

Eternal Heart 641

Chapter 641: Evil Clown

"You can call me Handsome Brother Dong!"

"...Or, Cute Brother Dong, which one do you prefer?"

Seeing no reaction from Chen Yu, the clown added another line.

Chen Yu looked once again at the clown's face. Despite the painted clown makeup, the look always gave off an evil, eerie vibe that didn't relate to handsomeness or cuteness at all.

So, he rejected that nickname once more.

Seeing Chen Yu not joining in the conversation, the clown picked up the topic himself, "What kind of Spiritual Artifact do you need made? Brother Dong guarantees your satisfaction."

"I need two pairs of wings fused into a single flying treasure."

Chen Yu stated his requirements.

If the other party couldn't accomplish it, there was no need to even bring out the materials.

"Oh? It sounds difficult, but for Brother Dong, it's a piece of cake."

The clown said with an air of full confidence.

Though the clown guaranteed results, Chen Yu felt... even more unsure.

However, having been turned down by four other shops, Chen Yu didn't have much patience left and took out the wings of the Golden Winged Phoenix and Yin Ming Bird.

"Golden Winged Phoenix, Yin Ming Bird's wings, not bad at all, one rare, one of high quality."

The clown immediately recognized the names of the two pairs of wings and then scrutinized them closely.

"Are you confident?"

Chen Yu asked, somewhat uneasily.

"Anything that reaches Brother Dong's hands, rest assured. However, both these materials are quite amazing. Have you considered selling them to Brother Dong? We can negotiate a good price!"

The clown said with a smile.

Chen Yu's forehead beaded with sweat—in one breath, this guy assured the safety of items in his hands, and in the next, he proposed to buy Chen Yu's materials.

Chen Yu even suspected whether this strange shop was colluding with the You Clan.

"I'm not selling. If you can't complete it, just return the items to me."

Chen Yu responded impatiently.

"If you aren't selling, that's fine. Brother Dong has many treasures here. If you fancy something, Brother Dong, in a good mood, might just trade with you. Too bad you refused Brother Dong."

The clown shook his head lightly and sighed, then returned to the topic: "Come back here in a fortnight to collect your items."

"Hold on, haven't you even asked about my refining requirements?"

Chen Yu immediately protested; this Artifact Refiner was too unreliable.

"Brother Dong guarantees your satisfaction!"

The clown repeated his earlier statement.

Chen Yu didn't believe him and still laid out some conditions: "The quality must be at least High Grade. That shouldn't be difficult. Primarily, its main ability should enhance speed, and it should primarily use the wings of the Golden Winged Phoenix..."

Meanwhile, Brother Dong had already begun sketching out design drafts, completely ignoring Chen Yu's words.

"Brother Chen, are you really going to let this clown refine for you?"

Yang Yuhuan asked quietly.

It seemed not just Chen Yu, but Yang Yuhuan also found this guy unreliable.

However, at this stage, no skilled Artifact Refiner was willing to help Chen Yu, and this clown seemed very confident.

Hopefully, this clown was just quirky, and his skills were decent.

Then, Chen Yu started looking around, as the clown had just mentioned he had plenty of good items.

Chen Yu's mystical heart also sensed that this store was not ordinary.

The place was filled with all sorts of bizarre and exotic items.

Soon, Chen Yu found what had triggered his heart—an object shaped like a heart!

It appeared to be a mechanical heart made from rare woods, minerals, and other materials, resembling the internal mechanism of a puppet.

Grasping the mechanical heart, Chen Yu's mysterious heart pulsed again, sending off a strange, deep suction.

Immediately.

The mechanical heart in his hand trembled imperceptibly, and strands of a bizarre and profound mystical silver light were sucked into the mysterious heart.

The next moment.

In the murky space where the Light Silver Crystal Space was situated, dots of silver crystal light flashed and rapidly merged into the Light Silver Crystal Space.

Under Chen Yu's observation, the Light Silver Crystal Space expanded slightly.

Chen Yu was pleased and put down the mechanical heart nonchalantly.

However, just then, the nearby clown suddenly said, "Sir, blatantly stealing the spatial power from this puppet heart in front of Brother Dong, isn't that a bit inappropriate?"

Hearing this, Chen Yu was startled and then felt rather embarrassed.

He had never been discovered before when he used the mystical heart to absorb spatial power and expand its interior space.

Just now, Chen Yu had been sure the clown was busy sketching and hence directly absorbed it.

But after the absorption, he found the clown staring straight at him.

Chen Yu had to admit, he underestimated this quirky clown; he was not a simple character!

"Just now, when I touched this heart, my Spatial Combat Technique suddenly gained insights, and I couldn't control myself, absorbing the spatial power within this heart. I'll compensate you with Primordial Stones."

Chen Yu quickly explained and covered up, noticing the clown's gaze fixed on his chest where his heart was.

"A million!"

The clown spat out a number.

"A million, for that little thing..."

Chen Yu inwardly remarked that this guy was really taking advantage of the situation.

But, having no right to argue, and to avoid exposing the mystical heart, he chose not to quibble with the clown, especially since he was even refining an artifact for him.

"Since you've drained the spatial power from that device, it's now useless. Brother Dong has to remake it, so a million is actually a discount for you."

The clown added.

Chen Yu noticed the clown's gaze lingering near his chest, and he felt somewhat uneasy, "Focus on your business, stop looking around."

"Brother Dong is... a bit interested in you!"

The clown suddenly revealed an exaggerated smile that made him appear somewhat sinister and creepy.

Yang Yuhuan, standing nearby, noticed the clown's gaze fixed on Chen Yu's chest, and then his sinister face spouted these words, sending chills through her entire body.

Yang Yuhuan felt that something was off about the behavior of these two men!

Feeling as if he had been seen through, Chen Yu swiftly left the place with Yang Yuhuan.

That night.

A tall man dressed in a black brocade robe strode into the clown's shop.

It was late at night, and upon suddenly seeing a clown with a sinister face looking at him, his body trembled with fear and he almost drew his sword to slay the demon.

"What can I do for you?"

The clown asked with a smile.

"Listen, Master, you don't need to wear this outfit and frighten people in the middle of the night!"

The long-faced man sighed in relief.

The clown just smiled and said nothing.

"My lord You Lie wants you to give up this business deal,"

The long-faced man arrogantly declared, evidently feeling proud whenever he mentioned the You surname.

"Oh? How much is your young master offering me?"

The clown asked with interest.

The long-faced man paused, surprised that the owner of this shabby shop dared to openly ask for a reward.

Perhaps he has some background, the long-faced man spoke again, "How much would you desire?"

Generally, You Lie would agree if it wasn't too much.

"Three million low Grade Essence Stones!" The clown replied.

"You must be joking with me!"

The long-faced man's expression turned cold.

A common High Grade Spiritual Artifact would cost between two to three million low Grade Essence Stones; the person before him was demanding a whopping three million!

If he brought this request back to You Lie, he felt he would be scolded for being senseless.

"Three million, it's a bit high, but we can sit down and discuss it slowly, can't we? That's what negotiation is about, right? Alright, Brother Dong will give you a discount of three hundred thousand."

Seeing that the other party found the price too high, the clown said again, seriously.

He was indeed serious, but matched with his somewhat evil clown face, the long-faced man couldn't shake the feeling that the clown was just mocking him.

"Hmph, aren't you being too arrogant? Refusing Young Master You Lie's offer can have serious consequences!"

"I would advise you to think carefully in the future; there are some people you can't afford to offend."

The long-faced man threatened, sure that the other party wouldn't dare to harm him.

Or perhaps after his threat, the clown would get scared and change his approach.

But contrary to his wishes:

Bang!

The shop's main door suddenly closed on its own.

Click! Drip! Ding!

Then, various strange noises echoed inside the room.

The long-faced man saw a shelf in front of him suddenly transform into a square puppet.

The chandelier above turned into a Spider Puppet while a cylindrical, ugly puppet slid out from the piles of random objects at the back.

In an instant, the long-faced man found himself surrounded by nearly ten puppets.

"How dare you oppose the You Clan!" In a panic, the long-faced man yelled out.

Boom! Boom!

He then channeled his True Yuan and launched two palm strikes engulfed in blue flames directly at the square puppet in front of him.

Bang! The palm strikes hit, the blue flames quickly dissipated, and the puppet was left completely unharmed.

"How is this possible..."

The long-faced man was shocked, as the square puppet looked so frail and ugly, yet he, being in the Late Guiyuan Realm, couldn't even scratch it.

A rising fear crept into his heart and he started to back away.

Bang! Crack!

Suddenly, the floor gave way and pushed aside, revealing a large puppet hand that instantly grabbed the long-faced man and dragged him underground.

"My lord, senior, spare me, spare... Ah!"

The long-faced man kept shouting until his cries ended in a miserable scream.

"Brother Dong's territory is quite dangerous; it's best not to mess around."

The clown floated out a phrase lightly and then focused on his work, as if a rat had just popped up and fallen into his trap.

The shop door opened automatically, and everything returned to normal.

Chen Yu had agreed to meet the clown fifteen days later, so during this time, he wandered around the Cultivation Spirit Hall.

He encountered many new things, increasing his understanding of this world.

Furthermore, most people currently at this Cultivation Spirit Hall were here for Black Demon Valley and the Heavenly Jade Sect.

Here, Chen Yu had seen some of the geniuses from major clans, King Families, and even Three-Star power families. It must be said, the Great Yu Realm is a mightily powerful realm with a constant emergence of powerful individuals and a plethora of geniuses.

It was fortunate for Chen Yu to have come to the Great Yu Realm.

Soon, fifteen days passed, and Chen Yu returned to the clown's shop.

"You're here; Brother Dong has finished refining your items, guaranteed to satisfy you!"

With that, the clown pulled out a pair of wings.

Chapter 642: Ascending the Heavenly Peak

These were a pair of golden wings, where the originally damaged areas no longer existed, now filled in with some black feathers.

Apart from that, many other parts of the golden wings had also been transformed with black feathers, making the whole appear like two clumps of black flame patterns.

The originally splendid and dazzling golden wings, because of the embellishment of the black feathers, retracted some of their brilliance, adding a few strands of mystery.

Above the wings, there emitted a strange and ancient Holy Beast Bloodline aura, leaving it difficult to discern exactly which Holy Beast Bloodline it was.

It seemed that the clown, in the process of refining, had completely fused the aura of the two types of wings, making it difficult for outsiders to grasp the true origin of the wings unless they felt carefully.

"How about it? Brother Dong didn't lie to you, I guarantee you'll be satisfied."

The clown's face suddenly came close, that exaggerated clown face interrupting Chen Yu's observation.

"Not bad."

Chen Yu was quite satisfied.

"This wondrous artifact's grade reaches the very top of high-grade, so I'll charge you two million low-grade Primordial Stones," the clown continued.

"Top high-grade?"

Chen Yu inhaled slightly, the grade also perfectly met his requirements.

A normal high-grade Spiritual Artifact was worth around two million, and the grade of these wings was even higher, it was only because Chen Yu provided the materials that the clown charged two million low-grade Primordial Stones.

However, in Chen Yu's view, the price was still high.

Since he was in a good mood and had enough Primordial Stones, he didn't quibble with the clown.

"Last time I broke your equipment, plus the cost of refining the Spiritual Artifact, that's a total of three million!"

Chen Yu took out so many Primordial Stones in one go, which somewhat surprised the clown.

"By the way, Mr. Clown, did you encounter any obstacles during the artifact refining process?" Chen Yu suddenly remembered that the previous four shops had refused his artifact refining requests.

"Yes!" the clown revealed a thoughtful expression before answering.

"You really are a fine Artifact Refiner, honest Brother Dong!"

Chen Yu couldn't help but praise the clown.

The previous few shops had all chosen to compromise, agreeing to the requests of the King clans, unlike this seemingly unremarkable small shop, where the slightly odd Artifact Refiner refused the others and helped Chen Yu complete the artifact refining.

The clown's eyes lit up slightly, as if he liked the title Chen Yu gave him.

Having obtained the item, Chen Yu then left the place.

"It's just a pity that Brother Dong only stops by here to earn some Money; I hope to see you again in the future so that I might uncover the secrets within your body..." The clown once again revealed an exaggerated smile, his eyes flickering with a sinister light as he muttered softly to himself and then turned to enter the shop.

After returning to his residence, Chen Yu began to refine the "Golden Phoenix Wing."

Due to the high grade of this miraculous flying artifact, and Chen Yu's lower cultivation level, the refining process was rather slow.

However, Chen Yu discovered that once he activated the Golden Winged Phoenix's bloodline, the refining speed would increase exponentially.

Thus, in just three days, Chen Yu had completely refined the Golden Phoenix Wing!

During the refining process, Chen Yu noticed a detail that he couldn't let go of for a long time.

"I just can't trust that clown!" Chen Yu let out a sigh.

At the end of the Golden Phoenix Wing, there were many ancient mysterious characters that seemed to be related to Arrays, but they vaguely outlined three characters – Mo Sandong!

This was presumably Brother Dong's real name, but how could he bear to do such a thing on such a beautiful creation?

There were still ten days left until the time Black Demon Valley was recruiting disciples, and Chen Yu began to retreat and cultivate on his own.

Chen Yu's mental realm had already reached the Half-step Sky Sea Realm; the threat within the True Essence Lake had been completely resolved back when he was with the Yang Family, and he was now ready to make a breakthrough to the Late Stage Guiyuan Realm Peak at any time.

But since the assessment was coming up, Chen Yu wasn't in a rush to make a breakthrough.

...

In a luxurious and spacious residence, a group of young men and women gathered.

"Has You Han been found yet?" You Lie, dressed in a black robe and exuding a sharp aura, asked in a low voice.

"No, not a single clue," answered someone below.

"How is that possible? Where could he have run off to? Today is the day Black Demon Valley is recruiting disciples!"

You Lie roared somewhat irritably.

