

Humanity 1341

Chapter 1341 The Tradition Must Not Be Lost

Is it to hold onto the current achievements and securely place second, or to strive further to attempt to seize first place? For Hai Tang, this is undoubtedly a difficult choice, as she knows her decision will influence the home world's development for the next fifty years.

But no matter how difficult, a decision must be made.

With only a moment's pause, she opened her mouth, "Let's go for the fourth Spirit Orb!"

They already have three orbs in hand, and currently, only six Spirit Orbs have appeared in the Black Abyss, which means they still have three chances!

With some luck, they might be able to snatch one.

Most importantly, the East Camp has never had such a good opportunity in many years. Missing this chance means who knows how long they will have to wait for another attempt at first place.

Though Hai Tang is a woman, she is dedicated to the prosperity of the home world.

Hearing her words, everyone in the East Camp agreed. They were clearly inclined to push a bit more, thinking along similar lines as Hai Tang. Of course, Lu Ye's earlier performance was also impressively strong.

Being able to instantly kill a Constellation Mid-Stage, even if the opponent was careless, indicates that Lu Ye's strength could rival a Constellation Late Stage. The gap at the Late Stage level is roughly equalized with the other two camps, so even though their overall strength may still not match others, the gap is not as wide anymore.

It's worth a try, even if it doesn't work out, there is nothing to lose!

While the East Camp made their decision, a figure rapidly flew through the Black Abyss. It was Ye Chaoqun from the Western Region. However, he did not fly towards his own camp but rather towards the Southern Region Camp, leaving one to wonder what his intentions were.

Shortly after, he halted his movement as a stream of light approached, which was the nine from the Southern Region.

From afar, the people of the Southern Region saw Ye Chaoqun's figure and, observing the spirit force fluctuations around him, how could they not recognize him?

If it were during the Spirit Orb contest, the Southern Region would undoubtedly attack first and deal with Ye Chaoqun before anything else.

But currently, with no new Spirit Orbs being born, the Southern Region had no intention of killing, and with Ye Chaoqun's current manner, it was clear he wasn't there for a fight.

After a brief consideration, a Constellation Late Stage from the Southern region instructed his people to stay put, while he himself flew out alone to meet him.

A moment later, he stopped a few miles from Ye Chaoqun, and slightly cupping his fist, he said, "Duan Xiuchen!"

Ye Chaoqun returned the gesture and introduced himself in turn.

Duan Xiuchen looked at Ye Chaoqun with great significance, "Brother Ye, what brings you here?"

Ye Chaoqun got straight to the point, "An alliance!"

Duan Xiuchen exclaimed in surprise, with a slightly exaggerated expression, "And who might the enemy be?"

"Naturally, it's the East Camp!"

Duan Xiuchen appeared puzzled, "Brother Ye, you want to form an alliance with me to deal with the East Camp. Did I hear you right?"

Ye Chaoqun knew exactly what he was thinking. If it weren't for the recent battle, had the Southern Region suddenly approached him for an alliance, he wouldn't have taken it seriously either.

Such a weak East Camp, why would it require two of the camps to join forces? Either camp could crush it alone.

But in truth, only after experiencing the recent battle could one realize that the seemingly fragile East Camp was anything but simple. Among those nine, there was a hidden fierce tiger!

"That's correct!" Ye Chaoqun nodded.

Duan Xiuchen let out a hearty laugh, "Impossible, impossible! My Southern Region and the East Camp have an extremely solid alliance. The East Camp are my Southern Region's dear friends and brothers. How could we betray them at a few words from you Westerners? If such a thing spread, wouldn't they accuse my Southern Region of being untrustworthy, behaving treacherously!"

Besides, prior collaborations between the Southern Region and the East Camp had been quite pleasant, with each party securing a Spirit Orb, leaving the Western Camp sighing helplessly.

Therefore, Duan Xiuchen believed the alliance with the East Camp could still continue.

On the contrary, this Ye Chaoqun's abrupt visit seemed suspicious. Though he arrived alone and seemingly sincere, who knows what schemes he might harbor, possibly trying to sabotage their alliance with the East Camp.

With such considerations, how could Duan Xiuchen easily agree to Ye Chaoqun's proposal?

In every Martial Arts Meet, the three troops of the Dwarf Race not only have to fight bravely in the Black Abyss but also rely on wisdom, and the alliance strategies are an extreme test of the leader's intellect.

Ye Chaoqun sighed, "The East Camp already has three orbs in their possession!"

Duan Xiuchen said, "I was just about to ask what your Western Region is up to. How did you let the East Camp snatch the orbs?"

Previously, the Western Camp disengaged from their confrontation and headed to where a new orb was born. The Southern Region thought that orb was bound to fall into the Western Region's hands. However, the unexpected outcome was that the orb did not head towards the Western Camp, but instead steadfastly moved towards the East Camp.

And now it is evidently placed there.

Ye Chaoqun didn't answer, but instead said, "Fellow Daoist Duan, what do you think of the strength of my Western Region's six men?"

He didn't say nine people, only six, obviously referring to the lineup when they separated from the Southern Region at the end.

Duan Xiuchen solemnly said, "Very strong, if your six men continued to pester, my Southern Region could only trade life for life and send everyone back to camp."

At that time, the Spirit Orb was closer to the Southern Region Camp, so trading life for life was favorable to the Southern Region. In fact, Duan Xiuchen had already planned to do this, but when the sixth Spirit Orb suddenly appeared and the six from the Western Region withdrew, the plan was not implemented.

Ye Chaoqun said, "But my six were utterly devastated by the Eastern Region. If I hadn't seen the bad situation and run fast, I'm afraid I'd have to be reborn again."

Duan Xiuchen was shocked: "True or false?"

"Absolutely true!"

"Impossible!" Duan Xiuchen was full of disbelief. He was well aware of the level of those six from the Western Region, one Late Stage, two Mid-Stage, three Early Stage. Although fewer in number, it was still no problem for them to handle the Eastern Region. How could they be so miserably defeated?

Moreover, could the Eastern Region have such capabilities? It's absurd!

This Ye Chaoqun must be talking nonsense!

Ye Chaoqun knew that Duan Xiuchen was still doubting him and said calmly, "That Spirit Orb is now in the Eastern Camp. Do you think if my Western Region still had the power to fight, we would give it up so easily?"

This was indeed an unavoidable question. If Ye Chaoqun was just using words to beguile him and sow discord, it was likely. But if it required sacrificing a Spirit Orb to achieve this, no Dwarf Race would be willing to do it.

Duan Xiuchen was in doubt: "Were they really utterly devastated by the Eastern Region?"

Ye Chaoqun was somewhat annoyed: "Such a humiliating thing, how many times do you want me to say it, Fellow Daoist?"

Duan Xiuchen finally confirmed that the other party wasn't deceiving him, but...he really couldn't imagine how the Eastern Region did it.

Spirit light flashed: "Did they hide their cultivation?"

Ye Chaoqun shook his head: "Their cultivation is indeed as it appears, one Mid-Stage, eight Early Stage."

"Then did they set up a Formation in advance, using the power of the Formation?"

"In a direct clash, they didn't use any External Force!"

Duan Xiuchen was furious: "I am sincerely speaking with Fellow Daoist, and Fellow Daoist should not deceive me!"

Ye Chaoqun sighed again: "There was external assistance in the Eastern Region, not of the Dwarf Race. Though only at the Constellation Early Stage cultivation, they had the strength of the Constellation Late Stage. A Mid-Stage of my Western Region was slashed by him with a single blade. Thus, Fellow Daoist should understand why my Western Region was utterly defeated."

"Constellation Early Stage cultivation, Late Stage strength...a blade-wielding guy?" Duan Xiuchen tried to recall, and immediately thought of Lu Ye's appearance. He remembered that it was this person who had talked to him before, forming an alliance between the two regions. At the time, he felt this person wasn't from the Dwarf Race, and it now seemed he was right.

He said angrily, "The Eastern Region is so shameless to invite external assistance!"

If they were Dwarf Race, it would be impossible to find someone with Early Stage cultivation and Late Stage strength due to the constraints of their cultivation system, but with a Foreign Clan, especially the human race, it was understandable since that side often produces remarkable individuals.

Ye Chaoqun said, "The Eastern Region has been declining for years, with few Constellation members. It's not rare for them to occasionally invite one or two external aids. Let's not mention this; the key is to reassess the Eastern Region's strength and the threat they pose."

Previously, when leaving the Eastern Region, Ye Chaoqun had thought about hiding the situation there, letting the uninformed Southern Region clash with the Eastern Region, and then the Western Region could benefit from it.

But after careful consideration, he found this approach unreliable, especially when the Southern Region and Eastern Region had already cooperated once. If things went awry and the two sides teamed up against the Western Region again, the Western Region would be in a worse predicament.

So after much thought, he felt that it was best to ally with the Southern Region.

This prompted him to specifically seek out the Southern Region and reveal everything.

Duan Xiuchen laughed heartily: "My Southern Region allies are so powerful, and with previous cooperation, why shouldn't I ally with them again instead of bargaining with your Western Region?"

Ye Chaoqun reiterated, "Because the Eastern Region already has three orbs!"

Duan Xiuchen's laughter stopped, his expression grave: "Continue!"

Ye Chaoqun knew that he was already considering it and pressed the advantage: "In this Martial Arts Meet, on the surface, the Eastern Region has the weakest strength, and much weaker than our two regions. But now they have three orbs. In contrast, our two regions have two orbs for the Southern Region, and the Western Region has only one. If this continues, the Eastern Region, regardless, will at least rank second. By then, which of our two regions gets first, and who falls last? There's a chance we'll be at each other's throats, possibly letting the Eastern Region profit as a bystander. If they indeed seize first place, then where would the Southern and Western Regions' face be? Furthermore, when we return from the Black Abyss, how do we explain ourselves to the Sun Blaze Master Uncles? Saying our powerful lineup couldn't beat an Eastern Region team led by a Mid-Stage? Some things are easier said than heard."

