

Humanity 121

Chapter 121 A Nice Place

In the wilderness, Lu Ye rode Amber in a wretched flight, with several Spirit Talismans exploding behind him. The magic and spells sealed within the talismans burst forth, rendering his escape incredibly clumsy.

Throughout the entire day of skirmishes, the cultivators who were hunting him had also grown wiser, greeting him with Spirit Talismans upon each encounter.

Although Spirit Talismans were expensive, a low-level cultivator could still afford one or two if they gritted their teeth, typically keeping them as a lifesaving trump card.

Launching them recklessly now indeed posed a tricky situation for Lu Ye. Had he not frequently activated the Defense Spirit Runes to protect himself, he and Amber would have been overwhelmed long ago.

Even so, both the man and the tiger bore numerous injuries.

It wasn't just the Spirit Talismans; the unknown force's cultivators also deployed demon beasts to hunt him. Not many cultivators possessed beast pets because demon beasts were difficult to tame, and if not handled carefully, they could even turn on their masters.

Now, as Lu Ye fled ahead, a rumbling noise followed with five or six cultivators riding various beast pets. Although these beasts were not as divine or as swift as Amber, Lu Ye faced constant obstructions ahead, severely hampering his efficiency in breaking through. Any slight delay would allow his pursuers to catch up immediately.

Several times, Lu Ye narrowly escaped being completely trapped, barely managing to fight his way through a gap to continue his flight.

After this entanglement, Lu Ye realized one issue: he shouldn't keep winding around. The more he did, the more numerous the enemies became. In contrast, taking a straight path resulted in fewer encounters with enemies.

He did not know that the Tailuo Sect's cultivators had Han Zheyue guiding them from behind, with the Shadow Moon Disc at their disposal, rendering all his movements visible to Han Zheyue's eyes.

The whistling of air erupted anew as several arrows shot towards Lu Ye from different directions. Though startled, Lu Ye wasn't thrown into disarray. He channeled his spirit force to protect himself and simultaneously swung his blade forward.

He severed an arrow flying towards Amber, and at the same time, Amber rapidly zigzagged to dodge the other arrows.

This was not Lu Ye commanding Amber but rather a grim lesson Amber had learned from experience.

The Tailuo Sect's cultivators knew that to capture Lu Ye, they had to disable Amber first; otherwise, with such a demon beast around, it was difficult to pin Lu Ye down.

So, after the initial encounters, those archers hiding in the shadows targeted Amber, aiming to take it down first.

Unfortunately for Amber, it was hit by several arrows, though none caused serious injuries. Lu Ye snapped the arrows, leaving only the shafts in Amber's body.

Since then, Amber had grown wiser. At the sound of an arrow's whistle, it immediately started dodging adeptly, avoiding many attacks.

Just as they avoided those arrows, several figures sprung out ahead under the cover of night, their spirit light extremely visible.

Three Level 5 cultivators!

Lu Ye's eyes narrowed, sensing the situation turn dire.

If there had been only one Level 5 cultivator, he might have managed somewhat, but two were already too much to handle, let alone three. If he was trapped, he would undoubtedly die.

He wondered whose territory this was, as its heritage seemed profoundly robust. On this journey, he had encountered almost a dozen Level 5 cultivators.

He was unaware that the war declarations between Xuanmen and the Nine Stars Sect had been sudden. Most of those sects' Level 5 cultivators were undergoing trials abroad and couldn't return in time, thus their numbers were few, and they restrained each other, making them invisible to him.

However, the Dragon Spring Meet was different. Held once every three years, the nearby three forces greatly valued it. Ten days prior, all cultivators above Level 2 and below Level 5 had gathered at their respective stations in anticipation of the Dragon Spring Meet.

The number of Level 5 cultivators in a sect was considerable. The dozen or so that Lu Ye encountered were only a small fraction; many more were stationed in various mountains. Although Han Zheyue desperately wanted to have Lu Ye killed, she knew the balance of matters and could not divert all her powerful cultivators for an unknown Level 4 cultivator.

Doing so would leave openings for Qing Yu to exploit, potentially leading to losses far greater than just ten or so lives; many territories could be lost.

Among the three Level 5 cultivators who had appeared, two charged at Lu Ye, while a third stood not too far away, lifting a hand toward Lu Ye's direction, spirit force surging at his fingertips.

It was a Level 5 magic cultivator!

Lu Ye felt a headache coming on.

The archers hidden in the shadows weren't much of a threat; their cultivation levels were generally not high, and with the experience that Lu Ye and Amber had gained, these occasional attacks couldn't harm them. However, a Level 5 magic cultivator posed a different challenge entirely; the power of the magic and spells such a cultivator could unleash was significant.

A careless move might yield disastrous results.

Seeing that the cultivator was casting a spell, Lu Ye made a quick decision, throwing an object with one hand while forming a hand seal with the other.

The object he had thrown instantly arrived above the magic cultivator's head, rapidly enlarging and transforming into a huge bell radiating spirit light, which crashed down resoundingly.

The magic cultivator clearly hadn't expected Lu Ye to have such a move up his sleeve. It was too late to dodge, and he was squarely trapped under it.

The other two Level 5 cultivators had nearly closed in, the leader of them being a burly man with a vigorous build and abundant blood Qi, clearly one who followed the path of a physique cultivator.

As Amber lunged at him, he did not dodge or evade but even provocatively met the charge head-on, raising his hands to intercept Amber's front legs, seemingly aiming to flip Amber over.

"Roar!" The tiger roared throughout the forest; the physique cultivator only managed to fend off Amber for two breaths before being toppled to the ground.

He had overestimated his abilities; although Amber was not as strong as him, demon beasts had their own advantages, especially one as robust as Amber, whose charge could hardly be stopped without sufficient power.

While he was delayed by those two breaths, another Level 5 realm cultivator had attacked him from behind; this guy was likely a combat cultivator since he wielded a huge hammer, as big as a human head, and certainly looked formidable.

Like a thousand-pound hammer, which in his hands seemed weightless, he leaped from behind his fellow sect member and struck at Lu Ye with his hammer glowing with spirit light as he bellowed, "Come down!"

This strike was powerful and heavy, truly overpowering.

Such an attack was something Lu Ye could not block no matter what; had he tried, he would only end up with severed tendons and broken bones.

Thus, he hurriedly activated the Defense Spirit Runes, forming a shield in front of him.

Bang... A loud noise erupted; Lu Ye felt the spirit force inside him flow out like floodwaters escaping a broken dam.

Even the Defense Spirit Runes barely withstood the fierce strike, displaying tiny cracks and shattering completely after a mere three breaths.

This was the first time Lu Ye encountered someone who could shatter his Defense Spirit Runes with a single blow; even that Level 7 cultivator Dong Shuye hadn't managed that.

It seemed that the Defense Spirit Runes had some advantage in resisting magic and spells, but their defense was somewhat weaker against pure physical attacks.

Though the runes shattered, they had at least blocked most of the impact.

As the hammer struck down, Amber's body lowered, with front legs kneeling on the ground, while Lu Ye was smashed backward; had he not hastily propped his long sword in front of him, his chest might have been crushed.

Just as Lu Ye was about to fall off the tiger's back, at the crucial moment, a small hand suddenly reached out and grabbed his waistband, pulling him back; it was Yiyi who had been hiding inside Amber all this time.

She could only help so much during the fight and had remained hidden, but this timely move saved Lu Ye.

His mouth tasted of iron, his chest and arms aching tremendously, clearly injured.

Such a hammer strike was not easily fully blocked.

At this moment, Lu Ye was incredibly relieved that he had trapped the Level 5 magic cultivator with the tiny bell spirit artifact. Otherwise, with these three coordinated together, he might have really been left behind.

The physique cultivator got up from the ground and retreated several yards, warily watching Lu Ye. The combat cultivator also stepped back a few yards, gripping the hammer with a grave expression—if one looked closely, they could see his hands trembling intensely.

That hammer strike was the result of him exerting all his strength... and it took a great toll on him as well.

In this brief moment of delay, rustling sounds emerged from the surrounding jungle; cultivators were cornering from all directions, and those riding demon beasts were also closing in rapidly.

Lu Ye did not have the luxury to assess his injuries and quickly pinpointed a weak spot in their defense, immediately finding a direction to exploit.

Just as he was about to direct Amber in that direction, a prolonged cry echoed in the distance, accompanied by strong fluctuations of spirit force from that direction.

Lu Ye turned to look and saw a mountain peak nearest to him where colorful spirit light flickered non-stop.

Someone was fighting over there—and it was a fierce battle.

Lu Ye slapped the tiger's back and pointed his sword in that direction, "Charge there!"

Instead of choosing the spot where their defense was weakest, he chose the position where the combat cultivator with the big hammer was!

Regardless of who was fighting there, one of the sides must be part of the sect chasing him... It seemed they had enemies of their own.

Lu Ye immediately felt that this was a good direction to head towards.

Moreover, the past encounters made him realize something—escaping was not the solution since the other party seemed capable of tracking his movements and appeared to be led by a very adept individual, making it easy to encircle him repeatedly.

Seeing Lu Ye rushing in that direction, the Level 5 physique cultivator urgently shouted, "Don't let him get away!"

The combat cultivator with the big hammer stepped forward, blocking in front of Amber, his arms bulging with veins as he raised the hammer high, his arm blood vessels bursting, blood instantly staining his clothes.

"Come and die!" he roared, charging at Lu Ye.

With red-glowing spirit force surging, Lu Ye raised his hand and immediately cast a magic spell at him.

Chapter 122 Qing Yu Mountain's Response

The combat cultivator's eye twitched violently, cursing internally; he had forgotten that this guy also knew magic and spells, yet he still did not dodge. Instead, he fully activated his protective spirit force and charged toward the incoming spell, hammer striking down.

Boom...

His figure was hurled away, his chest a bloody, charred mess. Lu Ye, riding atop Amber, leapt over him. Not only that, but he also bent down to swing his sword, its blade enhanced by Sharpness spirit runes, flickering with spirit light.

The sound of a sharp weapon cutting into flesh rang out, blood spurted, and before Lu Ye could check his results, he was whisked away by Amber.

"Chase him!" someone shouted from behind, as a flurry of arrows sliced through the air, penetrating the night.

Feeling the urgent reactions of this group, Lu Ye immediately understood that his choice had been the right one.

If he had really charged toward that weak spot in their defenses he could have temporarily escaped danger, but he would still have been pursued and surrounded. Now thinking of it, that weak spot seemed like a trap deliberately left by the enemy.

He recalled the tiny bell spirit artifact, and the moment the Level 5 magic cultivator was freed, he launched a spell in the direction Lu Ye had fled, but Lu Ye was already long gone.

The cultivators riding demon beasts continued their relentless pursuit. After covering some distance, they stopped as if commanded, staring in the direction of Lu Ye's escape, their eyes full of frustration.

From the perspective of the Shadow Moon Disc, ahead of Lu Ye's white point were about twenty blue points rushing towards him. On a nearby mountaintop, another cluster of blue points was fiercely clashing with black points.

The disturbances Lu Ye had previously sensed were coming from that direction.

In the grand hall, Han Zheyue's gaze could have ignited flames as she stared at Tang Wu. If looks could kill, Tang Wu would have died a hundred times over.

The twenty or so blue points moving towards the white one were clearly marshaled by Tang Wu. Otherwise, Tailuo Sect wouldn't have ceased its chase, as continuing would imply encroaching on Mount Qingyu's domain.

The nearby combat was also initiated under Tang Wu's orders. Mount Qingyu hadn't intended to capture that mountain peak, only wanting to create some noise to signal to the outsider.

Now, it appeared that this outsider was a clever fellow. Even though there was no direct interaction between him and Tang Wu, under Tang Wu's covert planning, the outsider had voluntarily moved closer to Mount Qingyu.

However, the weak point she had designed failed to serve as a bait.

In this round of long-distance confrontation, Han Zheyue was utterly defeated—losing over a dozen cultivators, several mountain peaks, and the outsider had even been picked up by Mount Qingyu.

"Is he that formidable?" Qin Wanli gasped in surprise beside her.

He had been enjoying the spectacle here all afternoon and into the night, witnessing how that white point maneuvered through Hundred Peaks Mountain. Frankly, he was immensely impressed—placing himself in the same situation, he knew he couldn't have managed such feats at the Level 4 realm. If the guy lacked abilities, he would have died during the first encirclement.

As if that wasn't enough, a moment ago on the Shadow Moon Disc, a black point representing a Level 5 cultivator had suddenly vanished.

In other words, a Level 5 had fallen to that outsider!

