

Disciples 471

Chapter 471: Why Are You Following Me?

Hua Chongyang's eyes lit up. He bowed and said, "Now that you mentioned it, Mister Seventh, I have some recollection of it as well. I did some digging around Jing Province City before this. Indeed, there's something like that coming up. However, I didn't think much of it before and didn't ask anyone else about it in detail."

Yu Zhenghai nodded and said, "My wise brother, you're telling me that we should snatch this person away and use him for our cause?"

"That's right."

Yu Zhenghai's eyes brightened up. He stood up and patted Si Wuya's shoulder. With a forthright smile, he said, "Why didn't I think of that before, my wise brother?"

Hua Chongyang had a respectful expression on his face well. It had been the same piece of information, but he had thought nothing of it. On the contrary, that information he had easily discarded became extremely useful in Si Wuya's hands.

Si Wuya nearly spat out blood from the forceful pat on his shoulder. He said, "However, my cultivation base isn't profound. It's not practical for me to whisk this person away."

Yu Zhenghai said, "That can be easily arranged. You may use my Four Great Protectors as you see fit. The others are in Liang Province, but just give the word, my wise brother, and they'll come to you in haste." After he finished speaking, he felt his words were not sincere enough so he thumped his chest and added, "I'll be at your service as well."

Upon hearing this, Hua Chongyang hastily said, "Mister Seventh, please leave this to me... I'm familiar with the layout of Jing Province City, and I know where the heaven worship platform is." How could he allow the great Sect Master of the Nether Sect to personally whisk someone away? Such an act was beneath his sect master.

Yu Zhenghai looked at Hua Chongyang disapprovingly.

Si Wuya nodded and said, "In that case, I'll have to trouble you, Brother Chongyang."

"It's my duty," Hua Chongyang replied.

Si Wuya said meaningfully, "Although the people from the powerful factions won't be on heaven worship platform, you should still keep a low profile just to be safe. You shouldn't expose your identity as well, otherwise... not even Eldest Senior Brother can save you. Also, if you can go about it with your wits, don't resort to force. After all, the activity at the heaven worship platform deals with men."

"Understood," Hua Chongyang said.

"Go, then."

Hua Chongyang retreated from the great hall reverently.

After Hua Chongyang left, Yu Zhenghai nodded in satisfaction. "I feel much more at ease when you're around, wise brother. I've been troubled these few days. I've racked my brain, but I can't seem to come up with a way to take down Jing Province City."

Si Wuya smiled and said, "The Four Great Protectors have profound cultivation bases. There's no shortage of abled men in the Nether Sect as well. How is it that nobody can think of anything?"

Yu Zhenghai shook his head and said, "Now that the nine provinces are in chaos, I have no problem focusing on taking one city at a time. However, keeping tabs on the overall situation is much more difficult. Bai Yuqing, Yang Yan, and Di Qing are guarding Liang Province, and they have to guard against sudden advances from the Roulians. The more concerns I have, the more muddled my brain becomes. The more muddled my brain is, the more difficult it is for me to calm down and think of a countermeasure." This was especially true now that a Nine-leaf cultivator had appeared, and they had entered the Lotus Severing era. He was truly flustered.

On the surface, although he had plunged the nine provinces into chaos and many places are now under the Nether Sect's control, he could not consider himself as having succeeded so long as the Divine Capital's lifeline remained intact. Taking down the Imperial city in the Divine Capital sounded far-fetched.

"There's no need to worry, Eldest Senior Brother," Si Wuya said in a soft voice, "I'll do everything I can."

For some reason, Yu Zhenghai felt there was something different about the current Si Wuya. He did not know what Si Wuya had experienced to become so determined. Si Wuya had become more grounded. However, he did not comment on the changes. He turned around with his hands on his back and looked at the map of Great Yan on the table.

...

Business went on as usual in Clouds Inn.

Lu Zhou parted the curtains and looked down at the streets. There did not seem to be any disturbances. 'Did I waste my Appearance Alteration Card?'

A knock sounded on the door at this moment...

"Your meal, dear customer." The waiter entered and placed the dishes on the table.

Lu Zhou glanced at the dishes. In truth, Nascent Divinity Tribulation realm cultivators often did not need to eat for as long as ten days to a fortnight. However, since he was in Jing Province City, he could not afford to draw attention to himself. He asked, "Waiter, did anything happen in Jing Province City lately?"

"Dear customer, you've asked me this question many times... Jing Province City is as peaceful as can be. There's no place safer than here. You can feel at ease staying here," the waiter said confidently.

Lu Zhou had expected this response.

At this moment, there was a commotion on the streets below. Some low-ranked cultivators gathered on the streets and marched north. There were also many who were dressed in outlandish and ostentatious clothes.

Lu Zhou pointed at them. "Waiter, what's this about?"

The waiter tiptoed to the window and looked out before he shook his head and said, "A live sacrifice, that's what it is. It's boring."

"A live sacrifice?"

"In the past, they sacrificed pigs, oxen, lambs, or other livestock. I heard they're going to sacrifice a living person this time. Who knows if it's true?" As the waiter talked, he prepared the table. "Enjoy your meal."

Regardless of the era, there would always be things like this.

Lu Zhou shook his head. He did not want to stick his nose into where it did not belong.

The streets were getting livelier by the minute.

Just when he was about to close the windows, he saw a man speeding through the crowd. He was dressed plainly, but his appearance seemed familiar to Lu Zhou.

"This person is..." Lu Zhou could not recall his name. 'What's his name again? He looks familiar! Curse my memory!'

The more he looked at the man, the more curious he became. He tapped his feet lightly on the ground before he leaped out into the alley next to the inn. He walked onto the street and followed the man.

At the end of the street, the man suddenly stopped and turned around...

"Why are you following me, old mister?" The man had intentionally walked on this stretch of road when he discovered he was being followed.

"My little friend, have we met?" Lu Zhou asked calmly. This was a genuine question. He still could recall where he had met this man.

"My name's Hua Yang. I think you've mistaken me for someone else, old mister. Stop tailing me."

If the man did not mention this name, Lu Zhou would not have instantly recalled who this man was. It was none other than Hua Chongyang, the leader of the Nether Sect's Four Great Protectors and the First Seat of the Azure Dragon Hall.

Why would the great leader of the Four Great Protectors, a Seven-leaf Golden Lotus elite, enter Jing Province City on his own?

When Hua Chongyang turned around and left, a frown could be seen on his face. He quickly searched his memories and confirmed he had not met the old man before. It would be bad if his identity was exposed and foiled Mister Seventh's plan.

Lu Zhou glanced at the remaining time of the Appearance Alteration Card. He still had about two days left. He continued following Hua Chongyang. So long as he followed Hua Chongyang, he would certainly be able to meet the rascal, Yu Zhenghai.

Lu Zhou hid his aura and was now no different from an ordinary pedestrian. He was quite pleased with the Appearance Alteration Card... If Hua Chongyang knew who he was, he would have been scared out of his wits and ran away.

Hua Chongyang navigated through four streets and emerged from the main city. He proceeded northward from Jing Province City. Halfway through the journey, he suddenly swerved to the side and launched an attack behind him at lightning speed. "Forgive me, old man!"

When he was ten meters away from Lu Zhou, Hua Chongyang noticed that Lu Zhou appeared unflustered. He felt an unexplainable pressure weighed down on his chest.

Just when Hua Chongyang's energy fist was about to reach Lu Zhou's face, Lu Zhou raised a hand. His fingers seemed to be electrified. The bolts of electricity could be vaguely seen. He pushed his arm forward.

Bam!

The instant the two palms collided, a vertical blast of energy rippled out!

Hua Chongyang instantly reeled from the formidable power. He flipped as he flew backward. After flipping thrice, he landed and staggered three steps back. His eyes were brimming with shock. 'Penglai Energy Palm? Six-leaf? Seven-leaf? Eight-leaf?' He was not sure. This was because he merely used 30% of his power. However, since the old man faced him in such a calm manner, he was certain the old man had to be at the Six-leaf stage at least.

Hua Chongyang no longer underestimated his opponent. He cupped his fists and said, "Old Mister... I have no quarrel with you. Why are you following me?"

Chapter 472: She's Special

Hua Chongyang had been mulling over this the entire time when he was traveling earlier. He did not have any friends with such a huge age gap between them. Moreover, he had disguised himself for this mission. He spent most of his time in the Nether Sect where he held a high-rank. When they went about their various missions, he rarely had the chance to personally take action. Therefore, he was certain he had not met this old man before. Throughout his time with the Nether Sect, he had taken out quite a number of elites at the Six-leaf stage and above. He was worried that perhaps, the old man had recognized him and had come to seek revenge from him.

Lu Zhou did not answer Hua Chongyang immediately. Instead, he gauged his extraordinary power. The palm strike he launched was not powerful. It roughly contained one-tenth of his extraordinary power. Finally, he said half-seriously as he threw out a random story, "My surname's Lu. I'm from Penglai. You resemble a friend of mind, young friend... It seems like I was mistaken."

So what if he was mistaken? The person he wanted to find was Yu Zhenghai.

Lu Zhou's answer caused an expression of delight on Hua Chongyang's face. "Oh, a senior from Penglai! Forgive my rudeness!"

"You know about Penglai?"

"I don't only know about it..." Hua Chongyang stopped talking abruptly, swallowing the rest of his words. He had almost ruined his mission.

Lu Zhou, on the other hand, was intrigued. If he had known, he would not have said that he was from the Penglai Sect nor would he choose to mimic a Penglai Sect technique when he attacked.

Hua Chongyang changed the topic. "What brings you here to Jing Province, old mister?"

"I'm looking for someone," Lu Zhou answered honestly, "What brings you here to Jing Province, young friend?"

A question for a question. There were no losses.

"I'm looking for someone," Hua Chongyang replied.