"Fellow Daoist Ye means..."

Ye Chaoqun said, "All along, it's been our two regions competing for first and second, and the Eastern Region has been the third for so many years. Let them continue to maintain that! Such a good tradition can't be lost."

Duan Xiuchen raised an eyebrow: "But the Eastern Region already has three orbs in hand!"

Ye Chaoqun said calmly, "It's not that they can't be snatched back..."

Chapter 1342 Alliance

In the Black Abyss space, the three factions gathered separately, each occupying a region, waiting quietly.

In past Martial Arts Meets, the first two waves of competition were considered relatively peaceful, as the Eastern Region had no competitiveness, and the Southern and Western Regions could easily divide the spiritual orbs and control the situation.

But this time, some unexpected changes have obviously occurred. Since the fourth spiritual orb appeared, the battles between them have become incredibly intense, with frequent deaths of Dwarf Race Constellations, more dangerous than ever before.

The reason, after all, is the Southern and Western Regions' underestimation, combined with the sudden rise of the Eastern Region.

Among the three factions of cultivators right now, apart from the three people from the Eastern Region who have each died once, almost all other cultivators from the South and West troops have perished at least once, except for their respective Constellation Late Stage cultivators.

This inevitably results in a significant consumption of their spirit force.

In combat, cultivators pay great attention to maintaining their own spirit force reserves because once these reserves fall below a certain limit, their performance will be affected.

This limit is generally around fifty percent.

In other words, if a cultivator's spirit force reserve is above fifty percent, they can normally exert their full strength; but if it falls below fifty percent, their strength will certainly be affected, making some explosive techniques difficult to perform.

The special characteristic of the Black Abyss allows cultivators to die and be reborn, but the consumed spirit force won't be replenished, especially since the act of rebirth itself consumes a large amount of spirit force.

Additionally, transporting the Spirit Orb also requires a continuous output of a large amount of spirit force.

So at this moment, all the cultivators from the three factions are trying their best to recover their strength during the rare intervals between the appearances of new spiritual orbs.

The Eastern Region cultivators are doing the same, but in comparison, Huang Li and Xiao Xinghe, who are in the same squad as Lu Ye, appear much more vigorous. With the power of the As-Close-As-Siblings Array Disc, the spirit force refined by Lu Ye can be easily absorbed by them, naturally allowing them to recover quickly.

Hai Tang whispered through audio transmission, "Junior Brother Lu, the alliance with the Southern Region should be nullified now, right?"

Lu Ye nodded, "We now have three orbs; there's no need to mention the alliance anymore."

The Southern Region wouldn't want the Eastern Region to obtain four orbs, so from now on, the Southern Region definitely won't continue to assist us. Hai Tang, of course, has considered this level of understanding, and till now, no one from the Southern Region has come to inform us of anything, which clearly indicates some issues.

After a thought, Lu Ye said, "We might also need to guard against the other two factions joining forces."

Hai Tang was surprised, "Would they?"

"It's hard to say, but it's possible."

In the past, the Eastern Region usually allied with the other two factions, with rare instances of those two factions joining forces against each other. But this time, it's different. The perennial third-ranked East has taken a huge lead, while the first and second are lagging, making their choices unpredictable.

Especially the Western Region, which, despite having the strongest overall strength, currently has the least achievements. If Lu Ye were the leader of the Western Region, having suffered a major loss, he would definitely discuss with the Southern Region.

Of course, the best scenario for the Eastern Region now is for everyone to act independently, not allying with anyone. This is possible too, as the South and West troops have always considered each other as key adversaries, confronting each other in every Martial Arts Meet, making an alliance not that simple.

Hai Tang pondered for a while and then smiled, "Do your best and don't force it!"

The current achievements of the Eastern Region are already impressive enough, something worthwhile to report back to the Sun Blaze of their main region.

Lu Ye nodded, actually having another layer of concern in mind. Although the Spirit Orbs placed in the camp are not easy to be snatched, within the rules, they can still be taken before the Martial Arts Meet ends. If the South and West troops genuinely join forces, they might just do it.

He didn't mention it to Hai Tang, lest she worry.

Just in this waiting, the seventh Spirit Orb was born.

The location was extremely advantageous for the Eastern Region, as it was relatively close to the East Camp.

In an instant, the quiet Black Abyss became as if boiling salt had been thrown into a pot of hot oil, becoming lively. From three directions, figures turned into streaks of light, rushing to where the Spirit Orb was located.

For the Eastern side, the leadership had changed to Lu Ye. After the previous battle, none of the Eastern cultivators opposed this change, as it was only natural for the strongest to lead.

Since the Spirit Orb appeared closest to the East Camp, the Eastern side was the first to reach the Spirit Orb.

From afar, the giant Spirit Orb hung in the Void, occasionally struck by meteors flying in, altering the direction of the Orb's movement.

Everyone's gaze on that Spirit Orb became heated, as if they could already see the scene of the East winning the first place.

However, just at this moment, Lu Ye suddenly changed direction, moving horizontally instead of lunging towards the Spirit Orb.

Everyone followed, though puzzled in their hearts, none questioned.

Only after putting some distance between them and the Spirit Orb did Lu Ye stop, raising his hand to deploy array banners and stimulate spirit force to construct spirit runes.

Soon, a Concealment Array formed, enveloping everyone within.

From this position, they could see the scene at the Spirit Orb, yet it was not easy to be detected from there, a distance neither too far nor too close.

He knew what everyone was thinking, so he explained, "Even if we want to seize the fourth Spirit Orb, now isn't the right time."

Having already secured three orbs, if they moved in now, it would prompt the Southern and Western Regions to unite against them.

So they could only wait.

The best opportunity is naturally when all three spirit orbs are born; in this way, the factions can each take one, and by then everyone will have to transport the orbs back, no one interfering with anyone else. But the chances of this happening are quite small.

Unless, like before, they stall for time and wait for the right moment.

A moment later, the silhouette of a group of nine entered the eye, headed undeniably by Ye Chaoqun.

These are evidently cultivators from the Western Region.

Originally, three of them were trapped in the Blood Sea and unable to escape, but after receiving audio transmissions from Ye Chaoqun, they decisively self-immolated and returned to their camp; they used this method to escape, rendering Lu Ye's doppelganger incapable of stopping them.

The Western group reached the spirit orb's location, and after a simple investigation around, they began transporting the spirit orb.

But before they got far, the Southern Region's constellations appeared; when the two sides encountered each other, it was as if heaven's thunder stirred earth's fire, engaging fiercely in battle.

Lu Ye constructed Insight Spirit Runes at his eyes, observing from afar.

The battle was intense, with no sign of either side holding back; each wished to annihilate the other completely. In such intense confrontation, it wasn't long before cultivators began to fall.

Hai Tang said excitedly, "It seems they haven't teamed up!"

Previously, through Lu Ye's recounting, she was most worried about encountering a situation where the other two factions might join forces; truly, if that were so, the East Camp would have no chance of snatching the spirit orb. Fortunately, the worst-case scenario hadn't appeared.

Lu Ye said nothing.

Hai Tang's thinking was ultimately a bit naive; on the surface, it appeared the two factions indeed hadn't teamed up, but the more viciously they fought, the more suspicious it became.

The Southern Region might not know the East Camp's background, but the Western Region surely does, right?

In this situation, the East Camp's cultivators hadn't appeared, which was evidently suspicious; anyone could think that the East Camp was in hiding. Given this understanding of the East Camp, the Western Region would surely be wary and cautious.

But in reality, they were currently fighting the Southern Region as if their brains were about to be smashed out.

As if they were afraid of not drawing out the East Camp.

Lu Ye secretly frowned, realizing the scenario was developing into what he least hoped for, yet this was their choice, and he couldn't interfere.

Besides, when deciding to seize the third spirit orb, he had already foreseen the probability of such a situation arising.

If the East Camp remains weak, no one would take them seriously.

But in the process of seizing the third spirit orb, if they suddenly reveal their true strength, it would inevitably lead to some undesirable situations.

Not seizing it isn't an option either, as he promised Su Yuqing he'd do it, and he doesn't want to be delayed on Mount Fangcun for a hundred years.

Even though he's seen the situation clearly, Lu Ye decides not to explain further; some matters are futile to explain, especially since he is ultimately of the human race.

So it is necessary for Hai Tang and others to see it themselves!

The battle on that side remains intense, with cultivators continually falling; by now, each side has lost four, all of Constellation Early Stage cultivation.

Lu Ye knows there's no need to wait any longer, because no matter how long they wait, the situation won't change much; no more will die from the South and West troops.

He slowly opens his mouth: "Prepare to go!"

The East Camp's group has long been waiting for this moment; hearing his words, their expressions brighten.

Lu Ye's tone shifts: "But everyone must be careful, if you find the situation unfavorable, escape immediately!"

With this said, he gathers the scattered array banners and leads the charge towards the battlefield.

The group from the East Camp reveals their movements, and Duan Xiuchen from the Southern Region immediately laughs: "Western Region, you're doomed, my allies have arrived."

Amidst the chaos, he also calls out to Lu Ye: "Friends from the East, hurry and help kill them, these Western folks aren't quite compliant!"

"We're on our way!" Lu Ye responds enthusiastically.

Witnessing this scene, the Western group's faces all change, led by Ye Chaoqun who angrily curses.

They attempt to escape the battle, but the Southern cultivators entangle them so tightly they can't break free.

Lu Ye has led his squad into the fray, targeting Ye Chaoqun directly!

And at that exact moment, the situation shifts dramatically.

Originally appearing as if trying to escape Duan Xiuchen's entanglement, Ye Chaoqun suddenly abandons all defense against him and ferociously punches towards Lu Ye, the fierce force causing the Void to shudder, and a small nearby meteorite struck by the aftershock shatters violently.