"Young Master You Lie, You Han was sent by you to track and obstruct that kid. Afterwards, he disappeared without a trace. Could he have been... killed by that kid?"

A man below spoke quietly and slowly.

You Lie's pupils suddenly constricted. "You Han is a genius of our You Clan; how could he possibly die at the hands of that kid!"

"Moreover, his disappearance was sudden, without any disturbance, without any clues."

Fighting is not allowed in the Cultivation Spirit Hall.

Now with so many people gathered in the Cultivation Spirit Hall, one could almost see heads wherever they turned.

In such a situation, would it be possible for Chen Yu to make a Late Guiyuan Realm genius disappear without alerting anyone?

"However, all of this started because of that kid; perhaps he also knows something."

You Lie snorted coldly.

"You're right, sir. Should we interrogate him?"

"No need, let's just set off. I believe that kid will definitely come for the assessment; I'll ask him myself!"

Suddenly standing up, You Lie walked out of the residence.

On the other hand, Chen Yu also left his dwelling with several people from the Yang Family.

"Wow, there are so many people, all going to be assessed by Black Demon Valley and the Heavenly Jade Sect."

Yang Hai exclaimed in amazement.

Not far away, a huge carriage, drawn by two golden griffins, was moving forward slowly.

People ahead, upon seeing this carriage, made way for it one after another.

Under everyone's gaze, members of the You Clan left the Cultivation Spirit Hall.

"If I'm not mistaken, the one who obstructed my Artifact Refining this time must be You Lie."

A cold glint flashed in Chen Yu's eyes.

Although the other party was a King Clan, if there were a chance, Chen Yu would still seek revenge for that arrow.

"Let's go as well, if we're too late, who knows how long we'll have to queue!"

Yang Fenghou spoke and had already taken action.

Just then, a huge green peacock flew from behind, pulling behind it a yellow-green palanquin inside which sat an enchantingly beautiful woman and a long-haired, handsome man.

At this moment, the green peacock was heading toward the Yang Family members, and the surrounding crowd quickly stepped aside.

"Cui Clan!"

Yang Fenghou saw the man and woman on the carriage, along with a troop of dozens of people behind them, and he immediately stopped in his tracks, not daring to act rashly.

He could tell that they were coming for the Yang Family group.

"I've had the pleasure of meeting two talents from the Cui Clan. What guidance do you have for us?"

Yang Fenghou bowed and said with a smile, looking up at the green peacock exuding a strong aura and the man and woman in the palanquin, feeling immense pressure all over his body.

As a King Clan, the Cui Clan was the focus of everyone's attention.

At the moment, countless people around found it odd that the Cui Clan's talents were staying with several individuals who seemed to have weak cultivations and poor talent.

"Yan'er, you know someone?"

The long-haired man looked toward the woman beside him and asked.

Cui Yan'er nodded and then looked at Chen Yu with a confident smile, "You're quite impressive, managing to put You Lie at a disadvantage. However, he won't let it go. If you enter the Heavenly Jade Sect, you can join our Cui Clan faction!"

Hearing Cui Yan'er's words, the long-haired man's gaze became sharp, scrutinizing Chen Yu closely but didn't find anything particularly special. He must be a foolhardy person who wasn't afraid of anything, otherwise, how would he dare to offend You Lie.

"Thank you for your kindness, Miss, but my aim is the Black Demon Valley!"

Chen Yu replied politely.

"Black Demon Valley? If that's the case, then we are enemies now!"

Cui Yan'er's attitude changed abruptly, her proud demeanor laced with cold indifference and disdain.

Chen Yu was stunned, this woman changed her face too quickly.

He didn't realize that Cui Yan'er placed great importance on face. She had invited Chen Yu, yet he not only refused but also declared that his goal was the Black Demon Valley.

Everyone knew that the Black Demon Valley and Heavenly Jade Sect were bitter rivals, and Chen Yu's blunt words were seen as a provocation by Cui Yan'er; she felt this was a slap in the face.

"Let's go, Yan'er. This kid doesn't know what's good for him. If we encounter him during the assessment, I'll take care of him for you."

The long-haired man said casually, as if it were a trivial matter easily handled.

Then, the green peacock, pulling the palanquin, passed by the Yang Family and others.

"Guest Chen, you have a feud with You Lie?"

Yang Fenghou wiped off cold sweat.

Chen Yu had offended not only You Lie of the You Clan but now also Cui Yan'er of the Cui Clan; he truly attracted trouble like a magnet.

"Fenghou Brother, it was You Lie who troubled Brother Chen."

Yang Yuhuan spoke up for Chen Yu.

"Right, that man just now said, if we meet in the assessment... Members of the Cui Clan should all choose to enter the Heavenly Jade Sect, right? How could we meet them in the assessment?"

Chen Yu was somewhat puzzled.

"You don't know?"

Yang Fenghou looked at Chen Yu in surprise and then explained, "The news has been spreading these past few days."

"I heard that the Black Demon Valley and Heavenly Jade Sect are recruiting disciples simultaneously, seemingly betting on the results of the disciples... so this recruitment assessment is expected to be very brutal."

Yang Fenghou shared what he had heard during these days.

"No wonder the recruitment location is at the Heavenly Ascension Peak!"

Chen Yu's confusion was cleared.

The group also quickly left the Cultivation Spirit Hall and headed toward the Heavenly Ascension Peak.

The distance from the Cultivation Spirit Hall to the Heavenly Ascension Peak was not far, it could be reached in less than half a day.

At this moment, at the foot of the Heavenly Ascension Peak, it was already a sea of people with two long queues stretching on for more than twenty meters.

Many more were gathered nearby, unsure whether they were spectating or just waiting for the queues to lessen before joining.

From a distance, one could see two giant stone gateways, one black and one white. Hanging on the gateways were plaques inscribed with Black Demon Valley and Heavenly Jade Sect, the mere sight of those few characters emanating endless might, intimidating all creatures.

Chen Yu and the Yang Family members approached the queue leading to the black stone gateway.

At that moment, they saw two men walk straight to the front, skipping the queue, and after registering, they passed through the gateway.

"Those who don't need to queue either belong to a King Clan or a Three-Star Great Clan, or they have a strong backer in a sect, allowing them to enter directly. None of them are simple."

Yang Fenghou gave Chen Yu a heads-up, finding that Chen Yu really had a talent for attracting trouble.

Three hours later, it was finally Chen Yu and the others' turn. After registering some information and paying a fee of five thousand middle-grade Primordial Stones each, they were allowed in.

Just then, a sharp-nosed elder approached from the side.

"You lot, you are from the Yang Family, aren't you?"

The sharp-nosed elder glanced over at Chen Yu, Yang Fenghou, and the others and then shook his head slightly.

"Greetings to Senior Liu, I often hear the Ancestor mention you!"

Yang Fenghou immediately greeted with a fist and palm salute.

This sharp-nosed elder before them was a Steward within the Black Demon Valley, and if they could form a connection, life within the Black Demon Valley would be much easier.

"Let's go. The first trial to enter the Black Demon Valley is that Heavenly Ascension Ladder. As long as you climb fifty steps, you can become an Outer Valley Disciple!"

The sharp-nosed elder led the group forward.

Ahead at the base of Heavenly Ascension Peak was a hundred-step stone staircase leading straight to the summit of the peak!

Atop the summit were two majestic palaces, distinct in black and white, surrounded by swirling winds of black and white, shrouding them and making them difficult to see clearly.

But standing at the foot of the mountain, everyone could feel the terrifying aura emanating from within those palaces!

Chapter 643: Struggle on the Heavenly Ascension Ladder

"At the top of the Heavenly Ascension Peak's palace, there are elders of our Black Demon Valley. If you perform well and catch their eye, perhaps after the assessment ends, there'll be an elder who will take you as an apprentice..."

The sharp-nosed elder saw the crowd staring at the palace atop the Heavenly Ascension Peak and couldn't help but explain.

However, after he finished speaking, he felt that he had spoken out of turn.

Among the people from the Yang Family, Yang Fenghou's cultivation was a bit higher, but his age was on the higher side, his aura wasn't sufficiently restrained and powerful, and his natural talent was only average—at best. It would be impossible for an elder to take notice of him.

So, in essence, he was speaking in vain.

"Old Man Yang has spent a considerable price to send you here, and I won't simply take advantage of his kindness without doing my part. If you are unable to reach the fiftieth step, as long as you can reach the thirtieth, I can arrange for you to stay in the Black Demon Valley as servants."

The sharp-nosed elder said this quite casually.

He scrutinized the seven people before him, believing that at most, Yang Fenghou and Chen Yu could reach the fiftieth step; the others probably would have a hard time.

Of course, he did not expect Old Man Yang to have sent any particularly astonishing geniuses.

He simply hoped that someone he introduced would turn out to be exceptionally talented and shine brightly within the Black Demon Valley, which would benefit him as well.

"We appreciate your efforts, Senior."

Yang Fenghou responded respectfully.

Yang Hai, Yang Ling, and the others thought that they would probably have to remain in the Black Demon Valley as servants.

Back in the Yang Family, they had at least been regarded as talents, but now, to enter the Black Demon Valley, they had to rely on connections and still, end up as mere laborers after entering.

But considering that the Black Demon Valley was a famed three-star power in the Southern Domain, they accepted their fate.

Diligently serving as laborers also presented a chance to become official disciples.

"Black Demon Valley and Heavenly Jade Sect are actually both conducting their first assessment on the Heavenly Ascension Ladder!"

Chen Yu looked at the Heavenly Ascension Ladder before him.

The steps were flickering with intricate Array patterns, covered in countless bright and dark lights, exuding an immense pressure.

The Heavenly Ascension Ladder was divided into two parts, the left completely dark, the right purely white.

To seek entry into the Black Demon Valley, one must take the left ladder, while the right was for those choosing the Heavenly Jade Sect.

At this moment, there were people slowly making their way up both the dark and light ladders!

Whoosh!

A man in a yellow shirt chose the Black Demon Valley's Heavenly Ascension Ladder and flew out, instantly landing on the thirtieth step.

"That's incredible!"

Yang Yuhuan couldn't help but exclaim.

The sharp-nosed elder had said that reaching the fiftieth step was the only way to qualify as an Outer Valley Disciple.

From this, it could be inferred that the Heavenly Ascension Ladder was not simple, not something one could simply climb up with ease.

Yet, the man in the yellow shirt had managed to land directly on the thirtieth step, so his strength must be very formidable.

But just then.

On the Heavenly Jade Sect's side, a man and a woman who were at the thirty-eighth and forty-second steps suddenly attacked the man in the yellow shirt.

The man drew a large saber and sent forth a white light saber shadow filled with the faint sound of a dragon's cry, aiming at the man in the yellow shirt.

The woman, on the other hand, stretched out her hand and gently slapped down, sending a cyan jade palm imprint toward the chest of the man in the yellow shirt.

"Not good!"

The man in the yellow shirt faced a great peril.

However, he had just stepped onto the thirtieth step and hadn't yet steadied his stance.

The thirtieth step was filled with a staggering worldly might, reducing his speed to just forty percent of its original, making it impossible for him to dodge.

The man in the yellow shirt could only circulate his True Essence to prop up a True Essence Defense Shield.

Hiss!

The white light of the saber shadow cut through, opening a smooth slit in the True Essence Defense Shield.

Soon after, the cyan palm imprint landed.

Bang!

The True Essence Defense Shield shattered, and the cyan palm imprint hit the chest of the man in the yellow shirt, leaving behind a bloody imprint.

The man in the yellow shirt tumbled down, falling all the way to the third step of the ladder.

"Damn it!"

The man in the yellow shirt clenched his fist and fiercely pounded the step, forced to temporarily retreat.

With an injury, attempting the Heavenly Ascension Ladder would surely not yield good results.

Moreover, he had to guard against attacks from those participating in the Heavenly Jade Sect's assessment who might strike at him again while climbing the ladder.

"On the Heavenly Ascending Ladder, it is permitted for disciples undergoing assessments from both sects to interfere with each other!"

The sharp-nosed elder stated flatly, then added, "This time, the higher-ups of Black Demon Valley and Heavenly Jade Sect have made a bet, with the results of the disciples' assessments serving as the deciding factor for victory. That's why this situation has arisen."

"However, rest assured, while it is allowed to fight on the Heavenly Ascending Ladder, killing is strictly forbidden. Should it occur, both powers will severely punish the offenders!"

"If you manage to severely wound many of those taking part in the Heavenly Jade Sect's assessment, even if your initial test performance is average, you might still catch an elder's eye. Even if they do not take you as an apprentice, just getting an elder's advice and care is incredibly beneficial."

This recruitment of disciples involved significant stakes as well as the face of the two major sects.

Simply affecting, interfering with those participating in the Heavenly Jade Sect's assessment is already contributing to the Black Demon Valley.

But on the other hand, it increased the difficulty of the challenge for everyone, because those undergoing the Heavenly Jade Sect's assessment would also take action against them, creating obstacles and hindrances.

"Let's wait a bit, wait for fewer people, then we'll give it a try."

Yang Fenghou suggested.

Although he was the Yang Family's top talent, upon reaching the recruitment ground of the two major sects, Yang Fenghou had lost count of how many had surpassed him in talent.

There's always someone better out there.

For now, it was important to stay low-key and aim for the best results possible by making it through smoothly.

Boom, bang, crash!

At around fifty steps on the Heavenly Ascension Ladder, five candidates from both sects were interfering with each other, each trying to prevail over the others.

At this moment, they had almost reached their limit, and the worldly might at the fiftieth step was so oppressive that it made their movements extremely difficult, so the fight was quickly resolved.

The Heavenly Jade Sect had three people and held the advantage; they drove the two from Black Demon Valley off the ladder.

In the end, the three people from the Heavenly Jade Sect all successfully reached the fiftieth step, becoming outer sect disciples of the Heavenly Jade Sect.

One of them continued onwards, while the other two had already reached their limits and walked down, choosing to complete the first test.