"..."

Their conversation was tense and stilted, fraught with distrust. This was common in the cultivation world.

Lu Zhou was not surprised by Hua Chongyang's response.

At this moment, several cultivators flew on their swords in the air. They were heading north. All of them wore white robes and were moving swiftly.

Hua Chongyang looked up at them with a slight frown and said, "The Hengqu Branch?" He cupped his fists at Lu Zhou at once. "Old mister, I'd best get going. Until we meet again." He leaped into the air and tailed the Hengqu Branch cultivators.

Lu Zhou was puzzled. The Hengqu Branch was one of the major branches from the Confucian Societies. They had always kept a low profile over the past years. Why were they out and about now? Were these branches starting to make their moves after the fall of the ten great sects? Perhaps, they were thinking of ways to improve their sects' strength after the dawn of the Lotus Severing era?

Lu Zhou did not dwell on this any longer. He stepped into the air and followed them, flying at full speed.

As Hua Chongyang flew, he looked behind him. As he had expected, he saw Lu Zhou following him. He looked at the others from the Hengqu Branch in front of him. Then, something stirred in him. The older, the wiser. It was too easy for something unexpected to happen if he was too close to his target. Hence, he slowed down. "Senior Lu, are you going to the heaven worship platform to see what the fuss is all about as well?"

'Heaven worship platform?' Then, Lu Zhou remembered what the Clouds Inn waiter told him and said, "Yes."

Hua Chongyang felt uneasy when he heard this. Things were much more complicated than he had imagined them to be. He had assumed this was an ordinary live sacrifice and that a Seven-leaf elite such as himself could easily accomplish his mission alone. Now that he discovered the elites from the Hengqu Branch elites and the Penglai Sect's senior, he realized this was not a simple matter.

Hua Chongyang had a better impression of the Penglai Sect. The Confucian Societies had governed the world for a long time. When the Nether Sect began to walk on the road to world dominion, it was only natural for them to offend many Confucian cultivators who were also officials in the Divine Capital.

In the end, Hua Chongyang slowed down even more. He blocked the wind with his energy as he asked, "Do you know about the person being sacrificed this time, Senior Lu?"

"Not really." Lu Zhou was relieved Hua Chongyang had slowed down. How could he continue to tail Hua Chongyang otherwise? His target was moving at the speed of a Seven-leaf Nascent Divinity realm elite while he was only at the One-leaf stage. He could use Whitzard to catch up, but that would just be exposing his identity.

Hua Chongyang thought about it for a moment before he said, "I heard the woman is of unknown origins, and she's an evil person. Some say she's from Lou Lan, and some say that she's from the Endless Ocean. The point is, she's unusual. After she showed up, the beasts attacked the humans, and the birds ran amok. In the cultivation world, these are unlucky signs. She's going to be used as a sacrifice." After he finished speaking, he furtively studied Lu Zhou's face. He wanted to make sure Lu Zhou was not after the same person.

Naturally, Lu Zhou was not interested in these matters. His target was Yu Zhenghai, and Yu Zhenghai alone. "And you believe that?"

"Of course not!" Hua Chongyang shook his head.

"... Are you going to rescue her?" Lu Zhou asked.

"..." Hua Chongyang was stunned. This old man was something else. Before he could glean any information from the old man, he discovered he had been checkmated. "Just like you, I'm just going to see what the fuss is about, Senior Lu. However, this woman's special. It's a shame for a living person to be offered up as a sacrifice."

"The hearts of men are difficult to fathom. We would be considered fortunate to be able to make it through this world smoothly. Who has the time to feel sorry for others?" Lu Zhou said.

"You have a point. I'm enlightened." Hua Chongyang looked ahead. The Hengqu Branch cultivators were no longer in sight. He said, "Senior Lu, shall we pick up the pace?"

"There's no need," Lu Zhou said calmly.

Hua Chongyang gave it some thought and found it reasonable. He nodded at once and said, "You're wise, Senior Lu. The heaven worship platform won't go anywhere. There's no need to follow the people from the Hengqu Branch."

The two of them continued flying. They were neither fast nor slow. They flew past a patch of forest and river outside the city. Then, they saw a simple yet formal heaven worship platform in plain colors. It was like a dark ink painting.

The heaven worship platform was not huge. It occupied about 100 meters of the land. It was completely paved with limestone. There were steps at its four corners. In the center of the heaven worship

platform, a raised dais seemed to have been temporarily erected. There was a wooden cross on it, and firewood was piled at its feet.

‘They’re really using a living person as a sacrifice?’

“Senior Lu, there are oo many people here,” Hua Chongyang said.

The two of them landed slowly. They stepped into the bounds of the heaven worship platform.

Many low-ranked cultivators were swarming in and surrounding the heaven worship platform.

“Kill the demon woman!”

“Kill the demon woman!”

“Kill the demon woman!”

Lu Zhou and Hua Chongyang heard the cries from the crowd and turned to look.

The Hengqu Branch cultivators in white robes were gathered together. They did not join in the shouting.

There was another group of cultivators in Daoist robes to their left. Both groups were looking at each other.

Hua Chongyang frowned. As he expected, things were truly complicated.

“Young friend, why are you frowning?” Lu Zhou asked.

“There are too many people here. It’s noisy,” Hua Chongyang replied.

“Why don’t we leave now? You’re like a long-lost friend to me. Would you care to join me for a cup of tea?” Lu Zhou tried his best to make himself seem peaceful and approachable. ‘I can’t appear imposing now.’

However, Hua Chongyang shook his head and said, “Let’s take a look now that we’re here...” He promised his sect master and Mister Seventh that he would complete the mission. How could he give up halfway? Although the situation was complicated, it was still controllable.

Hua Chongyang looked up at the wooden platform and asked, “Senior Lu, you’re not here for the woman?” His eyes were brimming with doubt and disbelief when he asked the question.

Lu Zhou knew that Hua Chongyang would not believe him no matter what his answer was. Hence, he said, “Why are you asking me if you’ve already made up your mind about me?”

Chapter 473: A Guest from Afar, Luo Shiyin

Hua Chongyang would never believe him, regardless of his answer. Even if he said he was not from the Penglai Sect, and the Nether Sect did not have any quarrel with the Peng Lai Sect, he did not think Hua Chongyang would trust his words since they were merely strangers who had come together. It was only natural that they guarded against each other. For these reasons, he felt it was enough to just give a vague answer.

Hua Chongyang pointed in the opposite direction of the white swordsmen and said, "The people from the Taixu Academy are here as well. It's quite the lineup."

"Are you afraid?"

"Why would I be afraid? If we fight, there's no telling who's going to emerge victorious," Hua Chongyang replied.

"It's good to be confident, but overconfidence can make you conceited." Lu Zhou saw this kind of excessive self-confidence in Yu Shangrong and Si Wuya as well. Sometimes, their confidence would help them, but it would pull them down as well. Among his disciples, if he had to choose one who was the best at carrying out missions, he would certainly pick his fourth disciple, Mingshi Yin. Up until now, Mingshi Yin had never let him down.

Hua Chongyang replied with a smile, "It's not overconfidence, it's self-confidence. Self-confidence stems from strength. Aren't you confident as well, Senior Lu?"

Lu Zhou did not reply to him even though he wanted to say he was brimming with confidence. He looked at the still-empty wooden platform and knew the main characters had yet to arrive. Feeling bored, he said, "Let's talk about the person who's going to be sacrificed."

"I don't know much about her, aside from her ability to speak the tongue of beasts and that she's musically gifted... It's said that she was seen blowing on a conch as she sat on the shoreline. The sound attracted many vicious beasts from the sea who attacked the fishermen. Naturally, all this is hearsay. I can't verify them," Hua Chongyang replied.

Initially, Lu Zhou did not pay much attention to the woman. However, it was hard for him not to notice someone with such a special ability. Her ability was so special that she was being used as a sacrifice.

"Does no one know where she came from?" Lu Zhou asked.

"Nobody knows if she's an Other Tribesman or if she's from Great Yan."

"There are those who can talk to beasts among the Other Tribesmen. That's nothing special. However, it's, indeed, rare that she's able to incite ferocious beasts into action," Lu Zhou said.

While Lu Zhou and Hua Chongyang conversed, the crowd was growing impatient. Some of them even began to shout due to their impatience.

"What's taking so long? Bring the demon woman here!"

"Hey! Everyone's been waiting for ages! The citizens of Jing Province City are watching!"

"The people won't be able to eat and sleep in peace as long as the demon woman is alive! Hurry up..."

Under the urging of the crowd, a middle-aged man dressed in peculiar clothes stepped forward. He wore a brocade hat, and his face was painted in vibrant colors. His soundwave rolled over the crowd, traveling far since it contained Primal Qi. "Order, order." Then, he looked at the sun for a moment before he said, "The time has come. Bring forth the demon woman!"

As soon as he finished speaking, the heaven worship platform fell silent.

Everyone turned to look at the path on the left. A slender figure could be seen walking on the path accompanied by two figures. The moment light hit the slender body, the crowd gasped in shock. If they were unaware, they would not have associated the girl they were seeing with the demon woman. Although her clothes were tattered, her black hair was messy, she had patches of dirt on her face, she was barefooted, and her hands were bound by a rope, these did not mask her exquisite beauty at all. Her most eye-catching feature was her pair of big, shiny, ink-black eyes. They seemed almost lost under her long eyelashes. The words 'Miss Conch' appeared in many of their minds. Many among the crowd thought of the same term, Miss Conch.

The woman had successfully attracted everyone's attention; everyone was looking at her at this moment.

Thud! Thud! Thud!

The sound of her walking on the wooden platform rang crisply in the air. For a time, this was the only sound that could be heard on the heaven worship platform.

When she finally walked to the center of the platform, the crowd broke into an uproar.