Meanwhile, as Duan Xiuchen attacks Ye Chaoqun, he also raises his hand and releases a Spirit Talisman, which transforms into Heaven-shocking Sword Aura, slashing down upon Lu Ye!

Not only do these two act thus, but almost simultaneously, the Southern troops also respond similarly, each facing Hai Tang and Han Molong's squads.

The East Camp's group, with aggressive intent, steps into a meticulously planned, sinister trap.

Chapter 1343 The Best Defense Is Offense

If Lu Ye were caught off guard, he would be in grave danger at this moment. After all, this is the combined strike of two Constellation Late Stagers.

But with a defensive mind, it won't be easy for the opponents to succeed.

The saber is unsheathed, slashing diagonally. A gigantic crescent saber light flies out, dazzling brightly, greeting Ye Chaoqun's fierce attack. The sinking saber force cuts across a semi-circle, and with the vibration of spirit force in the Boulder Mountain Saber, it slices through the sword flashes aiming for the face.

The moment the sword flashes shatter, Lu Ye's tiger mouth goes numb.

To be honest, this is his first time facing off directly with Constellation Late Stagers, and he immediately perceives the vast gap between Late Stage and Early Stage.

His own foundation is indeed deep, but cultivation is ultimately a hard flaw.

No time to catch his breath, Ye Chaoqun already lunged forward, swinging his fists at Lu Ye in a frenzied bombardment. At the same time, Duan Xiuchen also launched from the side, casting various Spirit Talismans, manifesting a fierce offensive.

Lu Ye led Huang Li and Xu Xinghe in a rapid retreat, wielding the saber like the moon in rotation, while conjuring layers of protective barriers in front of him, resisting the incoming force.

The breaking speed of the barriers is unprecedentedly fast; even with all his might, Lu Ye seems somewhat unable to withstand them.

At this critical moment, Huang Li suddenly raised her hand and tapped Lu Ye's back, a Spirit Talisman on her hand transformed into golden light, enveloping Lu Ye's entire body.

Lu Ye's pressure was greatly reduced.

However, Huang Li and Xu Xinghe weren't so fortunate. The fierce combined attack of two Constellation Late Stagers seemed as if only Lu Ye was resisting, but in reality, the three were working together.

The aftermath of the fierce attack caused the Qi and blood of the two to surge, and when Huang Li tapped Lu Ye's back with that Golden Body Talisman, her mind relaxed for a moment, accidentally struck by Ye Chaoqun's fist force, instantly exploding into a mist of blood.

The three formed an array; with one dead, the array broke without being attacked, and Xu Xinghe immediately followed her fate.

Seeing this scene, Ye Chaoqun and Duan Xiuchen's assault became even more intense, evidently aiming to send Lu Ye back to the East Camp at once.

Yet unexpectedly, Lu Ye, fighting alone, became much more agile, and with the protection of the Golden Body Talisman, the two couldn't take him down for a while.

When Lu Ye found an opportunity, he unleashed a Crescent Moon slash, forcing the two back.

The two Late Stagers did not pursue him but stood in place, each with different expressions.

Only then did Lu Ye have the leisure to observe the surroundings. Just now, during his entanglement with the two Constellation Late Stagers, sounds of cultivators dying around continued to reach him, knowing that ally forces encountered misfortune. Only by looking around now does he realize the losses were far greater than expected.

Nine came, but only three were alive, besides him, only Hai Tang and another Constellation Early Stager were struggling to hold on.

Even as he watched, the Constellation Early Stager fell dead on the spot, and Hai Tang was also in grave danger, apparently unable to survive.

Despite his prior warnings to everyone to flee immediately if the situation looked bad, it seemed they lost vigilance, mainly because the South and West troops staged too realistically.

Carrying the Boulder Mountain Saber, Lu Ye's eyelids slightly drooped: "Fellow Daoists from the Southern Region, this isn't how friends treat guests!"

Duan Xiuchen clicked his tongue, his expression solemn: "Brother Ye previously told me about you, and I didn't quite believe it, but now it seems, Brother Ye not only didn't exaggerate but even underestimated you."

An Early Stager, under the ambush and mad attack of two Late Stagers, could retreat intact; who would believe this if told?

Yet this happened right before his eyes.

"Southern Region has allied with the Western Region?" Lu Ye asked.

Ye Chaoqun chuckled: "As Fellow Daoist sees!"

Duan Xiuchen said, "Brother Lu, don't be angry, it's the situation that forces it. Think about it, the East has always been third, and our two factions fight for first and second; it's a convention. If the East suddenly rides above our two factions, we wouldn't be able to account for it when we return. But your

East, always third, maintaining it again this time doesn't matter. The so-called assisting others' success is something everyone should have. Brother Lu, you're just external support, no need to be so strenuously!"

Lu Ye slowly sheathed the saber, said slowly: "We thought we could maintain our alliance relationship continuously, but it seems it's just one-sided wishful thinking."

Duan Xiuchen said: "It's about a domain matter, some choices are forced, but that doesn't affect our personal friendship. Should Brother Lu come to Southern Region's Mount Fangcun, Duan will warmly welcome and apologize personally, but for this Martial Arts Meet...I'd ask Brother Lu to bear with it."

"Understood!" Lu Ye nodded.

Duan Xiuchen laughed heartily: "I like how Brother Lu understands reason, so...farewell for now!"

No longer pursuing Lu Ye with Ye Chaoqun, it was unnecessary. Out of the nine from the East, only Lu Ye remained, and in the time they'd spent talking, Hai Tang also perished.

It wasn't that Lu Ye didn't want to save them, it's just that these two Constellation Late Stagers constantly locked him with their Mental Consciousness. If he rashly charged, he feared he would fall into a trap.

The South and West cultivators briefly reorganized, pushing Spirit Orbs toward a direction, Lu Ye glanced, finding it was toward the Western Region Camp.

It was obvious that they had pre-arranged this.

The current situation was that the East had three Spirit Orbs, the South two, and ironically, the overall strongest West only had one. Since these two factions wanted to form an alliance, naturally, they needed to first make up for the West's shortcomings.

They couldn't possibly let the South get three orbs first, as that would make the West's position look too unfavorable.

It seemed the eighth Spirit Orb was intended to be placed in the South.

Watching the cultivators of the South and West leave, Lu Ye turned around and headed toward the East Camp, receiving a message via Hai Tang's audio talisman midway, setting up a meeting point.

After a while, Hai Tang and her group of eight arrived.

Everyone seemed somewhat unhappy, especially Huang Li, who was so angry her mouth pouted: "These two factions are so shameless. They're already so strong, and they still team up. As if teaming up wasn't enough, they set us up! It really angers me!"

Han Molong chuckled, "Senior Brother Lu had already warned us to retreat quickly if the situation looked bad, but we weren't cautious enough. You see, Senior Brother Lu got away without a scratch."

Huang Li, still indignant, said, "That's because Senior Brother Lu is skilled!" She turned to Lu Ye, "Senior Brother, did you already foresee their ill intentions?"

Lu Ye said, "Regardless of the situation, you must always stay vigilant. You can't rely on others; only by being cautious can you ensure long-term safety."

Everyone nodded in agreement.

Lu Ye looked around, and fortunately, although everyone was quite angry, the atmosphere wasn't too heavy. After all, the East still had three Spirit Orbs in hand, which was enough to report back. If they couldn't snatch the fourth one, there was nothing to be done.

From the current situation, trying to seize a fourth Spirit Orb for the East seemed unrealistic; the Southern cultivators were even willing to assist in transporting them to the West, showcasing a cooperation that was beyond mere alliance.

Hai Tang couldn't help but worry: "Junior Brother Lu, do you think that after they've divided the remaining Spirit Orbs, they'll come to seize ours?"

Lu Ye replied thoughtfully, "Do you know what the Constellation Late Stage cultivator from the South said to me?"

"What did they say?"

"He said that since the East has been the eternal third, there isn't much problem in maintaining that position again this time. But for their two factions, falling below us wouldn't look good, and now with the seventh Spirit Orb appearing, they're transporting it to the Western camp. If I'm not mistaken, the eighth will be sent to the South, and the ninth to the West, thus evenly dividing all the Spirit Orbs among our three factions."

Hai Tang's face changed slightly: "So... they'll come to take ours!"

At these words, everyone else immediately grew tense.

Even though they had almost been wiped out earlier, everyone was only slightly angry without much worry. But if such a thing were to happen, they could forget about securing the second position.

If they hadn't secured the third Spirit Orb, they might've resigned to fate due to their overall weakness, but how could you spit out the meat when it's already in your mouth?

Lu Ye nodded, "They definitely will. With nine Orbs divided three ways, it's tough to rank them. But if they take one from us and then decide the winner amongst themselves, they can establish the rankings. The South and West have set their strategy, just waiting for us to comply."

Huang Li weakly said, "Coming to our camp to seize a Spirit Orb... isn't that not so easy?"

"Indeed it's not easy, but it's not impossible, especially when those two factions join forces."

With two Constellation Late Stage and five mid-stage cultivators, what could the East use to resist? Even if they could keep reincarnating and joining the battle again at the camp, the spirit force they would expend could never be restored. Once the number of deaths hit a limit, they'd lose all combat capability!

At its core, it's because the East's lineup is too weak, so much so that it makes the other two factions see this plan's feasibility!

Their only concern was Lu Ye, but if one Constellation Late Stage cultivator engaged him, the others wouldn't be a threat. Once Hai Tang and the others lost their combat effectiveness, Lu Ye wouldn't be able to stop them alone.

Realizing the gravity of the situation, Hai Tang said, "Should we return to reinforce the camp's defenses?"

"I've already started doing so!" Lu Ye replied.