"Let's go, we'll strive to achieve the best results in a short period of time," Yang Fenghou suddenly said as he stared at the Heavenly Ascension Ladder.

At this moment, only two people from the Heavenly Jade Sect were ascending the ladder, not posing much of a threat.

On the Yang Family's side, there were six of them!

After he finished speaking, Yang Fenghou stepped onto the black staircase, and at once, he felt a formidable power of heaven and earth descending upon him, though it wasn't very intense.

Step step...

Yang Fenghou took fifteen strides in a row, each stride spanning two steps, and he quickly arrived at the thirtieth step.

At this point, the pressure on him had become quite substantial, preventing Yang Fenghou from continuing to advance as quickly as before.

Swoosh, swoosh!

The rest of the Yang Family followed suit, quickly catching up to Yang Fenghou.

After all, there was safety in numbers.

"Which clan are these people from? Why are they so weak?" Two people from the Heavenly Jade Sect, who were on their way down the ladder, glanced at Yang Fenghou and the others and couldn't help but sneer.

The two felt it was a bit of a pity; if they had come later, they could have dealt with this bunch of weaklings. It was just too bad they had already completed the challenge and could not make a move against those from Black Demon Valley taking the test.

Yang Fenghou continued to advance, but Yang Ling had already stopped at the twenty-eighth step, while Yang Hai had just reached the thirtieth step.

"Ah!"

The Sharp-nosed Elder shook his head as he watched this scene, shifting his gaze to Yang Fenghou.

If even Yang Fenghou couldn't reach the fiftieth step, then the Yang Family were truly finished.

However, Yang Fenghou seemed to have momentum, and the Sharp-nosed Elder estimated that he wouldn't have a problem reaching the fiftieth step.

On the Heavenly Ascension Ladder, the gap between the six members of the Yang Family rapidly widened.

Yang Fenghou had already reached the forty-third step, Yang Yuhuan was at the thirty-eighth, and two others were around the thirty-third.

In a certain area below, dozens of young men and women had gathered.

"Yan'er, these people seem to be with that kid. Should we take care of them?" A long-haired man glanced at the Heavenly Ascension Ladder and said indifferently.

"No need. These few are too weak. To act against them would sully the reputation of our Cui Clan," Cui Yan'er replied with a cold gaze and an arrogant demeanor.

"I didn't say I'd send people from the Cui Clan into action!" The long-haired man said with a hint of a disdainful smile.

"Chang Guangyan, go and take care of the few on the Black Demon Valley's Heavenly Ascension Ladder!" The long-haired man commanded.

Not far away, a dark-skinned man in black armor, from the Chang Family, a two-star power clan, immediately said, "Big Brother Cui Ming, it's a small matter!"

"Isn't that the Yang Family? I heard this clan had suffered a great battle and had become very weak. I didn't expect they'd send people here!"

The dark-skinned man "Chang Guangyan" looked at the people on the Heavenly Ascension Ladder, and a slight smile formed on his lips.

The Chang Family and the Yang Family were both two-star power clans, not too far from each other, and Chang Guangyan had also heard about what had happened to the Yang Family.

However, even among two-star powers, there were strong and weak ones, and the Chang Family had three Sky Sea Realm experts sitting in residence, far outclassing the Yang Family.

The task that Cui Clan genius "Cui Ming" had given Chang Guangyan was not difficult, and driving off those taking the Black Demon Valley's test also had certain benefits for him.

"Brother Chang, let's go up together!" Some Chang Family juniors nearby immediately said.

"You all wait here, I alone am enough!" Chang Guangyan said with great confidence.

Swoosh!

Having said that, Chang Guangyan leaped up and landed directly on the thirty-fifth step of the Heavenly Ascension Ladder.

Confident in his own power and looking to make a name for himself, Chang Guangyan did not ask for help from his family.

The two Yang Family members on the Black Demon Valley's Heavenly Ascension Ladder were stunned upon seeing Chang Guangyan reach the thirty-fifth step in a single bound, amazed at his extraordinary talent.

But in the next moment, Chang Guangyan swiftly struck, unleashing a fierce dazzling yellow light that transformed into the phantom of a lion's head, surging forward.

Boom!

The two Yang Family members didn't have time to react and were blasted down the Heavenly Ascension Ladder by Chang Guangyan's single move, spewing several mouthfuls of fresh blood, covered in injuries.

"Too weak. It would be unfortunate if I accidentally killed them," Chang Guangyan said with a wicked smile, as he continued to ascend, his gaze falling on Yang Yuhuan.

"You must be Yang Yuhuan, known as the greatest beauty of the Beishui region. If you agree to be with this young master, I won't lift a finger against you. Come down from the Heavenly Ascension Ladder!" Chang Guangyan threatened aloud.

"Who are you, and why are you troubling the Yang Family?" Yang Yuhuan said, her complexion slightly pale.

Above, Yang Fenghou saw the situation below and his eyes settled on Chang Guangyan.

"It's the Chang Family genius, Chang Guangyan!"

Yang Fenghou's gaze quivered.

As a talent of the Yang Family, he had a wider range of knowledge than the others and recognized Chang Guangyan.

Under fifty, the other's cultivation had reached the Late Stage Guiyuan Realm Peak, and he was four years ahead of Yang Fenghou.

Yang Fenghou also realized that the other party was targeting the Yang Family.

He immediately quickened his pace, striving to reach the fiftieth step sooner.

"It's not that I, Chang Guangyan, want to make life difficult for the Yang Family. It's just that your Yang Family has provoked an existence you shouldn't have. Allow me to teach the Yang Family a lesson!"

Facing a beauty like Yang Yuhuan, Chang Guangyan didn't attack right away, but instead, he explained.

Chapter 644: A Move Blasts Off

At the peak of Sky-reaching Peak, within a black great hall, sat three men and two women, all of an older age, each emitting terrifying fluctuations.

At this moment, they were all staring at the Heavenly Ascension Ladder below.

However, the participants from Black Demon Valley were continuously being blasted off the ladder by the assessors from the Heavenly Jade Sect.

First was a man in a yellow shirt, who ascended thirty steps in one go, talented indeed, but his temperament was not calm enough and was repelled down by the collaboration of two other people.

Next, around the fiftieth step, the assessors from Black Demon Valley and Heavenly Jade Sect engaged in a melee, resulting in the defeat of the two from Black Demon Valley.

And now, two members of the Yang Family were sent flying by Chang Yanping with one move.

So far, the performance of the Black Demon Valley side was inferior to that of the Heavenly Jade Sect, which greatly displeased the elders of Black Demon Valley, darkening their expressions.

"Ha ha ha, this young man is not bad, directly ascended thirty-five steps and repelled two others with one move."

From the Heavenly Jade Sect, a voice of praise came through, a laugh loud enough to reach into the black palace.

"With a cultivation at the peak of the Late Guiyuan Realm, attacking two from the Middle Stage of Guiyuan Realm, such a bully relying on his strength will have limited achievements in the future!"

On the side of Black Demon Valley, a middle-aged man wearing a black jade crown, his expression cold and severe, huffed coldly.

"Elder Wei, those words are not quite right, standing on the Heavenly Ascension Ladder, it's all fair competition, where does this notion of bullying the weak come from?"

Another elder with a long beard spoke, his words accompanied by a faint cold laugh.

"Elder Wei, there's no need to compete in wit with them, those few people have poor talents, and there's nothing significant about being knocked off the ladder."

"The real key that will decide the outcome of our sects' wager is still the clash between the top geniuses!"

A woman wearing a black silk robe, her robust figure slightly revealed inside, slowly said.

"Even so, the more people we have passing the assessment, the more advantageous we are in the second round."

Elder Wei's brows were tightly knitted, watching the Heavenly Ascension Ladder.

As expected, Yang Yuhuan and Yang Fenghou, who were advancing towards the fiftieth step, would both be knocked down by Chang Yanping.

...

Above the Heavenly Ascension Ladder, Chang Guangyan looked upwards at Yang Yuhuan.

"It's not that I, Chang Guangyan, want to make things difficult for the Yang Family, but it's your Yang Family that has provoked a being that should not have been provoked, and thus, I shall teach the Yang Family a lesson by taking action!"

Facing a beauty like Yang Yuhuan, Chang Guangyan did not immediately attack, but instead, explained.

"Who exactly did our Yang Family provoke?"

Yang Yuhuan's brows were tightly furrowed, her heart somewhat in a panic.

Ever since they had come to participate in the assessment, they had been very low-key, not troubling anyone along the way.

Could it be Hanshan?

Knowing that they were coming to participate in Black Demon Valley's assessment, did he send someone to obstruct them after Hanshan's plan failed and his reputation was ruined?

Yang Yuhuan had learned of Hanshan's news not long ago.

In the outer sect grand competition of Heavenly Jade Sect, Hanshan had defeated all the competitors and seized first place, earning a reputation in the inner sect for a moment.

Had it not been for the too severe negative news about him spreading previously, Hanshan's achievements might have been even greater.

"To not even know who you have offended, you really are quite foolish."

Chang Yanping coldly scoffed, channeling his True Yuan, preparing to strike.

Without the Cui Clan's permission, he still should not reveal it outright.

Although he pitied the fairer sex, with people from the Cui Clan watching below, he couldn't delay for too long.

Boom!

Chang Yanping suddenly threw a punch, the dazzling golden light transforming into a huge lion's head phantom, which after emitting a deafening roar, suddenly charged toward Yang Yuhuan.

Above the Heavenly Ascension Ladder, enveloped by a terrifying earthly pressure, Yang Yuhuan found it very difficult to levitate, let alone dodge Chang Yanping's strike.

Thump!

When Chang Yanping's punch arrived, it instantly shattered Yang Yuhuan's defensive shield and struck her body.

Yang Yuhuan spat out a mouthful of fresh blood, her body thrown backwards, and due to the earthly pressure, she harshly smashed downwards.

But just at that moment, a tall figure appeared on the Heavenly Ascension Ladder, just in time to catch Yang Yuhuan.

"Brother Chen?"

Yang Yuhuan lay in Chen Yu's arms, her panic and fear gradually dispelled by warmth and security.

"You should go down first!"

Chen Yu quickly set Yang Yuhuan down, asking her to descend the Heavenly Ascension Ladder.

"Young man, truly ignorant of death, daring to play the hero saving a beauty in my presence!"

Above, Chang Yanping, staring at Chen Yu, wore an unfriendly expression.

However, since the Cui Clan only allowed him to deal with the Yang Family, although Chen Yu was meddling, Chang Yanping did not plan on doing anything to Chen Yu.

Because Chang Yanping had another target, which was Yang Fenghou.

After knocking Yang Fenghou off the Heavenly Ascension Ladder, he would have completed the task assigned to him by Cui Ming.

Step step step!

Chang Yanping quickened his steps, swiftly moving upwards.

He moved quickly, first reaching the fortieth, then the forty-fifth step.

At this moment, Yang Fenghou was on the forty-eighth step, seeing Chang Yanping coming straight for him, his heart was filled with immense panic.

"Brother Chang, if you strike at me, you can forget about achieving a good result this time!"

Yang Fenghou, realizing that he was the target, knowing he couldn't avoid it, started to threaten Chang Yanping.

The two had similar strengths with a slight gap, but if Chang Yanping insisted on knocking him off the Heavenly Ascension Ladder, he would not make it easy for Chang Yanping either.

"Where's all this nonsense coming from, get down!"

Chang Yanping coldly shouted, not having time to waste on idle talk with Yang Fenghou.

Boom!

Chang Yanping smashed out a punch, its might extraordinary, the huge punch-light transformed into a male lion phantom, charging ferociously forward.

On the other side, Yang Fenghou, unwilling to show weakness, drew out his treasure sword, its blade emitting a rising purple flame.

Whoosh whoosh whoosh!

Yang Fenghou swung twelve strikes in succession, twelve trails of purple flame light cutting through.

Boom bang!

The twelve trails of purple flame light collided violently with the lion phantom, creating a fierce storm spreading out.

Due to the heavy pressure of the heavenly and earthly forces, this explosive storm was contained within a very small area, affecting only Yang Fenghou and Chang Yanping.

Both of their figures shook, Chang Yanping launching another attack.

"Lion King Fist!"

Chang Yanping's True Yuan surged wildly within him, transforming into a gigantic lion that burst forth; a formidable Lion King's aura formed a mental shockwave, striking first towards Yang Fenghou.

Yang Fenghou's head buzzed, his figure swayed, and he took a step back.

"Not good!"

Yang Fenghou watched as the golden lion suddenly pounced towards him, his expression becoming strained.

Chang Yanping's move was strong, but he could only try his best to defend while also attacking Chang Yanping, making the latter equally uncomfortable.

Boom Bang!

An explosion occurred, and Yang Fenghou was affected by a surge of golden True Yuan Power, retreating more than a dozen steps backward to the forty-second stair.

Meanwhile, Chang Yanping only fell down two stairs.

"Ha ha, get down from there!"

Chang Yanping laughed loudly, preparing to pursue his advantage.

But just then.

Bang!

A huge black iron fist suddenly struck towards Chang Yanping, emanating a tyrannical demonic aura, as if it intended to crush everything in front of it.

Pong!

By the time Chang Yanping reacted, he immediately threw a punch. The golden light fist and the black-patterned giant fist collided.

In less than a moment, the golden fist shattered, and a dark, furious demon wind blasted out, sending Chang Yanping flying.

Spurt!

Chang Yanping spat out a mouthful of fresh blood, and his body tumbled down to the twenty-second stair before stopping.

"You... you ambushed me!"

Chang Yanping looked stunned, then quickly reacted and cursed loudly.

Being sent flying by an unknown junior, Chang Yanping felt a mix of anger and humiliation.

"Chang Yanping is defeated!"

"Who is that kid? He actually repelled Chang Yanping in one move!"

Cries of surprise came from below.