Hua Chongyang and Lu Zhou turned to look.

Lu Zhou had been curious since earlier. He was shocked when he discovered the Eye of Truth did not provide him with any information. 'What's the meaning of this?'

Lu Zhou wondered if the system was deliberately making his undercover mission more difficult for him? Based on what he could tell at this moment, the woman had no Primal Qi fluctuation nor did she possess the aura of a cultivator. If that were the case, how did she incite the beasts to attack people?

At the same time, the crowd looked at each other before they shifted their eyes to the girl. Then, they began to shout. "Demon woman!"

The girl seemed even more confused. It was as though she did not understand what was going on. Strangely, as confused as she was, she did not seem surprised, afraid, or nervous. It was clear she was just perplexed. more lost than before.

At this moment, the old male priest on the heaven worship platform looked down and said, "Bring her here."

"Understood!" The two cultivators sent their energy out to prop the girl up on the wooden platform.

Then the old priest waved his horsetail whisk.

The rope circled thrice around the girl and bound her to the wood.

The scorching sun shone down on the girl. Her disheveled hair, the dirt on her face, her old and tattered clothes, and her fair exposed feet did nothing to obscure her beauty. In fact, it accentuated her lofty, out-of-this-world charm.

"Do you know why she's being tied up?" Lu Zhou asked.

"I don't..." Hua Chongyang shook his head.

“Do you think she’s a demon woman?” Lu Zhou asked again.

“She doesn’t look like one.”

“Why not?”

“Gut feeling.” Hua Chongyang remembered his own mission. Naturally, he would not forget why he was here. He asked, “What do you think, Senior Lu?”

“I think she’s the demon woman,” Lu Zhou said.

“Why’s that?”

Lu Zhou placed his hands on his back and slowly said, “She’s not surprised, not flustered, not panicking, not afraid, not cowering... Do you think ordinary girls can maintain their composure like her?”

“She has no Primal Qi fluctuations; how could she command vicious beasts?”

“She’s barely 16. How can you explain the fact that nobody knows where she’s from or even her name?”

Lu Zhou’s words rendered Hua Chongyang speechless.

Upon seeing this, Lu Zhou only smiled and no longer said anything. Hua Chongyang was clearly here for this little girl. There was no need to ask further questions.

The old priest on the heaven worship platform looked at the sun again and said in a clear voice, “The time has come... Let us worship heaven now!”

Dong!

The bell tolled, signifying the ritual had begun.

Most of everyone looked at the old priest.

On the other hand, the people from the Hengqu Branch and the Taixu Academy kept staring at each other, but nobody made the first move. It was as though they were merely here to supervise the ritual.

The old priest loudly said, “I’m Yang Ping of Breeze Mountain. I hereby purify you of your sins in the name of the heavens. You’ll have your ashes forever scattered, you’ll be covered in flames, you’ll sink to the bottom of the ocean. Your soul will be tired, and your will will be tested. Sins cannot tolerate souls, and evil cannot tolerate ugliness. Preaching is useless. Broken bones and a scorched body is the best punishment. Let it burn!” After his long speech, he waved his hand.

Everyone widened their eyes in anticipation of the wood catching fire.

Whoosh!

Embers glowed as a fire started.

At this moment, the girl looked down, clearly puzzled.

Boom!

At this moment, a member of the Taixu Academy sent an energy palm out and scattered the firewood at the base of the cross.

Chapter 474: Fighting Over a Person

The sudden move from the Taixu Academy member stunned Yang Ping, the old priest. He looked at the scattered firewood on the heaven worship platform with a furious expression on his face. He pointed at the people from the Taixu Academy and said, "How dare you! Who are you to go against the will of the heavens?"

The person who made a move said in a clear voice, "I am Taixu Academy's first disciple, Jiang Renyi... It's only natural for me to take action when there are lies in your words."

Yang Ping snorted before he said, "You don't get to decide what's right or wrong. You'll have to see if the people agree with you!" He really did not expect someone to cause trouble at this juncture. Over the years, he had never had any issues conducting the rituals of Jing Province City in the past. The only difference this time was they were using a living person as a sacrifice so the crowd, which consisted of many cultivators, was bigger. However, he was not worried. His confidence came from the knowledge that he had the support of the common folk.

Although the common folk was as weak as ants, only cultivators who were out of their minds would openly oppose the will of the people. After all, the mortals were the foundation of cultivators. They provided the cultivation world with new blood. Even the Emperor had to bend to the will of the people; the cultivators were no different.

Openly attacking civilians would only earn one scorn and hostility from other cultivators. This had long been an unwritten rule in the cultivation world.

As the old priest had expected, the common folk began to rebuke the member from the Taixu Academy.

"The demon woman should be killed!"

"Kill the demon woman!"

"You shouldn't defend the demon woman!"

The Taixu Academy's first disciple, Jiang Renyi, said in a loud voice, "You're a Daoist, and yet, you're talking about the rituals of the Other Tribes! How dare you sacrifice a living human and fool the masses for your own personal gains? Who gave you the courage to do this?"

Yang Ping's face darkened as he said, seething, "How dare you!"

"The Dao is before the Celestial Emperor. Primal Qi gives rise to all things, and yet, is insubstantial," Jiang Renyi said loudly, "I've told you that I'm from the Taixu Academy! You're a Daoist, how dare you spout nonsense! Sins cannot tolerate souls, evil cannot tolerate ugliness? Who taught you that?"

The cultivators present on the scene felt that Jiang Renyi's words made sense when they heard them.

No matter how loudly the people shouted, all they could do was make noise. They could not alter the wills of the cultivators.

Cultivation theories in Great Yan were founded by thought. Instructions based on those theories were used for cultivation. The Confucian, Buddhist, and Daoist Societies did not have such rituals. Instead, it seemed similar to the witchcraft of the Other Tribes. Cultivators who joined academies would be even more aware of this.

Jiang Renyi's speech seemed to make the masses give pause.

Meanwhile, Yang Ping took a step backward.

Clap! Clap! Clap!

At the same time, the white-robed cultivators from the Hengqu Branch who were standing across him applauded.

The applause was so abrupt that it easily drew everyone's attention.

"As expected of the Taixu Academy's first disciple. I agree with him. This old priest bears the physical body of a Great Yan citizen, and yet, he possesses the filthy soul and distasteful thoughts of the Other Tribesmen. I propose that we kill him first!"

"Kill him!" The members from the Hengqu Branch shouted in unison in voices that were so loud that it seemed as though they could shock the heavens.

With the Primal Qi in their voices, the soundwave resounded through the entire area.

The Taixu Academy's first disciple, Jiang Renyi, cupped his fists and said, "Thank you for your support, everyone..." He looked around himself before he faced the people again and said, "My dear people, don't be fooled by this man. Open your eyes and see. Is that little girl, bound on the cross, a demon lady?"

On the wooden platform, the girl blinked her huge eyes curiously as she watched the proceedings.

Jiang Renyi continued to say, "You old thing! You're treating the life of another human with as much worth as a stack of hay! You should confess to your own crimes now!"

Yang Ping took another step back. When he saw that the situation had turned unfavorable, he pushed away from the ground and leaped up into the sky. If he had chosen to stay and defend himself with words, he might still be able to redeem himself. After all, the accusations hurled at him were without proof at the moment. However, now that he had chosen to flee, his guilt was apparent.

The people were shocked as well when they saw the old priest fleeing.

"Running away?!" Zhang Can, an elder from the Hengqu Branch Elder, drew his sword and leaped into the air. His Primal Qi surged and five energy swords spun around his sword. He pushed both palms out, and the energy swords shot out.

Bam! Bam! Bam!

Yang Ping was only a low-rank cultivator who had not even entered the Brahman Sea realm. In just a blink of an eye, the five energy swords pierced him from behind. He cried out wretchedly as he fell from the sky.

Zhang Can shouted, "A person with the ambition of wild wolves like him should submit to the rule of law and confess his crimes!" Zhang Can shouted.

"Good! Nice kill!"

Jiang Renyi, the Taixu Academy's first disciple, looked at the girl who was bound to the wooden cross and said in a clear voice, "Under my master's orders, I'll bring her back to the academy to be dealt with."

"Hold up!" Zhang Can raised a hand.

"Do you have a problem?"

"Who gives the Taixu Academy the right to take her away? What do you treat the Hengqu Branch as?" Zhang Can coldly said.

It was quite clear the reason for their presence here.

Something stirred within Jiang Renyi. His gaze was fierce as he said, "Is the Hengqu Branch trying to meddle in this matter as well?"

The disciples of the Taixu Academy had already gotten into position.

Zing! Zing! Zing!

The Hengqu Branch cultivators unsheathed their swords.

"Those who have no business here should stand back!"

The common folk could tell something was amiss, and they retreated like the receding tide until they were out of the heaven worship platform's bounds.

At this moment, Lu Zhou and Hua Chongyang were the only ones who stood unmoving from their spot. For this reason, they stood out. How could they not draw attention to themselves at this time?

The members of the Hengqu Branch and Taixu Academy looked at the duo.

"Unrelated people should scram!" Zhang Can shouted.

Hua Chongyang shook his head. "I have a better suggestion."

"Hm?" Zhang Can and Jiang Renyi exchanged a look.

"Why don't we ask her for her opinion..." Hua Chongyang pointed at the girl on the wooden cross.

Everyone was fighting over her, and yet, nobody paid any heed to her opinion.

Upon hearing Hua Chongyang's words, the members of the Hengqu Branch and Taixu Academy exchanged glances.

"I agree."

"Me, too."

The representatives of both sides looked at the girl on the wooden cross with expectant expressions.

Jiang Renyi looked at the girl and said, "Don't be afraid... What do you say to coming back to the Taixu Academy with me? If you follow me, I'll give you anything you want." He struggled to maintain his expression. He was afraid of scaring the girl.