That was somewhat terrifying. Escaping a Level 5's pursuit might be attributed to his mount's power, but overpowering someone of a higher level indicated a whole different significance.

This guy... could he be from some powerful family? Qin Wanli wondered.

"Do you still want to watch?" Han Zheyue suddenly turned her fiery gaze on him.

Clearing his throat, Qin Wanli promptly adjusted his attitude, "Wherever Senior Sister Han says to strike, we strike!"

Although the Qin family had gained stature and a station on the battlefield, their rise had been too recent, and they still relied heavily on the Tailuo Sect. Especially since this woman was currently enraged, Qin Wanli had to be even more careful in how he interacted.

Seeing his cooperative attitude, Han Zheyue's anger somewhat subsided. She didn't avoid Tang Wu and began to discuss the attack plans openly in front of him.

Tang Wu was also strategizing on his side. Occasionally glancing at the Shadow Moon Disc, seeing that the white point had already linked up with his troops, he felt greatly relieved.

At this juncture, Lu Ye, looking at the twenty or so cultivators ahead of him, clutched a jade slip in his hand, silently reflecting.

These people bore no malice, and it seemed they already knew he was here, declaring their identities and showing their affiliation with the Haotian Alliance before even approaching. Since the other party was so forthcoming, Lu Ye naturally revealed the blue light of his battlefield marking on his wrist to avoid any potential misunderstandings.

The jade slip in his hand, given to him by the leader named Xie Jin, a Level 5 cultivator, promised answers with a quick investigation.

Despite being a Level 5, the cultivator's words were quite polite.

With no immediate pursuit from behind, Lu Ye gently patted the tiger-back and asked Amber to stay alert, then he pressed the jade slip to his forehead to begin his inquiry.

After a moment, he lowered the jade slip, his face wearing a puzzled expression.

Dragon Spring Meet?

A competition for entering the Dragon Spring hosted jointly by three factions?

Lu Ye was somewhat speechless. He had been wandering uninhabited areas these days, avoiding territories claimed by sects as much as possible. Even when he needed supplies, he visited marketplaces frequented by independent cultivators.

His last visit to an independent marketplace had been ten days ago.

Avoiding contact with others, he had no idea this was the venue for the Dragon Spring Meet. He had chosen to pass through Hundred Peaks Mountain because it was at the junction of three forces nearby and belonged to none, thinking it would be safer and more convenient.

Little did he know it would turn into such a spectacle.

The last time he chose Sky-Splitting Gorge was similar; it was the boundary between Xuanmen and Nine Stars Sect, which ended up sparking a major conflict between the two forces, culminating in the Nine Stars Sect's base being overrun.

He realized he had made a mistake concerning one thing; he should never have chosen those border areas of forces since such places were generally chaotic. If he truly wanted to avoid trouble, he needed to choose the territory under the Haotian Alliance's influence.

He silently noted this lesson.

According to the information revealed in the jade slip, the spot where he entered Hundred Peaks Mountain was deep within the Tailuo Sect's territory, which was why he had been constantly pursued and trapped by the cultivators of Tailuo Sect.

This indeed matched his previous experiences; the cultivators he initially encountered were rarely of Level 5 realm, but as he kept moving forward, the number of Level 5 realm cultivators increased.

Since the rear was safer than the front, the personnel stationed there, both in terms of cultivation and numbers, were not highly demanded. Conversely, the peaks bordering Mount Qingyu needed higher-level cultivators to be stationed, and the number of people was greater.

The reason they had come to aid him was because of that Shadow Moon Disc. Each of the three sects stationed Level 9 cultivators there to monitor all cultivator movements within Hundred Peaks Mountain, so no matter how Lu Ye tried to escape or hide, he could not elude the scrutiny of those Level 9 cultivators.

He had felt as if eyes were constantly watching him, surrounding him no matter how he tried to escape. It turned out to be because of that Shadow Moon Disc.

The situation matched his experiences, and Lu Ye could almost confirm the other party was not lying.

Moreover, however it was said, these twenty-odd people coming to his aid had helped him escape being hunted down, which counted as a favor from them.

"Junior Brother, this place is not suitable for a long stay, please move along and we can talk," a man suggested with a gesture.

Lu Ye nodded, "Okay."

A group of people hurriedly escorted Lu Ye forward, moving very fast.

Along the way, Xie Jin chatted casually with Lu Ye. When asked for a name, Lu Ye simply gave the name Yiye, fortunate that Xie Jin also tactfully did not probe into Lu Ye's background.

In the Spirit Stream battlefield, many cultivators hide their sect affiliations, especially those from big sects venturing into the outer circles for experience.

Do not assume that cultivators from big sects will receive preferential treatment; in reality, they are more often the targets of opposing factions.

Tang Wu communicated with Xie Jin, informing him that Lu Ye was very likely a Disciple of a big sect, and naturally, Xie Jin knew not to be indiscreet.

As they continued on the road, the twenty-odd people gradually dispersed, leaving only Xie Jin and Lu Ye together. Those people were summoned from nearby peaks and now that their task was completed, naturally, they needed to return to their duties.

Furthermore, Han Zheyue had gone mad, joining forces with Qin Wanli to attack the peaks of Mount Qingyu, which drastically increased pressure on their side. The peaks they had gained during the day were lost again, which was quite helpless though fortunately, there were not many casualties.

After crossing two mountain peaks and arriving at a valley, to his surprise, it was brightly lit with tents standing tall. From inside those tents, cultivators could be seen constantly coming and going.

Lu Ye, riding on the back of a tiger, looked around and noticed that many of the cultivators here were injured. Screams emanated from many tents and the smell of blood was rampant.

He immediately understood that this place was likely akin to a field hospital where cultivators injured in the front lines came for treatment.

Upon Lu Ye's arrival, many cultivators turned their gaze towards him, some shouting, "Well done, Fellow Daoist!"

Others cheered and whistled at him...

And some fiery-tempered female cultivators even threw him flirtatious glances...

The enthusiastic crowd of the injured left Lu Ye somewhat bewildered.

Xie Jin laughed and said, "Junior Brother, your heroic act has already spread, and everyone here admires you a lot."

Only then did Lu Ye understand what was happening.

Following Xie Jin, they approached a tent, where Xie Jin said, "Junior Brother Yiye, please stay here for now. Someone will come later to treat your injuries."

"Thank you."

He couldn't refuse such kindness. While his own injuries were not too severe, having survived a couple of near-death experiences before, Lu Ye had a strong tolerance for pain at the moment.

However, Amber was quite severely injured, mainly because the Tailuo Sect cultivators had thrown too many Spirit Talismans at Amber, and later specifically used arrows to shoot at it; although Lu Ye had blocked many, some still got through.

"Then I won't disturb Junior Brother's rest," Xie Jin said as he was about to leave, then suddenly, as if something came to mind, he turned around and said, "Oh yes, almost forgot."

During the conversation, he took out a storage sack.

Chapter 123 Senior Sister Can Heal the Heart

Xie Jin tossed the storage sack to Lu Ye.

Lu Ye caught it, looking puzzled, "What is this...?"

Xie Jin explained with a smile, "This is the reward from Qingyu Mountain for Junior Brother, one merit for two Spirit Stones, with an extra reward of ten Spirit Stones for killing an enemy at the Level 5 realm. Junior Brother has killed one at Level 5, three at Level 4, five at Level 3, and six at Level 2 on your way here.

With Junior Brother's cultivation at Level 4, the merits you should receive are forty-nine points. You may check them."

He not only recited the number of people Lu Ye killed along the way, but also the cultivation levels and the exact amount of merits calculated.

If Lu Ye didn't know about the existence of the Shadow Moon Disc, he almost would have wondered if someone had gouged out their eyeballs and placed them on him.

"Before coming here, Senior Brother Tang Wu repeatedly instructed that these Spirit Stones must be handed over to Junior Brother personally. Please do not decline them, Junior Brother. I won't disturb you any longer. Have a good rest."

Xie Jin spoke extremely fast, not giving Lu Ye the chance to speak further, and left the tent.

Lu Ye was left, exchanging glances with Amber while holding the storage sack.

A moment later, Lu Ye checked the battlefield marking on the back of his hand and indeed found an increase of forty-nine merits, totaling two hundred and twenty-three.

The last Level 5 combat cultivator... is he dead? It seems likely, given that the last time Lu Ye passed by him on Amber, the strike that had been enhanced by Sharpness spirit runes had cut off half his neck. Lu Ye was in a hurry to escape at the time and did not check the outcome of the battle, but judging from the increase in merits, that Level 5 cultivator was indeed dead.

He nonchalantly tossed the storage sack onto a table nearby, sat down, and took out fresh water from his own storage sack to drink in large gulps.

This day and night of hurried travel and battle had truly exhausted him. Amber was now panting like a dog, so Lu Ye also gave it some water to drink.

Yiyi popped out, went over to the storage sack, and started to count the contents. She found there were a total of one hundred and eight Spirit Stones inside, and her eyes gleamed with excitement...

She had never seen so many Spirit Stones before. She was actually quite fond of money, just not as badly as Hua Ci. Mainly because she and Amber had no means of making money before and could only

rely on robbing low-level cultivators to barely make a living. This went on until they followed Lu Ye out of Qingyun Mountain, and things started to get better.

"Lu Ye, Lu Ye," Yiyi, a little excited, clutched the storage sack and didn't want to let go, "What do they mean by this?"

"They are trying to buy us off," he replied.

"Why?" Yiyi asked with an innocent look on her face.

Lu Ye briefly explained the situation regarding the Dragon Spring Meet to her, "As the side that has to fight against two others, Qingyu Mountain can recruit some helpers, mainly independent cultivators. As long as they do not seek aid from the factions with whom they have good relations, it does not count as a breach of contract.

We killed so many of Tailuo Sect's cultivators today, naturally Qingyu Mountain has the intention to recruit us."

All this information was recorded on the jade slip Xie Jin had given him. When Lu Ye saw this information, he had a guess in his heart, which was confirmed when Xie Jin handed him so many Spirit Stones.

Qingyu Mountain had sent more than twenty cultivators to escort him because they recognized his worth, a value that he had fought for along the way.

If he didn't have such skills, why would Qingyu Mountain care about his well-being? There were no previous ties to speak of, and every day many cultivators perished on the Spirit Stream battlefield.

But from the beginning to the end, they didn't mention recruitment. They sent a large number of people to escort him here, arranged for his healing, and even directly offered the rewards for killing his enemies. They handled it very nicely, to say the least; it wouldn't make anyone feel repulsed.

Tang Wu... Lu Ye thought of the name mentioned earlier by Xie Jin; this person must be the Level 9 cultivator from Qingyu Mountain.

"So that's how it is..." Yiyi, having understood the reasons, asked, "What do you think?"

Instead of answering, Lu Ye questioned, "What do you think?"

She looked down at the storage sack in her hand and slowly put it down, "If it's too dangerous, then forget it. The battle between the three factions here is too chaotic."

Lu Ye smiled, "Actually, it's not too dangerous. The cultivation of the cultivators participating in the Dragon Spring Meet is limited between Level 2 and Level 5 realms. As long as one is not attacked by too many Level 5 cultivators at the same time, there won't be any problems."

"You're planning on participating?" Yiyi tilted her head and looked at him.

"I want to sleep," he said.

Yiyi snickered, and then her gaze lifted to the outside of the tent, "Someone's coming." After saying this, she dived into Amber's body.

An agreeable voice came from outside, "Is Junior Brother Yiye here?"

"Please come in!"

The tent flap was lifted, and a young girl entered. She seemed to be around Yiyi's age, but certain areas were much more developed than Yiyi's. Not daring to say her front was as steep as a ridge and her side like a peak, but at least they were full and bulging.

She wore a square cloth on her head and also had something that looked like an apron on her body, marked with many splashes of blood, both large and small spots.

A healing cultivator from Qingyu Mountain?

Seeing her, Lu Ye was reminded of Hua Ci, who also dressed this way while healing others in the marketplace.

The girl didn't seem out of place, probably ordered by someone higher up, and after seeing Lu Ye, she smiled and said, "I am from Qingyu Mountain, my name is Mhu Ling."

Lu Ye stood and bowed, "I've seen Senior Sister."

Mhu Ling smiled, "I've come to check Junior Brother's injuries." As she said this, she went aside and began taking out some items from her storage sack.

Lu Ye said, "I'm not hurt. Please check my beast pet instead, it's more seriously injured."

"That won't do," Mhu Ling turned around, "Senior Brother Tang Wu has ordered that Junior Brother be treated well."

Seeing such enthusiasm from others, Lu Ye really found it hard to refuse and simply followed the instructions. Fortunately, he indeed had no serious injuries, as all the external wounds were not severe and could be dealt with casually. The only thing that bothered him was the internal injury caused by a head-on blow with a Level 5 combat cultivator.