Chen Yu was only in the Late Guiyuan Realm, yet he managed to send the genius Chang Yanping flying with one move. Although Chang Yanping was distracted by Yang Fenghou, Chen Yu's achievement still amazed them.

Inside the black palace at the top of the Heavenly Ascension Ladder, Elder Wei's expression eased slightly after seeing this scene.

"Do I need to notify you before I make a move?"

Chen Yu's cold, profound gaze overlooked the scene below.

In fact, he was directly attacking Chang Yanping, but the latter never took Chen Yu seriously until it was too late.

"Thank you, Guest Chen, for your help!"

Yang Fenghou looked at Chen Yu, a look of gratitude on his face.

If not for Chen Yu's timely intervention, he would probably have been severely injured by Chang Yanping. If he couldn't recover within a month, he might miss this assessment.

Chen Yu chose to intervene because of the kindness he had received from the Yang Family. During the time he spent with them, they had developed a good relationship.

Furthermore, Chang Yanping's behavior was something Chen Yu found unbearable.

"So, you're with the Yang Family!"

Chang Yanping's gaze turned fierce. He initially thought Chen Yu was merely playing the hero to save the damsel, Yang Yuhuan, but now he realized his misunderstanding.

He heard Yang Fenghou calling Chen Yu 'Guest Chen,' so Chen Yu was indeed one of the Yang Family's people.

Bang!

Chang Yanping suddenly erupted, his aura soaring as he threw both fists simultaneously.

Standing on the twenty-second stair, he could almost ignore the oppression of the heavenly and earthly forces and unleash his full strength!

Roar!

Two overlapping golden Lion King Fist shadows rushed forth, attacking Chen Yu.

Just now, Chang Yanping accused Chen Yu of ambushing, but his current action resembled an ambush even more.

Hum!

Facing Chang Yanping's attack, Chen Yu activated his Secret Pattern Demon Body, his body shimmering with a faint light.

Demon's Claw!

Chen Yu's right hand swept past, and a dark, ferocious demon claw shot out, instantly tearing through the Lion King Fist shadows.

"Impossible!"

Chang Yanping cried out in surprise.

At this moment, Chen Yu's strike was much stronger than before!

Crash Crack!

Chang Yanping's True Essence Shield shattered, the demon claw striking his chest and causing his blood and Qi to surge wildly.

Chang Yanping's body was sent flying, tumbling down the Heavenly Ascension Ladder.

He spat out a large mouthful of fresh blood. If it were not for the protective armor he wore, Chen Yu's strike would have been enough to severely injure him for several months.

"One move repelled Chang Yanping!"

"What a formidable claw! Who exactly is this person? I've never heard of him before!"

Discussions below became even more intense.

The strength displayed by Chen Yu didn't seem like that of an ordinary two-star family or even a two-and-a-half-star family, but rather of a King's Clan or even a three-star family's genius.

But they had never heard of Chen Yu before.

"This kid, not too shabby."

Below, among the You Clan crowd, You Lie snorted coldly.

Chen Yu had rejected his business, and Yu Han's death was also related to Chen Yu.

Swoosh!

You Lie suddenly rushed out, flying towards the Heavenly Ascension Ladder.

He intended to surpass Chen Yu with an unbeatable momentum, making Chen Yu submit beneath his feet.

At the same time, he also wanted to inquire about Yu Han's cause of death.

However, as You Lie shot out, from another side of a King's Clan, the Cui Clan, another figure also flew out—it was Cui Yan'er.

"What's going on? You Lie and Cui Yan'er from two King's Clans are simultaneously ascending the Heavenly Ascension Ladder!"

"There's a good show to watch, these two are arch-enemies!"

Chapter 645: Seventieth Level

Cui Yan'er had previously invited Chen Yu to join the Heavenly Jade Sect, and even to join the faction where the Cui Clan was located, which was out of goodwill to prevent Chen Yu from being secretly harmed by You Lie.

Unexpectedly, Chen Yu, in front of countless outstanding contemporaries, refused Cui Yan'er and stated that he wanted to enter Black Demon Valley, becoming Cui Yan'er's enemy.

Now, Cui Yan'er wanted to show Chen Yu what it meant to stand against her.

"You Lie?"

Cui Yan'er moved and noticed that You Lie had also flown out.

"You Lie had a grudge with this kid, but they were both participants in the Black Demon Valley assessment, and You Lie couldn't make a move against Chen Yu."

Cui Yan'er's thoughts began to spin.

Could it be that You Lie's target was her?

However, since she had already decided to make a move, Cui Yan'er wouldn't shrink back, and she wasn't afraid of You Lie.

The talented from two great King clans made their appearance at the same time, instantly igniting the atmosphere, drawing the attention of several elders at the top of Sky-reaching Peak.

Stomp! Stomp!

Cui Yan'er and You Lie had simultaneously ascended to the fortieth step of the Heavenly Ascending Ladder!

"Forty steps!"

"To think they both went straight to the fortieth step, truly worthy of being from the King clans; how terrifying their talents must be!"

"I heard that You Lie and Cui Yan'er are sworn enemies; I wonder who among them is the stronger one!"

Below, the chatter rose suddenly, creating an uproar several times louder than when Chen Yu defeated Chang Yanping.

Reaching the fiftieth step means passing the first test.

But these two, going straight to the fortieth step, would surely reach an incredibly high number of steps.

"Reaching the eightieth step grants the right to enter the inner valley. I wonder if You Lie from the You Clan has any hope of reaching such a height!"

The Sharp-nosed Elder stared at You Lie on the fortieth step with appreciation.

Under normal circumstances, anyone entering Black Demon Valley would start from the outer valley and then rise to the inner valley.

This rule was a special privilege for those of exceptional talent.

Those who could reach the eightieth step were seen as having the potential to reach the Condensed Star Realm and qualified to be Kings.

Giving these talents a higher starting point was only appropriate.

However, since this regulation was established, not many were able to achieve it. With each recruitment of disciples, at most two or three could reach the eightieth step.

As for the ultimate goal of the Heavenly Ascending Ladder — one hundred steps — it was almost impossible for anyone to accomplish.

At the top of Sky-reaching Peak were seated powerful Sect Elders from the two three-star powers, whose fearsome aura, not even an average person in the Sky Sea Realm could withstand, let alone with the added gravitational pressure of the Array.

This arrangement mainly served to establish the sect's might, to let the disciples participating in the assessment deeply feel the power of the Sect Elders, to understand the insurmountable chasm between them, and to demonstrate the sect's strength.

"Cui Yan'er, what are you doing getting mixed up in this?"

You Lie frowned as he looked at Cui Yan'er not far away.

In You Lie's view, he was the first to step onto Heavenly Ascension Ladder, followed by Cui Yan'er's emergence, which seemed like she came to stop him!

"What I'm doing is none of your business!"

Cui Yan'er snorted coldly.

"Since you're so eager to start, then bring it on!"

You Lie's eyes sharpened, and he waved his hand.

Immediately, the people of the You Family below all flew up the Heavenly Ascension Ladder, each one in the Late Guiyuan Realm or even at the peak, all at once soaring to around the thirty-fifth step.

This scene was extremely spectacular and showcased the King clans' strength!

If anyone opposed You Lie, they would face the siege of so many people; even if they held back, they might perish.

However, those standing against You Lie were not to be underestimated either.

"Yan'er, we're here to help you!"

On the other side, Cui Ming led the rest of the Cui Clan members, all ascending the Heavenly Ascension Ladder.

In an instant, the ladder was crowded with powerhouses.

The tension between both sides was palpable!

No one expected that it would be Chen Yu who prematurely triggered the confrontation between the two great King clans, not even Chen Yu himself.

Yang Fenghou was still on the forty-second step of the ladder at this moment, intending to continue climbing after Chang Yanping had been blasted off the ladder by Chen Yu.

But now, he suddenly found himself surrounded by dozens of Guiyuan Realm powerhouses, all of them You Clan geniuses, with the Cui Clan's talents facing them on the opposite side.

The extremely tense atmosphere and the oppressive force of heaven and earth made it hard for Yang Fenghou to breathe.

"Forget it, I'd better go down!"

Yang Fenghou immediately began descending, to avoid getting caught up in the strife between the two King clans.

Boom!

A member of the You Family made the first move, as the energy around surged, and a burst of blue flame shot out from his palm, striking at the You Clan's faction.

Yang Fenghou hastened his pace, rapidly descending the Heavenly Ascension Ladder.

Bang!

The next moment, resounding explosions came from behind him as almost everyone from the You Clan and Cui Clan unleashed their attacks, starting a tremendous battle between them.

It should be noted that the Cui Clan and You Clan had brought thirty to almost forty Guiyuan Realm participants for the assessment this time.

Such a vast number of Guiyuan Realms were now fighting on the Heavenly Ascension Ladder.

Of course, prodigies like Cui Yan'er, Cui Ming, and You Lie were shielded by others and were the safest.

At the outset of the battle, seven or eight members from each of the two King clans were blasted off the steps.

Everyone was limited by the space on the Heavenly Ascension Ladder, and the oppressive might of heaven and earth made it difficult to dodge, forcing them to clash head-on.

"The profound heritage of the King clans is indeed extraordinary, but they're also too trivial. To think they would come here for a massive brawl."

Chen Yu glanced behind him.

He didn't intervene, continuing to ascend one step at a time.

No matter how fierce the fighting behind him, it wasn't his concern.

Stomp! Stomp!

Chen Yu activated his Secret Pattern Demon Body, his body cloaked in shadow, as he stepped upward.

Soon, Chen Yu reached the fiftieth step.

Arriving here meant that Chen Yu had passed the first test of Black Demon Valley.

But Chen Yu felt that the oppressive force of heaven and earth he was enduring was not too great.

"I wonder what my limit is?" Chen Yu mused with some curiosity as he continued upward.

Below, the Sharp-nosed Elder shook his head upon seeing Yang Fenghou run back down, "Ah, poor Yang Fenghou has bad luck."

However, there was still hope for Yang Fenghou. As long as he healed within a month, he could still climb the Heavenly Ascension Ladder; getting past fifty steps shouldn't be a problem.

"Eh? That kid reached fifty steps!"

The Sharp-nosed Elder's gaze had been drawn to the brawl between the royal clans, but then someone dressed in black suddenly appeared higher up, capturing his attention.

On closer inspection, it was Chen Yu, and he had already reached the fiftieth step!

"This kid is really lucky!" the Sharp-nosed Elder chuckled.

Situated near the You Clan, Yang Fenghou feared getting caught in the royal clans' battle and had to descend.

Chen Yu was positioned higher, out of reach of the fray, and moreover, the genius scions of the two royal clans were too busy fighting each other to pay any heed to Chen Yu.

"Is he still going up?" the Sharp-nosed Elder expressed in surprise.

He had assumed that Chen Yu would come back down as soon as he reached the fiftieth step. Instead, Chen Yu, ambitious, dared to keep pushing upward.

"Fifty-five steps, this boy is not bad!" his surprise turned to delight.

"Fifty-nine steps!" he murmured, his mouth hanging open slightly.

Reaching fifty-nine steps was not unusual, but for someone in the Late Guiyuan Realm to do so was rare indeed—such an accomplishment was typically seen in geniuses from major families.

The Sharp-nosed Elder had not expected that someone introduced by Old Man Yang, from that broken clan, could reach this point.

Perhaps because Chen Yu was introduced by Old Man Yang, the Sharp-nosed Elder had underestimated him repeatedly.

"Sixty steps!"

The Sharp-nosed Elder took a sharp breath.

Reaching fifty steps passed the first test; climbing to sixty steps was a sign of excellence.

Generally, those who were not bad in strength in the Late Guiyuan Realm could reach fifty steps.

But to conquer sixty steps, you had to be among the best even at the Late Stage Guiyuan Realm Peak.

"Eh! Someone has climbed to sixty steps!"

"Isn't that the kid who defeated Chang Yanping in one move just now?"

"Chang Yanping is quite strong. It's not surprising that this kid could make it to sixty steps without interference," the crowd began to discuss.

Previously, they were all talking about the scuffle among the royal clan geniuses, but now many conversations shifted to Chen Yu.

"Sixty-two steps!"

"Sixty-five steps!"

More and more people were drawn to the sight of Chen Yu.

The struggle between the royal clan talents was so fierce and magnificent; shifting their attention was not easy.

"Sixty-six!"

"Sixty-seven!"

"Sixty-eight!"

Chen Yu's pace was steady and deliberate; each step was firm and sure-footed.

"This level of gravitational pressure is just about right."

Chen Yu took a moment to feel the immense pressure bearing down on him, which felt heavy.

He quickly reached the sixty-ninth step.

There's a threshold every ten steps, and the pressure of the Heavenly Ascension Ladder would suddenly increase a lot.

And now, Chen Yu had arrived at the threshold of the sixty-ninth step.

"I think this kid will stop at the sixty-ninth step!"

"That's right, without the strength of the Half-step Sky Sea Realm, it's tough to reach the seventieth step!"

But in the next moment, those who had spoken were stunned.

Chen Yu maintained his speed and abruptly climbed to the seventieth step, slightly wobbling before coming to a complete standstill.

What had been a bustling scene at the base of the Sky-reaching Peak suddenly quieted for a moment, then erupted into noisy chatter.

"He's at the seventieth step!"

"He's impressive, who is this kid?"

"That's a level only those in the Half-step Sky Sea Stage should be able to reach—this kid couldn't have hidden his power, could he?"

The voices below were filled with shock, curiosity, and suspicion.

And the warring royal clans also gradually ceased their fighting, their eyes fixed on Chen Yu above the seventieth step.

"This young man dares to stand so high, looking down at me You Lie?"

You Lie's face darkened with anger upon seeing Chen Yu's figure.

His purpose in stepping onto the Heavenly Ascension Ladder was to utterly crush Chen Yu, to make him submit at his feet—he would not tolerate Chen Yu being above him.

"Can this person really make it to the seventieth step?"