The girl cast her gaze downward. She looked at Jiang Renyi for a mere second before she shook her head.

Upon seeing this, Zhang Can laughed loudly. He said, "Jiang Renyi, you should give up while you can... Little girl, return to the Hengqu Branch with me. The sect master will personally teach you how to cultivate! The senior disciples of the Hengqu Branch will be your helpers!"

The girl glanced at Zhang Can before she shook her head again.

Zhang Can. "..."

The members of the Taixu Academy laughed as well in an act of revenge.

At this moment, Hua Chongyang asked in a clear voice as he looked at the girl, "Miss, what's your name?"

Lu Zhou remained silent as he stood in his spot. However, his interest in the girl was growing. Who was she that the other sects were fighting over her? They even gave her special treatment and promised her so many benefits.

Hua Chongyang's question drew everyone's attention again. It suddenly dawned on everyone that they did not even know the girl's name after talking so much. All of them shifted their eyes to her.

The girl shook her head again, seemingly at a loss. She struggled to free her hands. Since the rope was already loosened by the energy blast. With a firm tug, it fell to the ground easily. Then, she raised the item in her hand and softly said, "Conch."

"Conch?" Hua Chongyang smiled. "Alright, I'll call you Conch... Will you come with me?"

Chapter 475: Miss Conch's Choice

Perhaps, it was due to Hua Chongyang asking for her name, the girl smiled warmly against the sunlight. However, she did not respond to him. Instead, she raised the conch in her hand and lightly placed them against her lips. She pursed her thin lips slightly before a deep sobbing noise resonated in the air.

The sound produced by the conch was meandering and melodious as it spread across the heaven worship platform. The unique tone and tune sounded like something that came from under the sea. It seemed to sing tales from the past in a low but beautiful and bright tone.

The tune spread into the forest.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!

Birds appeared in the skies. Huge eagles and meek sparrows flew in the air. Meanwhile, the beasts on land slowly crept toward the platform from the forest. Their eyes shone with a dark green light. This was the sign of a being attaining the basic level of cultivation. The wild beasts absorbed the Primal Qi of

heaven and earth and became tougher, scarier, and more savage. Powerful vicious beasts were the enemies of mankind.

The conch's sound stunned the masses. When they regained their senses, they began to clamor again.

"Demon lady!"

"Demon lady!"

At this moment, Jiang Renyi, the Taixu Academy's first disciple, pushed away from the stone floor and flew at lightning speed toward Miss Conch.

Bam!

The Hengqu Branch's Zhang Can followed suit. He was not inferior to Jiang Renyi in terms of speed. Energy stirred and landed on Jiang Yiren as he said, "Let's decide who's worthy with our fists!"

"You took the words right out of my mouth!"

Both of them were covered in spheres of energy. After the initial collision, they faced each other in the air.

The disciples of the Taixu Academy charged forward as the disciples of the Hengqu Branch drew their swords and advanced as well.

Chaos descended on the scene.

Upon seeing this, Hua Chongyang glanced at Lu Zhou briefly. He did not hesitate to make a move. With the two tigers fighting, he could easily gain the benefit as the third party. His movements were as nimble as a swallow as he kept the energy at bay. "Follow me..."

A surprise expression on Miss Conch's face as she took a step backward. At the moment she stepped back, several energy swords sailed toward her.

Hua Chongyang struck with one hand. A huge energy seal shattered the energy swords. Then, he pulled Miss Conch to him with the energy.

After retracting the energy palm, Miss Conch was pulled in by the energy palm.

"Don't let him get away!"

"D*mnit!"

Zhang Can and Jiang Renyi had discovered Hua Chongyang. The duo stopped fighting immediately as though they had a tacit agreement as they flew toward Hua Chongyang.

A palm and a sword.

From the left and right.

Hua Chongyang shouted, "Get lost!"

Whizz!

An avatar that was nearly 90 feet tall suddenly appeared with an explosion. The shining golden energy pushed Zhang Can and Jiang Renyi back. The two of them reeled back as they spat out mouthfuls of blood up in the sky.

The disciples of the Hengqu Branch and Taixu Academy looked at the avatar that was nearly 90 feet tall in shock.

“A Seven-leaf elite!”

“He’s a Seven-leaf elite?!”

Lu Zhou looked at Hua Chongyang, the Seven-leaf elite. His expression remained calm.

When Hua Chongyang summoned his Seven-leaf avatar, he did not even spare a glance for Zhang Can or Jiang Renyi. His attention had always been on Lu Zhou. Of all the people gathered here, he surmised Lu Zhou was most likely to pose a threat to him here.

Zhang Can and Jiang Renyi endured the pain in their bodies as they hovered in the sky.

“Disciples, hear my order!”

The disciples of the Taixu Academy and Hengqu Branch were well-trained. They retreated at the same time and formed square formations.

“Prepare the Formation!”

The disciples of the Taixu Academy produced talismans from their pockets.

The disciples of the Hengqu Branch bit the tips of their thumbs and swiped it across their swords.

The talismans were ignited; the energy blades shone.

Script seals appeared and formed a huge script seal Grand Formation.

Hua Chongyang did not expect them to work together harmoniously. He retracted his palm after he brought Miss Conch to him. As he had expected, she was not a cultivator. When she was bound by his energy, she was completely helpless.

“You won’t get away!” Zhang Can shouted.

The disciples of the Hengqu Branch flew on their swords. The densely packed energy swords shot out in rapid succession.

Hua Chongyang recalled his avatar and descended. “Let’s go!” Logically, this was the best chance he had to run away. His mission was to retrieve Miss Conch. He was a Seven-leaf elite, after all. There was no need for him to fight if it was not necessary.

The moment Hua Chongyang flew away from the heaven worship platform, a black figure shot after him from the back.

There was no energy or avatar as though the figure was using his body as a weapon. The figure punched Hua Chongyang with golden energy seals swirling around his fist.

Hua Chongyang's expression darkened as he blocked using his arms. At the same time, an energy seal shield appeared around him as he defended against the Taixu Academy's script seals and the Hengqu Branch's sword Formation!

Bam! Bam! Bam!

He could defend himself against the attacks of the two sects, but the sudden appearance of the golden energy fist exceeded his expectations.

Boom!

It was too fast!

The fist connected firmly with Hua Chongyang's arms. The strong impact caused him to grunt as he fell. He fought against his surging blood essence and pushed with his palm. There was only one person he could rely on at this moment. "Elder Lu! Help me..."

The moment the black figure appeared, Hua Chongyang knew his mission today would not be that easy. He was sent flying rather far back on the ground. The limestone floor left in his wake seemed to have been removed. It took a while before he finally slid to a stop. He punched on the ground and flipped 360 degrees in the air before he stood on his feet. Then, he sent Miss Conch over to Lu Zhou with a palm strike

Miss Conch looked up with her huge eyes. For the first time, she smiled and greeted someone. "Hello."

Lu Zhou looked down into her eyes. Her head only reached his shoulders. It was said that eyes were the windows to a person's soul. He only saw innocence and purity in her eyes. She seemed so pure that it was as though she was not even tainted by a speck of dust.

Miss Conch's greeting seemed to catch the black figure off guard. It came to a halt and looked over.

The black figure belonged to a middle-aged man who wore full armor. A blade scar could be seen on his face. Based on his armor, it seemed like was a soldier from the Jing Province City's garrison.

"Hello," Lu Zhou replied to Miss Conch.

"What's your name?"

"I'm Lu Zhou... What about you?" Lu Zhou asked with a smile.

"I... I... I..." Miss Conch could not seem to remember her name. Her brows were furrowed as she struggled to remember her name. "Luo..."

"Luo?" Lu Zhou looked at the conch in her hand. "Come here."

"Oh." Miss Conch moved to Lu Zhou's side. She was as obedient as a granddaughter.

The others were greatly surprised at this.

The garrison soldier spoke in a deep voice, "Under the orders of the lord, no one's allowed to use a living person as a sacrifice on the heaven worship platform... I'll be taking this girl with me. In these unique times, those who disobey military orders will be persecuted!"

Hua Chongyang looked beyond the heaven worship platform. The space 100 meters behind the civilians was already occupied by 1,000 soldiers. They exuded a majestic aura as they looked at the heaven worship platform.

Lu Zhou looked at the garrison soldier. "This little girl is somehow tied to me by fate. I don't think I can let you take her away."

"Hm?" The garrison general's gaze darkened.

At this moment, Jiang Renyi, the Taixu Academy's first disciple, descended on the heaven worship platform. Then, he cupped his fists and said, "I didn't notice General Ning, the strongest elite under General Wen Shu."

"Greetings, General Ning. I'm Zhang Can of the Hengqu Branch."

Hua Chongyang's heart turned slightly cold. 'Why is Ning Han here?'

If they were to fight one-on-one in a righteous manner, Hua Chongyang would be evenly matched with Ning Han. However, the sneak attack from before had caught him off guard and injured him. Ning Han is skilled in melee combat. He was a killing machine on the battlefield. Before they advanced on Jing Province, the Nether Sect had investigated Wen Shu and his subordinates. Ning Han was one of the noteworthy people who came up in the investigation. He did not expect to meet Ning Han here. An ominous feeling rose in his heart. He could not let his guard down. He shuddered when he thought about what would happen if his real identity was revealed.

Chapter 476: Elder Lu's Strength

If a deputy general was this powerful, General Wen Shu, one of the eight great commanders, definitely would not be a weakling.

Back then, the commander of the three armies, Wei Zhuoyan, rose through the ranks under Li Jingyi's support. He was in control of heavy forces and had a high authority. Even then, he could not even compare to the eight great commanders.

The Divine Capital was full of crouching tigers and hidden dragons. It was not a lie.

The appearance of General Ning made the members of the Hengqu Branch and the Taixu Academy give up on fighting. If the Divine Capital wanted this person, they could only step aside.