However, that impact was mitigated by the Defense Spirit Runes, and after being treated by Mhu Ling with a series of techniques, he immediately felt much better.

After attentively and seriously treating Lu Ye's injuries, Mhu Ling then started to tend to Amber's wounds, pulling out one arrow after another that was embedded in Amber's body, and then applying herbal medicine.

Busy for most of an hour, Mhu Ling finally said her goodbyes and left. Before going, she left behind two healing pills, saying that Lu Ye and Amber should each take one.

Lu Ye did not stand on ceremony, and after she left, he and Amber split the pills and ate them.

Yiyi popped out, staring at Lu Ye with puffed-up cheeks.

"What's the matter?" Lu Ye was puzzled by her stare.

Yiyi didn't speak.

"What on earth happened?" Lu Ye was really confused.

"Hmph!" Yiyi turned her little head away.

Lu Ye stretched out his hand to pinch her cheek, lifting it a bit: "Speak up if you have something to say."

Suddenly letting go, Yiyi quickly dove into Amber's body as someone else approached.

Carrying a breeze of fragrance, a curvaceous woman came in and said gently, "Junior Brother, it's time for your treatment."

Lu Ye looked bewildered: "Didn't we just..."

The woman said, "That was then, this is now. Get on the bed."

Lu Ye marveled silently, Qing Yu must hold him in high regard for them to administer treatments twice, but he really wasn't seriously injured...

Seeing that Lu Ye was still hesitating, the female cultivator urged, "Get on quickly."

Healing cultivators seem to have short tempers, Lu Ye thought about refusing, but he was already pressed onto the bed by the woman, who then stripped off his shirt.

Soft hands began to roam over Lu Ye's chest as the female cultivator looked at him with amorous eyes: "I couldn't tell, Junior Brother, that your chest is so solid..." Her hand traced over those ferocious scars, admiring them endlessly, "A man's battle scars are truly intoxicating."

Lu Ye started to feel that something was not quite right.

As the woman's hand moved further, he quickly sat up, grasping her hand, "Senior Sister, are you from Qing Yu as a healing cultivator?"

The woman threw Lu Ye a flirty look: "A healing cultivator only heals the body, but Senior Sister can heal the heart!"

Lu Ye suddenly remembered, wasn't this the woman who had given him amorous glances earlier when he was following Xie Jin over?

This person was definitely not a healing cultivator from Qing Yu.

Holding onto her hand, Lu Ye said with a headache, "Senior Sister, I am injured."

The female cultivator said, "What do a few injuries matter? Life is short, and we should enjoy it while we can. We might die tomorrow once we reach the summit, don't you agree, Junior Brother?"

Lu Ye looked at her prominent chest and nodded continuously: "Senior Sister makes a lot of sense!"

Suddenly feeling two pairs of eyes on him, Lu Ye looked up and met Amber and Yiyi's eyes.

Yiyi was about to explode with anger, silently pointing out, and Amber immediately pounced with a growl, biting down.

Amidst the earth-shaking commotion, the woman cursed and ran out of the tent, one hand still rubbing her back. If it weren't for Amber's mercy, that bite could have crippled her.

The tent, which was fairly neat, was now a mess, and even the bed was collapsed...

Sitting on the ground helplessly, Lu Ye saw Yiyi with her cheeks all puffed up, glaring at him, and she angrily ground her teeth: "So you think what she said makes a lot of sense, huh?"

"Indeed, it does."

"What sense did it make, according to her?"

"She just has a great point," Lu Ye gestured around his chest.

Yiyi, fuming, looked down at her own chest, and after screaming, she dove into Amber's body.

Lu Ye and Amber looked at each other, eventually deciding to go find something to eat first. They had hardly eaten anything the whole day and night and were truly hungry, especially for two big eaters like themselves.

Stepping out of the tent, they found a campfire and took out some beast meat from Lu Ye's storage sack to barbecue. Before they even began eating, wounded cultivators came one after another, some bringing meat, others bringing wine, all very enthusiastic.

Since coming to this world, Lu Ye had never encountered so many enthusiastic cultivators. Fortunately, those cultivators just dropped off the stuff and left after exchanging a few words.

Lu Ye responded appropriately to each one, really quite fitting for a disciple from a big sect, thought the cultivators to themselves.

Chapter 124 Recruitment

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On the following day, in the valley, Lu Ye walked around while Mhu Ling, the healing cultivator, accompanied him.

He had been healing in the tent and felt too bored, so he went out for a walk and happened to meet Mhu Ling, who took the initiative to keep him company, which Lu Ye did not refuse.

Along the way, they encountered many cultivators who all greeted them enthusiastically.

It was natural for Mhu Ling to be so popular, as she was not only a healing cultivator but also had a pleasant appearance, which easily endeared her to others.

As for Lu Ye... now the entire Qing Yu Mountain camp of cultivators knew about a Level 4 cultivator named Yiye, who had fought his way out of the Tailuo Sect's rear alone and made it all the way to Qing Yu Mountain's territory, a feat that made him famous overnight.

Not only cultivators from the Qing Yu Mountain sect were here, but nearly half were independent cultivators who had been recruited. These independent cultivators were treated very well, with fine wine and dishes every day, immediate medical attention when injured, and Qing Yu Mountain even tallied merits daily and handed out the promised Spirit Stone rewards.

One merit was worth two Spirit Stones, and any spoils of war were kept by the independent cultivators themselves. Moreover, those with outstanding merits would even have the opportunity to go to Dragon Spring with Qing Yu Mountain disciples after the Dragon Spring Meet.

All these tangible benefits had been maintained by Qing Yu Mountain for fifteen years, which was why they could recruit many independent cultivators to help before every Dragon Spring Meet.

For those independent cultivators, this was an opportunity not to be missed. As long as they survived the Dragon Spring Meet, they could obtain many cultivation resources.

Life as an independent cultivator was tough, and there were few ways to obtain resources, so many ambitious ones were willing to take a gamble. Participating in the Dragon Spring Meet indeed had risks, but on the Spirit Stream battlefield, where was there no risk?

Although Lu Ye felt that Xie Jin would not deceive him, hearing from others was one thing and seeing with his own eyes was another.

Now it seemed that the information recorded on the jade slip given to him by Xie Jin was indeed true.

"The Dragon Spring Meet is not only about the futures of the disciples from the three powers but also a struggle between the three families. Therefore, no one dares to take it lightly, and each time everyone gives it their all.

I know Junior Brother Yiye comes from a not-so-ordinary background, and probably doesn't think much of those rewards, but for the sake of being part of the Haotian Alliance camp, if Junior Brother Yiye is willing, please support Qing Yu Mountain in whatever way you can.

The entire Qing Yu Mountain would be immensely grateful," said Mhu Ling, who clearly had not encountered Lu Ye by chance but had come looking for him on purpose.

Since the day before when Qing Yu Mountain had taken Lu Ye away, Han Zheyue and the Qin family had gone mad, relentlessly pressuring Qing Yu Mountain without regard for losses, forcing Qing Yu Mountain into a strategic retreat and giving up many hilltops. Now, they had retained control of fewer than thirty hilltops.

This put pressure on Tang Wu.

Originally, he had not planned to persuade Lu Ye. Although he did want to recruit him, he feared that poor persuasion might cause offense, so Tang Wu had decided to let things take their course. But now, the sentiment within Qing Yu Mountain was riled up, with many disciples clamoring for a fight to the death with those two families.

Under such circumstances, a real battle would indeed put both families through hardship, but Qing Yu Mountain would also certainly suffer severe casualties.

This was an outcome Tang Wu could not accept.

Therefore, he thought of Lu Ye. Mhu Ling had been treating Lu Ye and Amber for the past two days. As a female healing cultivator, she was the best candidate to persuade Lu Ye. Even if Lu Ye was not interested in participating in the Dragon Spring Meet, it would not offend him.

Lu Ye had become accustomed to being mistaken for someone of extraordinary origin. He stopped walking, pondered for a moment, and then said, "Your sect has shown me kindness, and it is only right to repay that kindness. I will participate in the Dragon Spring Meet."

He had never intended to refuse Qing Yu Mountain's recruitment. The previous day, when more than twenty cultivators from Qing Yu Mountain had come to his aid, it had indeed saved him a lot of trouble. In retrospect, Qing Yu Mountain seemed to have deliberately arranged a battle to attract his attention with a series of protracted howls, guiding him in the direction of escape.

When others are kind to him and their intention to recruit him is obvious, Lu Ye naturally reciprocates.

Moreover, participating in the Dragon Spring Meet was not particularly dangerous for him, and he could take the opportunity to earn some cultivation resources.

Although he still had many elixir pills that could take him through to the Level 5 realm, both he and Amber's consumption was great, and there would come a time when their resources would run out. He had already sold all the origin magnetic ore and needed to plan ahead to gather resources for future cultivation.

The Dragon Spring Meet was an opportunity.

Killing the cultivators from the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge would not only earn him some spoils of war, but every merit point could also be converted to Spirit Stone rewards. Even if he killed a Level 2 cultivator, that would be four Spirit Stones, which was enough for Yiyi to search for herbs for several days.

If he killed a Level 5 realm cultivator, besides the merit award in Spirit Stones, there would be an additional ten Spirit Stones—thirty in total!

How could Lu Ye refuse? His previous non-commitment was mainly due to him needing to heal and recover, and also because he wanted to see for himself if the treatment of the independent cultivators was indeed as described in the jade slip.

Now that he had confirmed everything, and since the other party had made their intentions clear, Lu Ye agreed smoothly.

Upon receiving an affirmative response, Mhu Ling looked surprised, "Are you serious, Junior Brother?" She had prepared many arguments and was ready to persuade with emotion and reason, not expecting them to be unnecessary.

Lu Ye nodded.

Mhu Ling happily looked at him, "Then I will contact Senior Brother Tang Wu and tell him the good news."

"However, I have one condition," Lu Ye spoke again.

"Tell me."

"Sister just mentioned that the Dragon Spring Meet will last a month? How many days have passed already?" Lu Ye asked.

"Seven days."

"That's too long. I have other matters to attend to. My condition is that I can withdraw from the Dragon Spring Meet at any time," Lu Ye didn't plan to tie himself down to Qing Yu Mountain. There were always uncertainties, and if the situation truly turned unfavorable, he would be able to leave at any moment. As for the matter he had to attend to, it was obviously just a pretext.

...

"No problem," Mhu Ling readily agreed and began to manipulate his battlefield marking.

In the great hall of the central mountain peak, Tang Wu received the message, raised his eyebrows slightly, and breathed a sigh of relief. With such a fierce general added to his ranks, he didn't dare to say that the tide would be completely turned for Mount Qingyu, but at the very least, it could be stabilized. As for the lost mountain peaks, they could be slowly recaptured.

At the moment, Han Zheyue seemed a bit insane, and the enemy's two factions were at the height of their morale. It was not wise to continue clashing directly with the enemy. It was better to let them cool down for a few days; they could always strike back after their enthusiasm waned.

"What are you looking at? I'll gouge out those eyeballs of yours!" Han Zheyue turned her head and yelled angrily at Tang Wu.

Tang Wu said indifferently, "When will you give me the two hundred merits?"

Han Zheyue snorted lightly, "Who can prove which camp he is from? Anyway, I didn't see it with my own eyes, so it doesn't count!"

She was being somewhat unreasonable. Lu Ye's white dot had already entered the territory of Mount Qingyu and had stayed there peacefully for two days, which clearly indicated his allegiance.

However, when night fell, and Han Zheyue saw that white dot suddenly turn blue, her face turned sour.

"Do you still want to be unreasonable?" Tang Wu asked.

Han Zheyue turned her head away, "I didn't see it with my own eyes anyway, say what you want."

Two hundred merits were not a small sum even for those at the Level 9 realm, so why would Han Zheyue give in easily? After all, she was a woman, and as their factions were enemies, what was wrong with being obstinate? Since Heaven's Augury did not launch any punishment, it meant she had found a loophole to exploit.

Tang Wu only snorted and did not entangle with her.

Yet Han Zheyue was unrelenting, "Don't think that recruiting this person will do you any good. He is just one man; the Dragon Spring Meet relies on having more people!"

She was right, as each mountain peak needed cultivators for defense. With too few people, their strength would be too dispersed, and it would be easy for the enemy to defeat them one by one. This was also why the Qin family initially occupied only twenty-five peaks—they did not have many people.

"Then just wait and see," Tang Wu said indifferently, not interested in getting into a war of words with her.

