

## Cultivating 281

Chapter 281: Ten Thousand Flames Cave\_2

However, he felt it wasn't that simple.

"Is this the only headquarters?"

"There are two headquarters, but we only know this one. Usually, if there are any important matters, high-level meetings are held here."

"Who else knows about the other one?"

"No one knows except the Grand Elder."

Ning Qi asked for more details and specific locations and already had an idea in mind. Ghost Mask's expression grew fiercer, with his eyes increasingly unfocused. Ning Qi then asked:

"Where does your Demon Sect refine the Holy Pill, and how is it used? Tell me everything you know about the Holy Pill."

Luo Wentian and the others' bodies trembled as they eagerly looked at Ghost Mask.

Only to see Ghost Mask starting to struggle.

Ning Qi's Divine Intent suppressed him, the Heart Inquiry Platform's waves encircled Ghost Mask, and then Ghost Mask spoke with difficulty:

"I don't know, only the Grand Elder and the Sect Leader know the Holy Pill Technique. It's the highest secret of the Holy Sect. Every Exotic Beast's Inner Core is handed to the Grand Elder personally. No one else knows where those Inner Cores go, perhaps to the other headquarters."

"What is your Sect Leader's background?"

Ghost Mask's voice surprisingly contained a trace of pride:

"The Sect Leader is an unparalleled genius of our Holy Sect, achieving the Martial Intent Ultimate Realm a Jiazi ago. No one knows what level he has reached now. Perhaps in the future, he will step into the Martial Saint Realm and lead our Holy Sect to unparalleled achievements!"

Even in the Soul Capturing state, he was somewhat fanatical.

Lin Ruhua saw Jiang Baishan looking at her and shook her head slightly:

"The Sect Leader had already gone into seclusion before I was born. Anything about the Sect Leader is an absolute secret in the Demon Sect, not to be mentioned by anyone."

Everyone felt a chill in their hearts, realizing this Sect Leader was not simple.

But Ning Qi remained calm.

As long as it wasn't a Martial Saint, he had no fear.

After a series of inquiries, he also understood that the Holy Pill Technique of the Demon Sect would likely still fall upon the Grand Elder. As for the Grand Elder's strength, it was equally extraordinary; according to Ghost Mask, it might be at the level of the top five of the Celestial Being List, if not more.

Moments later.

Ning Qi looked at Ghost Mask, who was starting to foam at the mouth and waved his hand lightly. Ghost Mask came out of the Soul Capturing state. He knew what he needed to know, but he couldn't kill Ghost Mask just yet. After all, he didn't know if the Demon Sect had some Secret Technique that could sense one's life and death.

If they found out Ghost Mask was dead, it would affect his subsequent actions. Moreover, he had promised Jiang Baishan to hand Ghost Mask over to him after questioning.

At this moment, Ghost Mask's eyes were filled with fear, looking at Ning Qi as if he had seen a ghost.

He couldn't imagine there was such a bizarre technique in the world; he felt like a stripped lamb, with no secrets left.

He had a splitting headache, as if a stone full of spikes had been shoved into his brain, continuously stirring. Snot and tears flowed uncontrollably, and his body trembled as if sieved. The aftereffects of the Pupil Technique had begun to manifest; even if he survived, he would live as a cripple.

Ning Qi flicked his finger.

Ghost Mask dropped like a rag in front of Jiang Baishan.

What needed to be known, he already knew.

"Fifth Brother, he's yours now. For now, he can't die. Wait for me to return, then we'll decide," Ning Qi said softly.

Jiang Baishan nodded hatefully:

"Don't worry, Jiu. I won't let him die so easily. As long as Ba doesn't wake up, he can't dream of dying!"

Luo Wentian sighed lightly, patted Jiang Baishan on the shoulder, but didn't say much. Qin Yun's current state made Jiang Baishan the most guilty. Perhaps this could allow him to vent some of his emotions.

He offered a few words of comfort, then let Jiang Baishan and Lin Ruhua go to rest. He already knew Lin Ruhua was pregnant, and despite Ning Qi healing her injuries, the continuous travels had left her mentally exhausted.

Only Ning Qi and Luo Wentian were left.

Luo Wentian said:

"Jiu, what do you plan to do?"

Ning Qi, with his hands behind his back, looked toward the sky:

"This trip down the mountain yielded nothing regarding the Blood Emperor Gu of the Southern Border. Now that I have a lead on the Demon Sect's Holy Pill Technique, I must seize this opportunity. I'm planning a trip to the Ten Thousand Flames Cave to best uproot them."

His voice was calm but full of murderous intent.

Qin Yun's plight further sentenced the Demon Sect to death in his heart.

Luo Wentian did not dissuade him, solemnly saying:

"No matter what situation you encounter, prioritize yourself. Always think of our master. If anything were to happen to you, he might be..."

With that, he sighed.

Ning Qi nodded seriously:

"Don't worry, I'll be careful. Time is of the essence, so I plan to leave now, lest the Demon Sect senses something amiss."

Ghost Mask, Qin Yun, and Elder Ye came out to capture Jiang Baishan and Lin Ruhua. If delayed too long, the Demon Sect would surely suspect.

Luo Wentian patted him on the shoulder:

"Go quickly and return quickly. Everything inside the sect is in my hands, don't worry."

Ning Qi nodded slightly and silently stepped into the air.

...

Heading west all the way.

Ning Qi's speed was extremely fast, but he restrained his presence, leaving no one aware of his passage.

His mind began to recall all the previous information, Ghost Mask's demeanor, some subtle habits that were hard to notice, various contact codes, detailed intelligence about the Ten Thousand Flames Cave, and information on many Demon Sect experts.

"The Ten Thousand Flames Cave is located at the border of the westernmost Liang State and the desert. There are numerous dangerous areas there, and the Ten Thousand Flames Cave is one of them. The Demon Sect, while making it their headquarters, has actually not fully explored it, merely occupying a small section based on previous generations' experiences."

"According to Ghost Mask, only those qualified to know about the Ten Thousand Flames Cave headquarters must be strong with a level above the Celestial Human Realm and absolutely loyal to the Demon Sect. Simply put, barring exceptions, one must be a lifelong member of the Demon Sect to know, which is why even Ba doesn't know, and Fifth Sister-in-law might gain that qualification if she steps into the Celestial Human Realm and passes the tests."

Ning Qi gradually understood why the Demon Sect was so elusive.

The Celestial Human Realm is the core.

Even if Great Yan eradicates all other branches of the Demon Sect, in a few decades, they can send some Celestial Human Realm experts to rebuild them, and the sect can revive.

Not to mention, the Ten Thousand Flames Cave is just one headquarters.

"This Demon Sect indeed has multiple nests. Without my Soul Capturing Eye Technique, I wouldn't even know about this Ten Thousand Flames Cave headquarters."

Ning Qi knew this journey wouldn't be easy.

He didn't know how many Celestial Human Realm experts the Ten Thousand Flames Cave had amassed over the years.

While pondering.

His face and body began to change, and in a blink, he had transformed into the appearance of Ghost Mask.

"Something's still missing."

Ning Qi patted his forehead, remembering.

While passing through a town, he took on the appearance of a regular person and bought some pieces of bronze. Then, using Gang Qi to form a flame, he melted them. In no time, a bronze mask identical to the one Ghost Mask wore appeared in Ning Qi's hand. He could imprint all the details in his mind after seeing it just once.

Ning Qi sped through the sky, during which he also practiced Ghost Mask's martial arts.

Time passed.

After crossing Liang State, he truly became 'Ghost Mask,' indistinguishable in appearance, build, attire, and martial arts characteristics.

He smirked.

Now, there were no flaws. But he had to be cautious since the intelligence from the Soul Capturing Eye Technique wasn't comprehensive; if his cover was blown, he had to be ready for a direct confrontation.

Still, if it could be done with less effort, all the better.

