

Cultivating 391

Chapter 391: Another Strike Against the Fifth Realm

Ning Qi was calm and indifferent, simply watching the scene before him quietly, as if he had just crushed not a Fourth Realm Martial Saint, but an ant.

This was naturally expected by him.

Originally, before stepping into the Martial Saint Realm, he could only rely on Martial Saint Secret Treasures to fight against enemies, unable to widen the gap. Now that he has stepped into the Martial Saint Realm, the difference naturally reveals itself. With Ning Qi's foundation, if he couldn't do it this effortlessly, there would be a problem.

He felt pleasure in his heart.

Back in the Black Sand Sea, the Red Sun Martial Saint had humiliated his master. He didn't have the ability to kill him instantly, so he could only take a little interest first. Now that the Red Sun Martial Saint has come to him, he naturally wouldn't be polite.

Rumble!

The fall of the Martial Saint shook the heavens and earth.

Blood rain poured slowly, each drop of Spirit Blood containing tremendous power.

The atmosphere became stagnant.

Originally concentrating on watching the battle, the three Thunderstorm Martial Saints were all stupefied. They instinctively rubbed their eyes, their pupils suddenly constricting, their hearts raging with a mighty storm.

They watched the scene before them in disbelief.

Originally thought to be a dragon and tiger fight, perhaps with an opportunity to fish in troubled waters.

But now, what did they see?

Martial Saint Tianjian had crushed the Red Sun Martial Saint.

Like squishing a chick.

If not for the heavens roaring and Martial Saint blood rain right before their eyes, they would indeed think it was an illusion. But the fact was right in front of them, couldn't help but believe it.

Thunderstorm Martial Saint felt a long screech in his heart, filled with fear and gratitude.

Just a little.

Just a little bit.

He would have been the one crushed.

"Brother Red Sun, you are a good person, in the future, I will certainly incense and worship you frequently."

He mentally sighed with relief, if not for Red Sun Martial Saint coming out first, he would have been the one rushing forward. Now, looking at that young Taoist, he felt unfathomable and deep, his originally arrogant and domineering language now filled with substance.

All three of the Martial Saints were numbed.

They didn't know what to do for a time, staying would seem like they had intentions, but if they left without a word, they would be doomed if Martial Saint Tianjian came to them in the future. They could only stay honestly at a distance.

The members of the True Martial Sect were equally shocked.

Taoist Longshan and Luo Wentian naturally believed in Ning Qi's strength, but they did not expect Ning Qi to so decisively annihilate the Red Sun Martial Saint, such power was simply defying heaven.

After the shock.

The True Martial disciples erupted in earth-shaking cheers.

Every gaze towards Ning Qi was filled with fiery worship.

Except for one person.

After being dazed, turned to extreme hatred and anger.

Martial Saint Ziyue stared blankly at the scene before her, with droplets of Spirit Blood still floating, carrying the aura of her brother Red Sun, but his voice and smile had all disappeared.

Fallen.

She could not accept it.

Everything happened too suddenly, too suddenly. She had prepared for Red Sun Martial Saint's defeat and her ready intervention, but never imagined this, being blasted apart with just a single strike.

"Ah!!!!"

A furious scream accompanied by a terrifying burst of spiritual power, with ripples causing the void to crack like glass, mountains crumbling into dust, especially seeing Ning Qi collecting Red Sun Martial Saint's fallen blood rain towards the Sword Embryo, she felt unprecedented hatred.

"You beast, you seek death!!"

Martial Saint Ziyue went completely berserk.

She and Red Sun Martial Saint had sworn brotherhood, bound with affection. They had promised to not part upon meeting in this life, but just as it began, they were already separated by the heavenly divide.

"I will tear your flesh apart inch by inch to bury with Brother Red Sun."

Her body exuded a chilling aura, Five Elements Qi circulated over her body, a powerful and unmatched aura swept across the void, a bright purple moon appeared behind her, a ribbon at her waist swung out, spilling magnificent purple moonlight.

Thunderstorm Martial Saint was horrified, that was no moonlight, clearly a blade to slash flesh, even if this moonlight wasn't falling toward him, he was terrified, the Five Elements Qi flowing on top was quite frightening.

Fifth Realm Martial Saints and Fourth Realm Martial Saints had the largest gap in a single realm because the former had achieved Five Elements Perfection, not only could they transform the Five Elements at will, mutually amplify, but they could also evolve many powerful methods.

This moonlight was one such method.

It possessed the sharpness surpassing Gold Qi, the softness of Water Qi, the vitality of Wood Qi, and the most dreadful, it had a dreamy feel, faintly uncertain between reality and illusion.

Ning Qi raised an eyebrow.

"Interesting."

After Taoist Baishan reminded him that Red Sun Martial Saint had a powerful sworn sister, he had been vigilant. Originally, his baseline was breaking through to Third Realm Martial Saint, thinking it would not be a problem to battle her. Now stepping into Fourth Realm Martial Saint, he naturally was not afraid.

As for now.

He was probing the mysteries of Five Elements Perfection.

He did not know if, after Spiritual Awakening, there was an existence surpassing Fifth Realm Martial Saint among Ancient Saints, but he reckoned that Fifth Realm Martial Saints were already among the top tier, less likely to avoid dealings later. Moreover, he had to promote to Fifth Realm Martial Saint next, learning more beforehand had no harm.

Ning Qi stepped forward.

The Golden Pupil of Illusion-breaking had already seen through the reality and illusion of the purple moonlight.

His right hand continued to guide the Martial Saint blood rain towards the Sword Embryo, to make use of waste and enhance the innate power of the Sword Embryo.

Chapter 392: Slaying the Fifth Realm Again_2

The left hand raised to form a seal.

Surging spiritual power gathered, mountains shattered and reformed, becoming a grand, ancient, and heavy seal, with a Black Tortoise sitting on top, exuding an aura of suppressing all.

True Martial Seal.

Divided into the True Dragon Seal and Black Tortoise Seal, two Dharma Methods.

Ning Qi was currently using the Black Tortoise Seal.

Boom!

The Black Tortoise Seal moved to suppress the vast moonlight, locking the entire void, regardless of its uncertainty, suppressing it all together!

The moonlight was like a Heavenly Blade, attempting to slice through the Ancient Mountain Seal.

But it only left deep marks behind, while the moonlight shattered under the suppression of the Ancient Seal, its dreamlike aura dissipating like foam. The Ancient Seal continued its relentless suppression toward Martial Saint Ziyue.

The pupils of Martial Saint Ziyue contracted, knowing despite the hatred in her heart, that this opponent was somewhat terrifying.

Clearly just a Fourth Realm Martial Saint, but with spiritual power so magnificent it was unbelievable, with profound foundations unseen for ages.

Having reincarnated through so many eras, yet never hearing of this person's name.

She found it somewhat incredible.

"Who exactly are you, and what grudge have you against me!" Martial Saint Ziyue felt she might be caught in a setup.

The purple ribbon in her hand snapped straight, transforming into a Divine Sword, sword lights tearing through the heavens, shattering the Ancient Seal to pieces. Yet even so, she was blown a thousand zhang away, her breath somewhat ragged.

Who was superior was clear at a glance.

Ning Qi was even more composed in his heart.

After a brief exchange, he had mostly figured out her foundation; if this was all she had, she wouldn't be his match.

He did not speak.

But glanced at the sword embryo in the sky. After infusing Red Sun Martial Saint's flesh and blood, the sword embryo's origin was clearly more substantial. The flesh and blood of a Fourth Realm Martial Saint was no simple matter, and he was somewhat expectant.

Meanwhile, Martial Saint Ziyue's pupils shrank sharply, shouting harshly:

"You anticipated this sword embryo's birth long ago, deliberately luring my brother Red Sun here to nourish the sword embryo with our flesh and blood, creating a Demon Sword! With such malicious intent, aren't you afraid of Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint's pursuit, or being hunted by all the saints!"

Any discerning person could see that Martial Saint Ziyue was somewhat blustering to cover up her fear.

She even brought up Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint.

Ning Qi chuckled quietly.

You really do have an imagination.

"It was you who came looking for revenge, yet now you claim I led you here, how interesting." Ning Qi's gaze locked onto Martial Saint Ziyue, making her shiver, "But you did remind me, a Fifth Realm Martial Saint's flesh and blood should make this sword embryo go one step further."

Upon hearing this.

Martial Saint Thunderstorm and the other two felt parched, Martial Saint Ziyue's previous guess had already made them anxious, and now with Ning Qi speaking, they only wanted to leave this troublesome place immediately.

But they dared not.

They could only continue watching with forced composure.

Martial Saint Ziyue's pupils shrank again, her heart alarmed, as she saw Ning Qi disappear from afar.

