

Cultivating 71

Chapter 71: The Senior Brother and Sister's Shock

"Jiu, since this peach fruit is gradually becoming enchanted, why not give it a name?"

Luo Wentian suggested.

Ning Qi fell into contemplation, thought for a moment, and said:

"Since our gathering is called the True Martial Peach Assembly, let's call it the True Martial Spiritual Peach."

He really wasn't good at thinking of names.

Everyone laughed, noticing Ning Qi's laziness, but the name was decent, and moreover, since it was the peach tree Ning Qi had planted and cultivated, he could name it whatever he wanted.

However, their gaze towards Ning Qi was even more filled with amazement.

To this day.

As Ning Qi revealed more and more wonders, they had already understood that this junior brother of theirs was far more formidable than they had imagined.

"Just if one day junior brother suddenly shows strength beyond ours, I fear it would also be reasonable."

As this thought arose, several true disciples shook their heads and laughed, thinking that day might still be a bit far off.

After all, Ning Qi was not yet eight years old.

For other peers, they had just begun stepping into the Martial Path.

Everyone drank heartily, tasted the peach fruit, and their spirits lifted, releasing the pressure accumulated in recent days, turning into even greater motivation. During the exchange, they also talked about the upcoming Celestial Being Grand Ceremony, encouraging each other not to disgrace the sect, but everyone tacitly avoided asking Ning Qi about the Gang Condensing Pill to not burden him with too much pressure.

This made Ning Qi couldn't help but feel a bit helpless.

Originally, he had thought to wait for his senior brothers to ask him and then casually bring it out.

Unfortunately, things did not go as he wished.

As the sky darkened.

The moon rabbit rose high.

The group was already preparing to leave.

Ning Qi smiled and stopped them:

"Senior brothers and sisters, please wait for a moment, I've prepared some gifts for you."

Each person received a standard wooden box from the True Martial Sect into their hands, and several people immediately showed curiosity, Ye Qinghe smiled and said:

"Jiu, is it because you know I like eating the spiritual peach, and you have prepared another one for us?"

Ning Qi smiled without speaking.

Their curiosity deepened.

The others still considered their pride, while Ye Qinghe directly lifted the lid of the wooden box.

In an instant, everyone was stunned.

In the wooden box.

What came into view was not a spiritual peach; instead, a shiny black pill greeted their eyes. They were much familiar with the exotic aroma; what else could it be if not the Gang Condensing Pill?

This time, no one cared about modesty anymore; they all opened their own wooden boxes, and one by one, Gang Condensing Pills appeared before their eyes.

"Jiu, you... you succeeded?"

Luo Wentian's excited voice trembled slightly.

One by one, excited and enthusiastic glances fell on Ning Qi, who smiled and nodded:

"Fortunately, I didn't disappoint, though it consumed the previous Gang Condensing Pill, and the medicinal materials in the treasury were also used up."

Receiving Ning Qi's confirmation, everyone laughed heartily.

"Jiu, you truly are a genius!"

They held back from cheering, but their hearts couldn't control the pounding.

To be honest.

That day, although Ning Qi said he was somewhat confident in reverse-engineering the formula for the Gang Condensing Pill, everyone had not held out much hope, because if it were that easy to reverse-engineer a formula from a single pill, Gang Condensing Pills wouldn't be so precious.

They supported Ning Qi simply because he was their junior brother.

Unexpectedly.

How long had it been, and Ning Qi actually succeeded, not only reverse-engineering the Gang Condensing Pill formula but also successfully refining so many Gang Condensing Pills, previously they had modestly refused that one Gang Condensing Pill, not because they didn't want it, but because there weren't enough Gang Condensing Pills.

Now it was alright, one per person, more than enough.

"With this, senior brother and the second senior brother both hope to break through to the White Mist Realm before the Celestial Being Grand Ceremony!"

Everyone thought of this at the first opportunity, smiling.

At that time.

With Jiang Baishan added, the sect would have three White Mist Realm cultivators, which could adequately hold the scene, not appearing too sparse.

"Huh, there's something else underneath?"

At this time, the voice of the sixth disciple Sun Chuanhai attracted everyone's attention.

He lifted the second layer of the wooden box.

A piece of white paper and several bottles of pills fell into their view.

All showed a puzzled look; they recognized the previous Gang Condensing Pills, but now these items seemed unfamiliar.

All eyes instinctively turned to Ning Qi.

Ning Qi felt somewhat satisfied; it had always been the sect that created conditions for his growth without sparing effort. Now, finally giving something back to the sect made him feel a different sense of accomplishment and satisfaction.

He didn't keep it a secret, smiled, and said:

"This is an incidental gain during the reverse-engineering of the Gang Condensing Pill. The jade bottle contains the Sleep Dream Pill, which, after consumption, allows entering a special cultivation state. The white paper records the Sleep Dream Skill, which, combined with the Sleep Dream Pill, permits cultivation during dreams, accelerating the condensation of inner strength."

"This thing is useless to the fifth senior brother, of small effect to the senior brother and the second senior brother, but to the third senior sister and you others, it can accelerate cultivation."

With these words, silence fell.

Everyone was dumbfounded.

The previous Gang Condensing Pill was remarkable enough, but now, what had they heard? A secret technique and matching pill to accelerate the condensation of inner strength!

They were not ascetics hiding in the mountains without contact with the outside world.

Naturally, they understood what this meant.

After a moment, the sculptures came alive again, Luo Wentian and others exchanged bitter smiles, ultimately becoming intense amazement:

"Jiu... when you make a move, it's truly astonishing..."

At this moment.

The seemingly radiant figure of Ning Qi in their eyes seemed to be cloaked in a certain aura.

Ning Qi laughed, yawning.

"Junior brother is tired, senior brothers and sisters should return early to rest."

Saying so, he turned and headed back to the house.

Looking at the relaxed and natural Ning Qi, everyone exchanged smiles, and the radiant aura around Ning Qi unknowingly faded, leaving visible only Ning Qi's form.

"No matter how extraordinary junior brother is, he is always our junior brother."

...

After the brief True Martial Peach Assembly, the true disciples plunged into even more rigorous cultivation.

Having received Ning Qi's Sleep Dream Skill and Gang Condensing Pill, everyone was even more diligent.

Especially Ye Qinghe and several other disciples still in the Inner Essence Realm, who felt the wonder of the Sleep Dream Skill, experiencing that inner strength could still be condensed during the Sleep Dream, with efficiency more than doubling.

As for Luo Wentian and Xiong Shi, the two masters at the ninefold Inner Essence Realm, they adjusted their states fully, preparing to use the Gang Condensing Pill to break into the White Mist Realm.

As for Ning Qi,

His cultivation had also reached a critical moment.

The inner strength in his body had once more formed a bond with the physical body, about to enter the eighth Fake Death.

If successful this time, Ning Qi would arrive at the Ninefold Inner Essence Realm, which is the Realm of Perfection!

After that would be the ninth Fake Death.

At that time, it would be the moment to ascend to the White Mist Realm.

But for now, Ning Qi was somewhat looking forward to seeing what would be different upon reaching the Realm of Perfection.

"Tiansheng, be my guardian."

After giving instructions, Ning Qi entered his eighth Fake Death with strands of anticipation.

Chapter 72: Consecutive Breakthroughs

Having gone through so many fake deaths, Ning Qi was already well-versed in the process; he could now enter a state of 'tranquility' with his eyes closed.

His breathing was so faint as to be inaudible.

Eventually disappeared completely.

Ning Qi's incredibly formidable physical body became desolate.

...

Unexpectedly.

When Ning Qi woke up, it wasn't like the previous two instances where half a month had passed; this time, twenty days had gone by.

"It seems that Inner Essence Realm Perfection is somewhat different."

Ning Qi's eyes shone with divine light.

He felt his state was unprecedentedly good, his Essence Yuan was abundant, and his body felt comfortable.

With eight consecutive fake deaths, Ning Qi's body was now nine times stronger than when he first reached Body Tempering Realm Perfection!

This was exceedingly exaggerated.

One must know that Ning Qi had originally forged a Supreme foundation, now enhanced to nine times the original, it's unimaginable how strong his body truly was. It wasn't just about physical power; this strength represented an all-encompassing fortitude, profound in depth.

"Perhaps I could even match the physical body of a Celestial Human Realm expert who focuses on the Flower of Essence. I wonder how my body compares with the Wang Family Ancestor's."

The details of the battle between the Wang Family Ancestor and Taoist Longshan spread throughout Qing State, and Ning Qi was naturally aware that Ancestor Wang had reversed vitality, transforming decay into miraculous, earning accolades from many.

Ning Qi thought that perhaps he could also achieve this step now.

If he didn't conceal the vitality in his body, it would be enough to outshine the entire True Martial Mountain.

Of course.

Even if his physical body could rival Ancestor Wang's, it didn't mean Ning Qi could fight against him. Ancestor Wang's formidable physical body was only a vessel; the Power of Heaven and Earth was his true strength.

"Besides, there's the matter of lifespan; I feel my lifespan is possibly double that of an ordinary Inner Essence Realm!"

"My comprehension has improved again!"