His aura gradually shifted, and the pupils hidden beneath the mask grew cold and calculating.

Ahead.

Was already the Ten Thousand Flames Cave.

The Ten Thousand Flames Cave had countless entrances and exits; from the sky, it looked like the earth had opened enormous mouths, some even spewing flames of various colors, quite spectacular. Some of the flames' power even surprised Ning Qi.

However.

The Demon Sect had explored over the years and mastered some of the patterns.

Ning Qi stopped before an entrance, waiting silently.

An two-hour later, the deep blue flames before him subsided, and he stepped in.

But just as he was about to act, a wave came from afar, rushing toward this direction. Ning Qi retracted his steps, looking coldly as a purple-robed young man approached, laughing heartily:

"What a coincidence to meet the Vice Sect Leader here!"

Ning Qi recognized this person as Jiang Tianlong, one of the Demon Sect's potential Saint Heirs.

He inwardly cursed his bad luck, feeling somewhat off to a rough start.

## Chapter 282: Grand Elder

This time is different from the previous incident at the Southern Border Qing State base. Back then, whether it was the disguised Lei or the Fatty Elder, they were essentially among the top-ranking individuals, so there was no need for excessive interaction. They only needed to display a high-status demeanor to avoid most troubles.

However, this time, quite a few people at the Demon Sect headquarters can converse with Ghost Mask.

Ning Qi was mentally prepared and had asked Ghost Mask a lot about this matter. Nevertheless, the more one talks, the more mistakes one might make. Unexpectedly, before he had the chance to step into the Ten Thousand Flames Cave, he encountered someone.

Moreover, it was a candidate Saint Heir of considerable status.

He could only stop, for avoiding would seem deliberate.

The eyes under Ning Qi's mask appeared somewhat indifferent, and he did not speak.

Jiang Tianlong had already approached, slightly cupping his hands, with a respectful smile:

"Why must Vice Sect Leader Ghost Mask be like this? I wonder what you think about the matter we discussed last time?"

Ning Qi was startled.



How could anyone know what exactly you talked about with Ghost Mask!

But then he quickly realized that, if Qin Yun was counted earlier, there were three candidate Saint Heirs in the Demon Sect. Now that Qin Yun had fallen from power, only Ye Qin and Jiang Tianlong remained to compete, and it had reached a feverish point. Naturally, Ghost Mask, who originally supported Qin Yun, became a coveted figure.

He still did not speak, but his gaze showed some slight changes and was no longer so indifferent.

Sure enough.

Jiang Tianlong immediately seized the opportunity:

"After all, Qin Yun is an outsider, so why are you so adamant about supporting him? If you are willing to help me ascend to the position of Saint Heir, should I become the Sect Leader in the future, the position of Grand Elder will be yours."

He smiled and painted a rosy picture.

Ning Qi laughed coldly:

"Qin Yun is someone valued by the Grand Elder."

He spoke very simply, but Jiang Tianlong's expression immediately changed.

Ning Qi stepped forward, continuing downwards.

An immediate heat wave swept through, as a faint black aura emerged from his body, completely blocking it out. Within the cave, various fire-attributed exotic flowers and herbs glowed, providing little use but illuminating the intolerable heat.

Looking ahead, the cave was vast and high, with numerous crisscrossing passages leading everywhere, ingeniously designed.

Ning Qi was slightly amazed in his heart. He recognized the distinctive markings left by the Demon Sect, constantly discerning directions, occasionally stopping to wait, avoiding erupting flames. Although it was his first visit, he seemed quite familiar with the routes.

Jiang Tianlong followed beside him, and after a few times, he began to take the lead.

This was the custom of the Demon Sect, that if entering together, regardless of status, everyone had to show the ability to identify the markings, which was one of the measures to prevent outsiders from infiltrating.

Jiang Tianlong whispered:

"Vice Sect Leader, I know that your departure this time was for the matter of Lin Ruhua. Since you have returned alone, there must have been some setbacks. Why not reconsider and help me suppress Ye Qin? State your terms."

He subtly revealed his own resourcefulness, as this matter was supposed to be extremely confidential.

Ning Qi raised an eyebrow, suddenly realizing that this candidate Saint Heir might not have encountered him by chance, but was specifically waiting here.

Ning Qi was about to speak.

Another wave of fluctuations came from the front, Jiang Tianlong's expression changed, and he saw a bald young man striding forward from another direction. With a few black lines on his head, he looked full of murderous aura and was the other candidate Saint Heir, Ye Qin.

Ye Qin laughed in a deep voice:

"What a coincidence, I didn't expect Younger Brother Jiang to return together with Vice Sect Leader Ghost Mask. It seems my sincerity still lacks."

He implied something, while Jiang Tianlong merely snorted lightly.

The three moved forward.

Ye Qin respectfully bowed to Ning Qi, then said:

"Was Vice Sect Leader's journey smooth? Did you meet the Elder of my Ye Family?"

He casually mentioned, also showing his strength. This was indirectly informing Ning Qi that he already knew the full plan this time, including Elder Ye leading the capture of Lin Ruhua and Jiang Baishan, Qin Yun's assistance, and Ghost Mask's secret supervision.

The two were here now, likely wanting to inquire about the outcome of this matter, as if Qin Yun returns, the competition among the three would continue, increasing variables.

They simply did not know that Ghost Mask had long been secretly replaced by Ning Qi.

Ning Qi glanced at the two emotionlessly:

"Do the two Saint Heirs want me to report to you? If that's the case, why not join me in seeing the Grand Elder?"

Hearing the implicit cold anger in his words, the two hurriedly bowed:

"We wouldn't dare."

After all, Ghost Mask is now the Vice Sect Leader. Besides a few individuals, others must show respect when seeing him.

Ning Qi snorted coldly and marched ahead.

Having traversed such a long distance by now, it was estimated they had delved tens of miles underground. Occasionally, fierce flames flared up, but after passing through a particular turn, it became gradually safer. This was the safe area excavated by the predecessors of the Demon Sect through generations.

Suddenly, a bright light appeared before Ning Qi's eyes, with dazzling crystal stones suspended from the ceiling like luminous pearls, resembling stars. The expansive underground world emerged before him, revealing meticulously regulated underground palaces, majestic and splendid, in close succession, becoming more luxurious as they approached the center.

He had already heard the description from Ghost Mask before, but seeing it firsthand still left him somewhat astonished.

The view before him resembled a subterranean Imperial Capital.

There were many people inside, rather than few.

Seeing the arrival of Ning Qi and the others, people immediately came forward to greet them. These were not the core high-ranking members of the Demon Sect but their servants. Their ancestors were initially brought to this place, forbidden to leave, and through generations of reproduction, most people by now did not know what the outside world looked like, or even that there was an outside world at all.

Chapter 283: Grand Elder\_2

Their sole mission was to serve those few powerful figures in the Demon Sect.

"Greetings to Vice Sect Leader Ghost Mask and the two Saint Heirs!"

A group of beautiful ladies in palace attire approached gracefully.

Ning Qi didn't pay attention, merely saying indifferently:

"Where is the Grand Elder?"

The leading female officer prostrated herself on the ground:

"The Grand Elder was in meditation at the Sorrow Forgetful Palace yesterday and will come out tomorrow."

Ning Qi's eyes flickered:

"Alright, if the Grand Elder exits seclusion early, come and inform me."

With that, he turned and headed towards the Underground Palace belonging to Ghost Mask.

After Ning Qi's figure disappeared, Jiang Tianlong and Ye Qin exchanged glances, both a bit puzzled. Jiang Tianlong suddenly said:

"Did you notice, there's something strange about Vice Sect Leader Ghost Mask today?"

Ye Qin nodded:

"You noticed too? It seems he doesn't wish to talk much with us."

He chuckled with interest, and the black pattern on his bald head seemed to wriggle:

"Do you think... could there be an accident with this mission? It seems Vice Sect Leader Ghost Mask is eager to meet the Grand Elder."

