

Genius 1611

Chapter 1611 - Overestimating Oneself!

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Qin Fang is in such a position now; being invited to become a judge for this sword tournament means enjoying the highest level of privilege.

While others are still lining up at the foot of the mountain, he is leading Liu Xianhe majestically up the mountain through the main gate, and the Fu Family guards around do not dare to provoke him.

Liu Xianhe is quite excited this time as well. In past sword tournaments, he didn't have the qualification to come up here. Even if he was lucky enough to come over and watch the ceremony, he could only queue up there with everyone else.

But unlike this time, amid the envious and jealous gazes of so many people, he marched up the mountain through the main gate in a grand manner.

Although his appearance seemed no different from Qin Fang's lackey, even so, it was enough to make him very thrilled. In the past, he wanted to be the lackey of those big figures, but they wouldn't even look at him.

When they reached the mid-mountain position, they saw that a large cluster of buildings had been built here; some structures clearly had many years of history.

"This whole area is owned by the Fu Family, but it's usually closed and only opened on some important days of the Fu Family..."

Liu Xianhe did know some information, so he briefly introduced it to Qin Fang.

Similar to the Ryu Family, this entire area of Bagong Mountain is the Fu Family's domain. The buildings in the mountain also belong to the Fu Family. They were originally the Fu Family Ancestral Home, but as times changed, the Fu Family descendants found it hard to endure the simple life in the mountains and moved to live down the mountain.

As a result, this ancestral home was left vacant, and the Fu Family members would only come to reside here on some important days...

Of course, for an important day like the sword tournament, it is one of the most important events for the Fu Family, so they naturally have to use this ancestral home.

But they only use a portion of the Fu Family Ancestral Home's living quarters; places like ancestral halls are obviously not open for casual entry.

"Hello, Mr. Qin, please this way..."

There was a dedicated person to receive them, especially when Qin Fang handed over the invitation, someone immediately came to guide Qin Fang and his group to the living quarters.

The duration of this sword tournament is not very long but also not very short, lasting approximately four to five days, and the exact timing will depend on the exact combat situation.

However, the entire Bagong Mountain is generally closed, so entering and exiting the mountain is significantly restricted. It's impossible for Qin Fang to come and go freely from the mountain, so the Fu Family arranged for Qin Fang and these other judges to reside on the mountain.

Soon, Qin Fang and Liu Xianhe were led by a Fu Family disciple named Fu Chuan to an old mansion of considerable size.

This courtyard is somewhat similar to a Dragon Country siheyuan, surrounded by courtyards in the east, south, west, and north, with a small alley connecting them in the middle.

These small courtyards are quite serene, and in such a mountain, they add a touch of freshness and elegance. At least for someone like Qin Fang, who is used to the concrete jungle of the city, seeing such an environment was very satisfying.

"This courtyard is specifically for hosting the judges. Currently, the other three courtyards already have residents, only the west wing is vacant, so Mr. Qin, you will have to make do..."

Fu Chuan was very courteous. Although there were four courtyards, three of them already had people living in them, and only the west wing was vacant, which naturally was allocated to Qin Fang.

"Then the west wing it is..."

Qin Fang didn't care much about it, as it was just a place to stay.

Compared to those guests who came to watch and could only stay in the main courtyard, with many rooms having bunk beds, he and Liu Xianhe each having an entire courtyard was already quite a high privilege. What could he possibly complain about?

"Mr. Qin, due to limited conditions in the mountains, you both should avoid going out at night, or you might get lost, which would be quite troublesome..."

Fu Chuan couldn't help but remind them before leaving.

The conditions on the mountain are indeed not good, and despite the renovations by the Fu Family, they remain rather simple. Even electricity is only supplied selectively, stopping at 9 PM.

Ding Chen didn't mind much, and he didn't have many issues either; practicing at night is no big deal, and time would pass swiftly.

Liu Xianhe had no issues either. The Ryu Family also lived in the mountains, just with conditions slightly better than the Fu Family's. He had long since gotten used to it, and there was nothing he couldn't adapt to.

In fact, if he were made to squeeze into a public dorm with others, he would be quite uncomfortable.

Qin Fang and Liu Xianhe settled down here temporarily, just waiting for the sword tournament to begin...

Besides three rooms, the west wing has a small courtyard. It is not very small in size, and combined with the other three courtyards, this large courtyard was even more extensive.

This is meant to accommodate the judges of this sword tournament. It is said there is another similar large courtyard, meaning that there are about seven or eight judges this time.

This number is not considered a lot, but it is definitely not a few either. At least these seven or eight people can definitely be considered big figures with status.

Calculating again and again, only Qin Fang seemed like an obscure little figure.

Qin Fang didn't really care about this. In this martial world, whoever has the bigger fists holds more sway. As for those other superficial titles, they have no real significance.

Perhaps today you are a high-ranking figure, and tomorrow you might become a pitiful wretch despised by others. Qin Fang had seen too many such scenarios.

The strong are revered; this is the unchanging rule in this martial world!

Qin Fang and Liu Xianhe stayed here as tomorrow was the day for the Emaki Tournament. Today was mainly the Fu Family and Cui Family conducting some sacrificial activities, which Qin and the others could go watch. Of course, they could also tour the mountain to enjoy the scenery...

Of course, some explicitly forbidden areas are better not to visit. Otherwise, regardless of who you are, the Fu Family and the Cui Family will not show much mercy...

Bagong Mountain is merely a small mountain. It is said to be where Master of Yijian, Fu Cailin, lived in seclusion in his later years. Qin Fang didn't need to verify this, but the mountain indeed had nothing much to see. Qin Fang just wandered around briefly and immediately returned to the courtyard intending to rest.

"Who are you? This is not a place for you..."

Just as Qin Fang and Liu Xianhe came back from outside, they ran into a few people, and among them, an old man said unhappily.

"We are staying here, why can't we come?"

Usually, Qin Fang wouldn't care too much about an elder saying a word or two, but this old man's arrogance was too overbearing, posing as if he was the ultimate ruler while speaking to Qin Fang. This made Qin a bit displeased, and so he didn't find it necessary to show any courtesy.

"Uh..."

The old man was slightly stunned, looking at Qin Fang and Liu Xianhe with a rather strange expression. Meanwhile, Qin Fang led Liu Xianhe towards their courtyard.

"Hold on! My master is speaking to you, don't you have any manners?"

The old man hadn't reacted yet when two young men in their twenties or thirties, following behind him, immediately discontented blocked Qin Fang on both sides, speaking arrogantly.

"Idiot... Move aside!"

At first Qin Fang only felt the old man was overly arrogant, which annoyed him. However, now these two were just plain idiots, and Qin Fang's tone couldn't possibly be pleasant.

"How dare you insult us?"

The two young men had faces full of surprise, obviously not believing that this young man, smaller than themselves, dared to insult them.

"Courting death..."

Immediately, the two young men were furious and almost without hesitation took action. Each reached out a claw towards Qin Fang's shoulders.

Their movement seemed intended to clamp Qin Fang's shoulders to capture him.

Both of them were quite strong, already stepping into the master level. Their moves were swift; even Liu Xianhe felt immense pressure, his face turning green.

Yet Qin Fang remained unaffected, seemingly not taking the two seriously at all, allowing them to attack.

"Stop..."

The old man had been watching Qin Fang all along. Seeing his seemingly foolish composure, the old man initially felt pleased but suddenly recalled something and tried to halt his two disciples.

Unfortunately, his shout was too late.

Ah~~Ah~~

Almost at the moment he spoke, his two disciples' claws were about to reach Qin Fang's shoulders, but at this point, two screams rang at the same time.

And it was this moment when everyone present noticed that, at some unknown time, Qin Fang had acted. Those two hands initially rapidly clawing towards Qin Fang's shoulders were now caught in Qin Fang's hands...

To be precise, both hands now hung limply, the angle rather awkward, and the faces of the two young men were twisted with immense pain, with large beads of sweat dripping continuously.

Such a turn of events was beyond many people's expectations, especially the three opposing them, who were utterly stunned.

In contrast, it was much easier for Qin Fang's side to accept.

Qin Fang himself was, after all, the involved party, being clear about their strength and his own. If he couldn't even handle these two buffoons, he really wouldn't survive in the martial world anymore.

Chapter 1612 - No Friendship Without a Fight

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Liu Xianhe obviously had his eyes opened as well. Although these two people were also master-level experts, they were only at the early stage of that level. Even someone like Jin Zhengming, who was a late-stage master-level expert, wasn't he also knocked down by Qin Fang with a single kick?

Ever since Qin Fang came to Korea, Liu Xianhe had seen him deal with many masters. First, he took down master-level Jin Zhengxi, then defeated late-stage master-level Jin Zhengming, and even made the more powerful Cui Zheming of the Cui Family wary and not dare to take action...

Although Liu Xianhe still couldn't figure out Qin Fang's true strength, he knew that essentially any expert below the late-stage master level was not in Qin Fang's eyes at all.

As for the few people on the other side, except for the old man whose strength was unknown, these two young men were really no match for Qin Fang.

The faces of these two young men turned green at this moment. They really didn't expect that as honorable master-level experts, the two of them attacking one person didn't manage to harm even a hair, and instead, their wrists got broken...

The worst part was that they hadn't even seen clearly how Qin Fang made his move... They just felt a slight blur in front of their eyes, a pain in their wrists, and then ended up in such a state.

Yet Qin Fang remained quite calm, casually releasing the two unlucky guys as if he were throwing out garbage, then his gaze turned towards the old man.

"Old fellow, don't say I don't respect the old and cherish the young. You better take these two wastes back and train them slowly. It's best to teach them what humility and low-profile mean!"

Qin Fang had no good feelings towards this arrogant old man, who relied on his age to act superior, something that made people speechless.

As the saying goes, what kind of teacher brings out what kind of apprentice. This old man was domineering, and so were his disciples, learning from him quite well.

Otherwise, they wouldn't make things difficult for Qin Fang over such a trivial matter.

The old man looked at his two disciples with broken wrists, his face not looking very good. Upon hearing Qin Fang's rather unpleasant words, his face turned bluish-purple.

Yet he couldn't flare up, thinking carefully about the cause of the incident, it seemed Qin Fang didn't really do anything wrong. Instead, it was their master-disciple who went too far, insisting on making trouble for Qin Fang, which led to Qin Fang's counteraction.

"Young friend, my master-disciple indeed went too far just now, please forgive us..."

After Qin Fang scolded him, the old man instead calmed down. After a brief silence, he actually clasped his fists towards Qin Fang, apologizing sincerely.