Cui Yan'er and Cui Ming were also quite surprised; they had only known before that Chen Yu had put You Lie at a disadvantage and thought Chen Yu was an inflexible man without much strength.

It seemed they had been wrong.

"Yan'er, didn't I tell you? If I meet this person during the evaluation, I will be the one to deal with him," Cui Ming's usually impassive face broke into a slight smile, as if he was looking forward to it.

"Cui Yan'er, let's pause our fight; I, this young master, do not enjoy playing second fiddle to others," You Lie coldly barked.

"I had the same thought!" Cui Yan'er lifted her chin.

She was a confident, prideful woman who wanted to be the center of attention, the most dazzling. She disliked playing second fiddle to anyone!

The two great royal clans called a truce!

Their eyes were all on Chen Yu, perched above the seventieth step!

Chapter 646: Sweeping Through the Geniuses

At the summit of Sky-reaching Peak, many eyes were upon Chen Yu.

"This kid is a promising seedling!"

Elder Wei nodded approvingly.

"Old Man Wei, isn't that stating the obvious? If this kid, with his Late Guiyuan Realm cultivation, can come this far, could he possibly be ordinary?"

An elderly man clad in black from Black Demon Valley teased.

"However, by the looks of it, he doesn't seem to have reached his limit. I'm genuinely curious as to how far this youngster can go."

A woman wearing a black veil commented.

Chen Yu scaled seventy steps in one go, which caught the attention of many elders from Black Demon Valley, but it wasn't enough to make them consider taking him as a disciple.

First of all, they could see Chen Yu's Spiritual Body talent wasn't high—in fact, very low.

For such talent to have come this far, he must be incredibly fortunate and possess great opportunities.

But life can't be left entirely to luck.

On another note, only a few talents who ventured into the inner valley, or those top existences among the outer valley, might be considered by an elder to become disciples.

The atmosphere among the higher-ups of the Heavenly Jade Sect grew a bit more somber.

"The kid is indeed not bad, but he's too arrogant, flaunting his talents in front of the prodigies from the two great King clans—isn't a wise choice."

A long-bearded old man commented.

"Correct, my Cui Clan's geniuses will not sit by and watch, they'll certainly crush him underfoot."

A beautiful lady in blue smiled elegantly, a powerhouse of the Cui Clan and also an elder of the Heavenly Jade Sect.

...

Below Sky-reaching Peak, many were still marveling that Chen Yu had reached the seventy steps.

Then, the prodigies from the two great King clans suddenly ceased their fighting, their gazes uniformly turning upwards.

"This is going to be interesting."

"With this kid outshining them in front of the two King clans, how can the prodigies from those clans let it go? They will definitely crush him!"

"Aye, such is the sorrow of having no backing—if that boy had a stronger backing, no one would dare lay a finger on him!"

The discussions resumed, with many feeling sorry for Chen Yu.

What use is talent? In the face of powerful clans, one can only bow down and serve!

"Go!"

Cui Yan'er muttered under her breath, leaping up three steps in one go.

On the other side, You Lie was equally reluctant to show weakness, leading the geniuses of the You Clan upwards.

The You and Cui clansmen, all exceptionally talented and powerful, covered the distance swiftly, with many quickly surpassing fifty steps in their ascent.

The sight was truly spectacular!

Some geniuses from the two clans quickly stood out, advancing at the forefront of the large group.

"Chen Yu, how dare you stand above me, forcing me, You Lie, to look up to you?"

You Lie had reached the fifty-sixth step, his speed astonishing.

Chen Yu glanced back at You Lie, finding him rather odd.

"You don't have to look at me!"

Chen Yu offhandedly said.

Upon hearing this, You Lie's anger flared, and he quickened his pace, determined to leave Chen Yu behind today, making him gaze upon his back from afar, unable to get close.

"You're quite good to have reached seventy steps, but you've hit your limit now, haven't you?"

Cui Yan'er sneered.

Chen Yu didn't bother to even listen to what Cui Yan'er said.

Stomp! Stomp! Stomp! Stomp!

Cui Yan'er and You Lie were ascending step by step, surpassing sixty steps and getting closer to Chen Yu.

Before long, they reached the sixty-fifth step, and even You Lie and Cui Yan'er had to slow down.

They were both focused on overtaking Chen Yu, so neither made a move against each other.

However, those in the back from the two King clans, whose strengths were lesser, could no longer continue.

"Damn it, this is my limit, fifty-three steps!"

"If we can't advance further, then we must support Sister Yan'er and Brother Ming!"

"Yes, let's attack together and knock that kid down!"

Several promising youths from the Cui Clan joined forces, making a decision.

"Golden Killing Fist!"

A Late Guiyuan Realm individual from the Cui Clan channeled his True Yuan, fiercely unleashing a blinding golden light from his fist!

That golden light rocketed upwards, aiming for Chen Yu.

At the same time, several others also unleashed their attacks, with beams of swords and sabers streaking toward him.

However, Chen Yu had already reached the seventy-third step, and there was a huge gap of twenty steps between him and those on the fifty-third step.

As the attacks made their impact, they were weakened by the pressure of heaven and earth, and even their trajectories were altered.

Boom!

Chen Yu was surrounded by a series of explosive sounds, as a storm of Yuan energy ravaged all around.

After the smoke cleared, Chen Yu was unscathed.

Ever since his Body Refinement days, Chen Yu had never been hurt by an attack from a cultivator of the same level, and even if the cultivators from Great Yu Realm were a cut above those from Kunyun Realm, the result would not be different!

"How is this possible?"

One of the Cui Clan individuals attacking Chen Yu was stunned.

Even with some gap between them and Chen Yu, how could the barrage of attacks leave him completely unharmed?

The group was deeply demoralized!

"It seems that knocking down the people from Heavenly Jade Sect off the Heavenly Ascension Ladder amounts to contributing to the sect, perhaps later I can expect some rewards!"

Chen Yu thought for a moment, then sharply turned back and threw a punch.

He didn't bother with the two great clans, but since these people had provoked him and even attacked him, he had no courtesy left to offer!

Bang!

His giant black fist stirred up black currents, exuding a domineering demonic aura as it crushed everything in its path downwards.

In that punch, Chen Yu used the power of the Demon Pattern, incorporating a trace of the true meaning of the Swallowing Cloud Demon Fist!

The geniuses, already at their limits, felt their legs tremble under that oppressive demonic might, struggling to stay steady.

In such a state, blocking Chen Yu's fist became even more difficult.

Boom!

A fist exploded, and three figures were sent flying, crashing down the Heavenly Ascension Ladder!

This sight caused a wave of surprise among the many people below.

"Guest Elder Chen..."

Several members of the Yang Family revealed a look of terror.

Ordinary people wouldn't dare to blast a member of the Cui Clan off the Heavenly Ascension Ladder,

Not to mention the number of Cui Clan talents on the ladder!

"Injuring our Cui Clan's people, brother, let's blast this kid off the Heavenly Ascension Ladder!"

A thick-browed man declared.

"Hmph, let him understand the consequences of striking our Cui Clan's people!"

Another tall, thick-browed man said.

After speaking, the two brothers initiated their attack on Chen Yu.

The rest of the Cui Clan, including Cui Ming, did not act for the time being.

They were all talents of the Cui Clan, and talents had their pride. Besides, countless people were watching below. It would be too shameful for the Cui Clan's talents to beat up one person in a group. Even if they succeeded, there would be no sense of accomplishment, and it would even tarnish the name of a talent.

Buzz!

The two Cui Clan brothers, holding their treasured swords, burst out with astonishing golden Sword Intent.

The brothers simultaneously struck with their swords, two identical beams of sword light, carrying extremely sharp Sword Intent, shot out.

The two brothers' cultivation was respectively in the Late Guiyuan Realm and the Peak of the Late Guiyuan Realm, and their attacks seemed to merge into one, doubling the might!

"Child's play!"

Chen Yu let out a low shout, circulating Demon Pattern True Essence around his arm and smashed out with a punch.

Bang!

Chen Yu's timing was precise, his punch hitting right upon the golden sword light, instantly shattering it.

At the same time, Chen Yu mobilized all his strength and True Yuan, aiming at the two brothers, and threw a fierce punch!

Boom!

The black iron fist, carrying a domineering demonic might, surged downward.

On the Heavenly Ascension Ladder, the brothers had no way to dodge Chen Yu's attack and could only take it head-on!

Bang!

The younger brother was sent flying by Chen Yu's punch, while the older brother stumbled back more than a dozen steps to the thirty-third step, his blood qi boiling inside him.

"Damn it, let's go together!"

Two more talents, both at the Peak of the Late Guiyuan Realm, launched an attack on Chen Yu.

Two talents at the Peak of the Late Guiyuan Realm ganging up on Chen Yu, who was at the Late Guiyuan Realm, already seemed quite bullying.

Chen Yu circulated his True Yuan in conjunction with his body's defensive power, and coupled with his High Grade Inner Armor, he still easily blocked the attacks of the two Late Stage Guiyuan Realm Peaks.

Swoosh!

He drew out the Demon Flood Dragon Sword, and Chen Yu slashed fiercely with a black and violent beam of sword light.

"Block it!"

On the Heavenly Ascension Ladder, where there was no room to dodge, the two men could only defend!

These two Cui Clan talents were quite strong and successfully blocked Chen Yu's sword.

Chen Yu then followed up with a second, third, and fourth sword striking swiftly.

Boom!

The two talents at the Peak of the Late Guiyuan Realm were likewise blasted off the Heavenly Ascension Ladder by Chen Yu.

"He's too formidable, to have successively repelled seven or eight Cui Clan talents. What is the origin of this kid?"

"He is a Body Cultivator, which gives him a certain advantage on the Heavenly Ascension Ladder. Nevertheless, being able to do this is indeed admirable!"

Due to the oppressive might of heaven and earth on the Heavenly Ascension Ladder, everyone was greatly restricted, and it was nearly impossible to dodge attacks from one another.

Hence, they could only injure each other and fend off attacks!

Simply put, it was a matter of who could withstand the other's attack to emerge as the victor!

When it came to defensive power, Chen Yu, as a Body Cultivator practicing the defensive-oriented Heavenly Demon Secret Pattern Record, naturally had the upper hand.

At this moment, Cui Ming had reached the sixty-ninth step, very close to Chen Yu.

Seeing his clan members being beaten back one after another by Chen Yu, Cui Ming felt humiliated and furious inside.

"Kid, your opponent is me!"

Cui Ming let out a low shout, deciding to take action himself.

The other Cui Clan members ready to strike immediately ceased.

Rashly intervening in Cui Ming's fight, if they annoyed Cui Ming, they would end up being punished instead!

"Cui Ming has made his move!"

"Cui Ming is a Half-step Sky Sea Realm powerhouse, ranking second only to Cui Yan'er among the young generation of the Cui Clan!"

"Now, that kid is finished, the gap in cultivation is too vast!"

"Gold Shattering Claw!"

Cui Ming stretched out one hand, and five golden bone claws formed in the air, suddenly grabbing toward Chen Yu.

Demon Extermination Claw!

Chen Yu bravely confronted without fear, stimulating the first demon pattern, and swung his arm, casting out a black, ferocious, and primitive demonic claw!

Bang!

A black and a gold claw, both with tremendous power, collided, producing a loud bang!

A swirling vortex of black and gold storm spread in all directions!

Yet Chen Yu didn't retreat half a step and still stood as firm as Mount Tai on the seventy-third step!

"This kid can actually take a hard hit from Cui Ming!"

Cui Yan'er was somewhat surprised, but she did not interfere in the fight between Cui Ming and Chen Yu.

In her view, Cui Ming was certain to win in the end!

Stamp!

Cui Yan'er stepped on the seventy-third step, level with Chen Yu.

You Lie did the same!

In this moment, Chen Yu, You Lie, and Cui Yan'er—all three—stood together on the seventy-third step.

But Cui Yan'er and You Lie felt as though they were still only the backdrop to Chen Yu!

Chapter 647: All Get Out

At this moment, Cui Yan'er, Yan Lie, and Chen Yu stood together on the seventy-third step, but they felt that many more eyes were focused on Chen Yu; they were still just the green leaves against his backdrop.

"Amazing, this child is actually standing on the same step as the geniuses of the two great King clans!"

"It's truly admirable that an unknown person has managed to come this far!"

The Yang Family members also stared wide-eyed, astonished that Chen Yu had made it to this stage.

At the same time, they were quite worried, as Chen Yu already had a history with the two great King clans, and his current actions had only further incensed Cui Yan'er and Yan Lie.

At this moment, Cui Ming had already made a move against Chen Yu, and there were still twelve Cui Clan geniuses below.

Under these circumstances, could Chen Yu escape unscathed?

"Humph, Chen Yu, from now on, just keep looking up at my back, Yan Lie!" Yan Lie snorted coldly, stepping up to the seventy-fourth step.

Cui Yan'er also acted simultaneously.

They would never tolerate becoming mere backgrounds to Chen Yu.

To break this situation, they could only continue to climb upwards, surpassing Chen Yu!

Cui Yan'er and Yan Lie almost simultaneously stepped onto the seventy-fourth step, their figures slightly wavered.

Reaching this step, they both felt it was extremely difficult to move, and had to give their all to keep climbing upwards.

"Sister Yan'er, go ahead without worry; once I deal with this guy, I'll join you!" Cui Ming said calmly, his words filled with confidence.

"Okay!" Cui Yan'er responded.

Though Chen Yu was radiant at the moment, she believed that Cui Ming would definitely win!

"You Cui clan are too shameless, coming at me one by one, is this a rotational battle?" Chen Yu couldn't help but mock.

The Cui clan were the first to strike at him, Chen Yu blocked the attack, defeated the opponent, and immediately, another person came up.

Now, Cui Ming had also made a move against Chen Yu.

"Humph, just a few moves, it won't even consume much of your True Yuan, how could it be considered a rotational battle!" Unexpectedly, Cui Ming shamelessly refused to admit this.