Jiang Tianlong said coldly:

"Your Ye Family snatched this mission and you claim you don't know what's going on?"

Ye Qin shrugged:

"I really don't know, it's clear Vice Sect Leader Ghost Mask returned alone in advance. Tsk tsk, could it be that Qin Yun turned traitor again?"

Jiang Tianlong's eyes flickered:

"How about we collaborate? This time we absolutely cannot let Qin Yun return to the Saint Heir candidate list. Both of us are from the main line of the Holy Sect, why should that outsider who joined halfway be on equal footing with us? Two competitors is better than three."

Ye Qin grinned, revealing his sharp white teeth:

"I had just that thought, and I don't know what the Grand Elder was thinking, supporting Qin Yun. This time we'll join forces and crush Qin Yun!"

The two passed by each other and left nonchalantly.

From afar.

Ning Qi's lips curved slightly.

With his strength, even if the two used secret transmission techniques, he could still hear them.

"It seems the internal strife within the Demon Sect is quite intense indeed."

Having seen and heard all along the way, he had many thoughts.

It is said that the Demon Sect's predecessor was the remnants of a previous dynasty, always wanting to overthrow the Great Yan. But after two thousand years, how many still hold onto their original intentions is hard to say. But this is good; with differing goals, things become easier for him.

He did not forget the purpose of this trip.

Returning to the palace belonging to Ghost Mask, Ning Qi dismissed everyone to be alone.

"The mission this time is to stop the Demon Sect from producing a Martial Saint, and the Grand Elder is the only one who knows the secrets. The best plan is to subdue him quietly and then extract information. But he is currently meditating, making it difficult to approach."

"Fortunately, he'll come out tomorrow. If it's delayed for several days, and Fifth Senior Brother doesn't send back intelligence, it will surely arouse suspicion."

"Perhaps... I could go investigate after nightfall."

Ning Qi prepared for the worst, which was nothing more than fighting forcibly.

As long as he confirmed the Grand Elder was here, it was better than wandering blindly like before, but it was best to conserve energy.

He closed his eyes gradually, contemplating, and rejuvenating his energy.

...

Night falls.

In the underground, there is no sun or moon, but here, someone manipulated crystal stones above to simulate day and night.

Ning Qi suddenly opened his eyes.

He activated the Silence Technique and stepped out of the palace silently.

The underground palace was dark, only the lamps were continuously lit. Ning Qi identified the direction of the Sorrow Forgetful Palace and moved like a cunning cat. Occasional patrols couldn't spot Ning Qi at all.

The underground palace was vast, but the cultivation of these servants serving the core Demon Sect members was not high.

Before long.

Ning Qi stopped outside the Sorrow Forgetful Palace.

He concealed himself in the shadows, not proceeding further. The guards were secondary; mainly he sensed a Qimen Array secretly set up in this palace. Entering recklessly would surely alert those inside.

If that happened, a direct confrontation would be inevitable.

The idea of secretly subduing the Grand Elder was immediately dashed.

"Indeed, it's not that simple. The people of the Demon Sect are truly cautious," Ning Qi thought to himself.

This was much more challenging than the operation at the Qing State stronghold in the Southern Border. Only someone of Ning Qi's prowess could find the door to the underground palace; others wouldn't even find it.



But he wasn't discouraged.

If it couldn't be done now, he would see if there was an opportunity when meeting the Grand Elder tomorrow.

He might as well make some other preparations first.

Ning Qi's eyes glinted as he silently sneaked elsewhere in the underground palace.

As he moved quietly, he periodically sensed the surrounding auras cautiously.

Before long.

Ning Qi circled around the underground palace.

He stopped, somewhat astonished:

"Just in this underground palace alone, I can sense more than thirty Celestial Human Realm auras. If we include the few I haven't sensed, there might be over forty? And these auras are quite strong, probably not just at the initial Celestial Human Realm level."

The number was indeed astonishing.

After all, this was only the headquarters of the Demon Sect. If one includes the strongholds across various branches of the Demon Sect, the number might double.

"Across the Great Yan Thirteen States, if all Celestial Human Realm experts are counted together, it might number only a few hundred. By estimate, such experts are nearly one in a billion, unparalleled geniuses. The Imperial Court occupies at least thirty percent, with the rest distributed across many Martial Path sects."

"No wonder the Demon Sect can contend with the Imperial Court for so long; they indeed have a profound foundation."

Ning Qi became more cautious.

With so many Celestial Human Realm experts, some could undoubtedly rank high on the Celestial Being List. He had to be very careful; if a melee broke out, it might not be easily resolved.

If he wanted to leave, there would be no danger, but if he failed this time, it would be unlikely to have such a good opportunity again.

After meticulous consideration.

Ning Qi already had an idea.

He quietly moved through various parts of the underground palace, avoiding patrols, then planted one Gang Essence Sword Species and a few arrays as a precaution to prevent anyone from escaping.

After completing everything.

Ning Qi returned to his own palace.

Now, he just had to wait for tomorrow.

...

The next day.

Ning Qi, served by many servants, finished his breakfast, when yesterday's female officer arrived gracefully:

"Vice Sect Leader, the Grand Elder has emerged from Sorrow Forgetful Palace. He instructed this servant to have you meet him at Chaotian Hall."

Chaotian Hall?

Ning Qi paused slightly, then nodded:

"Understood."

This Chaotian Hall is the Grand Elder's residence; if he closed in seclusion, it would be there. It's the Grand Elder's private place, and he wouldn't usually summon other Demon Sect high-ranking members there; they had other venues for meetings.

This was a display of trust.

From the increasingly respectful demeanor of the surrounding servants, one could discern a thing or two.

But Ning Qi's heart was slightly apprehensive.

He straightened his robe according to Ghost Mask's habits and said:

"Lead the way up front."

The female officer bowed respectfully and led the way.

Jiang Tianlong and Ye Qin, whom he met yesterday, appeared together, and there was a trace of envy in their eyes. They complimented together:

"Congratulations Vice Sect Leader Ghost Mask, for earning the Grand Elder's favor!"

Within the Demon Sect.

The most important figures are the Sect Leader and the Grand Elder, possessing authority and secrets unmatched by others, passed down through word of mouth. The Saint Heir inherits the Sect Leader's position, while the Grand Elder chooses from among the Vice Sect Leaders.

Now that Ghost Mask was summoned to Chaotian Hall by the Grand Elder, this attitude was showing a significant inclination.

Ning Qi pondered and continued forward.

He heard the two transmitting secretly:

"This Vice Sect Leader Ghost Mask is indeed lucky. Like Qin Yun back then, he joined the Holy Sect from outside. Could it be that the Grand Elder..."

Both of their pupils shrank, continuing no further.

But Ning Qi had already guessed a bit.

Moments later.

Ning Qi stepped into Chaotian Hall with large strides, slightly respectful as he said:

"Ghost Mask greets the Grand Elder!"

Then he saw an elderly man with silver hair slowly turning, a slight smile rising on his face.

## Chapter 284: One Against Forty, Blocking the Stronghold to Kill

Inside the grand hall.

Only two people were present.

It felt a bit empty.

Ning Qi silently observed the silver-haired elder in front of him. His figure was tall, and there was a faint smile on his lips. He looked like an ordinary neighborly old man, and his presence was unassuming. Yet because of this, Ning Qi did not dare to underestimate him.

"He ought to be a powerful figure, like the Blade Demon," he speculated in his heart. Although he could win steadily, it would not be easy to take him down without a certain opportunity.

The Grand Elder smiled and gestured to the seat beside him:

"Tianming, please sit. It's just the two of us here, no need to be so formal."

Ning Qi was not surprised.

Qu Tianming, that was Ghost Mask's real name, but only a few in the Demon Sect knew this. Most people called him Ghost Mask because he habitually wore the Bronze Ghost Mask.