"Uh..."

This time, it was Qin Fang who appeared a bit dumbfounded.

He was almost pointing at the man's nose and cursing, yet the old man not only didn't get furious but apologized instead. And from his expression, it didn't seem fake. Qin Fang felt extremely strange.

"Forget it, I guess we are no strangers after a fight! I also spoke a bit too harshly earlier, please forgive me, elder..."

Seeing that the other party wasn't pretending, Qin Fang didn't bother to argue any further, as that would only make him appear petty.

However, this matter wasn't Qin Fang's fault, but since the other party was an elder in the martial world, Qin Fang maintained the grace he should have and courteously expressed his apologies.

"Hehe, no strangers after a fight, no strangers after a fight... I am Fang Zonglin from the Tian Nan Sect of Little Island."

Seeing Qin Fang being so polite, the old man's face improved significantly. At least it was clear from this point that Qin Fang was quite reasonable and not someone who wouldn't let things go.

The old man's mood brightened, and his gaze towards Qin Fang improved a lot. He even clasped his fists and introduced himself to Qin Fang voluntarily.

"From Little Island?"

Qin Fang was slightly startled, with a hint of a smile at the corner of his mouth.

He certainly wouldn't be unfamiliar with Little Island. It was of the same bloodline after all. Although it hasn't returned yet, the connection remains unbreakable.

In fact, when Qin Fang was in Ninghai, he had received a request from Ning Yumo to protect some important political figures from Little Island for a period.

But besides that, Qin Fang seemed to have less interaction with people from Little Island. Though they belong to the same country, the gap between them was quite significant.

Qin Fang had been to some areas in Dragon Country, even the Hong Kong and Macau regions, but it seemed the only place he hadn't set foot in was this Little Island.

In the past, Qin Fang said he would go visit when he had the chance, but he never found the opportunity. He never expected to meet his fellow countrymen from Little Island here, although it was in such a manner.

"I've heard so much about you..."

Though part of the Dragon Country's territory, and despite the distance, it doesn't change the fact that they are all Dragon Country people. Little Island may not be very large, but it also has a martial world and various martial sects, and among them, there are some with quite a long history...

For example, the Tian Nan Sect of this old man is one of the more famous sects on Little Island. Its heritage may not compare to major sects like Shaolin or the Tang Sect in the inland, but it's comparable to the Tianchi Sect, with quite solid heritage and strength.

This point is evident when you look at the strength of the three people from the Tian Nan Sect in front of us—one old master and two young ones—all at the master-level. Especially the old master, though not at the grandmaster-level tier, he has already reached the peak of the master level, on par with Qin Fang's mentor, Cai Pingyuan.

However, compared to a family background like Master Cai Pingyuan's, the Tian Nan Sect is obviously a behemoth, thus achieving even higher accomplishments.

Still, the Fu Family and the Cui Family have organized a very impressive sword tournament, inviting highly prestigious figures from around the area to act as judges.

And the old Master Fang before us—strong in martial prowess, high in identity and status, and with substantial background—is perfectly suited to be a judge for this sword tournament.

"I am Qin Fang, just an insignificant nobody..."

Since the other party already introduced their name and identity, Qin Fang naturally couldn't hold back and simply introduced himself.

However, compared to the renowned Master Fang from a major sect, Qin Fang seemed somewhat disadvantaged. He wanted to say he was an inheritor of the Xingyi Fist, but there were too many Xingyi

Fist sects in the Dragon Country, and the other party might not recognize it, so it was better to leave it unsaid.

Upon hearing Qin Fang's introduction, Fang Zonglin and the two others had somewhat peculiar expressions. Their first reaction was that Qin Fang was deliberately withholding information and not telling the truth, but seeing Qin Fang's helpless expression, it seemed not to be as they imagined.

Fang Zonglin himself was a bit better, being a senior with an extraordinary identity. His disciples were different, if not for being taught a lesson by Qin Fang, they would likely have shown mocking expressions.

Unfortunately, it was too late for regret now. If they dared to show even a hint of mockery, it would certainly be them losing face, not Qin Fang.

They belonged to a major sect and were considered outstanding among young experts, yet they couldn't handle someone of Qin Fang's obscure background. Instead, they were easily defeated, with their wrists broken. This didn't just lose face; it was a severe slap in their faces...

Thus, their faces didn't look great now. They thought their master would stand up for them. However, Fang Zonglin seemed to have a desire to befriend Qin Fang rather than seeking revenge, which naturally made them quite frustrated.

Now that the conversation was open, the resentment between both sides lessened a lot, no longer as tense as before. Only Fang Zonglin's two disciples remained quite troubled.

"Your disciples' hands..."

Seeing the troubled faces of the two, Qin Fang looked at their broken wrists and couldn't help but speak, hesitating whether he should mend them for them.

"They brought it upon themselves..."

Fang Zonglin, thinking Qin Fang was still holding a grudge over what happened earlier, was rather blunt in criticizing his disciples. His own face also turned slightly red.

He understood that this incident was due to his own rashness, and his disciples were merely bearing the consequences for it.

"I'll find someone to fix it for them later!"

Fang Zonglin didn't dwell on this topic, knowing that his two disciples merely had broken wrists and that he could find someone to fix their bones afterward.

Long experience makes perfect; martial artists are generally also the best in treating injuries. Acts like bone-setting are common skills among many martial arts experts, so Fang Zonglin wasn't very concerned about this.

"By the way, Younger Brother Qin, were you also invited by the Fu Family to act as a judge?"

Qin Fang's swift action earlier left Fang Zonglin's two disciples unable to see how Qin Fang made his move, and even Fang Zonglin himself hadn't seen it very clearly.

But his single move alone showed that Qin Fang's skill was far superior to his two disciples, and perhaps not much weaker than himself, an experienced master-level peak expert.

He's already aged, and although he has a strong Internal Strength, his physical stamina is obviously not as abundant as a young person's. If he were to fight Qin Fang, he feared the odds of him losing would be greater.

Originally, Fang Zonglin thought Qin Fang was a martial artist who came to observe the ceremony and had suddenly intruded into their courtyard, which naturally displeased him. Judges and spectators are two entirely different groups with vastly different treatments.

If anyone could intrude into their courtyard, the judges would surely not be happy and it would affect their rest.

But now seeing Qin Fang's abilities, easily subduing his two disciples who were at early-stage master level, he truly believed Qin Fang resided there, having such skill was more than adequate to serve as a judge...

Chapter 1613 - Conversations Over Wine

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"I should probably set their bones back in place first..."

Qin Fang didn't rush to answer Fang Zonglin's question, instead, he looked at the wrists of those two unlucky kids and said calmly.

"Younger Brother Qin, I've already said, they brought this upon themselves. Let them ache for a while to learn a lesson, no need to worry about it..."

Fang Zonglin clearly didn't understand the implied meaning in Qin Fang's words and replied bluntly. Even though his apprentices suffered a miserable defeat, losing face but not the spirit, he was holding up his dignity.

The faces of those two unlucky kids turned quite sour upon hearing their master Fang Zonglin's words. Even though they hoped Qin Fang would help set their bones, since Master Fang Zonglin said so, they had no choice but to endure the pain.

"Better not do that! I have a unique technique that may not be effective if someone else tries. Even if they were lucky enough to set the bone, it would at least hurt for a month before slowly getting better... It wouldn't be fully recovered for three to five months!"

But Qin Fang smiled and explained briefly to Fang Zonglin and his apprentices, immediately scaring the two unlucky kids, who looked at Qin Fang with even more fear.

Qin Fang was not trying to intimidate them. These two acted arrogantly, really irritating Qin Fang, so he applied a little trick when making a move.

If their grudges weren't resolved and they were still opponents, these two unfortunate kids would indeed be in big trouble...

Qin Fang spoke lightly, but the reality was far more serious than he let on.

Having the bones put back is undoubtedly the best. Even if it hurts for three to five months, recovery is possible. But if the bones aren't set properly, these two unlucky kids might end up disabled.

Qin Fang was precise in his action. Their wrists were dislocated but weren't immediately problematic. However, over three to four hours could render the hand useless. Even if it was reattached, it would essentially be disabled, lacking the strength to even lift a weight...

"Is it that serious?"

Fang Zonglin was startled by Qin Fang's words. He originally planned to reset the bones himself once they returned, having decades of experience in the martial world, not inferior to any bone-setting master.

Yet he also knew that some experts had special secret techniques, enabling them to manipulate mischief during actions. If one recklessly attempted to reset the bones without understanding or noticing, accidents could certainly happen... Ending up with a few disabled individuals wouldn't be surprising!

Qin Fang nodded, not joking but speaking the truth. These two unfortunate kids were nearly misled by their master.

However, Qin Fang didn't have much time to chat idly with Fang Zonglin. He directly grabbed the wrists of the two unlucky kids, lightly pinched, twisted, then pulled and clicked them into place!

A continuous sound of bones cracking was heard as Fang Zonglin's two apprentices turned pale, then green, followed by red and purple...

It wasn't until Qin Fang let out a light breath and declared "Mission accomplished" that the two released a long sigh, gently rotating their wrists. Although there remained a slight pain, the previous intense pain had disappeared, and their wrists regained their former agility.

"Thank you, thank you..."

Regardless of whether Qin Fang was truthful or not, at least his bone-setting technique was undeniably top-notch. Although the process involved considerable pain, there was now no more problem.

The injuries of the two hapless kids were caused by Qin Fang, yet he restored their bones, and now they had to thank him politely, feeling quite wronged... Their eyes occasionally glanced towards their unreliable master, Fang Zonglin.

"Younger Brother Qin, it seems we got to know each other through a fight. I have some good wine back home; how about we go have a few drinks?"

Anyway, their unprincipled master seemed unconcerned about their reaction, instead enthusiastically extending an invitation to Qin Fang.

"When in Rome..."

Initially, Qin Fang intended to refuse, but after a moment of hesitation, he had some questions on his mind. He needed someone to clarify things, and Fang Zonglin seemed like a fitting choice, so he nodded in agreement.

"Little Four, go find someone from the Fu Family to prepare some appetizers... Little Three, go fetch my wine jars; I intend to have a good drink with Younger Brother Qin!"

Seeing Qin Fang nodding in agreement, Fang Zonglin was very pleased and immediately assigned two disciples to handle some tasks while he enthusiastically invited Qin Fang and Liu Xianhe into his courtyard.