Everyone was bewildered, not understanding how Lu Ye, standing here, could be reinforcing the camp's defense.

Only within the Bizarre Fog space, did the three Sun Blaze stages see clearly that the previously added twenty-eighth light point was now stationed at the East Camp, immobile.

"Merely strengthening the camp's defense won't suffice; any defense can be breached, so other stratagems are necessary."

Hai Tang said, "If Junior Brother Lu has a plan, just let us know. As long as we can protect the camp's Spirit Orb, it doesn't matter how many times we die."

Everyone looked to Lu Ye, who calmly stated, "The best defense is a good offense. So... let's go seize the fourth Spirit Orb!"

The group was stunned. Seizing the fourth Spirit Orb was the prior strategy, but given the circumstances now, it seemed infeasible. With the South and West's earnest cooperation, the East had no foothold either.

How could they seize it?

Chapter 1344 Is My Spirit Orb Moving?

In the Black Abyss, meteors swept past, crisscrossing through the void.

The members of the three factions gathered once again, waiting in silence.

The eighth Spirit Orb was born.

Almost at the same time, cultivators from all three factions dashed toward the direction of the Spirit Orb.

This time, the Spirit Orb appeared closer to the Western Region Camp, so the nine from the Western Region were the first to arrive, but as Lu Ye expected, they didn't choose to transport the Spirit Orb toward their own camp. Instead, they moved it forward to the Southern Region Camp.

When the nine from the Southern Region arrived, the two groups joined forces, chatting and laughing with each other, the atmosphere relaxed and joyful.

Lu Ye led his own men, maintaining a distance of about 30 miles, trailing them from afar, displaying a stance that was unwilling to give up, ready to seize the Spirit Orb at any time.

Under such circumstances, the Southern and Western troops could only band closely together, not daring to be negligent.

It wasn't until both groups had transported the Spirit Orb halfway that Lu Ye stopped his pursuit, sensing that the eighth Spirit Orb was moving rapidly and unwaveringly toward the Southern Region Camp.

After four hours, everything was settled.

A lengthy wait followed.

The Spirit Orb's position wasn't fixed, usually appearing within a central area of the Black Abyss, but the timing was entirely unpredictable. No one knew when the next Spirit Orb would appear.

In past Martial Arts Meets, there were even occurrences when as many as three Spirit Orbs appeared at once.

This wait was somewhat long. After a full day, the ninth Spirit Orb was born, and when that peculiar energy fluctuation spread out, the cultivators from both the Southern and Western factions surged forward like sharks catching the scent of blood.

The Eastern faction, under Lu Ye's leadership, also dashed toward that direction.

Just like last time, they trailed the two groups from afar, watching as they labored to transport the Spirit Orb.

Duan Xiuchen and Ye Chaoqun were somewhat perplexed, for it was already apparent that their two factions had formed a strong alliance, and given the massive power disparity, why was the Eastern faction so persistent?

If they were in the Eastern faction's position, they should not be doing such futile things but instead strengthening their own camp's defenses to ensure the three Spirit Orbs they had already secured were not lost.

They did not often communicate with Lu Ye, but could see that this foreign aid to the Eastern faction was no fool, always feeling that he was plotting something in the background, though they didn't know exactly what.

The two discussed these matters while transporting the Spirit Orb.

After a while, Duan Xiuchen suddenly froze, "Where are the other Eastern members?"

Somehow, the nine from the Eastern faction trailing behind them had dwindled down to just Lu Ye! All the others had vanished!

Upon closer inspection, as a meteor streaked past in front of Lu Ye, Lu Ye too disappeared!

At that very moment, within the Bizarre Fog space, pandemonium erupted among the three Sun Blaze factions.

Having reached their level of cultivation, rarely did external matters disturb them. Take Chen Xuanhai and Woo Qimo, for example; even upon noticing Su Yuqing's earlier transformation, they remained unfazed. It would take something incredibly astonishing to draw such a reaction from them.

What they witnessed was truly bizarre!

From their vantage point, the eighteen Constellations from the Southern and Western factions were gathered together, with a light representing the Spirit Orb. This undoubtedly meant the two factions were jointly transporting the Spirit Orb.

Yet, the Eastern cultivators, who were initially near them, were now divided into two groups, advancing towards the opposing factions' camps at an unbelievable speed.

They weren't flying; it was more like a leaping advance.

The nine from the Eastern faction currently showed as ten light points, split into two waves. After a slight pause at one location, they suddenly shifted to the next, covering a nearly 10,000-mile leap! They were directly advancing toward the camps of the Southern and Western factions, with no deviation in their route.

"Are those transposition talismans?" one from the Western Sun Blaze exclaimed in surprise.

Second Zhu from the Southern faction spoke solemnly, "Does your faction have such transposition talismans?"

The Dwarf Race could create transposition talismans, but not with such effects; for when activated, the direction of transposition couldn't be controlled. Instead, they would randomly transpose to a location and the distance was limited, usually used for escaping.

Only transposition talismans crafted by Sun Blaze Realms could achieve a one-time transposition over 10,000 miles!

What's more, the two groups from the Eastern faction were heading unmistakably and directly towards the other two camps without any deviation, which couldn't possibly be achieved by transposition talismans alone.

If not transposition talismans, then it must be a teleportation array!

Only a teleportation array could produce such an effect.

The Sun Blaze cultivators realized collectively, finally understanding the peculiar behavior of the extra twenty-eighth light point seen before.

As early as during the competition for the sixth Spirit Orb, when three Western cultivators perished and returned to their camp, this bizarre twenty-eighth light point had separately visited the Southern and Western Camps. At that time, the Sun Blaze cultivators didn't understand the purpose behind these actions, finally realizing it now.

This guy... actually set up teleportation arrays along the way!

This means that even back then, this person had already set his sights on the camps of the two troops. What foresight!

However, there's one thing that the Sun Blaze can't figure out, because in their previous observations, there was no trace of this twenty-eighth light point stopping along the way. How did he have the time to set up the teleportation arrays?

Relying on teleportation talismans isn't realistic either. The teleportation talismans made by the Dwarf Race are all paired, allowing movement from one point to another, but not continued teleportation like this, and ordinary teleportation talismans can't move so many people.

Besides, with meteors of various sizes flying all over Black Abyss, pre-placed talismans might easily be destroyed by these flying meteors.

"Brother Chen, what's up with this kid from your family?" Second Zhu couldn't help but ask.

Who knows what method was used to mark the twenty-eighth point in the Bizarre Fog space, and now even such a wondrous technique is displayed. How is this something a Constellation can do?

Chen Xuanhai remained silent. If you ask me, who should I ask?

Since Lu Ye came to Mount Fangcun, he had only met him a couple of times, and he didn't know Lu Ye's details. All he knew was that Lu Ye's joining came at a great sacrifice from Su Yuqing.

At that time, he thought Su Yuqing was too desperate.

But now, it turns out that she had unique insight. Earlier, seeing the southern and western troops join forces, Chen Xuanhai knew his side was in trouble, thinking they might end up at the bottom again in this Martial Arts Meet. But now it seems, the key to turning things around lies with this outsider.

At this moment, it's not their trouble; it's the two other troops who are in trouble!

In a flash, two waves of troops from the east have arrived at the two camps.

On the southern side, three Spirit Orbs are quietly placed on the platform, while on the western side there are two. Each is protected and shrouded by Formations.

The Formations set up by the Dwarf Race using Spirit Talismans are good, but without someone to oversee them, the big arrays are ultimately dead arrays with limited power.

As early as when the eastern side set up Formations, Lu Ye had observed carefully. Such precautions aren't very effective. A sufficiently strong attack can break the Formations.

Not to mention, when it comes to array destruction... he has unique experience. Back in the Spirit Stream battlefield, the garrisons of the top sects in the Core Circle suffered heavily at his hands. That's how Lu Ye the Sect Destroyer made his name.

At the camps of the two troops, the eastern troop, led by Lu Ye's real and doppelganger, each used their methods to break the arrays. Each and every one was full of enthusiasm. The thrill of doing something sneaky like this was quite exciting.

Within one incense stick's time, the Formations of the two camps were completely broken.

Everyone looked for suitably sized pieces of meteorite, placing them behind the Spirit Orbs, then laughing and pushing the meteorites to move the Orbs.

Because the Spirit Orbs don't move without force, they must rely on the flying of the meteorites to facilitate the movement of the Spirit Orbs, ensuring that after the eastern troops leave, the Orbs will continue to move.

To be safe, the three Spirit Orbs on the southern side and the two on the western side were pushed in different directions.

In this way, the southern and western troops would waste a lot more time retrieving these Spirit Orbs.

Lu Ye never thought about plundering these two troops' Spirit Orbs; it's unrealistic. Once they make a move here, the two troops would definitely react quickly and return to support, while the eastern troops are already split into two groups. They can't match either troop.

Lu Ye's target, from start to finish, was the ninth Spirit Orb!

And it was as the two troops' Orbs started moving.

The cultivators transporting Orbs to the Western Region Camp all suddenly had their faces change.

Duan Xiuchen frowned and said, "Brother Ye, I don't know if I felt it wrong, but why do I feel like our Spirit Orb is moving?"

Ye Chaoqun's expression was solemn. "I also have that sensation!"

Looking at the others, they all nodded to show they felt the same.

"Bad, it must be the work of the east!" Duan Xiuchen was shocked. He had been searching for traces of the eastern cultivators with Ye Chaoqun but since Lu Ye disappeared, the eastern troops hadn't appeared again. They thought the eastern side acknowledged inferiority and returned to their camp. But now it turns out they went to raid their place instead.

For a moment, it was puzzling. How could it be done? Because only brief moments have passed since the eastern troops vanished until now.

How did the east have such a method to travel such a distance in so little time?

Upon realizing that the situation at their camp was dire, Duan Xiuchen decisively ordered, "Return to aid, quickly!"