"Was the journey smooth?" The Grand Elder got straight to the point.

Ning Qi cupped his hands and said:

"Grand Elder, there were some surprises."

The Grand Elder sipped his tea, raised an eyebrow, and said:

"Did Qin Yun intervene to save Jiang Baishan?"

Ning Qi replied:

"Grand Elder, you are indeed insightful. However, I've already captured them, and they are currently held at another branch. How to deal with them, I await your instructions, Grand Elder."

This was the excuse he had prepared, and now that the Grand Elder had brought it up, Ning Qi naturally followed the lead.

The Grand Elder stood up and sighed lightly:

"What a pity."

Saying this, he began to walk out of the hall. Ning Qi followed behind him, and in just a few steps, they reached a garden in the rear hall, filled with vibrant flowers and rare plants.

The Grand Elder continued:

"Qin Yun ultimately couldn't let go of the past; it's a pity. He has extraordinary talent and a superior disposition. If he could be of use to our Holy Sect, he could achieve great success in the future."

Regret was evident in his eyes.

He truly valued Qin Yun, and one could even say that Ghost Mask's favorable treatment of Qin Yun was largely due to the Grand Elder.

Ning Qi's eyes showed a perfect hint of confusion.

The Grand Elder glanced at him and did not speak further.

They walked slowly toward the rear of the hall. Unexpectedly, what appeared before them was not a luxurious pavilion, but rather a shabby earthen house with a small courtyard. Inside the yard were patches of land planted with vegetables, alongside some farming tools, resembling a farmer's home.

Entering the courtyard.

The Grand Elder took off his outer robe and began to till the soil with a hoe in his hand.

His voice carried a note of emotion:

"People should never forget their roots."

Ning Qi asked the question that puzzled him:

"Why are you so fond of Qin Yun?"

This was a question Ghost Mask had never understood. It was appropriate to the scene, and Ning Qi was also somewhat curious.

The Grand Elder responded with a question:

"Don't you think the Holy Sect has changed? It has become scheming, vying for power, and corrupt beyond repair. How many still remember their original intentions? Though the passing down through generations has its benefits, after a thousand years, the drawbacks are greater."

"Qin Yun's greatest advantage is that he didn't grow up within the Holy Sect. He has no burdens, and if he could wield the blade, he could cut away some entrenched illnesses."

Ning Qi was mentally invigorated, deep in thought.

It appeared the Demon Sect also recognized its own shortcomings and was constantly looking for solutions. However, internal factional struggles, intertwined with each other, made it impossible to eradicate.

"When I found you back then and elevated you to the position of Vice Sect Leader, it had a good effect. Over the years, you've managed Xiang Tianxing and Lin Xueshuang very well. Now that the influence of Lin Xueshuang's faction is being suppressed, when you ascend to the position of Grand Elder, you can continue my work."

"And if Qin Yun could become the Saint Heir and further succeed as Sect Leader, with the two of you working together, our Holy Sect will surely be able to restore its glory!"

His voice carried a hint of hope and fervor.

Ning Qi respectfully replied at the right moment:

"Tianming will follow the Grand Elder's arrangements."

The Grand Elder waved his hand:

"What a pity, such a promising young talent as Qin Yun is not on the right path. But if he truly kills Jiang Baishan, I would have to think less of him."

Ning Qi asked:

"According to Grand Elder, should we not deal with Qin Yun for now?"

The Grand Elder slowly nodded:

"Let's give him one more chance. Restrain him, and after we destroy the True Martial Sect, when the Sect Leader exits seclusion, baptize him anew. By then, with no ties, he'll naturally become focused."



He seemed to have anticipated this, showing no surprise that Qin Yun would help Jiang Baishan and even seemed rather satisfied.

Ning Qi suddenly understood.

This trial for Qin Yun was not what it seemed on the surface. If Qin Yun had actually killed Jiang Baishan, he might have incurred the Grand Elder's disfavor. However, the Grand Elder before him didn't know that Qin Yun had burned all his remaining lifespan to resist Ghost Mask.

"Tianming understands." Ning Qi slowly nodded.

He listened for a long time, having walked to the Grand Elder's side. He was looking for an opportunity to act, but he knew that the seemingly amiable Grand Elder before him could erupt with full force in an instant; now was not the best time to act.

The Grand Elder cheerfully tapped his old waist and naturally handed the hoe in his hand to Ning Qi.

"As one gets older, sometimes nostalgia kicks in. Long ago, I spent a lovely period in a place like this, and coming here sometimes brings peace to my heart, Ning Qi."

Ning Qi swung the hoe, carefully comprehending his state of mind, as if he was gaining some enlightenment.

The Grand Elder lay down on the rattan chair.

His eyes slowly closed, and only a faint sound could be heard:

"Tianming, go inside and fetch me a straw raincoat."

Ning Qi's eyes flashed; he put down the hoe and walked slowly toward the earthen house. This might be a good opportunity, a slight ripple in his heart, but on the surface, he remained unperturbed.

## Chapter 285: One Against Forty, Blocking the Stronghold to Kill\_2

One step.

Two steps.

...

Ning Qi stopped at the door of the clay house but hesitated to enter. The low clay house before him seemed as though it contained some sort of ferocious beast.

A slightly indifferent voice from the Grand Elder came from behind:

"Why don't you go in?"

Ning Qi turned around, his gaze no longer respectful:

"When did you find out?"

He realized that he had been exposed, though not sure where the flaw was. However, the clay house in front of him was unusual, with a faint sense of danger inside. If he were to step in, it might cause some trouble.

Under the Golden Pupil of Illusion-breaking, all disguise vanished. This was clearly not just a clay house but a Killing Array!

The Grand Elder, whose eyes are now open, with divine light shining and oppressively aggressive, scrutinized Ning Qi standing in front of him, sighed and said:

"Your excellency indeed has great methods; it has not deceived you. Where is the real Tianming?"

Everything before was naturally just an act.

He was candidly honest, and even attempted with some secrets of the Demon Sect to entice, all to no avail in luring the person in front into the Killing Array. The inner shock was evident.

He understood that the person before him was definitely not simple. This was the first time ever an outsider silently set foot on the headquarters of the Underground Palace, even impersonating a Vice Sect Leader to do so. This was extraordinary, and if he couldn't figure out the reason and background, he couldn't rest easy.

Ning Qi said:

"You still haven't answered my question."

The Grand Elder slowly stood up, as the Power of Heaven and Earth started swirling around him:

"Your excellency's Secret Technique is unparalleled. Even if the real Tianming were really standing with you, I couldn't tell who's genuine. However, our Holy Sect has a Secret Treasure that connects a strand of Tianming's blood with it, and I saw it since you entered."

He actually confessed openly, which surprised Ning Qi somewhat.

"Are you from the Imperial Court? You seem so familiar with Tianming that he must have fallen into your hands. In this case, Jiang Baishan and Lin Ruhua were just traps you set up?" The Grand Elder sighed lightly, as if reminiscing with an old friend.

Ning Qi once more observed the Grand Elder before him, sensing an extraordinary aura, with a faint threat.

He immediately knew that the seemingly good opportunities earlier were no such thing. The Grand Elder was always vigilant, and now chatting casually was just intentional stalling.

Fortunately.

Ning Qi wasn't foolish.

The Sword Array he set up yesterday also needed time to connect. He secretly rejoiced that he had been cautious enough yesterday.

Both held secret thoughts but seemed to reach a sort of mutual understanding.

Ning Qi said calmly:

"Indeed, Ghost Mask is in our hands."

The Grand Elder sighed:

"So it is, then how about I let you leave and you return Tianming?"

Ning Qi chuckled:

"With someone like me lurking, aren't you worried? Dare to let me go?"

The Grand Elder stayed silent, then laughed after several breaths:

"In that case, I can only ask you to be a guest here."

As the words fell.