Ning Qi slightly moved his body, with a crystalline sheen covering his physique, he calmly focused, beginning to comprehend this most significant breakthrough.

With Inner Essence Realm Perfection, the biggest change was naturally in Inner Strength.

For a typical Inner Essence Realm Perfection, Inner Strength is almost tangible, able to extend nearly a yard outside the body, just waiting for the final transformation to condense into Gang Qi, to completely solidify it, and kill from a distance.

But Ning Qi long ago, when at the Eightfold Realm, could extend his Inner Strength ten yards.

And now...

Ning Qi stood in the courtyard, lightly pointed.

An invisible, formless Inner Strength shot out like a thread, and a peach tree branch thirty yards away quietly slid down, the cut incredibly smooth, Ning Qi then mentally commanded it, causing the peach tree branch to hover and spin back, slowly landing in Ning Qi's hand.

Ning Qi's mouth revealed a smile.

"If I recall correctly, the fifth senior brother's Gang Qi could only shoot thirty yards, if it went beyond that, its power greatly diminished."

"And now, my Inner Strength can extend as far as thirty yards, even surpassing the going but never returning effect of Gang Qi, and now I can also allow my Inner Strength to leave my body!"

Ning Qi flicked his finger lightly, waves of Sword Qi and Blade Qi shot towards the sky.

Nearly achieving an effect similar to Gang Qi, even the power was much greater than Gang Qi, Ning Qi's Myriad Phenomena Chapter could make his shot-out Inner Strength possess various magical effects.

It's incredibly intimidating.

"It's a pity that the essence hasn't undergone the final transformation, otherwise it wouldn't require such huge expenditure."

Ning Qi shook his head with a smile; even though his Inner Strength within his body was amazingly vast, it couldn't sustain such expenditure. His ability to let Inner Strength leave his body relied entirely on recklessly stacking it up, equivalent to having a faucet wildly unleashing Inner Strength while fighting.

Only Ning Qi could afford such consumption.

However, to him.

The most reasonable way to fight was still wielding the thirty-yard long 'Inner Strength Great Cleaver' to slay enemies; if Ning Qi were placed on the battlefield, he could mow them down like grass.

"My current combat strength, if unleashed completely, maybe I could battle a Primordial Core Realm?"

This was not him overestimating himself, but a conclusion drawn from several battles with Gang Essence Realm experts; he had estimated conservatively, most recently realized Ape King True Form and Unity of Heaven and Man, two great Secret Techniques, could greatly enhance his combat strength.

Ning Qi felt joyful.

Unknowingly, he had already reached such heights; looking around the world, he could be considered a strong individual.

Yet, he needed to continue settling.

Combat strength is only to protect the Dao, one's own realm is the foundation.

"Next, it's all about preparing for the last fake death with full force, achieving Great Dream Nine Deaths Strength Perfection, naturally advancing to Gang Essence Realm!"

Ning Qi was somewhat expectant.

The typical Gang Essence Realm has a lifespan of four hundred years; he would only be stronger.

There was still a long time before autumn and winter; he felt it wasn't an issue to advance to Gang Essence Realm before his master emerged from seclusion.

...

Time flows gently, summer was lush.

Ning Qi's cultivation was steadily progressing; for him, Gang Essence Realm posed no bottlenecks; it just required accumulation, then it would naturally break through.

Meanwhile, the True Martial Sect also welcomed good news successively.

True Disciples continuously broke through.

With Ning Qi's Sleep Dream Skill and Sleep Dream Pill, a group of True Disciples at Inner Essence Realm mostly advanced a small realm; after all, the initial effects were the best, especially Ye Qinghe, who even used this to break through to Inner Essence Realm Perfection, though time was needed for consolidation, unable to rise to Gang Essence seamlessly.

Thankfully.

The first disciple Luo Wentian and second disciple Xiong Shi did not disappoint everyone.

With Gang Condensing Pill assisting, coupled with both cultivating Stacking Strength Skill, their foundation was solid, breaking through with no surprises.

Luo Wentian first broke through to Gang Essence Realm.

And ten days later.

Xiong Shi closely followed, stepping into Gang Essence Realm.

At once.

The True Martial Sect was rapturous.

From now on, aside from Taoist Longshan the Celestial Human Realm unparalleled expert, the True Martial Sect had as many as three Gang Essence Realm members, although all were at White Mist Realm, it was enough to present well, holding the fort at the Celestial Being Grand Ceremony.

Coincidentally, the three happened to cultivate each one of the Heaven-shaking True Gang, Earth-shaking True Gang, and Sea-covering True Gang, forming a joint strike technique, showing a glimpse of 'Nine Great Celestial Beings versus Martial Saint'.

As a sect established merely decades ago, such growth speed was already exceedingly remarkable.

It was foreseeable.

Once these True Disciples completely mature, the future True Martial Sect would surely be a giant dominant force.

Following that, Jiang Baishan, Luo Wentian, and Xiong Shi had a few sparring sessions, those battle scenes made True Martial Sect disciples dazzled, each aspiring in heart, yet unsurprisingly, Jiang Baishan was still the strongest.

After all, he was the first to step into White Mist Realm and had the highest aptitude.

Ning Qi felt the joyous atmosphere within the sect and couldn't help but feel delighted, cultivating was more smooth than before.

But.

He still devoted most of his energy to his own matters.

Reading classic texts, cultivating, creating techniques, growing trees, practicing alchemy, teaching the White Ape...

Ning Qi was content.

The Celestial Being Grand Ceremony was an event for the True Martial Sect; Ning Qi was attentive, but he felt in the long future, such occurrences would be plentiful, thus he needed to seek inner peace amid the noise, getting accustomed early.

Anyway, whatever needed to be done, Ning Qi was doing.

And when it was time to exert effort, he wouldn't shy away.

Chapter 73: Illusion-breaking Spirit Eyes

Although Taoist Longshan has not yet exited seclusion, preparations for the Celestial Being Grand Ceremony are in full swing.

After Luo Wentian broke through to the Gang Essence Realm, he devoted himself once more to the countless affairs within the sect.

Currently, the True Martial Sect is bustling with activity.

Many pavilions require renovation, with some even being dismantled for reconstruction, necessitating the help of skilled craftsmen and martial artists. Given the steepness of True Martial Mountain, just transporting materials up is quite an effort. Fortunately, the sect has many disciples, so there's no worry there.

The commotion is considerable, and Ning Qi can occasionally hear snippets, even in the quiet corners of the Seeking Tao Institute.

He occasionally observes the changes from afar, feeling both familiar and unfamiliar with the place, having been at True Martial Mountain for nearly eight years. This is the first time there's been such extensive renovations.

Nonetheless, it's a good thing.

Luo Wentian also told him that the originally small town at the foot of True Martial Mountain is continuously expanding, growing into a city. After all, the influence of a Celestial Human Realm expert is different from that of a Gang Essence Realm expert.

The world is becoming increasingly unstable, but having a Celestial Human Realm expert nearby deters villainous rogues.

Many are drawn by reputation, even wealthy merchants and gentry are relocating their families here.

Many are inquiring about how to join the True Martial Sect, making earlier disciples immensely proud and filled with a sense of belonging to the sect.

Throughout Qing State, eyes are on the True Martial Sect, wondering when it will start issuing invitations.

There's great anticipation for the Celestial Being Grand Ceremony, where Celestial Being experts will discuss the martial path. It's been a long time since Qing State birthed a Celestial Human Realm expert.

Everything is proceeding in an orderly manner.

Ning Qi quietly cultivates.

Steadily advancing towards the Gang Essence Realm, the Three Realms of Gang Essence: White Mist, Jade Liquid, and Primordial Core. He is becoming increasingly close to the White Mist Realm.

Mostly due to his strong inner strength, otherwise transforming into Gang Qi would be simple.

The autumn wind slowly blows across True Martial Mountain.

Ning Qi has not stepped into the White Mist Realm, whereas White Ape Yuan Tiancheng completed the breakthrough beforehand.

"Four years to complete body tempering, faster than I imagined. It seems Tiansheng's bloodline is indeed extraordinary."

Ning Qi regards the White Ape absorbed in fist techniques from afar, nodding slightly with satisfaction in his eyes.

This cultivation speed is incomparable with him, yet still astounding when compared to other humans.

This is due to the White Ape's highly intelligence, perfect compatibility with the Ape King Stance, and bloodline awakening.

None of the three can be lacking.

At this moment.

White Ape's movements are sometimes swift as lightning, sometimes slow. His entire figure has merged into the sunset, manifesting the Ape King Divine Intent, making it seem as if a Heaven-Reaching Ancient Ape is roaring at the sky, moving mountains and filling seas.

His physical body is flawless, and he is at the critical moment of generating inner strength.

But then, Ning Qi's eyes reveal an expression of surprise.

He says, "Huh," noticing something amiss.

In an instant.

White Ape lets out a low growl, and his figure rapidly swells.

The silver-white fur grows with the wind, and a Silver Giant Ape, standing two and a half meters tall, appears in the courtyard, silently roaring in the sunset light, seeming extraordinary. But Ning Qi has seen this scene before, at most showing the Ape King's true form, where the White Ape's physique grows larger.

What truly surprises him are the White Ape's pupils.