Back in the tent in the valley, Xie Jin hurried back to meet with Lu Ye and signed a contract. The contract stipulated that during the Dragon Spring Meet, Lu Ye would follow the summons of Mount Qingyu and could withdraw at any time.

Other rewards and penalties were all specified in detail.

This was quite satisfactory to Lu Ye.

"Junior Brother Yiye, would you prefer to defend or attack?" Xie Jin asked after collecting the contract.

"Tell me the details."

Xie Jin explained, "If you want to attack, I can arrange for junior brother to join the assault team or the hunting team, coordinating with other teams to capture peaks and confront the cultivators from the other two houses. It's a tough and dangerous assignment.

If you want to defend, then you just need to guard a certain peak, which is relatively leisurely, and you can retreat if it's too dangerous."

As expected, Lu Ye responded, "Attack!"

What was the point of just defending? It was uncertain whether the enemy would come to him. Only by taking the initiative could he kill more enemies and earn more Spirit Stones. Wasn't the reason for participating in the Dragon Spring Meet to gather resources for future cultivation?

"I knew junior brother would choose this," Xie Jin smiled. "It just so happens that my team is short one person. Join me, junior brother. Rest tonight and come find me tomorrow."

Having said that, Xie Jin wiped his hand over his battlefield marking, and a streak of blue light flew toward Lu Ye. Lu Ye reached out to meet it, and it fell into his own marking.

The second good friend was born...

As for the first... he had already deleted it.

After explaining some matters, Xie Jin left.

Yiyi popped out from Amber, "Lu Ye, are we going to participate in the Dragon Spring Meet?"

"Don't you want to participate?" Lu Ye asked.

Yiyi shook her head, "We'll go wherever you go." The day before, she'd been in a huff with Lu Ye, but she got over it the next day. She was even afraid that Lu Ye would be angry and was very careful for a while until she was sure that Lu Ye was as usual before she relaxed.

Lu Ye rubbed her head gently, "Amber was hurt by them; we have to take revenge. After all, what comes around goes around!"

Yiyi nodded, "That makes sense."

"I don't really have any 'sense,'" he replied.

"Anyway, let's beat them until they're devastated!" Yiyi did not want to discuss the topic of reason with Lu Ye—it was ultimately a very upsetting topic.

Chapter 125 Hunting

During the Dragon Spring Meet, clashes between cultivators from the three major powers often took the form of small-scale skirmishes by small squads.

In the past, there had been attempts at large-scale battles, where an area was designated and all cultivators from all sides were thrown into the region for a fierce fight to the death.

But after trying this twice, all parties were reluctant to continue.

The reason was that in such battles, each side suffered huge losses, and the costs were disproportionate to the benefits.

Small squad skirmishes were different; casualties could be effectively controlled, and the mountain defense cultivators, upon sensing the tide turning against them, could withdraw and preserve their strength.

There were three types of squads: one was the defense team, stationed at various peaks to fend off incoming enemies.

Another was the assault team, which took the initiative to strike and seize the enemy's mountaintops.

There was also a hunting team, roaming about, seizing any opportunity that arose, and if the chance was right, they would coordinate with the assault team to launch an attack.

Lu Ye was part of a hunting team.

There were only five people in the team, but each had impressive cultivation levels. Besides Xie Jin, who was from the Level 5 realm, the other three were all from Level 4.

Since the hunting team was most likely to engage in combat with the enemy, their cultivation requirements were relatively high.

Not only that, all five of them had mounts, granting them significant mobility.

Before dawn, Lu Ye gathered with Xie Jin and the others, got to know each other a little—the team consisted of four men and one woman. To Lu Ye's chagrin, the woman who had tried to ambush him the previous night was also there, her eyes shining whenever she saw Lu Ye, frequently throwing him flirtatious glances.

The woman, named Qiao Qiao'er, was an independent cultivator who had been recruited; she was bold in personality and dressed quite daringly.

The other two were named Song Xie and Tao Tiangang. Tao Tiangang was a disciple from Mount Qingyu sect headquarters, while Song Xie was also an independent cultivator who had been recruited.

Originally, there was another Level 4 cultivator from the Qing Yu sect in this team, but he had been killed a few days ago, and Lu Ye was brought in to fill the gap.

The mounts of the team members varied, with some riding wolves, others leopards, and one a giant wild boar. The most outrageous was Song Xie's mount, a huge scorpion with a body the size of a tabletop shining with a metallic luster, and its raised tail sparkled with a cold light that looked menacing, making one wonder how Song Xie managed to subdue such a monster.

Song Xie himself looked sickly, with greenish skin and an expression as if on the brink of death, leading Lu Ye to wonder if the man was going to collapse at any moment.

In the wilderness, silence enveloped the surroundings as the five riders stood by in silence, each closing their eyes to rest and regulate their breath.

In less than the time it took an incense stick to burn, Xie Jin suddenly spoke out, "Let's move!"

Four sets of eyes opened at once, and with a quick leap, they mounted their steeds and followed Xie Jin in a set direction.

On one of the peaks ahead, a group of Qing Yu sect cultivators were resisting an attack by the Qin family cultivators, creating a tense situation. Initially, the Qin family was just watching the fray, but after Han Zheyue lost his temper, Qin Wanli had no choice but to mobilize his own forces to join the attack and put pressure on Qing Yu sect.

It was the task of Xie Jin's five-member hunting team to collaborate with their sect's mountain defense cultivators in flanking attacks against the people from the Qin family, showcasing the powerful mobility of the hunting team.

However, they hadn't gone far when Xie Jin suddenly shouted, "Face the enemy!"

The enemy's hunting team had also set out, heading straight toward them. It wouldn't be long before the two teams met.

Moments later, the silhouettes of enemy cultivators riding various demon beasts could be faintly seen maneuvering nimbly through the forest, quickly closing the distance between the two sides.

Xie Jin led the charge with Lu Ye and Qiao Qiao'er flanking left and right, while Song Xie and Tao Tiangang brought up the rear. The team, in a V-formation, surged forward.

When they were about thirty yards apart, spirit force began to surge. Whether it was a mutual understanding or sheer coincidence, Xie Jin and the leading cultivator from the enemy's Level 5 unleashed a Golden Wheel Talisman each. As the Spirit Talismans were activated, golden arcs slashed toward the opposite side.

The sharp strikes felled trees and gouged the ground with slash marks as both sets of cultivators dodged and weaved through the attacks.

By the time the power of the Spirit Talismans was exhausted, the cultivators met head-on. Long whips unfurled from each team, crackling with spirit light—surely they were Spiritual Artifacts.

The whips entwined, and as both parties exerted force, they were pulled from their mounts simultaneously. At one end of a whip, Qiao Qiao'er looked disdainfully at an enemy Level 4 cultivator, "What kind of man uses a whip? Disgusting!"

The cultivator didn't respond with words but shook his whip free from the entanglement and lashed fiercely toward Qiao Qiao'er, who was no less determined. They instantly clashed fiercely, even their mounts began biting and tearing at each other.

While those two fought fiercely, everyone else was busy, too. In the blink of an eye, at least six people from both squads were knocked off their mounts.

The cultivators weren't really accustomed to fighting while riding their mounts, as the primary purpose of mounts was transportation, followed by assisting in battle; it was difficult to unleash their full strength while mounted.

Lu Ye dismounted as well, but he did so intentionally. During the head-on clash, he had managed to slash down an enemy Level 4 cultivator, who, though not injured, ended up in a rather sorry state.

Struggling to his feet, Lu Ye had already rushed over with his knife, slashing towards the man's neck.

The man reacted quickly, raising his Spiritual Artifact to block, but the slash didn't completely fall, as the long knife stopped in front of the opponent's Spiritual Artifact.

Spirit force surged, and the man suddenly looked up, only to see Lu Ye raising his hand toward him, with a pale red glow emanating from his palm.

The sound of flapping wings rang out as a fat bird appeared out of nowhere, crashing into the cultivator's chest.

With a boom, the spirit force exploded with a scorching heat spreading all around, and the cultivator screamed as he was sent flying, his chest a mess of blood and flesh.

Bright knife light flashed before his eyes, filling the man with terror. He quickly mobilized his protective spirit force, yet he only felt a slight pain in his neck before his vision began to tilt.

Lu Ye had already sheathed his knife, realizing that with magic and spells as support, killing the enemy was much easier than before. In the past, even if he could kill a cultivator at the Level 4 realm, it would take a good while, as cultivators are not fish on a chopping board to be sliced as one wishes—they wield weapons too, capable of blocking fatal strikes.

But with a Dao technique cast, unless the opponent used some defensive Spirit Talisman, it was difficult to block, allowing Lu Ye to slice as he pleased when the enemy's mind was in disarray.

Almost in a blink of an eye, a cultivator of the Level 4 realm fell under his blade, while the battles of others had barely begun. Lu Ye's fight had already ended.

He pressed his legs and dashed within a few steps to the nearest battlefield, where Xie Jin was locking horns fiercely with a Level 5 realm cultivator from the enemy side.

Both were combat cultivators and had dismounted at the first moment of clash to fight in close quarters. However, their strengths were evenly matched, which made it hard to determine a winner.

Suddenly, a chill crept up the back of the Level 5 cultivator. As the fierce wind struck, he quickly ducked his head. His scalp felt a coolness as strands of hair flew into the air, his scalp having been sliced off a piece.

When he raised his head again, he finally saw clearly who was attacking him, and not far away, another one of his clansmen lay in a pool of blood.

His mind shook violently—was someone already dead?

Suddenly recalling the message he'd received earlier, he stared at Lu Ye in horror, "It's you?"

He finally remembered—that two days ago, a guy single-handedly broke through Tailuo Sect's territory, apparently riding a snow-white big tiger.

It was said that more than a dozen people died there, including one from the Level 5 realm.

The Qin family hadn't previously had contact with Lu Ye, which is why they hadn't recognized him.

Xie Jin was already tough to deal with, and now another fierce felon had joined the fray. How could he possibly be his match? He immediately thought about retreating.

Yet, wanting to retreat at this moment was easier said than done. Lu Ye, joining forces with Xie Jin, unleashed a fierce assault that pushed the Level 5 cultivator back at every turn, leaving him wide open within a mere ten breaths' time.

Lu Ye, swift and agile, delivered a slash. The long knife gleamed with spirit light, enhanced by spirit runes. As the blade fell, the man was gutted, screaming out as he collapsed to the ground.

Xie Jin's longsword flickered, piercing through the opponent's wrist and severing his tendons.

With a clang, the weapon hit the ground, and Lu Ye's long knife, flipping in motion, thrust downwards, stabbing into the opponent's heart.

Pulling out his blade, blood gushed forth. The next instant, Lu Ye and Xie Jin split up, each darting toward the left and right, where two other battles raged intensely.

Lu Ye pounced towards Qiao Qiao'er's battlefield. She and the male cultivator were swirling their long whips in thrilling fashion, sparks of spirit light constantly flickering on them. Qiao Qiao'er's face had been whipped, leaving one side of her cheek severely swollen with a very visible lash mark. Her opponent didn't fare much better, and it was unclear what injury he'd sustained.

At the moment, he stood in a strange posture, clenching his legs together with a face pale as paper.

Seeing that their side had already lost two people, and the strongest among them at the Level 5 realm was dead, the male cultivator knew his time was short. Barely enduring Qiao Qiao'er's whip, his skin splitting and flesh tearing, he quickly fumbled in his storage sack for a Spirit Talisman to throw at her.

The Spirit Talisman exploded, transforming into three radiating slashes that instantly struck at Qiao Qiao'er's face.

Qiao Qiao'er tried to dodge but couldn't avoid them completely. Frantically retreating, she reached for a Golden Body Talisman from her own storage sack. Just then, a figure suddenly leaped in front of her, and a shield-like object with flickering spirit light appeared in front.

Thud, thud, thud... The three slashes fell but couldn't shake the shield at all.

With the crisis averted, Qiao Qiao'er blinked up at the figure standing before her and smiled, but the injury on her face made her smile appear rather ghastly and ferocious.

The rumbling sound of impact was heard as a wild boar, with the momentum of a charge, barreled towards them. The male cultivator, just hit by Qiao Qiao'er's whip and already battered, was unable to avoid it.

Thump, the boar sent the male cultivator flying, its tusks ripping off a chunk of flesh. By the time he hit the ground, the Level 4 cultivator had breathed his last.

With a whip crack, Qiao Qiao'er's angry whip exploded the man's head open like a smashed watermelon.

On the other side, Song Xie's coughing could be heard. Near him, the giant scorpion's stinger impaled a person, lifted high in the air. The man was not yet dead and struggled violently, his blood and viscera falling continuously, presenting a bloody scene.

