Long Chen, Zhao Wuji was just a child. If they were in the streets, Long Chen would have been able to toy with him until his death. Strength was only one aspect of a person; experience and mindset were a whole different matter. With those advantages alone, Long Chen could kill him instantly.

Whatever. After beating him, I’ll be number one. As the three-time champion, I’ll receive a hundred thousand Heavenly Passage Pills! I’ve gotten the best result I could!

Chapter 473 - Silver Lance

The finalist of every stage would be determined soon, but stage number one attracted most of the attention because Long Chen and Zhao Wuji were there.

Even the lofty seven Demon Kings did not wish to miss the duel between them.

Long Chen and Zhao Wuji were having a face-off, but Zhao Wuji could not wait any longer. If Long Chen were not here, he would have easily become the three-time champion. That was why he hated Long Chen to the bone and could not wait to swallow him alive. How could he hold back any longer?

That was why soon after Long Chen knocked the two Fourth Passage Stage cultivators off the stage, Zhao Wuji started to attack. During the second round, he had used his most powerful attack, which was the Martial Peak Finger. This time, he took out a silver lance from his Universe Pouch!

Long Chen peered closer. It looked similar to the Azure Dragon Halberd. It was covered in silver scales, and the sharp tip gave Long Chen the same feeling as a cold, venomous snake.

“An intermediate Heaven-tier divine weapon, the Silver Snake Lance! The lance techniques of the Zhao clan are peerless. Even the Martial Peak Finger was adapted from the lance technique. Just wait till I have mastered the entirety of the lance techniques! Your sword array will look like nothing!”

Then his lance turned into a silver thread and shot out at Long Chen at extremely high speed. It moved as quickly as Long Chen did when he used Traceless Demon Shadow.

The guy's actually decent at using his lance, Long Chen commented to himself in awe. He turned into an illusion when he used Traceless Demon Shadow, appearing and disappearing on the stage. It was even difficult to track the location of the Demon Emperor Sword.

“Are you trying to intimidate me with cheap tricks?” Zhao Wuji chuckled coldly. Long Chen had used Traceless Demon Shadow to its full capacity, but Zhao Wuji was very smart and chose not to move. He strained his ears to listen to the sound of the wind around him, using it to determine Long Chen's direction.

“You're there!” Zhao Wuji suddenly grinned, and his lance shot out like a flying dragon. Tens of thousands of long, silver snakes shot out of the tip of his lance, shooting straight ahead!

“River Breaking Qi!”

This attack radiated power the moment it was launched. It was an intermediate Heaven-tier technique, further proving that Zhao Wuji was indeed a prodigy. He had learned an advanced Heaven-tier technique, but his intermediate Heaven-tier technique was also very impressive!

His senses are sharp. It looks like Traceless Demon Shadow is ineffective against experts of this level.

Long Chen deeply sensed that the law of nature was cruel. Previously, the Traceless Demon Shadow was one of the strongest techniques in the Cangyang Kingdom, but it had been neutralized with ease in the Divine Martial Empire.

Every person improved quickly, and if one's speed of growth did not exceed that of another person, then they would easily be eliminated in society. Traceless Demon Shadow was considered Long Chen's treasure, but right now it was barely usable.

Only divine techniques like Blood Transmutation would be forever impressive, and would follow him for a very long time!

Long Chen chose to retreat. Zhao Wuji spotted his chance and pressed even further, launching attack after attack using his lance, forcing Long Chen to the edge of the black stage.

“Zhao Wuji's clan is definitely the wealthier one. Although Long Chen looks powerful, he's actually weaker in terms of Qi. He's been at a disadvantage since the beginning of the duel.”

“Although his body is extremely tough, he’s only at the First Passage Stage. His physical strength gives him an edge over normal Fourth Passage Stage cultivators, but a confrontation against Zhao Wuji can only end in disaster.”

The Demon Kings discussed among themselves behind the stage.

Just as they conversed, the tides turned.

To be fair, Long Chen was stronger than Zhao Wuji in many aspects other than Qi. For example, he managed to break free from Zhao Wuji’s lance using just an initial Heaven-tier attack, which was the Supreme Demon Sword technique!

When he was suppressed by Zhao Wuji, he spotted an opportunity and used the Supreme Demon Sword to interrupt Zhao Wuji’s attacks. At the same time, he launched another strike of the Supreme Demon Sword!

It was a never-ending release of Supreme Demon Sword strikes. Although it was not a strong technique when used once, Long Chen was capable of unleashing a flurry of attacks. The storm of sword strikes completely interrupted Zhao Wuji’s attack, and he could barely react to them!

“Do you plan to fight me with nothing but cheap little tricks? I think you should go home and drink your milk!” Long Chen laughed maniacally. The tides had been completely turned. Zhao Wuji had been forced back by Long Chen’s attacks, and when he stumbled backwards, he looked more pathetic than Long Chen did.

Long Chen’s humiliation made Zhao Wuji infinitely embarrassed and furious!

He had been arrogant all his life, and not only was Long Chen suppressing him, but he was humiliating him! He could never swallow his pride like this! A crazed look appeared on his face!

“Oh? Are you about to rage quit?” Long Chen had a perfect grasp of his psychology. Just from Zhao Wuji’s gaze, he could tell that the ultra-competitive teen was ready to use the Martial Peak Finger.

It looks like the brat refuses to believe the Heavenly Passage Pillar’s judgment and still chooses to attack me directly. Unbelievable. Long Chen was a little speechless. He had forced Zhao Wuji back, causing him to almost fall off the stage. With great difficulty, Zhao Wuji stabilized himself and Qi erupted from his body. He then pointed a finger outwards, and a whirlpool of Qi appeared. A shining arrow made out of starlight appeared in the whirlpool!

“Martial Peak Finger!”

Zhao Wuji roared, and the attack was launched at Long Chen. From an outside perspective, Long Chen looked like he was completely swallowed by Zhao Wuji’s attack!

Is he dead? This was the question that popped into many people’s minds.

But this thought did not last very long. A sharp ray of sword light pierced through the attack, then more sword lights shot out, forming a sword array that quickly enveloped Zhao Wuji. All he could see were swords! Zhao Wuji had nowhere to hide in the face of so many sword lights. All of them were formed from sword symbols, and the symbols and Sword Qi interacted with each other.

It took only one second. The advanced Heaven-tier Martial Peak Finger was completely destroyed by the Heaven Sword Array. The full might of the Heaven Sword Array hit Zhao Wuji directly. This all happened within a short time, and Zhao Wuji was completely overwhelmed with panic!

His life was in danger. Zhao Wuji had never thought that he would die during the qualifiers. To him, these qualifiers were just a place for him to show off his skills, not where he would die.

But he did not have the strength to withstand Long Chen's Heaven Sword Array. The sharp sword lights had completely pierced through his clothing. In the next instant, his body would be cut to pieces!

"Mom! Dad!" Zhao Wuji was in complete panic and his mind was blank. He was in complete disbelief, regret, and despair. But if it had come to this, then it was up to fate.

Long Chen was hesitant to kill Zhao Wuji. A lot of information instantly flashed through his mind. Zhao Wuji was probably not very important to the Ancient Demon Domain, so killing him probably wouldn't cause a lot of trouble.

With a *whoosh*, he slashed the Demon Emperor Sword at Zhao Wuji.

Suddenly, a hot gust of wind threw Long Chen back. The source of this arrogant power did not care about Long Chen at all, and almost threw him off the stage. Thankfully, Long Chen managed to block using the Demon Emperor Sword, or he would've been hurt!

"Who did that?!" Long Chen stabilized himself and quickly looked over. A tall, ugly, red-skinned man was levitating in front of Zhao Wuji, looking at Long Chen. The ice-cold glare in his eyes made Long Chen feel like he had fallen into a freezer.

The strength of an Earthly Martial Realm cultivator is indeed extraordinary up close! Long Chen was privately shaken. He was no fool, so he would not rush over to argue with this person, who was obviously one of the seven Demon Kings. He saluted him politely and asked, "The disciples are meant to fight on this stage. Lord Demon King, may I ask why you attacked?"

He had done well. Even the Red Ghost King could not nitpick his words.

Everyone was thinking the same. Long Chen was about to win, but the Red Ghost King had suddenly stepped in. Based on the way Long Chen was thrown backwards, the Red Ghost King was clearly siding with Zhao Wuji.

The youths who had just become Ancient Demon Domain disciples felt indignant and were anxiously waiting for the Red Ghost King's response. The other disciples also looked over. The fights of the other groups had ended, and the six other Demon King disciples had been decided. The only one who remained was Long Chen's group.

Just like the first two rounds, Long Chen had completely defeated Zhao Wuji. Although everyone was shocked, the result wasn't at all hard to accept.

After Long Chen asked his question, everyone looked at the Red Ghost King.

Zhao Wuji's face was ghostly white. He stood behind the Red Ghost King and looked at him in terror.