Their original slight golden hue has become much more prominent, almost half now, carrying a distinct meaning.

Ning Qi watches silently, suppressing his curiosity.

Until the White Ape fully vented, returning to his original form.

"Master, I've ascended to the Inner Essence Realm!"

White Ape is extremely excited.

Feeling the powerful force within him, there's a dreamlike sensation. Once, he merely hoped to defeat that Iron-Armed Ape, but with his current strength, any punch might call the Iron-Armed Ape's father.

All this was bestowed upon him by Ning Qi.

He looks at Ning Qi with gratitude and admiration.

Also rejoicing in his past decision, had he stayed in the mountains, even if his bloodline awoke someday, he would only be a bewildered beast, unable to witness the true martial path. He feels, if he continues to follow Master, he might reach a height beyond his imagination.

Ning Qi smiles and nods:

"How do you feel?"

"Unprecedentedly good, my body perfect, spirit enhanced, an all-around improvement. The Ape King true form is stronger, even the bloodline has further awakened!"

White Ape speaks as his pupils gradually turn golden.

Yet he holds Ning Qi in great respect, the golden eyes do not look at Ning Qi.

Ning Qi sees White Ape's gesture and asks:

"What changes have happened with the golden pupils?"

Previously, when his bloodline first awakened, White Ape mentioned that if he concentrates, moving objects would slow down. Now further awakening likely reveals more wonders.

"My bloodline seems to contain some information telling me this talent is called Illusion-breaking Spirit Eyes. In my view, common beings slow down a lot, but it doesn't work for very strong ones. I also seem to see things I couldn't before."

He scratches his head, looking a bit simple.

The Illusion-breaking Spirit Eyes are just emerging, and he's still exploring; the talent is far from its complete state.

Ning Qi is quite surprised by this talent.

"Illusion-breaking Spirit Eyes, breaking illusions..."

He ponders.

"Try and look my way."

Ning Qi operates the Silence Technique and Body Shifting and Bone Changing, his aura vanishing, true visage concealed, transforming into a youth covered in pockmarks.

White Ape eagerly attempts.

And then is dumbfounded.

Under the gaze of golden eyes, not the slightest flaw, Ning Qi appears as an ordinary person, yet how could his Master be ordinary? Furthermore, his Master doesn't look like this.

"Master's realm is too high, I can't see through." White Ape feels somewhat ashamed.

Ning Qi returns to his true form, laughingly waving.

He distinctly felt a strong probing force just now, but since comprehending the Celestial Being Unity Secret Technique, optimizing the Silence Technique and Body Shifting and Bone Changing once more, ensuring that even Celestial Being experts cannot see through him, White Ape being unable to see through is expected.

Conversely, he thinks White Ape's talent is potent, perhaps someday breaking through all illusions.

Ning Qi does not use inner strength to delve.

He has tried several times.

With his current realm, unearthing the Ape King's true form is the limit; understanding bloodline power might require Celestial Human Realm capability, then, aided by the Power of Heaven and Earth, perhaps uncovering the essence of Illusion-breaking Spirit Eyes.

He holds some anticipation.

"Continue to deeply explore your bloodline and martial path, don't slack off." Ning Qi advises.

His expectations for White Ape grow ever higher.

Strong bloodline and martial path cultivation, combined, would make the White Ape incredibly powerful, cannot merely be gauged by martial path realms, can even say, even without martial path cultivation, the White Ape's current bloodline strength can compete with Inner Essence Realm experts.

White Ape respectfully nods.

Ning Qi then imparts the recently created Ape King Strength to White Ape and resumes cultivation.

Counting the time, he's nearly ready for the ninth Fake Death.

Chapter 74: Flying in the Sky

Seeking Tao Institute.

Ning Qi practiced the Great Dream Nine Deaths Strength, able to feel that his Inner Strength was on the verge of transformation. For ordinary people, the final leap of Inner Strength Ninefold Gang Formation requires great effort to gradually transform.

But in Ning Qi's extrapolation, during the final fake death state, his physical body and Inner Strength would transform on their own.

Luo Wentian visited.

He brought another batch of recently collected medicinal herbs, including two sets of Gang Condensing Pill herbs, expedited from some industries under the True Martial Sect. To acquire more in the future, one would have to accumulate them slowly.

It wasn't that Luo Wentian wanted Ning Qi to practice alchemy, but rather that Ning Qi requested it himself.

"Jiu, while the Alchemy Dao is indeed remarkable, beware not to lose the main focus and get lost in it."

Luo Wentian couldn't help but remind.

He feared that his little junior brother might indulge too deeply in refining the Gang Condensing Pills, neglecting his Martial Path cultivation. Although unaware of Ning Qi's current realm, everyone implicitly recognized Ning Qi's future as surpassing all his peers.

Ning Qi nodded with a smile:

"Elder Brother, I understand."

He merely wanted to try it during his leisure time, to see if he could develop a pill formula that could accelerate Gang Essence Realm cultivation.

The cultivation in the Gang Essence Realm was a long, grinding process. Even a genius like Taoist Longshan could take ten years to break through one realm. Ning Qi's creation of the Myriad Phenomena True Gang, while formidable, primarily excelled in 'embracing myriad phenomena'.

"As long as you're aware, don't blame your elder brother for being nagging."

Luo Wentian stood up smiling, knowing Ning Qi never needed others to worry for him, yet couldn't resist saying one more word, an instinctual care.

"I'll be leaving now. The master will probably come out of seclusion soon, and I need to be fully prepared before he does."

Ning Qi said:

"I was about to enter seclusion for a while. If the master comes out, please inform him that I can't come to greet him."

Luo Wentian waved his hand as he went away.

Ning Qi looked at the array of herbs and smiled knowingly.

He performed an inner observation of himself.

Inspired spiritually.

His Inner Strength and physical body were completely intertwined.

It was already late autumn, the wind chilly, but it couldn't dispel the joy within Ning Qi.

"Tiansheng, don't go out during this period."

With a reminder, Ning Qi strode into the interior.

He took a deep breath, slightly excited; although he had undergone eight consecutive fake deaths, this final one was particularly crucial: the Inner Strength Ninefold Gang Formation, a qualitative metamorphosis.

Adjusting his state, Ning Qi gradually emptied his mind.

He entered a state of tranquility, as if sinking into a chaotic space.

...

Thump!

Thump!

Thump!

His physical body was pulsing, life essence surging from the depths, carrying a rhythm that only Ning Qi himself could hear.

Inner Strength and life essence combined, beginning to produce inexplicable changes.

Above the vast and silent Dantian space.

The first wisp, like white mist, emerged.

Then, strands of fine rain fell straight down, permeating the entire space.

Time slowly passed.

The white mist gathered more and more, indistinct, like a hazy mist marsh.

Until one moment.

A faint hum resounded.

Ning Qi opened his eyes, feeling a sense as if time had elapsed. Though he was familiar with fake death, this period of sleep far exceeded his expectations.

"A whole month."

He exclaimed somewhat.

Originally imagining this final fake death would last similar to the previous one, he underestimated the magnitude of his Inner Strength and physical body, with the new Gang Qi white mist coalescing akin to marsh-like rain, unimaginably vast.

This also took a long time to transform.

Fortunately, everything was worthwhile.

Ning Qi had heard a few senior brothers describing their internal conditions.

None could compare to himself.

"Is this the Gang Qi Realm? Truly powerful."

Ning Qi reflected, and with a thought, Gang Qi flickered at his fingertips — a power incomparable to his previous Inner Strength.

"White mist, jade liquid, and Primordial Core, are technically three forms of Gang Qi."

"The cultivation of the Gang Essence Realm lies in incessantly refining Gang Qi, merging it with life essence: achieving initial gaseous white mist to solid Primordial Core; then attempts at 'Divine Union of Heaven and Earth,' 'Unity of Heaven and Man,' attaining the Celestial Human Realm."

The cultivation within the Gang Essence Realm bore no secrets for Ning Qi.

Even the cultivation technique for the Gang Essence Realm, he already developed the Myriad Phenomena True Gang.

He felt his current state unfathomably excellent, his thoughts turning, spiritual inspirations continuously rising — a vast elevation of life's essence, promoting a higher realm of enlightenment, whereas ordinary Gang Essence Realm practitioners could live four hundred years, Ning Qi appeared vastly more exaggerated.

He speculated his lifespan potentially nearing the Celestial Human Realm.

Nonetheless.

Ning Qi's most profound feeling now was...

He felt immensely strong.

Already uncertain about the limits of his own abilities.

The mighty Gang Qi within him surged with formidable strength, making him feel capable of instantly annihilating his former self.

"Perhaps... I could try flying."

Ning Qi's heart stirred with a tinge of excitement and anticipation.

Ordinary Martial artists, upon reaching the Primordial Core Realm, could barely manage flight, but Ning Qi, with his overwhelming Gang Essence and high quality, might accomplish it.

He restrained the impulse, stepping outside.

The White Ape awaited long time, eyes filled with reverence. With his awakened Illusion-breaking Spirit Eyes, his perception was exceedingly keen, the fleeting oppressive aura earlier showed him how formidable his seemingly unremarkable teacher truly was.

"Has the master come out of seclusion?"