Hearing this, the southern cultivators immediately turned around, flying towards their camp.

Duan Xiuchen shouted again, "Foolish, die and return!"

This place is so far from their camp, and they would be too late if they flew back. To return quickly, they should die and come back to life. As for the spirit force consumed by rebirth, at this time, who still cares about these trivialities?

Everyone woke up as if from a dream, quickly using their means to self-destruct on the spot.

In a blink of an eye, the nine men of the southern group died decisively.

Chapter 1345 We Did It!

Ye Chaoqun felt absolutely terrible!

The Southern Region could smoothly retreat because this Spirit Orb was set to be sent to the Western Region Camp. Compared to assisting their allies in escorting it, they naturally cared more about the outcomes for their own camp.

But what should the Western Region do now?

If everyone dies and returns, should they still go for the ninth Spirit Orb? But if only part of them die and return, facing that devouring beast from the Eastern Region, what use would it be?

He was a decisive person, and immediately called out two names, instructing, "You two continue transporting the Spirit Orb, everyone else, fall back!"

Everyone received their orders and acted without hesitation.

In the blink of an eye, only two cultivators at the Constellation Early Stage were left with the Spirit Orb.

The two exchanged glances, both feeling helpless. The originally buzzing scene suddenly became cold and desolate, and they could only continue transporting the Spirit Orb laboriously.

However, this leisure was quickly broken, as in their perception, the auras of several cultivators at the Constellation stage were fast approaching in this direction.

Looking up, they indeed saw numerous streams of Liu Guang coming their way.

The people's attack from the Eastern Region arrived; nine in total, not one less!

What exactly is going on? The two at the Constellation Early Stage guarding the Western side were baffled.

If it was the Eastern troops raiding the Southern and Western Region camps, then what was going on right in front of them?

Not only were they bewildered, but Duan Xiuchen and Ye Chaoqun, who had retreated to their own camp, were also puzzled because in their view, no trace of any Eastern region cultivator could be seen, not even a hint of aura in their perception.

It was as if the Eastern Region cultivators had never been there.

But the Protective Array set up before at their own camp couldn't have broken without reason; it was obviously attacked by force, and the Spirit Orbs had scattered all over, each pushed by a massive meteorite!

"Cheating!"

In the Bizarre Fog space, Sun Blaze from the Southern Region was hopping mad, accusing Chen Xuanhai, "This is blatant cheating!"

Sun Blaze from the Western Region was stunned for a moment, then realized, "Exactly, exactly, what kind of Constellation techniques are these? What kind of treasure did you provide these kids with beforehand? Such elusive powers!"

Chen Xuanhai frowned, "Though our Eastern Region has been in decline for years, we wouldn't break the rules left by our ancestors. Besides, you all are Sun Blaze. What kind of treasure do you think can have such effects? I think you just can't handle losing!"

"But how do you explain this method of teleportation, from your Eastern Region?"

"Why do I need to explain anything?"

"You're just cheating!"

"Cheating, my foot! Is it cheating just because our Eastern Region rises once in a while? Should the Southern and Western Regions remain strong forever while our Eastern Region stays in decline?"

A group of Sun Blaze, who were esteemed in front of disciples as pillars of this world, were at this moment arguing in the Bizarre Fog space like squabbling children, with filth-laden words pouring out constantly. If the disciples from various realms saw this, it would surely challenge their perception.

Amidst the noisy quarrel, the blue light point representing two cultivators from the Western Region extinguished, which undoubtedly meant that the two had already perished in battle.

Next to the ninth Spirit Orb, there was only the red light point representing Eastern region cultivators, escorting the Spirit Orb as it flew toward the Eastern Camp.

From the current state of the Southern and Western Regions, there was absolutely no strength to stop them, nor was there time to do so. The Eastern Region taking the fourth Spirit Orb was already a sure thing!

Sun Blaze of the Southern and Western Regions actually knew that in Martial Arts Meet matters, the Eastern Region's Sun Blaze wouldn't cheat. Otherwise, they would not consistently end at the bottom. But this time, both regions had brought extremely strong line-ups, practically securing the first place in the history of Martial Arts Meets.

Looking at the Eastern Region, with those weak nine, if they managed to get first place, the Southern and Western Regions would lose face.

In the midst of the uproar, the oldest Sun Blaze from the Western Region slowly spoke, "Stop arguing, the character of the Fellow Daoists from the Eastern Region should not be questioned. The Black Abyss Martial Arts Meet is a significant event for our Dwarf Race every fifty years, and no one would secretly play unfair tricks. We should be happy for the performance of these little ones from the Eastern Region."

As he was the oldest, he had seen almost all the Sun Blaze present grow up. His speech indeed stopped the discord.

Second Zhu nodded and said, "What Veteran Xsu said is correct; we have shown a lack of respect!"

Veteran Xsu changed the subject, saying slowly, "However, there's still some time before the end of the Martial Arts Meet; capturing the Spirit Orb is not the final result, holding onto it till the end is what counts!"

At these words, Chen Xuanhai couldn't help but sigh, while the Sun Blaze from the other two regions had a gleam in their eyes.

Indeed, capturing the Spirit Orb isn't the end, keeping it until the Martial Arts Meet concludes is the final judgment.

The state of affairs inside the Black Abyss is already very clear: the Eastern Region has grabbed the fourth orb, the Southern Region has three, and the Western Region has two. It's intolerable for the Western Region, the most powerful on the surface, to accept this result.

So, by all means, they will go to raid the camp.

The Southern part definitely won't just be a bystander either. They probably also want to advance further, and now the Western part only has two spheres, so they can only deal with the Eastern camp.

So the upcoming situation is most likely the Southern and Western troops will continue to cooperate sincerely and launch a strong attack on the Eastern camp!

This is undoubtedly an extremely severe test for the East. If they can hold, they will be able to redeem their past failures. If not, it will all be for naught, and all previous efforts will be wasted.

What the final outcome will be, even the Sun Blaze cultivators present cannot easily discern. On the surface, it seems the East does not have the strength to defend their achievements, but the

performance of the Eastern cultivators this time is somewhat strange, so it's hard to make a conclusive judgment.

In the Black Abyss, at the Eastern camp, the fourth Spirit Orb was safely sent back, without encountering any obstacles along the way, unimaginably smooth.

Cheers erupted, the male cultivators were excited, while the more sensitive-natured female cultivators were almost moved to tears.

No one expected, they actually did it!

Achieved what their predecessors had always hoped for but could not achieve!

Previously, when Lu Ye decided to go for the fourth Spirit Orb, no one thought it would succeed. After all, the cooperation between the other two parts was so tight, their own lineup was the weakest, and they had to fight against two. How could it work?

But unexpectedly, under Lu Ye's meticulous strategy, what seemed impossible was easily achieved. During the whole process, they only followed orders, continuously changing positions, and apart from finally surrounding and killing two Western cultivators, they did not actually confront the main forces of the other two parts.

It was truly miraculous!

"Don't celebrate too soon!" Lu Ye interrupted everyone's cheers, "The real test is just beginning. The Southern and Western troops definitely won't stop here. They're surely already on their way, and we must defend the camp until the Martial Arts Meet ends."

Hai Tang nodded: "Junior Brother Lu is right. There are roughly two days left until the end of the Martial Arts Meet. If we endure these two days, we win!"

Han Molong said: "Senior Brother Lu, just tell us what to do and we'll follow orders!"

Everyone nodded. Originally, the leader in everyone's mind was Hai Tang, but as they snatched one Spirit Orb after another, Lu Ye had become the anchor for the Eastern side. Particularly after the contest for the fourth Spirit Orb, even if Lu Ye were to ask them to die now, probably no one would even frown, they would just wonder if there was a deeper meaning behind it...

"Then... let's first recover our spirit force," Lu Ye suggested.

Everyone was taken aback, expecting some daunting task ahead, but it turned out to be something so simple.

No one asked more questions. They all sat down crossed-legged and began to silently recover.

Hai Tang quietly transmitted audio to Lu Ye: "Junior Brother Lu, the big array here seems to have some changes. Was that your doing?"

Lu Ye nodded: "I added some defensive formations."

Hai Tang said: "Junior Brother, do you have a doppelganger?"

Lu Ye smiled: "Did Senior Sister see through it?"

Hai Tang said: "When you led us to the Western camp, Junior Brother's attire was a bit different, and... there was no saber, so I thought it might be a doppelganger. But Junior Brother's Clone Technique is truly mysterious, showing no flaws."

"The Clone Technique I practice is somewhat special," Lu Ye casually explained.

Strictly speaking, it wasn't really a Clone Technique, but a unique ability based on the Talent Tree, exclusive to Lu Ye. However, its external manifestation resembles the Clone Technique, so to those unaware, it indeed appeared flawless.

After chatting a bit casually, Hai Tang also began to recover herself.

The Eastern camp was peaceful, and a thousand miles away in the Void, Duan Xiuchen led the Southern troops in waiting. Moments later, the Western troops, led by Ye Chaoqun, arrived.

Upon meeting, they exchanged glances and saw the bitterness in each other's eyes.

No one had expected that the sincere cooperation of the two troops was so easily dissolved by the East. Originally, they thought that since the sixth Spirit Orb, the East would not be able to intervene in the remaining Orbs. Not only would they not intervene, but the Orbs they had already seized might not even be secure.

Who knew the ninth Spirit Orb would ultimately fall into the hands of the East.

After a moment of silence, Duan Xiuchen said, "On the bright side, the situation hasn't really changed much!"

Originally, the two troops had planned to attack the Eastern camp after transporting the ninth Spirit Orb, and now they're here anyway.

However, the current situation is advantageous for the Southern side because the Spirit Orb initially intended to be sent to the Western side was lost, meaning the South hasn't actually incurred any loss.