Undulating waves emerged from all around, the Power of Heaven and Earth turned into whirlpools, sweeping in all directions, and in an instant, figures with powerful aura appeared in Chaotian Hall, the Grand Elder seemingly having notified all Celestial Human Realms from the Demon Sect.

Ning Qi looked up.

All of the dozens of Celestial Human Realms sensed yesterday were present, along with a few that he hadn't noticed last night.

Counting carefully, there were already over forty.

The auras of more than forty Celestial Human Realms converged; it was terrifying.

The entire Underground Palace trembled.

Everyone gathered, staring at Ning Qi and the Grand Elder in confrontation, their expressions changing, unaware of what transpired. Today, they even heard the Ghost Mask Vice Sect Leader summoned by the Grand Elder to this private Chaotian Hall, but given the current situation, was the Ghost Mask Vice Sect Leader plotting malice?

In the next moment.

The Grand Elder's words left everyone speechless with amazement.

"The person in front of us is not Ghost Mask; join me in capturing him!" The Grand Elder's silver hair was flying, like a lion, divine light flared in his eyes, his imposing manner exploded without reservation, clearly also an unparalleled expert of the Martial Intent Ultimate Realm.

Jiang Tianlong and Ye Qin exchanged glances, seeing the horror in each other's eyes.

Yesterday, they had entered the headquarters with this impostor; if the person had malicious intent, they had virtually stepped through the gates of hell.

Everyone was in uproar.

Glares filled with killing intent locked onto Ning Qi, an outsider had set foot on the headquarters, an unprecedented major event, if the root cause couldn't be found, it might completely shake the foundation of the Holy Sect, perhaps even leading to its destruction!

At this thought, no one could remain calm.

"Thief, won't you quickly reveal your true form!"

"Kneel now, or you may yet keep your whole corpse!"

The Grand Elder stared at Ning Qi, finally breathing a little easier. Ever since discovering the Ghost Mask before him was an impostor, his heart had been on edge, yet he couldn't fully comprehend the person before him.

Even now, he did not truly relax.

The person ahead was just too calm.

Ning Qi faced the vicious faces around, smiling.

"Perfect timing, now I don't need to seek each one out."

Since diplomacy wouldn't work, he could only fight with force.

Having wasted all this time with the Grand Elder, the connections to the Sword Species he buried last night were finally established; now there was no need to waste any more time.

He slowly ascended, a peerless Sword Intent erupted suddenly, spawning endless sword intent in the void, terrifying all. In recent times, Ning Qi's Sword Intent had improved yet again. Having resolved not to spare anyone, he disregarded exposing his identity, preparing to unleash the strongest Sword Intent.

Chapter 286: 1 Against 40, Blocking the Nest to Kill\_3

Someone recognized Ning Qi's identity:

"True Man Tianjian! You are True Man Tianjian!"

Another Vice Sect Leader, Xiang Tianxing, was extremely shocked, realizing something:

"Back then, the Qing State stronghold in the Southern Border was also destroyed by you!"

People from the Southern Border once said that the Qing State stronghold was likely destroyed by someone proficient in disguise, which matched perfectly.

Everyone was both shocked and angry.

A torrent of Power of Heaven and Earth suppressed them, fist seals, palm seals, sword qi, almost all were exerted with full force, showing no signs of holding back.

A name as heavy as the shadow, True Man Tianjian's strength was evident to all.

The Grand Elder was more serious than ever before.

Ning Qi did not answer.

He stretched out his hand and a series of Celestial Swords had already condensed, unleashing unparalleled Sword Intent, the surging waves erupted in the underground world. This place was not the True Martial Sect, so he had nothing to hold back. With full force execution, luxurious Underground Palaces shattered, and distant servants all looked over in shock.

"Boom!!"

The Celestial Sword clashed with numerous Celestial Human Realm techniques.

A terrifying loud noise shook the underground, and then the entire world seemed to fall into a silent state. It was as if the earth shook and the mountains swayed, 'stars' fell from the sky, Celestial Human Realm beings flew backwards, faces full of horror.

They could not have imagined.

More than forty Celestial Human Realm beings joined forces, yet still were on the losing end!

Even if not for the Grand Elder and Xiang Tianxing, who bore most of the pressure, the Celestial Sword's explosion would have been enough to directly annihilate some Celestial Human Realm beings. Although they were all in the Celestial Human Realm, the gap between Ning Qi and them was incredibly vast.

The immense Power of Heaven and Earth left everyone dumbfounded.

"Is this True Man Tianjian truly so terrifying!"

The Grand Elder was shocked at heart, having heard before of the battle between Blade Demon and True Man Tianjian. He estimated that he might not be as good as True Man Tianjian, but not so as to suffer a severe defeat. But now, it seemed that True Man Tianjian was clearly at another level.

"Could it be that he really is going to step into the Martial Saint Realm?"

If not for not feeling the power of a Martial Saint, the Grand Elder might have already been considering how to preserve their legacy. But even so, True Man Tianjian's battle prowess was far beyond his imagination; more than forty Celestial Human Realm beings couldn't suppress him.

Just as this thought emerged.



Ning Qi had already condensed Celestial Swords again. Even under the attacks of numerous Celestial Beings, he was still able to condense sword qi at an extremely fast speed, one after another, more and more, the sharpness becoming more and more terrifying.

Ning Qi laughed heartily, feeling an unprecedented sense of joy.

This could be considered the first time he had exploded himself so recklessly.

"Thousand Stars Sword Array!"

The numerous Sword Species planted last night had already been fully activated, mixed with the Power of Heaven and Earth, instantly transforming into Celestial Swords, spanning all over the Underground Palace, the sharp sword light hanging down; anyone who tried to approach would be immediately torn to powder.

The Thousand Stars Sword Array was Ning Qi's limit. Without the Sword Species from last night, it would not have been so easy for him to condense the Thousand Stars Sword Array while being besieged by more than forty Celestial Human Realm beings.

But now.

It was different.

Off guard.

A thousand Celestial Swords soared into the sky, like countless stars, emitting an extremely terrifying aura, enveloping the Celestial Beings. Everyone felt a sense of imminent doom, their hearts panic-stricken, due to the abruptness of this change.

Although they were previously at a disadvantage, they could at least resist.

But who would have expected that in just a few breaths, the situation changed dramatically, sword qi soared from the underground, merging with the Power of Heaven and Earth, and the number of Celestial Swords exploded exponentially.

Everyone's pressure doubled.

Just as a scream was heard, one of the weaker Celestial Human Realm beings could no longer withstand the crushing sword qi, being forcibly expelled from the defense, and then being cut into a mist of blood by the sword qi. The tragic death left everyone in horror.

Even more terrifying was that the Celestial Swords had already sealed off all exits, the intention was undeniably clear, to block their old nest and capture them all!

The Grand Elder's expression was serious.

He realized it was a critical moment.

"Activate the Blood Demon Array!"

His eyes sharpened, loudly commanding before the Thousand Stars Sword Array was fully formed.

Immediately, more than a dozen white-haired elders stepped forward. They were some of the older Demon Sect elders with less longevity left. But at this moment, with the Grand Elder's command, they did not hesitate, instantly blowing themselves up.

Bang bang bang bang!!

After the series of muffled explosions, more than a dozen Celestial Beings perished.

However, the blood mist formed after their self-detonation did not scatter but instead coagulated together in a bizarre manner, with surging power, the remaining more than twenty Celestial Being strong persons all filled with anger, eager to tear Ning Qi into pieces.

A single person broke into their lair and forced them into such a predicament, brutally causing more than a dozen predecessors to self-destruct.

A series of roars echoed.

Everyone poured their strength into the congregations of lingering blood mist, moving in a peculiar manner.

In an instant.

The blood mist stiffened and then violently squirmed as if coming to life!

"Roar!!"

With a growl that seemed to come from hell, the blood mist began to expand and distort, eventually transforming into a ferocious monster!