"What are you looking at?" A faint voice sounded behind her.

A domineering punch tearing through the void was already coming.

Martial Saint Ziyue's heart pounded, the ribbon instantly expanded, layer upon layer wrapping around herself, but only partially deflecting the punch's power. With a bang, her waist was broken, continuously coughing blood.

She wanted to counterattack.

But two dragon roars sounded in succession.

Water and Fire Two Dragons formed a trapping sky, locking her firmly. This was a move Ning Qi had comprehended with the Yu King Pearl and Great Sun Compass before reaching Martial Saint Realm, capable of joining water and fire. Now that Ning Qi had reached the Martial Saint Realm and refined Water Fire Two Qi, it was incomparable to before.

Martial Saint Ziyue was horrified, manifesting her signature Ziyue, frenziedly slicing with moonlight, but all was melted by water and fire. She gritted her teeth, channeling Ziyue to suppress, only managing to melt part of the dragon's body, escaping was no easy feat.

But Ning Qi evidently wouldn't let this opportunity slip easily.

One move after another.

Martial Saint Ziyue had already fallen into his trap.

The onlookers' hearts raced in shock, seemingly taking long, but in truth, the two exchanged blows swiftly.

Ning Qi's eyes glowed with golden light, cold and indifferent, he pointed a finger, and an amazingly breathtaking Sword Qi appeared out of thin air. This was the Innate Divine Sword Qi, and after stepping into the Martial Saint Realm, its sharpness exceeded before, slashing through, tearing a space crack several zhang wide along its path.

If placed before the world changed, it would probably be ten times wider.

The scene was quite terrifying.

The several Martial Saints were jittery with fear.

This Sword Qi concealed itself within the space crack, impossible to lock onto, moving with extreme speed.

Martial Saint Ziyue, striving to break free from the two dragons' shackles, stared wide-eyed, then her pupils suddenly widened.

She slowly lowered her head.

Her heart had somehow been pierced by the Sword Qi, its terrifying sharpness shattering her vitality.

"You... you... who are you really..."

But before she finished speaking.

The Sword Qi had already torn her to pieces, transforming into a rain of blood.

Boom!

Another Martial Saint fell, the world roared.

A dignified Fifth Realm Martial Saint was similarly subdued by Ning Qi, without much effort.

Martial Saint Thunderstorm and the other two were dumbstruck, everything before their eyes seemed dreamlike, since when could a Fourth Realm Martial Saint so easily slay a Fifth Realm Martial Saint, could it be they awakened in the wrong era?

To reach Fourth Realm Martial Saint or Fifth Realm Martial Saint, how far could innate talent and brilliance differ, most of their competition relied on foundation.

In the past.

At most, a Fourth Realm Martial Saint could compete with a Fifth Realm Martial Saint relying on various means, barely undefeated, which was already an exceptional prodigy.

Everything before their eyes overturned their understanding.

In the distant.

A shabby Taoist was rushing desperately, Taoist Baishan hurried over after dealing with the opportunities at True Profound Sect, trembling at the sound of Martial Saint falling echoes.

"Ning Qi kid... no way? With how monstrous he is, he can't be so unlucky."

He had an ominous premonition in his heart, perhaps a new Martial Saint of True Martial Mountain had been killed.

Taoist Baishan hastened even more.

The Fifth Realm Martial Saint aura unmistakable, Five Elements Qi flowing around his body, extremely fast.

Soon.

True Martial Mountain was in sight.

He immediately saw Martial Saint White Cloud, Martial Saint Heize, and Martial Saint Thunderstorm 'observing' from afar, eyes narrowing, rushing toward True Martial Mountain without concealing his aura. He thought True Martial Mountain was under siege, given the treasure light there exceeded even the opportunities at his True Profound Mountain.

Martial Saint Thunderstorm and the other two felt a chill, another Fifth Realm Martial Saint arriving, making them want to flee the scene immediately.

But soon.

Taoist Baishan froze.

He was just in time to see Ning Qi had already begun to disappear with Martial Saint Ziyue's blood rain nourishing the sword embryo.

White Cloud Martial Saint's mouth twitched slightly.

"Huh?"

The abounding power within that Spirit Blood shocked him somewhat; if he hadn't sensed it, he wouldn't believe a new Martial Saint from True Martial Mountain could be this monstrous.

He felt a bit of ominous premonition in his heart.

After a moment.

Taoist Baishan chuckled bitterly:

"So you're truly a monster!"

He couldn't believe he had rushed over in haste, thinking something had happened, only to now find that it wasn't Ning Qi being overpowered, but the other way around.

As he finished speaking.

Taoist Baishan froze in place, seeing Ning Qi guiding the blood rain of Martial Saint Ziyue to nourish the sword embryo.

The boundless power in that Spirit Blood unsettled him to some extent, and if he hadn't sensed it himself, he wouldn't have believed it.

After a moment.

He let out a wry laugh:

"Ning Qi, you truly are a monstrous being!"

Chapter 393: Boundless Magical Power, Vast Divine Techniques

In front of True Martial Mountain.

Terrifying lightning bolts descended from the sky, with a purplish-black hue. Initially, the sword embryo had already formed, but after Ning Qi had invested all the flesh and blood of two Martial Saints, it transformed again. For this purpose, Ning himself personally used the Heavenly Thunder Technique to summon the lightning.

He had just stepped into the Martial Saint Realm, but from previously observing the heavenly thunder tempering the sword embryo, he had already gained some insight. Now, naturally, he took the Heavenly Thunder Technique a step further.

Boom!

During the tempering by heavenly thunder, the aura of the sword embryo became increasingly sharp.

Taoist Baishan felt a bit envious, as this kind of Spiritual Treasure not only surpassed the opportunity he gained this time, but even his True Profound Seal could not compare.

Meanwhile, the three Thunderstorm Martial Saints watched, both excited and apprehensive, fearing that Ning Qi would not be satisfied and grab them to fuse with the Spirit Sword too, in which case they would be truly helpless.

Time passed.

The heavenly thunder ceased.

The Spirit Sword finally took shape.

The treasures around it grew increasingly radiant, with sword light weaving through, tearing minute cracks in the surrounding void. Even just by relying on the power of the Spirit Sword, such feats were achievable, demonstrating its might.

Ning Qi looked satisfied.

When the radiant glow faded.

The Spirit Sword was fully revealed.

Everyone instinctively looked; the Spirit Sword was entirely silver-white, only three fingers in width, shrouded in a layer of hazy sword light, with sword energy intermittently flickering from the tip. Its might was so impressive that even the Blade Demon felt uneasy.

Ning Qi reached out and beckoned, and the Spirit Sword stopped before him. He sensed the uniqueness of the Spirit Sword, resonating with it, and his expression grew more pleased.

"An innate Five Elements Perfection Spiritual Treasure, Ning, you're truly fortunate!" Taoist Baishan couldn't help but exclaim.

Martial Saint Secret Treasures naturally also have levels of classification.

Generally, they are classified according to the variety and amount of Five Elements Qi contained within.

For example, the Yu King Pearl and Great Sun Compass each only contain one type of Five Elements Qi.

Of course.

At their peak, these two Secret Treasures were more than this, but as time passed, they only retain the initial Spiritual Treasure source of the Five Elements Qi.

His True Profound Seal, although it also achieved Five Elements Perfection postnatally, reached its limit, whereas this Spirit Sword boasts innate Five Elements Perfection, able to continue growing, incomparable.

Furthermore.

Back then, he expended endless effort to forge the True Profound Seal, yet Ning Qi achieved it effortlessly.

Truly vexing when compared.

Ning Qi chuckled lightly.

With just simple attempts, he already knew that this Spirit Sword possessed extraordinary might. Its body alone had the sharpness to tear through the void, and when paired with his Innate Divine Sword Qi, could further strengthen it. Moreover, the Five Elements source within the Spirit Sword could provide him inspiration.

Additionally, the Spirit Sword harbored mysteries, to be explored slowly afterwards.

"Congratulations."

Everyone gathered around sincerely offering their congratulations, genuinely delighted for Ning Qi acquiring such a powerful Spirit Sword.

"Does this Spirit Sword have a name yet, Jiu, have you decided?" Luo Wentian asked with a smile.

Ning Qi didn't think for long:

"Since it was a fortuitous chance descending upon True Martial Mountain, let it be named True Martial Sword."

Although he felt the Spirit Sword could continue to grow, he didn't know how long it would stay with him, and perhaps in the future, it might remain with the True Martial Sect, becoming part of its heritage.

Everyone smiled.