Chapter 126 Confrontation

Lu Ye's squad consisted of five people, and the Qin family's squad also consisted of five. Not only were their numbers equal, but even their cultivation configurations were the same.

It's not that both sides didn't want to assemble a better team; they simply didn't have enough manpower. The whole Hundred Peaks Mountain range was extremely vast, and squads like the one Lu Ye was in were numerous, each one responsible for a different area.

In less than half the time it takes to brew a cup of tea, four out of the five people in the squad were dead, leaving only the last Level 4 cultivator desperately fleeing for his life.

This Level 4 cultivator was able to escape not because he was stronger but because he had better luck. In the initial charge, he wasn't thrown off his mount. When he considered dismounting to join the fight, he saw Lu Ye slaughtering a clansman and immediately felt that something was wrong.

After Lu Ye and Xie Jin joining forces to kill the Level 5 cultivator, he didn't hesitate any longer and rode his mount to escape.

Tao Tiangang gave chase, but it probably wouldn't be of much use. With the enemy having mounts to speed away and being set on escaping, catching up would be very difficult.

Amidst the bloodshed, Xie Jin and the others looked at each other with disbelief in their eyes.

This... they won? It seemed too easy.

They had clashed with the enemy's hunting teams before, but each fight was incredibly fierce and desperate. When both sides had similar numbers and cultivation levels, it was hard to determine the victor.

But looking at this battle, not only did they win decisively but also killed four enemies while, except for some injuries sustained by Qiao Qiao'er, the rest of them were almost completely unharmed.

The contrast before and after was drastic.

They couldn't help but look toward Lu Ye, recalling the recent battle where he was the one to first kill a Level 4 cultivator, opening a gap, and then assisting Xie Jin, promptly disposing of the enemy Level 5 cultivator, leading to their overwhelming victory.

Indeed, he was the man who single-handedly fought his way through the Tailuo Sect's territory. Although they had heard about Lu Ye's feat and admired him, they always felt luck played a significant part in it.

But now they realized it wasn't just luck; without the corresponding strength, even good luck wouldn't suffice.

The enemy Level 4 cultivator died too quickly, making it easy for Mount Qingyu's side to create a scenario where they outnumbered the enemy.

Xie Jin let out a sigh of relief. With Lu Ye's striking performance in his first battle as part of the squad, he felt reassured, finally understanding why Senior Brother Tang Wu held him in such high regard.

He nodded slightly toward Lu Ye as a sign of acknowledgment and said, "Thirty breaths, clean up the battlefield!"

Everyone immediately sprang into action.

In the battle that had just taken place, the Qin family's hunting team not only lost four cultivators but also had a demon beast killed by Amber—the one ridden by the first cultivator slain by Lu Ye.

As for the other demon beasts, they had all fled; without masters to command them, they wouldn't return to the Qin family but would roam the Hundred Peaks Mountain until caught or killed by another cultivator.

It could be said that this skirmish had effectively wiped out one of the Qin family's hunting teams, greatly aiding the future strategic situation.

Lu Ye stepped forward and hastily dismembered the demon beast killed by Amber, stuffing it into his storage sack. This would serve as sustenance for both him and Amber and was very nourishing when consumed.

Thirty breaths later, fully equipped and ready, Xie Jin still led the way, riding at the forefront with the four others rushing towards a mountain peak, their original mission target.

At that moment, the mountain peak was engulfed in a fierce battle. Defenders from Mount Qingyu were fending off attackers from the Qin family.

Since Mount Qingyu's territory had been reduced to less than thirty peaks, there were now more cultivators partaking in the defense, making the mountain peak harder to conquer.

The Qin family had no realistic chance of capturing that peak; their main goal was to put on a show for the Tailuo Sect to see, especially since Han Zheyue was still fuming. Subject to the whims of others, the Qin family had no choice but to act accordingly.

Originally, the Qin family's hunting team was supposed to block Mount Qingyu's hunting teams, making the assault less perilous. But the two hunting teams had barely clashed when, on the Shadow Moon Disc, the red dots representing the Qin family extinguished one after another, leaving only one survivor who fled.

This alarmed Qin Wanli, who had been keeping a close eye on the situation, and he immediately ordered the assault team to retreat as further delay could lead to encirclement by Mount Qingyu.

Mount Qingyu had been holding back their anger over the past few days, with multiple peaks seized and many fellow disciples killed, which caused them to see red. When the Qin family came to cause trouble, they were more than ready to counterattack. Using their advantage in numbers and the high ground, Mount Qingyu's defense was like a wave crashing down.

They were only tasked with driving the Qin family away, but following a new command, a Level 5 cultivator leading the defense shouted, "Kill!"

With that, a large number of the defenders charged forth.

The two sides continued to clash as they descended the mountain, with the might of spirit talismans and spells flying back and forth, creating an intense spectacle.

The Qin family's assault team barely made it to the bottom of the mountain when a rumbling noise erupted from one side. The leading cultivator looked up to see five riders charging out, and he felt a chill run through him.

The newcomers were naturally Xie Jin leading the hunting squad. Arranged in a wedge formation, the five riders and their mounts sliced into the Qin family's forces, and in the ensuing clanging of metal, several low-level cultivators fell into pools of blood.

Xie Jin didn't dismount but turned around and led Lu Ye and the rest in another charge, completely disrupting the Qin family's formation.

After two charges, everyone had suffered some injuries. It was then they dismounted and started searching for their individual targets.

Lu Ye, wielding his blade, charged around the edges of the battlefield. The light of Defense Spirit Runes blinked continuously on his body, blocking one attack after another. With a cleave of his long knife, a cultivator was chopped down to the ground, with blood spraying several feet away.

On the Qin family's side, there were not many at the Level 5 realm, only two in fact. Most were at Level 2-3 realms, and against someone like Lu Ye, their cultivation was like paper paste. One couldn't claim a single slice would do a child in, but after two or three slashes, few people could stand it, and those who tried to resist would have their weapons chopped in half along with their bodies.

Every now and then, he would also activate a Dao technique. Although his cultivation was only at Level 4, any cultivator he set his sights on usually didn't survive past three breaths.

Cries and curses rose into the air, mixing with the chaos of the battlefield.

The Qin family suffered heavy losses. On the Shadow Moon Disc, dots of red blinked out one after another, causing Qin Wanli's eyelids to twitch uncontrollably, and Han Zheyue's expression became extremely solemn. Since the beginning of the Dragon Spring Meet, there had never been such bizarre battle casualties.

In previous battles, even if one side suffered losses, the losses wouldn't be too significant, and the side that was at an advantage wouldn't cling stubbornly to their opponents, as doing so could easily place themselves in danger.

But within just a short moment, a Qin family assault team had been massacred until only half were left, and judging from the situation, their numbers were still rapidly decreasing.

They fought while retreating, climbing towards the mountains behind them. Those peaks were occupied by the Qin family, and the mountaintop defense squad stationed there was hurrying to provide support, yet they needed a bit more time.

Lu Ye now targeted a cultivator at the Level 5 realm, for in Mount Qingyu's reward system, killing someone from the Level 5 realm yielded the highest rewards. Not only did it provide twenty Spirit Stones as battle merit, but there was also an additional bonus of ten stones, making it a total of thirty stones, enough to buy three Spirit-Nurturing Pills.

He looked at the blood-covered Level 5 cultivator in front of him as if he were gazing at a pile of shining Spirit Stones!

Joining the Dragon Spring Meet was partly to take advantage of the situation and partly to gather resources for future cultivation. Lu Ye naturally wouldn't miss the opportunity to kill an enemy from the Level 5 realm.

The long knife descended, its blade flickering. The Level 5 cultivator, with a ferocious face, relying on his higher level of cultivation, fearlessly exchanged blows with Lu Ye. However, he soon paid the price for his bravery.

Because his attacks were mostly blocked by Lu Ye's Defense Spirit Runes, whereas Lu Ye's chopping strikes couldn't be withstood by him.

In just ten breaths of fighting, the man was drenched in blood. Had he not slapped a Golden Body Talisman on his body in time, he would have probably already been dead.

His face filled with disbelief as he stared at Lu Ye, his mind occupied with a single thought: what kind of Spiritual Artifact was Lu Ye wielding in his hand, and why was it so sharp?

Before he could finish his thought, Lu Ye raised his hand, spirit force surged, and a plump bird flapped towards him. The man reacted quickly and dodged to the side immediately.

The plump bird brushed past him as it flew by, but a vulnerability had been exposed. Lu Ye brought his blade down in a slash. Having experienced the sharpness of Lu Ye's blade before, the man didn't dare to block it and rolled on the ground to awkwardly escape.

Just as he was getting up, a long whip came whirling from behind, wrapping around his neck. The whip glinted with spirit light as it violently pulled him backward.

The cultivator was immediately jerked into the air.

Lu Ye stepped forward swiftly, chopping three times at the man's suspended body. The first strike caused the light of his Golden Body Talisman to dim, the second broke through the protection of the talisman, and the third sliced his body apart.

When he hit the ground, blood instantly stained the earth red, and he was without breath.

Lu Ye looked up to see Qiao Qiao'er holding the long whip, throwing him a flirtatious glance accompanied by bloodstains on her face and a swollen cheek... an eyesore!

"Be careful," Qiao Qiao'er shouted.

A long spear stabbed towards Lu Ye from behind, aimed at the back of his head.

But the incoming long spear was blocked by the Defense Spirit Runes. Lu Ye turned, raised his arm to trap the long spear, and then his blade followed the spear to shave off the attack.

A half palm flew out as the cultivator who tried to ambush Lu Ye screamed and retreated, while a Qing Yu mountain disciple charged from the side and took his life with a sword.

In such a frenzied battle, an individual's ability to adapt was put to the test. Even the slightest carelessness could result in death on the spot.

"Qing Yu mountain thieves, don't get carried away with your insolence!" a loud shout suddenly came from not far away, originating from the nearby Qin family's mountaintop defense squad's reinforcements.

After receiving their orders, they had rushed over in a hurry, thinking they could collaborate with the assault team to counter-attack. But when they arrived and took a good look, the assault team had hardly a few people left.

Amidst the chaotic battlefield, more than thirty Qing Yu mountain cultivators, soaked in blood, were teeming with murderous intent. The ground was littered with the corpses and severed limbs of Qin family cultivators, the red blood staining the earth thoroughly.

In the midst of such an Asura Purgatory, everyone from Qing Yu mountain turned their heads towards the source of the voice, their eyes gleaming red.

The scalp of the cultivator who had shouted grew numb, and the supporting Qin Clan disciples instinctively stopped in their tracks.

"Quick... Retreat!"

Chapter 127 - Led by the Nose

The Qin family's mountaintop defense squad rushed to the edge of the battlefield, and after only a glance from a distance, they hastily retreated. It wasn't that they were cowardly or afraid of trouble, but the difference in numbers was simply too great.

About a dozen of them had arrived, and originally, if they could have linked up with the assault team, they would have had the fighting strength to even counterattack.

But the assault team had died too quickly, and by the time they reached the spot, only a few members of their own assault team remained. In such a circumstance, even if they had forced an attack, it wouldn't have led to any good outcome, and choosing to retreat was the wise move.

The thirty-some people from Mount Qingyu didn't rush in to pursue; instead, they spread out, encircling the few members from the Qin Clan's assault team.

At this moment, these few formed a circle, back to back with each other, in utter despair.

But no one begged for mercy, because everyone knew that begging was useless. With the opposing sides standing firm and years of grudges between them, begging for mercy would only invite ridicule from enemies.

"Kill!" Among the survivors was one from the Level 5 realm, but he was already seriously wounded. Crying out loudly, he led the remaining clan members in a charge toward one direction.

Facing such desperately fighting enemies, naturally, no one was foolish enough to confront them directly, lest they carelessly get dragged down to die together in a futile exchange.

What greeted them were a series of magic and spells.

After reaching the Level 5 realm, cultivators could usually determine their own sect, and at Level 4, they were already preparing for their future path. So, cultivators at this level who wanted to walk the path of a magic cultivator had often begun studying magic and spells.

However, due to their low cultivation and lack of proficiency in casting, it was very difficult for them to perform a complete spell in the midst of fierce battle. But since they had started preparing to cast their spells before the Qin family members made a move, the spells were ready to go at the perfect moment.

Less than ten spells, each shining with multicolored lights of various element signs, among which an especially large firebird was the most eye-catching.

The spells struck down, and several Qin Clan cultivators died on the spot, leaving only the one from the Level 5 realm. Covered in wounds, he threw himself in front of an independent cultivator recruited by Mount Qingyu, unable to summon his protective spirit force.