Miss Conch stood at the side as she watched the happenings in her surroundings. Even at this moment, her eyes showed no fear or nervousness; only curiosity could be seen.

General Ning looked at Lu Zhou and asked, "What did you say?"

"I never repeat myself." Lu Zhou no longer bothered with General Ning. Instead, he looked at Hua Chongyang who was injured and simply said, "Let's go."

He grabbed Miss Conch's hand, which seemed small in his, as he walked away from the heaven worship platform.

Miss Conch asked in confusion, "Where to?"

“Wherever you want,” Lu Zhou answered in a low voice.

The two sects and General Ning looked as the old man and the young girl conversed as they walked away.

Lu Zhou had just waved his hand, creating a small storm of Primal Qi when General could no longer hold it in and said, “Catch them.”

With this order, dozens of mounted soldiers at the front lines charged.

The warhorses’ eyes shone with a dark green light at this moment. It was clear these were not ordinary warhorses. More than ten warhorses galloped across the land, stirring up clouds of dust. The mounted soldiers were at least in the Brahman Sea realm. The spears in their hands buzzed as they moved forward.

Lu Zhou shook his head. He stopped and looked at the warhorses charging at him before he raised his right hand.

Miss Conch stopped walking as well. She raised her conch and blew into it softly. A deep and sobbing sound resonated in the air. The sound seemed ordinary; there were no Primal Qi or offensive soundwaves. However, the warhorses seemed to understand her. They came to a halt immediately and raised their front hooves as they neighed.

The cultivators’ expressions changed immediately. They had tamed these steeds. Why did the steeds go out of control for no reason at all?

Meanwhile, the warhorses moved in a frenzy, bucking around the shake the cultivators off their backs.

Lu Zhou looked at the warhorses curiously before he shifted his eyes to Miss Conch who was standing next to him. “What did you say to them?”

“Freedom.” Miss Conch looked up slightly.

Meanwhile, Hua Chongyang and General Ning Han were filled with awe. What a terrifying ability! She was capable of swaying the warhorses’ loyalty with just a tune.

Ning Han, otherwise known as General Ning, stomped his foot on the heaven worship platform and said domineeringly, “Those who dare take the demon lady away will be persecuted on the spot!”

Boom!

The heaven worship platform crumbled with a loud crash immediately.

Ning Han hovered in midair and ordered, “Kill them.”

The cultivators abandoned their frenzied warhorses and leaped into the air.

Lu Zhou looked to the side slightly, “Are you afraid?”

“What’s afraid?” Miss Conch asked. Since she asked this question, it was clear she was not afraid at all.

Lu Zhou was already a One-leaf Nascent Divinity Tribulation realm cultivator. These small fries were not even worthy of him using his trump cards.

“Don’t move.”

“Oh.”

Lu Zhou flipped his palm. The Primal Qi around him surged. Dozens of horizontal energy swords materialized around him.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!

They shot forward.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

The mounted soldiers could not even withstand a single hit before they fell. Only two mounted soldiers were left. They carried their comrades’ corpses with their Ten Worlds avatars and charged toward Lu Zhou.

Lu Zhou raised his hand and pushed it forward casually.

The two soldiers seemed to freeze.

Lu Zhou pushed his palm out and a shining golden energy palm shot out.

Boom!

“A Small Seal of Fearlessness!”

The two Divine Court soldiers reeled back and died.

Hua Chongyang’s gaze was complicated. “Isn’t Senior Lu from the Penglai Sect? Why is he able to use a Buddhist attack?”

General Ning, who was hovering in midair, was confused as well.

When the first wave of cultivators fell, another wave of cultivators took their place.

“You overestimate your own capabilities.” Lu Zhou flipped his palm again. Primal Qi was condensed into energy. The Great Blitz Treasure Seal and the Outer Circle Mystic Seal shot out. The energy palms were unique. Huge shining golden scripts could be seen on the five fingers of the palm seal.

These moves were too obvious.

“Those are two of the palm seals of the Daoist Nine Cuts Hand Seals!”

“Who’s this old man?”

“How can he master the techniques of the Buddhist and Daoist Societies at the same time?!”

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Another dozen cultivators lost their lives.

Lu Zhou was satisfied with the feeling of not having to rely on his item cards. Although he was not as awe-inspiring as before, it felt more realistic.

Ning Han said loudly, "You two sects, what are you standing around for? It's time for you to be of service to the Imperial court." Having lost much of his men, he intended to make the members of the Taixu Academy and Hengqu Branch take on the role of vanguards.

"Glad to be of service," Jiang Renyi said with a bow.

"You should leave this to the Hengqu Branch..." Zhang Can had no intentions of letting the Taixu Academy take all the merits. He waved his hand.

The disciples of the Hengqu Branch drew their swords.

Dozens of swords sailed through the air.

The men formed four to five energy swords each that spun around their swords.

"Senior Lu, look out!" Hua Chongyang warned.

As soon as Hua Chongyang finished speaking, the countless densely packed energy swords shot toward Lu Zhou, looking like a long dragon.

"A sword Formation?" Lu Zhou glanced at it. His 1,000 years of combat experience and knowledge was put to good use at this moment.

Lu Zhou waved his sleeve! Unnamed flew out. He joined his index and middle fingers as he controlled the sword with his Qi. Unnamed split into two and continued to multiply...

Boom! Boom! Boom!

The dragon was slain by Unnamed.

The disciples of the Hengqu Branch had sour expressions on their faces when they saw this.

"That weapon... It's a heaven-grade weapon?" General Ning continued looking down from above. This could not go on. A One-leaf Nascent Divinity Tribulation realm cultivator could not continue fighting for a long time, after all.

Lu Zhou thought about the Disguise Card which could be used to intimidate the others. Alas, a single card costs 10,000 merit points. It was a waste to use it right now. 'If it weren't for the price, I would've swatted you as though you're flies ages ago! How dare you act pretentious before me?'

At this moment, Jiang Renyi and Zhang Can flew toward him.

A sword and a palm!

They moved at lightning speed!

"How dare you make a scene when you merely have a One-leaf cultivation base?!"

If they could not gauge this old man's cultivation base after fighting for this long, they would have been the laughingstock of the cultivation world.

"Forget it!" Lu Zhou pushed away from the ground and rose into the air. When the sword and the palm were upon him, Primal Qi surged as he pushed his palms to the sides. A faint bluish glow appeared

immediately! With Lu Zhou in the center, a gigantic array of energy swords that spanned 100 meters appeared!

The Yellow River Sword was a gift from the heavens!

“Impossible!”

“He’s not a One-leaf cultivator!”

Zhang Can and Jiang Renyi were almost upon him when they were greeted by a tidal wave of energy swords.

Bam! Bam! Bam

The energy swords washed over the two of them like a tidal wave. They were minced by the energy sword. They did not even have the time to cry out.

The energy swords seemed to have eyes of their own. They skirted around Miss Conch and formed an independent safe space.

“Eldest Senior Brother!”

“Elder!”

The members of the Taixu Academy and Hengqu Branch were stunned.

General Ning’s gaze turned cold. He stepped into the air that rippled under his feet. With his fists by his side, he launched an attack at Lu Zhou with an overbearing force that was as heavy as a mountain.

Lu Zhou was still surrounded by energy swords.

The terrifying part was that Ning Han had parted the energy swords with his shining golden fists!

‘Hm? My extraordinary power isn’t enough?’ Lu Zhou seemed indifferent. He retracted his arms and placed them before his dantian. The array of energy swords vanished at once.

“Die!” Ning Han, who had been resting all this while, punched Lu Zhou at lightning speed. His body was horizontal in the air as he punched with his right hand.

Ning Han had the opportunity to catch his breath. With lightning speed, he hurled a punch at Lu Zhou. His body was horizontal in the air as he punched with his right arm.

Bam!

This punch connected with Lu Zhou’s chest.

‘It hit!’ Ning Han was feeling pleased with himself. Anyone hit by him would have their bones shattered. Upon seeing his punch had landed true, he hovered in the air. He had seen and felt his fist connecting with Lu Zhou’s chest. However, with a second glance, he discovered a layer of blue light surrounding Lu Zhou’s body.

Chapter 477: The Nine-leaf Avatar Appears Again

To maintain and manifest samadhi. Like light and shadow, permeating everywhere while staying still in samadhi.

This was the power to silence everything!

Lu Zhou forcibly focused the Heavenly Writing's power before himself. There was no explosion of blue lotus nor was there any reversing of the blue lotus's energy.

Ning Han's heart sank. He cursed silently. When he looked up again, he saw the indifferent expression on Lu Zhou's face.

"It's been a long time since I've felt the touch of a punch." After saying this, Lu Zhou punched his wizened hand at Ning Han.

Boom!

Ning Han, or General Ning, felt as though his arm had been punched with the force of 10,000 pounds as he flew back. 'No energy seal? How did he do that?'

How was it possible for a cultivator to unleash such great power with his physical strength alone without condensing Qi into energy? Moreover, Lu Zhou, in all appearances, was an old man!

The others thought it was over when Lu Zhou suddenly flew up and dove. He appeared in front of Ning Han at a great speed. Nobody noticed the blue light shining between his fingers.

Boom!

Lu Zhou punched again. This time, it landed squarely on Ning Han's chest

"General!"

The others, including Hua Chongyang, were stunned.

Ning Han was a body-cultivation elite. A cultivator like him was not talented in utilizing Qi or condensing it into energy. Hence, he took the path of body cultivation. He wrapped his skin in energy while strengthening his body at the same time. He was a formidable foe in close-range combat. A person like him was great at taking punches. He was like a solid rock.

Ning Han had lost all control when he was sent flying back.

Lu Zhou dove again. He moved faster than the speed Ning Han was sent flying. He punched again!