In this way, the spiritual awakening ushered a perfect ending to True Martial Mountain. Now remained some territorial issues requiring handling, since the world expanded over tenfold, a domain originally covering only two prefectures quickly compared to an entire original province, plenty of matters needed closing.

"Congratulations Heavenly Sword Martial Saint on acquiring this Spirit Sword, may your martial journey ascend to the heavens!" Three ill-timed voices interrupted.

This side was harmonious.

The three Thunderstorm Martial Saints were however restless.

Neither staying nor leaving felt right.

In the end, they decided to steel themselves and approach; otherwise, leaving like that would completely offend a powerful Martial Saint.

The three forced smiles, attempting to appease as they congratulated.

Everyone looked, expressions odd.

The previously imposing Ancient Saints now in such a posture drew attention, but thinking back to Ning Qi's astonishing display earlier did invite understanding.

Ning Qi said nothing, merely regarding the three calmly.

Although they hadn't acted, ultimately they were merely deterred. Given a chance, they likely wouldn't have shown mercy, constituting 'attempted robbery,' and thus he didn't offer warmth. Were it not for concerns over Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint, Ning Qi might have dealt with them.

After contemplation, he decided against it.

Red Sun Martial Saint and Martial Saint Ziyue had actively attacked, retaliating and slaying them had justification, but to further dispatch these three would risk thoroughly offending Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint.

The three Thunderstorm Martial Saints felt tense, aware that without presenting an attitude, today's events might be difficult to pass.

"This time it was our fault, please forgive us, Heavenly Sword Martial Saint. Next time, we will prepare generous gifts and come to apologize!"

All three spoke earnestly, ready for significant compensation.

They closely watched Ning Qi.

Finally.

Ning Qi spoke:

"Enough, you may leave."

The three felt as if pardoned, backs drenched in sweat, dealing with such a fierce young Taoist, slaying Fourth Realm Martial Saints as chickens and easily dispatching Fifth Realm Martial Saints; this strength must be among the few able to equalize worldwide.

"Thank you! Thank you!"

The trio prepared to depart eagerly, wishing for wings.

Taoist Baishan's cheerful voice rang out:

"The three should see clearly, this matter involved Red Sun Martial Saint and Martial Saint Ziyue coming to seize treasures and slaughter True Martial Mountain, forcing Taoist Friend Tianjian to fight back and slay the two."

Chapter 394: Boundless Magical Power, Vast Divine Techniques_2

The Thunderstorm Martial Saint grumbled in his heart.

What a forced retaliation!

Yet on the surface, he forced a dry smile and said:

"True Monarch Baishan spoke rightly; we saw it clearly that the fate of the Red Sun Martial Saint and Martial Saint Ziyue was their own doing."

The people of the True Martial Sect all showed a smile.

They watched as the three Martial Saints fled in disgrace.

When the silhouettes of the three disappeared, they laughed loudly.

What a satisfaction!

...

Taoist Baishan didn't stay too long at True Martial Mountain before leaving, after all, with the Spiritual Awakening just begun, there were many affairs at True Profound Mountain that needed handling. Coming immediately here showed great regard for Ning Qi, and now that matters were settled, he naturally wouldn't linger.

But before leaving.

He earnestly reminded Ning Qi that if the Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint visited, he should discuss today's events properly.

"You are not at fault this time, do not stir conflict with him. Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint is not unreasonable, besides, you are much stronger now than the Martial Saints Ziyue and Red Sun, and more valuable than them." Taoist Baishan patted Ning Qi on the shoulder.

He felt some sentiment in his heart, sensing that the help he could provide Ning Qi was growing smaller, as this guy in front of him was definitely a freak, becoming stronger every time they met, to the point now where he wasn't Ning Qi's match—truly ridiculous.

Ning Qi nodded, unable to resist asking:

"What is Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint's realm?"

Taoist Baishan pondered:

"Above the Celestial Human Realm is the Martial Saint Realm, and beyond the Martial Saint Realm is known as the Divine Power Realm!"

"Before the emergence of Life Poison, the Divine Power Realm was already the limit, unaccepted by the world. If one reached this step, only breaking through to ascend was possible; the old saying of Martial Saints ascending actually referred to the Divine Power Realm, though such phenomena have not appeared in a long time, as the presence of Life Poison limits martial artists' progress."

He sighed with some longing in his eyes and continued:

"It's unknown whether the Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint has taken that step."

Ning Qi was struck, slowly pondering the words 'Divine Power Realm', then suddenly a phrase emerged in his heart.

Boundless magical power, vast divine skills.

He had learned from the Profound Turtle Senior that spiritual power was also called magical power. Now knowing that the Divine Power Realm follows the Martial Saint Realm, he instinctively made this association.

A stir of battle intent rose in his heart.

Wondering how he compared now to the Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint?

"Are there many like Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint now?" Ning Qi asked.

Taoist Baishan laughed:

"Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint is one of them, and the Great Yan Martial Saint shouldn't be inferior. Besides that, the old Profound Turtle of True Martial Hall is also one; the others are hidden, mere relics, maybe one or two more, in other words, the number of beings at this level might be counted on one's fingers."

"Your brat's strength might even squeeze into the top five in the world!"

Even he was stunned by this statement.

Previously, he said he could protect Ning Qi, but now it seemed the situation might reverse.

Ning Qi chuckled lightly, about to speak but then hesitated.

Taoist Baishan noticed.

"I know you have some doubts in your heart, but the agreement among the Ancient Saints is an old covenant, known only to the Ancient Saints, which I can't disclose. Only a few of the people I mentioned have the qualification to tell you, but no need to rush. Soon enough, there may be a convening of Martial Saints for a discussion, then everything will be laid out."

This time the emergence of New Saints was considerable.

The Ancient Saints hold not shallow heritage. Besides the few originally Celestial Being Perfection martial artists, some Ancient Saints nurtured and accelerated the creation of Celestial Being Perfection martial artists, allowing them to step into the Martial Saint Realm under today's opportunity.

For example, True Man Baixiang, one of the three true men on True Profound Mountain, has now stepped into the Martial Saint Realm.

Taoist Baishan was busy with these matters recently.

"A hundred saints emerge, truly a spectacle unseen in ages!" Taoist Baishan himself marveled—such a brilliant scene even the Ancient Saints never witnessed before.

If not for the current Spiritual Awakening, vast heavens and earth, more resilient than the peak times before, likely could not bear so many Martial Saints.

"A hundred saints emerge..."

Watching Taoist Baishan leave, Ning Qi murmured softly.

Though Taoist Baishan didn't elaborate, Ning Qi could somewhat guess: behind the brilliant scene often lies an imminent decline; the Ancient Saints meticulously hid the Spirit, and now its resurgence and explosion were certainly for more than boredom.

Perhaps a great crisis looms.

"Enough, pondering brings no benefit. In a few days, I'll visit the True Martial Hall to ask the Profound Turtle Senior."

When he received the True Martial inheritance, the Profound Turtle had told him to visit after stepping into the Martial Saint Realm.

As for finding the location of the True Martial Hall, it's very simple; the Profound Turtle left him a perception mark.

True Martial Mountain was still immersed in a joyful atmosphere.

The gains today were immense.

More than that, it witnessed a peerless battle.

Four Martial Saints from the same sect.

With the likes of White Ape and Zhuang Chen as Martial Saint reserves, and numerous Martial Seeds with exceptional talent and comprehension.

The True Martial Sect had powerfully risen!

And it would only grow stronger in the future.

Ning Qi shared his martial insights with everyone, then prepared for seclusion. This time, having broken through to the Fourth Realm Martial Saint in one go, consolidating his foundation was necessary, and there were many mysteries that needed careful understanding and digestion.

He quietly stood in the Seeking Tao Institute, the Enlightenment Tea Tree towering at ninety-nine feet, creating a scene that blocked the sun—it was incomparable to the past.

Every disciple of True Martial could see it.

But that was not entirely good; in the future, outsiders would inevitably visit the True Martial Sect, losing some of its mysterious quality, and it wasn't wise to flaunt wealth, being observed constantly would inevitably make them targets.

Upon this thought.

Ning Qi waved his hand.

Streams of spiritual power emerged, directing into the surrounding True Martial Peach Trees—this Spiritual Awakening opportunity, with the Enlightenment Tea Tree receiving the main benefit, and the True Martial Peach Trees also gaining some blessings, had resulted in noticeable changes, now smoothly accommodating spiritual power.

Ning Qi used the Peach Trees as the base for an array.

Instantly.

Wisps of white mist spread, soon enveloping the towering Enlightenment Tea Tree.

The True Martial disciples expressed surprise.

Then some regret that they wouldn't see the majestic sight later.

Ning Qi was satisfied and nodded.

This was a White Mist Maze deduced from the place of True Martial inheritance, a small trial during the battle against the Gu God, now wielded with ease and increased influence.