Laughter erupted from the man who was saying, "I deserve to strike it rich," as he thrust his spear straight through, piercing the Level 5 realm cultivator completely.

The nearby few looked at him with envy, mainly because the killer, a mere Level 3 cultivator, had now acquired the merits of fifteen points for slaying one from the Level 5 realm. Along with Mount Qingyu's reward, this spear thrust had earned him forty Spirit Stones!

For independent cultivators, forty Spirit Stones was a considerable fortune, enough to cover two or three months of cultivation needs for those with lower cultivation levels.

"Still got the strength?" Xie Jin turned his head to look at Lu Ye who was nearby, wiping his blade clean of blood on a corpse at his feet, and Lu Ye nodded silently in response.

He then looked toward the other members of the hunting team.

Song Xie coughed as though he was about to die any second, gasping hard as he said, "I can't do anything else... but I still have the strength to kill!"

Tao Tiangang naturally looked up to his senior brother as a leader, and Qiao Qiao'er snorted, "If all you several men can, of course, a woman like me can too!"

The logic behind this was unfathomable.

Xie Jin then smiled, "If everyone still has the strength, then let's chase!"

The battle, naturally, wasn't going to end so simply; for the people from Mount Qingyu, it had only just begun.

The five called over their own mounts, and Xie Jin signaled to one of his own Level 5 realm cultivators, then led Lu Ye and the others toward the opposing mountain peak.

Immediately following, that Level 5 cultivator led the remaining members of his assault team to quickly catch up.

Fortunes of war can change in an instant; just moments ago it had been the Qin family attacking Mount Qingyu, and now it was Mount Qingyu's turn to counterattack.

The cultivators moved quickly, and it was only when Lu Ye and the others reached halfway up the mountain that they saw the figures of the Qin Clan disciples ahead, hearing the commotion behind them, the Qin clan members all turned back and were shocked and disorganized for a moment.

The foremost one from the Level 5 realm immediately roared, "Don't panic, form up the array, they're only five, it's the hunting team from Mount Qingyu."

It must be said, his response was not incorrect; scattering in disarray at this moment would only give Lu Ye and the others the chance to pick them off one by one, and the mobility of the hunting team was undoubtedly stronger than theirs.

However, Xie Jin had no intention of charging to fight, pulling the reins of his mount from dozens of yards away, simply watching the foremost Level 5 realm from a distance.

As their eyes met, the Level 5 cultivator's heart skipped a beat, roughly understanding Xie Jin's plan.

The hunting team was obviously stalling them; with the assault team from Mount Qingyu coming from behind, if they stood their ground here, they wouldn't be able to escape once Qingyu's assault team arrived.

"Retreat slowly!"

With this thought, the Level 5 realm bellowed again.

The mountaintop defense squad retreated in an orderly fashion.

Just as they started to move, Xie Jin led Lu Ye and the others toward them.

"Hold steady!" The Level 5 realm shouted again, and the Qin group immediately got into position to meet the incoming attack. However, the five riders from Mount Qingyu made a circle from thirty paces away and disappeared without a trace.

As they were preparing to retreat, the five riders reappeared, watching from a distance.

After several such occurrences, Qin family's men were being toyed with to the extreme, and the cultivators at Level 5 realm's complexions were as dark as the bottom of a pot, cursing Xie Jin to a bloody mess in their hearts. It was very uncomfortable to be led around by the enemy like this.

Fortunately, just moments ago, he had received a message that the mountaintop defense squad left behind on the peak had come down to support them. As long as they could join forces, there was a high probability they could resist the attack from Mount Qingyu.

Hold firm and wait for reinforcements! He made up his mind.

However, the transmission that followed sank his heart to the bottom.

Because the assault team from Mount Qingyu did not come towards them but circled around them, heading straight for the top of the mountain!

They themselves were part of the mountaintop defense squad, just that they had been ordered to support their own assault team. Unfortunately, they couldn't be of much help before retreating.

In other words, the defense squad for this mountain peak was divided into two groups, one was them and the other was on their way to support them. Each group had about a dozen people, totaling around thirty.

And the assault team from Mount Qingyu was heading straight for that group!

All three forces had Level 9 cultivators monitoring the Shadow Moon Disc, so the movements of each family's cultivators couldn't be concealed from others. However, there would definitely be a slight delay in time through the transmission of messages.

Also because of this, during the Dragon Spring Meet, the casualties among the cultivators from the three families were under control. When the situation looked bad, Tang Wu and the others would make certain adjustments; they wouldn't let their cultivators go to their deaths lightly.

However, the previous battle was the first to break free from the control of the Level 9 cultivators. Qin Wanli, who was in charge of the Shadow Moon Disc, had not expected his own hunting team to lose four members so quickly, and by the time he ordered the assault team to retreat, it was already too late.

One mistake led to a cascade of others.

At this moment, Mount Qingyu's assault team was heading straight for the summit, with less than thirty people, and on their side, only a dozen. The difference in numbers was significant; if an engagement occurred, casualties for the Qin family would be inevitable.

"Where are those guys?" The Level 5 cultivator from the Qin family looked around but could no longer see Xie Jin and the others.

A clan member beside him spoke up weakly, "They haven't shown up at all."

"This is bad!" The Level 5 cultivator suddenly realized something, fearing that those five people might also have gone to attack the other part of the mountaintop defense squad. If so, the situation would be terribly unfavorable, "Hurry up and move out!"

At the same time, he transmitted a message to inquire about the five people's whereabouts.

In just 5 breaths, he received a reply, "Above you!"

No sooner had he checked this message than he heard the sound of demon beasts charging. Looking up, he saw the five riders from Mount Qingyu charging down towards them with an overwhelming force!

"Activate the talismans, we must block them!" he bellowed.

Whoosh, whoosh, whoosh, in an instant, seven or eight Spirit Talismans were triggered, hurtling towards the enemy above, each exploding with the power of the talismans, ferocious in their might.

But Lu Ye and his companions were well-prepared, and as the talismans were activated, they swiftly scattered, relying on the swiftness of their mounts to avoid the barrage of talisman attacks.

After the first volley of talismans finished, except for Song Xie, who was rather unlucky and got blown off his mount, the other four managed to avoid danger. Even Song Xie quickly got up, appearing to be fine.

"Again!" Following the bellow of the Level 5 cultivator, another volley of talismans was unleashed.

However, this time the attack was even less effective than before, as Lu Ye and the others had taken cover behind trees well in advance.

As the second wave of talisman attacks ceased, Lu Ye and his comrades reemerged. The fluctuation of spirit force emanated from them, each holding a Spirit Talisman in hand.

The Spirit Talismans were provided by Xie Jin, and it must be said that Mount Qingyu was quite generous with their supplies.

With five Spirit Talismans activated, fire serpents, Wind Blades, and ice spikes all smashed towards the Qin family cultivators at once. Qiao Qiao'er triggered a Golden Wheel Talisman, a basin-sized golden round disc in front of her, bombarding the Qin family's side with a frenzied bombardment, laughing wildly.

Although the Qin family cultivators tried to dodge, without mounts, they naturally didn't have the maneuverability of Lu Ye and his party. When the barrage of talismans hit, one was killed instantly, and several others were injured.

The scene of chaos unfolded, and before the Qin family side could catch a breath, they heard the sound of demon beasts charging again. The leading Level 5 cultivator looked up, only to see Lu Ye and his party charging down again.

At this time, the originally tight formation had become a complete disarray. In the haste, they could hardly organize to face this charge that had the advantage of the terrain. It was genuinely difficult for the Qin family to resist.

As they passed by each other, Lu Ye's blade flashed, severing a large head that flew into the air. Song Xie's giant scorpion tail pierced another figure, who screamed continuously. Qiao Qiao'er's long whip wrapped around a cultivator, dragging him to the ground, though he broke free soon after.

Xie Jin and Tao Tiangang had no kills, but the former blocked the Qin family's Level 5 cultivator, while the latter tied up a portion of the enemy's forces and attention.

The five riders broke through the ranks and, under Xie Jin's lead, circled around only to return above the Qin Clan disciples. The second round of charging began.

Chapter 128 - The Crippled Qin Family

After one incense stick's time, the battle had subsided, and five mounts were licking their wounds, while Lu Ye and his four companions each leaned against a large tree, either tending to their injuries or regulating their breath.

Qin Clan disciples' corpses were scattered all around, the Level 5 realm disciple who died the most miserably. He lived the longest and was encircled and killed by Lu Ye and the others; his body was chopped into several pieces.

In just half a day, the hunting team had fought three battles. They first encountered the enemy's hunting team, then joined forces with their own mountaintop defense squad to annihilate the enemy's assault team, and finally, with the power of five people, they wiped out half of the enemy's mountaintop defense squad. The victory was indeed significant.

In such frequent and intense exchanges, both the cultivators and their mounts suffered injuries, luckily none of them severe.

"Thanks!" Qiao Qiao'er came closer with her soft body and thanked Lu Ye.

While they had jointly attacked that Level 5 realm cultivator, Lu Ye clearly had the opportunity to kill the opponent but left the final blow to someone else. Eventually, it was Qiao Qiao'er who was luckier and ended the opponent's life, earning herself thirty Spirit Stones.

In these three battles, if anyone was asked who killed the most enemies, it was undoubtedly Lu Ye. He alone accounted for thirty percent of the team's total kills. During the last stand of that Level 5 realm opponent, it was he who faced the enemy at the front, blocking the attacks.

Otherwise, even if his side had managed to kill the adversary, they would have paid some price, and it could potentially have led to more casualties.

Having already gained a lot, Lu Ye was naturally not too greedy. Everyone was risking their lives fighting here; no one's life was more valuable than another's. Given the chance, he was still willing to help others.

Life as an independent cultivator was indeed not easy.

"You deserve it," Lu Ye responded casually while restoring his own spirit force, slightly shifting away to the side, as he was somewhat overwhelmed by the woman's enthusiasm.

Qiao Qiao'er edged closer to him and whispered, "I'll come find you tonight."

"Roar..." A snow-white large head suddenly squeezed in between them, a pair of compelling, soul-stealing tiger eyes staring at Qiao Qiao'er.

"Forget I said anything," Qiao Qiao'er quickly got up, placing her hands behind her back, and moved to sit elsewhere, recalling the unpleasant memories of the previous night.

This scene made Song Xie, who was tending to his wounds, burst into loud laughter, which soon turned into an uncontrollable cough.

Qiao Qiao'er shot a dagger-like glare at him: "Cough to death!"

Some rustling sounds and waves of spirit force fluctuations came from not far away.

Everyone tensed up, but Xie Jin raised his hand and said, "Don't panic, it's our own people."

It was indeed their own people. The assault team had already taken down this mountain, killed quite a few enemies, and had hurried over to provide support. The leading Level 5 realm, upon arriving, was dumbfounded: "It's all over?"

They had thought it would be a tough battle here, considering the hunting team had only five people while the Qin family had more than a dozen. Even with mounts, the hunting team at most would have managed to hold the enemies at bay. On their way here, they were all prepared for a fierce fight, only to find upon arrival that the battle had already ended.

Seeing the number of corpses around, the Level 5 realm cultivator gasped in shock: they had annihilated the enemy...

This hunting team of their own was this strong? He had never realized it before.

The Level 5 realm looked at Xie Jin in shock. Xie Jin nodded towards him, and he immediately understood.

It wasn't that their own hunting team was particularly strong, but rather, they had an exceptionally fierce member in their team.

In previous assaults, Lu Ye had always managed to kill at least one cultivator each time, and if lucky, two. The others simply did not have this capability.

After several rounds, the Qin family's half of the mountaintop defense squad had no strength to resist anymore. They had wanted to scatter and flee, but without mounts, they simply couldn't escape.

The Level 5 realm was somewhat annoyed. In their rush to come and support Xie Jin's squad, they let seven or eight Qin cultivators escape. If they had known that the battle here would end so quickly, they could have completely wiped out their opponents.

But the outcome wasn't too bad.

Xie Jin briefly discussed with the Level 5 realm, and then the assault team returned to keep the mountaintop.

Meanwhile, he led Lu Ye and the others back towards their own territory. All five people and their mounts needed treatment, and after the consecutive battles, everyone was greatly depleted and needed proper recovery.

After crossing two mountain peaks and reaching the third, tents were already set up. This was Mount Qingyu, with over twenty people responsible for holding it.

However, Lu Ye saw Mhu Ling there, along with two others who also appeared to be healing cultivators.

It was clear why Mount Qingyu had arranged for several healing cultivators to be here; it was to facilitate their treatment. Still, this was quite dangerous as healing cultivators, despite their ability to defend themselves, were generally a bit behind cultivators of the same level. If Mount Qingyu were attacked by Tailuo Sect or the Qin family, it was almost certain these healers wouldn't escape.