“Why did I attack? Do I need to explain myself to a brat like you?” asked the Red Ghost King coldly.

It looked like the Red Ghost King had chosen to reply in a brute manner, but Long Chen was not afraid.

“Of course not! You are a person of a very high rank, and you are someone that my generation respects and worships. I truly admire every master who has reached the Earthly Martial Realm. However, I heard that the Ancient Demon Domain is a place that respects rules. We were fighting according to the rules, yet you have interrupted the fight. I still do not understand why. But as a true master, you won’t take my question to heart, right?”

The crowd below expressed their assent. Everyone was confused. If Long Chen was eliminated and Zhao Wuji became the finalist, they would feel that it was unfair. Everyone knew that Long Chen was clearly stronger than Zhao Wuji.

Chapter 474 - King of the Newcomers

The reaction of the crowd placed pressure on the Red Ghost King. *If I kill this brat right here, it will leave a terrible impression on the new disciples. And the Domain Lord will definitely punish me when he returns.*

With that thought, he glared at Long Chen and said, “I won’t beat around the bush, kid. Just now, you used the Demon Emperor Sword Technique, Traceless Demon Shadow, and the Demon Seed Planting Technique. Those are all secret techniques of the Ancient Demon Domain, and we do not teach them to outsiders. Doesn’t that mean that you’ve killed our disciples and robbed them of their secret scriptures?”

Long Chen grinned. “Lord Demon King, you’re jumping to conclusions. Is murdering a disciple of the Ancient Demon Domain the only way that I could have learned your secret techniques?”

The crowd was completely impressed by Long Chen’s boldness to speak to the Red Ghost King like that. Everyone strained their ears to listen to the conversation.

“If you didn’t kill one of our disciples, how could you have learned them?” he demanded.

“Alright ...” Long Chen had no choice but to take out a black token. It was the one Zhao Qingyun had given him when he left the Cangyang Kingdom. It was an identity token with the name “Guang Yuan,” who was their ancestral master.

“I’m sure you know what this is?”

“That is an identity token of the Ancient Demon Domain!” The Red Ghost King raised his eyebrows, and a wave of heat hit Long Chen. He then said with a smirk, “Kid, you have an Ancient Demon Domain disciple’s identity token! Does that not prove that you’ve killed that person?”

Long Chen was also studying the Red Ghost King. Despite being powerful, he was not very smart. The other six Demon Kings had not even said anything, and he was the only one who had rushed to the stage.

However, since the Red Ghost King was being unreasonable, Long Chen could only do his best to explain himself. As long as he could convince this guy, the sixty thousand Heavenly Passage Pills would be his.

“Please calm down, Demon King.” Long Chen held up the metal token. “The name on the token is Guang Yuan. You may check if there has been a disciple named Guang Yuan in the Ancient Demon Domain in the past one hundred years.”

“What do you mean by that?” asked the Red Ghost King furiously.

“It’s simple. This disciple named Guang Yuan was indeed initially from the Ancient Demon Domain, but he left this place and settled down in a random tiny kingdom in the Ten Thousand Nations Territory. There, he founded a small sect as a minor branch of the Ancient Demon Domain, and it has survived until today. I am but a disciple of the leader of that small sect. Because I was successful in cultivation, I wanted to come to the Divine Martial Empire to further grow in the Ancient Demon Domain. If you do not believe me, Lord Demon King, you can investigate this matter.”

Long Chen was telling nothing but the truth. The Supreme Demon Sword was only an initial Heaven-tier technique, and many people who were not from the Ancient Demon Domain could use it.

The Red Ghost King was only here to look for trouble. Since Long Chen had evidence, the Red Ghost King would likely be scolded by the Domain Lord if he continued this. Therefore, he nodded impatiently and said, “Since you did not kill a disciple of the Ancient Demon Domain, I’ve got nothing else to say.”

Then he disappeared. When he reappeared, he was back in his seat.

Long Chen was a little traumatized.

Judging by how unreasonable the Red Ghost King was, Long Chen would likely have died if he hadn’t thought to use Guang Yuan’s identity token.

When Demon General Typhoon saw this, he could only announce, “The finalists from every stage have been determined! They are Jiang Cheng ...

When Jiang Cheng’s name was called, Zhao Wuji knew that he had lost all hope. He had initially aimed to be the three-time champion, but he had only ended up taking second place in the first two rounds. In the third round, he had failed to enter the top seven. Zhao Wuji wanted to kill himself.

He descended the stage dejectedly with his head hung low. With a dark and terrifying look on his face, he clenched his fists tightly.

Demon General Typhoon announced the names of the other six finalists.

“Congratulations to you all! You are now in the top seven. Soon, you all will be lucky enough to be picked by the seven Demon Kings to become their direct disciples. As for who will become which Demon King’s disciple, it will depend on your luck! Now, we must determine the top three. Everyone, get on stage number one!”

The finalists made their way to the first stage. One of them was Huangfu Qi, who was overjoyed that Long Chen had also won. She ran up to him happily with her hands on her cheeks and stars in her eyes, then cried admiringly, “Big Brother! You’re so awesome! You beat that jerk so hard, he peed his pants!”

“Aren’t you awesome too, Qi Qi? No one was a match for you in your group,” said Long Chen with a grin, pinching her cheek.

“You’re bullying me! Hmph! But I’m no match for you, Big Brother,” Huangfu Qi said.

Both of them stood closely together, but the other five were far away.

Demon General Typhoon announced that the fight for the top three places had officially begun. Everyone knew Long Chen’s strength, and based on the attack he had used on Zhao Wuji, no one present could withstand it. Especially not when he was on very good terms with Huangfu Qi, who was widely considered the third-strongest present and also the number one prodigy.

If the other five did not attack them together, no one could withstand them working together. Even so, there was no guarantee that they would win.

Therefore, the other five decided to give up on fighting Long Chen and Huangfu Qi. The five of them fought among themselves in order to decide who would take third place.

Long Chen had long known it would end up like this. After defeating Zhao Wuji, he knew he would be the champion.

After a while, the fight ended. They had gotten the best results and had become the Demon Kings’ disciples. They were set for life, so there was no need to work too hard here. Third place was only awarded five thousand Heavenly Passage Pills, so there was no need to risk their lives.

A winner had emerged, and a panting teenager remained on the stage. He was about Zhao Wuji’s age, and compared to him, he merely lacked an advanced Heaven-tier technique. He had indeed rightly earned third place.

He was no match for Long Chen and Huangfu Qi, so he made the smart choice to descend the stage. After that, Huangfu Qi grinned mischievously. “Big Brother, I’m not lacking Heavenly Passage Pills and you look like you really need them. I’ll give it to you!”

Then she skipped down the stage.

Only Long Chen remained. All eyes were on him.

The dark horse had appeared out of nowhere and became the three-time champion!

Most importantly, he was only at the First Passage Stage!

Long Chen's victory today would become a popular topic among the Ancient Demon Domain disciples. There were many people watching in the surrounding mountains after all. The name "Jiang Cheng" would spread across the entire Ancient Demon Domain.

He was only a newcomer, yet he had created a huge storm with his excellent results.

Long Chen enjoyed the gazes of the large crowd.

The King of Newcomers. I think this term suits me very much. Long Chen smiled to himself in exasperation.

Demon General Typhoon's booming voice announced the names of the top three. Since Long Chen was the three-time champion, Demon General Typhoon mentioned his name several times!

Long Chen was very satisfied with becoming champion, but he knew that great masters were lurking in the Ancient Demon Domain. There were many people watching him who were a lot more powerful. He was only the king of newcomers, so he did not even have the right to speak up in the Ancient Demon Domain.

"The qualifiers have finally come to an end. Congratulations to you seventy people, especially the ones in the top seven! From today onwards, you will begin your journey of true cultivation! Now you will have one of the Demon Kings become your master! Of course, Demon Kings do not take in trash. If you do not show sufficient improvement in two years, you will become normal disciples!" Demon General Typhoon's stern warning woke them up.

No one could afford to be complacent. Only the ones who progressed continuously could become an elite.

"Finalists, please step forward!"

Long Chen and Huangfu Qi stepped forward along with the other five disciples. He turned around and spotted Zhao Wuji's venomous glare.

He pretended not to see it and followed Demon General Typhoon up to the front of the seven Demon Kings. Facing them, even Demon General Typhoon had to hang his head. Long Chen also looked down, in case his arrogant gaze offended the Demon Kings.

However, he wondered how the seven disciples would be allocated.

Their talent levels varied greatly. For example, Huangfu Qi was very powerful at a very young age, making her the most talented. The other five disciples were about fourteen or fifteen and were at the Fourth Passage Stage, which made them look much better than Long Chen. It looked like Long Chen had won because he was older and had learned a few more techniques. In terms of talent, he was the worst.

Of course, that was only how it looked from the outside. Long Chen had only started cultivating a year ago. He had spent far less time than other people, meaning his talent was terrifying.