Ning Qi asked.

The White Ape respectfully bowed:

"The True Man hasn't come out of seclusion yet."

Ning Qi hadn't officially accepted him as an apprentice, hence the White Ape dared not address Taoist Longshan as a master.

Ning Qi was slightly surprised.

He originally thought his one-month fake death meant the master had already emerged; unexpectedly, he was still secluded.

"Seems the master's harvest this time is indeed substantial."

He reflected, generally speaking, the longer the post-breakthrough digestion period for the Celestial Human Realm, the greater the gains — maybe the battle with the Wang Family Ancestor earlier had given Taoist Longshan some inspiration.

"Once the master comes out, I could exchange insight on the Celestial Being Unity Secret Technique, perhaps benefiting him — meanwhile, he might help me experience the Power of Heaven and Earth."

Ning Qi pondered.

In the night.

Ning Qi silently left True Martial Mountain, extraordinarily quick like a phantom.

Perceiving no one around, Ning Qi's eyes revealed a hint of anticipation.

The next instant.

The mighty white mist Gang Qi within surged, and Ning Qi's figure slowly lifted off the ground.

Initially unstable, yet upon adapting, exceedingly steady, surging forward like the wind.

Standing high above, he instinctively spread his arms, closed his eyes, feeling the night wind brushing past.

From lying immobilized on a sickbed in his past life, to now soaring through the sky.

Ning Qi couldn't help but feel a surge of abandon and exhilaration.

And this, was merely a beginning.

Seizing this hard-won opportunity to advance further.

Chapter 75: Two Months Later

Ning Qi was flying through the sky. After gradually getting used to flying, he started to enjoy this mode of travel, standing with his hands behind his back, taking a light step in the void, and he was already in the distance. In terms of both comfort and style, it surpassed his previous body technique.

But there were also drawbacks.

"Firstly, the speed isn't fast enough; compared to using body techniques to sprint, it's still slightly inferior. Secondly, the energy consumption is rather high."

This was normal.

After all, Ning Qi was only in the White Mist Realm now, and the reason he could fly entirely depended on his overwhelming Gang Qi.

However, this was not a difficult problem for Ning Qi.

He slowly closed his eyes, landed on a peak, then spread his arms, feeling the wind passing through.

If the speed wasn't fast enough, he would increase it; if the consumption was too high, he would lower it.

Inside him, Gang Qi churned like fog, occasionally revealing various true intents.

What is Myriad Phenomena True Gang?

It's to encompass all phenomena, to transform into all phenomena. To achieve such a supreme cultivation technique, one would need to have an extremely profound understanding of the myriad phenomena of heaven and earth. For an ordinary person, comprehending just one phenomenon might take a lifetime, not to mention the myriad phenomena of heaven and earth. Only Ning Qi could achieve that.

By his side,

Gang Qi surged out, accompanied by various visions.

At times, it transformed into a True Dragon, coiling around Ning Qi, as if it wanted to take him up to the heavens; at other times, the cry of an eagle sounded, with Gang Qi turning into wings, stirring the air

currents. This was all an application of Gang Qi. Ning Qi was trying to figure out how to fly faster and consume less.

Constantly trying, combining.

The spiritual light in Ning Qi's mind gushed out like a spring, continuously surging.

After ascending to the White Mist Realm, his perception grew stronger, creating such martial arts was not difficult for him.

It was unclear how much time had passed.

Ning Qi slowly opened his eyes, a slight smile in them.

He stood with his hands behind his back, took a slight step forward.

In the void, there seemed to be invisible steps. He walked idly, stepping far and wide with just a step. Faintly, there were roars of a True Dragon and cries of a Divine Eagle. This speed was much faster than the previous forced flight using Gang Qi, and the consumption was reduced by seventy to eighty percent.

"Taking the shape of True Dragon and Divine Eagle, combined with the aspect of wind, far surpasses the past, so I'll call it Heaven-Stepping Step."

Trying out the new skill, a trace of joy emerged at the corners of his mouth.

"Indeed, applying different true intents in different scenarios brings drastically different effects. One major advantage of Myriad Phenomena True Gang is that it can evolve into different true intents' Gang Qi based on different enemies, and they can be integrated with each other, offering endless wonders."

But for Ning Qi, whether it was the Myriad Phenomena Origin Stance or Myriad Phenomena Strength or Myriad Phenomena True Gang, the greatest help was laying a foundation for him.

Now, he's contacting the myriad phenomena of heaven and earth. In the future, if he touches the Great Dao, there's no reason he couldn't master the myriad Daos.

Ning Qi stood in the void, glanced back at the peak where he had just stood, and lightly pointed his hand.

The next moment,

A Sword Gang condensed, carrying unmatched Sharp Sword Intent, and in a flash, it leapt a hundred feet, slicing through the peak.

The incision was exceptionally smooth, and the peak slowly slid off, tumbling into the ravine, creating a resounding boom.

Cutting a mountain with a single sword, it was as simple as that.

But this was far from Ning Qi's limit.

He looked up at the sky and decided to leave.

"Seems like I need to create a few Slaughter Techniques; otherwise, I can't fully unleash my Gang Qi."

This was not difficult for Ning Qi.

The most challenging is the Seeking Tao Technique, as it involves the enhancement of the essence of life.

Whereas the Path Guardian Technique is simple—just the application of Gang Qi—and as long as Ning Qi had spiritual light, he could create it quickly.

...

Time passed.

After stepping into the Gang Essence Realm, Ning Qi did not slack off but continued his cultivation routinely. He experimented with refining pills to speed up the tempering of Gang Qi, but in the end, he found that the effects were minimal.

It wasn't that Ning Qi's newly created Quenching Gang Pill formula was ineffective; the issue lay in Ning Qi himself.

His Gang Qi was too vast. If he used pills to accelerate, he might exhaust the resources of the entire True Martial Sect and still not speed up too much, at most just saving a few months' time. After all, according to Ning Qi's own estimate, he wouldn't stay in the Gang Essence Three Realms for several years. Given this, Ning Qi simply decided to focus on cultivation techniques, aiming to improve his cultivation speed from this aspect.

He wasn't a greedy person; the sect had already helped him a lot, and he wouldn't empty the sect for the sake of his cultivation.

These Quenching Gang Pills were given to Luo Wentian and the others, which could at least save them more than ten years.

No one knew that Ning Qi had already become the fourth True Disciple to step into the Gang Essence Realm.

Moreover, his combat power was extravagant.

Fearing that even if Jiang Baishan and the other two teamed up, it would be just a matter of a single sword.

At this time, True Martial Mountain was already covered with a touch of snow.

Ning Qi was also eight years old.

Just when everyone was wondering if Taoist Longshan would remain in seclusion until next year, there was an astonishing wave from the Bright Martial Pavilion. Accompanied by Taoist Longshan's loud laughter echoing throughout True Martial Sect, everyone's eyes were filled with joy.

Everyone knew that Taoist Longshan had emerged from seclusion!

...

"Disciple congratulates Master on successfully coming out of seclusion!"

The True Disciples gathered in the Bright Martial Pavilion at the first instance. From Taoist Longshan's loud laughter, they knew this seclusion had yielded great results.

Taoist Longshan, having bathed and changed clothes, met with the disciples.

His eyes immediately showed a look of surprise.

This time he had been in seclusion for only half a year, but the disciples' mental states had undergone a tremendous change.

Except for the youngest disciple Ning Qi, who remained inscrutable, the other disciples had made considerable progress in their cultivation, especially Luo Wentian and Xiong Shi, whose Gang Essence Realm auras were revealed without reservation.

It seemed Luo Wentian had perceived the surprise in Taoist Longshan's eyes, so he smiled and took the initiative to report:

"Reporting to Master, it's all thanks to Junior Brother."

He slowly narrated, informing Taoist Longshan about the Gang Condensing Pill and the Sleep Dream Skill.

Taoist Longshan was stunned.

Ning Qi had actually reverse-engineered the pill formula just from a Gang Condensing Pill?

And this Sleep Dream Skill was amazingly able to accelerate Inner Strength cultivation during sleep?

He subconsciously looked towards Ning Qi, only to see Ning Qi smiling peacefully.

Taoist Longshan also smiled, feeling countless emotions in his heart.

"Jiu, well done."

Just a few words, but everyone smiled knowingly, able to sense the joy in Taoist Longshan's heart.

Since obtaining the True Martial inheritance, Taoist Longshan's greatest dream had been to revitalize the True Martial Sect. Now, as he himself had stepped into the Celestial Human Realm, the next step was to cultivate disciples to become independent forces. Ning Qi's actions undoubtedly accelerated this process, and he was naturally pleased.

Taoist Longshan stroked his goatee and laughed:

"In two months, on the eighth day of the twelfth lunar month, convene the Celestial Being Grand Ceremony!"

"Wentian, you will coordinate the specific matters."

All the disciples were excited.

They had long been preparing, just waiting for Taoist Longshan to emerge from seclusion. Now, with the instructions given, they were eager to start taking action immediately.

"Yes, Master!"

Two months seemed neither long nor short. After all, the Qing State alone was so large. After sending out the invitations, they would have to give people some time to prepare.

Chapter 76: Night Conversation Between Master and Disciple

This day.