"Afterward, when I have time, I must delve deeply into this. Now that I can command spiritual power, my previous ideas can start being tested—the path of arrays surely leads to mastering divine power."

He mused internally, then sat cross-legged beneath the Enlightenment Tea Tree, breathing gradually stabilized.

He began inner observation.

Clearly perceiving the significant changes compared to before the breakthrough.

"Firstly, the Gang Qi and Primordial Core have already been fully assimilated by spiritual power, now my inner body contains only spiritual power as a formidable force."

"The Three Flowers remain, which I can condense at any time, yet they are much stronger than before, since my Essence, Qi, and Spirit have vaulted to a new level."

"Firstly, Essence—my physical body is stronger; though I still cannot achieve rebirth from severed limbs, the activity of flesh is greatly enhanced, allowing easy recovery to peak state if a limb is reattached, common injuries are insignificant."

"Secondly, Qi—now within me exists only one force, spiritual power; previous Gang Qi has been fully assimilated by spiritual power, and even the Primordial Core is likewise, this is one reason my spiritual power is so abundant."

"Lastly, Spirit—affected by spiritual power, the transformation of Divine Intent has altered into a more potent force, not only revealing the surrounding but also impacting reality, according to prior Martial Saint Techniques this is termed spiritual sense."

Ning Qi experienced each aspect, finding them novel, and internally satisfied.

Every breakthrough was a wholly new experience.

"However, while the Three Flowers persist, they are no longer the primary means; the most formidable now are the Five Organs and Five Qi."

"Currently, I possess the Four Qi of Gold, Wood, Water, and Fire, just lacking the cultivation of Earth Qi within the spleen organ."

Inner observing himself.

Streams of spiritual power circulated within, mostly converging in the heart, liver, lungs, and kidneys—these four organs shimmering, markedly different from the spleen.

Chapter 395: Five Elements Divine Sword Qi

The reason Martial Saints are called 'Saints' is due to their extraordinary origin rooted in spiritual power.

Besides the spiritual power flowing through their bodies, most of it is concentrated in the five organs. With each breakthrough to a new realm, the quality and quantity of spiritual power both double, with the addition of a new type of Five Elements Qi, thus making the might of the spiritual power even stronger.

Ning Qi's thoughts shifted, and instantly, the light of metal, wood, water, and fire flickered continuously at his fingertips.

And that's not all.

This is merely the most basic.

Based on the Five Elements Qi, it can evolve into other powerful forces. For example, Thunderous Power and Wind Power originate from Wood Qi, while White Cloud Power and Ice Power come from Water Qi.

Compared to other Martial Saints, Ning Qi's control over the Five Elements Qi is much more flexible, even with lacking Earth Qi. With just four elements, a sort of cycle is formed, becoming even stronger.

Various powers continuously manifest.

In Ning Qi's mind, spiritual light rose, gradually aligning the myriad paths he mastered with spiritual power.

At the same time.

Numerous martial arts and information regarding the Martial Saint Realm that he had previously acquired from the True Martial Hall were continuously being assimilated, transforming into nourishment for his strength.

"However, it's still incomparable to the true Five Elements Perfection and their endless cycle. Some power transformations are not that smooth." Ning Qi quickly noticed the drawbacks.

But there's no help for it.

This is the result of an imperfect realm.

If he steps into the Fifth Realm of the Martial Saint, it will be resolved, and by then, Ning Qi's power will become even stronger.

"It's not easy to step into the Fifth Realm of the Martial Saint. In reality, every breakthrough in the Martial Saint Realm probably takes centuries. The reason I was able to do it so easily before was due to the benefits of the Spiritual Awakening. When the source manifested, shortcuts could be taken. Now, even if I have a spiritual treasure containing Earth Qi in front of me, I can't just break through all at once."

"Only by continuously accumulating and honing spiritual power, allowing the body to adapt to changes, can Earth Qi naturally emerge. Only then can the Five Elements Perfection be achieved, breaking through to the Fifth Realm Martial Saint."

"At my current pace... perhaps it will still take a few years?"

Ning Qi was silent.

This is already an extremely fast speed, enough to leave other Martial Saints amazed.

But he was not satisfied.

"If that's the case, then seek external power. Luckily, I'm familiar with this."

Ning Qi smiled.

Back when he was in the Gang Essence Realm, he once tapped into the Power of Heaven and Earth to refine Gang Qi. Later, in the Celestial Human Realm, he utilized thunder to refine the Three Flowers. The principle was always to refine oneself with stronger power to expedite cultivation.

"Now that I have cultivated spiritual power, finding a power stronger than it is scarce..."

Ning Qi's gaze involuntarily turned to the horizon.

More accurately, to the depths of the High Heaven.

There.

Lies the extremely terrifying thunderstorm forbidden zone.

He is no longer the same as before, and the thunder on the periphery is probably already useless, but the deeper thunder can still be effective. He can sense that even his current self cannot traverse the thunderstorm forbidden zone.

With guidance for the future, given some time, he can create a Dharma Method to refine spiritual power with thunder.

However, he was not in a hurry.

For him, the only obstacle in the Martial Saint Realm is this. Afterward, the mutual generation of the Five Elements, their endless interplay, which is a bottleneck extremely difficult for other Fifth Realm Martial Saints, is instead not a problem for him. With his understanding, achieving this is straightforward.

"But all Martial Saint techniques end here."

"Taoist Baishan said that after the Martial Saint Realm is the Divine Power Realm, but so far, there are no records about the Divine Power Realm. To know more, I still need to visit Profound Turtle Senior."

Ning Qi made up his mind.

After consolidating his gains from this time, he would seek out the old Profound Turtle.

He took a deep breath, casting aside these thoughts.

His cultivation couldn't quickly increase in the short term, but his combat power was not yet at its peak. There are still many Secret Techniques and ultimate skills of the Martial Saint Realm that are only in a nascent form, waiting for him to perfect. Moreover, the True Martial Sword, this spirit sword, is yet to be developed.

Ning Qi's thoughts moved, and the silver-white spirit sword broke through the air from the side, landing steadily in his hand.

Carefully examining the natural patterns on the sword body, he seemed thoughtful.

"This seems to be... a sword array."

Ning Qi was intrigued.

He had previously sensed that, besides amplifying the sharpness of sword qi, the True Martial Sword also held other mysteries. Upon careful contemplation, he immediately discovered the exceptional nature within.

Spiritual power operated, activating it.

In an instant.

The True Martial Sword blazed with light, the sword patterns on the blade seemed to come alive, and then various colors of sword qi burst forth. Although these single strands of sword qi were not as terrifying as Innate Divine Sword Qi, they were still extremely potent. Most importantly, each of those strands of sword qi clearly encompassed the Five Elements.

"Five Elements Sword Qi?" Ning Qi's mind was continuously illuminated with spiritual light.

Under his watch, the strands of sword qi stood in five directions, with Golden Sword Qi, Wood Sword Qi, Water Sword Qi, Fire Sword Qi, and Earth Sword Qi each displaying their might, then forming a sword array where the Five Elements gathered together, tearing through the void within the sword array.

The power of the sword qi surged dramatically, ripping open a massive black hole in the void.

Ning Qi's eyes revealed a different hue.

"The might is remarkable, and it stands shoulder to shoulder with the Innate Divine Sword Qi. However, each has its merits. Innate Divine Sword Qi excels at penetration, while this Five Elements Slaughter Sword Array integrates the Five Elements for a forceful annihilation."

He was very pleased.

Being able to rival the Innate Divine Sword Qi was already exceedingly rare. At least among the Martial Saint inheritances from the True Martial legacy he obtained, even the top-tier Slaughter Techniques slightly paled in comparison to the Innate Divine Sword Qi.

Chapter 396: Five Elements Divine Sword Qi_2

"However, it can still be improved."

"What if the Innate Divine Sword Qi could be merged with this Slaughter Sword Array? That would surely amplify its power!"

Ning Qi's eyes sparkled with brilliance, and inspiration surged in his heart, already flashing with ideas.

His accumulated insights continuously nurtured various thoughts in him.

"The first step is to transform the Innate Divine Sword Qi into the Five Elements, then it can be integrated with the power of the Sword Array."

"The Innate Divine Sword Qi itself is already strong enough, and if it's simply combined with the Five Elements arbitrarily, it would backfire. Therefore, a deeper and more ingenious combination is needed! If successful, it will become the Five Elements Divine Sword Qi, and even without the Sword Array, the power of this sword qi would advance further!"

Ning Qi continued to comprehend the True Martial Sword.