Of course, Qin Fang was the main guest he invited, and Liu Xianhe was obviously just a follower whom Fang Zonglin didn't really mind, inviting him along merely as an afterthought.

Judges like Qin Fang and Fang Zonglin, who were invited by the Fu Family, naturally enjoyed the highest level of treatment, not only with the best accommodations but also with the finest food.

The cuisine in Korea is indeed quite monotonous, with the so-called delicacies being nothing more than some kimchi. Though it's a bit hard to swallow as a main dish, it's quite alright as a simple appetizer with drinks.

Moreover, the Fu Family was aware that the judges invited this time were from various neighboring countries and regions. To cater to the dietary preferences of these judges, they specially hired some chefs to assist, trying their best to accommodate everyone's tastes, though it was impossible to satisfy everyone completely.

Actually, the Martial World in Asia is primarily centered around East Asia, including Dragon Country, Japan, Korea, and a few small countries in Southeast Asia.

Indian yoga, while also quite impressive with some extremely formidable experts, tends to remain isolated and has little contact with the martial artists from East Asian countries, making it impossible for them to integrate. Naturally, the Yijian Tournament wouldn't invite them.

Fang Zonglin's courtyard was right beside the one where Qin Fang was staying, separated only by a wall.

Food and drinks were quickly served. The liquor was aged wine that Fang Zonglin had brought from Little Island, said to be a good wine stored by the Tian Nan Sect for many years.

As for the appetizers, they were basically negligible. Qin Fang and Fang Zonglin just tasted them briefly and then lost interest, finding the taste of the kimchi unbearable.

Fortunately, neither of them cared much about this, so they sat down, drinking and chatting casually.

"Old Fang, you've participated in several Yijian Tournaments, right? You must be quite familiar with them. I want to ask about this Yi Sword Stone..."

After exchanging a few words with Fang Zonglin, Qin Fang couldn't help but express his doubts.

The Yijian Tournament is held once every three years, a frequency not particularly high nor low. Fang Zonglin had already participated in three Yijian Tournaments, spanning about ten years in total, making him a relatively seasoned judge, knowing far more than Qin Fang, who was a newcomer.

The reason Qin Fang agreed to attend the Yijian Tournament was his interest in the Yi Sword Stone, as well as the secret location continuously contested by the Fu and Cui families.

However, regarding that secret location, Qin Fang didn't need to consider it much. The Fu and Cui families certainly wouldn't allow anyone to enter, so Qin Fang had to settle for second best and look into the matter of the Yi Sword Stone.

As a seasoned judge, Fang Zonglin had already acquired several Yi Sword Stones, yet he still came to the Yijian Tournament, indicating that these stones had some value to him.

"The Yi Sword Stone... how should I put it?"

Fang Zonglin took a sip of wine, pondered for a moment, and then said quietly, "The effect of this thing is somewhat exaggerated, but you can't completely rule out that it might indeed have some minor uses..."

"Please elaborate..."

Qin Fang nodded gently and spoke softly.

"The Yi Sword Stone is a type of stone produced from a secret place of the Fu Family. It's said that in the past, Master of Yijian, Fu Cailin, practiced swordplay at that secret site, leaving sword moves and marks on these stones, which led to its creation..."

Qin Fang had heard of this legend before. The truth was unclear, so he could only continue listening to Fang Zonglin.

"However, these legends may not be completely baseless. At least the Yi Sword Stone I acquired once helped a predecessor from our sect advance beyond the Grandmaster-level Tier..."

"Although I still doubt if it was truly because of its function, that predecessor firmly believed it was, which is why I attend the Yijian Tournament each time as a judge, hoping for another Yi Sword Stone as well..."

Clearly, even Fang Zonglin didn't fully believe in the mystical effects of the Yi Sword Stone. Despite the Tianshan Sect predecessor's firm belief, it was merely his personal conviction. Whether it was indeed due to the stone, or just a coincidence, remains unknown.

"Younger Brother Qin, if you're here for the Yi Sword Stone, I think you shouldn't get your hopes up too high. Each tournament sees many acquiring a Yi Sword Stone, yet almost none manage a breakthrough using it. Even if one or two do, it might just be by sheer chance!"

Though a bit arrogant, the elderly Fang Zonglin proved to be a reliable companion, unable to resist dampening Qin Fang's enthusiasm upon seeing his apparent interest in the Yi Sword Stone.

Though he hadn't fully gauged Qin Fang's strength, he knew that Qin Fang hadn't reached the Grandmaster level yet and seemed somewhat anxious, which prompted his counsel.

Chapter 1614 - Shock You to Death!

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"Elder Fang, you've misunderstood. I didn't intend to use this Yi Sword Stone to break through. I'm just curious about its effects..."

Seeing Fang Zonglin's comforting words, Qin Fang's expression was rather peculiar, but he knew that Fang Zonglin meant well, so he simply explained a bit.

He has only recently stepped into the Grandmaster level. Although his strength has directly advanced to the Grandmaster Level Peak, in the short term, he shouldn't expect another breakthrough.

Just like before, stepping into the Grandmaster level is the beginning of an accumulation process.

When others enter the Grandmaster level, they start at the Grandmaster Level Early Stage. To break through to the Grandmaster level requires a very long accumulation process.

Qin Fang merely simplified the entire process. His starting point was already at the Grandmaster Level Peak, and though the distance to Grandmaster is just a thin membrane, for the present Qin Fang, this membrane is unbreakable.

"I hope I'm mistaken..."

Fang Zonglin sighed softly, looking at Qin Fang in front of him with envy, jealousy, and a bit of resentment.

This is truly a case of comparing oneself to others leading to frustration!

Fang Zonglin can be considered a well-known figure in the martial world. Otherwise, he wouldn't have been invited by the Fu Family to judge at this Sword Competition, with reputation being one aspect, but primarily his strength being enough to command respect from the crowd.

However, looking at Qin Fang in front of him, who was also invited to judge, his strength wasn't much different from Fang Zonglin's, qualifying him for this position. But his age... made Fang Zonglin feel quite helpless.

Qin Fang is only around twenty years old now, while Fang Zonglin reached the Grandmaster Level Peak after fifty. The gap between him and Qin Fang is extraordinarily wide.

Fang Zonglin was once considered a genius disciple in the Tian Nan Sect, yet when compared to Qin Fang, he couldn't even count as a fraction. Even the most outstanding genius disciples of the Tian Nan Sect pale significantly in comparison to Qin Fang.

"Perhaps only those ancient sects that have been passed down through the ages can teach such disciples..."

Though Qin Fang considered himself a nobody and kept his background and origins secret, Fang Zonglin felt Qin Fang must come from an ancient inland sect.

It's not likely to be the Shaolin Temple, so he thought Qin Fang might be from Kunlun, the Tang Sect, or any of those ancient sects... It seemed only such sects could cultivate such outstanding disciples.

Fang Zonglin, being an elder, had much more reliable judgment than most. For a young disciple as outstanding as Qin Fang, these ancient sects were the only ones capable of nurturing such talent. After all, only these great sects have such substantial resources for cultivation.

Exceptional talent, without receiving the best training or resources, might still become a first-class master, but it's difficult to become truly top-notch.

Take Song Qingshan for example... If he hadn't joined a small sect like the Tianying Sect but instead entered a prominent sect like Kunlun or Qingcheng, even if he hadn't reached the Grandmaster level by now, he would certainly be a Master Level Late Stage or even Peak master.

Even if he joined a sect like Heavenly Pool Sect, his achievements would be much stronger than they are now... Song Qingshan's talent is undoubtedly top-notch, but unfortunately, his background is lacking.

If not for accidentally encountering Qin Fang and obtaining a drop of the Peerless Elixir Golden Dragon Saliva, even if he broke through to the Grandmaster level, he'd at most be at the Mid-Master Level. How could he have reached his current Master Level Late Stage cultivation?

Let's consider those disciples from large sects, like that meat-drinking Monk Wukong residing in Ninghai... This one from the Inner Temple of Shaolin Temple has outstanding strength and cultivation.

Back then, when Qin Fang had yet to break through to the Grandmaster level, he could already fiercely battle masters above the Mid-Master Level, yet he had no confidence in defeating Monk Wukong.

Even now, although Qin Fang has stepped into the Grandmaster Level Peak, recalling the calm and composed Monk Wukong, Qin Fang still senses he doesn't have a guaranteed chance of victory.

Monk Wukong clearly hasn't stepped into the Grandmaster level yet, but his cultivation is absolutely among the finest in the Grandmaster level. He may not be weaker than Qin Fang and might even be stronger.

These, however, are merely side discussions...

After finishing this drink, Qin Fang and Fang Zonglin established a friendship.

Fang Zonglin directly addressed Qin Fang as Younger Brother Qin, and his disciples had to call Qin Fang "Martial Uncle," which left those two unfortunate kids rather frustrated.

Both of these individuals were significantly older than Qin Fang, with the younger one nearing thirty, making him about half again as old as Qin Fang. The older one was well into his thirties, nearly twice Qin Fang's age...

But now they have to call Qin Fang "Martial Uncle" for no reason, which makes them feel quite depressed... However, in the Martial World, strength is what determines your position, and Qin Fang's strength is more than enough for them to call him Martial Uncle... Although they felt quite awkward inside, under the pressure of their master, Fang Zonglin, the two of them obediently bowed and called Qin Fang "Martial Uncle!"

At first, Qin Fang also felt quite uncomfortable and refused to accept it no matter what...

But he couldn't outmatch the more stubborn Fang Zonglin, so he had no choice but to reluctantly agree.

"Alas, it's the first time we meet, and Martial Uncle doesn't have anything good to give you, so here are two pills, you can each take one..."

Suddenly gaining two Martial Uncle-level disciples, Qin Fang felt awkward but also reluctantly accepted it... Considering Qin Fang hadn't taken any disciples yet, these two nephews were Qin Fang's only juniors. He couldn't be too stingy, so he took two Blood Replenishing Pills from the Props Box as a gift.

"Hiss~~"

Qin Fang nonchalantly gave away two Blood Replenishing Pills, after all, he still had hundreds of them in the Props Box, so he didn't care at all.

But others didn't see it that way, leaving everyone around stunned, whether it was Fang Zonglin, his two disciples, or Liu Xianhe himself, almost all were dumbfounded in an instant.

Tian Nan Sect is also considered a Great Sect, but due to its weaker foundation compared to those inland sects, and the limited space on the Little Island, even though it's close to the boundless sea, its family assets are still quite weak, not even necessarily as good as the Tianchi Sect.