Ye Chaoqun said, "Brother Duan, if the South wants to take first place this time, they must not hold back!"

The Western side is already on the brink. With only two spheres in hand now, if they don't seize one back, there's no way to explain it upon return, and first place is out of the question. They'll just have to aim for second.

Therefore, they need the South to help out as well. If everything goes smoothly and they manage to snatch two Spirit Orbs from the East, with each taking one, it'd be a win-win ending. As for the East... let them lament.

Duan Xiuchen naturally understood Ye Chaoqun's perspective, and he nodded with a smile: "Rest assured, the South does not want to miss out on such a good opportunity."

It's rare for the Western side not to compete for first place with them, so how could the South not seize this chance?

Chapter 1346 Defense

"They're coming!" In the quiet wait, Han Molong's voice suddenly rang out.

The people in the East Camp, who were hastily recovering their energy, looked up, and indeed saw a large area of flowing light rapidly approaching.

The South and West troops, eighteen Constellations, stood boldly, without any concealment.

In fact, there was no way to conceal anything. In such a situation, in such an environment, there was no room for any schemes or plots. To attack the East Camp by force, they had to rely on the true strength of the two divisions.

Just three miles away from the East Camp's platform, the cultivators of the two divisions stopped.

Ye Chaoqun and Duan Xiuchen stood side by side, their eyes complex as they looked ahead. The four Spirit Orbs that had been properly placed were now so glaring. Such a situation should have appeared in their own camp, but it now appeared in the East.

Until this moment, they still didn't know what kind of method the Eastern side had used to break their camp's defense and then move the placed Spirit Orbs away.

They wanted to ask, but estimated not to get any result, so they let it be.

Ye Chaoqun exhaled softly, his Mental Consciousness surging, his voice spreading in all directions: "Fellow Daoists of the East, this time we have learned a lesson! But considering the domain's foundation for the next fifty years, we implore you to forgive our South and West troops for joining forces to attack. Please do not say that we won without honor!"

With such a lineup to deal with the seemingly weakest East, it was indeed hard to justify. But the East's behavior this time was too bizarre, forcing them to do so. With things as they are, they could only say some courteous words.

Although these words were meant for everyone in the East, Ye Chaoqun's gaze was fixed on Lu Ye, as he always had a feeling that all the oddities of the East this time were inextricably linked to this human.

Although the Dwarf Race was divided into three factions, they were ultimately one race. They were well aware of each other's abilities, and if there were methods beyond their understanding, they must have been employed by outsiders!

Facing his gaze, Lu Ye's expression was calm: "Bring it on!"

Ye Chaoqun nodded, lightly waved his hand, and said a single word: "Attack!"

Eighteen figures instantly transformed into several waves, surrounding the East Camp from different directions. In the next moment, colorful lights began to bloom, bombarding the position of the East Camp.

As early as when the cultivators of the two divisions arrived, the East side was already prepared for battle.

Nine figures spread out on the smooth platform, each occupying a big Array Eye, channeling spirit force into the array, activating the Formation's power.

Instantly, layer upon layer of light screens lit up on the platform's surface, tightly enveloping the entire camp and the Spirit Orbs placed within.

Though these layers of protective arrays seemed independent, they were in fact closely linked in threes or twos. With someone sitting in place managing them, the power they could unleash was not to be underestimated, incomparable to the South and West camps' formations before. At that time, no one sat in defense, it was a dead formation, whereas now the East had a live formation, the difference in their protective capabilities was at least four or five times greater.

Sharp attacks fell on the light screens, causing ripples and flickering light.

On such a battlefield of clear attack and defense, if the attacking side did not have explosive means to break the array in a short time, what tested both sides was a battle of patience and spirit force endurance.

The South and West troops evidently knew that facing such rock-solid defense from the East, quick results were impossible. Thus, while their attacks seemed fierce, they were actually controlling their spirit force consumption rhythmically, showing composed demeanor.

The situation seemed to be in a stalemate but was actually developing little by little in a direction favorable to the South and West troops.

After all, no matter how solid the defense, there comes a time when it breaks, especially considering the strength disparity, the defending side is always at a disadvantage and passive in such a battlefield.

After a fierce battle lasting more than four hours, the first layer of defense on the East side was broken.

Another four hours, and the second layer of defense shattered.

After another one hour, the third layer of defense was breached...

There were nine layers of defense, not each able to hold the same amount of time, but rather the further it goes, the shorter the time it could hold. By the last layer, perhaps it wouldn't even last one incense stick's time.

Lu Ye's expression remained calm, not surprised by this. In fact, the first layer of defense on the East side lasting this long had already exceeded expectations, mainly because the South and West cultivators feared excessive spirit force consumption would affect their subsequent performance.

Hai Tang was secretly anxious, yet helpless.

The current situation was actually quite suitable for the Dwarf Race to use array talismans, but the talismans were also divided into offensive and defensive types. She had a Nine-Melody Chain Array talisman bestowed by her master, which was offensive and not suitable for use at this time.

After all, being the defending side, the main goal is to delay time, not to easily take the initiative to attack.

And the reason Su Yuqing bestowed this offensive talisman was considering the East had always been weak, hoping that with this talisman, they might turn the tide at some crucial moment.

Who would have thought, the East, always at the bottom, this time had such a great outburst, finding themselves in need of defense.

Things were developing in the direction Lu Ye expected. At the camp, layers of defense were successively broken, each holding for decreasing amounts of time.

But even so, the offensive of the South and West troops showed no changes, nor did they appear impatient.

From their standpoint, breaking through the East Camp's Formation defense was not a victory. They still had to endure a bloodier battle to slaughter the cultivators of the East until they were utterly powerless to resist, only then could they smoothly seize the Spirit Orbs. If the East retained any bit of strength, they couldn't achieve their goal.

So breaking the defense was not the end, just another beginning.

Less than a day later, the last layer of defense at the East Camp completely broke!

A barrage of attacks, like raindrops, rained down on the unprotected people of the East. Even as they scrambled to dodge, some were inevitably hit, and in an instant, there were several more injured on the East's side.

Lu Ye received special attention.

Ye Chaoqun and Duan Xiuchen, two Constellation Late Stage experts, launched relentless long-range attacks, their offensives swift and continuous.

Lu Ye's movements were agile and erratic, evading with difficulty, yet as the defending side, he couldn't easily make an offensive move.

Because if he charged out, the remaining people of the East would become lambs to the slaughter, and the South and West troops would undoubtedly rush in to wipe them out completely.

After dodging for a while, seeing that these two forces had no intention of closing in, only attacking from a distance, Lu Ye sighed internally. Ye Chaoqun and Duan Xiuchen were indeed cautious, obviously intending to suppress the East with superior numbers and overall strength, perhaps also because of his identity as a combat cultivator.

Although the Dwarf Race didn't have particularly strict factions, they knew that against a combat cultivator, one shouldn't fight in their specialty area or give them a chance to get close.

Such long-range suppression was what troubled combat cultivators the most.

Couldn't wait any longer!

Lu Ye had initially wanted to surprise these two troops when they got close, but now that plan was dashed, he could only deploy his own techniques.

The moment the blood light bloomed, a faint sound of surging waves could be heard, as if one was suddenly placed in a roaring sea of gales.

The next instant, the blood-colored radiance suddenly spread outward, quickly unfurling!

"Retreat!" Duan Xiuchen's expression changed, hurriedly shouting.

The two troops reacted extremely fast, retreating together upon realizing the danger. However, the blood light spread incredibly quickly, with no warning at all, and in the blink of an eye, it transformed into a massive Blood Orb.

From the safe distance, Duan Xiuchen focused his gaze, unable to see any trace of the East Camp, even the four Spirit Orbs placed within were securely enclosed by the Blood Orb.

Similarly missing were three cultivators from the South!

Duan Xiuchen's face darkened, knowing full well that the missing South cultivators must have fallen into this bizarre Blood Orb.

Looking again at the West, the situation was equally grim, with two people missing, though they were down one less than their own, one of the missing was at the Constellation Mid-Stage!

The loss of five out of an eighteen-member lineup, though not incapacitating, was considerable. Fortunately, their two Constellation Late Stage experts were unharmed, otherwise, the situation would be dire.

"This is... a Blood Path Secret Technique?" Duan Xiuchen looked at the Blood Orb doubtfully.

"Seems very similar to the Blood Race's Blood Technique, definitely a Blood Path Secret Technique," Ye Chaoqun nodded, turning to a Constellation Early Stage cultivator beside him, "Previously, were you three trapped by this thing?"

The Constellation Early Stage was indeed one of the unfortunate ones previously caught by Lu Ye's Blood Technique.

The Constellation Early Stage grit his teeth and nodded, "Precisely. This Blood Path Secret Technique is almost identical to the Blood Technique recorded in texts, and there was no way to escape once trapped inside." Back then, to escape, the three who were trapped had to self-destruct, which allowed them to break free.

Seeing the Blood Orb again, they couldn't help but feel resentment.

"Troubling!" Duan Xiuchen frowned deeply.

They had thought that breaking through the East Camp's defenses was the hardest part, but who expected the opponent could wield such a Blood Path Secret Technique, catching them off guard and losing five people in an instant.

Ye Chaoqun spoke seriously, "It's not that troublesome. The Martial Arts Meet has only one day left, we can only launch a fierce attack! Such a massive Blood Technique must be extremely draining for him, I don't believe he can sustain it for long!"

Duan Xiuchen clearly understood this truth too. Historically, the Dwarf Race, due to ancestral reasons, had a thorough understanding of the Blood Race's Blood Technique. Even if he hadn't encountered it before, he knew what the best course of action was.

With a brief discussion, the remaining thirteen from the two troops launched another attack. Compared to before, the onslaught this time was undoubtedly fiercer.

Such was expected. Before, they were attacking the East Camp's Formation defense, which didn't require aggressive force, just gradual wearing down.