Boom!

The punch landed on Ning Han's chest again. All three punches were done in a single breath. He flew out of the heaven worship platform and crashed heavily onto the limestone floor.

Lu Zhou looked down at the crater. Based on this battle, he discovered his control over the extraordinary power had improved. He no longer needed to take down his target with a single hit. He was now more than capable of subduing his target using much less extraordinary power. On top of that, his cultivation base was now in the Nascent Divinity realm. The three punches collectively used a quarter of his extraordinary power. In total, he spent about one-third of his extraordinary power. According to

his previous calculations, he would have needed two-third of his extraordinary power to achieve this, including killing Zhang Can and Jiang Renyi with the energy swords.

At this moment, the platform was as silent as a graveyard.

The members of the Hengqu Branch and Taixu Academy stood riveted to the ground in stunned silence. All of them gulped as they watched on. It was as though no one cared about Jiang Renyi and Zhang Can's deaths. The tidal waves of energy swords had long since minced the two of them to shreds.

Hua Chongyang felt his heart race. Cold sweat trickled down his back. 'What a savage old man!'

To think that a body cultivator who was skilled in punches had lost in a punching match, and to an aged individual to boot! Who could defend his honor? He dared not move, afraid that 'Senior Lu' was a petty person who took their previous misunderstandings to heart. He had no choice. It was not as though this situation was rare in the cultivation world. Let alone the fact that he had actually fought with the old man, in Great Yan, people had warred over off-handed remarks such as, 'What are you looking at?'

Inside the crater.

Crash!

Ning Han swiped the debris on him away. He stared at Lu Zhou who was hovering in the air. His dust-covered face and his dented chest clearly indicated that he was seriously wounded.

'He's still alive after three punches?'

Everyone else was surprised by Ning Han as well. He was too powerful!

Ning Han raised a callused hand and pointed at Lu Zhou who was looking down at him in the air. "A-a... What a tough punch." He fought back the pain and spoke through gritted teeth, "How... how did you do it?"

Lu Zhou stared at Ning Han for three seconds before speaking with a powerful voice, "When you clench your hand into a fist, you'll notice that fate is in your hands..."

Ning Han spat out a mouthful of blood. His head lolled to the side. He was no longer breathing. His eyes remained opened. He was only a martial artist. How could he die in peace after hearing those words? Were they nonsense? Or were they the truth? As the saying went, 'The speaker had no particular intention when speaking, but the listener inferred his own meaning'.

"Ding! Killed a target. Reward: 1,500 merit points."

Hua Chongyang placed a hand on his chest and bowed at Lu Zhou. "I'm enlightened seeing you win a fight with just three punches, Senior Lu." Despite his words, he was shuddering inwardly. 'Please don't be mad, old man!' He lowered his head so that he would seem sincere, humble, and polite. 'This old man must be an Eight-leaf cultivator!'

Lu Zhou ignored Hua Chongyang. Instead, he looked at the remaining mounted soldiers and the members of the Hengqu Branch and Taixu Academy.

The three forces retreated.

Lu Zhou had no intention of killing these people, but they were prepared to kill him just moments ago. Their cultivation bases were not profound. He would not earn many merit points by killing them. He would not gain much by killing them.

As the three forces retreated, a huge flying chariot appeared in the horizons. Hundreds of cultivators could be seen flanking the flying chariot as it sailed.

“Cultivators incoming!”

“Which sect?”

Hua Chongyang looked up. He frowned. “The Penglai Sect?!”

There were umbrella patterns on the flying chariot’s body. They were of varying sizes and bright colors.

Groups of men and women were gathered at the helm.

A huge flying chariot with such characteristics could only belong to the umbrella cultivators of the Penglai Island’s Penglai Sect.

Hua Chongyang cursed inwardly.

Senior Lu was a member of the Penglai Sect. These were his people. It was practically impossible for him to take Miss Conch away now.

The flying chariot was soon upon them.

A voice rang from the helm, “Brother Chongyang... Why are you here?”

Hua Chongyang was shocked! ‘I’m exposed? What in tarnation?’

Hua Chongyang looked in the direction of the voice. “Shen Liangshou?!”

“Hello!”

“I... I... I...” Hua Chongyang felt like crying. There was no need to fear a godly opponent, but one should be afraid of a pig-like teammate. He felt as though he was having the worst of luck of eight lifetimes combined. He was a great Seven-leaf elite. He could have gone wherever he liked. Alas, at this moment, he was like a stray dog.

“Senior Lu! I...”

“Who’s this old man?” Sheng Liangshou pointed at Lu Zhou.

Hua Chongyang cursed at Shen Liangshou inwardly. ‘You’re a f*cking elder of the Core Yang Sect. Although you’re on good terms with the Penglai Sect, you shouldn’t be spouting whatever nonsense that comes to your mind!’

Lu Zhou looked up. “Penglai Sect?”

At this moment, an ancient voice rang from the flying chariot. “The Penglai Sect is merely passing by. We have no intentions of meddling.”

“That will be best.” Lu Zhou felt that it was time to wrap things up. He turned around and flew toward Miss Conch. He landed beside her, as light as a feather.

“Are you afraid?”

“I’m not.”

At this moment, Shen Liangshou said, “The people from the Hengqu and Taixu Branch? You’re here?”

“Please help us resolve this, senior! That demon lady will plunge the world into chaos. She can’t be allowed to live!” The people of the Hengqu Branch knelt in unison. If they could not have her, it was better to have her killed.

“That demon lady knows the tongue and tune of beasts. The civilians here can attest to that! The heaven worship platform is objective evidence of that! I speak the truth, senior. Please help us resolve this!”

Their voices reached the flying chariot.

A puzzled voice rang from inside the flying chariot. “The tongue and tune of beats?”

Lu Zhou ignored them, preparing to leave.

The voice rang from the flying chariot again. “What’s the hurry, my friend?”

Lu Zhou stopped his movements and replied, “What is it?”

“How can you leave when the matter isn’t settled yet?”

“Are you trying to stop me?”

“What if I am?”

Whizz!

With the flying chariot in the center, a bright golden light expanded.

Everyone looked up.

The flying chariot was now enveloped by a huge avatar. It was 100 feet tall.

Under the flying chariot, there was a Golden Lotus. Eight bright and dazzling leaves were spinning around it.

“An Eight-leaf elite!”

“Good heavens...”

Hua Chongyang cursed inwardly, ‘F*ck.’ He was certain that they were done for now.

Just when everyone was focused on the flying chariot...

Whizz!

A more intense sound resonated in the air.

An avatar rose from Lu Zhou.

10 feet, 20 feet, 30 feet... 80 feet, 90 feet, 100 feet...

Everyone's attention was, naturally, attracted by this sight.

"Another Eight-leaf cultivator!"

"No! No! No! That's not an Eight-leaf..."

The avatar continued to grow.

110 feet, 120 feet... 140 feet, 150 feet!

Nine leaves spun around the Golden Lotus under the avatar's feet!

"..."

A 150-foot avatar faced the 100-foot avatar as well.

It was easy to tell which one was superior.

No wind blew on the heaven worship platform for 100 meters.

It was extremely quiet.

The cultivators of the Hengqu Branch and Taixu Academy felt as though their eyeballs were about to pop out from their sockets as they stared at the 150-foot tall avatar. They could not even see its head. They could only see the nine leaves that were dazzling and eye-catching. The leaves seemed like blades that kept slicing at their hearts.

Chapter 478: Nine-leaf Lu

In Great Yan's cultivation world, aside from the legends of elusive experts who lived in seclusion, the experts whom the cultivators respected were Eight-leaf experts. Those who were at the Five-leaf stage could be considered grand cultivators.

Ever since the start of the Lotus Severing era, the cultivation world was quick to pick it up. Almost everyone severed their lotuses and recultivated for fear of being left behind.

The incident of the seven great sects attacking the Evil Sky Pavilion shocked the entire cultivation world. They were shocked by the appearance of a Nine-leaf cultivator. Who could stand against a Nine-leaf cultivator?

Nobody knew how the Evil Sky Pavilion Patriarch, Ji Tiandao, did it. It was a mystery that was unresolved in the cultivation world. However, the nine leaves could not lie.

The Penglai Sect's elite in the huge chariot had intended to intimidate Lu Zhou by showing off his avatar so that he could get what he wanted. However, he did not expect the person he wanted to intimidate was a Nine-leaf expert. Indeed, an Eight-leaf cultivator was powerful. However, in the face of a Nine-leaf cultivator, they were as worthless as grass.

Hua Chongyang pressed a hand to his chest. He found it difficult to breathe. When he recalled he had exchanged blows with 'Senior Lu', cold sweat began to bead on his back. If the old senior had been merciless, what would happen to him?

Ten seconds were not long, but it was enough to intimidate everyone, including the elite in the huge chariot.

After ten seconds, Lu Zhou's Nine-leaf avatar vanished before everyone's eyes.

The entire heaven worship platform was deathly silent.

The elite inside the flying chariot suddenly realized how rude and stupid he had been. The old senior had withdrawn his avatar, and yet, he was still shamelessly maintaining his laughable Eight-leaf avatar. He quickly withdrew his avatar.

Who was this old man? Everyone had this thought in mind. They could not help thinking he might be the Evil Sky Pavilion's Ji Tlandao! Some of them were already convinced the old man was the Evil Sky Pavilion's patriarch!

"Land the chariot!" A voice sounded from the flying chariot.

The disciples finally reacted and began lowering the flying chariot.

As the chariot landed, a deep voice rang from it. "Sheng Liangshou..."

"Huh?"

"Is this the Evil Sky Pavilion's Patriarch?"