Elixirs, such treasures, are not nonexistent in Tian Nan Sect, but they are quite scarce.

Unless one has made significant contributions to the sect or holds a prominent, illustrious position at the Elder level, perhaps they could manage to have an elixir on hand, but other people shouldn't even think about it.

Fang Zonglin's status in Tian Nan Sect is not considered low; apart from the Sect Master and the three Elders, he is the fifth-ranked powerful Elder.

Unfortunately... he never possessed any life-saving elixirs.

Back then, he helped an Elder step into the Grandmaster Level using the Yi Sword Stone, making great contributions to the sect, and was originally supposed to receive an elixir.

But at that time, Tian Nan Sect's elixirs happened to be exhausted, and new elixirs weren't refined yet, so he couldn't get one. Later, the matter passed, and no one wanted to bring it up again. Although the elixirs were refined, they were confiscated by the Sect Master, who never mentioned the original matter, which made Fang Zonglin extremely depressed.

That was the closest Fang Zonglin ever got to having an elixir... yet he missed it for no reason.

This is because Fang Zonglin hasn't been injured over the years, so he didn't need elixirs, therefore, he didn't fight for them... And since the Tian Nan Sect Master never awarded the elixirs to the disciples, Fang Zonglin barely managed to accept it.

But unexpectedly, the elixirs he longed for but couldn't get, Qin Fang handed out like they were cabbages, giving away two at once, and doing so nonchalantly. This huge disparity was overwhelming even for an old senior like him, deeply moving him.

Liu Xianhe, no need to mention, when Qin Fang first visited, he gifted a Blood Replenishing Pill, making their entire family so excited they couldn't sleep.

Now seeing Qin Fang take out two at a time and give them away like rotten cabbages, while he felt envy, jealousy, and hatred, his heart was also bleeding.

He secretly regretted not thinking of this strategy, if he had selected talented and gifted clansmen from the family to acknowledge Qin Fang as their master, they would certainly obtain such treasured elixirs.

No doubt, the most excited and thrilled were Fang Zonglin's two disciples. Initially, addressing Qin Fang, who was much younger than them, as "Martial Uncle" was something that made them feel quite embarrassed.

But unexpectedly, calling him Martial Uncle wasn't for nothing. Even their master didn't have these elixirs, yet this "Little Martial Uncle" gave out two at once, and each of them got one, just like randomly buying a lottery ticket and winning the first prize. It was too sudden.

"Thank you, Little Martial Uncle... Thank you, Little Martial Uncle!"

Seeing these two elixirs, how could the two disciples still care about Qin Fang's age? They practically wanted to worship Qin Fang as if he were their ancestor.

"Two ingrates..."

Seeing his two disciples originally unwilling, but as soon as Qin Fang took out the elixirs, they instantly turned into ingrates, almost wanting to kneel in front of Qin Fang and lick his dirty feet, even Fang Zonglin, their master, couldn't help but feel a bit envious...

But there's nothing to be done, elixirs have always been treasures of major sects, and even those with deep backgrounds in major sects have these elixirs strictly regulated.

For example, the few major sects Qin Fang interacted with only Shangguan Tianling and Tang Huaiming seemed to have elixirs. This is because Shangguan Tianling's and Tang Huaiming's identities are special. One is an important figure in the Heavenly Pool Sect, and the other is the younger brother of a Tang Sect Elder and a descendant of the Tang Clan.

Others such as Tang Nan, Tang Xin, Tang Zhan, Song Qingshan, etc., although not lacking in strength or simple backgrounds, none have seen the shadow of an elixir because they simply aren't qualified to obtain them, so it's not surprising at all for Qin Fang not to see them...

Chapter 1615 - Sneak Attack!

...

"Younger Brother Qin... this is really too valuable! I can't accept it, they can't accept it... you better take it back quickly!"

Initially, I thought Fang Zonglin was quite arrogant and somewhat self-important, but after truly befriending him, he turned out to be a rather reliable person.

After a brief shock, Fang Zonglin also reacted and immediately snatched those two elixirs from his disciples' hands, intending to return them to Qin Fang.

Those two disciples could only helplessly watch the elixirs return to their master's hands, about to be given back to Qin Fang. They were anxious and reluctant but didn't dare say anything unnecessary.

"Senior Brother Fang, if you recognize me as your junior brother, then don't say such alienating words... these two elixirs, though precious, are my gifts to my nephews upon first meeting... if you return them to me, it would mean looking down on me, Qin Fang... I'll walk away right now!"

The more Fang Zonglin behaved this way, the more Qin Fang felt that this elder was a reliable person worth befriending. He had plenty of Blood Replenishing Pills, and if spending one or two could win people over, he didn't mind distributing some.

Of course, Qin Fang wasn't some nouveau riche or a fool who would throw things away mindlessly. Although he had quite a few Blood Replenishing Pills, they weren't just cabbage.

Moreover, rarity breeds value. Precisely because these elixirs are very scarce and hard to obtain, they appear extremely valuable. Having one is already an immense honor; if they suddenly became common like cabbages, how could they be so treasured?

"This..."

After hearing Qin Fang's words, Fang Zonglin hesitated for a moment, with his face showing some uncertainty. Mainly, Qin Fang didn't seem to be just talking casually, which made it rather difficult for him.

Looking at his two pitiful disciples, Fang Zonglin nodded helplessly, signaling his acceptance.

"Alright! We'll accept these two elixirs... hurry and thank your junior uncle!"

The elixirs were very precious, especially as there were two of them, so Fang Zonglin immediately urged his two disciples.

"Thank you, Junior Uncle, thank you, Junior Uncle..."

The two disciples naturally showed gratitude to Qin Fang eagerly, calling out more smoothly now, as if Qin Fang really were the Junior Uncle of the Tian Nan Sect.

Liu Xianhe at the side could only envy and resent, wishing his Ryu Family had such an opportunity, or they might not just get one elixir but even a few more.

Due to these elixirs, the relationship between Qin Fang and Fang Zonglin's master-disciple group suddenly became much closer, appearing so close that outsiders might think they were from the same sect.

Getting two elixirs, even though they fell into the hands of his two disciples, Fang Zonglin was still very happy, drinking freely.

Originally, he brought six jars of wine to share with his old friends, but having gotten along well with Qin Fang, in high spirits, the six jars were emptied in one night.

This banquet lasted until deep night, when all six jars were dry and even the pickles, so hard to swallow, were finished by Qin Fang and the others, before each person retired to their own courtyard, their own rooms to rest.

A night without words.

The next morning, Fang Zonglin's two disciples came early to greet Qin Fang.

"Good morning, Junior Uncle..."

The two approached Qin Fang eagerly, displaying an even more diligent demeanor than they did towards their master, Fang Zonglin.

"Master is already waiting for Junior Uncle in the front hall, planning to have breakfast together..."

Although they drank quite a lot, as martial artists, they didn't have hangovers like ordinary people. Not only did they rise early, but they were also quite refreshed, with no discomfort whatsoever.

Perhaps due to his age, Fang Zonglin even got up earlier than Qin Fang and was already waiting in the front hall to have breakfast together.

The front hall was actually a common living room, due to limited space, converted temporarily into a dining hall where people from four courtyards were dining.

Of course, they could also have meals delivered to their courtyards individually.

But after dining, they had to head to the competition for the Swordplay Tournament, so eating here was for time efficiency...

Qin Fang didn't mind this at all and, guided by Fang Zonglin's two disciples, his two nephews Chen Liang and Ling Fei, headed to the front hall.

"This way, Junior Uncle..."

Chen Liang and Ling Fei indeed had some talent for being lackeys; they opened the way ahead, while Qin Fang strolled slowly behind. Their sycophantic attitude surprised many already seated in the hall.

It's a pity these two "lackeys" don't seem to care about others' opinions at all, dutifully completing their tasks with extreme dedication.

As for what others think... these two couldn't care less, right?

"A bunch of fools, if you knew this young master gives out elixirs casually, you'd probably be dying to lick his dirty feet..."

Of course, they are only thinking this to themselves, considering there are quite a few prestigious martial arts veterans present, not much inferior to their master Fang Zonglin.

Such a reception was a first for Qin Fang, and under such public scrutiny, he felt slightly uncomfortable but didn't dwell on it too much.

Just this way of making an entrance seemed a bit too high-profile for Qin Fang, as many people were already present in the front hall, mostly here for the Sword Tournament, many of whom were prominent figures of substantial stature.

Unfortunately, among so many people, besides Fang Zonglin, he didn't recognize anyone else, including Liu Xianhe, as the levels he had interacted with were still too low.

Whoosh~~

At this moment, Qin Fang suddenly felt a gust of chilly wind and noticed a chopstick shooting toward him at an extremely high speed.

"Hmm?"

Qin Fang frowned slightly and didn't pay attention to the chopstick, but instead glanced at a nearby table.

At this table sat four people, an old man with two young men and a young woman. All four were quite powerful, with the old man being at the master level peak, while two of the young ones were at a master level.

From the force of the incoming chopstick, it seemed that the one who acted was the old man with the somber face. Although the other three also looked hostile towards Qin Fang, they clearly didn't possess such strength.

Snap~~

The chopstick flew very fast, just about to stab Qin Fang, but it suddenly seemed to be knocked down by something, making a crisp sound before being sent flying somewhere unknown.

"Everyone is a guest here, my apologies for the poor hospitality..."

Just then, someone walked in from the entrance of the front hall; it was the steward from the Fu Family who had initially sent the invitation to Qin Fang.

Seeing his calm demeanor, Qin Fang knew that it was him who had intercepted the chopstick.

Qin Fang was aware of this Steward Fu's capability, probably the strongest among those present, even stronger than himself and Fang Zonglin.

Although the chopstick attack was initiated first, Steward Fu could respond later and still intercept it, clearly indicating his prowess was above that of this inexplicably hostile old man, despite both being at the master level peak.

Having been sneak attacked without reason, although the opponent didn't succeed, Qin Fang still glanced at the old man, slightly displeased, but refrained from acting out. After all, Steward Fu had intervened, clearly not wanting Qin Fang and the old man to clash there.

Qin Fang was willing to give face to Steward Fu, so he ignored the old man and leisurely walked past him from the side.

"Humph..."

As Qin Fang walked by, he heard a very disgruntled snort from the old man, but he seemed wary of Steward Fu's strength and did not make a move.

"Younger Brother Qin, over here, have a seat..."

Chen Liang and Ling Fei guided Qin Fang to the table of their master, Fang Zonglin, who personally received him warmly, treating him as an equal, which made many present slightly moved.