But now they were attacking a Blood Path Secret Technique, fueled by the power of one person, a more savage attack naturally consumed the opponent's strength faster, until they could no longer sustain it!

Chapter 1347 Pulling the Same Trick Again?

The numerous attacks struck the Blood Orb, causing the blood within to surge and evaporate, seemingly with little effect; however, the Dwarf Race all knew that such attacks greatly drained the practitioner of Blood Path Secret Technique.

Once the practitioner is unable to sustain it, they can directly strike at the Yellow Dragon!

Inside the Blood Orb, the five cultivators trapped were also using their own techniques. Especially the Constellation Mid-Stage cultivator, whose attacks were most fierce, almost giving it his all because he knew that trapped in such a predicament, he was doomed. Before dying, he certainly wanted to exert his maximum power to weaken the enemy's strength.

He was not wrong in thinking this, but within a fleeting moment, a figure ghostly appeared behind him, a long blade drawn, giving him no time to react, severed his head in one stroke.

Simultaneously, with Lu Ye's covert guidance, the Eastern Region cultivators in pairs began their siege on the fallen enemies in the Blood Sea at four different positions.

The battle erupted quickly and ended swiftly, within a few breaths, it returned to calm.

Following Lu Ye's guidance, eight individuals returned to the camp platform, sat cross-legged, and began to take out spirit jade to replenish themselves.

Yet soon, everyone noticed something odd, as in this environment, their recovery efficiency was many times faster than usual cultivation. The energy flowing into their bodies wasn't just from refining spirit jade, but also from a source they couldn't detect, continuously injected from the surrounding Blood Sea, replenishing their consumption.

Most were unaware of what was happening, only Huang Li and Xu Xinghe, who were with Lu Ye understood this was Lu Ye's doing.

They had experienced this before with Lu Ye, using the As-Close-As-Siblings Array Disc, never worrying about their spirit force endurance, as their spirit reserves were always full.

Yet, the two didn't know that this time Lu Ye was utilizing the As-Close-As-Siblings Spirit Runes, rather than the array disc.

The array disc's coverage was ultimately limited, but within the Blood Sea, Lu Ye could easily construct an As-Close-As-Siblings Spirit Runes covering everyone. At this moment, spirit jade was piled under his feet, with the roots of the Talent Tree dug in, rapidly devouring, replenishing his consumption while aiding Hai Tang and others' recovery.

Not stopping there, he also took out the demonic pills from previous lanternfish star beasts he killed, chewing and ingesting them.

Others in the East couldn't sense the danger outside, but as the Blood Technique practitioner, Lu Ye was well aware of the situation in the South and West divisions.

He had to admit, the South and West's current response was not what he wanted to see, and it gave him the biggest headache.

They only launched long-range attacks, never approaching the Blood Sea, leaving him with little recourse.

And observing the current situation, he could only persist for half a day at most since the spirit force he refined now had to maintain the Blood Sea and assist Hai Tang and others' recovery, a consumption an Early Stage Constellation could hardly bear.

Only he, possessing the Talent Tree, could still hold out for a while.

After half a day, he would have to retract the Blood Sea, or else if his spirit force fell to a certain limit, it would surely affect subsequent strength exertion, worsening the situation.

Choosing to retract the doppelganger is a problem; if retracted, it could quickly replenish his consumption, considering the separated force from the doppelganger could swiftly merge with the main body.

Yet, even if retracted, whether he could endure to the Martial Arts Meet's end remained uncertain.

After a while of thinking, Lu Ye decided not to retract; the doppelganger had its uses outside, and it was about time to begin operation.

With a thought, at the South Camp, several recently deceased in the Blood Sea sped out, rushing toward the East Camp, evidently to support the battlefield.

Once these individuals proceeded afar, the doppelganger emerged from hiding, heading directly toward the South Camp.

Facing two was ultimately too difficult; dividing the enemy offered hope. This tactic was used before during the ninth Spirit Orb snatch, repeating it now would be fine.

Previously, five joined forces to destroy an array, yet now only the doppelganger was there, needing more time to break the South Camp's Protective Array.

This was also why the doppelganger went out now—the timing must be just right; too early, and even if they returned for support, they might still charge to the battlefield, missing the division purpose; too late, failing to break the Protective Array to move the Spirit Orb, the South wouldn't notice and naturally wouldn't reinforce.

At this precise moment.

The choice to target the South rather than the West... there were only two Spirit Orbs in the West, more secured.

Whereas the South had three; even without gaining more, keeping the current spoils would suffice for reporting back, hence they wouldn't allow any damage to existing spoils no matter what.

Time passed, five deceased from the South and West divisions gradually arrived at the battlefield, rejoining combat.

Lu Ye felt even more pressured, evident in the ongoing shrinkage of the Blood Sea, which enemies saw and naturally attacked even fiercer.

After half a day, sensing his spirit force already at a set limit, Lu Ye knew he couldn't delay any longer and immediately transmitted audio to all sides.

Hai Tang and others, in recovery, simultaneously opened eyes, each with bright pupils; supported by Lu Ye, their spirit force reserves had fully restored, they were in their prime state at this very moment!

Everyone knew that the moment of the final battle had arrived, and whether they could hold onto the current victory depended on this last fight.

At the same time, at the Southern Region Camp, the doppelganger finally broke through the big array, fully driving the spirit force to crash into a Spirit Orb, then pushed it to fly outward swiftly.

The cultivators of the South and West troops attacking the Blood Orb fiercely suddenly sensed something. Duan Xiuchen cursed: "Damn, why are they playing this trick again?"

This had happened before, and they were on guard against it, but when they saw with their own eyes all nine people from the East gathering, they assumed the same thing couldn't happen again. The Eastern troops were at the camp, so who would attack their camp?

Yet it happened, truly beyond comprehension.

All nine from the West were present, and there were no traces of anyone leaving the East Side; how could their camp's Array be broken, and how was the Spirit Orb moved?

Surely, there couldn't be a fourth faction emerging from the Black Abyss?

They couldn't explore it, but the fact that their Spirit Orb was moving was undeniable, and it was moving increasingly faster. If they didn't quickly intercept it, it might really be stolen.

Duan Xiuchen made a swift decision, quickly ordering a cultivator at Constellation Early Stage: "Go back and check the situation!"

The Constellation Early Stage cultivator obeyed, and immediately met his demise!

In the next moment, he reappeared at his camp, pursued the source of the Spirit Orb's fluctuation, and soon saw the trace of the Spirit Orb. Observing closer, he saw a familiar figure fiercely pushing the Spirit Orb.

The person was instantly dumbfounded, almost unable to believe his eyes, because he discovered the one pushing the Spirit Orb was none other than that fellow Lu Ye!

Before he could take out his audio talisman to send a message, a streak of sword light slashed toward him, too quick to dodge, slicing him in half, and blood spattered the Void.

Upon reappearing at his camp again, the person looked slightly pale; dying twice in succession was a tremendous drain on his mental state and spirit force. Furthermore, he had been assaulting the East Camp, leaving him with less than fifty percent of his usual spirit force reserve.

He took out his audio talisman, transmitting to inform Duan Xiuchen of the situation.

Duan Xiuchen was dumbstruck upon receiving the message. He had always thought the blood orb was a secret technique by Lu Ye, but if Lu Ye was raiding the camp, then whose handiwork was this blood orb secret technique?

More puzzling was how he managed to leave. There was no trace of anyone departing, as the South and West troops had been constantly monitoring the area.

Without much hesitation, Duan Xiuchen quickly pointed out four, instructing them to return for backup.

He had previously experienced Lu Ye's tactics, naturally understanding that sending too few wouldn't be effective, but there was no need for everyone to go back just for one person, especially since he needed to remain there to contest for the Spirit Orb. Reincarnating once drained too much spirit force; he wouldn't do it unless necessary.

Among the four selected, there were two at Constellation Mid-Stage, plus the one who had returned, making a team of five. In Duan Xiuchen's view, it was enough to deal with Lu Ye; even if they couldn't kill him, they could retrieve the Spirit Orb, which was sufficient.

"What's happening?" Ye Chaoqun asked, eager to know what was occurring at the Southern Region Camp.

Duan Xiuchen appeared to have a toothache: "That Brother Lu somehow managed to get out and is raiding our Southern Region Camp!"

Ye Chaoqun was not surprised but delighted: "Is this true?"

"My junior saw it with his own eyes, how could it be false?"

Ye Chaoqun laughed immediately: "Is this his way of admitting defeat, trying to annoy you guys some more?"

It was impossible to successfully raid a camp at this point, but Lu Ye chose to do it, even abandoning the defense of the East Camp, which was a completely thankless task.

Whereas on the East Side, their main concern was Lu Ye, and now that Lu Ye was absent, there was no need to regard the rest.

"Tell your juniors to just retrieve the Spirit Orb and entangle Lu Ye. But for heaven's sake, don't kill him!" Ye Chaoqun hastily reminded.

If he died, he would return, becoming a variable again.

If they entangled him, he couldn't return, and dealing with the East would be easier.

Of course, if he insisted on self-destruction, there was nothing they could do.

"Of course, I have already instructed them to do just that," Duan Xiuchen responded while continuing to wildly assault the wavering Blood Sea.

As the words left his mouth, the audio talisman stirred again, and upon inspection, his expression changed drastically, as the supposedly foolproof team of five had been completely wiped out by Lu Ye!

Chapter 1348 Division

How long has it been? Five people dead without a single survivor, including two at Constellation Mid-Stage!

In Duan Xiuchen's perception, a Spirit Orb originally placed at his own camp was still moving, and it was getting faster!

"Brother Ye, I need to go back!" Duan Xiuchen said in a deep voice.

He must go back; only by returning personally can he stop Lu Ye and reclaim his Spirit Orb.

"I'll leave this side to you all."