The disciples of the True Martial Sect descended the mountain, one after another, riding fast horses toward various places in Qing State, and even to several nearby states.

Afterward, Qing State was once again in an uproar.

"True Man Longshan is finally going to hold the Celestial Being Grand Ceremony!"

"I wonder which Celestial Being strong persons will attend this time. It's a supreme opportunity. If one could catch the eye of a Celestial Being strong person, not to mention being taken as a disciple, even being a servant by their side would be a tremendous fortune!"

"What I yearn for the most is the Celestial Being's discussion of the Dao. Even understanding a bit would benefit me for a lifetime. Unfortunately, it's too difficult for us loose cultivators without any sect to get an invitation."

"Opportunities are for the prepared. Even if we can't ascend True Martial Mountain, it's good to linger nearby. Who knows if a Gang Essence Realm strong person might notice us?"

"Such a grand event must be experienced. It's a perfect chance to see how deep the foundation of the True Martial Sect is."

...

The sounds of discussions echoed throughout Qing State.

Those who received invitations were naturally thrilled and began preparing gifts. At that time, strong ones would gather like clouds, all to offer congratulations. If the gifts were too meager, it would invite ridicule. It's an excellent opportunity to establish connections.

Even those who didn't receive invitations didn't give up. They also headed towards the True Martial Sect, mostly martial artists with low cultivation levels, hoping to find a chance in such a gathering of storms.

Fortunately, the villages below True Martial Mountain had been greatly expanded, and under the directive of Taoist Longshan, it was named 'True Martial City.'

It can be foreseen.

True Martial City will gradually develop into another great martial city in Qing State.

True Martial Sect became the center of countless gazes.

As for Taoist Longshan, he was contemplating matters concerning Ning Qi.

In the dead of night.

He stood by the window of the Bright Martial Pavilion with his hands behind his back, gazing at the night view.

During this period, he first descended the mountain to search for Qin Yun's traces, followed by a closed meditation to break through to the Celestial Human Realm. After emerging, he heard that his disciples had been bullied and swiftly descended the mountain to kill in all directions. Upon returning to the

mountain, he hurriedly closed himself off to digest the gains of his breakthrough to the Celestial Human Realm.

After this cycle of busyness, nearly two years had passed, with little time to focus on his disciples during the interim.

Luo Wentian and others did not worry Taoist Longshan; after all, they were adults who could take care of themselves. Only Ning Qi, being too young, now only eight years old, bore a blood feud but possessed great power. Taoist Longshan was concerned that Ning Qi's desire for revenge would grow more urgent with his increase in power, affecting himself.

With a lethal weapon comes the intent to kill. Wishing to seek revenge after gaining power is only human.

"A year ago, Jiu already had the strength to subdue a White Mist Realm opponent. I wonder to what extent he has progressed now?"

Taoist Longshan pondered.

Throughout the True Martial Sect, only he knew that it was his little apprentice who killed the Flying Heaven Eagle.

Even now, he occasionally finds it hard to believe that a year ago, the seven-year-old Ning Qi could effortlessly kill a White Mist Realm master, something that would be unbelievable to others.

Luo Wentian and the rest were not wrong in their guesses; it truly was the True Martial Foundation that acted. Yet, they never imagined that the True Martial Foundation was their own junior martial brother.

"With my current strength, suppressing the Blood Rain Tower is not an issue. However, we must not alert them beforehand, lest the four of Wind, Rain, Thunder, and Lightning escape first. Moreover, I need to probe the truth behind the massacre of yesteryears carefully."

It is said that those four can escape unscathed even before a Celestial Being, implying greater caution and the need to take them down one by one.

"Perhaps, I should proactively discuss this matter with Jiu, lest he becomes unsettled."

With this thought, Taoist Longshan made up his mind and headed in the direction of the Seeking Tao Institute.

Soon.

He appeared outside the Seeking Tao Institute, revealing a look of astonishment in his eyes.

Peach trees stood tall outside the courtyard. Although there were no blossoms, and it seemed bleak, his keen eyes could discern something mysterious about the placement of these trees, subtly resonating with the small courtyard, creating an indescribable feeling.

Looking at the words 'Seeking Tao Institute,' he smiled knowingly as if he understood his little apprentice's aspirations from those three words.

He stepped in unhurriedly, where Ning Qi was already waiting inside, having sensed Taoist Longshan's arrival.

"Master."

Ning Qi greeted with a smile.

Taoist Longshan looked at Ning Qi, filled with emotions. At eight, Ning Qi already stood as tall as a boy of thirteen or fourteen years, clad in a blue Taoist robe that exuded an unspeakable Dao charm, an aura cultivated from years of enlightenment and scriptural study.

"Qi'Er, you've grown up."

Taoist Longshan sighed heavily. He had to admit, even though he had stepped into the Celestial Human Realm, he still couldn't see through this little apprentice, feeling somewhat like waves surging over the older generation in the Yangtze River.

He recalled Ning Qi at half a year old asking him about immortality. Over seven years, the growth was astounding. If it hadn't all happened before his eyes, he would not have believed it.

Ning Qi earnestly said:

"Without you, Master, Ning Qi wouldn't have grown so smoothly."

He didn't ask Taoist Longshan why he came late at night.

And Taoist Longshan didn't bring it up.

Master and disciple, a duo of large and small figures, wandered inadvertently out of the courtyard, idly strolling on True Martial Mountain.

They talked about recent events, amusing stories on the martial path, and the True Martial Peach Assembly organized by the disciples, also touching on the upcoming Celestial Being Grand Ceremony.

This feeling was very comforting.

Such opportunities were rare between master and disciple.

Ning Qi was always very grateful to Taoist Longshan, who not only saved him from the Death Realm but also painstakingly taught him. Although there wasn't much left to teach him in later years, Taoist Longshan still aimed to create the best conditions for him and never interfered with his affairs.

A master like this, anywhere under the heavens, would almost be impossible to find a second.

He noticed Taoist Longshan's hesitation, let out a light laugh, and took the initiative to say:

"Master, were you going to talk about the Blood Rain Tower?"

Taoist Longshan was taken aback, then smiled helplessly. He found himself lesser in decisiveness than an eight-year-old child, possibly influenced by the previous issues concerning Qin Yun.

Taoist Longshan nodded solemnly and said:

"I once told you, I would surely help you seek revenge. Now that I have reached the Celestial Human Realm, wiping out the Blood Rain Tower is no problem. I don't want this matter bothering you for too long."

Ning Qi was somewhat moved.

In fact, he had indeed thought about when to exact his revenge.

Previously, when he was only at the Inner Essence Realm, even though he could contend with the Gang Essence Realm, it wasn't secure enough. After advancing to the White Mist Realm, feeling confident in subduing Primordial Core Realm opponents, this thought gradually came alive.

He hadn't forgotten about the events of eight years ago when he first transmigrated.

The so-called 'Lord Feng' greatly feared Taoist Longshan, who was at the Primordial Core Realm back then. Even after eight years, despite breaking through, he would at most be in the Primordial Core Realm.

Ning Qi believed he wouldn't have much of a problem killing him.

Chapter 77: Limit of Strength

However, the enemy is not a wooden figure and will not wait in place for Ning Qi to strike.

In fact, as an assassin organization, the actions of the Blood Rain Tower are much more secretive than ordinary forces, and the difficulty of revenge lies not in eliminating the Blood Rain Tower, but in finding its base.

Therefore, Ning Qi had this thought but did not act rashly. If he accidentally alerted the enemy, allowing them to hide, it would be even more troublesome to find them later.

"Master, don't worry. I remember this matter, but I won't be mentally disturbed by it. Revenge is a goal, but it is not my entire life."

Ning Qi said seriously.

Taoist Longshan felt relieved. What he feared most was Ning Qi harboring grievances, but after a candid conversation with Ning Qi today, he realized he had underestimated his disciple's mindset; such calmness and resilience made him feel somewhat inadequate.

"The Blood Rain Tower is elusive. After the Celestial Being Grand Ceremony, I will start handling this matter. It won't take long, I should have results, and by then, I will assist you."

Taoist Longshan spoke with confidence.

After all, the Blood Rain Tower is just a first-class force. Even with some means, it cannot withstand Taoist Longshan, who is already in the Celestial Human Realm, and many would be willing to do him a favor.

Ning Qi nodded and said:

"Master, by then, leave 'Feng' among the 'Wind, Rain, Thunder, and Lightning' to me. I want to take revenge personally."

Taoist Longshan was stunned.

The four gold assassins, Wind, Rain, Thunder, and Lightning, are all Gang Essence Realm experts, especially 'Feng,' who has a record of assassinating a Primordial Core Realm opponent. That battle made the Blood Rain Tower famous, causing many first-class forces in Qing State to fear them.

At this moment, hearing Ning Qi say this, he couldn't help but feel anxious.

"Qi'Er, you..."

Ning Qi smiled gently and said:

"Master, I have confidence."

Taoist Longshan gazed at Ning Qi, his heart stirred. If these words came from someone else, he would never believe it. An eight-year-old child saying he has confidence in defeating a Primordial Core Realm expert?

This is simply a fantasy.