The sword patterns bore various profound mysteries, and the sword contained the Five Elements. If he could understand it, it would surely greatly aid Ning Qi in developing the Five Elements Divine Sword Qi.

Inside the Seeking Tao Institute.

The branches of the Enlightenment Tea tree drooped, occasionally swept by the breeze, lifting the hem of his Taoist robe, making Ning Qi appear like an immortal being.

He sought the Dharma, created methods, and with a single thought, myriad ideas flashed.

This was a scene beyond the imagination of everyday people.

His past comprehension of the Path of the Five Elements also played a role, and his understanding of other paths allowed him to draw analogies.

...

Spiritual Awakening had only happened a day ago.

But the world had already changed dramatically.

The tenfold expansion of heaven and earth weakened the original world's connections, and even within the Great Yan Dynasty, many different voices emerged, some people naturally developed ambitions, but if not for the overwhelming reputation of the Great Yan Martial Saint, it might have already led to chaos.

But even so.

The many private territories once occupied by Ancient Saints had completely severed their ties with the Great Yan Dynasty.

Some governed as sects, while others declared themselves kings and established nations.

The world was in an uproar.

Many's power surged due to Spiritual Awakening, but others lost their lives because of it, and everyone needed time to adapt to the new world.

The True Martial Sect domain was no exception.

Fortunately, Luo Wentian had various contingency plans ready, making the control much faster.

Additionally, the events on the day of Spiritual Awakening were broadcasted by True Martial City, and the feat of Ning Qi slaying two saints further skyrocketed his reputation, deterring any ambitious individuals from within the territory.

The True Martial Sect had four Martial Saints.

A terrifying foundation.

Suppressing the current two states was a breeze.

However.

The disciples of the True Martial Sect were also very busy.

Spiritual Awakening, a dramatic change in heaven and earth, and apart from the major opportunities on that day, new opportunities could emerge anywhere, such as a Spirit Fruit appearing in an unknown corner, or a Spiritual Ore being discovered, or some sort of Spiritual Object.

This required the disciples of the True Martial Sect to search for them.

Especially within the True Martial Mountains, these opportunities were more abundant, and even the Blade Demon and two others were not idle, searching carefully, as some places could only be handled by them, and they needed to explore whether any dangerous areas appeared within the True Martial Mountain borders.

Throughout the True Martial Sect, only Ning Qi was undisturbed.

Everyone knew that Ning Qi was now the true foundation of the True Martial Sect, and as long as he was strong, the sect could stand firm, and while anyone else's cultivation might be interrupted, Ning Qi's could not.

Ning Qi was happy with this arrangement.

He smoothly progressed in comprehending the Five Elements Divine Sword Qi.

His past insights supported him forward, every tome and Taoist Scripture was nourishment, giving him deep understanding of the Path of the Five Elements.

At this moment.

He had already succeeded.

Inside the Seeking Tao Institute.

Streams of spiritual power gathered before Ning Qi, as he closed his eyes and evolved within his mind.

"Innate Divine Sword Qi is a Secret Technique granted by heaven and earth to the Innate Sword Bone, to transform into the Five Elements naturally requires pursuing the origin and matching positions."

He felt a sudden enlightenment flash like thunder in his heart, opening his eyes abruptly, with a confident smile appearing in his eyes.

With a casual point.

"This is Geng Metal Divine Sword Qi!"

A golden sword qi, carrying unparalleled sharpness, tore through the void, more incisive than the Innate Divine Sword Qi of before, as if slicing through the soul.

"This is Jia Wood Divine Sword Qi!"

A green sword qi, slightly weaker in sharpness but containing an eternal vitality, flashed and disappeared, still possessing great momentum.

"Ren Water Divine Sword Qi!"

"Bing Fire Divine Sword Qi!"

A blue and a red sword qi reflected each other, one continuous and endless, the other explosive and overbearing, each with distinct characteristics, both possessing extreme sharpness, unable to be contained by the void.

Ning Qi laughed heartily.

"Four of the Five Elements Divine Sword Qi have been obtained. Only the Wu Soil Divine Sword Qi cannot be condensed, as I have not reached the Fifth Realm and do not possess Earth Qi. Even if forced, it would be merely illusory."

"However, even so, the power of these four sword qi I've created is stronger than the previous Innate Divine Sword Qi!"

"Once I reach the Fifth Realm Martial Saint level, the five sword qi of the Five Elements will gather, and with the Five Elements Slaughter Sword Array unleashed, the power will be unimaginable, perhaps even beyond the Divine Power Realm capable of breaking through worlds and ascending."

He was deeply satisfied in his heart.

The short time of seclusion was highly effective, allowing him to make significant progress.

He continued to close his eyes.

Starting to deduce the Myriad Phenomena Scripture, he needed to add a Supreme Dharma Method to temper spiritual power with the Thunderous Forbidden Zone, and once he made a trial attempt in High Heaven without issue, he would visit the Profound Turtle.

...

As Ning Qi rapidly grew.

A piece of news caused a sensation in the world, for although the world had expanded more than tenfold, the spread of urgent secretive news remained swift, and since the True Martial Sect did not deliberately cover up, the events atop True Martial Mountain on Spiritual Awakening day quickly spread far and wide.

"Red Sun Martial Saint and Martial Saint Ziyue were both slain by Martial Saint Tianjian?"

Upon learning this news, most Martial Saints gasped in disbelief.

Red Sun Martial Saint and Martial Saint Ziyue were not common Martial Saints; they were paragons of their era, newly awakened, reportedly as Fourth and Fifth Realm Martial Saints, standing at the pinnacle overlooking all beings.

Yet such existences fell together.

There's even a rumor that Red Sun Martial Saint was crushed like a chick in one grasp.

This was truly shocking.

"How is this possible? Could it be a rumor? No matter how strong Martial Saint Tianjian is, could he really be this fierce?"

Some Martial Saints instinctively doubted and secretly visited the Red Sun Sect domain.

But what they saw was ruins.

The Blade Demon and two others, leading the disciples of the True Martial Sect, had already rounded up everyone involved, showing no mercy in taking what was needed.

The Martial Saints were stunned by the sight.

Rumors spread that when red Sun Martial Saint was like a chick being squeezed effortlessly.

They also heard murmurings that Martial Saint Tianjian had caused both to fall.

And then it was said that Red Sun Martial Saint was squeezed like a chick and crushed with one hand.

Some Martial Saints instinctively disbelieved, and went to probe discreetly within the Red Sun Sect for more accurate information.

But they saw nothing of him.

The three of the Blade Demon avoided visiting guests behind closed doors, unwilling to discuss the matter at all.

This reaction caused even more astonishment among the Martial Saints.

This almost amounted to tacit admission.

It seemed that such a demonstration had gone beyond the realm of the Fourth and Fifth Realm Martial Saints, perhaps even comparable to those strongest beings.

The Thunderstorm Martial Saint was left chuckling at the predicament.

There was nothing more to say.

The bigger Martial Saint Tianjian's fame grew, the more troubled they were by what kind of gift would be enough to calm the situation.

Now that everyone knew, it was no longer possible to cover it up quietly, otherwise, it would not only severely damage the other party's face.

The three Martial Saints were all troubled.

The whole True Martial Sect was busy, full of life.

Yet, instead of waiting for compensation from the three Martial Saints, a most unexpected visitor arrived at True Martial Mountain first.

In the distance.

A figure draped in a Taoist Robe and leaning on a cane slowly made his way over.

It was the Heaven Slaying Martial Saint.

Ning Qi, with a slightly serious expression.

The True Martial Mountain hadn't yet received compensation from Thunderstorm and the three Martial Saints, but instead welcomed a most unexpected visitor in advance.

This unforeseen visitor was slowly approaching, holding a cane.

.....

Chapter 397: Let me tell you a story

The aura of the Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint is far stronger than before, not because he deliberately revealed it, but because Ning Qi sensed it.

In his eyes, faint golden light flows, and the Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint before him is like a tyrannical, unparalleled giant blade, full of oppressive aura, which the Martial Saint Ziyue cannot compare with.

"Even if not at the Divine Power Realm, probably not far off." Ning Qi was secretly vigilant in his heart.

It is still unclear whether the Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint is friend or foe on this journey.

The elder's hollow pupils looked over calmly and said:

"Young friend of the Celestial Sword, peeping at others openly is not a good habit."

Without knowing when, the Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint had already walked up True Martial Mountain, and disciples' hearts inexplicably pounded. Luo Wentian and others arrived upon hearing the news, and all their pupils shrank fiercely. The reputation precedes the name, who in the world does not know the name of the Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint? There are rumors that he is the Orderer among the Martial Saints.

"The Spirit Mountain has a great phenomenon, rich in fortune, a good place indeed." He continued, marveling at the extraordinariness of True Martial Mountain.