On top of that, which Demon King would be willing to allow a prodigy like Huangfu Qi to be taken away?

That was why Long Chen was looking forward to seeing how they would be allocated. Who would be his new master? Long Chen had taken a glance at them. Other than the Red Ghost King, the rest were terrifying both physically and mentally!

Chapter 475 - Clear Shallows King

“Everyone, let’s follow the usual rules. We shall decide by drawing lots,” said a cold, female voice. Long Chen had seen a lady in her thirties among the seven Demon Kings when he arrived. She had a curvy figure and a pretty face, while her expression and voice were endlessly cold. The person who had spoken was that lady.

Women usually took better care of their looks, so Long Chen guessed that the Clear Shallows King was in her forties.

“Fine! I don’t want us to waste time fighting again. These seven people have varying levels of talent; there are good and bad candidates. If we don’t draw lots, will we ever be willing to accept the outcome?” said another Demon King.

“Typhoon, bring the stuff here. I know you guys have already prepared it,” said another one.

Demon General Typhoon nodded hurriedly. Then he walked up to the Demon Kings and took out a small box from his Universe Pouch. In sequence, the seven Demon Kings each took out a folded piece of paper. It was a very old-fashioned method, but it was effective.

“All seven stages have one finalist each. The number you pick will match each disciple. Do you all agree?” Demon General Typhoon asked respectfully.

“Of course. Everyone, let’s open our pieces of paper,” said the Clear Shallows King, who was also the only lady present.

Everyone nodded and opened their papers at the same time. All of their faces changed instantly.

“You seven! Look up so the Demon Kings can see your faces!” Demon General Typhoon said. Long Chen and the rest all looked up. They were already standing in sequence, so it was clear which Demon King had gotten which candidate.

The Clear Shallows King smiled.

“Little girl, your name is Huangfu Qi, right? See, out of us seven, I’m the only girl. Out of you seven, you’re the only girl too. And you’re going to be my disciple! Don’t you think it’s a great coincidence?”

The Clear Shallows King’s expression was usually cold, but when she opened the paper, she gave a rare smile. It was clear just how happy she was.

Although Huangfu Qi had only won second place, the Demon Kings opined that she was the most talented out of the seven, so she was the one that they most wanted. Now that she belonged to the Clear Shallows King, they looked at her with envy and admiration.

“Congratulations, Clear Shallows King! It’s too bad I got number three. Fourteen years old, Fourth Passage Stage. Same as last year.”

“Me too. I got five.”

“I got four.”

“Six.”

“Seven.”

The other Demon Kings announced their numbers. When numbers two to seven were announced, only number one remained. Everyone froze and turned to the Red Ghost King. They realized that frustration was written all over his face, with traces of rage. Then he burned the piece of paper!

“Motherfucker! Why am I always unlucky?! Last time, I got a Third Passage Stage guy and thought he was quite talented for being able to make it into the top seven. One year later, he was still at the Third Passage Stage! Even the normal disciples had surpassed him! This time, I’m even unluckier! Now I get a First Passage Stage kid, and he’s already seventeen! Why do you all get prodigies while I get trash?!”

He started to curse, showing just how angry he was. He had already had a faceoff with Long Chen, but Long Chen had managed to defeat him with reason. He hated Long Chen for that, but now, Long Chen had become his direct disciple.

All top seven candidates had to become the direct disciples of Demon Kings. This was the rule set by the Domain Lord many generations ago. That was why the Red Ghost King had no choice but to accept his fate! However, although it looked like he agreed, if Long Chen went with him, he would suffer.

“Who said my Big Brother was trash? He beat that bad person Zhao Wuji and was even the three-time champion! He’s number one! Is that considered trash?” Huangfu Qi was upset when she heard him. The newborn calf was never afraid of the tiger, so she spoke to the Red Ghost King indignantly.

“How dare you speak to me like that, girl?!” roared the Red Ghost King.

“Red Ghost King, don’t scare my disciple! If you have a problem, talk to me instead!” The Clear Shallows King was in a very good mood. Huangfu Qi was the treasure of her heart, so she would do everything to protect her.

“You got a good disciple, and now you’re showboating in front of me? Clear Shallows King, everyone, today I will go on the record to say that I refuse to take this Jiang Cheng guy in. Anyone who wants him can have him. Give me that eliminated guy, Zhao Wuji. I will take him as my direct disciple. I guarantee that in less than a year, Jiang Cheng will be defeated by him in just one strike!” the Red Ghost King said sternly.

He had made his firm decision.

The Red Ghost King had a terrible temper and often did things without thinking. The other six Demon Kings were a little embarrassed to be standing with him, but since they had their own disciples already, they were too lazy to bother with the Red Ghost King's tantrum. When the Domain Lord returned, it would be none of their business if he wanted to punish the Red Ghost King for refusing to take in Long Chen.

Of course, Zhao Wuji indeed held great potential too, and the other Demon Kings were also eyeing him. Now that the Red Ghost King had announced that he would take Zhao Wuji, the others let him have Zhao Wuji as they were not willing to argue over a disciple.

“Zhao Wuji, come here. I, the Red Ghost King, will take you in as my direct disciple!”

Zhao Wuji was utterly stunned at first, then he was overjoyed and quickly ran over.

“Not bad. The kid is smart. From today onwards, I, the Red Ghost King, will be your master. I guarantee that in one year, you will be one of the best disciples of the Ancient Demon Domain! As for Jiang Cheng, I don't want him. Anyone who wants him can have him. He's so old, yet he's still at the First Passage Stage. Who knows when he'll reach the Sixth Passage Stage? In ten years?”

No one had objected to his decision to take Zhao Wuji in, so his mood lifted. Looking at Zhao Wuji, he grew more and more pleased. He grabbed Zhao Wuji's clothes, then flew up into the sky, declaring, “Typhoon, send the other nine disciples to the Red Ghost Pavilion later. I'll take Zhao Wuji away first.”

Worried that other people would fight him for Zhao Wuji, he left instantly.

After the Red Ghost King said that, Zhao Wuji felt like there was hope again. Long Chen had won first place, but in the end, he had gotten the spot instead!

He was the ultimate winner in the end.

Zhao Wuji thought that he was fated to be nothing after he lost to Long Chen, but he didn't expect to end up as the final winner. As long as the Red Ghost King did his best to mentor him, he could definitely surpass Long Chen by a long shot. Soon, Long Chen would be dead beneath his lance.

Before he left, Zhao Wuji shot Long Chen a smug look. He thought Long Chen would be devastated, but he saw no change in Long Chen's expression.

In truth, Long Chen had never planned to be the Red Ghost King's disciple. Since the Red Ghost King hated him, Long Chen would surely be killed one day. His most important objective was to get the Emperor Flame Pearl and train himself. He did not really need a master like that.

From the outside, it was a true tragedy to Long Chen ...

He had entered the top ten with great effort, yet he had been abandoned to become the joke of the crowd.

The remaining six Demon Kings looked at each other, then at Long Chen. To their surprise, Long Chen didn't seem to react. Had he gone stupid with shock?

“Does anybody want Jiang Cheng?” the Clear Shallows King asked gently.

Huangfu Qi pulled Long Chen’s hand and cried angrily, “Big Brother, we don’t want that red toad anyway! Will you follow me instead? Master, I want to be with Big Brother.”

Huangfu Qi looked at the Clear Shallows King hopefully with tears in her eyes.

This was her killer move, and when she used it on the Clear Shallows King, the Clear Shallows King’s heart softened. She said, “Alright, Jiang Cheng, come to the Clear Shallows Pavilion. However, I can only take in one direct disciple per year due to the rules. You’ll only be able to be a regular disciple there. Are you willing?”

This was just as Long Chen wished.

“Thank you, Clear Shallows King. I am willing, of course,” said Long Chen, nodding. He did not speak in an ingratiating manner.

His response made it clear that he had not gone stupid with shock, but rather, he didn't even care in the first place. The other Demon Kings looked at each other again and faintly sensed that Long Chen was impressive in terms of both attitude and strength.

If he was simple-minded, would he have been the three-time champion?

The seventy new disciples were evenly distributed to the seven pavilions. The seven Demon Kings led their disciples to their pavilions, bringing the qualifiers to an end.

Demon General Typhoon quickly gave Long Chen the sixty thousand Heavenly Passage Pills. Long Chen had successfully received a hundred thousand Heavenly Passage Pills today, which would last him a very long time.

The details of the qualifiers spread like wildfire.

Long Chen became a popular topic. It was just too soap-opera-like, with Long Chen becoming the dark horse by winning three times, only to be abandoned by the Red Ghost King in the end. And the one he had defeated ended up becoming the Red Ghost King’s disciple ...

In everyone’s eyes, Long Chen’s situation was utterly tragic.

Of course, Long Chen also knew that this was a humiliation.