As long as one stood on the Heavenly Ascension Peak, they would have to use True Yuan to resist the oppressive power of heaven and earth; fighting in this condition was more strenuous and dangerous; a rotational battle was more effective too.

Boom!

Cui Ming didn't say much more; he immediately launched an attack at Chen Yu, a golden bone claw, with fierce power and tyranny, aimed to crush Chen Yu's head.

Chen Yu fearlessly waved the Demon Flood Dragon Sword, slashing out a surge of black Sword Qi.

Thud-crack!

Cui Ming's claw collided, his fingers fiercely clutching, actually smashing Chen Yu's Sword Qi.

However, Chen Yu's Demon Flood Dragon Sword possessed explosive properties; the exploding Sword Qi maximally mitigated the power of Cui Ming's claw.

Pong!

Ultimately, when this claw landed on Chen Yu, he blocked it with raw force.

"Let's see how many of my claws you can block!" Cui Ming's gaze suddenly sharpened, and the usually mild-looking man exuded an overbearing aura.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

In the void, a series of golden bone claws flew towards Chen Yu, like blooming golden flowers, dazzling yet containing powerful force and lethal intent.

"This man's strength is almost no different from Hanshan's." Chen Yu thought inwardly, unafraid, actively meeting the attack with the Demon Flood Dragon Sword.

At the same time, he activated the third demon pattern; a pitch-black, fierce demon armor quickly appeared on his body.

All the explosive turbulence and bone claws that came his way were blocked by the Demon Scale Armor.

The battle on the Heavenly Ascension Ladder was often decided by defensive measures; those with stronger defensive power were more likely to survive.

But just then, Chen Yu saw Cui Ming activate the treasure armor within his body, a golden film appearing on his surface.

The opponent also possessed a Spiritual Artifact with excellent defensive power. If Chen Yu had anything in reserve, it would take a long time to determine the victor.

Roaring winds!

Chen Yu's body stirred up a storm of black winds, revolving continuously around him.

This tyrannically frenzied demon wind grew stronger, sharp as a blade!

Demon Wind Sword Domain was formed!

Suddenly, the area within several meters was affected.

If not for the great oppressive force of the Heavenly Ascension Ladder suppressing it, Chen Yu's Demon Wind Sword Domain could cover nearly a hundred meters.

"Damn it, Chen Yu, what are you doing?" On the Black Demon Valley's side, many from the You Clan were affected by the Demon Wind Sword Domain, facing even greater obstacles to advance.

Chen Yu didn't bother with that; he had no intention of injuring those participating in the Black Demon Valley's assessment, so he wasn't breaking any rules.

Boom!

Chen Yu slashed at Cui Ming with his sword; inside the Demon Wind Sword Domain, this strike was even more powerful.

Cui Ming's expression darkened slightly, not expecting Chen Yu to have this move.

"Bone-breaking Finger!" Cui Ming waved his arms, his claws twisting and flying in the air, golden bone fingers shooting out.

The golden bone fingers twisted in the air, the joints bursting with a series of explosive sounds.

Boom crash pong!

In the pitch-black Demon Wind Sword Domain, explosions were continuous.

"Damn!" contentPane Cui Ming felt the pressure.

He stood on the sixty-ninth step, enduring tremendous heavenly and earthly oppression, and now also facing the attack and suppression from the Demon Wind Sword Domain.

As Chen Yu in the sword domain felt relatively easier, his attack power also enhanced.

With this give and take, Cui Ming was very likely to lose!

"Golden Bone-breaking Claw!" Cui Ming roared, his two claws coming forth simultaneously.

Bang, crack, bang, crack!

Suddenly, two huge golden bone claws appeared on either side of Cui Ming, the five claws slowly moving, emitting a series of explosive sounds.

"This is Big Brother Cui Ming's 'Golden Bone-breaking Claw'. Even someone in the Half-Step Sky Sea Realm, if careless, could be disfigured by Brother Cui Ming's claw!"

"That kid is really impressive, pushing Brother Cui Ming to this extent. But since Brother Cui Ming has used the Golden Bone-breaking Claw, this duel is basically over."

"What a powerful strike!"

Chen Yu's gaze sharpened, showing no fear.

He charged his heart, amplifying his power, and swiftly swung the Demon Flood Dragon Sword.

Demon Light Sword Spin!

Boom boom boom!

In an instant, Chen Yu slashed out more than a dozen pitch-black sword rays, each one incredibly powerful. At this moment, all the sword rays combined to form a pitch-black blade vortex. Amplified by the Demon Wind Sword Domain, it spun and struck out!

Boom bang!

The Demon Light Sword Spin clashed with the Golden Bone-breaking Claw, exploding continuously. A series of fierce storms spread out.

Chen Yu and Cui Ming were both defending.

Below them, members of the Cui Clan and the You Clan did the same, some even being knocked back a step or two by the shockwaves!

Boom!

With a loud noise, Cui Ming's Golden Bone-breaking Claws completely dissipated, but two rays of sword light from Chen Yu's Demon Light Sword Spin remained, slashing towards Cui Ming in an instant.

Pang!

The first sword light landed on a pale golden membrane, causing it to dent and crack slightly.

At that moment, the second sword ray arrived nearby. The pale golden membrane burst open with a "pang", and the residual sword rays struck Cui Ming.

Black light exploded from Cui Ming's chest, injuring him, sending his figure tumbling backward.

At the same time, the massive pressure from the Heavenly Ascension Ladder bore down.

Thud thud thud!

Cui Ming's body fell and tumbled down the Heavenly Ascension Ladder, rolling over three times until he stopped on the forty-second step!

Cui Ming was defeated!

Below Heavenly Ascension Peak, uproar erupted!

"Damn it, this kid defeated Brother Cui Ming!"

"Brothers, let's gang up and blast this kid off the Heavenly Ascension Ladder!"

After Cui Ming's defeat, the remaining prodigies from the Cui Clan felt utterly disgraced and extremely angry.

But they also knew that apart from Cui Yan'er, none of them could match Chen Yu alone, so at this moment, all the remaining Cui Clan members, discarding any pride as prodigies, prepared to mob Chen Yu!

"Shameless, so many from the Cui Clan ganging up on one person!"

"Ah, such a situation should be stopped!"

There was a buzz of discussion below.

Yang Yuhuan was also worried for Chen Yu but could do nothing.

Chen Yu's gaze turned fierce, his heart even more annoyed.

Since the Cui Clan members were so despicable as to plan to mob him, Chen Yu no longer cared about retaining any decorum.

Strike first!

Yangming Sword Point!

Swoosh! Swoosh!

Two blood-red Sword Qi beams shot out.

On the Heavenly Ascension Ladder, ordinary attacks were hard to stop, not to mention the Yangming Sword Point.

Splurt! Splurt!

Two peak Late Guiyuan Realm members from the Cui Clan were penetrated in their legs by the Yangming Sword Point. Blood immediately gushed out, unstoppable.

On the Heavenly Ascension Ladder, with their legs suddenly wounded, how could they remain stable!

Thud thud thud!

Those two immediately rolled down.

With this, only ten people were left on that side!

Slash! Slash! Slash!

Chen Yu wielded the Demon Flood Dragon Sword, launching a fierce offensive.

At this moment, each of his strikes was comparable to those of Cui Ming. The Late Guiyuan Realm simply couldn't defend against them!

Instantly, two members of the Late Guiyuan Realm were blasted off the Heavenly Ascension Peak by Chen Yu, while a peak Late Guiyuan Realm member managed to block Chen Yu's strike.

Meanwhile, the attacks from the other members of the Cui Clan descended, their might horrifying.

But among these, there was only one Half-step Sky Sea, the rest being Late Guiyuan Realm, which was not fearsome.

Chen Yu's defensive power made the attacks of the Late Guiyuan Realm feel like mere tickling.

Even at the peak of the Late Guiyuan Realm, he was completely unafraid!

"Demon Scale Shield!"

Chen Yu activated the second Demon pattern, quickly forming a Demon Scale Shield around his body.

Then, he activated the High-Grade Inner Armor he wore, with an ancient cyan protective light appearing around him.

Demon Scale Shield, Demon Scale Armor, High-Grade Inner Armor... Chen Yu had all his defenses up!

With these layers of defense, Chen Yu fearlessly launched a vicious offensive against the prodigies of the Cui Clan!

They had thought that Chen Yu, faced with their mobbing, would either be scared witless or blasted off in one round.

Unexpectedly, Chen Yu was so fierce—daring to counterattack!

Boom bang!

After one round of attacks, Chen Yu's ancient protective light and Demon Scale Shield were shattered, leaving the Demon Scale Armor somewhat damaged, but Chen Yu was otherwise unharmed.

On the other side, three more Late Guiyuan Realm members from the Cui Clan were blasted off the Heavenly Ascension Peak by Chen Yu!

Thus, only five people were left on the Cui Clan's side!

This outcome dumbfounded the Cui Clan.

"Get down, all of you!"

Chen Yu, enraged, launched another attack on the people from the Cui Clan.

The Demon Wind Sword Domain was still active, and his sword moves grew even stronger!

Shortly after, these five were also successively blasted down by Chen Yu.

It was not until then that Chen Yu's Demon Scale Armor was destroyed, leaving some injuries on his body.

Chapter 648: Inner Valley Disciple Qualification

Within the two palaces at the summit of the Heavenly Ascension Peak, the atmosphere was unusually tense.

All the elders of Black Demon Valley were shocked by Chen Yu's actions.

"This young man is not bad, his strength is so formidable, but it seems he primarily practices the Body Refining Technique," Elder Wei carefully observed Chen Yu.

In fact, he had the idea of taking him as a disciple, but since the techniques Chen Yu practiced were different from his, he hesitated for the moment and decided to wait until after the two evaluations ended to make a conclusion.

"No matter what he practices, this young man defeated so many talents from the Cui Clan alone, making a great contribution to our Black Demon Valley. Black Demon Valley will definitely not treat him unfairly!" a dark-robed elder said.

Meanwhile, at the Heavenly Jade Sect, a blue-dressed beauty from the Cui Clan frowned deeply, her expression gloomy and uncomfortable.

The talented members of the Cui Clan, a kingly family, were defeated by Chen Yu alone.

She had just boasted that the Cui Clan would definitely crush Chen Yu, but now she felt a burning sensation on her face, as if someone had slapped her several times.

"What a bunch of rubbish!" the blue-dressed beauty scoffed coldly.

Luckily, Cui Yan'er was still climbing the Heavenly Ascension Ladder, or else the Cui Clan would have been utterly humiliated.

The other elders present also looked toward Chen Yu with unfriendly expressions.

They had deliberately mocked and ridiculed Black Demon Valley earlier, but now, as laughter and provocations continued to come from the Black Demon Valley group, they all remained silent, offering no response.

Chen Yu's performance not only attracted the attention of the elders on the Heavenly Ascension Peak but also caused a complete uproar below the peak.

"He is too formidable, this kid is like a tortoise shell bristling with spikes, repelling all the Cui Clan members."

"Not even Cui Ming could match him."

"However, this kid is also lucky. His defensive power is strong, giving him an advantage on the Heavenly Ascension Ladder."

"You're right, if it were a fight to the death, Cui Ming might not necessarily lose!"

Below, there was a flurry of discussions. Some people felt that Cui Ming was actually stronger than Chen Yu, but they still greatly admired Chen Yu.

"Guest Chen is incredible!" Yang Hai couldn't help but exclaim, his admiration for Chen Yu growing further.

To fight alone against many heroes and emerge victorious was a glorious achievement.

Although they were also worried, fearing the Cui Clan might seek revenge against Chen Yu, once Chen Yu entered Black Demon Valley, even the Cui Clan probably wouldn't dare to attack him there.

"This young man is quite interesting, I wonder where he comes from?" a white-robed man sat in a carriage, quietly sipping tea.

"Young Master Hua, should we send someone to investigate?" a woman outside the carriage said.

"Go ahead, if this person has a noteworthy background, it would be worth befriending him!" the white-robed man nodded.

Participants in the evaluations of the Heavenly Jade Sect and Black Demon Valley were not limited to just the two kingly families; the Hua Clan was another kingly family, and there were many other powerful families as well.

The evaluation lasted a month, so there was no rush, and they also did not want to get involved in the dispute between the You Clan and the Cui Clan.

On the Heavenly Ascension Ladder, after repelling the Cui Clan talents, Chen Yu continued to climb upward.

With a step, he landed on the seventy-fourth step. The heavenly pressure intensified slightly, causing Chen Yu's body to sink a bit.

However, this force still could not overwhelm Chen Yu. He quickly stepped up and soon steadied his footing.

At that moment, Chen Yu spotted You Lie and Cui Yan'er ahead.

They stood on the seventy-eighth step, also turning to look back at Chen Yu with expressions that had grown more solemn.

Earlier, they had not taken Chen Yu seriously, even after he had defeated Chang Yanping, he still did not catch their attention.

But Chen Yu's recent performance was truly astonishing and had fully caught the attention of both You Lie and Cui Yan'er, making them regard him as a true contender!

And in Cui Yan'er's eyes, besides solemnity, there was also intense anger.

After all, Chen Yu alone had repelled all the other Cui Clan talents.

Although very annoyed, Cui Yan'er did not make a move.

Chen Yu was clearly a formidable opponent with strong defensive power, holding an advantage on the Heavenly Ascension Ladder, so Cui Yan'er did not have much chance of winning.

If enemy You Lie suddenly intervened, Cui Yan'er would undoubtedly be defeated, and the Cui Clan's face would be completely lost.

Thus, Cui Yan'er suppressed her inner rage.

Now, seeing Chen Yu advancing again and continuing his climb up the Heavenly Ascension Ladder, both she and You Lie quickly turned around and focused on moving forward!

As talents from kingly clans, they were extremely proud and absolutely could not let Chen Yu surpass them!

With steps, Chen Yu did not bother with You Lie and Cui Yan'er and slowly climbed upward.