The monster was completely blood-colored, formed from blood mist, towering dozens of zhang high, with three heads and six arms, but all faceless, exuding an aura of slaughter and violence all over.

A series of sword qi fell from the sky, like starlight.

But when the blood mist monster reached out, it astonishingly swallowed them all into its belly.

Ning Qi squinted his eyes.

This Demon Sect, they have some means indeed.

Chapter 287: Who is the Villain, Martial Saint Secret Treasure

Underground Palace World.

The surging Power of Heaven and Earth continuously fluctuated, trembling unceasingly. Crystal Stones, like Luminous Pearls, fell one by one from above, with large sections of the palace collapsing. Were it not for the Earth Cave here being forged through millennia of fiery tempering, incredibly solid, it might have already crumbled.

At this moment.

The thousand Celestial Swords condensed by Ning Qi had replaced the previous 'Stars', turning into a sky full of brilliant stars.

Threads of starlight descended, looking splendid yet filled with lethal intent, an unstoppable Sword Qi.

Below.

A terrifying blood-colored creature roared at the sky. Though faceless and mouthless, its three heads simultaneously fixed on Ning Qi. A horrifying tide of blood surged out as that dozens-of-zhang-tall monster leaped high, soaring to attack.

Golden light flickered in Ning Qi's eyes.

The Golden Pupil of Illusion-breaking activated, making everything in the world slow in his eyes. He stared at the blood-colored monster and saw a massive stirring of blood and flesh power within it. In a moment, he understood the essence of this blood creature—

Formed by the total sacrifice of all blood and power by numerous Celestial Beings from the Demon Sect. Still not sufficient, the remaining Celestial Human Realm continuously fed it power.

In a way.

This was many Celestial Human Realms fully combining their power.

Much more powerful than that previous forced combined strike.

"Indeed extraordinary. This blood-colored creature's strength is at least multiple times that of the Blade Demon," Ning Qi estimated. The Demon Sect indeed had its methods and foundation, not easy to deal with.

However.

Ning Qi was unafraid.

It was merely probing; being cautious against this unknown enemy was wise.

The blood creature approached menacingly, treading waves of blood. With six arms reaching for stars and moons, it absorbed all the Sword Qi into its belly, enhancing its aura rather than diminishing.

The people of the Demon Sect were incredibly excited at the sight.

"Blood Demon, seize him!" the Grand Elder's silver hair danced wildly, his once calm face turning hideous. The Demon Sect had never been driven into such a dire state.

Ning Qi calmly pointed a finger.

The Thousand Stars Sword Array above changed immediately.

The Thousand Stars Sword Array wasn't just a stacking of Celestial Swords; rather, it held profound mysteries. Each 'Star' trembled, and the starlight that originally fell skyrocketed, illuminating the entire underground palace. The anger and seriousness on everyone's faces were vividly visible.

"Star Sea Descent!" Ning Qi muttered in his heart.

Suddenly, each star split into 108 Sword Qi blasts, totaling 108,000.

108,000 Sword Qi, how vast and mighty!

Truly like the falling of a sea of stars.

In the shocked eyes of the Demon Sect individuals.

The Sword Qi surged like a reversed Milky Way towards the blood creature, submerging it in an instant. Though a single Sword Qi might not compare to the Celestial Sword, the quantity made up for the quality difference. This power far exceeded the Heavenly Gang and Earthly Fiends Sword previously used by Ning Qi.

"Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang!"

"Roar!!"

A dense noise of impacts, slices, and roars continuously resounded.

Everyone saw.

The Blood Demon roared continuously. Its six arms, swinging to the limit and further extending like tentacles, formed six blood-colored barriers, resisting the bombardment of Sword Qi. But just these were not enough; 108,000 Sword Qi was too overwhelming. Despite the Blood Demon's desperate struggle, it visibly fell behind.

Wisps of blood mist power dispersed.

Suddenly.

The Blood Demon roared madly; the originally faceless and mouthless three heads cracked open simultaneously like gaping maws.

"Blood Demon Devouring Heaven!" the Grand Elder shouted.

This so-called Blood Demon creature possessed no intelligence, merely controlled by the array master in the shadows, appearing eerie and intimidating. At this moment, he finally stopped hiding, manipulating the Blood Demon to unleash its trump card.

Immense suction pulled in every strand of Sword Qi into its three heads, and in the blink of an eye, the space once filled with Sword Qi became empty.

Xiang Tianxing and others revealed delighted expressions.

"It worked!"

They clenched their fists with effort, and their tense bodies finally relaxed slightly.

But the Grand Elder did not smile; cold sweat appeared on his forehead, bearing immense pressure.

Ning Qi likewise showed no change in expression.

His eyes sweeping the golden light towards the Blood Demon's belly, a smile appeared at the corner of his mouth.

Indeed, the Blood Demon creature had some skill, yet he had already discerned its true nature; it was merely a conglomeration of power, still controlled by the Grand Elder.

At this moment.

After swallowing 10,000 Sword Qi, the Blood Demon's body rapidly expanded, in the blink of an eye growing over a hundred zhang tall.

A cold smile flashed in his eyes: "Eating so much, aren't you afraid of bursting?"

Now.

The people of the Demon Sect also noticed something amiss. After the Blood Demon's body rapidly swelled, it then shrank sharply, repeatedly, extraordinarily bizarre, clearly not in a normal state.

The Grand Elder's angry roar resounded:

"Hurry and sacrifice yourselves to become demons!"

He spat blood, even blood tears flowed from his eyes. The other Demon Sect experts' expressions changed, and more than a dozen elder Celestial Human Realm experts stepped out, their decisiveness not equaling the previous white-haired elders, yet hesitated only slightly before stepping forth.

They whispered a few words to the people around them, then resolutely embraced death.

Though often engaged in internal strife, facing outside enemies, they showed unusual unity, clearly discerning the urgency of the situation.

Chapter 288: Who is the Villain, Martial Saint Secret Treasure\_2

Boom boom boom!!

After a series of self-detonations.

The intense power of flesh and blood roared out once more, converging into a Blood River around the Blood Demon.



In an instant.

The chaotic aura of the Blood Demon finally stabilized. It let out a skyward howl, releasing a majestic breath that exploded in the void, forming terrifying shockwaves. With the help of the flesh and blood of over a dozen Celestial Human Realm beings, it finally resisted the eighty thousand Sword Qi it had swallowed.

However, it merely discharged them in a different manner rather than absorbing them into its body as before.

Moreover.

The shockwaves emitted shattered palace after palace, and the Demon Sect's servants hiding in various places turned to dust, without the slightest resistance.

The Thousand Stars Sword Array and the Blood Demon Array clashed fiercely, and the superior was apparent at a glance.

Ning Qi remained unscathed.

But on the Demon Sect side, more than thirty Celestial Human Realm members had been lost.

This was an unprecedented massive loss!

Most of the Demon Sect's accumulated power over the years had been significantly diminished by Ning Qi. These people were the essence of the Demon Sect, both powerful and loyal, but now, only around ten remained.

The remaining ones were either new forces of the Demon Sect, like the two candidate Saint Heirs, or core figures, like Vice Sect Leader Xiang Tianxing and the Grand Elder, or powerful beings comparable to those on the Celestial Being List.

All were filled with shock and anger.

The True Man Tianjian before them was terrifyingly powerful, clearly surpassing the Celestial Human Realm. They even wondered if True Man Tianjian had stepped into the Martial Saint Realm.

But the crisis before them was not yet over.

The suspended Celestial Swords exuded sharp auras that made them shudder.

At this moment.

The Blood Demon monster dared not charge again. It had charged once before but didn't even touch the corner of Ning Qi's clothes, losing over a dozen Celestial Human Realm beings instead. Although its aura was stronger now, it dared not risk further.

It stood towering like a blood mountain before the many experts of the Demon Sect.