Previously, Ning Qi being able to kill the Flying Heaven Eagle was already extraordinary, but the gap between the White Mist Realm and the Primordial Core Realm isn't insignificant. Taoist Longshan himself took several decades to traverse from the White Mist Realm to the Primordial Core Realm.

But he knew, Ning Qi never exaggerated.

"Really?"

"Really."

Ning Qi and Taoist Longshan stared at each other, his expression was calm yet full of confidence.

A moment later.

Taoist Longshan took a deep breath and decided to personally test him.

No matter how much he believed in Ning Qi, he could not be careless. Wanting to personally take revenge is good, but he must have enough strength to do so.

Ning Qi's eyes gradually filled with excitement. He was really curious about the strength of a Celestial Human Realm expert but never had the opportunity.

"If you can't hold on, let me know at any time."

"Alright."

Master and disciple stood facing each other, ten yards apart.

As the words fell.

Taoist Longshan's expression became solemn, and his Taoist robe slightly rippled. The Power of Heaven and Earth gradually gathered and then pressed down on Ning Qi like a huge mountain.

Ning Qi's body trembled and immediately felt an invisible oppressive force.

Unlike the unconscious Power of Heaven and Earth fluctuation when Taoist Longshan broke through before, the current Power of Heaven and Earth was targeted suppression. Ning Qi suddenly felt like he was trapped in a swamp.

He slightly raised his hand and felt it took several times more effort than usual.

His body trembled, bones shook, and spine crackled.

The Gang Qi within his body could no longer resist, automatically circulating to withstand that omnipresent and increasingly strong oppression.

"No wonder Gang Essence Realm is powerless against Celestial Human Realm. They are simply not on the same level of power," Ning Qi thought to himself.

The mere suppression between heaven and earth was already so terrifying, let alone real combat. No wonder Ning Qi previously heard that the Primordial Core Realm Purple River Sword Venerate didn't withstand even a few moves before being instantly defeated by his master.

Just imagine, two adults wrestling, one tied up by ropes; wouldn't he be at the mercy of others?

Let ordinary Gang Essence Realm and Celestial Human Realm experts wrestle; it would be too much.

But Ning Qi was clearly not an ordinary Gang Essence Realm.

The vast Gang Qi within him suddenly surged, forcibly pushing away the oppressive Power of Heaven and Earth. Taoist Longshan's eyes widened, and then he immediately increased the pressure, enveloping Ning Qi like an invisible cage.

Ning Qi's Gang Qi transformed, like clouds and mist—elusive, and like water and marsh—ever-changing.

Taoist Longshan's eyes opened wider.

"What is this Gang Qi?"

As he applied the Power of Heaven and Earth, it felt like he was suppressing an eel—only a third of his force remained, either repelled, shifted, or absorbed. That mysterious Gang Qi was incredible, far from the existing Cultivation Techniques of the True Martial Sect.

Taoist Longshan marveled inwardly, realizing Ning Qi had already embarked on his own path.

Unknowingly, his Taoist robe billowed more violently.

He intended to test the limits of Ning Qi's Gang Qi.

The Power of Heaven and Earth grew increasingly surging. The cliff winds were fierce, and although he didn't make a move himself, Taoist Longshan no longer held back on the Power of Heaven and Earth.

Ning Qi was gradually struggling; resisting this incredible oppression required a tremendous amount of Gang Qi every moment. Even with his abundant Gang Qi, he found it difficult to withstand such consumption.

He roughly understood his own limits.

"Celestial Human Realm experts are indeed extraordinary. Although my current Gang Qi is vast, its quality is slightly lacking. Being able to hold on for a while is already quite impressive."

"Unless using the Ape King's true form or the Unity of Heaven and Man Secret Techniques, forcibly tearing through this Power of Heaven and Earth's suppression, or perhaps stepping into the Jade Liquid Realm, transforming the quality of Gang Qi entirely."

"In other words, if I go all out, I might barely contend with a newly entered Celestial Human Realm expert like Master. Whether I can win is uncertain, but I certainly won't die. It shouldn't be difficult for me to leave."

Ning Qi smiled inwardly, gaining a clearer understanding of his strength.

In that case, even without Taoist Longshan's assistance, he could easily wipe out the Blood Rain Tower.

As thoughts whirled in his mind, Ning Qi spoke:

"Master, I can't hold on any longer."

There was no need to reveal his trump cards when not confronting life and death.

Taoist Longshan slowly withdrew the Power of Heaven and Earth. He too was relieved internally. Ning Qi's performance was too extraordinary; if he didn't show weakness further, he might have to intervene personally.

Taoist Longshan marveled immensely inside.

Ning Qi was only eight years old!

With such performance now, even compared to before reaching the Celestial Human Realm, he couldn't have done better. At that time, he was over eighty years old!

In comparison, he felt like he'd lived to a dog's age.

Ning Qi smiled and asked:

"Master, how was it?"

Facing that expectant gaze, Taoist Longshan coughed lightly, trying to keep his complexion calm:

"Not bad."

He turned around, standing with his hands behind his back.

Such performance was far more than "not bad"; it was monstrous—capable of contending with a Primordial Core Realm with ease.

"Afterward, the gold assassin 'Feng' from the Blood Rain Tower will be yours to deal with."

Taoist Longshan's tone was calm, but the curve of his lips betrayed all of his current feelings.

Chapter 78: An Ant Gazing at the Sky

"Master, can you let me feel the power of heaven and earth again?" Ning Qi's words interrupted Taoist Longshan's thoughts.

Ning Qi's eyes were filled with curiosity.

Earlier was to test strength, but now he wants to experience the power of heaven and earth up close again. He had wanted to do this before, but Taoist Longshan was too busy and there was no opportunity.

Taoist Longshan's face showed a smile, rarely showing a bit of eagerness.

Sometimes having a prodigy as a disciple is both a joy and a burden.

Taoist Longshan recalled that apart from having the opportunity to impart martial arts principles when Ning Qi first came into contact with the martial path, he could no longer find even a trace of accomplishment from Ning Qi, and even felt frustrated.

No matter what he taught, Ning Qi learned it quickly, sometimes even using it better than him with just a slight distraction.

Who can handle that?

But now.

The opportunity has come.

You must not have mastered the things of the Celestial Human Realm yet, right?

Taoist Longshan had a smile on his face.

"Of course you can, and it's a good chance for me to explain the path of the Celestial Being to you in advance."

Ning Qi nodded repeatedly.

The master and disciple sat quietly by the cliff.

Although the cold wind was biting, to the two of them it was like a gentle breeze.

"The so-called Celestial Human Realm emphasizes leveraging human power to harness the power of heaven and earth. Human power is finite, but the power of heaven and earth is infinite. With the Divine Union Yuan Pill, resonate with the will of heaven and earth..."

Taoist Longshan patiently explained, his voice gentle, and he did not hold back, sharing all his insights from this period.

As he spoke, strands of the power of heaven and earth also coalesced, weaving around Ning Qi.

Though not as active as during his breakthrough, it was extremely gentle, unlike the violent force from before.

Listening, rays of spiritual light arose in Ning Qi's mind.

Compared to when Taoist Longshan ascended to the Celestial Human Realm, Ning Qi's comprehension had also improved considerably, and at a higher level, he gained different insights.

Unknowingly, Ning Qi had already closed his eyes.

The Celestial Being Unity Secret Technique began operating unconsciously, and he entered a magical state, with the power of heaven and earth around him becoming clearer.

"The power of heaven and earth is a mysterious force that permeates between heaven and earth, but before reaching the Celestial Human Realm, one cannot perceive it, let alone wield it early."

"Human power is finite, and heavenly power is infinite. The reason I can barely contend with a Celestial Being strong person now is because my Gang Qi is too abundant, but what if I could control some of the power of heaven and earth in advance? Perhaps the gap would be smaller."

"Divine Union Yuan Pill, but I don't have a Yuan Pill yet; can something else be used as a substitute?"

...

Thoughts continuously arose in Ning Qi's mind like a waterfall, having already entered a wonderful state of enlightenment.

Taoist Longshan, while explaining, sensed something was off.

He couldn't help but twitch his beard.

"Has Jiu... achieved enlightenment?"

"And the force surrounding him is... the power of heaven and earth?!"

Taoist Longshan couldn't help but draw a cold breath in his heart.

When Ning Qi demonstrated power not inferior to the Primordial Core Realm, he wasn't this shocked, but seeing Ning Qi manifest control over the power of heaven and earth, he was truly stunned!

Advancing to the Celestial Human Realm?

Impossible.

That would mean Ning Qi had already formed a resonance with the power of heaven and earth before even reaching the Celestial Human Realm.

Unheard of.

Taoist Longshan's heart was surging, unconsciously lowering his voice for fear of disturbing Ning Qi's enlightenment.

Who knows how much time passed.

The sky gradually lightened.

Only then did Ning Qi slowly open his eyes.

There was joy in his eyes.

What Taoist Longshan imparted this time yielded great harvests!

Not only did he further understand the path to ascension of Celestial Being strong persons, but he also created this trump card secret technique.

The Heavenly Sword Technique.

This sword path secret technique was the result of Ning Qi's attempt to manipulate the power of heaven and earth.