At this moment, he reached the seventy-sixth step and started feeling significant effort.

Chen Yu activated his physical strength, and a surge of even more immense Demon Pattern True Essence emerged from his body să former, reducing the heavenly pressure slightly!

With steps, Chen Yu did not slow down and took another two steps up, reaching the seventy-eighth step.

Here, Chen Yu felt like there was a giant mountain on him, incredibly heavy!

At this moment, You Lie was on the seventy-ninth step, also feeling Chen Yu's approach.

"This is impossible, how can he be this fast?" You Lie momentarily panicked inside, but he quickly composed himself.

Chen Yu had stayed the longest on the Heavenly Ascension Ladder and had gone through numerous battles, consuming a great deal of True Yuan.

The higher one goes on the ladder, the more time and True Yuan it requires!

The final victory will definitely be his, You Lie!

"It's about time to stop here, If I want to continue climbing, it's necessary to use some of my hidden cards!"

Chen Yu murmured to himself.

This was only the first assessment, and reaching the fiftieth step was considered passing; he had already qualified.

However, just to show off and reveal some of his tricks seemed unwise.

Yet, Chen Yu had a heart that refused to admit defeat, and he wanted to surpass You Lie and Cui Yan'er at the very least!

Chen Yu took a deep breath, his heart storing power to amplify his strength!

Suddenly, Chen Yu stepped forward and reached the seventy-ninth step, tying with You Lie!

You Lie's mind tensed and he immediately stepped onto the eightieth step!

On the Heavenly Ascension Ladder, every ten steps represented a threshold, and the eightieth step was a major one!

At the same time, Chen Yu also moved onto the eightieth step.

Unlike You Lie, Chen Yu quickly walked up as if this threshold was nothing to him.

Then, Chen Yu took another step and suddenly reached the eighty-first step!

"Surpassed them!"

Chen Yu thought to himself, as the state of his heart storing power ended, and then he slowly walked down the Heavenly Ascension Ladder.

If he had unleashed his heart's explosion or used the Golden Winged Phoenix bloodline, perhaps reaching the ninetieth step would not be an issue, but was there any necessity to do so?

To go that far seemed to offer no significant advantage.

Chen Yu also wasn't accustomed to revealing his tricks in front of everyone, especially when some in the crowd were enemies.

However, Chen Yu's leap to the eighty-first step had already shocked everyone.

You Lie and Cui Yan'er both stood there stunned, trembling slightly.

They all thought it impossible for Chen Yu to surpass them, given that he had first climbed the ladder and undergone a chaotic battle, wearing him out significantly.

Yet, Chen Yu's sudden surge, instantly surpassing them both, dealt a huge blow to You Lie and Cui Yan'er!

They had the illusion that Chen Yu completely overpowered them in strength.

Moreover, after Chen Yu quickly reached the eighty-first step, he immediately gave up and walked down the ladder.

This action made You Lie feel that Chen Yu might not have yet exerted his full strength!

Similarly, below the Heavenly Peak, there was an uproar.

"Eighty-one steps!"

"He suddenly surpassed Cui Yan'er and You Lie, reaching the eighty-first step. This kid is really astonishing!"

Everyone thought that a fierce competition would ensue among You Lie, Chen Yu, and Cui Yan'er.

Unexpectedly, Chen Yu swiftly surpassed You Lie and Cui Yan'er and then walked down the Heavenly Ascension Ladder.

Meanwhile, atop the Heavenly Peak.

"This young man is not bad, why not let him be my disciple!" Elder Wei laughed.

Previously, he had doubted whether Chen Yu could reach the eightieth step, hence his hesitation; but now it seemed he had underestimated Chen Yu.

"Elder Wei, taking a disciple isn't just about who speaks up first," a man in black robes chuckled, now considering taking Chen Yu as his disciple as well.

"Hehe, if you guys secretly take a Body Refinement prodigy as your disciple without informing Iron Plow Venerable, aren't you afraid he'll come and smash your gates?" a woman with a black veil laughed, covering her mouth.

After Chen Yu descended from the Heavenly Peak, the Sharp-nosed Elder suddenly appeared before him.

"What is your name?" the Sharp-nosed Elder stared at Chen Yu with gleaming eyes, his attitude much changed from before.

"Chen Yu!" Chen Yu responded evenly.

He knew this change in attitude was due to the astonishing talents he had demonstrated; power was respected in this world, which was quite normal.

"My family name is Liao, first name Sifeng!" the Sharp-nosed Elder smiled at Chen Yu, nodding with satisfaction. "Do you know that by reaching the eightieth step, you qualify to become an Inner Valley Disciple!"

He had not expected that Old Man Yang would introduce such a talent to him, considering that the geniuses from the Cui Clan and You Clan of the King's families had all been surpassed by Chen Yu.

"Excellent assessment results can directly make one an Inner Valley Disciple?" Chen Yu asked with surprise, unaware of this fact before.

"That's right, as long as you meet the qualifications to become an Inner Valley Disciple in the second assessment, you can directly become one!" the Sharp-nosed Elder said excitedly.

Directly becoming an Inner Valley Disciple, only a very few could achieve this in each generation.

And almost all of them later made their names on the 'Southern Domain's List of Geniuses!'

The 'Southern Domain's List of Geniuses' recorded one hundred talents under the age of fifty.

Those who made it into the top fifty of the list all had the potential to become Kings!

If Chen Yu could become an Inner Sect Disciple directly, he, too, would have a chance to enter the 'List of Geniuses' and his future achievements would definitely surpass those of the Sharp-nosed Elder; by then, the Sharp-nosed Elder might even rely on Chen Yu.

"Senior Liao, what is the second assessment?" Chen Yu inquired.

The Sharp-nosed Elder hesitated; the sect's assessments were not to be disclosed in advance.

However, he still disclosed a bit to Chen Yu, "The Heavenly Ascension Ladder is just a test of talent, but in this world, actual strength is most useful. Even the finest Spiritual Bodies and top bloodlines are useless if they don't grow. They can still be slaughtered."

"I understand," Chen Yu nodded. From what the Sharp-nosed Elder had said, he already knew that the second assessment was related to combat and strength!

Chapter 649: The Second Examination

"Brother Chen, you are amazing, you even obtained the qualifications of an Inner Valley Disciple."

Yang Yuhuan said excitedly.

The members of the Yang family had just arrived, and they also heard what the Sharp-nosed Elder had said.

As long as Chen Yu passed the second test, he would also gain the qualifications of an Inner Valley Disciple and could directly enter the Inner Valley!

Meanwhile, Yang Ling could only reach the twenty-eighth step and could not stay in Black Demon Valley, and Yang Hai had just reached the thirtieth step and could only remain in Black Demon Valley as a menial worker.

The gap between Chen Yu and them was like heaven and earth.

"Guest Chen, as long as the second test meets the requirements, you can directly enter the Inner Valley, you must try your best. Each term, only a few people from Black Demon Valley can directly enter the Inner Valley, and most of these people are taken as disciples by the elders and enjoy better guidance!"

Yang Fenghou said enviously.

If Chen Yu could directly enter the Inner Valley, it would be greatly beneficial to them.

The Yang family lacked backers in Black Demon Valley, if Yang Fenghou, Yang Yuhuan, and others were under the protection of Chen Yu, an Inner Valley Disciple, their lives would certainly be better.

They believed that Chen Yu would not turn his back on them and ignore the people of the Yang Family.

"do your best."

Chen Yu smiled.

Even if he could not directly enter the Inner Valley, as long as he stayed in the Outer Valley for a few years, he could still enter the Inner Valley.

For Chen Yu who had just come from Kunyun Realm to the Great Yu Realm, being able to enter a three-and-a-half-star force was already quite good.

Black Demon Valley had a significant reputation in the Great Yu Realm, a single Black Demon Valley would be sufficient to dominate the Kunyun Realm.

On the Heavenly Ascension Ladder, You Lie and Cui Yan'er came down.

Previously, You Lie could have stepped onto the eightieth step, but his spirit was shaken by Chen Yu, making it impossible for him to reach the eightieth step.

In the end, he activated the You Family Bloodline Power and managed to reach the eightieth step, continuing all the way to the eighty-third step.

As for Cui Yan'er, she had just reached the eightieth step and could not advance further.

"Congratulations to Brother You Lie, currently first place, far surpassing everyone else, including that Chen Yu!"

A member of the You family congratulated.

However, You Lie had a gloomy expression, completely unable to feel happy.

Before coming here, he had planned to use his own strength to reach the eightieth step and then utilize the You Family Bloodline Power to reach the eighty-fifth step.

Now that he had only reached the eighty-third step, this result was even lower than he had expected.

Moreover, You Lie had given it his all to reach the eighty-third step but he always felt that Chen Yu had not yet given his all!

Therefore, even though he had surpassed Chen Yu, You Lie did not feel any sense of accomplishment.

After the two major King clans descended, more participants steadily climbed the Heavenly Ascension Ladder to take part in the test.

On the steps to the left and right, people continuously fought, some were knocked down from the Heavenly Ascension Ladder, while others reached the fiftieth step, and even more reached the sixtieth or seventieth steps.

The two three-and-a-half-star forces recruiting disciples attracted an immense number of participants, creating a sea of people.

Below the peak of Heavenly Ascension, the area was crowded with people, and outside, the line still stretched over twenty yards long.

With so many participants in the test, they would likely eliminate two-thirds.

At this moment, Cui Ming approached.

"Chen Yu, if I get a chance in the second test, I will definitely defeat you face to face!"

Cui Ming stated solemnly, intending to declare war.

He was not satisfied with his defeat to Chen Yu on the Heavenly Ascension Ladder!

The Cui Clan was a family with a bloodline heritage, and he had also awakened the Bloodline Power; however, the Cui Clan's bloodline was useless on the Heavenly Ascension Ladder.

He believed that if he could utilize the Cui Clan's Bloodline Power, he would not lose to Chen Yu.

"You won't get that chance because you can't defeat me!"

Chen Yu spoke confidently.

Since he had already offended the Cui Clan, there was no need to be polite or modest with them.

Moreover, what Chen Yu said was the truth, he had no plans to intentionally hold back and let Cui Ming win when they met again.

"Hmph, we'll see!"

Cui Ming snorted coldly, his eyes flashing with a sharp glint, and then he turned and left.

The members of the Yang family broke out in a cold sweat, Chen Yu's mouth was indeed merciless.

"Guest Chen, Cui Ming's strength is second only to Cui Yan'er among the Cui Clan's younger generation. And the Cui Clan's bloodline is related to speed, hence it's useless on the Heavenly Ascension Ladder, but if it's a real fight, you should be cautious."

Yang Fenghou explained and cautioned Chen Yu.

Just as he finished speaking, the talents from the You Clan all came over together.

"What are they planning to do?"

Yang Hai said in a panic.

On the Heavenly Ascension Ladder, people from the You Clan could not attack Chen Yu, otherwise, it would be a violation of the rules.

Now that they had descended from the Heavenly Ascension Ladder, the You Clan's group came in full force, were they looking for trouble?

"I, the young master, ask you, where did You Han go?"

You Lie asked arrogantly.

"Why are you asking me where the You family's people have gone? Are you sick?"

Chen Yu retorted, sounding as if he thought You Lie was ridiculous.

"At the beginning of your Artifact Refining, the rejections you faced were all You Han's doing, now you know who he is, right?"

You Lie thought Chen Yu was unaware of specifically who You Han was, thus he straightforwardly mentioned this.

"I don't know him."

Chen Yu answered decisively.

He only knew someone had been obstructing him, but he had never seen the person.

"You Han disappeared while tracking you, and you are the prime suspect!"

"Do you realize the consequences of killing a member of the You Clan?"

You Lie pressed on.

You Han hadn't returned or made contact up to now, and You Lie deduced the other party might very well be dead.

"I don't know and I don't care, believe it or not, it's up to you."

Chen Yu said impatiently.

The people from the You Clan secretly tracked him and tried to trip up Chen Yu. He did not seek trouble with the You Clan, yet they turned around and caused issues for him.

However, You Han vanished on the fourth day...

Chen Yu remembered that it was the day before when he had handed over the materials to the clown Artifact Refiner.

He also learned from the clown Artifact Refiner that someone had interfered with his Artifact Refining, proving that You Han had met with the clown Artifact Refiner...

"Don't let me find any evidence!"

Frustrated by Chen Yu's stubborn denial, You Lie had no choice but to leave behind a harsh threat.

"Send someone back to the Cultivation Spirit Hall to investigate. Gather all the information regarding You Han."

You Lie coldly instructed.

He initially did not believe that Chen Yu could kill You Han without alerting anyone.

After experiencing the Heavenly Ascension Ladder, he changed his mind.

If You Han was indeed dead, Chen Yu was the most likely suspect, and he certainly had the capability to do so.

"Chen Yu, how did you end up in such a deep conflict with the You Family?"

After the people from the You Clan left, the sharp-nosed elder tentatively asked, essentially inquiring if Chen Yu really had killed a genius of the You Clan.

"They're just a group of prideful fools!"

Chen Yu did not want to elaborate.

In fact, he did not feel that there was any irreconcilable conflict between him and the You Clan, it was purely them looking for trouble for no reason.

The sharp-nosed elder smiled and remained silent.

People who grew up in royal clans generally tended to be haughty, but he would not say this out loud since there were many royal clans present here.

"I am Shi Wwei. May I have the honor of knowing your esteemed name?"

Just then, another man approached and introduced himself.

"Chen Yu!"

Chen Yu responded indifferently, sizing up the burly man in front of him whose face was full of smiles, seemingly not here to provoke or cause trouble.

"Your actions just now were truly astonishing, I must say I admire you."

"I haven't heard of you before. Which clan are you from?"

The burly man continued, chuckling.

"My young master invites you over for tea!"

Suddenly, a beautiful woman approached and extended an invitation to Chen Yu.

After climbing the Heavenly Ascension Ladder, Chen Yu's fame spread, catching the attention of many. Some people came to form connections, while others from major clan powers wanted to court a talent like Chen Yu.