The Grand Elder wiped away bloody tears and opened his eyes, looking at Ning Qi and said solemnly:

"True Man Tianjian, how about ending this here? Your True Martial Sect has suffered no loss. There's no need to fight to mutual destruction for Great Yan and us. I can assure you that henceforth, my Holy Sect will not harm the True Martial Sect, and all past grievances will be written off!"

The people of the Demon Sect felt frustrated and unwilling, clenching their fists tightly, but had no choice.

True Man Tianjian was too strong!

If they didn't stop, fought to the death heedlessly, even winning might not lead to better outcomes.

All eyes fell on Ning Qi, the golden pupils swept across each of them, leaving their hearts uneasy.

Ning Qi spoke calmly:

"If you have any means, just use them."

Coming here today without achieving his goal, how could he leave, relying on others' promises was not Ning Qi's way. Retreating now would only mean that when the Demon Sect births a Martial Saint in the future, the first to be exterminated would likely be the True Martial Sect.

His Golden Pupil of Illusion-breaking remained focused on the Grand Elder. Only this person held an unfathomable aura, which should be the Grand Elder's confidence. Others were not to be feared. Yet, using this confidence might come at a great price, hence the Grand Elder's low pleas for peace.

The Grand Elder took a deep breath and said coldly:

"True Man Tianjian, do you really intend to do this?"

Ning Qi did not answer.

In those brief moments, the Celestial Swords once again brimming with energy, sharpness at its peak.

"Very well! Hope you don't regret it!" The Grand Elder gave Ning Qi a deep look and then said in a low voice, "Tianxing, you take charge of the formation!"

Xiang Tianxing's body shook, then nodded forcefully.

The remaining dozen Celestial Human Realm beings, led by Xiang Tianxing, tightly guarded the Grand Elder.

The Blood Demon roared angrily, its whole body bursting with blood light, locked onto Ning Qi, seemingly provoking. Naturally, Ning Qi wouldn't let it off; he took a moment to adjust his state, not one

for idle talk. The previous clash had allowed him to see through the Blood Demon's strengths and weaknesses completely.

Now he would not hold back any longer.

Once again, the starry sea fell.

Eighty thousand Sword Qi like a reversed Milky Way rushed towards the many in the Demon Sect.

The Blood Demon monster roared skyward, taking the initiative to face the attack. This time, it was on the defensive. Having learned a lesson from before, Xiang Tianxing dared not recklessly swallow the eighty thousand Sword Qi again, focusing on defense instead, to avoid disturbing the Grand Elder.

The blood power transformed into giant hands, continuously slapping, dispersing Sword Qi into waves. Especially those six blood arms, savagely crushing one Sword Qi after another, though it was evident the Blood Demon could barely hold on, completely suppressed.

Ning Qi's Golden Pupil of Illusion-breaking saw through the Blood Demon's vulnerabilities, with each Sword Qi exerting stronger suppression.

The earth shook, resembling the end of the world.

Ning Qi saw, after the Grand Elder adjusted his breath, he slowly offered a certain object.

It was a translucent Treasure Pearl.

The moment the Treasure Pearl appeared, Ning Qi's heart skipped a beat. He realized that perhaps the Grand Elder's confidence stemmed from this.

"What is that?"

As Ning Qi's thought just moved.

He saw the Grand Elder's wild hair flying, the Treasure Pearl suspended in the air radiating a great brilliance, then waves spread in all directions. Subsequently, numerous hidden servants suddenly began to contort all over, and with a bang turned into a blood mist.

The Demon Sect servants in the Underground Palace world numbered over a hundred thousand at least. As the Treasure Pearl was activated, they exploded into blood mist amidst fearful wails.

Streams of blood mist converged, not entering the Blood Demon but flowing into the Treasure Pearl before the Grand Elder.

Chapter 289: Who is the Villain, Martial Saint Secret Treasure\_3

"With the power of your ancestors, offer your final glory!" the Grand Elder roared with laughter.

In an instant.

The treasure pearl transformed into a Blood Pearl!

A force so terrifying it startled even Ning Qi was being nurtured within. Ning Qi's eyes gleamed with golden light as he attempted to see through its essence. He witnessed the Power of Heaven and Earth converging and condensing within in a unique way.

"Could this be... the power of the Martial Saint? Is it the long-lost Martial Saint Secret Treasure as rumored?" Ning Qi couldn't help but feel a surge of excitement in his heart.

Information about the Martial Saint was extremely scarce, but the Martial Saint Secret Treasures were among the few remnants. It was rumored that Martial Saints possessed powerful secret treasures, vastly different from the weapons used by ordinary martial artists. These treasures had formidable potency, far beyond the so-called divine weapons.

Yet, with the disappearance of the Martial Saints, those powerful treasures were also lost—unexpectedly reappearing now.

"Surely the Demon Sect has deep roots."

While marveling, Ning Qi formed a plan in his mind.

He utilized Sword Qi to intercept the blood mist power gathering from all directions, but discovered that although the blood mist was blocked, some intrinsic force within couldn't be stopped.

The power within the Blood Pearl grew increasingly abundant.

He operated his golden pupils with full strength, suppressing the Blood Demon while rapidly contemplating:

"This secret treasure is extraordinary. It's not just about condensing the Power of Heaven and Earth; it requires a critical medium. There's something unusual in the blood of those servants. The Demon Sect raised them here not merely for enjoyment but likely more for this secret treasure!"

"Since it can't be stopped, why not go along and let it form? I've been pursuing the Martial Saint Realm without success; perhaps if I can obtain and study this, the Martial Saint Realm is within reach."

"However, this needs to be carefully managed."

The thought flashed, and Ning Qi waved his sleeve. Hundreds of Celestial Swords descended, all transforming into Sword Qi. The initially waning Sword Qi surged again, severing three arms of the Blood Demon cleanly.

At the same time, Ning Qi fully operated his golden pupils, quietly observing the trajectory of the secret treasure's operation. Rays of Spiritual Light rose, continuously analyzing possibilities to finally approach the correct path.

Xiang Tianxing spat blood, his face pale, urgently shouting in anger:

"Why not quickly sacrifice yourselves to become demons!"

The remaining dozen Demon Sect Celestial Beings felt grief, but what choice did they have? Glory shared, loss shared. They glanced at the Grand Elder still urging the secret treasure and resolved to contribute rather than die in vain. The Holy Sect would surely not neglect their descendants.

Three Celestial Beings stepped forward.

"Senior Tianjian, we will never share the same sky with you!"

An angry roar rang out as the three Celestial Beings' flesh merged into the Blood Demon. The previously severed three arms regrew, blood light permeated, blocking waves of Sword Qi.

Ning Qi raised an eyebrow, sensing an imperceptible fluctuation in the Grand Elder's aura, and waved his hand calmly again.

Another two hundred Celestial Swords descended, an unsustainable burst with terrifying might.

Xiang Tianxing was shocked.

But this time, before he could shout, another four Celestial Human Realm members went bravely to their deaths.

"Senior Tianjian, you will die a terrible death!"

The Blood Demon's power surged again. This time, the few Celestial Human Realm members were strong enough to slightly suppress the Sword Qi.

Yet Ning Qi remained calm.

Another three hundred Celestial Swords pressed down.

The few remaining from the Demon Sect were nearly in despair. They so hoped the Grand Elder could hurry, but the Grand Elder showed no signs of awakening.

"Vice Sect Leader, you must protect the Grand Elder!"

"Senior Tianjian, we'll fight you!"

Each Celestial Human Realm member cursed as they self-destructed, even the two young Demon Sect Saint Heirs were no exception. Ning Qi's expression remained calm, though he felt somewhat peculiar. It seemed as if he was the villain now.

He shook his head with a laugh, looking towards the only two remaining.

Xiang Tianxing and the Grand Elder.

At this moment.