Only by being in a state of unity with heaven and man can one induce some power of heaven and earth, and then surround it with Gang Qi to form a Celestial Sword.

Ning Qi felt that even Celestial Being strong persons should avoid its edge.

Ning Qi bowed respectfully to Taoist Longshan as the rising sun gradually brightened:

"Thank you, Master, for imparting your teachings!"

Taoist Longshan inwardly gave a bitter smile, originally thinking he could use his Celestial Human Realm status to finally have a chance to impress his young disciple, only to be struck down again.

But he couldn't help but ask:

"Qi'Er, that force surrounding you earlier was...?"

Ning Qi immediately realized and naturally took out a prepared manual from his bosom.

"I almost forgot to tell Master, this is the Celestial Being Unity Secret Technique I comprehended watching you break through the Celestial Human Realm, and I was about to give it to you."

The Heavenly Sword Technique was unique to the prodigy Ning Qi, who was in the Gang Essence Realm yet could manipulate the power of heaven and earth, so he did not give it to Taoist Longshan.

But the Celestial Being Unity Secret Technique, however, was acceptable for Taoist Longshan to use, and it might be greatly beneficial to him.

"The Celestial Being Unity Secret Technique?" Taoist Longshan was slightly taken aback, initially wanting to decline but instinctively accepted it.

He inhaled deeply and slowly opened the booklet.

"The root bone of man conceals the mystery of heaven and earth."

The opening statement struck him like a bolt of lightning, sudden enlightenment.

Taoist Longshan hungrily turned the pages, becoming completely immersed in it.

Who knows how much time passed.

He only raised his head, bewildered, from the book, his eyes full of shock.

The words "astonishing talent" could no longer suffice to describe this secret technique; such ingenuity would be unattainable even with hundreds of years, leaving him with an absurd feeling like an ant seeing the azure sky.

His face couldn't help but show a faint hint of embarrassment, mind you, this secret technique was created by his young disciple.

Seeing the area devoid of people, with Ning Qi long gone, Taoist Longshan exhaled softly.

He looked towards the green mountain and burst into loud laughter.

He felt that taking Ning Qi as a disciple might be the best decision of his life.

...

After acquiring the Celestial Being Unity Secret Technique, Taoist Longshan began diligent research.

This secret technique made his comprehension of the power of heaven and earth much easier, and even improved his combat strength significantly. He felt that facing the Wang Family Ancestor again would certainly be much easier.

Until it was only one month before the Celestial Being Grand Ceremony.

Only then did Taoist Longshan set off down the mountain.

The Celestial Being Grand Ceremony required inviting several Celestial Being strong persons to attend, so he had to go personally. With his speed, it wouldn't take too long.

Meanwhile, as True Martial disciples descended the mountain to deliver invitations and returned, the Martial Realm of Qing State became increasingly bustling, and the newly expanded True Martial City became more lively by the day.

Many eyes were set on True Martial Mountain, awaiting the arrival of the Celestial Being Grand Ceremony.

True Martial Mountain had become the focus of everyone's attention.

Chapter 79: Little Meat Mountain

In such an atmosphere, all the True Martial disciples were equally excited.

This gathering of heroes at True Martial Mountain can be said to be the largest event since the founding of the True Martial Sect, a turning point in the sect's prosperity. Luo Wentian had issued multiple orders within the sect to welcome the arriving guests with the best essence, qi, and spirit, without any mistakes.

Luo Wentian remained stationed at True Martial Mountain, while Xiong Shi was dispatched to True Martial City.

Nowadays, more and more martial artists are gathering in True Martial City. Although many people will restrain themselves, conflicts are inevitable when crowds gather. Having a strong figure to maintain order is naturally better.

As for those stronger than Xiong Shi, they wouldn't cause trouble either. Recently, the fearsome reputation of Taoist Longshan's killings still lingered, and no one wanted to seek discomfort at this juncture.

Each disciple had their respective duties.

Ning Qi, on the other hand, found himself peaceful once more.

He wanted to help, but there was really nothing he could assist with, having hardly been involved in the sect's affairs. Asking him to descend the mountain to deliver invitations was even less likely.

In the eyes of Luo Wentian and others, the little junior disciple was only eight years old, and it was better for him to stay within the sect.

Since that day when Taoist Longshan spoke about the Path of Celestial Being, Ning Qi seemed to comprehend something, creating the Heavenly Sword Technique, and then returned to his usual cultivation.

However, he felt the refining of Gang Qi to be somewhat slow.

"In the Gang Essence Realm cultivation, transform white mist into Jade Liquid, solidify Jade Liquid into Primordial Core; each realm is a qualitative change of Gang Qi. The Quenching Gang Pill is useful to me, but its consumption is too high. The sect's foundation in spirit medicine cannot support my cultivation unless I descend the mountain to seek resources, but that may not be faster."

"Combining the previous Dreaming Gluttony Secret Technique, I might try to harvest energy for refining Gang Qi from food or other resources, but the problem is not fundamentally solved."

"Is there an inexhaustible supply of energy?"

Ning Qi fell into contemplation.

In fact, he had already thought of it, and that was the Power of Heaven and Earth.

Using the Power of Heaven and Earth to refine Gang Qi would definitely be effective.

But the problem is, his control over the Power of Heaven and Earth is entirely reliant on the Unity of Heaven and Man Secret Technique, merely able to roughly gather it into a mass like the Heavenly Sword Technique; it's fine for combat but not precise enough for refining Gang Qi.

Ideas continually flashed in his mind, sweeping by one after another.

Ning Qi took a deep breath.

"Take it slowly."

This is a disparity in conditions, remedying it obviously isn't easy.

However, Ning Qi felt that even if he continued to cultivate like this, breaking through to the Celestial Human Realm wouldn't take too long, seven to eight years should suffice. Such a timeline is unparalleled across the world.

After all, even Taoist Longshan, known as an unparalleled genius, spent forty or fifty years before breaking into the Celestial Human Realm.

The challenge within is imaginable.

...

As time slowly passed.

As the eighth day of the twelfth lunar month approached, Taoist Longshan descended the mountain once more, and returned again, personally delivering invitations to several Celestial Human Realm experts, though how many would actually attend remained unknown. After all, Taoist Longshan had just stepped into the Celestial Human Realm, and his connections with these experts were mostly formed during past travels, with few truly close relationships.

The True Martial disciples who went out to deliver invitations had also returned to the mountain.

Ning Qi was no longer staying at the Seeking Tao Institute, as guests would soon be arriving on the mountain.

With cold weather and freezing days, heavy snow was flying in True Martial City, yet True Martial Mountain remained unaffected.

This was caused by Taoist Longshan's prior manipulation of the Power of Heaven and Earth. Upon reaching the Celestial Human Realm, altering the heavenly phenomenon on a small scale was no longer difficult.

On True Martial Mountain.

The pavilions were renewed, and the disciples were exuberant in spirit.

Taoist Longshan in a white Taoist robe, graceful and immortal-like; all the True Inheritors in blue Taoist robes, while Inner and Outer Sect disciples wore dark and light green respectively.

It was three days before the Celestial Being Grand Ceremony.

True Martial Mountain welcomed its first guest.

The Divine Sword Sect.

The sturdily built and upright Divine Sword Old Man gazed at the familiar True Martial Mountain, his expression complex; originally thinking he'd have to wait for the next ten-year agreement to return, it was unexpected that after only three years, he was back already.

"Longshan... Old Dao."

Divine Sword Old Man ultimately refrained from calling him 'bull nose,' substituting 'Old Dao' instead, as Taoist Longshan had now reached the Celestial Human Realm, and the gap between them had grown substantial.

Taoist Longshan laughed heartily, showing no airs of a Celestial Human Realm expert:

"Divine Sword Brother, this is not like you at all."

Divine Sword Old Man's eyes widened, snorted coldly:

"Longshan Old Dao, don't get complacent, give me a few years and I will surely surpass you!"

He remained as stubborn as ever.

His gaze fell on the disciples behind Taoist Longshan, sensing several Gang Essence Realm auras, he sighed inwardly before looking at the youngest boy.

Ning Qi.

The Divine Sword Old Man's eyes narrowed, noticing no change in Ning Qi's physique, still the same balance as always.

"Could it be he hasn't grasped the Dreaming Gluttony Technique?"

He was somewhat puzzled, given Ning Qi's comprehension, it shouldn't be so. Three years ago, his young disciple Zhuang Chen displayed a sword strike that continued to amaze him.

But before he could ponder further.

Taoist Longshan was already laughing and pulling him inside.

The two elders led the way, while the disciples followed closely behind.

However, this time the disciples from the Divine Sword Sect were visibly more reserved, considering the True Martial Sect's recent prominence, not only Taoist Longshan stepping into the Celestial Human Realm, but also the emergence of several Gang Essence Realm experts.

Only one remained unaffected.

"Ning Qi, long time no see!"

Zhuang Chen's excited voice rang out.

Ning Qi looked at the little mound of flesh in front of him, somewhat amazed.

If the Zhuang Chen of three years ago was just a chubby boy, now he was truly a big chunk.

Eleven-year-old Zhuang Chen was about the same height as Ning Qi, but his width was over twice Ning Qi's, yet he still had a goofy face, and his uniform of the Divine Sword Sect looked comically stretched.