Inside the tent, Mhu Ling diligently tended to the injuries of Lu Ye and Amber, sweating profusely from her efforts.

The man and tiger were not seriously injured. After receiving treatment from Mhu Ling and taking a healing pill, they were almost fully recovered by the next day.

The next day, Xie Jin once again led everyone out to fight. However, this time they had no opportunity to clash with the Qin family's hunting team, which seemed to be avoiding them. Even the original hunting team had been reassigned to the mountaintop defense squad, and Lu Ye and the others could only cooperate with their own assault team to capture the enemy's mountains.

Irresistible force!

One mountain after another was taken.

In just three short days, the Qin family had lost eight mountains. Initially, the Qin family had occupied twenty-five mountains, having captured two from Mount Qingyu before, but now they had not only spit those out but also lost six more.

Inside the main hall of the central mountain, Qin Wanli's expression was as grim as if his father had just died.

From what the Shadow Moon Disc showed, out of one hundred mountains, the Qin family was left with only nineteen, Mount Qingyu held thirty-two, and Tailuo Sect occupied the most, with forty-nine mountains—nearly half. This number was terrifying. Even when Mount Qingyu had the advantage in the past, the most they ever held was forty-six mountains.

The number forty-nine had broken the records of previous years.

The situation arose mainly because Mount Qingyu had, on the one hand, taken territory from the Qin family in the past three days and, on the other hand, abandoned their own. Whenever Tailuo Sect's assault team came to attack, the defense squad would withdraw in advance, giving up their mountains without a fight.

In this way, they could avoid unnecessary losses and ensure the combat effectiveness of the defense squad.

Tang Wu's plan was simple: avoid clashing with Tailuo Sect for now, cripple the Qin family first, and then deal with Tailuo Sect once they had a free hand.

Qin Wanli was no fool and could see this point, but what could he do when confronting it? The rules were clear, and each mountain represented a quota to enter Dragon Spring, which the Qin family couldn't just ignore.

"Senior Brother Tang, isn't this going a bit too far?" Qin Wanli said with a worried look at Tang Wu.

"Where is it too far?" Tang Wu replied indifferently. "Mount Qingyu is acting within the rules, without breaking any agreements. How can there be any talk of being excessive? Your Qin family wants a share in Dragon Spring, naturally, there must be a price to pay."

Qin Wanli thought to himself that the price was indeed too steep. With the three days of battle, over a hundred of his clan's disciples had died or were injured, and the Qin family could not sustain such attrition.

On the Shadow Moon Disc, another batch of blue dots moved toward the mountain occupied by red dots, clearly going to attack. Comparing both sides' numbers and cultivation, Qin Wanli sighed. They definitely couldn't hold it this time, and who knew how many would die.

His face changed several times before he said gruffly, "Senior Brother Tang, my Qin family needs eighteen mountains."

Tang Wu looked up at him and the corner of his mouth curled, "Granted!"

Qin Wanli exhaled a breath of relief and quickly spurred on the battlefield marking to issue commands. Shortly afterward, the red dots on one mountain began to withdraw, and a swarm of blue dots surged up the peak, easily taking it over.

Qin Wanli stealthily glanced at Han Zheyue, and indeed saw that Han Zheyue was glaring at him. He could only smile helplessly. The Qin family couldn't stir up more trouble. He had just told Tang Wu that he wanted eighteen mountains, which implied that he wouldn't disturb them further, nor would he create more trouble...

Tang Wu had agreed to this request.

All that was left now was the contest between Mount Qingyu and Tailuo Sect.

This naturally displeased Han Zheyue, but what could her displeasure do? While the Qin family had been enjoying the show from the sidelines, Han Zheyue insisted they get involved.

This involvement resulted in not only heavy casualties among their people, but they also lost mountains until only eighteen remained, while Tailuo Sect suffered little loss and now occupied nearly half of the mountain peaks.

Han Zheyue clearly understood the Qin family's concerns. A family that had only risen thirty years ago didn't have the deep foundations of the other two families. Thus, she didn't plan to press Qin Wanli further, merely glaring at him before turning to look at Tang Wu, "Despicable!"

"The roar of the powerless!" Tang Wu said coolly.

Angrily, Han Zheyue retorted, "If you dare, come and fight! Always avoiding conflict, what kind of man are you? Are all from Mount Qingyu cowards?"

"You want to fight?" Tang Wu turned his head to look at her. "Then, as you wish."

As his words fell, the situation on the Shadow Moon Disc suddenly changed. From where both their territories met, wave after wave of blue dots moved out, attacking the mountain peaks held by black dots.

The corner of Tang Wu's mouth showed a mocking smile, "Spreading yourself too thin, can you manage?"

Each clan had only so many disciples, so during the period of the Dragon Spring Meet, holding more mountains wasn't always better. Holding too many mountains could spread their defending force too thin, just like now. Although Han Zheyue had tried to strengthen the frontier mountains' defenses, relative to the enemy's offensive force, it still proved too weak.

Once Mount Qingyu attacked, Tailuo Sect's chances of winning were slim.

"I please as I see fit, can you control that?" Han Zheyue gritted her teeth, and under her annoyance, orders were issued one after another. Moments later, a scattered group of black dots continuously moved forward to reinforce their defenses.

Seeing this, the corner of Tang Wu's mouth slightly lifted, Qin Wanli wanted to speak but stopped. He looked up, met Tang Wu's sharp gaze, and his mouth twitched, daring not to say anything further. He feared that if he spoke, those blue dots might change direction and attack the Qin family's mountains.

Chapter 129 Whose Plan Is This?

The mountain peaks nearby were ablaze with action, and from a distance, one could see flashes of colors and chaotic fluctuations of spirit force.

Mount Qingyu had officially launched an assault on the Tailuo Sect, deploying five or six assault teams to attack various peaks, where at least dozens, and at times hundreds, of people were engaged in fierce battle.

Halfway up the mountain, Xie Jin's squad stood by at the original position.

The five riders were utterly silent, merely recuperating in silence, conserving their energy.

Their mission was simple: wait for the enemy's hunting team. If the enemy's hunting team didn't appear, they would join forces with the nearest assault team to eliminate enemy cultivators.

The Qin family had been frightened by previous attacks, and with no worries about their rear, Mount Qingyu could fight the Tailuo Sect openly and without restraints.

Half an hour after the battle began, Xie Jin suddenly opened his eyes and shouted, "Let's go!"

The five immediately mounted their horses—Lu Ye leading, Xie Jin and Tao Tiangang in the middle, with Song Xie and Qiao Qiao'er bringing up the rear.

Xie Jin had originally led the squad, but during a battle the day before, he had been injured. His injury wasn't critical, but it was not minor either, impacting his strength.

In the end, it was decided that Lu Ye would take his place.

The results surprised everyone—subsequent battles had become much simpler. With Lu Ye charging at the front, it often only took one confrontation to inflict casualties on the enemy and easily create a situation where they outnumbered them.

Reflecting on the various battles they had fought side by side during these days, everyone increasingly felt that Lu Ye's background was extraordinary.

The five riders thundered out.

Xie Jin directed Lu Ye, leading at the front, not towards the mountain peak but rather to another side of the mountainside to strike.

Lu Ye understood his intent immediately—they were to confront the enemy's hunting team. It seemed that their side must have gained some advantage on the mountain peak, otherwise, the enemy's hunting team wouldn't have come to assist.

"Five of them, two from the Level 5 realm, three from the Level 4 realm," Xie Jin yelled from behind Lu Ye, "One for you, one for me!"

Lu Ye nodded his head.

Qiao Qiao'er laughed, "They really think highly of us."

For their squad, the enemy had to deploy two from the Level 5 realm, showing how much the Tailuo Sect valued them—not surprisingly, given that in the past few days Lu Ye's squad had killed many enemy cultivators. No one dared underestimate them.

"They've turned and are coming towards us!" Xie Jin shouted again.

Lu Ye, racing in the front, barely needed the reminder as he saw several figures rapidly approaching, and the distance between them quickly closed.

Still thirty paces away, Lu Ye fixed his gaze on the leader from the Level 5 realm, a ferocious-looking man with a small goatee, appearing only in his early twenties.

Lu Ye raised his hand and cast a spell, but due to the intense jolting, it missed its mark.

He cast a second spell, much more accurately, but the man dodged it by ducking.

With less than ten paces between them, Lu Ye slowly drew his long knife.

The beast the enemy rode, which looked like a cross between a lion and a tiger, passed by Lu Ye, who raised his knife and slashed at the Level 5 realm rider.

The opponent dodged excessively, and astonishingly, his mount twisted its body and charged towards Amber.

Amber roared as Lu Ye felt a great force hit him, throwing his body into the air, and he tumbled on the ground several times before he stabilized.

He quickly scanned around and saw that his companions had all been treated similarly, each of them knocked off their mounts, scrambling to their feet in disarray. The enemy was in the same situation.

It seemed the opponent didn't want to fight on the mounts.

Lu Ye's eyelids slightly drooped, clenching the long knife in his hand. The opponent was confident in taking them down like this, it seemed.

Where did their confidence come from?

There was no time to ponder, as Lu Ye charged forward upon landing. He attacked the goateed Level 5 realm man before he could steady himself, slashing towards his neck.

The opponent hurriedly lifted an arm to block.

With a clang, the blade, despite being enhanced with Sharpness, failed to sever the opponent's arm but felt like it struck iron.

Lu Ye immediately realized that the opponent's arm must be equipped with some kind of arm guard, no wonder he dared to block the blade directly.

This guy was most likely a physique cultivator. Although his stature wasn't particularly imposing, his blood Qi was extremely vigorous.

Moreover, his reaction was extremely fast. Taking advantage of Lu Ye's uncollected blade, he punched towards Lu Ye's chest. Lu Ye quickly retreated, dragging his sword diagonally.

An ear-piercing sound erupted, sparks flying everywhere. The mustachioed man threw another punch, and Lu Ye hastily used his sword to block in front. Under the impact of the immense force, he couldn't help but stagger back several steps.

Roars of beasts echoed as the ten mounts battled fiercely against each other. Meanwhile, individuals like Xie Jin had also found their own opponents to showcase their skills.

"They are not at Level 4!" suddenly came an alarmed shout from Song Xie.

This shout truly startled everyone.

The information Xie Jin had was conveyed by Tang Wu from the Shadow Moon Disc, where different colors of light spots represented different forces. By the hue of these light spots, one could determine the cultivation levels of the cultivators.

This squad of the Tailuo Sect hunting team displayed on the Shadow Moon Disc showed two at Level 5 and three at Level 4. Although this setup was not weak, Lu Ye and others were not afraid. Xie Jin was at Level 5 and could block one, Lu Ye himself had a record of slaying those at Level 5, and the others just needed to handle their own targets properly.

Thus, everyone was relatively relaxed before the battle began, because even if they couldn't defeat the opposition, it wouldn't pose too great a danger.

But when they actually clashed, Song Xie discovered in horror that his target was at Level 5, and what terrified him even more was that his opponent was a magic cultivator. With various spells being cast, he couldn't get close at all and could only flee embarrassingly. Continuing like this meant death was inevitable.

"Ah!" Another scream rang out, it was Tao Tiangang. Accompanied by the scream, he uncontrollably retreated, a foot-long wound on his chest, his flesh horribly mangled.

His opponent, relentless when gaining the upper hand, pressed on aggressively, and judging from the spirit force fluctuations of his moves, this guy was also at Level 5.

Qiao Qiao'er was instantly flustered. Fortunately, her opponent was indeed just at Level 4, not exhibiting the cultivation of Level 5. However, the current situation was extremely unfavorable for them. What they thought was a team with only two Level 5 cultivators suddenly turned into four. Even though the numbers were still even, it now formed a crushing momentum.

If Song Xie or Tao Tiangang were to be killed, the enemies could form a majority and escalate their advantage like a rolling snowball.

In the grand hall, Tang Wu's expression was solemn. He looked up at Han Zheyue, "Women are truly as unpredictable as trying to find a needle in the ocean bed!"

By this time, he knew he had been outplayed. The Tailuo Sect had methods to suppress cultivation levels, which weren't rare, but it was somewhat unusual on low-level cultivators because ordinary Spirit Talismans didn't have this effect. A Breath-concealing Talisman would completely hide all spirit force, not reaching the effect of suppressing cultivation levels.

To achieve this effect, one must rely on a special type of spirit runes, and moreover, those runes must be branded onto the body.

This required the intervention of a skilled spirit runes master. Summoning such a master would incur no small cost.