Ning Qi slightly bowed:

"Pardon me, senior Heaven Slaying."

Peeping openly with the Golden Pupil of Illusion-breaking was indeed inappropriate. Previously, not knowing the other's intention, he instinctively used it, wanting more confidence. Now vaguely perceiving that the Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint harbors no significant malice, he doesn't mind saying some pleasantries.

The other's words clearly indicate that he knows Ning Qi is not an Ancient Saint.

"Many years ago, I had a fleeting glimpse of the young friend. At that time, most of my consciousness was dormant, yet did not know the young friend was so extraordinarily brilliant—it's lamentable." He recalled past events.

The members of the True Martial Sect felt relieved upon seeing the two conversing peacefully.

They already speculated why the Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint was here; the deaths of the Red Sun Martial Saint and the Martial Saint Ziyue needed an explanation.

Ning Qi said with a smile:

"In the past, my eyes also failed to recognize Taishan, and I thought senior was merely an ordinary storyteller. While obsessively seeking Martial Saint secrets, senior enlightened me. The legend of the Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint has inspired me for a long time."

The Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint nodded with a rare smile.

"Later, meeting the young friend again in the Black Sand Sea, I realized the young friend's talent was unprecedented. Unfortunately, if only born a thousand years earlier, or even a hundred years would be good." His regret was apparent to everyone.

Ning Qi asked:

"Why?"

The Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint did not answer but asked instead:

"Was it you who killed the Red Sun Martial Saint and the Martial Saint Ziyue?"

The smile on his face gradually faded, coupled with those hollow pupils, it felt somewhat eerie.

"Yes." Ning Qi said calmly.

He did not say for what reason, as the reason no longer mattered. What mattered was that he indeed killed two Martial Saints, which violated the other's taboo.

"You know I don't advocate life-and-death confrontations among Martial Saints."

There was a mysterious aura gathering around the Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint, making everyone anxious. Just a trace of momentum ripple made their souls tremble, yet Ning Qi's expression remained unchanged:

"They brought about their own demise."

The Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint exclaimed:

"Good 'bringing about their own demise'! If that's the case, if my strength surpasses yours, then you too 'bring about your own demise'!"

Luo Wentian and others felt discontented.

Clearly, the Red Sun Martial Saint and Martial Saint Ziyue came to kill and plunder, yet this Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint seemed indiscriminately partial, but they dared not speak. A strong person of the Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint's level needed respect.

Ning Qi's Taoist robe slowly fluttered:

"Senior may give it a try."

His gaze was indifferent.

He could sense that although the Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint seemed angry, he was not genuinely so. Taoist Baishan had said before that the deaths of the Red Sun Martial Saint and the others were in vain, the Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint could not act further, but on the condition that Ning Qi demonstrated proper value. He said, as long as the Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint wasn't blind to the heart, he could discern priority and severity.

Within Ning Qi was a fighting spirit.

He had stepped into the realm of Martial Saint, and also deduced the Five Elements Divine Sword Qi. That previous battle was not satisfying.

"Very well." The Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint returned to calm once more.

But it was evident to those watching that his aura around him was increasingly terrifying.

Spiritual power gathered from all directions, unknowingly, True Martial Mountain was already shrouded in dark clouds, a single thought mobilized the heavenly phenomenon, far more terrifying than the Celestial Human Realm, the intense oppression forced Blade Demon and others to protect the True Martial disciples and retreat far away.

Such a battle was not something they could intervene in.

Then.

The Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint moved.

He gently tossed the cane in his hand, and in an instant, the wind and clouds changed. The cane expanded infinitely, transforming into a heaven-reaching giant pillar. Taoist Longshan's pupils shrank sharply. He had seen this move from the Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint on True Profound Mountain, directly pressing the heads of the three top-class powerhouses like the Barbarian Emperor unable to lift up.

And now.

This heaven-reaching giant pillar was far stronger than before.

The void trembled and shattered, unable to withstand such terrifying oppression, pieces of 'spatial debris' fell off, the scene was somewhat appalling, True Martial disciples were all wide-eyed, while Blade Demon's dark pupils were the widest, he murmured to himself:

"That is..."

Before the words were completed.

A crisp long chant was heard, and white light erupted from the giant pillar, a domineering sharpness tore through the sky, manifesting in the world.

"What a terrifying blade!" Blade Demon was thoroughly shocked, with incomparable fervor in his eyes.

He considered himself the Blade Demon, being the world's best blade before the Ancient Saint's revival, but now, he felt somewhat insignificant; that terrifying Blade Intent made him tremble.

Correct.

This was not any heaven-reaching giant pillar, nor any cane, but clearly a blade, a blade still sheathed!

At this moment.

As the giant blade slowly drew, its true form emerged.

Chapter 398: Telling You a Story_2

This was the Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint's way of showing respect to Ning Qi.

Ning Qi's breathing slightly quickened, and there was a sudden realization in his eyes:

"So... this is the intent of Heaven-Slaying?"

He had always been somewhat puzzled as to why the Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint had such a title, and now he finally had the answer. This kind of unparalleled blade intent truly deserved the name Heaven-Slaying.

As the true form of the giant blade was revealed, Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint's aura became even more domineering.

He extended a finger.

The giant blade then roared downwards, splitting the space like fragile paper, an enormous, terrifying rift extending outwards across the sky. It seemed as though it was going to sever the heavens, and the scene was extremely frightening, creating the feeling that even True Martial Mountain might be cleaved in two.

Ning Qi let out a gentle breath, his eyes showing no panic, only fighting spirit.

Within his body, his four organs instantly coordinated, and a surge of spiritual power erupted forth, catching Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint's attention.

But what shook Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint more was the sword intent that similarly surged skyward. Within it, he saw many paths, and even faintly glimpsed a shadow of his own Heaven-Slaying Blade Intent, which he found somewhat incredible.

This was naturally what Ning Qi comprehended from his earlier observation. However, Heaven-Slaying Blade Intent was deep and inscrutable, and Ning Qi still needed a little time to integrate its essence.

Now was not the time to think about these things.

Facing this Heaven-Slaying strike, he too needed to give it his all.

"Jia Wood Divine Sword Qi!"

With a thought.

The liver within his body immediately exploded with radiant light.

Ning Qi wielded the True Martial Sword, lightly swiping it, merging the dense Wood Qi and sword intent, and in the next moment, a cyan sword Qi carrying unmatched sharpness and a sense of endless vitality transformed into a dragon towards the heavens.

Rip!

The void was torn like cloth.

Though the sword Qi was several feet long, it seemed rather insignificant compared to the giant blade, yet its power was not inferior at all.

Under the tense gazes of everyone, the giant blade and sword Qi collided violently.

No earth-shattering explosion as one might have imagined; instead, they mysteriously 'stuck' together, becoming still. But only the Blade Demon and the other two Martial Saints could see clearly that at the point of contact, lines of spiritual power were constantly disintegrating and breaking apart, while the sword Qi, eternally vibrant, was perpetually eroding the might of the giant blade.

Ning Qi's choice was very deliberate.

Each of the Five Elements Divine Sword Qi had its focus, and facing this domineering Heaven-Slaying strike, going head-to-head was not a good choice; Jia Wood Divine Sword Qi was undoubtedly the best solution.

A circle of faint ripples spread outwards and then disappeared without a trace.

Both were very restrained; otherwise, just the aftermath would be sufficient to shatter True Martial Mountain. At such a level, scorching mountains and boiling seas was a trifling matter; a Martial Saint's destructive power was extremely terrifying.

But as it stood.

The sword Qi and giant blade were clearly evenly matched.

Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint's expression was calm, but his heart was filled with turbulent waves.

His hollow eyes stared at Ning Qi, finally sighing and saying:

"The young generation is truly fearsome."

He waved his hand, and the Heaven-Reaching Giant Blade returned to its sheath, then transformed in his hand into a plain and unremarkable walking stick.

The wind calmed, and the clouds dispersed.

As if everything before had been an illusion.

Ning Qi simply said flatly:

"You're flattering me."

He knew.

The opponent hadn't used full strength, and just wanted to test his limits with a single move. As seen from the result now, of course, Ning Qi hadn't used all his strength either; it wasn't worth going all out when it wasn't a life and death confrontation.

Everyone held their breaths, a sense of immense pride welling up inside.

Who was the opponent on the other side?

The Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint!

An unrivaled strong person that could make all ancient saints of the world bow and yield.

But now.

He was only evenly matched with Ning Qi.

The eyes of each True Martial disciple were shining; if they weren't concerned about the Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint's face, the crowd would probably have already erupted in cheers. Even so, many couldn't hide their joyful expressions.

The Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint paid no attention to these reactions; he simply looked toward Ning Qi and said:

"Since you killed Red Sun Martial Saint and Martial Saint Ziyue, you must take on their responsibilities."

The words were calm, as if stating a fact.

Ning Qi raised an eyebrow:

"Tell me about the covenant of the Ancient Saints."

The Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint nodded and said:

"You have the right to know."

The remaining people couldn't hear the subsequent words; from their perspective, Ning Qi simply locked eyes with the Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint for a moment, and then both disappeared from sight.

The Blade Demon and the other two exchanged glances, understanding where the two had gone.

Within the Seeking Tao Institute.

Ning Qi and the Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint sat opposite each other, Yuan Tiancheng respectfully brewing Enlightenment Tea before retreating.

The Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint praised:

"What a Seeking Tao Institute, what a Spiritual Ape, what an Enlightenment Tree!"

Ning Qi merely extended his hand in invitation:

"Please taste."

This was a treasure birthed from the Enlightenment Tea Tree's transformation, possessing miraculous effects.

The Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint took a small sip, his body going stiff as if savoring it, only putting down the teacup after dozens of breaths.

"Indeed, a fine tea."

Ning Qi's lips curved slightly; he had detected the envy in the Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint's words. This kind of treasure, even for Ning Qi, had some benefit, let alone for others. The Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint was powerful, but his understanding could never surpass Ning Qi's, perhaps even incomparable.

"You're flattering me," Ning Qi modestly replied, and then fell silent, just quietly sipping tea, waiting for the Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint to speak.

He wanted to know what this so-called responsibility of taking over from Red Sun Martial Saint and Martial Saint Ziyue entailed.

The Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint too quietly sipped tea, the emptiness in his eyes carrying a hint of desolation.

After a moment.

A voice tinged with heaviness finally spoke:

"Let me tell you a story."

Ning Qi earnestly replied:

"I'm willing to hear it in detail."

"Long ago, there existed a wondrous world where the Martial Path flourished, and life thrived in abundance. During that time, the Martial Saint Realm wasn't esteemed; there were legends of even stronger individuals breaking the boundaries to ascend. The world was prosperous, and some Absolute

Strong Persons believed that this world was about to ascend, capable of accommodating beings stronger than Martial Saints."

"One after another, Martial Arts Strong Persons pressed forward, and the world's civilization grew ever more brilliant."

"But then one day, everything changed. A formless, terrifying poison descended upon the world, merging with Spiritual Qi — the foundation of Martial Path civilization. In an instant, countless strong persons perished from expired lifespans, spirit beasts died in wails, and people called it Life Poison. This calamity came to be known as the Life Poison Catastrophe."

"Yet among the living beings were extraordinary talents who, through collective brainstorming, finally thought of a way to weaken it after enduring several years."

"Life Poison seemed no longer so terrifying. Although Martial Path civilization withered much, there was ultimately hope for a renewed splendor."

"But people slowly realized that the existence of Life Poison severely limited the Martial Artist's potential ceiling, and the whole Martial Path civilization was gradually declining, producing fewer and fewer Martial Saints."

Ning Qi slightly held his breath.

He had already realized what the Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint was talking about; it was the era of ancient brilliance in this world, of which now not even a trace remained in records.

At this point.

The fluctuations in the Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint's emotions were visibly noticeable.

His voice bore heaviness as well as anger and killing intent.

"But that's not all. As time passed, new Martial Saints, ones who fused with Life Poison, emerged, marking the beginning of true disaster as the invaders arrived!"

"Life Poison was theirs to deploy!"

"On that day, one despairing powerhouse after another appeared beyond the world. Perhaps any one of them could annihilate everyone; even through the world's barrier, the oppression was suffocating."

"That's when everyone realized the newly emerged Martial Saints were the world's Tao Marks. When enough people had refined both Spiritual Qi and Life Poison into their bodies, those Tao Marks became exceedingly clear, guiding them to connect with the world."

"Fortunately, due to the world's suppression, those despairing powerhouses couldn't descend; the strongest this world could accommodate were Martial Saints. However, even so, they dispatched numerous Martial Saint-level invaders."

"On that day, rivers of blood flowed, all beings were slaughtered, and there were endless cries of woe."

"This world's powerful individuals rose in resistance, many of them extraordinarily talented, but it was futile."

"The gap was much too large; the number of invaders was ten to a hundred times that of this world's strong persons."

Unknowingly.

Ning Qi had been listening with bated breath, his pupils filled with a solemn expression.

A hundred times the number of current Martial Saints?

Just thinking about it felt suffocating.

Chapter 399: Mountain and Sea Realm

Even if the number of Martial Saint-level experts back then wasn't as large as now, we can assume there were at least thirty percent. After all, it was the lingering resonance after the ancient glory.

And what does a hundred times the quantity mean?

Thousands of Martial Saints!

Even more!

Ning Qi's expression turned serious.

Even if there were only thousands of First Realm Martial Saints, they would be enough to destroy this world dozens of times over. The power of a Martial Saint is far superior to the Celestial Human Realm, not to mention that these invaders surely don't just have First Realm Martial Saints; it's likely there are numerous Fifth Realm Martial Saints among them.

By this comparison.

There is no chance of victory.

By normal logic deduction, this world should have been destroyed long ago.

Yet, since it still exists, it indicates an unexpected formidable power intervened.

"What happened afterward?" Ning Qi asked softly.

The Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint stood up, gazing toward the sky, taking a deep breath:

"As you might have guessed, under normal circumstances, we would definitely not be opponents. In fact, that's exactly what happened; we were defeated step by step, one strong person after another died in battle, everyone was in despair."

Mildly spoken, yet it was a painful era.

"Fortunately, at the crucial moment, the world consciousness awakened!" His eyes burned with fervor.

"Even the invaders did not anticipate this change. According to them, the consciousness of our Lower Realm is extremely difficult to awaken. Perhaps the efforts of generations of predecessors paid off, and our world, which was already on the brink of ascension, awakened in such extreme conditions!"

"The power of world consciousness is undeniable; it empowered the Martial Saints of our world, dramatically increasing their strength, allowing the invaders to be easily annihilated. Victory was in sight, and the world consciousness even destroyed the connected world channels, erasing all previously formed Martial Saint Tao Mark imprints."

"But, it didn't come without a cost."

"The newly awakened world consciousness was not stable; after this battle, it almost dissipated, but finally, with collective effort, it was merely put into slumber."

In these brief words.

Ning Qi seemed to witness a glorious and moving history of resistance, inevitably involving many touching stories.

He sighed lightly in his heart.

Clearly.

The invasion isn't over.

The Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint continued:

"The crisis is only temporarily alleviated; we already know that there are observers intending to invade our world, and their strength is far superior to ours! The power of world consciousness is already strong enough, but let me tell you, the strong individuals who appeared outside the world sky that day, among them, there are many stronger than the world consciousness!"

"If not for some form of restriction, they alone could destroy us. According to them, we are a Lower Realm, while they are the Upper Realm."

This feeling is very despairing.

Ning Qi felt an intense pressure.

His understanding was extraordinary; given enough time, he had confidence not to lose to anyone, but the problem is that there may not be that much time now.

However, combined with the co-appearance of Ancient Saints and Spiritual Awakening, he realized that time was indeed running out.

At this moment.

He vaguely understood why the Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint had been avoiding internal conflicts among Martial Saints; they are the main force against the invaders in the future.

Yet Ning Qi did not regret.

Killed is killed; such people might betray him in the future.

He said nothing, merely waiting for the Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint to continue, wondering what the connection with the covenant of the saints was.

The Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint clasped his hands behind his back, and within his vacant eyes, it seemed like myriad rays of light were shooting outward:

"Indeed, they are very strong, but it is absolutely impossible for us to sit idly and await doom!"

"It's unclear when the invaders will continue to descend, but we need to prepare in advance. After this battle, we are not entirely ignorant about them; we've gained some understanding."

"The so-called Upper Realm is named the Mountain and Sea Realm; initially, the experts above Martial Saints ascended by breaking through the realm, and in their mouths, we are referred to as the Jiazi 1673 World. This name is revolting; Martial Realm is our original name."

He snorted coldly, venting his discontent, and then continued:

"After that battle, all remaining Martial Saints sat down to brainstorm, analyzing how to deal with the next invasion."

"We have grasped several key pieces of information, first and foremost being that the Mountain and Sea Realm is the Upper Realm of our Martial Realm. Theoretically, as long as our cultivation reaches the Divine Power Realm above Martial Saint, we can break through to ascend. However, they have natural limitations when descending to the Lower Realm."

"Therefore, they released Life Poison, intending to limit the growth of our Martial Realm's strength, but more importantly, to form Tao Marks. Life Poison roots itself in the Spiritual Qi, and imperceptibly forms anchor points."