"Zhuang Chen?"

"Indeed, indeed."

Zhuang Chen nodded repeatedly, though excessively plump, he wasn't greasy; his movements made the flesh jiggle, adding a touch of humor.

The two lagged behind, while the other disciples merely exchanged knowing smiles.

"Did you cultivate Dreaming Gluttony to achieve this?" Ning Qi couldn't help but ask.

Zhuang Chen scratched his head and chuckled:

"That's part of it, and also because I've grown to enjoy eating more."

He looked a bit puzzled.

"Ning Qi, didn't you cultivate Dreaming Gluttony? Why haven't you gotten fat at all?"

Before Ning Qi could respond.

He continued:

"If you didn't cultivate it, then let me tell you, you definitely can't beat me now. Secretly, I'm almost at the Inner Essence Realm, my master told me not to disclose it to others."

Well, still as talkative as ever.

Yet Ning Qi glanced at Zhuang Chen, slightly surprised too, with a flawless physique perhaps soon generating Inner Strength; his rate of cultivation didn't match Ning Qi's, but compared to normal people, was somewhat monstrous.

It appears Zhuang Chen is very compatible with the Dreaming Gluttony Secret Technique.

However.

What intrigued Ning Qi the most wasn't Zhuang Chen's compatibility with Dreaming Gluttony but rather the... Innate Sword Bone within him!

Chapter 80: Arriving as Promised

In front.

Senior Brother Dong He of the Divine Sword Sect, who was chatting with Luo Wentian, suddenly turned around and realized that his junior disciple was missing, and he was immediately startled.

Luo Wentian, however, smiled and held him back, saying:

"Don't worry, it should be my junior disciple who took him to play, no need to worry."

Dong He immediately felt relieved.

He looked at Luo Wentian in front of him with some envy, even a bit of jealousy. He had heard that Taoist Longshan had made a great show of power at the Wang Family in Qing State, and in the end, the Wang Family even offered a Gang Condensing Pill as a gift, allowing Luo Wentian to successfully step into the Gang Essence Realm.

He is also now at the Realm of Perfection in the Inner Essence Realm, and if he had a Gang Condensing Pill, stepping into the Gang Essence Realm would not be difficult.

Unfortunately, he didn't have the opportunity, as Gang Condensing Pills are incredibly precious.

He felt somewhat conflicted inside.

"Brother Dong? Brother Dong?"

"Rest assured, with my junior disciple there, there won't be any problems."

Luo Wentian just assumed the other was worried about Zhuang Chen.

Dong He quickly waved his hand.

"Brother Luo, you worry too much. My junior disciple has been mentioning Ning Qi for the past three years, and now that they meet suddenly, being a bit close is normal, after all, they are just kids."

A smile appeared on his face.

...

At the Seeking Tao Institute at the moment.

Zhuang Chen was trembling.

Earlier, when Ning Qi suggested taking him to play at the Seeking Tao Institute, his eyes lit up, and he agreed without hesitation.

But at this moment.

Seeing Ning Qi's smiling eyes, he felt a bit flustered, sensing a chilly aura.

"Ning... Ning Qi, what are you going to do?"

Ning Qi, seeing Zhuang Chen's expression, couldn't help but go speechless, as if he was going to do something weird.

He slapped Zhuang Chen on the forehead, speaking angrily:

"Teach you a secret technique related to the sword, do you want it?"

Zhuang Chen's eyes suddenly lit up.

"Really?"

Three years ago, the sword technique Ning Qi taught him was treated as a treasure, and he had comprehended the Overbearing Sword Intent through it. Now hearing that Ning Qi was going to teach him a new Sword Path Secret Technique, he couldn't help but rub his hands excitedly.

"How could I lie to you, but these few days, you need to cooperate with me for some research, and don't tell anyone else. I promise this secret technique is much stronger than the previous sword I taught you."

Ning Qi really wasn't lying to him.

Previously, exploring the physique of the White Ape, he created the powerful secret technique of the Ape King True Form. This time, by exploring Zhuang Chen's physique, even if he can't fully understand it, there will definitely be some gains.

If he really created a secret technique as strong as the Ape King True Form, Ning Qi wouldn't be selfish to hide it.

Zhuang Chen was even more excited and nodded.

Beside them, Yuan Tiancheng was watching with a smirk. Although the Ape King True Form was great, the process was somewhat torturous.

"Sit tight."

Ning Qi said, slowly raising his hand and placing it on Zhuang Chen's back.

The next moment.

Strands of Gang Qi surged from Ning Qi's palm, infiltrating Zhuang Chen's body. Gang Qi was metamorphosed from Inner Strength, naturally having the same effects, but Ning Qi once probed the White Ape's body with Gang Qi and found it powerless against the essence of bloodlines, so he temporarily gave up.

However, now touching the surface was no problem.

"Ah!"

Zhuang Chen let out a cry, his whole body trembling, instinctively wanting to break free. Fortunately, Ning Qi's power suppressed him, making him unable to move an inch.

Zhuang Chen immediately realized and held still despite it.

A strange sensation arose from his body, unbearably itchy and slightly sore and weak. When Ning Qi was probing, the Gang Qi would constantly vibrate within the flesh and meridians, creating a somewhat sour sensation.

Zhuang Chen looked at the schadenfreude White Ape, feeling miserable, but the promise of the Sword Path Secret Technique was alluring enough for him to endure.

He didn't know how much time had passed.

Zhuang Chen was already drenched in sweat, just about to reach his limit.

Ning Qi finally withdrew his right hand.

Before Zhuang Chen could ask anything, Ning Qi had already sat cross-legged and slowly closed his eyes.

"Innate Sword Bone... basically, it's a special physique among humans. People with this physique have remarkable sensitivity towards the Sword Dao, and even possess an extra boost when using Sword Dao Ultimate Skills."

"This always seemed somewhat similar to the bloodline of Heavenly Beasts. Could it be that the Human Race once had 'those favored by the heavens,' similar to 'Celestial Beings'? Extraordinary innate talents? But if so, every Human Race should have such a powerful bloodline, so why so rare?"

"However, a physique sensitive to the Sword Dao also feels like it might be acquired postnatal. Could it be that among Zhuang Chen's ancestors, there was a Heaven-Reaching powerhouse who cultivated to an unprecedented realm and even altered their own bloodline?"

Ning Qi found the Innate Sword Bone intriguing, not quite understanding it, mainly due to too little information.

He had various guesses in his heart, but eventually abandoned them.

"Forget it, let's first comprehend this Innate Sword Bone. Upon probing, Zhuang Chen's physique is indeed different from ordinary people, especially near the bones, there are peculiar fluctuations that resonate with the tendons and flesh. This might be one of the reasons for the mystical manifestation of the Innate Sword Bone."

Ning Qi's mind was constantly sparked with inspiration.

He had previously contemplated creating a secret technique to cultivate Postnatal Sword Bone, but now it seems too distant. First, understand these peculiar fluctuations, then it won't be hard to create a powerful Sword Path Secret Technique.

Time flowed by.

Zhuang Chen's stomach had long started growling with hunger, but he dared not disturb Ning Qi.

Finally.

Ning Qi opened his eyes, with Zhuang Chen eagerly asking:

"How is it?"

Ning Qi smiled:

"I have some clues, but you'll need to cooperate with me a few more times."

With the experience of the Ape King True Form behind him, Ning Qi was much more familiar this time, even to the extent that if not for worrying about Zhuang Chen's body, he could continue probing with Gang Qi. After all, his current Gang Qi strength compared to the previous Inner Essence Realm is vastly different.

Zhuang Chen immediately showed a bitter face.

But thinking that if he gave up halfway, the Sword Path Secret Technique would be ruined, he could only grit his teeth and agree.

"Come on, let's eat." Ning Qi said, hearing Zhuang Chen's stomach growl, and laughed.

Upon hearing this, Zhuang Chen eagerly followed.

...

Disciples of the Divine Sword Sect were accommodated in the guest quarters.

For the following three days.

Ning Qi would take Zhuang Chen to the Seeking Tao Institute every day for a two-hour study. Zhuang Chen was both in pain and joy, with a chicken leg dangling in front of him, he had to grit his teeth and endure.

Ning Qi estimated that another one or two days would be enough. He planned to find an excuse for Zhuang Chen to stay a few more days on True Martial Mountain after the Celestial Being Grand Ceremony ended.

He felt that this Sword Path Secret Technique was extremely suitable for a Swordsman, capable of greatly amplifying Sword Dao Ultimate Skills, and was somewhat looking forward to it.

And during these three days.

One renowned force after another from Qing State also arrived successively, and normally rare to see Gang Essence Realm powerhouses were now everywhere, with quite a few Primordial Core Realm experts as well.

Those invited were either prominent figures, righteous figures with widespread good reputation, or at least from influential forces, where the elders would bring some disciples to broaden their horizons.

Meanwhile, some Martial Artists who, due to various reasons, couldn't ascend the mountain gathered in True Martial City.

They waited eagerly, as they could hear news passed down from the mountain in real-time here.

The eighth day of the twelfth lunar month.

Arrived as promised.