I’ve only just arrived, so I must lay low for a while. When I am stronger, that damn Zhao Wuji and the Red Ghost King will be easy to kill. Along the way to the Clear Shallows Pavilion, Long Chen looked ahead with a small smile on his face.

Chapter 476 - Demon General Strongman

The Clear Shallows Pavilion was situated in the eastern section of the Ancient Demon Domain, not far away from the entrance.

The Ancient Demon Domain had seven royal pavilions controlled by the seven Demon Kings scattered throughout mountains. There was also a royal palace that was the true heart of the Ancient Demon Domain; it was where the Demon Emperor lived. However, the average person did not know where it was.

Ten of the seventy new disciples had joined the Clear Shallows Pavilion. One of them was Huangfu Qi, who was now the Clear Shallows King's direct disciple. Long Chen and the other eight would become regular disciples. Since they had just arrived and were relatively weak, they would be the lowest-ranked disciples in the Clear Shallows Pavilion. They would have to slowly work hard to become outstanding.

Of course, Long Chen was the exception.

The other disciples who followed the Clear Shallows King cast Long Chen occasional glances. They were shocked that Long Chen was acting so nonchalantly even though he had lost his right to be a direct disciple, though they were more so impressed by his attitude.

Long Chen may look like he had less potential than the rest, but he was the strongest among the seventy people. If he could increase his cultivation level, he would be the person the rest could only wish to become.

Along the way, the Clear Shallows King showed great concern and care for Huangfu Qi, but completely forgot about Long Chen and the rest.

Very soon, they arrived at the Clear Shallows Pavilion.

The Ancient Demon Domain was situated on a group of gray mountains, so the Clear Shallows Pavilion's environment could only be considered moderately decent as far as aesthetics went. However, it was indeed better than the other pavilions despite the fact that not many plants could grow here.

"There must be a strange item beneath the Ancient Demon Domain that is sucking all the life force out of this place," said Little Cat from the Primordial Realm.

"What is it?" Long Chen asked curiously.

"I don't know either. The masters of the Ancient Demon Domain are too strong for you, so you should focus on increasing your cultivation level for now. If you can't get the Emperor Flame Pearl, no matter how powerful I am, I will not be able to plant the Golden Crow's power in your body."

This was indeed an urgent matter.

"Don't worry. My current combat abilities far exceed my actual cultivation level. This means I can kill beasts several levels above me. As long as I can find a place where beasts gather, my cultivation level will skyrocket," Long Chen said confidently.

Usually, blood from beasts three levels above him would allow him to ascend by one stage. Long Chen only had as much Qi as a First Passage Stage cultivator, but killing Category Four Heaven-tier beasts was not a problem to him. Even Category Three beasts would greatly progress his cultivation, let alone Category Four.

During his conversation with Little Cat, the Clear Shallows King suddenly turned around and looked at the new disciples. "After you all have entered the Clear Shallows Pavilion, you will be under one of the Demon Generals, Demon General Strongman. Demon General Strongman is in

charge of the training and development of regular Clear Shallows Pavilion disciples. When you meet him, you will refer to him as ‘Lord Demon General!’”

“Yes!” Long Chen and the rest nodded.

The Demon Kings were the only ones in the Ancient Demon Domain who had the right to take in disciples. The normal disciples like Long Chen were like soldiers and the Demon Generals were their superiors. The difference between regular and direct disciples was like heaven and earth. Of course, he knew that even direct disciples could be demoted to regular disciples if they did not perform well.

The Clear Shallows King led them into the Clear Shallows Pavilion’s martial arena. Long Chen could already feel an immense and violent aura ahead. This was an aura generated from a hundred experts training together, which was enough to intimidate Long Chen.

When they approached, Long Chen saw more than a hundred young disciples training in the vast training grounds. They were all wearing simple black training armor, so they looked like normal soldiers with gigantic “demon” characters on their chests.

About seventy of the one hundred disciples were quietly cultivating in a corner while the others were sparring. It was a good system to train and grow through sparring.

The Ancient Demon Domain’s system was strict and dense, completely adopting a military-style management system. Based on the vigor of the regular disciples and their pouring sweat, it was clear just how intense competition was. Long Chen guessed that this strict military-style system was the reason why the Ancient Demon Domain had managed to become a large faction in the Divine Martial Empire.

“You have just left the qualifiers, but you all must have felt it, right? The Ancient Demon Domain has a strict reward and punishment system. As long as you work hard and are talented, you will be adequately rewarded and will be outstanding one day. If you do not work hard and do not produce results, you will be surpassed one day no matter how talented you are. Two of you have received a huge reward just now. Everyone, I hope you will work hard from today onwards,” said the Clear Shallows King before turning around.

She was referring to Long Chen and Huangfu Qi.

At this point, the people who were training had already sensed their arrival. Since the Clear Shallows King was the head of the pavilion, everyone obediently bowed despite their current ranks. Even the Demon General, who had just emerged from the group, did the same.

This Demon General was abnormally muscular. Standing at over two meters tall, his body’s shape was even more noticeable than his height. He had a stocky figure, so despite his height, his thick muscles made him look short. Long Chen was privately shocked by his bare arms.

This Demon General is so muscular. I wonder what he did to get that body ...

Long Chen was speechless.

He did a quick comparison and realized that this person’s arm was almost as thick as his own waist.

After taking a few glances, he did not dare to look again because the man was a Demon General at the Ninth Passage Stage. Long Chen did not have the right to eye him boldly.

Everyone also averted their gazes obediently.

Long Chen knew that the muscular man was Demon General Strongman, the one he would have to follow from now on. Demon General Strongman had a mature and solemn countenance, as well as a cold glare in his eyes that was very intimidating. If there was a bit more violence in his eyes, he would be almost like a violent beast.

Just based on his looks, he was the kind of person most suited to be a general. Following his training regime, the regular disciples were all energetic and ambitious with sharp glares. Every person radiated a thick killing intent.

Back in the Heavenly Demon Palace, Zhao Qingyun associated the term “demon” with freedom. However, the Ancient Demon Domain encouraged competition and violence, lining up perfectly with what most people thought of when they heard the word “demon.”

Demon General Strongman greeted the Clear Shallows King.

“Strongman, these ten are the new disciples. Qi Qi here will be my direct disciples, and the others’ cultivation, talent discovery, and improvement in combat will be up to you as usual,” said the Clear Shallows King with a smile.

“Yes, Ma’am! I will do my best to complete this task. I will not give up on any prodigy, nor will I allow any trash!” Demon General Strongman saluted sincerely. His gaze swept across the ten people, but he did not spot the person he expected to see, so he asked, “I will accept these disciples. They will undergo the Demon Light Bath tomorrow and will start their training the day after. Forgive me for asking, but may I ask if my nephew, Zhao Wuji, has been taken in by another Demon King?”

Then he looked at her expectantly.

Long Chen froze before the Clear Shallows King answered. What were the odds? He had merely followed Huangfu Qi to the Clear Shallows Pavilion, and now the person who would control his life and schedule was going to be Zhao Wuji’s uncle? Long Chen knew very well how much he had humiliated Zhao Wuji during the qualifiers. Once Demon General Strongman found out about it, wouldn’t he be finished?

There was no use in regretting at this point. Long Chen could only try his best to keep his guard up in this terrible environment and strengthen himself. If he got killed before he retrieved the Emperor Flame Pearl, none of this would be worth it.

“Zhao Wuji has been taken in by the Red Ghost King as his direct disciple. Don’t worry, the Red Ghost King acted as if he had picked up a treasure. He might even personally come to talk to you about this,” said the Clear Shallows King with a smile.

Demon General Strongman sighed in relief with a bright smile on his face. He then said, “My nephew is indeed talented. I watched him grow up, and I know his strengths very well. As long as

he can grow safely, his future will be infinite. He once told me that he could easily become the three-time-champion. May I ask if he did it?"

"Three-time champion?" The Clear Shallows King froze and instinctively glanced at Long Chen. She was smart, so she knew that if she told him what had happened, Long Chen would become his enemy and would probably be killed. Then again, Demon General Strongman was likely to learn about it sooner or later. Since Long Chen did not have much potential and wouldn't be very useful to the Clear Shallows Pavilion, the Clear Shallows King thought that it would be better for him to die because he could end up being an obstacle to Huangfu Qi's growth.

"Three-time champion? Zhao Wuji is indeed talented, but he fell just short of becoming the three-time champion."

"He didn't do it?" Demon General Strongman was a little sour. "Which round did he not get first place in? Was it the first round? His body is not tough; he did not inherit my strength."

The Clear Shallows King looked at Long Chen and shook her head. "Not just the first round. He did not win the second and third rounds either. He was not even in the top seven in the third round. He only became a direct disciple because the Red Ghost King broke the rules to take him in. To be honest, someone else became the three-time champion, and he is standing in front of you!"