Shen Liangshou was taken aback. He widened his eyes as he looked at the old man again. Compared to Ji Tiandao, this old man looked thinner and livelier. His hair was darker as well. Apart from the fact that they were both old, this old man bore no resemblance to the Evil Sky Pavilion's Patriarch at all. Therefore, he did not hesitate as he said, "He's not the Evil Sky Pavilion's Patriarch."

"Are you sure?"

"I guarantee it! I was in close contact with Old Senior Ji during the battle at Liang Province. I remember his words, actions, voice, and looks. They're all imprinted in my mind. It's impossible for me to mistake him," Shen Liangshou said confidently.

Boom!

The flying chariot landed on the ground.

The disciples left the flying chariot, bowed, and said, "Welcome, sect master."

An old man, who seemed slightly weathered, emerged from the flying chariot. The only eye-catching thing about him was the extravagant clothes he wore. His brocade robes were embroidered with green birds and umbrellas. The moment he disembarked from the flying chariot, two disciples supported him on each side as he hastened forward. They came to a stop several meters before Lu Zhou. With a slight bow, he said, "Greetings, old senior. I'm Huang Shijie from the Penglai Sect."

“Huang Shijie?” Lu Zhou nodded. “The Penglai Sect seldom meddles with the trivial matters of the cultivation world. Why today?”

The Master of Penglai Island was also the Sect Master of the Penglai Sect.

Huang Shijie said, “We were passing by when we encountered a powerful Primal Qi fluctuation. Hence, we came to take a look... We didn’t expect to run into an otherworldly elite here.”

Lu Zhou remained unmoved. He had heard too many flatteries.

At this moment, Shen Liangshou jogged over. He emboldened himself to get as close to them as possible. Then, he flashed a smile and said, “Old senior... How should we address you?”

“Hm?” Lu Zhou shifted his gaze to Sheng Liangshou.

Sheng Liangshou was frightened into taking a step back when he felt the pressure from Lu Zhou. “I’m sorry, old senior!” How dare a puny little Nascent Divinity realm weakling ask about a Nine-leaf elite’s name? A single look from Lu Zhou sucked out all the courage in him. He no longer dared to speak.

Huang Shijie said, “Senior, the Penglai Sect has no intentions of becoming enemies with you. About before...”

“You want me to give you an explanation?” Lu Zhou asked.

“We dare not!” Huang Shijie looked to his sides. He saw the Taixu Academy and Hengqu Branch at the far side. He pulled a face, waved his hand, and said, “Execute them now.”

This order startled everyone.

The members of the Taixu Academy and Hengqu Branch retreated in fright.

Huang Shijie knew this was not the time to be merciful. He lowered his voice and said, “What’s this? Are my orders of no importance now?”

“Yes, sect master!” The Penglai Sect’s first disciple held a black umbrella in his hand. He turned around with killing intent flashing in his eyes.

A few other disciples turned as well.

Five of them leaped into the air before they charged at the crowd.

For a time, there was a rain of blood.

Cries rose and fell.

Lu Zhou did not look at them. They deserved this outcome. Besides, their lives and deaths had nothing to do with him.

Huang Shijie cupped his fists and said, “Are you satisfied with this, old senior?”

“Do your part well,” Lu Zhou replied.

“Huang Shijie shall follow your instructions, old senior.” Huang Shijie bowed.

The other disciples bowed as well.

Lu Zhou turned his attention away from Huang Shijie. He walked up to Miss Conch. He noticed that she was not at all afraid. In fact, she seemed more curious than anything else.

Before Lu Zhou could speak, she said, "I've seen it before."

"What have you seen before?"

"Nine... nine leaves." Miss Conch made a Golden Lotus shape with her hands.

When Lu Zhou heard this, he was shocked. His instincts told him that Miss Conch was not lying. Her eyes were filled with honesty. He did not press further. He found her words slightly frightening. Was it true that he was not the only Nine-leaf elite? In the end, he extended his hand to her and said, "Let's go."

Miss Conch glanced at him and took his hand.

The sun shone on the platform.

The beasts of the forest had left. The birds took flight in neat formations toward the setting sun. They were chasing the sunlight. There was still hope.

Lu Zhou held Miss Conch's hand in his and turned toward Jing Province City. He looked back and said, "Hua Chongyang."

Hua Chongyang shuddered. A great Seven-leaf elite was like a small fry today. He made his way through the members of the Penglai Sect. When he hurried past Huang Shijie, he did not even have the time to salute him. "S-senior Lu."

The people from the Penglai Sect heard Hua Chongyang's words. So this Nine-leaf elite's surname is Lu.

At long last, there was another miracle in the cultivation world. Nine-leaf Lu's name will certainly shock the cultivation world.

"I... I... It wasn't my intention to hide my identity," Hua Chongyang stammered.

Lu Zhou brushed him off. He walked toward Jing Province City.

When he left, Huang Shijie and the others sighed in relief. 'That was close.'

However, as the Sect Master of the Penglai Sect Master, it was only natural he could not show he was frightened like the others were. Instead, he tried to appear calm as he looked at Lu Zhou's retreating back. Then, he spared the members of the Hengqu Branch and the Taixu Academy a glance before he said, "Get rid of the roots while cutting the weed. Don't leave anyone alive."

"Understood."

Chapter 479: Mystical Miss Conch

He was too afraid of offending a Nine-leaf cultivator, but he could not offend the Taixu Academy and the Hengqu Branch as well. In that case, the best course of action was to cut the weeds and eliminate the roots. As to what would happen after this, he would leave it to their investigations.

Shen Liangshou did not even dare to breathe loudly. He wiped the sweat off his face. "That old man Lu... His aura seems even more powerful than Old Senior Ji."

"Shen Liangshou."

"Here..." Shen Liangshou raised his hand. He was at the top of the whitelist, and yet, he was living like a servant.

"He called the person behind him Hua Chongyang. Isn't he the leader of the Nether Sect's Four Great Protectors?" Huang Shijie asked in confusion.

"That's right. He has a profound cultivation base, but I don't know why he's here..."

Huang Shijie nodded. "Since he's close to Nine-leaf Lu, Penang Lai won't let this opportunity pass us by. Don't you forget why we're here."

"Understood!"

...

Lu Zhou did not travel through air. Instead, he deliberately traveled on foot for the first leg of the journey to see how Miss Conch would react.

Hua Chongyang followed behind him quietly.

Lu Zhou stopped when they were inside a forest. He looked at Miss Conch's feet before he said "Where's your house? I'll send you back."

"House?" She shook her head.

'She's homeless?' Lu Zhou studied her again. She was truly mysterious. Apart from being gifted in the tongue and tune of beats, she survived under such harsh conditions. Children from ordinary families would find it difficult to survive being homeless. After muttering to himself for a while, he said, "Then, I'll take you with me."

Hua Chongyang called out, "Senior Lu."

"Hm?"

"I have something to say, but I don't know if it's appropriate," Hua Chongyang said.

"You've already hidden your identity, and I haven't cleared that debt with you yet," Lu Zhou said in a deep voice.

"..." Hua Chongyang jolted.

Lu Zhou glanced at him. 'Well, aren't I in disguise as well? What an awkward double standard...' He shook his head. This is not important.

"I'm Hua Chongyang, one of the Nether Sect's Four Great Protectors and the First Seat of Azure Dragon Hall," Hua Chongyang said, "The Nether Sect is currently the greatest Fiend sect under the heavens. I'm sure you've heard of it, Senior Lu."

Lu Zhou looked at Hua Chongyang and asked, "What's your point?"

"Miss Conch is pure and naïve. It's difficult for her to survive in the dangerous cultivation world. I... I can look after her. I'll treat her like my biological little sister," Hua Chongyang replied.

"You?"

"I don't dare compare myself against you, Senior Lu. You're a Nine-leaf elite, after all..." Hua Chongyang lowered his head.

Cultivation base had nothing to do with looking after another person, after all. If a great Nine-leaf elite with a family of his own brought a child back with him, how was the elite going to explain himself? If he was a lone cultivator, he would not have the time to raise a child as well. was one thing.

At this moment, before Lu Zhou could reply, Miss Conch said, "I won't go with you."

Hua Chongyang. "???"

"Hua Chongyang, why did you come for her?" Lu Zhou's gaze was stern. 'I won't allow you to lie to me about this.'

Hua Chongyang's chest tightened from Lu Zhou's pressure. He had no choice but to honestly reply, "When the empire is ruled by an incompetent monarch, it's our duty to take him down. The Nether Sect is only acting as the situation calls for and has the support of the civilians and cultivators of the nine provinces. However, we're having trouble conquering Jing Province..."

"So, you plan to use this little girl?" Lu Zhou asked.

"Well..."

Lu Zhou was not wrong when he used the word 'use'. It was the truth.

Hua Chongyang appeared awkward. He looked at the young girl sheepishly. At this moment he recalled Lu Zhou was not a member of the Penglai Sect. Lu Zhou had merely said that to fob him off. He mustered his courage and said, "I have a presumptuous request... If the Nether Sect can have your assistance, old senior, I'm sure we can easily take down Jing Province." If they had the help of a Nine-leaf elite, they would no longer need Miss Conch or the vicious beasts at all. After he had spoken, he no longer had the courage to look Lu Zhou in the eye.

After a moment's silence, Lu Zhou said, "I have no intentions of meddling in this trivial matter... However, I'm quite interested in the Sect Master of the Nether Sect."

Hua Chongyang asked in shock, "You've heard about my sect master, Senior Lu?"

"A little."

"To tell you the truth, my sect master's master... is also a Nine-leaf elite like you! I wonder if you've heard of... the Evil Sky Pavilion that has taken the cultivation world by storm, Senior Lu?" Hua Chongyang was invigorated. He immediately spoke about the Evil Sky Pavilion. He was now convinced Lu Zhou was a lone elite.

“Nine-leaf? The Evil Sky Pavilion?” Lu Zhou could not give himself away. After all, his objective was to meet Yu Zhenghai and see what the rascal, Si Wuya, was up to.