Xiang Tianxing was already on the verge of collapse. The Blood Demon had been repeatedly wounded, and as the master of the formation, he had also suffered significant impact. Although the edge of the Celestial Swords had diminished greatly, he was alone now, unable to hold on. The Blood Demon was riddled with holes, unable to recover.

The remaining Celestial Swords pressed down.

Their formidable might almost drove him to despair.

Xiang Tianxing let out a bitter laugh, about to merge with the Blood Demon for one last effort.

A hand grasped him.



The Grand Elder, who had awoken without anyone knowing, held the Blood Pearl in one hand. Blood light illuminated his face, appearing not at all fierce but rather somewhat gentle, and he spoke softly:

"Tianxing, leave the rest to me."

Though his voice was low, anyone could hear the icy coldness within.

While urging the secret treasure, he wasn't completely oblivious to the outside world. On the contrary, he was clearly aware. Each Celestial Being who died brought heartbreak.

At this moment, the Blood Pearl's light was not complete.

But there was no choice.

The time available to him was dwindling.

If Xiang Tianxing died too, then he truly would be left alone. Waiting any longer would be meaningless—it was better to save a Celestial Being for the Holy Sect.

Xiang Tianxing nodded forcefully.

He glared at Ning Qi fiercely, like a child with a parent backing him up. He despised Ning Qi terribly, as this day became the Demon Sect's sorrow. One familiar fellow disciple after another died before his eyes—this old man was more terrifying than a demon.

He desperately hoped the Grand Elder could suppress the old man before him.

Upon hearing the Grand Elder's response, Xiang Tianxing almost cried in joy, yet as he looked at the Blood Pearl, he couldn't help showing a hint of worry. Even though he'd never seen it, he could tell it was incomplete.

The Grand Elder understood his thoughts and said lightly:

"To deal with him, it's enough."

He looked at the countless sharp Celestial Swords, full of confidence.

His eyes held a proud intent—could others understand the power of the Martial Saint?

Chapter 290: Tearing Through the Void, A Bountiful Harvest

The Grand Elder looked up to the sky.

Those incredibly formidable Celestial Swords seemed to become sparse and ordinary, not because they were insignificant, but because he now held a confidence in his heart that allowed him to regard them as nothing.

Xiang Tianxing struggled, controlling the Blood Demon's remnants to leap toward the heavens.

All the remaining blood mist power erupted at this moment, with the Blood Demon howling continuously, finally transforming into a blood-red arc.

"Boom!"

After the earth-shattering sound, the blood-red arc consumed nearly half of the Celestial Swords, causing waves to spread out, further destroying the already ruined Demon Sect's underground palace, making it look even more desolate.

But the remaining Celestial Swords would not show mercy, still suppressing with astonishing momentum.

Ning Qi's eyes restrained the golden light, observing the Blood Pearl in the Grand Elder's hand. He pressed on step by step, forcing the Grand Elder to act. At this moment, it was just right, but caution

was needed, and he also needed to further explore the mystery of the Blood Pearl's power. Although he had already observed for a long time, it was not enough.

Those remaining Celestial Swords were merely a test.

Xiang Tianxing was almost suffocating and could only pin all his hopes on the Grand Elder.

The Grand Elder's robe fluttered and his silver hair danced.

He floated in the air, holding the Blood Pearl as if in devotion.

He suddenly shouted, and the Blood Pearl radiated light, sweeping out a transcendent power, transforming into a rainbow beam, slashing toward numerous Celestial Swords.

Ning Qi's eyes shone with golden light, utilizing the Golden Pupil of Illusion-breaking fully, observing this wondrous power.

"Never have I seen such a marvelous power, its essence seems no different from the Power of Heaven and Earth, but the might it displays is worlds apart, almost like cotton and steel if one were to compare! Not only that, but it also possesses various mysteries, seemingly able to turn decay into miracles!"

"Is this... Martial Saint Power?!"

His heart trembled.

Amidst the sweeping blood-red beam, it was as if he heard voices of fear and wailing floating within, with someone unwilling, reaching out to struggle, but pulled into the depths of the Blood River. He seemed to see a blood-red lotus rising, and a mad demon laughing, all sorts of visions flashing past.

The Celestial Sword wailed, encountering such a tough opponent for the first time.

The Celestial Sword, which had been invincible, was easily cut down by the blood-red beam. Previously, the Blood Demon was ruthlessly suppressed by the Celestial Sword, but now the roles were reversed, and the Celestial Swords shattered, not from exhaustion of power, but from being forcibly broken, a significant difference.

Xiang Tianxing's eyes filled with ecstasy.

The Grand Elder stroked his beard with a smile, all within his expectations.

The blood-red beam returned, fragmenting many Celestial Swords, only dimming a little. The Grand Elder's stature rose step by step, holding the Blood Pearl for the first time at level with Ning Qi, he calmly said:

"True Man Tianjian, you are indeed stunning, a rarity in millennia, surpassing the Celestial Human Realm, approaching the Martial Saint Realm, but... you ultimately do not understand the true power of Martial Saints! In the face of such great power, no matter how demonic you are, you must submit!"

He urged the Blood Pearl, and the energy of the blood-red beam was replenished, bursting forth again with brilliance.

Ning Qi marveled:

"Indeed, an unbelievable power! The Martial Saint Realm, truly the realm that countless Martial Artists yearn for!"

He did not hesitate to praise, even though before him it was merely utilizing Martial Saint Secret Treasure to catalyze Martial Saint Power, it was extraordinary, far beyond what the Celestial Human Realm could compare to, fueling his fervor for the Martial Saint Realm, thinking that perhaps mastering such a mysterious power might truly be the start of eternal life.

The Grand Elder stared down Ning Qi:

"You massacred numerous strong figures of my Holy Sect, your soul should be extinguished, but considering the difficulty of your cultivation, I offer you a chance, open your mind, let me imprint a mark, serve me, and you might live."

This was to recover losses.

In this battle the Demon Sect lost more than forty Celestial Human Realm experts, greatly reducing its foundation.

But if he could enslave such a peerless demon, he could recover more than half, perhaps even profit, the deterrent power of a True Man Tianjian was enough to dominate Great Yan unless Great Yan also used an equivalent of the Blood Pearl foundation.

Ning Qi naturally would not agree, and after a brief moment of respite, more Celestial Swords floated beside him, he merely sighed to himself:

"It's a pity, you are not a Martial Saint."

This time, he had roughly guessed the true power of a Martial Saint.

The Grand Elder snorted coldly:

"Won't shed a tear until you see the coffin, so be it, let you witness once again the mighty power of Martial Saint!"

With such power in hand, he was assured, even somewhat inflated, not caring at all about Ning Qi recovering his strength, intending to break all the pride of the True Man Tianjian before him with absolute dominance, thus making him willingly serve as a slave!

The Celestial Sword howled and transformed into a Sword River across the sky.

The Grand Elder merely waved his hand, and the blood-red beam like a Heavenly Blade, slashed down with overwhelming might.

Not surprisingly.

The Celestial Swords all shattered.

Even Ning Qi's face turned a bit pale, the continuous battle had drained him considerably, although his foundation was beyond ordinary, the consumption was not small, yet everything remained under control.

With successive attacks, he roughly discerned the Blood Pearl Secret Treasure's reality.

Whether it was due to the limitation of the secret treasure itself or the Grand Elder's ability to manipulate it, the upper limit of the blood-red beam was locked, though the power to turn decay into miracles was mysterious, it ultimately bore some rigidity, under the Golden Pupil of Illusion-breaking, Ning Qi saw its flaws.

The Grand Elder, with momentum like heaven, roared:

"Quickly submit, spare you a life!"

The blood-red Heavenly Blade slashed again, replenished with Blood Pearl energy, blossoming into radiance once more. Ning Qi felt a twinge of regret, seeing the Grand Elder squander like this, as the Blood Pearl's energy diminished with every bit used, being an extraordinary power that was finite.