Chapter 477 - Exchange For Your Life

"In front of me?" Demon General Strongman gasped and his gaze fell on Huangfu Qi. He cried in surprise, "This little girl is young, but she's already at the Fourth Passage Stage! It's not that surprising that she became the three-time champion! What a prodigy! I wouldn't even think about resenting someone like her for beating Zhao Wuji."

The Clear Shallows King froze, knowing that he had misunderstood.

But Huangfu Qi was upset. She grabbed Long Chen's arm and said, "Uncle Blockhead! What nonsense are you spouting? The person who won first place three times is my Big Brother! He is the number one champion of the qualifiers and should have become the direct disciple of that red toad! Your idiot nephew was no match for my Big Brother! But that red toad has a problem with his brain! He did not want my Big Brother and instead took in Zhao Wuji! That's why I asked my Big Brother to follow me here!"

Huangfu Qi's choice of words shook all of them. First, she had called Demon General Strongman "Uncle Blockhead," which was somewhat acceptable. However, she had called the Red Ghost King "red toad" because of his pockmarked face and red skin. If he heard that Huangfu Qi had called him a red toad, he would explode in rage.

"Qi Qi, watch your words," the Clear Shallows King said sternly, almost choking on her saliva. The Red Ghost King was famously difficult to deal with and short-tempered. If

he found out that Huangfu Qi had called him that, he would cause never-ending problems.

Demon General Strongman also woke up from the shock of Huangfu Qi calling him Uncle Blockhead, then he completely digested the information she had provided. He looked at Long Chen, unable to accept reality, then asked the Clear Shallows King, "Clear Shallows King, what the girl said ..."

"Everything she said is true. This young man is Jiang Cheng. He is only at the First Passage Stage, yet he has mastered advanced Heaven-tier body tempering and combat techniques. Using those advantages, he became the three-time champion and won a hundred thousand Heavenly Passage Pills! The Red Ghost King is not on good terms with him, so he took Zhao Wuji in as his disciple instead. Now that he is under your wing, mentor him well. Keep private grudges out of this," the Clear Shallows King said casually. If Demon General Strongman did it too obviously, she would be the one to lose face.

Understanding the Clear Shallows King's warning, he nodded hurriedly.

He studied Long Chen up and down, unable to figure out how such a normal teenager possessed the capability to win first place three times.

Demon General Strongman understood why Long Chen had not become a direct disciple. He was older than the other participants, yet his cultivation level was the lowest. Cultivation level was the foundation of everything, and a person's natural talent determined the gap between themselves and other people. Right now, Long Chen was three to four stages behind, but in the future, he would be five or six stages behind, causing him to fall behind for the rest of his life.

People like Zhao Wuji would cultivate many advanced Heaven-tier techniques in their lifetimes.

This gap was the reason why the Red Ghost King had chosen Zhao Wuji instead of Long Chen.

However, the glory that initially belonged to Zhao Wuji had been taken away by this teenager, along with the Heavenly Passage Pills. Demon General Strongman was uncomfortable with seeing such a huge sum end up in Long Chen's hands.

Based on the look in Demon General Strongman's eyes, Long Chen knew that his days would be tough.

However, he had never planned to stay in the Ancient Demon Domain for long anyway. The Day of the Nine Suns would come in two months, so he would only stay for two months at most. He was confident that he would become strong very quickly, even surpassing all their imaginations. Then they would all understand who the true prodigy was.

"Your name is Jiang Cheng? Not bad, you were able to win first place three times. Not many people have achieved that. However, you have a disadvantage in cultivation level, so you will have to work hard. I hope you remain in the top three among the seventy newcomers and make the Clear Shallows Pavilion proud!" said Demon General Strongman with a nod after eyeing Long Chen for a while.

“Yes, Lord Demon General,” Long Chen replied obediently.

The Clear Shallows King nodded approvingly and said, “Alright, Strongman, you may carry on with your training. Everyone, follow me. I will make arrangements for your accommodations. Tomorrow, you all will undergo the Demon Light Bath to increase your Qi and truly become an Ancient Demon Domain disciple. On the day after, you will train with Demon General Strongman! He is a very good senior. If you train under his wing, I believe that your cultivation will improve greatly!”

“Yes, Ma’am!” everyone said.

Under the Clear Shallows King’s arrangements, Long Chen arrived at the regular disciples’ quarters. There were very few buildings here. He had heard that all regular disciples below the Sixth Passage Stage would live in this area. Everyone above the Seventh Passage Stage would be considered advanced disciples as long as they had cleared one of the two earthly meridian points.[1]

Huangfu Qi was a direct disciple of the Clear Shallows King, so she would stay with the other direct disciples. The Clear Shallows King led her away. The little girl was a little hesitant, but she left in the end.

Long Chen, of course, knew that she would miss Xiaolang the most.

After settling down, Xiaolang came out of the Primordial Realm. Little Cat was not willing to remain alone, so he rolled around in the small room in the form of a fat, white cat.

“Big Brother, I think Demon General Strongman will set traps for you. It’ll be very difficult to guard against that. He’s at the Ninth Passage Stage, so if he decides to attack you, you’re done for,” said Xiaolang worriedly.

“He doesn’t have the right to do something in broad daylight. As long as I take this time to quickly increase my cultivation level, I will be fine. After I bathe in that light thing tomorrow, I’ll head to the demonic beast training grounds in the Ancient Demon Domain.”

As long as he could make it there, Long Chen knew that the speed of his progression would scare other people.

“What is the demon light they kept mentioning?” Xiaolang asked curiously.

“I don’t know.” Long Chen shook his head.

“It’s probably a method of releasing the power in a seal. The disciples of the Ancient Demon Domain have a bit of demonic energy in their Qi, which may eventually affect their minds after some time.

“The source of this demonic energy is likely a seal. Usually, when a powerful master dies, part of their power can remain sealed in an object, which can be released to enter another person. Along with this power, the seal will also enter the recipient. The demonic energy is an example of it,” explained the cat.

Long Chen and Xiaolang understood.

“So that means that the Demon Light Bath will make my Qi contain demonic energy? Does it mean it’s best I don’t go for it?” Long Chen asked cautiously.

“You don’t want to go? Aren’t you afraid that the blockhead will use it as an excuse to kill you?” Little Cat chuckled, as if nonchalant.

“What should I do, then?” Long Chen was sure that the cat had an idea.

“You will go. Not only should you absorb the seal’s power, you can also take all of its power for yourself,” said Little Cat with a mysterious smile.

“Do you have a way to remove the seal so I can absorb its pure power?”

“Eh?” Little Cat’s eyes widened and he smiled in exasperation. “You’re smart. You have at least one ten-thousandth of my smartness! Not bad, not bad. Because you’re smart, I will help you erase the seal and let you absorb the power.”

It was settled.

Long Chen planned to quickly increase his cultivation level after completing the Demon Light Bath.

Little Cat suddenly furrowed his brows and said, “That blockhead is here! Pray you’ll survive!” Then, faster than anyone, he fled into the Primordial Realm.

“Coward,” said Long Chen. Then he used the Soul Swallowing Gaze and spotted Demon General Strongman walking over. He was huge, so no matter how light his footsteps were, they made a sound. Very soon, he arrived in front of Long Chen’s door and knocked.

“Lord Demon General, what brings you here?” Long Chen asked calmly after opening the door.

“Follow me,” Demon General Strongman said mildly, then he turned around.

“I’m sure it’s alright if we discuss whatever it is here.” Long Chen did not move. He wasn’t sure what the guy was up to, so he dared not move recklessly.

Demon General Strongman halted and turned around. His gaze, which was as sharp as a knife, swept across Long Chen. Long Chen felt a powerful pressure on himself.

Demon General Strongman took several steps closer, and a powerful force pressed Long Chen into the room.

“You brat, have you gotten bold after a good performance today?” asked the Demon General Strongman coldly with raised eyebrows.

“May I ask what you mean by that, Lord Demon General? I don’t think I’ve done anything ever since I entered the Clear Shallows Pavilion.”

“And you dare argue with me too. That is your mistake.” Demon General Strongman’s voice rumbled like thunder. Long Chen felt dizzy just from the reverberations. A Ninth Passage Stage cultivator’s Qi was indeed extraordinary. He could likely kill Long Chen with a wave of his hand.

Long Chen knew that this was an unreasonable man. The more he spoke, the more unreasonable he would be. Therefore, he chose to shut his mouth.

Seeing as Long Chen had finally learned his lesson, Demon General Strongman said, “I spoke with my nephew earlier. He has strong opinions about you and wants me to teach you a lesson. You brat, now that you’re in my hands, you’re going to suffer. Of course, if you can complete my training tasks for you, you won’t have to suffer.”

Long Chen remained silent.

Demon General Strongman suddenly felt bored because he was not arguing back and shrugged. “Whatever. You’re a newcomer, so I won’t trouble you for now. However, since you won’t be able to use the one hundred Heavenly Passage Pills any time soon ... Let’s do it this way. Let me take ninety thousand pills off your hands. This is for your safety, because other people might be eyeing them and you may even vanish into thin air if someone decides to target you for them. What do you think?”