“The Evil Sky Pavilion Master single-handedly defeated the seven great sects not long ago. His blooming Nine-leaf lotus is peerless...” Hua Chongyang’s tone was filled with respect. However, he realized he had spoken when he said the word ‘peerless’. He coughed lightly and corrected himself. “Naturally, compared to you, Senior Lu, he’s slightly lacking. After all, the pavilion master is getting old. Even if he’s at the Nine-leaf stage, there’s still a limit to the addition to his life.”

Lu Zhou. “???”

‘You’ve got balls talking crap about me!’

“How do you know his lifespan would remain the same after he’s attained the Nine-leaf stage?” Lu Zhou asked. Even he did not dare to make such a claim. His actual cultivation base was still at the One-leaf stage, after all. However, he had a feeling that the addition was surely more than 50 years once he broke through from the Eight-leaf stage to the Nine-leaf stage.

“You have a point, Senior Lu. I’m too uneducated,” Hua Chongyang said.

“If Yu Zhenghai has such a master... Why didn’t he ask for his help and flatten Jing Province?” Lu Zhou asked.

“Well...” Hua Chongyang dared not speak of such matters lightly. This was his sect master, Yu Zhenghai’s personal matter. It was rarely brought up in the Nether Sect as well. Then, he said, “Perhaps, you can ask my sect master in person about this.”

“Sure,” Lu Zhou replied. They clicked easily. Then, he looked at Miss Conch and said, “I’ll take you with me.”

“Mhm.”

A surge of energy lifted the two of them. They rose into the air and flew toward Jing Province City.

Hua Chongyang nodded silently. He thought that the Nine-leaf elite lived up to his name. Stability was the best way forward. He followed them quietly.

The three of them passed through the forest as they flew.

Miss Conch seemed excited by this. It was as though she had not flown before or had not flown for a long time. She pointed below and said, “Beautiful.” Then, she lifted her conch to her lips and softly blew into it.

The deep hum resounded across the skies. It was clearly an ordinary sound but was sonorous and forceful as it reached the lands below.

In the forest, the beasts ran wildly. The forest rumbled as clouds of dust rose between the trees.

The birds who heard the sound flapped their wings and flocked together.

Some of the vicious beasts that had begun cultivating moved at lightning speed.

As the three of them flew, the birds and beasts followed them.

Lu Zhou was not surprised to see this. He merely said, "Conch."

"Oh." She passed the conch to Lu Zhou.

Lu Zhou scrutinized it. It was not a weapon. It was just an ordinary conch. This was not a sound technique. 'Is it possible that the tune is also part of the beasts' language?'

Lu Zhou returned the conch to her.

"Thank you." Surprisingly, Miss Conch thanked him.

Chapter 480: A Place Far Far Away

When the sound of the conch faded away, the beasts and birds stopped following them.

Lu Zhou glanced at Miss Conch. It was mystifying to think that there was a person with such abilities.

Hua Chongyang praised her. "If this talent is used well, you'll be comparable to the brave master."

Lu Zhou glanced at him and said, "With these beasts alone?"

The beasts near human settlements were generally not very large. They would still be lacking if they were to compete with powerful human cultivators.

Hua Chongyang considered this in his mind. The old senior was knowledgeable and experienced. It was only natural for him to know about many things. He was somehow convinced that Lu Zhou was trying to find out about his sect master's strength. He mulled over it for a moment before he said, "Naturally, these beasts are too insignificant to mention. Many beasts are merely slightly more powerful than mortals. The minority that is powerful are only in the Mystic Enlightening or Sense Condensing realms. They can't be compared to human cultivators. However, the beasts from the four great forests are enough to strike fear in the hearts of the masses." When he saw Lu Zhou keeping quiet, he continued to say, "Not only did the Hengqu Branch and Taixu Academy covet the little girl's talents, they saw the huge benefits they could gain from her as well. If they were to groom the little girl well and catch some mounts, I'm sure they'll become the greatest sects in Great Yan within 100 years."

Lu Zhou had never thought about it from this angle. The little girl could subdue vicious beasts. Naturally, it was suited to taming wild beasts. Who knows how many powerful beasts there were within the four great forests? Even an Eight-leaf elite like Pan Litian had been lost inside the forest previously and nearly lost his life. He recalled his mounts, Whizard and Bi An. They were not from the four great forests and could not be compared.

After flying for some time, Lu Zhou, Miss Conch, and Hua Chongyang finally arrived at Jing Province City.

Lu Zhou glanced at Miss Conch's clothes and brought her to the tailor to have a set of garments made. Then, he employed someone to give her a wash. If the soil and her old clothes could not even obscure her other-worldly elegance, after a change of clothes, Miss Conch seemed like a fairy. Although her hair was coiled into a bun, she still seemed playful and cute. Her long dress that was girdled at the waist made her seem stately.

Hua Chongyang clicked his tongue in wonder. "It's difficult to imagine her being a homeless child." What kind of parents would be so cold-hearted as to abandon such a naïve, pure, beautiful, and elegant daughter?

Miss Conch seemed to like her new clothes well enough. When she emerged from the fitting room, she pirouetted like a graceful dancer. She relished in her new appearance; a joyful smile could be seen on her face.

"Do you like it?" Lu Zhou asked.

"I do." Conch looked up and smiled. "You're nice."

"Good."

That was all? The little girl was not only naïve, but she was oblivious to the workings of the world. She resembled Little Yuan'er in this aspect. However, the other party would usually be on the losing end when dealing with Little Yuan'er. On the other hand, Miss Conch seemed like the type to be at a disadvantage. Her being almost sacrificed at the heaven worship platform was the best proof of this.

At this moment, Hua Chongyang bowed and said, "Senior Lu, it's getting late. There's a curfew in Jing Province City at night."

Curfew was a form of strict control over the entry and exit of a city. The citizens would not be allowed to venture outdoors at night, let alone out of the city.

Lu Zhou did not seem to care as he said, "There's no need to rush." He looked at Miss Conch and asked, "Are you hungry?"

Miss Conch rubbed her stomach and nodded.

Hua Chongyang had no choice but to follow the two of them to the inn.

Sumptuous dishes were ordered and placed on the table, around which the three of them sat.

Lu Zhou and Hua Chongyang did not have much of an appetite. They only stared at Miss Conch as she ate. She was not a fast eater. She ate in small mouthfuls without gobbling down her food. She did not have the speed of a chick pecking for grain. She resembled more of a rabbit. Based on this, it seemed like she was not the child of an ordinary family.

"Where's your house?" Lu Zhou asked again.

She pointed east and said, "Far, far away..."

"Do you remember where it is?" Hua Chongyang's interest was piqued.

Miss Conch shook her head.

"What is your hometown like?" Hua Chongyang wanted to try and guess the place based on geographical landmarks.

Conch shook her head again, "I don't remember."

Lu Zhou felt suspicious. 'Did she lose her memories?' His curiosity was piqued. He said, "Give me your hand."

"Oh." Miss Conch obediently placed her hand in front of Lu Zhou.

Lu Zhou placed two fingers on her wrist. His Primal Qi trickled into her Extraordinary Eight Meridians. After a moment, he was even more confused. She was not injured nor did she hit her head. Her mind seemed to be in tip-top condition as well. Her dantian's sea of Qi was in its primordial state, indicating she had never cultivated. In other words, she was an ordinary healthy mortal. So why did it seem like she had lost her memories? What puzzled him even most was her ability to command wild beasts and her ability to evade the prying Eye of Truth. Would a mortal be like this? There were too many suspicious things about her so he paid attention to her every move. She seemed polite enough. She did not have the finicky air of a child, but she did not show the maturity and composure of an adult. It was difficult to find adjectives to accurately describe her.

"Senior, the sun is setting. We should get going," Hua Chongyang said urgently.

"Are you full?" Lu Zhou looked at Miss Conch.

"Mhm... Thank you." Miss Conch nodded.

"Let's go, then."

Then, the three of them left the inn.

...

Meanwhile.

In one of the certain Nether Sect's branches, Yu Zhenghai was pacing up and down.

Si Wuya looked at him nonchalantly and said, "Eldest Senior Brother, there's no need to worry. Hua Chongyang's performance has always been consistent."

Yu Zhenghai stopped pacing and said, "We can't be sure. I'm worried about what we would do if he fails."

"We'll think of something else, then."

"You have another wonderful plan, wise brother?" Yu Zhenghai asked.

"I won't call it wonderful," Si Wuya said, "I've gone through the recent records of the Nether Sect... When did you get acquainted with the Sect Master of the Penglai Sect, Eldest Senior Brother?"

Yu Zhenghai laughed. He said, "It's a long story. When I mastered my Great Dark Heaven Memorial, I was in need of opponents. I initially intended to test my skills against Second Junior Brother, but I couldn't find him. Hence, I had no choice but to travel to Penglai Island. I defeated him with three strikes of my saber. Basically, we got acquainted through a fight." Then, he asked, "Why are you asking, wise brother?"

"If we have the help of the Master of Penglai Island, we can easily take Jing Province City," Si Wuya said.

Yu Zhenghai's eyes brightened, enlightened. "You have a point."

At this moment, a subordinate walked in. He bowed and said, "Sect Master, the Master of Penglai Island is here."

Si Wuya stood up. His eyes were sparkling as he said, "Eldest Senior Brother, you're in luck."

Yu Zhenghai said, "Bring him in."

When the flying chariot landed outside the branch.

Yu Zhenghai walked up to it.

Si Wuya followed closely behind him.

A voice rang from the flying chariot. "It's been a long time!"

"Brother Shijie, good to see you again."

At this moment, a figure in brocade robes shot out of the flying chariot, guns blazing, at lightning speed.

The target of the attack was Yu Zhenghai.

The palms of the figure glowed in the dark.