For those who came to get acquainted, Chen Yu would chat for a while, but otherwise, he tried to politely decline.

Joining Black Demon Valley was enough; there was no need to tie himself to other clans.

Next, Yang Fenghou and others planned to return to the Cultivation Spirit Hall to heal.

Since there was a month's time for the first trial, they still had a chance to try again.

As Chen Yu had already passed the trial, there was no reason for him to stay, so he left with them.

Thus, they all returned to the Cultivation Spirit Hall.

While looking for a place to stay, Chen Yu passed by the clown Artifact Refiner's shop and decided to stop by to inquire about You Han.

However, Brother Dong's shop was already closed.

...

On the other side, at the Heavenly Jade Sect, where Inner Sect Disciples reside.

"Brother Yan!"

An Outer Sect Disciple came to a courtyard and called out loudly.

"Come in!"

The barriers around the courtyard disappeared, and the gates automatically opened.

The Outer Sect Disciple hurried inside.

"What is it?"

Yan Hanshan looked on coldly.

Seeing Yan Hanshan's chilling face and gaze, the Outer Sect Disciple felt a shiver down his spine.

In the past, Yan Hanshan was known as the good-looking gentleman of the Heavenly Jade Sect; he was kind-hearted and amiable.

But ever since that incident, Yan Hanshan became moody, and the loss of one of his ears also affected his looks.

"I just learned some news about someone named Chen Yu and the Yang Family!"

Said the Outer Sect Disciple.

"Speak!"

Yan Hanshan's frame slightly stirred, releasing a powerful aura.

"I heard that during the recent disciple recruitment event at Black Demon Peak by Black Demon Valley, Chen Yu took everyone by surprise, single-handedly battling and beating the geniuses from the Cui Clan into utter disarray!"

"Some people from the Yang Family were also spotted there."

The Outer Sect Disciple shared all the information he had gathered.

"Hmph, having offended the Cui Clan, he won't live long."

Yan Hanshan sneered.

The Cui Clan is a royal clan; these major clan geniuses are incredibly proud and would never tolerate a challenger without a powerful background insulting their dignity.

As for the people from the Yang Family, Yan Hanshan couldn't allow them to enter Black Demon Valley; it would make it difficult for him to take action.

Besides, if these people from the Yang Family gained opportunities to soar high or found major support upon entering a prominent clan, it would be even harder for Yan Hanshan to seek revenge.

The best course of action would be to eliminate them before they could enter Black Demon Valley.

"It seems I need to make a personal visit to Black Demon Peak!"

Yan Hanshan suddenly stood up.

A month passed quickly.

Several members of the Yang Family attempted the Heavenly Ascension Ladder again; among them, Yang Fenghou reached the fifty-fifth step, while Yang Yuhuan only reached the forty-seventh step.

One day, Chen Yu and the members of the Yang Family left the Cultivation Spirit Hall and headed once more towards Black Demon Peak.

The first trial had ended, and the second trial was about to begin!

Chapter 650: The Bet Between Two Clans, Ranking of Slaughter

At this moment, at the base of Sky-reaching Peak, besides the two sect forces and those who had passed the first trial, all others were isolated far away, unable to step foot without facing immediate execution by the two great sect forces.

Even so, as Chen Yu glanced over, he felt the area beneath Sky-reaching Peak was packed with people.

"Is this the grand assembly of a three-and-a-half-star force? Drawing countless people to surge forth, the number of those who have passed the first trial is actually this many!"

With a cursory sweep, Chen Yu realized that thousands had passed the first trial from both forces, totaling to an impressive five to six thousand!

The trials by Black Demon Valley and Heavenly Jade Sect were indeed challenging, with a fifty-year age limit and strength requirements to boot.

Yet still, so many had passed.

From this, one could imagine just how vast and boundless the entire Southern Domain, even the whole Great Yu Realm, was.

This was truly what one could consider a vast realm!

In comparison, Kunyun Realm indeed seemed nothing but a mere speck of land.

A surge of passion suddenly arose in Chen Yu's heart, longing to carve out a place for himself in this vast and boundless realm.

"The number of people from Heavenly Jade Sect is slightly greater than those from Black Demon Valley,"

Whispered Yang Fenghou, standing beside him.

Within the Yang Family, only Yang Fenghou had managed to pass the first trial and earned the right to participate in the second one.

"Indeed so!"

Chen Yu nodded in agreement.

Even though he had fended off nearly twenty Cui Clan geniuses on the Heavenly Ascension Ladder, as long as they were healed from their injuries, they could still take the trial.

With so many participants, the situation was hardly something one or two individuals could change.

However, while Chen Yu was observing the numbers of the two forces, he detected a considerable amount of hostility from many within the group from Heavenly Jade Sect when they looked his way.

Chen Yu believed that at most he had conflicts with the Cui Clan from Heavenly Jade Sect and should have no connections with other family forces.

Moreover, he also noticed some hidden hostility on the side of Black Demon Valley.

"Brother Chen? You've arrived!"

A burly man walked over, none other than "Shi Wwei," who had previously taken the initiative to befriend Chen Yu.

"Guest Elder, the Shi Family to which Shi Wwei belongs is a two-and-a-half-star family."

Yang Fenghou secretly transmitted his thoughts.

Coming from a family, when one meets anyone, the first consideration is their background before deciding whether to befriend them or not.

But Chen Yu didn't care about that, for when it came to making friends, he only considered the person's nature; getting along was all that mattered.

"The second trial is about to begin shortly, and Brother Chen, as long as you meet a certain standard, you can directly become an Inner Valley Disciple. Truly enviable,"

Shi Wwei spoke animatedly.

"Do you know what the specific content of the second trial is?"

Chen Yu asked curiously.

"Hehe, I've heard some rumors about it!"

Shi Wwei said with a proud smile, before he continued, "I hear the second trial tests combat ability, and the specific content seems to be related to the wager between the two great sect forces!"

Chen Yu had already heard about the wager between Black Demon Valley and Heavenly Jade Sect.

But that was a matter among the higher echelons of the two forces; ordinary people knew nothing about the details.

"It is said that the core of the conflict between the two sect forces this time is over a minor realm."

"It is rumored that the minor realm was first discovered by Black Demon Valley, but Heavenly Jade Sect learned of the news at the same time, and they fiercely refused to let go. In the end, somehow, the two sect forces bet on the outcome of this disciple recruitment, seemingly agreeing that the winner will get the minor realm."

"Of course, all of this is just hearsay, Brother Chen, you shouldn't take it for the absolute truth,"

Shi Wwei concluded, showing a hint of uncertainty himself.

Atop Sky-reaching Peak, a few more formidable individuals had joined those in the two palaces.

"Time is up, let's get started."

Urged the long-bearded old man from Heavenly Jade Sect.

"What's the hurry."

Elder Wei coldly retorted without a care.

"What's the matter? Is Black Demon Valley scared of losing, reluctant to hand Stone Cloud Realm over to us?"

Prodded the blue-garbed beauty from the Cui Clan with a smiling sneer.

"Haha, as if your Heavenly Jade Sect has already won!"

Laughed a black-robed elder from Black Demon Valley, emanating an astonishing aura.

"Remember, Heavenly Jade Sect, if you lose, you'll have to cede half the mining rights of the Ice Cold Stone Vein to us."

Someone asserted.

Indeed, between Black Demon Valley and Heavenly Jade Sect, there was a stake centered around Stone Cloud Realm.

If Black Demon Valley lost, they would hand over Stone Cloud Realm to Heavenly Jade Sect.

If Heavenly Jade Sect lost, since Stone Cloud Realm had been discovered by Black Demon Valley first, they could no longer contest for the minor realm and would also need to give up half the mining rights of the Ice Cold Stone Vein to Black Demon Valley.

...

"The second trial starts now!"

At the summit of Sky-reaching Peak, suddenly a resounding and authoritative voice echoed, deafeningly loud.

"I wonder what the contents of the trial will be?"

The multitude assembled at the base of Sky-reaching Peak began to discuss, as the second trial was critical to their chance of joining the three-and-a-half-star force!

At that moment.

Humming with energy!

Above Sky-reaching Peak, a massive Array power rippled, and a dense tapestry of runes twisted and surged.

Heaven and Earth Primordial Qi gathered frantically, and after ten breaths, spatial power fluctuated from within!

The next moment.

Swoosh!

A small spatial vortex slowly formed at the center of the Array, resembling a gaping black maw that slowly opened, exuding a strange spatial aura.

"For the second trial, you will be sent to a minor otherworldly realm to slaughter, and you must accumulate one hundred Slaughter Points within a month to pass the second trial."

Elder of Black Demon Valley announced the rules for the second round of the assessment.

"An otherworldly hunt!"

"I like this, I wonder which minor realm of an alien race it will be!"

Many geniuses expressed their thoughts.

The Great Yu Realm is incredibly powerful, ruling over many minor realms, some of which are enslaved.

Certain mighty three-star families also have slave realms, where they would hunt the creatures of other races during some events.

The realm passage that the two sects have now opened leads to one such enslaved realm, where all creatures within are their prey!

Some creatures in slave realms know they are enslaved and would resist, but the result is often tragic.

While some creatures in the slave realms are completely unaware of this fact.

Moreover, 'alien race' is a general term for all non-human races.

"Here are the specific rules."

An elder of the Heavenly Jade Sect waved his hand, and a mist of white light slowly condensed into lines of text in the air.

The first is the rule for Slaughter Points that everyone is most concerned about.

"Killing a peak Middle Stage Guiyuan Realm cultivator only earns two Slaughter Points!"

"Killing a Late Guiyuan Realm cultivator earns ten Slaughter Points!"

"Killing a Late Stage Guiyuan Realm Peak cultivator earns twenty Slaughter Points!"

"Killing a Half-step Sky Sea cultivator earns fifty Slaughter Points!"

"Killing a Sky Sea Realm cultivator earns two hundred Slaughter Points!"

The elder of the Heavenly Jade Sect announced the rules.

"Only ten Slaughter Points for killing a Late Guiyuan Realm cultivator? It means I need to kill ten Late Guiyuan Realm aliens to pass the assessment!"

"That's too difficult!"

The geniuses who were initially satisfied or even happy were now stunned.

The difficulty of this second round of the assessment is rather high!

There were also some who felt the Slaughter Points allocation was unreasonable, believing the points for killing Sky Sea Realm were too high, while too low for killing peak Middle Stage Guiyuan Realm cultivators.

However, these rules were decided upon by the higher-ups of both major sects, and they would not change just because some of the participants opposed them.

In reality, the set of rules does not affect fairness.

For those who only just reached the fiftieth step of the Heavenly Ascension Ladder, or those who aren't high up the ladder, it's simply impossible for them to slay Half-step Sky Sea or Sky Sea Realm cultivators; they must dutifully hunt Late Guiyuan Realm creatures.

If these geniuses hunt peak Middle Stage Guiyuan Realm creatures, they would appear incompetent, hence the low Slaughter Points set for them.

For talented cultivators with high cultivation level and strength, like You Lie, killing ten Late Guiyuan Realm aliens is a breeze, and there's no need to worry about the Slaughter Points settings.

Overall, if the goal is merely to pass the assessment, this set of rules does not impact fairness.

"Hehe, too easy."

Cui Yan'er chuckled lightly, finding the second round of the assessment somewhat uninteresting.

Just casually killing a few weaklings would be enough to pass the assessment, isn't that easy?

"Another point, this time Black Demon Valley and Heavenly Jade Sect will also establish a 'Slaughter Points Leaderboard', with higher ranks earning additional rewards upon entering the sect!"

The bearded elder said with a smile.

"A leaderboard for Slaughter Points?"

"It looks like the two major sect powers are going to use this leaderboard to decide the winner."

Many speculated the reason the Slaughter Points Leaderboard was established.

Most people were already aware that the two major sects had placed a "huge bet" on this disciple recruitment process.

"Oh? Now that sounds interesting!"

Excitement sparkled in You Lie's eyes.

Upon hearing this, the rest of the powerful top-genius cultivators present suddenly became enthusiastic.

With the Slaughter Points Leaderboard, there was competition, and with no upper limit, it was even more motivating!

"Let me state another rule: those who passed the first round above eighty steps must accumulate five hundred Slaughter Points in the second round to become Inner Sect Disciples!"

This rule targeted only the geniuses who surpassed eighty steps in the first round.

"Five times more than the average person?"

Chen Yu pondered.

Calculating it, the difficulty seemed to be quite high.

This was another strategy by the sects, forcing top geniuses to hunt down more powerful alien creatures, as this was related to the stakes between the two major sect powers.

Overall, the bet placed by the two major sects would mainly be decided by two factors.

The first: the Slaughter Points of top geniuses.

Only those powerful top geniuses could slaughter extensively, accumulating more Slaughter Points.

Those who barely passed the first round should simply focus on achieving the target of one hundred Slaughter Points.

The second: the number of participants.

The side with more participants still held a slight advantage.

"Alright, all of you enter now!"

The elder of the Black Demon Valley shouted loudly.

Whoosh—

Countless figures surged forth, heading for the "Stone Cloud Realm".

Chen Yu was among them.

"Chen Yu, while the Stone Cloud Realm is just a minor realm, it also contains some special treasures. It's said there's a treasure called 'Earth Primordial Crystal' inside, which can aid cultivators in breaking through to the Sky Sea Realm."

The voice of the Sharp-nosed Elder Liao Sifeng suddenly echoed in Chen Yu's mind.

"There's such a treasure?"

Chen Yu felt inwardly pleased, as he wasn't far from reaching the Sky Sea Realm himself.

As for why this information was not announced by the elders and was instead secretly told to him by the Sharp-nosed Elder, it was probably because the two major sects did not want too many people to know.

After all, the ownership of the Stone Cloud Realm had not yet been decided, and neither sect wanted disciples from the other to sweep away all the treasures within.