Has the fox finally revealed its tail? Long Chen was amused. He knew that the pills were Demon General Strongman’s target. This was no small sum to him after all. From Demon General Strongman’s perspective, it was a huge waste for something that should have belonged to Zhao Wuji to end up in Long Chen’s hands.

“Give them to me. Ninety thousand Heavenly Passage Pills in exchange for your life.” Demon General Strongman’s glare darkened when he saw that Long Chen was not moving.

Chapter 478 - Seven Demon Realms

If Long Chen did not hand over the Heavenly Passage Pills, Demon General Strongman would kill him.

Long Chen was nothing but an extremely minor figure to him. Despite having no background, he possessed treasures that did not match his strength. If he ended up dead, it would be well deserved.

Long Chen was quite calm because he initially thought it was going to be a difficult night, but thankfully, he had used the Soul Swallowing Gaze and spotted Huangfu Qi nearby. She must have missed him and Xiaolang and quickly hurried over after settling down.

Her arrival would coincidentally solve a huge problem for Long Chen.

Very soon, Demon General Strongman sensed Huangfu Qi approaching, and his face stiffened. He cursed furiously, “Motherfucker! You got lucky today! I’m warning you though. Those one hundred thousand Heavenly Passage Pills were supposed to belong to my nephew. If I don’t get them now, I will get them eventually. Also, it’s best if you don’t tell anyone about what happened today, or you will die. And my reputation will only be very minorly affected. The choice is yours.”

Then he wrung his hands hard and strode away. That was when Huangfu Qi arrived, and she cried, “Uncle Blockhead! Oh no, wait. Uncle Brick! Why are you here?”

She thought she was being smart. Since the Clear Shallows King had told her not to call him “Uncle Blockhead,” she had changed it to “Uncle Brick.” Indeed, due to his large stature, he was not far off from a brick.

A large, black line appeared on Demon General Strongman’s forehead when he heard her call him that.

Of course, Huangfu Qi’s rank was far above Long Chen’s, so Strongman only huffed coldly and left. Huangfu Qi watched him curiously, then she slipped into Long Chen’s room and eyed him up and down before sighing in relief. She patted her chest and said, “Thank goodness your innocence was not ruined by Uncle Brick ...”

Long Chen froze, almost choking, and cried angrily, “Hey, brat, where did you learn to say that?”

“Isn’t it true though? I heard that there are perverted uncles who prefer young, handsome teenagers with clean features like you over women. When I saw him, I thought you were going to lose your purity! Thankfully, I got here just in time, or I would’ve regretted this for the rest of my life!”

Long Chen was speechless.

Both his and Xiaolang’s expressions were very stiff.

“Ah, cute puppy! You’re here again!” Huangfu Qi squealed and shifted her focus to Xiaolang. She grabbed him and petted him all over until Xiaolang’s neat fur became as messy as a bird’s nest.

Long Chen’s mood lifted when he saw the girl playing with Xiaolang. When she got tired, Long Chen asked, “Little girl, did you manage to obtain the information I asked for?”

He had given her an instruction before they separated, so he knew that she would come here tonight.

“Ah! I did!” she answered happily.

“Tell me, then.” Long Chen was satisfied.

“Mhm. My master said that there is a mountain called Demon World Mountain in the Ancient Demon Domain. There is a straight road piercing vertically through the mountain, and at its peak, there is a huge hole like a volcano. That is the entrance of the tunnel!”

“Does the tunnel lead to the demonic beast training grounds?”

“Mhm! Master said that if you leap into the hole from the top, you will keep falling until you enter a place called the Seven Layer Demon World. There are seven layers of space, and each space is its own miniverse. The seven miniverses are stacked together to form the Seven Layer Demon World. The first layer contains beasts at the

first three Heaven-tier categories; the second layer contains Category Four, Five, and Six beasts; the third layer has Category Seven, Eight, and Nine; and as for the fourth layer ... The fourth layer is a gigantic arena for disciples to spar in. It's also used for training the military. It's much larger than the Martial Arena outside. As for the fifth layer and above, I don't know. Master didn't tell me!"

"Seven Layer Demon World?" Long Chen nodded.

The Divine Martial Empire really was different from everything he knew. There were seven miniverses stacked together here! Long Chen understood the function of the first four layers, but he had a faint feeling that the Ancient Demon Domain's secrets were all hidden in the last three layers, including the royal palace that could not be found in the outside world.

The seven royal pavilions were scattered throughout the Ancient Demon Domain, but the mysterious royal palace was nowhere to be found. Very few people had the right to enter.

The best combat techniques, divine weapons, and spiritual medicines were definitely stored in a place like the palace.

"Qi Qi, did your master mention any restrictions for entering the Seven Layer Demon World?" This was the key question.

"Master said that since I am a direct disciple, I can enter the first four layers any time I want as long as I have her permission. As for normal disciples, disciples at the first six Passage Stages are considered elementary disciples, while the disciples at the last three Passage Stages are considered advanced disciples. Elementary disciples can only access the first two layers, while advanced disciples have the same rights as direct disciples. Of course, anyone who has reached the Ninth Passage Stage is on the same level as the Demon Generals."

I'm now an elementary disciple, which means I can enter the first two layers. I'm sure the two layers will have many demonic beasts that will be very effective for me ... Long Chen sighed in relief. In that case, he could head to the Seven Layer Demon World tomorrow.

"Big Brother, are you planning to go to the Seven Layer Demon World tomorrow? I want to go too!" she cried as her eyes lit up.

"Who said I'm going? Aren't we going to do that thing called the Demon Light Bath? And isn't training going to start on the day after? I'm just wondering if we will have time in the future. If we have time, I'll take you there, alright?" Long Chen knew the little girl would not let this rest, so he had prepared his excuse.

"Alright. But, Big Brother, you are a man, so you must do as you say. If you lie to me, I'll curse you ... I'll curse you ... To be infertile!"

Long Chen started sweating, feeling like he was shooting himself in the foot. He did not know where Huangfu Qi had learned to say these things that could make someone choke.

Now that he had obtained the information he wanted, Long Chen finally got the energetic little girl to leave, and he finally immersed himself in cultivation.

At this point, it looks like my Heaven-tier techniques like the Demon Emperor Sword Technique are no longer effective. The only things I can use right now are the divine techniques from the Ancient Bloodsoul Dragon, as well as Rewind from the Primordial Dragon Talisman. As for combat techniques, I'm mostly relying on my physical toughness and the Heaven Sword Array left behind by Xiao Xi. These are far from enough ...

Long Chen understood that he was lacking in certain aspects.

He was like a dry sponge, and the Ancient Demon Domain was like the ocean. Now that he had leaped into the ocean, he would quickly absorb water. He didn't know how much water there was in this ocean, but he was an infinitely large sponge that could suck the ocean dry one day.

Once I get the Emperor Flame Pearl, I will advance directly to the Ninth Passage Stage on the Day of the Nine Suns. Then I will receive the Golden Crow's power in my nine meridian points. When that happens, I will surely skyrocket to the top level of the Divine Martial Empire. At that time, I will be strong enough to confidently enter the Ancient Graveyard, unlike right now. If someone like Demon General Strongman can squash me, how can I enter the Ancient Graveyard in this state?

Long Chen had a clear goal and a deep understanding of himself.

That was why his only objective here in the Ancient Demon Domain was the Emperor Flame Pearl.

The Emperor Flame Pearl can make someone reach the Ninth Passage Stage immediately. That means that my most powerful competitors for it will be at the Eighth Passage Stage. This means that I must reach the Seventh Passage Stage before the Day of the Nine Suns. Will I be able to cover such a large gap?

Long Chen felt like there were many unknowns in this journey.

Although he had Blood Transmutation, he needed a lot of Heavenly Passage Pills and blood from powerful beasts.

"Experts are as common as clouds here. So I must work harder!" Long Chen clenched his fists.

He cultivated through the night, and the second day soon arrived. He immediately opened the door after he heard urgent knocks. It was one of the other eight new disciples, though Long Chen did not know his name.

"Jiang Cheng, it's almost seven in the morning! The Ancient Demon Domain has harsh punishments for being late; I only just learned that too. The Demon Light Bath is today, so we must hurry over now!" the disciple said urgently.

The Ancient Demon Domain functioned like the military, so it was understandable how strict they would be regarding punctuality.

"Thank you!" Long Chen followed him, hurrying along as fast as he could to avoid being late.

After barely arriving on time, they found themselves not in a training area, but another pavilion.

They would only enter the training grounds tomorrow when the true training began.

When he arrived, Long Chen heard Huangfu Qi's silver bell-like laughter. He had not even spotted her when she pounced on him and cried with wide eyes, "Big Brother! Where's the puppy? Where's the puppy?"