Many knew Fang Zonglin's temper well, typically arrogant and domineering, yet here he was treating Qin Fang as an equal, a rather strange scenario where some even felt Fang Zonglin seemed to place himself beneath Qin Fang.

This left many more bewildered about Qin Fang's identity, yet try as they might, they couldn't figure out where Qin Fang might be from, as they had no impression of him at all.

"Brother, are you alright?"

After Qin Fang sat down, Fang Zonglin couldn't help but express his concern, shooting a fierce glance towards the old man who had acted against Qin Fang.

"Senior Brother Fang, who is that old geezer? He seems quite powerful..."

Qin Fang shook his head indifferently; even without Steward Fu's intervention, the chopstick still couldn't harm him, so how could there be a problem?

"That old fool is called Shi Yuan Yilang; in terms of cultivation, he's not much different from me, but as for character... I can only use one word to describe him... a real bastard!"

Fang Zonglin evidently knew the old man, showing clear indignation on his face, and described him with undeniable resentment...

Chapter 1616 - Hateful Old Jap!

...

"Little devil?"

Just by hearing his name, you can tell this old man is an old devil from Japan...

Looking at Fang Zonglin's expression now, it seems there's a significant grudge between him and this old devil called Shi Yuan, not just a small one.

"No wonder this guy seems so impressive..."

Qin Fang glanced again at Shi Yuan Yilang, memorizing his appearance.

Qin Fang isn't the type of person who worships everyone he meets, but he also isn't the type to let things slide easily. Since it was Shi Yuan Yilang who actively came to provoke Qin Fang, if Qin Fang doesn't even counter a bit, others would definitely look down on him.

There aren't many good little devils; they're almost universally despised, especially Japanese martial artists, who are famously like mad dogs.

At least among the Japanese martial artists Qin Fang has encountered so far, none were pushovers or good people, so Qin Fang almost never left any alive.

This old devil Shi Yuan is naturally much stronger than those devils Qin Fang previously encountered. Even though Qin Fang recently killed Nakano, who was at the peak of the master level, in terms of realm they might be equal, but if they were to fight, the loser would definitely be Nakano, and not this Shi Yuan Yilang.

"Qin Fang, if it's alright, you'd better not provoke him. This old guy is essentially a mad dog, well-known for biting people recklessly..."

Seeing Qin Fang's puzzled expression, Fang Zonglin, seemingly hesitant, quickly advised Qin Fang, apparently not wanting him to provoke Shi Yuan Yilang.

"And... and... never mind, you should just stay away from him!"

Fang Zonglin seemed a bit hesitant about the latter part, uncertain whether to say it or not, which made him appear indecisive and ultimately he didn't say it.

"Senior Brother Fang, if there's something to say, let's just lay it all out. Hiding it is really pointless..."

Qin Fang vaguely felt that what Fang Zonglin wanted to say might be very important, but due to some unknown concerns, he didn't say it.

"Shi Yuan, this old guy, is part of the right-wing forces and also holds a very high position. One of his cousins is a very famous leader among the right-wing, and it's said that to secure his cousin's promotion, they're even willing to spark a war between Dragon Country and Japan..."

After hearing Qin Fang's words, although still somewhat hesitant, Fang Zonglin remained silent for a moment and gave Qin Fang a brief explanation.

"Right-wing? Mingxia Island..."

Qin Fang was naturally not unfamiliar with this matter. Even though he had been away recently, he had always kept abreast of the domestic situation.

This time, Dragon Country and Japan were confronting each other over the territorial dispute on Mingxia Island, both sides already at a very tense moment, which might erupt into a conflict.

The instigator of this incident was the Japanese right-wing forces, who have been stirring things up from the start and now it's nearly irreconcilable.

These events were naturally something Qin Fang couldn't get involved in, but who would've thought to encounter this old devil Shi Yuan Yilang in Korea.

"Hehehe, Senior Brother Fang, during the Swordplay Tournament, you'd better stay out of whatever happens. I've got this under control..."

Knowing Shi Yuan's identity, even if Shi Yuan wasn't proactively causing trouble for Qin Fang, Qin Fang didn't plan to let it go and definitely wanted to give him trouble.

But now that Shi Yuan was not only actively causing trouble but also being particularly nasty, there was no need for Qin Fang to hold back.

But before that, Qin Fang gave Fang Zonglin a heads-up.

This isn't Japan, nor is it Dragon Country; it's Korea, on the territory of the Fu Family, so it's only natural to abide by the Fu Family's rules.

Though Qin Fang and the others can disregard these rules, the Fu Family certainly wouldn't like it if a fight broke out even before the Swordplay Tournament started, potentially leading to casualties.

"Sigh, you..."

Hearing Qin Fang's words, with decades of life experience, how could Fang Zonglin not understand Qin Fang's intentions? It's clear he's prepared to confront these little devils like Shi Yuan Yilang head-on.

"Since Younger Brother Qin put it this way, though I'm a bit older, these old bones can still move a bit..."

Although he was a bit surprised at Qin Fang's youthful impulsiveness, it suddenly gave Fang Zonglin a feeling of boiling blood, as if he were young again, pondering over fighting side by side with Qin Fang.

Even though Dragon Country and Little Island have not yet harmonized in their systems, and can't even use the same pot, in territorial disputes, they are unprecedentedly united.

Qin Fang's youthful vigor and impulsiveness are not unusual, but Fang Zonglin's sudden assertiveness and dominance surprised everyone, especially Qin Fang, who was somewhat dumbfounded.

However, after looking closely at Fang Zonglin's expression, he understood that Fang Zonglin was not joking and was indeed planning to help him deal with Shi Yuan Yilang.

"Senior Brother Fang, you... sigh!"

In response, all Qin Fang could do was smile wryly, as he seemed to have no better solution.

His reason for dealing with Shi Yuan Yilang is not simply for revenge or national resentment, but for other secret reasons.

Shi Yuan Yilang might be very strong and has helpers, but Qin Fang dared to do this naturally because he had his own backers.

Fang Zonglin's help was indeed well-intentioned, but for Qin Fang, it was not entirely a good thing, as some of his secrets were not convenient to be revealed.

"Hmph..."

Qin Fang and Fang Zonglin were conversing, and even though their voices weren't loud, many people heard them, especially Shi Yuan Yilang, who, despite his age, had good ears and heard their conversation clearly...

However, it seemed that Shi Yuan Yilang also had his own backers, not only unfazed by Fang Zonglin's involvement but provocatively looking at Qin Fang, as if he himself were eager to give it a try.

"Foolish nation, foolish people..."

To this, Qin Fang simply used the art of ignoring, causing all of Shi Yuan Yilang's attacks to vanish instantly. Looking at the arrogant and imposing Shi Yuan Yilang, Qin Fang dismissed him with disdain.

...

Although there was a bit of a small conflict and small turmoil, and both sides were still in a state of hostility, a direct conflict could possibly break out.

However, the Fu Family's duties remained unchanged, with Steward Fu personally overseeing to prevent any issues among the judges.

After all, these judges came from various places and countries and held unusual statuses and positions, so even the Fu Family treated them with politeness and hospitality.

Moreover, the judges' strengths were generally considerable. Aside from Qin Fang, whose exact strength could not be entirely ascertained, the weakest among the others was at the master level late stage...

Of course, this refers to the judges' cultivation. Each judge brought along one to four or five people, varying, who were there to gain knowledge and experience. Though not judges, they received special perks, much like how Liu Xianhe benefited from Qin Fang's influence.

"Dear judges, the Sword Tournament is about to begin. Please follow me to the tournament venue..."

Once the judges finished their breakfast with no further incidents, Steward Fu breathed a sigh of relief and said quietly.

The judges had no objections; many of them had participated in the Sword Tournament before and knew the rules.

So, Steward Fu led the way in front, while the judges followed behind, slowly making their way to the site of the Sword Tournament.

The disciples, members, or followers brought by the judges naturally followed as well. Although the judges might sit on a high platform, they still needed people to serve tea and water around them.

Besides, sitting there high and mighty, how could they maintain their exceptional status without a few people following behind them?

Qin Fang didn't care about this, but Liu Xianhe was visibly excited. This was his first time attending the Sword Tournament, and being able to have such a prime viewing position made many envious and jealous.

The Sword Tournament venue was located at the summit of Bagong Mountain, where a large arena had been constructed early on.

This arena seemed to have been around for many years, presumably appearing in the first Sword Tournament, or even much earlier.

The arena was ancient, but repairs were never discontinued. Qin Fang noticed many pieces of wood on the stage had been repaired time and again since the destructive power during martial arts bouts was hard to control, even slightly more violent actions could shatter these wood pieces.

Apart from the arena, the main platform's positions were already clearly delineated, with the Fu Family and Cui Family as two distinct groups temporarily occupying each side, facing each other, with a considerable amount of tension from the very start.

And the judges' seats were positioned in between the two families, also elevated but clearly separated from them. This was to ensure fairness and impartiality in this Sword Tournament.

Beyond these, the spectator stands were much simpler. To be precise, the spectator stands were nothing but flattened stone surfaces where people could sit, far from the accommodations provided for someone like Qin Fang and the judges, a stark contrast indeed.

Chapter 1617 - The Youngest Judge!

...

Of course, Qin Fang didn't really care about this. He wasn't the kind of person who was overly picky. Since he was here, he might as well settle in, naturally, he wouldn't mind.

"Please take your seats, judges..."

As the steward of the Fu family, Steward Fu was responsible for handling specific affairs, and this swordsmanship tournament was hosted by the Fu family. Naturally, he would also play the role of the host.

With his resounding voice, the originally chaotic scene suddenly calmed down, becoming silent in an instant, as everyone focused their gaze on the judges coming onto the stage.

This swordsmanship tournament had a total of eight judges. Most of them had already met each other during the meal in the front hall earlier.

Perhaps these people weren't very familiar with each other, maybe some were quite familiar, or even had some conflicts or grudges.

However, no matter what, they were invited by the Fu family and the Cui family to serve as judges for this swordsmanship tournament, and any conflicts must be put aside for the sake of these families.

Though neither family was extraordinarily powerful overall, they were still notable martial arts clans in Korea, with strong heritage most would respect, and the judges likely had reasonable ties with these families.

These eight judges came from various areas, representing martial arts forces of different nations. Their skills were exceptionally robust, and though no grandmaster-level expert was present, they were undoubtedly elite.