"But these anchor points aren't apparent; if someone from our Martial Realm steps into the Martial Saint Realm, refining the Spiritual Qi into their body, Life Poison will merge with the flesh and soul, and these anchor points will transform into Tao Marks. Only when enough Tao Marks exist can they link the world channel!"

"Therefore, our first step is to buy time."

Ning Qi's face showed a look of realization:

"So, you collectively erased the Martial Saint Techniques, not wanting anyone to step into the Martial Saint Realm and form Tao Marks."

The Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint nodded and said:

"It hasn't been completely erased; if an extraordinarily talented individual emerges, they will be given the opportunity to achieve Martial Saint Techniques. There needs to be a balance; we must maintain enough Martial Saint combat power while preventing the number of Martial Saints from being too many, to avoid immediate invasion from the Mountain and Sea Realm."

Chapter 400: Mountain and Sea Realm_2

Ning Qi sighed softly.

Obviously, the further one goes, the fewer opportunities there are, and it might even become impossible for those who come later to achieve Martial Saint.

This might seem somewhat unfair to future generations, as the pathway upwards grows increasingly narrow, but in the face of world crises, there are more pressing concerns.

Soon, he grasped a blind spot.

"Then what is the current Spiritual Awakening all about, and why has the Heaven and Earth Spiritual Qi changed into that former state?"

The Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint said:

"This involves another decision, namely the Saints' Pact."

"Eradicating the Martial Saint Technique to prevent an abundance of Tao Marks can only buy time. According to our calculations, as long as Life Poison exists, even if not a single new Martial Saint is born, over time, this world's channel will once again be constructed."

"We know that the great war is bound to return someday!"

"And the last time we managed to win, it was entirely due to the will of the world. But now, that will has fallen asleep, and we have no idea when it will awaken, so this becomes the focal point."

"After continuous discussion and deduction, we finally settled on a decision."

"Which is — to strip away the Spirit, hide it deep within the world, and ultimately let it erupt!"

At this point.

A trace of pride surfaced on the Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint's face. This earth-shattering plan consumed generations' efforts.

Ning Qi's gaze was fixed.

Previously, Taoist Baishan had mentioned that the Spirit being hidden was artificial, and it turned out it was a collective decision by the Martial Saints.

"How is this related to awakening the will of the world?" Ning Qi already had some guesses.

The Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint chuckled:

"Surely, you've used a bow and arrow? The greatest power of the bowstring erupts when it's drawn the tightest. By stripping away and concealing the Spirit, and then letting it erupt after a long period, the impact will be maximized, inevitably awakening the will of the world, perhaps even surpassing its peak!"

Ning Qi nodded.

He felt that using a spring as a metaphor might be more appropriate. He was somewhat in awe, realizing one shouldn't underestimate the wisdom of people worldwide, as these extraordinary ideas are truly remarkable.

"This is a grand project. Generations have hidden the Spirit until it was wholly achieved thousands of years ago. During this process, the manifestation was the decreasing concentration of Spiritual Qi, until it ultimately transformed into what you know as the Power of Heaven and Earth. During this era, it was also referred to as the End of Dharma Era."

"This plan achieves three benefits with one move."

"Firstly, the concealed Spirit can be used to restore the will of the world."

"Secondly, after the Spirit is concealed, it can suppress Life Poison to a certain extent."

"Thirdly, it complements our previous plan of eradicating the Martial Saint Technique. Once Spiritual Qi ceases to exist entirely, even with the Martial Saint Technique, one cannot set foot into Martial Sainthood."

"In response to this, we old-timers from the previous era survived by various means, during which some perished, while others gifted and talented joined."

"It wasn't until the present era that we collectively revived."

"This is the Saints' Pact!"

His words fell.

The Seeking Tao Institute was utterly silent.

Waves surged in Ning Qi's heart, and he had to admit that when all the truths were revealed, he was quite astonished.

He had previously guessed there might be external enemies, but he hadn't expected them to be so formidable.

"So, is the will of the world about to awaken too?" Ning Qi asked.

The Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint nodded:

"Correct, once the Spirit has awakened, and after some time, when the deep-rooted Spiritual Qi completely stabilizes, the will of the world will fully awaken. At that time, it will be a great opportunity for us."

Ning Qi was startled. If even the Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint called it an opportunity, it likely involved the mysterious and unfathomable Divine Power Realm.

"After a while, we will convene a Martial Saint assembly to explain the situation to the newly ascended Martial Saints. No matter what, we have a common enemy."

"Mountain and Sea Realm!"

The Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint gazed into the distance, as if wanting to pierce through the sky.

Ning Qi remained silent.

"Is the world channel of the Mountain and Sea Realm about to open again?"

The Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint said softly:

"Indeed, even though we've done our best to control the number of Martial Saint Tao Marks, with the prolonged erosion of Life Poison, the world channel will inevitably reconnect. So, controlling the number of Martial Saints is pointless. Hence, all Martial Artists in the Celestial Being Perfection state were granted the Martial Saint Technique during this Spiritual Awakening."

"Be prepared to fight."

Ning Qi said:

"How long do we have?"

The Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint shook his head:

"Maybe ten years, maybe five, maybe at the next moment, who knows?"

He seemed somewhat carefree.

Seeing Ning Qi's grave expression, he smiled and said:

"Don't worry, unless something unexpected happens, we should be fine until the will of the world awakens."

Ning Qi exhaled deeply.

He didn't know how he felt inside.

He longed for eternal life.

But he had never found hope in the Martial Realm, and even the rumors of ascension were vague. Now he finally knows that ascending is real, and there are upper realms with more powerful beings possessing even longer lifespans.

Yet, his emotions were mixed.

That upper realm... is the enemy indeed.

Considering eternal life now seemed premature. The most important thing was overcoming the looming obstacles, and he felt a sense of urgency.

Ning Qi said:

"Since I've understood the cause and effect, I will shoulder the responsibilities of Red Sun Martial Saint and Martial Saint Zi Yue."

He wasn't unreasonable.

Red Sun Martial Saint and Martial Saint Zi Yue were indeed the main forces against the invaders. Since he killed them, he wouldn't pretend nothing happened. Currently, everyone is in the same boat; if one prospers, all prosper; if one suffers, all suffer.

The Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint waved his hand with a sigh:

"I already know the fault isn't yours; it's just a pity. The previous act was merely to see your current strength, so please don't mind."

Ning Qi shook his head.

He had known from the start that the Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint bore him no ill will; otherwise, he wouldn't have shared so much with him.

The two sat in silence, quietly sipping tea.

After a moment.

The Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint stood up leisurely:

"Thank you for the Enlightenment Tea today, young friend. I have something to gift you."

With those words.

He pointed with his finger, and a mass emitting a heavy aura flew out from his chest pocket.

Ning Qi looked over and saw a palm-sized stone, dark yellow throughout with natural patterns, and his eyes lit up as he detected a rich Earth Qi aura from it.

"This is the Earth Vein Essence Stone; it might be of some help to you, young friend," the Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint said with a cheerful smile.

Indeed.

Ning Qi was very tempted.

He was just short of Earth Qi to step into the Fifth Realm Martial Saint. Although he needed to grind on his own for it, with the Earth Vein Essence Stone, he could save a lot of effort. He regretted a little, thinking that if he had this treasure on the day of Spiritual Awakening, he might have reached the Fifth Realm Martial Saint in one leap.

Yet for now, it was just the timely aid he needed.

Not being pretentious, he thanked him:

"With gratitude, I will shamelessly accept it. Thank you, Senior Zhan Tian."

The Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint waved his hand with a laugh:

"Consider it an apology for visiting with a blade today."

He recognized Ning Qi's world-defying potential, regrettably lamenting his late emergence in the world, for perhaps the Martial Realm could have produced an unprecedented powerhouse, but even now, Ning Qi's power surpassed most Ancient Saints, standing at the pinnacle of the Martial Realm.

He didn't mind giving Ning Qi a hand.

This was also helping himself.

After speaking.

The Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint glanced at the Enlightenment Tea Tree before leaving through the air.

Ning Qi looked at the Earth Vein Essence Stone in his hand, slightly dazed.

The arrival of the Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint took him somewhat by surprise.

"The Mountain and Sea Realm..."

He muttered to himself, gripping the Earth Vein Essence Stone tighter.

He felt that he needed to seize the time to step into the Fifth Realm Martial Saint or even stronger.

Ning Qi never relied on others for hope, not even the will of the world could ease his mind.

"Perhaps, I must quickly visit the True Martial Hall."

He wished to hear what the old Profound Turtle had to say, realizing that not all could be taken at face value from the Heaven-Slaying Martial Saint, for there might be information unknown even to him.