"The puppy isn't here today. Be good," Long Chen said sternly while he gently peeled her off.

"Oh ..." Huangfu Qi was a little sad, but she recovered quickly. She pointed at a young man and said, "Big Brother, look. That's Senior Brother Six! He's awesome; he was number one in the qualifiers two years ago! He was also a three-time champion and won a hundred thousand Heavenly Passage Pills! At the time, he was at the Fourth Passage Stage, but he is already at the Sixth Passage Stage! Master says that he will soon clear the earthly meridian point to reach the Seventh Passage Stage. He'll become one of the best disciples then!"

Following her gaze, he looked at the legendary teenager. He seemed to be a year younger than Long Chen and had clean features. He looked like a true prodigy with a gentle exterior but a strong mind, though there was a hint of viciousness hidden beneath that gentle elegance.

Chapter 479 - Second Passage Stage

Everyone had arrived and no one was late.

"Everyone, come at least fifteen minutes earlier next time. It's rude to make me or Lord Demon General wait here for you. In fact, this is an act of insubordination!" said Huangfu Qi's Sixth Senior Brother. His expression was cold and stern, and when he spoke, he did not hide his power.

"Yes!" everyone replied a little timidly. After their arrival in the Ancient Demon Domain, the Demon Kings and the Demon Generals had completely suppressed their tempers. If someone wanted to be successful here, the only way up was to become stronger.

Long Chen merely opened his mouth symbolically.

"My name is Qin Huanyu. You may call me 'Senior Qin.' During regular training sessions, I will be assisting Demon General Strongman, and I will be in charge of all nine of you newcomers. From today onwards, you must listen to me! Do everything I say! And if you do something I said you couldn't do, you will be punished. As for the punishments doled out in the Ancient Demon Domain ... Go learn about them! I believe you will find them interesting ..." Qin Huanyu chuckled lightly.

"Senior Brother Six sounds a little annoying. He wasn't like this just now," Huangfu Qi whispered into Long Chen's ear.

Of course he would be friendly towards Huangfu Qi. However, as the person in charge of the new disciples, he had to maintain his dignified demeanor and show that he meant business.

Long Chen and the rest did not speak.

“Do you all understand?” Qin Huanyu asked loudly.

“Understood.” Everyone nodded.

“What? Louder! I can’t hear you!”

“Understood!”

Their voices echoed in all four directions.

Long Chen was speechless. The guy was insufferable, and it looked like the coming days would be difficult. Thankfully, Long Chen already had a direction in mind. If he had to stay here and take Sixth Senior Brother’s hits every day, he would probably be tempted to beat him up one day.

Qin Huanyu’s gaze fell on Long Chen, and he said, “I heard that one of you ten was the three-time champion. I’m guessing that’s you?”

Long Chen nodded.

“Sigh ...” Qin Huanyu shook his head and said, “The standards of the qualifiers have declined over every generation. When I was the three-time champion years ago, the obstacles I faced far exceeded your imagination. But I still survived in the end.”

Qin Huanyu sighed and lamented for a while. When he saw that no one had any reaction, he did not want to waste any more time. He was satisfied because Long Chen and the others were being obedient today.

He took out a black crystal ball from his Universe Pouch. It was about the size of a fist, and it looked similar to the Soul Condensing Bead with thick energy contained inside.

“The seal power in that crystal can boost a cultivator straight to the Seventh Passage Stage,” said Little Cat from within the Primordial Realm. Only Long Chen and Xiaolang could hear him.

Seventh Passage Stage? What happens if I just keep absorbing? Long Chen thought excitedly.

“You would die. First, you aren’t able to control such a powerful energy in your current state. I can’t digest that much either. Also, this is likely the treasure of the Clear Shallows Pavilion. If you destroy or abuse it, do you think you’ll live? Most importantly, that young man controls the usage of the crystal. He can cut you off any time.”

Long Chen nodded. His idea of skyrocketing his cultivation was not realistic.

“Sit with your legs crossed. I will perform the Demon Light Bath for all of you, which will help your cultivation progress. Through the Ancient Demon Domain’s power, you will truly become disciples today!” said Qin Huanyu solemnly, looking around.

Everyone sat down with their legs crossed, forming the cultivating position. The moment the Demon Light arrived, they would be able to start cultivating.

“Good! Very good!” Qin Huanyu was very satisfied. He held the crystal ball in front of him and then closed his eyes. Under his control, the black crystal ball slowly levitated until it was four meters up in the air.

“Let’s begin!” Qin Huanyu said gently. As soon as he finished, black mist poured out of the black crystal ball. It looked like a rain cloud floating above Long Chen and the rest. Long Chen could feel a large power source situated above his head, and it was releasing more and more energy.

The black rain cloud descended, covering all of them. Slowly, it engulfed all ten of them in a gigantic egg. The crystal ball looked like a small pimple on top of the egg, still releasing black energy.

Long Chen could sense that the black energy had replaced the Earthly Qi in the environment and started to merge into his own Qi. It was an extremely pure source of energy, and it was ten times more concentrated and purer than the Earthly Qi of the Ancient Demon Domain. This energy could directly transform into his Qi, though the only flaw was that a certain quality existed within it. Without removing this quality, one would not have absolute freedom when using this power.

Little Cat’s alluring voice entered Long Chen’s ears. “That crystal is too slow in emitting its energy, plus it will be divided amongst the ten of you. I’m guessing that each of you won’t even progress by one Passage Stage in the end. Shall we take a risk and let you progress to the Second Passage Stage?”

“Alright,” Long Chen said decisively after thinking for a while.

Then he noticed that the energy surrounding him started flying towards him from all directions with the Primordial Dragon Talisman as the center point. Long Chen hurriedly increased the speed of Qi flowing in his body so he could swallow copious amounts of the black energy. This process was similar to Blood Transmutation.

Very soon, the black egg that enveloped all of them ended up in Long Chen’s body, and the whole egg disappeared, revealing the people within. However, for the moment, most of them were still doing their best to absorb the black energy and no one knew that the rest of it had gone to Long Chen.

The black crystal ball, as if acting under the influence of Long Chen’s sucking force, released even more black energy that formed a straight line connected directly to Long Chen!

“What?!” Qin Huanyu was initially relaxing, but the sudden change completely stunned him. He was very pale and his movements were frantic as he quickly pulled the crystal ball back into his Universe Pouch. He stared at Long Chen in shock because he looked like the culprit behind the abnormality!

At this point, the other people had also sensed that the energy source had been cut off and only thought that it had ended. They had only just begun and were feeling like it was not enough. That short moment had granted them far more growth than cultivating under normal conditions.

When they opened their eyes, they saw Qin Huanyu hurrying quickly towards Long Chen in anger. Based on his stance, it looked like he wanted to kill Long Chen.

What was going on?

They were puzzled.

However, Huangfu Qi would not let Qin Huanyu do such a thing. She hurriedly stood in front of Long Chen and said, "Sixth Senior Brother, what are you trying to do?"

"Little Junior Sister, move. This brat swallowed all of the energy that should have been divided between the rest of you! I don't know what diabolical method he has mastered, but I must kill him now!" Qin Huanyu said menacingly.

"No! No one can touch my Big Brother! Not even Sixth Senior Brother! If you don't listen, I'll tell Master that you bullied me! Sob sob ..." Not even Qin Huanyu could do anything when Huangfu Qi decided to kick up a fuss. He knew that Huangfu Qi was currently an important person to the Clear Shallows King, and her status even surpassed his. If he offended her, he would have to face consequences.

Of course, Long Chen only dared to swallow so much energy because he was banking on Huangfu Qi doing this. If she weren't here, Qin Huanyu would have killed Long Chen by now.

"Little Junior Sister, you don't understand! Long Chen has broken the rules! The Demon Light should have been divided among the ten of you, but he swallowed it all by himself! Don't you think he deserves to be killed?" Qin Huanyu said coldly.

Everyone looked at each other. If that was true, then Long Chen had taken something that belonged to them. It seemed only right that Qin Huanyu was standing up for them.

"I don't believe you! Also, there's a lot of energy in that crystal ball! Can't you just take it out again and let us absorb more? Also, my Big Brother is making a breakthrough right now! No one can touch him!" Huangfu Qi was very stubborn and was determined to protect Long Chen, so even Qin Huanyu had no choice but to concede.

In truth, Long Chen was indeed on the edge of a breakthrough.

The first breakthrough had taken him three hundred Heavenly Passage Pills to clear the dan meridian point in his dantian. After the Demon Light Bath, Long Chen possessed enough Qi to attempt to clear his second meridian point, which was known as the central meridian point, located in his chest, right next to his heart. After the central meridian point was cleared, it would become the new core of his body!

Then Long Chen would possess even greater power!

Right now, Long Chen was aggregating all the power in his body to move toward the central meridian point from all directions. The central meridian point was unlike the dan meridian point. The dan meridian point contained a large space, while the central meridian point didn't.