The people who came to witness the ceremony were mostly martial artists, including several master-level experts. Yet, they looked at the eight judges with considerable reverence.

Since they were invited to serve as judges, naturally, they must possess the strength and prestige to command respect. Otherwise, not only the participants but even the audience might not accept it.

This is one of the reasons why the swordsmanship tournament invited so many famous figures in the martial world...

The eight judges walked slowly toward the judging table, usually accompanied by one or two attendants, mostly younger individuals, to add prestige and have someone to serve tea.

However...

"Eh? Who's that kid?"

The first seven judges had nothing peculiar about them, but Qin Fang, walking at the back, immediately caught the attention of many present.

The first seven judges were elderly seniors, with the youngest already in his forties...

The attendants behind these judges were mostly young, in their twenties or thirties, generally juniors to these judges.

Yet, when it came to Qin Fang, the scenario seemed completely reversed. Others had the judges in front and the attendants behind, but for Qin Fang, the young one was in front, while the elder followed.

"Isn't that kid too arrogant and unruly?"

Seeing this scene, many couldn't help but murmur, and some even booed, with quite a few flipping the bird.

But such a scene did not affect Qin Fang's mood; he walked forward as if he didn't see it at all, while Liu Xianhe behind him looked very embarrassed.

The observers were quite sure of their thoughts, believing Liu Xianhe was the actual judge and Qin Fang was just an attendant, thinking Qin Fang was too out of line to walk in front of Liu Xianhe.

"Eh, why is he sitting at the judging table?"

However, this surprise reached its peak when the eight judges each reached their positions, and everyone uttered such an exclamation almost simultaneously.

For sitting at the judging table was not who they imagined to be Liu Xianhe, but rather the one they thought to be the attendant, Qin Fang, a shockingly young man, arguably younger than most of those present.

In contrast, Liu Xianhe stood obediently behind Qin Fang, hands at his sides, clearly in the role of an attendant, which immediately caused an uproar among many.

"Damn, what is the Fu family doing? Have they lost their minds? How could they let that kid sit at the judging table? Why isn't anyone doing anything about it?"

Some of the more incensed observers couldn't help but curse loudly. If not for the divide between the audience and judgment areas, it seemed like they would rush over and give Qin Fang a piece of their mind.

Despite the audience's agitation and anger, Qin Fang remained seated at the judging table like a serene monk, his eyelids drooping slightly, as if disregarding all those people.

"Silence!"

Beside him, Steward Fu, acting as the host, seemed to have anticipated this outcome. Not only did he refrain from explaining, but he also infused his voice with inner strength, letting out a loud shout.

A powerful wave of energy surged forth, echoing and overpowering the noise of hundreds of spectators, and the venue suddenly quieted down.

"Would the competitors from both families please step onto the stage..."

Steward Fu's shout proved very effective in subduing the commotion on the scene. However, he did not offer any explanations but directly adhered to the swordplay tournament's process, inviting contestants from both families onto the stage.

Every three years, the Fu Family and Cui Family hold a swordplay tournament. Both sides determine the winner through bouts, each sending ten contestants who face off in pairs. The side with the most victories is deemed the final winner.

As for the tangible benefits of winning, only the Fu and Cui families know. For many years, no one has known the details anyway.

With Steward Fu's words, the representatives of the Fu and Cui families began to make their way to the stage, their attire markedly different, clearly delineating their affiliations.

On either side of the judging panel sat the members of the Fu Family and Cui Family, each occupying a position, while the contestants aligned themselves with their respective families.

When all the contestants were on stage, the leaders from both sides returned to their family camps. The subsequent matches would proceed according to the formal process.

"Why was he invited?"

Cui Zheming, the leader on the Cui side, had been at the back until the contestants stepped onto the stage. Only then did he come forward and, as soon as he sat down in his position, he noticed Qin Fang sitting on the judging panel. His expression subtly changed, becoming both surprised and deeply furrowed.

"Zheming, what's going on?"

Beside him, Cui Zhehan noticed Cui Zheming's reaction and couldn't help but ask, finding it odd. Cui Zheming was known for his wisdom, and it was rare to see him with such an expression.

"That young man at the end of the judging panel..."

Cui Zheming did not hesitate and pointed towards Qin Fang over at the distant panel.

"What's wrong with him? Is there a problem... What on earth is the Fu Family thinking, inviting such a young person as a judge? Is Fu Qinglin out of his mind?"

In fact, Cui Zhehan had already noticed Qin Fang. However, the judges for each swordplay tournament were jointly invited by both families, each inviting half, so the Cui Family wasn't aware ahead of time who the Fu Family had invited.

Nonetheless, there are still no limitations. Both families ensured these judges were sufficiently respected, as being excessively biased would be disgraceful rather than cheating.

Yet, no one expected the Fu Family to invite someone as improbably young as Qin Fang this time. Not only did the people present find it unacceptable, but even members of the Cui Family thought the Fu Family was acting shamelessly.

"You're wrong! Fu Qinglin's mind is perfectly normal, and exceptionally so..."

But Cui Zhehan was surprised when Cui Zheming didn't agree with his words. Instead, he said with resignation, "Do not underestimate that young man; he's the one who destroyed the J Family, the Dragon Country's Qin Fang..."

"Uh... is he that Qin Fang?"

Cui Zhehan was momentarily stunned, looking in disbelief at the young, somewhat immature Qin Fang sitting on the judging panel. He couldn't connect this youth with the infamous Qin Fang who single-handedly destroyed the J Family.

However, Cui Zhehan knew very well that Cui Zheming wouldn't joke about such matters, especially since Cui Zheming was present at the scene back then and witnessed everything firsthand.

"Could it be as legendary as you say? Even if he came from those ancient sects of the Dragon Country, it seems improbable for him to reach such a level at this age, doesn't it?"

Cui Zhehan scrutinized Qin Fang, who was calm and composed on the judging panel, unable to discern any hint of a master's aura. He felt that Qin Fang was merely a young kid yet to reach full maturity.

"Although I've never fought him, I have a feeling... that he's far stronger than me! Even Shi Yuan Yilang might not be his match..."

Cui Zheming shook his head and said bitterly.

Among the eight judges, seven were familiar figures, and people generally had a grasp of their strength.

Old Ghost Shi Yuan, though a person of extremely poor character, possessed commendable strength, considered the strongest among the eight judges.

This is why, during the meal in the front hall, only he dared to make a move against Qin Fang, while others showed no reaction. Even Fang Zonglin, who didn't get along well with Shi Yuan, refrained from starting a fight. This was because Fang Zonglin was slightly weaker than Old Ghost Shi Yuan.

Old Ghost Shi Yuan's prowess was undoubtedly at the pinnacle of the Grandmaster Level, almost invincible among his peers. Even so, Cui Zheming's high regard for Qin Fang was astonishing to Cui Zhehan.

He evidently harbored skepticism, finding it unlikely that Qin Fang, even if trained from the womb, could stand on equal footing with an old master-level expert like Shi Yuan at such a young age.

Chapter 1618 - A Pair of Fools!

...

Qin Fang, the youngest judge, attracted a lot of attention, and almost everyone felt the Fu Family was being very ungraceful this time.

However, being the parties involved, the Fu Family and Qin Fang seemed incredibly calm, as if they hadn't been affected in the slightest, continuing with the Sword Tournament's process as usual.

"I object..."

But Qin Fang, sitting at the judge's seat with an indifferent appearance, naturally aroused the dissatisfaction of some people, making it easy for discord to arise.

The onlookers were just there to observe; although they were making quite a fuss, they had no right to speak. If they dared to spout nonsense, the people of the Fu Family would have no hesitation in throwing them out.

No one wanted such a precious opportunity to be wasted, so although these onlookers thought the Fu Family was behaving badly, at most they would just complain a bit, not causing any major disturbances.

However...

Just because the onlookers had no right to speak didn't mean the contestants were equally silenced.

Sure enough, just as the martial arts match of the Sword Tournament was about to begin, a contestant voiced their dissatisfaction, and the voice came from... the Cui side.

Almost upon hearing this voice, everyone's attention was drawn to this spot, not only the observers but also those from the Fu Family, the Cui Family, and those at the judges' table.

"Damn it, what is that idiot Cui Mingjun trying to do..."

Most people were waiting for the Cui Family contestant to speak, while Cui Zheming directly cursed, his face full of anger.

If they hadn't already entered the match's process, he really wanted to rush up and slap this dissatisfied Cui family member away...

"Zheming, calm down and watch!"

Beside him, Cui Zhehan also vaguely felt that things were going awry, sensing that Cui Mingjun might screw things up, possibly harming the Cui Family's interests.

"Contestant Cui Mingjun, what do you object to?"

As the host, Steward Fu stood there, smoothing out the commotion with a gesture, before asking calmly. But from his tranquil face, a trace of disdain and sarcasm could faintly be seen.

"Steward Fu, the Sword Tournament has been a grand event between our Fu and Cui families for a century, with each edition inviting martial world dignitaries as judges..."

Cui Mingjun apparently didn't realize how foolish his actions were and spoke confidently. As soon as he started, almost everyone knew what he was about to say.

Or rather, he was about to say what everyone wanted to say.

"These seven esteemed seniors as judges, I, Cui Mingjun, have nothing to say. But why is he... able to be a judge?"

Cui Mingjun pointed at Qin Fang, who was sitting at the end of the judges' table, and spoke rather rudely, almost directly saying that the Fu Family's actions were utterly disgraceful.

Of course, in ordinary times, his act of shaming the Fu Family would definitely earn unanimous approval from the Cui family members.

Unfortunately... he seemed to have chosen the wrong timing and even the wrong target!

"Mr. Qin was invited by our Fu Family as a judge, so naturally he has the qualification to sit here. If you think Mr. Qin is not qualified to sit here, then... you may ask him to step down!"

Steward Fu's expression was calm, not getting angry at Cui Mingjun's direct slap at all, even emphasizing that Qin Fang was invited by the Fu Family as a judge.

Upon hearing this, everyone present paused, as things were still calm on the Fu Family's side, but there was a clear unrest on the Cui Family's side.

Challenge the judge?

Hearing this, everyone present was shocked, astonished by Steward Fu's words.

Of course, there was nothing wrong with Steward Fu's words. In previous Sword Tournaments, such things have indeed happened, especially when a family had an exceptionally talented master, this was even more frequent.

Each Sword Tournament had a total of eight judges, each family inviting four. Generally, these four would slightly favor the inviting family.

But with four versus four, both sides having equal numbers, it usually appeared to be a very fair balance for victory and defeat, only when one side was utterly ungraceful would the numerical advantage show.