The Tailuo Sect didn't have such a person, so these two Level 5 cultivators must have been prepared by the Tailuo Sect in advance. Bringing them out at this time truly caught Mount Qingyu off guard.

Han Zheyue no longer expressed the impatience she had before, covering her mouth with a light chuckle, "Men are really easy to deceive." She glanced sideways at Tang Wu, "Did you think I wasn't aware that the boy riding the tiger was in this hunting team?"

All her previous actions were just to confuse Tang Wu.

"Although you have made various deceptive arrangements in the past few days, trying to confuse my vision, I kept an eye on him. I know exactly where he is," Han Zheyue raised her delicate finger, pointing at the position where the two hunting teams were clashing on the Shadow Moon Disc, "The Qin family has suffered such heavy losses these past few days, and this boy is significantly responsible.

Such a person obviously needs to be dealt with early. I started by eliminating your hunting team first."

Her finger slowly moved upwards, pointing to a mountain peak where blue and black points were clashing, then continued, "Then come to aid here. As long as we kill everyone here, the Tailuo Sect's assault team can tear a gap in your defensive lines, rush in, and attack your rear. At that time, it will be a slaughter—an ultimate rout, haha!"

Tang Wu's expression darkened, because this was originally his plan. If Xie Jin's squad could eliminate the opposing hunting team, they could go support a nearby battle. Qing Yu Mountain already had a

slight advantage there, and once Xie Jin's squad joined in, they could continuously expand that advantage.

In the previous arrangements, Han Zheyue had moved many of her forces from the rear to the front, making the rear defenses extremely weak. If the front line battle could be won, cutting down enough enemies, then the defense lines for Qing Yu Mountain would be as fragile as paper, allowing them to attack whichever mountain peak they wished.

This battle today could be said to be the most crucial battle of the Dragon Spring Meet; victory would mean everything going smoothly, defeat would mean irrevocable losses for either side.

Tang Wu had thought that Han Zheyue moving the cultivators from the rear to the front was a mistake, but now it seemed that this woman had foreseen everything. Her previous frustration was just a ruse.

She allowed Tang Wu to make various arrangements, then seamlessly adapted, turning his plans into hers.

Tang Wu's eyelids twitched, realizing he had severely underestimated this woman—Han Zheyue—and the cost of this mistake was something he could hardly bear.

At his side, Qin Wanli was also watching apprehensively. Compared to the cunning Tang Wu and Han Zheyue, he felt like a naive little rabbit... For the Qin family to rise, there was a long road ahead!

Chapter 130 Repeated Slashing

The two hunting teams clashed for just a moment before Lu Ye and his team began to show signs of defeat. Tao Tiangang was injured, Song Xie was beaten into a sorry figure fleeing in disarray, and it was only a matter of time before they faced certain death. Although Qiao Qiao'er was holding on for the time being, it did not help the overall situation much. As for Xie Jin...

with injuries on his body, it was already good enough that he could entangle his opponent.

The situation was extremely dire for Lu Ye and the others. If things continued this way, it wouldn't be long before Tao Tiangang or Song Xie would be killed, and then the situation would truly be irreversible.

They needed to break the situation!

As thoughts raced through Lu Ye's mind, he swung his blade, pushing back the small-mustache physique cultivator while simultaneously raising his hand to summon his tiny bell spirit artifact. Spirit force surged into it as the artifact whooshed out of his hand. In the blink of an eye, it enlarged and crashed down towards the Level 5 magic cultivator.

He chose this magic cultivator mainly because the foe had been casting spells from a stationary position, which made dodging difficult. Moreover, if the tiny bell spirit artifact trapped him, it would not be easy for the magic cultivator to escape, and he might even inadvertently harm himself while trying to cast spells within it.

With a clang, the tiny bell covered the magic cultivator solidly.

At that moment, Song Xie was struggling to dodge attacks, and when he saw the magic cultivator was trapped, a struggle and hesitation flashed across his face. He turned around and rushed towards Tao Tiangang, not knowing how long the tiny bell spirit artifact could hold his opponent, but this was undoubtedly an opportunity.

He just needed to join forces with Tao Tiangang, and while he wouldn't dare to say they could win against Tao Tiangang's opponent, they could at least hold on for a while.

He had thought of taking the opportunity to flee, but he quickly dismissed the idea because he knew that if the others were killed, he would not be able to survive either. It was better to fight desperately than to flee in disgrace.

With his assistance, the situation on Tao Tiangang's side finally stabilized, and the two of them could hold the Level 5 cultivator at bay for a while.

Meanwhile, after summoning the tiny bell spirit artifact, Lu Ye charged towards the small-mustache physique cultivator, slashing with his blade. However, the opponent just put his arms in front of him, adopting a stance that was solely defensive, parrying all of Lu Ye's attacks.

Seeing this, Lu Ye raised his hand and cast a spell. The fat bird slammed into the physique cultivator and exploded, instantly scorching the man's face. However, it seemed that he was wearing some kind of armor under his clothes, and the spell did not have the intended effect.

He staggered back several steps, gritting his teeth and said, "Impressive!"

A disparity of one level in cultivation was evident as the physique cultivator could only defend against Lu Ye, a testament to the enemy's strength.

As soon as the words were out, Lu Ye kicked out at him. The cultivator roared, his blood Qi surging as a mist of blood appeared on his body's surface. He punched towards the bottom of Lu Ye's foot as it came at him.

The instant their spirit forces collided, both figures stumbled backward. Lu Ye felt a numbness in his foot and nearly lost his balance, while the small-mustache physique cultivator didn't fare much better, as he was knocked to the ground by Lu Ye's kick.

Before he could get back to his feet, Lu Ye was already upon him, his long blade falling like a tempest.

The physique cultivator roared, his spirit force and blood Qi mixing together, thickening the protective mist of blood around him.

However, as Lu Ye's blade, augmented with Sharpness Spirit Runes, came down, the protection visibly began to fade.

Not far away, intense vibrations emerged from the tiny bell spirit artifact, and the luster of the spirit ribbons encircling it was rapidly fading. It wouldn't be long before the trapped Level 5 magic cultivator would break free, and the hard-earned opportunity would be wasted.

He had to kill this physique cultivator quickly to have any chance of survival!

Lu Ye's determination grew fierce in his heart. Ignoring everything else, he slashed and thrust one strike after another, but for all his efforts, every attack was parried by the physique cultivator. Even the few that hit did not harm the cultivator's vitals.

The spirit light on the surface of the tiny bell spirit artifact grew dimmer, almost on the verge of extinguishing.

"You're all dead!" the physique cultivator sneered as he withstood the barrage. He could see Lu Ye's desperation, so he knew that as soon as his comrade broke free, it would be their victory.

That was why he adopted a defense-only stance; the situation was in their favor, and he didn't need to take risks as long as he could maintain his defense.

As Lu Ye struck down with another blade, the bracer on the physique cultivator's arm shattered with a boom. It surprised him, as he had heard of the powerful spiritual artifact in the rider's hands, hence donning so much armor to stall his opponent. Even then, he had slightly underestimated him.

Indeed, Tailuo Sect had chosen him specifically to counter Lu Ye.

As Lu Ye's blade descended once again, he no longer dared to block directly. He reached into his storage sack, clearly intending to pull out a Spirit Talisman. Given the circumstance, it was most likely to be a Golden Body Talisman for defense.

Just then, a heaviness suddenly bore down on his shoulder, and a sharp whistle sounded beside his ear. The noise was very peculiar, causing him to feel dizzy and momentarily bewildered.

He hastily mobilized his blood Qi energy and spirit force. The already thin mist of blood on his body suddenly thickened again.

A piercing scream came from behind him. He did not know who had launched a sneak attack on him, but he knew he had injured the assailant.

As he saw the figure of Yiyi clinging to the small-mustache physique cultivator's shoulder suddenly fade, Lu Ye's expression turned ferocious, and he brought his long blade down.

In the past few days of battle, Yiyi had not made an appearance since she had no physical body and could only play a limited role in the fight. But at this critical juncture, she bravely chose to intervene, creating an excellent opportunity for Lu Ye.

Just as the physique cultivator took out the Spirit Talisman from his storage sack, before he could even mobilize his spirit force, Lu Ye's long blade had already fallen.

The arm guard had already been shattered, and nothing could withstand the enhanced sharpness of the blade any longer. The slash broke through the opponent's protective spirit force, sliced the arm that held the Spirit Talisman, and cut through the blood mist, slicing into the enemy's neck, spraying blood in all directions.

The small-mustache physique cultivator grunted, his teeth clenched tightly against the intense pain. The wound on his severed arm caused his concentration to falter, but in the face of life and death, he managed to grab Lu Ye's wrist with his other hand, resisting the vicious slash.

Lu Ye shifted his stance, raising his other hand to grasp the blade just below the tip, and pressed down hard.

Their eyes met as they faced each other at close range.

Hiss...

The sound of the blade cutting through flesh echoed, and blood gushed forth. The small-mustache physique cultivator's eyes widened as he knelt before Lu Ye, his mouth moving as if trying to say something.

With a swoosh, the sword, augmented with sharpness, tore through all obstacles, cutting across his entire neck.

The headless body tottered before collapsing to the ground.

A Level 5 physique cultivator, dead!

While Lu Ye, with Yiyi's assistance, was slaying the Level 5 physique cultivator, the tiny bell spirit artifact was also close to failing, its spirit light nearly extinguished.

Lu Ye wiped the blood that had splattered all over his face and looked around, seeing Xie Jin being pushed back by his opponent, and Tao Tiangang struggling to hold on alongside Song Xie against another Level 5 fighter. The pair should not have had such a hard time, but Tao Tiangang had already been seriously injured before Song Xie had come to help.

Consequently, the situation was quite unfavorable for them.

He also saw Qiao Qiao'er shaking her long whip, locked in an indistinguishable fight with a Level 4 opponent.

Without hesitation, he dashed towards the tiny bell spirit artifact, reaching out to beckon it back as he drew near.

Boom... A Dao technique suddenly erupted, aimed at empty space, an act of desperation from the trapped magic cultivator grasping at his newfound freedom. Although he was disheveled and battered, he couldn't help but let out a hearty laugh.

In his desperation to escape, he had cast spells in confined quarters, wounding himself in the process. Fortunately, he had controlled them well, so despite looking disheveled, he was not seriously harmed.

No sooner had he freed himself than a flash of bright blade light swept across his vision. Before the magic cultivator could grasp the situation, Lu Ye had already sliced through his protective spirit force, sending his still smiling head soaring into the air.

He never expected that in the short time he had been trapped, one of their Level 5 fighters—especially their most resilient physique cultivator—had already died!

How could he, a defenseless magic cultivator, possibly withstand such an unexpected strike?

In an instant, the situation had drastically changed.

The Tailuo Sect's hunting team had only two of their four Level 5 cultivators left alive, an abrupt turn of events that astonished not only their comrades but also the likes of Xie Jin, who could hardly believe it.

But then came wild joy.

What they had thought was a certain fight to the death had unexpectedly turned around. A Level 4 cultivator had consecutively slain two Level 5 opponents. Indeed, only someone as fierce as this could single-handedly break through Tailuo Sect's defenses.

Lu Ye, holding his blade, already charged towards Qiao Qiao'er's fight. He had chosen this direction because a Level 4 cultivator was easier to kill. Having just slaughtered two Level 5s, his spirit force was roiling and needed some time to stabilize.

And Qiao Qiao'er's whip was well suited to work in tandem with him.

After several days of fighting together, they had developed a certain understanding. So, seeing Lu Ye heading her way, Qiao Qiao'er immediately retreated.

The Level 4 opponent, seeing two of his senior brothers slain, was already terrified. He seized the opportunity to flee, but after barely two steps, the sound of a whip cracked through the air, wrapping around his neck.

With a fierce tug, Qiao Qiao'er jerked the man into the air.

Desperately, the Level 4 cultivator swung his weapon at the whip behind him, but before he could solidly strike, Qiao Qiao'er had already retracted her whip.

He landed awkwardly, and upon looking up, saw Lu Ye's figure entering his vision, a large blade chopping down towards him. Panicked, he hastily raised his weapon to block.

But his feet were bound by the whip, and with the force transmitted to him, his balance was lost, allowing Lu Ye's blade to strike him.

"Go help!" Lu Ye withdrew and headed towards Xie Jin's fight.

Qiao Qiao'er lashed her whip, bursting the head of the Level 4 cultivator lying on the ground. She called out, "Which side?"

Lu Ye had no time to respond; he had already plunged into battle, fighting alongside Xie Jin against another Level 5 opponent. Now with a face of utter despair and a bizarre expression of someone unsure whether to cry or laugh, the enemy struck with even more ferocity.