What he had to do now was force a space open within the central meridian point, so it required much more effort, and it was more difficult too!

Before this happened, he had to mix energy from Heavenly Passage Pills into his Qi, because the energy from the pills could protect the meridian point from the violent Qi. That way, it would be expanded gently.

This continued until Long Chen reached the Second Passage Stage.

Chapter 480 - Demon World Mountain

The first breakthrough required three hundred Heavenly Passage Pills; how many would he need to consume for the second? Thankfully, Long Chen now had a hundred thousand pills, or it would've been a tragedy. If a cultivator did not have enough Heavenly Passage Pills, they would not dare to attempt a breakthrough, because it would result in their blood vessels breaking, their body going into shock, and eventually death!

A hundred thousand Heavenly Passage Pills—even Qin Huanyu likely did not have this many. That was why these Heavenly Passage Pills would be enough for Long Chen to progress several stages even though his rate of consumption far exceeded that of regular people due to his Dragon Qi.

Large handfuls of Heavenly Passage Pills turned into pure white energy, which entered Long Chen's body. The disciples watching him were stunned. They knew that Long Chen was only at the First Passage Stage. To the normal person, ascending from the First to the Second Passage Stage required about a hundred to two hundred Heavenly Passage Pills. Long Chen had already consumed almost five hundred pills so far, but why did he still show no signs of stopping?

“Is ... is he a monster?” The same question popped into a few of their minds.

Qin Huanyu, who wanted to kill Long Chen, was also stunned by this situation, which momentarily made him toss his intention to kill out the window. If Long Chen required this many pills to break through to the Second Passage Stage, how many pills would he need to reach the Ninth Passage Stage?

There was the “two million axiom” circulating in the Divine Martial Empire, which said that reaching the Ninth Passage Stage required at least two million Heavenly Passage Pills. Most cultivators spent the majority of their resources on progressing their cultivation, which was why Ninth Passage Stage cultivators usually had only about a million Heavenly Passage Pills in total assets.

Based on Long Chen's current speed of consumption, did that mean that he would require ten million Heavenly Passage Pills to reach the Ninth Passage Stage?

That was terrifying.

Of course, he was only breaking through to the Second Passage Stage right now.

Handfuls of Heavenly Passage Pills appeared in his hands, which he swallowed. After swallowing about a thousand of them, Long Chen discovered that his Qi had finally reached a satiated stage. It was now time to clear the second meridian point, also known as the central meridian point.

After he had the experience of clearing his first meridian point, it was much easier the second time. As usual, he controlled his Qi and led the gentle energy of the Heavenly Passage Pills first to rush towards the central meridian point from all directions. All the power in his body followed.

Soon, all his Qi gathered outside the central meridian point. Currently, it was not yet a meridian point, so Long Chen had to clear it himself. He took a deep breath and slowly controlled traces of his Qi to gather in the location of the central meridian point. The Qi contained large amounts of Heavenly Passage Pill energy, which had a healing effect on the meridian points.

Thanks to Long Chen's careful guidance, everything went smoothly. The central meridian point slowly appeared and then gradually strengthened. When it was strong and large enough, all the energy suddenly poured into the central meridian point and formed a white whirlpool that spun quickly.

Next, it was almost the same as when he entered the First Passage Stage. The white whirlpool continued spinning in the central meridian point while all the energy flowed into it, exited from one of his star veins, and finally flowed back into the dan meridian point. The dan and central meridian points were now the two center points of the eighteen heavenly rivers in his body. After the Qi gathered in the two meridian points, it returned to the eighteen heavenly rivers once more.

Within the central meridian point, a white meridian pill slowly emerged from the whirlpool and floated above it. Just like the meridian pill that had formed at the other meridian point, the two meridian pills concentrated most of the power within Long Chen's body.

Everything was over. The Heavenly Passage Pill energy slowly dispersed and Long Chen's Qi slowly turned blood-red once again. Even the meridian pill returned to its original state.

A new cycle had been formed in his body. He had successfully reached the Second Passage Stage too. Sensing the increased strength in his body, Long Chen smiled proudly. It felt amazing to be stronger. From now onwards, his strength would progress exponentially until he ran out of Heavenly Passage Pills.

It was even possible to reach the Seventh Passage Stage in a month!

Whoosh! Long Chen's eyes sprang open and he stood up to face the group's confused and terrified gazes. While he was cultivating, he was also paying close attention to the commotion around him. That little girl Huangfu Qi was indeed as good as he expected—she had blocked Qin Huanyu for him.

As for the others, they were never a match for Long Chen anyway. Now that Long Chen was stronger, they would not dare say anything.

Qin Huanyu finally snapped out of his daze and looked at him coldly. "Can you explain what the hell just happened, brat?"

Just now, Long Chen had let Little Cat erase the seal within the crystal ball so he could absorb its pure energy until he absorbed enough Qi to reach the Second Passage Stage.

"I don't know the specifics either. I apologize, but I am only aware that a large amount of energy suddenly rushed into my body. I don't control the crystal's energy." Long Chen pretended to be completely clueless.

Qin Huanyu was so angry that he was stunned. He couldn't figure out the reason for this either. It did not matter if Long Chen was lying, but he realized he hated this teenager, so he said, "You have taken the energy that was supposed to belong to other people, and now you're pretending to be dumb?"

“I don’t know what you mean, Senior Qin! I don’t know what happened!” Long Chen put on an innocent face.

“Are you still lying? Jiang Cheng, do you think I won’t beat you up?” Qin Huanyu said with a dark expression.

“Senior Six, that’s enough! My Big Brother has already said he doesn’t know what happened, so why are you still harassing him? Don’t waste any more time! Just take that crystal out and let us do it again; won’t that work? I think there’s still a lot of energy in that crystal!” Huangfu Qi pursed her lips and glared at Qin Huanyu.

“Alright ...” Qin Huanyu shook his head, as he had no choice. He took a glance at Long Chen and huffed. “I’ll let you go for now. I’ll tell Master what happened later, and we’ll see how she deals with you! Also, you may leave now. Don’t disturb us again!”

Qin Huanyu knew that with Huangfu Qi present, he could not touch Long Chen. That was why his only choice was to let the Clear Shallows King deal with this.

To Long Chen, this was perfect.

“Qi Qi, I’ll head out first. Come play with me if you have time.” Long Chen could not wait to leave. What Qin Huanyu had suggested was exactly what he wanted.

“I’m going with you,” Huangfu Qi said hurriedly.

“No, Little Junior Sister! You haven’t performed the Demon Light Bath, so you do not count as a member of the Ancient Demon Domain yet! You can’t go!” Qin Huanyu said hurriedly.

“Alright ...” Huangfu Qi looked sad.

Long Chen was a little speechless after seeing her response. If he told her that he was actually going to the Seven Layered Demon World now, that girl would likely fight with everything she had to follow him. Thank goodness he had gone about it cleverly.

After he left, Long Chen slipped out of the Clear Shallows Pavilion and headed towards Demon World Mountain. He knew where it was, and that it would be very obvious because the other mountains in the Ancient Demon Domain were gray while it was fully black.

It looked similar to Demon Emperor Mountain. Perhaps the founder of the Heavenly Demon Palace had chosen to build the Heavenly Demon Palace on Demon Emperor Mountain because it was similar to Demon World Mountain.

Right after he left the compound, he spotted Demon World Mountain in the distance. It was at this point that he realized that the Clear Shallows Pavilion was indeed the most beautiful place around.

“This place has a lot of Earthly Qi, yet it has an extreme lack of life force. There must be something here that is absorbing all of it,” said Little Cat.

Little Cat had mentioned this many times already; he did not know what this thing was either.

This topic was still far from Long Chen's current capabilities, so he took note but did not investigate. He focused on making his way to Demon World Mountain. He did not know a single person in the Ancient Demon Domain, so no one greeted him along the way despite coming across many other disciples.

Very soon, he arrived at the foot of the mountain. Many others were heading towards the mountain too. He saw a large hole here, and many people emerged from it. The people who exited were mostly disheveled and even had minor injuries. They had obviously gone through battle.

"After exiting from the Seven Layered Demon World, we will appear at the foot of Demon World Mountain. The peak is the entrance, while the foot of the mountain is the exit. How interesting ..." said Long Chen.

Then he took out a black token from his clothing with the name "Jiang Cheng." This was the Ancient Demon Domain disciples' identity token that proved their identities. Long Chen could only enter if he presented it.

It had been given to the new disciples last night.

Holding the token, he started to hike up Demon World Mountain. The stronger members of the Ancient Demon Domain relied on their Qi to quickly sprint up. Long Chen had just made a breakthrough, but he was still considered weak here. That was why he had no choice but to slow down so he would not attract attention.

Many people had heard of him after what he had done in the qualifiers, though they only recognized him in his post-Dragon Soul Transformation state.