However, if a contestant challenges a judge and manages to dethrone the judge, then such balance is instantly broken.

With an obvious four to three, even a fool would know which side holds the advantage. If they didn't exploit this, it would indeed be too foolish.

This can be considered a form of cheating...

However, though this cheating mechanism is indeed good, it's not guaranteed to succeed every time, for some judges appear to be weak, but when it comes to a real fight, they are terrifyingly strong.

Competitors provoking the judges is essentially an act of shaming the judges, and these judges are unlikely to show mercy. Although they wouldn't outright kill the competitor, injuring them is often unavoidable.

And then, the competitor has to officially compete. Comparing a competitor in peak condition, without any injuries, to one who is seriously injured, the final outcome is already quite clear.

Cui Mingjun seized this opportunity, recognizing that Qin Fang was a great chance brought about by the Fu Family's unseemly behavior, and immediately jumped out to make a challenge.

"What a bunch of fools!"

Cui Zheming's face turned green. If it weren't for the fact that the process had started and they, the elders, weren't allowed to interfere, he would have liked to kick Cui Mingjun away right then.

He understood best what the Fu Family's intention was—purposely getting Qin Fang to be the judge was basically a trap to bait the Cui Family.

Although the Cui Family knew about Qin Fang's existence, besides Cui Zheming himself, the others only knew the person, but not what Qin Fang looked like or his age and such detailed information.

Not to mention the Cui Family's prominent status in Korea; aside from the Fu Family, they didn't regard anyone else seriously. Coupled with the innate strong confidence of the Koreans, they even imagined themselves as the world's top experts.

"Competitor Cui Mingjun, are you sure you want to challenge Judge Mr. Qin?"

Steward Fu looked very calm, as if he were completely neutral, and just looked at the agitated Cui Mingjun with a calm expression as he spoke.

"That's right... I want to challenge him!"

Although Cui Mingjun vaguely felt something was wrong, namely that the Fu Family's reaction seemed a bit too calm.

However, now in front of hundreds of people present, he couldn't possibly back down; doing so would only cause him to lose face.

"This idiot! I really want to smack him to death..."

Hearing that Cui Zheming really fell into the trap, the team leader's face was also very ugly, collapsing weakly. He knew things had gone wrong this time, but apart from angrily roaring, he was powerless.

"Mr. Qin, this competitor is questioning your qualifications as a judge..."

Receiving Cui Mingjun's definite answer, a glint of a different color flashed in Steward Fu's eyes, then he politely addressed Qin Fang on the judges' stand.

"Such confident Koreans..."

Looking at the defiant-faced Cui Mingjun, Qin Fang felt helpless, never expected that someone would actually fall for it.

In fact, some rules of the swordplay tournament, Fang Zonglin had already explained in detail to Qin Fang during their chat last night, including the current rule of challenging the judge.

Back then, Fang Zonglin said that the Fu Family specifically invited Qin Fang as the judge with hidden intentions, just to trap the Cui Family.

Although Qin Fang knew this, and was a bit upset about being used in this way, he didn't have any good relations with the Cui Family to begin with, almost even having a confrontation with Cui Zheming. Now coming to set up the Cui Family, he didn't mind it at all.

Initially, Qin Fang thought that the Cui Family wouldn't fall for it. After all, Qin Fang and Cui Zheming had already met once, and that guy didn't even dare make a move against Qin Fang, obviously wary of him.

But unexpectedly, the Cui Family dared to propose something so blatantly suicidal, which left Qin Fang quite helpless.

"Since this competitor is unconvinced, I will have a few rounds with you then..."

Although it wasn't difficult to spar with such a young master-level expert, since he was acting as a judge, Qin Fang also needed to play by the rules. He promptly stood up from the judges' stand, preparing to head to the arena.

"Hold on..."

However, just as Qin Fang stepped off the judges' stand, someone spoke up.

"Junhao..."

Steward Fu was slightly taken aback, looking with surprise at Fu Junhao who walked out from the Fu Family's side, with a face full of confusion.

"Mr. Qin was invited by our Fu Family to be the judge. Although he might differ slightly from the other seven judges, I believe his cultivation must be quite formidable as well."

"Brother Mingjun's cultivation is quite impressive, but I think there's still a slight gap compared to Mr. Qin... Therefore, for fairness' sake, I'd like to team up with Brother Mingjun to challenge Mr. Qin together!"

Steward Fu was quite shocked, and the people on the Fu Family's side were all puzzled, but Fu Junhao suddenly said such words.

"Uh..."

Almost everyone present was flabbergasted by Fu Junhao's words, all unclear about what this guy's intentions were, but one thing was very obvious, the expressions of everyone on the Fu Family's side instantly turned extremely grim...

"Hahaha... Truly the heavens assist my Cui Family as well!"

Hearing Fu Junhao's words, Cui Zheming was first slightly taken aback, but then he burst out laughing, even tears started streaming down.

Originally thought the Cui Family would suffer greatly this time, Cui Mingjun was clearly offering himself up as fodder, making achieving final victory very difficult, but unexpectedly, an idiot emerged on the Fu Family's side as well.

Chapter 1619 - Blast Them to Pieces!

...

Fu Junhao's strength, Cui Zheming roughly knows as well, should be about the same as Cui Mingjun's, they were originally arranged as opponents.

These two have comparable strengths, in normal circumstances, it's really hard to say who will win or lose, even their elders find it difficult to judge, it's all about their specific performance.

But this fool Cui Mingjun actually went as far as challenging the judge, it's basically no different from seeking death, an injured Cui Mingjun against a Fu Junhao in his prime, the result is obvious.

Cui Zheming thought Cui Family was going to suffer a loss, losing the first match...but this idiot Fu Junhao actually jumped out to join Cui Mingjun in seeking death!

If these two get knocked out together, then it's effectively a draw between them, though slightly off the expected outcome, a draw is still much better than a defeat.

Cui Zheming laughed, but the Fu Family members couldn't, and Steward Fu's face was even more unpleasant, just by seeing his eyes that seem ready to spit fire, one can imagine his mood at the moment.

Inviting Qin Fang to be this judge was indeed a spur-of-the-moment decision by the Fu Family, for this they even rejected a judge with very good connections.

To ensure nothing goes wrong, before these contestants went on stage, Steward Fu repeatedly reminded Fu Family's contestants not to comment on the judge.

But man plans and God laughs, Fu Junhao somehow got his wires crossed and disrespected the previous order, jumping out at such a critical moment.

"Mr. Qin, what do you think..."

Though furious, as the host, Steward Fu had to continue with the process, he could only look at Qin Fang with a wry smile, asking for his opinion.

"Doesn't matter, let's have both together then... if there are others not convinced, they can all come too, don't waste my time!"

Qin Fang shrugged indifferently, the younger disciples from the Fu and Cui Families were considered decent, similar to some small sects in the Dragon Country Martial World.

But juniors are still juniors, compared to the older generation, they still fall short, though there are young masters who have entered the Grandmaster Level, they're still lacking significantly.

Don't even mention two people making a move, even if all ten of them were to join forces, Qin Fang could easily wipe them all out...

"Such arrogance!"

As soon as Qin Fang spoke, the expressions of many people changed slightly, some self-proclaimed powerful experts scoffed dismissively.

Even in the Fu and Cui camps, some who didn't know Qin Fang showed such expressions, seemingly not very optimistic about Qin Fang.

Qin Fang didn't care, he stepped down from the judges' stand, and slowly walked towards the ring's center, where Cui Mingjun and Fu Junhao were already standing.

"Are you two a couple of buddies?"

Qin Fang walked up slowly, looking at these two fools from opposing camps, couldn't help but mutter this sentence.

"Gah~~"

As soon as Qin Fang spoke, the expressions of many people became peculiar.

But after thinking simply, it seemed they agreed Qin Fang's words might not be entirely baseless, at least in such settings, under such circumstances, the opposing families reached consensus on a matter they shouldn't have, if saying these two don't have some inexplicable relationship, it might really be hard to convince anyone.

"You... bastard!"

Cui Mingjun and Fu Junhao both were a bit stunned for a moment, then showed extreme anger, eager to tear Qin Fang into pieces.

Cui Mingjun provoked Qin Fang because he thought the judge was an easy target, the kind that's easiest to crush...

As for Fu Junhao, he jumped out to target Qin Fang not only because he thought he could defeat him, but also due to some previous unpleasantness with Qin Fang.

This guy is quite petty, so when he saw the opportunity, he couldn't help but jump out to make trouble, anyway his opponent is Cui Mingjun, regardless of win or lose, both are still on the same starting line, he naturally didn't care!

"Stop the nonsense, let's go... I'll let you have a few moves first!"

Unfortunately, Qin Fang seemed unwilling to waste words with them, waved his hand, and spoke with utmost calm.

"You're seeking death..."

Fu Junhao and Cui Mingjun exchanged a glance, though belonging to two camps, at this moment seemed united in thought, true qi surged, gathering all their strength, roaring as they charged towards Qin Fang...

The palm strike is strong, with a fierce gust from the fist, the speed is quite fast, looking impressive, just from this, it's clear these two have pretty solid fundamentals.

"Not bad, not bad..."

"A promising young man. With a bit of luck, he might advance to Grandmaster Level in twenty years..."

Amateur observers are everywhere, and this duel is no exception. As soon as they saw these two make their moves, self-proclaimed keen-eyed spectators began their analysis.

They seemed to favor Fu Junhao and Cui Mingjun, but were not optimistic about Qin Fang, who appeared calm and serene.

Qin Fang really gave off an ordinary, bland vibe, as if he didn't know martial arts at all, so it's no wonder these amateur viewers felt that way.

However, those who truly understand won't think like this. Fang Zonglin remained indifferent, other judges merely frowned slightly, and even Old Ghost Shi Yuan flashed a hint of surprise in his eyes.

Seeing Fu Junhao and Cui Mingjun actually start the fight, Cui Zheming and Steward Fu couldn't help but close their eyes in bitterness. Others' analyses mean nothing to them; the outcome was determined the moment these fools decided to challenge Qin Fang.

The force of their fists is like the wind.

Fu Junhao and Cui Mingjun, though standing on different grounds, shared the same intention this time, unleashing their strongest combat power at Qin Fang. Their violent fists aimed directly at Qin Fang's head, as if wishing to blow it up directly.

"What speed..."

However, as the audience exclaimed in surprise, just as their fists were about to hit Qin Fang, he suddenly transformed into a shadow and vanished from his spot.

When Qin Fang's form reappeared, he was already behind the two of them...

Sitting in the judge's seat, Old Ghost Shi Yuan saw Qin Fang's speed and slightly furrowed his brows, with a hint of surprise in his eyes.

Of course, aside from his speed, Qin Fang's strength didn't seem too outstanding, so his brows quickly relaxed.

Pumph pumph puh~~

But Fu Junhao and Cui Mingjun are both master-level experts. If they attack with full force, they are quite formidable.

The two quickly turned towards this side, their punching power more vicious, faintly producing sounds akin to striking leather.

In reality, they hit nothing at all, just the sound of fists rubbing against the air.

Qin Fang moved like a phantom, weaving around the two. Each time he seemed poised to be hit, he effortlessly dodged.

Soon, Fu Junhao and Cui Mingjun made several moves, and Qin Fang had already fulfilled his promise.

"Now it's my turn..."

After letting them strike ten times without even touching his robe, Qin Fang felt it was enough, and quickly taunted the two fools before swiftly closing in.

Pum pum pum~~

Fu Junhao was closer to Qin Fang, naturally being the first to be engaged. Without even a moment to react, a series of crashing sounds erupted from various parts of his body.

Then...

Pum~~

With a dull thud, Fu Junhao soared into the air, skimming about five or six meters before crashing heavily onto the ground, his head tilted as he passed out without even managing a scream.

"Uh..."

This scene played out in a flash, with Cui Mingjun failing to react as Fu Junhao was already taken down by Qin Fang.

"This is bad..."

With Fu Junhao down, Cui Mingjun immediately realized things had turned bad. Instinctively wanting to escape, he clearly knew he couldn't match Qin Fang.

"Thinking of leaving? Ask my fists first..."

Regrettably, he reacted too slowly. After handling Fu Junhao, Qin Fang moved and appeared before Cui Mingjun.

Before Cui Mingjun could react, Qin Fang's menacing fist had already surged forth. Despite desperately wanting to dodge, Cui Mingjun frustratingly realized his body couldn't keep up with Qin's striking speed, seeming to lag by more than a beat.

Pum pum pum~~

With one successful strike, Qin Fang gave Cui Mingjun no chance, his fists raining down furiously like a storm, instantly enveloping Cui Mingjun's entire body.

A torrent of snapping sounds nearly drowned out Qin Fang's fists — the sound of bones being forcibly fractured, clearly more than just one or two places.

The time was a matter of seconds, when Qin Fang's final punch launched out, Cui Mingjun's body flew helplessly, skimming several meters in mid-air before crashing heavily onto the ground with a dull thud, his head tilted like his pal Fu Junhao, passing out directly...

Chapter 1620 - Calm Before the Storm?

...

"Steward Fu, continue..."

Having settled this pair of friends, Qin Fang casually gestured to Steward Fu, as if it was just a bit of light exercise.

"The tournament begins..."

"Let's welcome the first pair of contestants, the Fu Family... the Cui Family..."

Seeing Qin Fang's expression as calm as could be, Steward Fu's face wasn't looking good. Though he had anticipated this result, when it really happened, he felt quite upset.

Of course, Cui Mingjun was heavily injured; not to mention continuing the tournament, he'd be lucky to get out of bed within three months.

But the problem was that Fu Junhao wasn't any better off. With at least twenty to thirty injuries to his bones and meridians, he wouldn't be able to fight for several months.

Thus, these two were basically done for. Forcing them to fight would likely mean waiting several hours for them to crawl together onstage...

A match?

Don't make me laugh!

Even a couple of kids could make them cry!

Though Qin Fang was a bit heavy-handed, he essentially dealt equal blows to both the Fu and Cui families. This pair wouldn't be competing anymore.

So for this match, either the two families compete in another way, or they switch fighters...

But all this had nothing much to do with Qin Fang. After dealing with Fu Junhao and Cui Mingjun, he leisurely returned to his judges' seat.

Still looking plain and indifferent, sitting at the far end of the panel, he seemed uninterested in any upheaval inside or outside the arena. His expression unchanged, as if all that had happened had nothing to do with him.

Qin Fang could behave this way, but others couldn't just ignore him. At least the previous commotion had now disappeared.

Many people had initially wanted to teach Qin Fang a lesson, but now they were all behaving, not daring to make a sound...

Qin Fang wasn't from Korea, so the Koreans didn't understand him. But they were quite familiar with the young prodigies Fu Junhao of the Fu Family and Cui Mingjun of the Cui Family.

Arguably the most anticipated match of this Sword Tournament was between these two prodigies...

Their strengths and battle abilities were on par, and their standing within their families was similar. A match between such evenly matched individuals promised to be a fierce battle.

Unfortunately...

Such a fierce battle was unseen, as the two of them teamed up to challenge a judge even younger than them.

The outcome left everyone dumbfounded... The two talented young men in whom they'd placed high hopes, almost idolizing, were defeated as effortlessly as if they were infants against this absurdly young judge!

Both were young martial arts experts at the early Grandmaster Level, each possessing secret techniques, yet they couldn't even touch Qin Fang's hem and ended up in such a tragic state, which was especially ironic.

However, the downfall of these two young talents served to further solidify Qin Fang's position as a judge, leaving no room for doubt.

All those watching, whether guests or the Fu and Cui families, became much more subdued.

"This outcome is not so bad..."

Cui Mingjun was carried off, but Cui Zheming wasn't the least bit sullen or angry; in fact, he wore a faint smile.

Compared to facing Qin Fang alone, this was actually saving face, even subtly aiding the Cui Family.

"It seems our Cui Family owes him a favor..."

From afar, Qin Fang sat calmly, his face serene. But when Cui Zheming's gaze fell on him, Qin Fang responded lightly.

The two weren't too far apart, yet not very near either, at least over thirty meters apart. Still, Qin appeared to have anticipated her reaction, waiting patiently in advance.

Though their eyes only exchanged a simple glance, Cui Zheming helplessly mumbled to Cui Zhehan beside him.

"This guy is truly a freak..."

Cui Zhehan wholeheartedly agreed, saying that Qin Fang's prowess had deeply shocked him. It's not just that Cui Mingjun couldn't be Qin Fang's match; even he, a Mid-Master Level expert, would only have the option to drink his own sorrow when facing Qin Fang!

"I'm afraid no such freak could emerge from our Korea... Perhaps only in that ancient Dragon Country!"

Although Koreans are inherently reluctant to concede, given the facts before them, they have no choice but to admit it. Korea's achievements in martial arts are far inferior to those of the ancient Dragon Country.

Qin Fang pays no mind to external opinions; dealing with Fu Junhao and Cui Mingjun was merely a diversion for him when bored. It's not something he'll dwell on.

As for his approach of equally reprimanding both sides, it did cause the Fu Family's faces to look somewhat displeased. Such a good opportunity wasted like this.

But to truly blame Qin Fang wasn't practical. If it weren't for Fu Junhao foolishly jumping out to stir up trouble, things wouldn't have escalated to this point.

The upcoming match would be a regular one, unlike the one between Qin Fang, Fu Junhao, and Cui Mingjun, which seemed like a farce.

Anyone could see that Qin Fang's strength surpassed the young masters of Fu and Cui families by a wide margin... In the end, those two idiots insisted on forcing Qin Fang to teach them a lesson. Isn't that the very definition of a farce?

A normal match appeared much more leisurely.

The eight judges sat comfortably, not particularly focused on watching these contests. They simply needed to confirm the contestants weren't using techniques outside the rules.

As for who ultimately wins or loses, there's a clear stipulation for that. Essentially, whoever remains on the platform until the end is the victor.

These judges actually don't have direct authority to judge the outcome of the matches. They only exercise their judging power when two equally strong opponents meet, and neither can gain the upper hand.

Official matches were rather dull, especially the first pair, whose skill level was quite weak, not even reaching the Master Level.

Moreover, their skill levels were quite similar, exchanging blows back and forth, with evident offense and defense, seemingly locked in a stalemate that wouldn't conclude anytime soon.

At this moment, Qin Fang somewhat understood why this Sword Meet needed such a lengthy duration. When both sides possess comparable strength, overcoming the opponent is no easy task.

In this way, five matches would certainly take a long time, and a delay of a day or two wouldn't be surprising.

"Mr. Qin, your cultivation is truly splendid..."

Precisely because the match was dull, the judges, seeing the contestants had already commenced, started casually conversing among themselves.

Sitting beside Qin Fang was an elderly man, appearing in his fifties, considered relatively young, yet with remarkable cultivation, undeniably a Master-level Peak Expert.

Of course, such prowess wasn't the strongest among the eight judges. It was generally accepted that Shi Yuan Yilang was the most formidable... However, the old man's cultivation was quite impressive.

"Elder Mu, you're too kind..."

The elderly gentleman, surnamed Mu, was also from Little Island, a Martial Arts Expert, and hailed from Cloud Mountain Sect, another strong sect on the island...

Compared to Fang Zonglin's Tian Nan Sect, Cloud Mountain Sect's strength was slightly weaker but still counted among the major sects on the island.

Moreover, Tian Nan Sect was located in the southern part of Little Island, while Cloud Mountain Sect's influence spread across the northern part, so these two powers coexisted peacefully, despite their relations not being particularly cordial.

Due to Fang Zonglin's connection, Elder Mu previously kept a respectful distance from Qin Fang, as he didn't want any entanglement with Fang Zonglin.

But Qin Fang had stood out brilliantly earlier, evident from the patchy display of cultivation which underscored Qin Fang's strength. Elder Mu possessed decades of experience in evaluating people and felt Qin Fang's potential was much more profound.

Adding to Qin Fang's seating at the end of the judges' row, it was partly due to his reluctance for high-profile attention, but also affected by his lower reputation among the eight judges.

Seeing Qin Fang scratching his head in boredom, Elder Mu couldn't help but chat with him, chuckling.

"Alas, every Sword Meet is so dull; if it weren't for old friends inviting me, I wouldn't have bothered attending."

Elder Mu felt some dissatisfaction over attending this Sword Meet, reluctantly yielding to social obligations. But upon witnessing Qin Fang effortlessly defeating Fu Junhao and Cui Mingjun, he viewed Qin Fang's impressive strength as potentially invaluable.

Nonetheless, Elder Mu held these thoughts alone. Other judges likely shared similar views, having encountered this scenario before, with ample understanding.

Of course, Qin Fang wouldn't overly concern himself with this; his purpose here isn't primarily to serve as a judge...