Ye Chaoqun nodded: "No problem!" After a moment of hesitation, he raised his hand and tossed a Spirit Talisman to Duan Xiuchen: "Take this!"

Duan Xiuchen received it, glanced at it briefly, then showed a surprised expression: "You in the Western Region are truly generous, bringing this out? It isn't easy to refine this."

Ye Chaoqun laughed heartily: "Originally, it was meant for dealing with your Southern Region."

Duan Xiuchen naturally understood that the Western Region had prepared means to deal with the Southern Region, and they had their precautions too. He carefully stored away the Spirit Talisman and turned his head, rushing towards the Blood Sea: "Before leaving, I'll probe the reality!"

Since the appearance of this colossal Blood Orb, they've been outside bombing incessantly, clueless about the situation inside, and are wary of rashly discovering its secrets; now, intending to self-destruct, it's a good chance to gather intelligence.

Even if little is uncovered, infiltrating the Blood Orb allows easier use of destructive tactics to worsen the opponent's depletion.

Duan Xiuchen's figure vanished within the Blood Orb.

Moments later, his presence disappeared entirely, whereas the already reduced Blood Orb shrunk further—a testament to Duan Xiuchen's pre-death deeds.

Reborn on his camp platform, Duan Xiuchen immediately pursued the Spirit Orb's fluctuations; shortly, he saw five individuals afar, even further was the flying Spirit Orb, and the familiar silhouette behind, who else could it be but Lu Ye?

Moments later, Duan Xiuchen rendezvoused with his five comrades, asking sternly: "What's the situation?"

A Constellation Mid-Stage cultivator, face full of shame, answered: "The opponent's onslaught was too fierce, we were caught off guard and killed before getting close."

"Killed before getting close?" Duan Xiuchen frowned, "Isn't he a combat cultivator? How can he have such ferocious ranged assault?"

That Mid-Stage cultivator replied: "What he used wasn't a combat technique but flying swords; I suspect he's adept in both combat and sword cultivation!"

Because they assumed Lu Ye was a combat cultivator, they failed to guard themselves enough when pursuing; consequently, his swordlight wreaked havoc, killing them utterly—the sharpness of that swordlight was beyond imagination.

"Combat and sword dual cultivation!" Duan Xiuchen felt his eye twitch; what kind of peculiar path is this?

Strictly speaking, sword cultivation is a subset of combat cultivation, but sword cultivators have divorced from combat constraints to form their own style. Cultivators have limited energy, even if they dabble in other schools, deep achievement is rare, unless exceptionally gifted.

With Lu Ye only at Constellation Early Stage cultivation and the flying sword's ability to kill Mid-Stage cultivators, his sword cultivation depth is evident.

"I'll confront him; you all cover the formation, seize the chance to reclaim the Spirit Orb!" Duan Xiuchen ordered, then rushed ahead first.

Soon, indeed a swordlight came from the front; intending to test Lu Ye's skills, he didn't evade but for safety, patted a Golden Body Talisman on himself.

However, when the swordlight struck, he found the attack weak—never mind the Golden Body Talisman protecting him, he could have endured it bare.

Such attacks certainly couldn't easily kill their Constellation Mid-Stagers, even Early Stage ones can block them; despite realizing Lu Ye's tactics weren't strong, he stayed vigilant.

There's always more behind strange circumstances, he wouldn't assume Lu Ye's methods ended here.

Continual swordlight surged from ahead like a sword stream; Duan Xiuchen, akin to a fish swimming upstream, pushed through fiercely—repelling all incoming swordlight with skillful techniques.

Until suddenly a seemingly insignificant swordlight struck him.

The Golden Body Talisman's brilliance faded instantly, the violent force momentarily immobilizing him.

Duan Xiuchen had been cautious, sensing something amiss, he moved away quickly, breaking into cold sweat, understanding finally why their Constellation members were so vulnerable.

Lu Ye's swordlight attacks clearly varied—some mild, others sharp and violent; such a combination of reality and illusion was truly vexing, hard to defend against.

This time, the doppelganger lamented too, the sword gourd indeed lives up to supreme treasure's affiliated treasure; the stronger the treasures it devours, the greater the derived sword Qi's power.

Currently, the sword gourd stored numerous sword Qi, mostly derived from refining ordinary spirit and magic artifacts; such sword Qi functioned at lower four realms, but was limited against Constellation, at best causing annoyance and perplexity.

Yet, upon returning to the Taichu Realm, Lu Ye obtained numerous high-quality spirit treasures as spoils, these treasures being owned by top talents of each realm, their quality supporting Constellation use after advancement.

Among these spoils, apart from leaving a piece of black sand and a short mace for reforging the Boulder Mountain Saber, Lu Ye put all the rest into the sword gourd.

The sword energy transformed from these spirit treasures had much greater power.

You must know, even the most supreme grade spirit treasure could only be transformed into 9th Dao Sword Qi by the sword gourd, equivalent to the sword energy erupting the entire lifespan and power of a spirit treasure at once, how could it not be strong?

And this was just with spirit treasures, if the sword gourd devours higher quality treasures, who knows what kind of power it would have.

It can be said, with a sword gourd and some foundation of a sword cultivator, anyone can become an unparalleled sword cultivator of slaughter, while Lu Ye just happens to have a good foundation in sword cultivation!

The sword gourd's strength is obvious, but its drawbacks should not be ignored. It consumes a lot during fights, and the sword energy it expels cannot be recalled, which is different from the orthodox sword cultivator techniques, so if the family is not wealthy enough, a fight may end in bankruptcy.

Duan Xiuchen, realizing Lu Ye was troublesome, made a swift decision and transmitted audio to all directions. The two Constellation Mid-Stage immediately rushed to help from left and right, joining forces and quickly approaching Lu Ye's direction.

Earlier, these two Constellation Mid-Stage mainly suffered losses due to lack of preparation, who would have expected a combat cultivator to suddenly unleash a flying sword? That's why they were killed with one stroke.

Now, with preparation and someone to share the pressure, it wouldn't be that easy for Lu Ye to kill them again.

In no time, several figures were entangled in a fierce battle.

The remaining two Constellation Early Stage did not join the battlefield but took advantage of the doppelganger being occupied, starting to send the Spirit Orb back to their camp.

Seeing this, the doppelganger had no plan to continue entangling.

The doppelganger's role here was to divide the enemy, forcing the Southern Region troops to return for support through raiding the camp. Now five from the Southern Region were back, including the only Late Stage and two Mid-Stage, the goal was achieved.

If the fight continued, not to mention whether there was danger for the doppelganger, just the sword energy consumption would be a loss, and if accidentally killed, that would be really troublesome.

Lu Ye couldn't be certain what consequences there would be if the doppelganger was killed in the Black Abyss, the only certainty he had was that if his original body died here, he could be reborn at the camp.

With a move of mind, fixing the posture, suddenly disappearing.

Duan Xiuchen and those two Constellation Mid-Stage were desperately suppressing the doppelganger, effective in their efforts, he listened to Ye Chaoqun's previous advice, not intending to kill Lu Ye to avoid him returning to the East Camp, just to entangle.

But unexpectedly, the enemy in front of him suddenly disappeared without a trace.

"Where is the person?" Duan Xiuchen looked bewildered, spreading Mental Consciousness, but there was no trace of Lu Ye, as if he had vanished into thin air.

Meanwhile, in the Bizarre Fog space where the Sun Blaze were located, the twenty-eighth light representing the doppelganger could be clearly seen rapidly leaping towards the East Camp!

Since the purpose of dividing the enemy had been achieved, the doppelganger didn't need to stay there anymore.

The original body's spirit force was greatly consumed on that side, the doppelganger needed to hurry back to merge with the original body, replenishing its spirit force to cope with the possible intensive battle to come.

At this time, in the East Camp, everyone was ready for the final battle.

The Western Region people along with the remaining four Constellation Early Stage from the Southern Region, a total of thirteen people, were still relentlessly attacking the Blood Orb.

Until a certain moment, a sharp aura suddenly approached rapidly from behind, like a sword emerging into the sky, even across a great distance, Ye Chaoqun and others had their spines chilled.

Upon focusing and looking back, immediately a sword light came into view, through the sword light's cover, Ye Chaoqun saw the figure hidden within, immediately surprised: "Lu Ye?"

This guy... wasn't he raiding the camp over at the Southern Region? How come he returned, and came back so quickly.

What on earth was Duan Xiuchen doing, clearly having been told to keep this person entangled!

No time for further contemplation, almost as Ye Chaoqun saw the doppelganger, the overwhelming sword light was already pouring out, like a river counter-flow, an ocean tumbling.

The thirteen Constellation withdrew their means to defend quickly.

However, Ye Chaoqun soon realized something was amiss because this sword light seemed terrifying, yet it had little killing power.

Not only did he notice, others noticed this too, instantly the tense mood relaxed, yet at this moment, a scream suddenly rang out, Ye Chaoqun caught in his peripheral vision a Constellation Mid-Stage among his ranks was slain on the spot.

Two more screams followed, but they were from two Constellation Early Stage!

"Be careful, these sword energies have differing powers!" Ye Chaoqun was sharp-minded, immediately reacting to what had happened, the next instant, his expression became serious because his senses detected many auras rapidly approaching from behind.

Nine from the East Camp, came out in full force all at once, choosing the timing when the sword light rampaged, leaving South and West forces flustered in responding.

Chapter 1349 Jinx

Even though he had noticed the East Camp had fully mobilized, Ye Chaoqun didn't pay much attention to it. At this moment, all his focus was on the 'Lu Ye' maneuvering the sword light.

Among all the people from the East Camp, only this Lu Ye was a worthy opponent he needed to take seriously. The methods he just exhibited had already proven this point. With a single strike, he had reaped three lives from their side, including a Constellation Mid-Stage. Such strength could not be judged by his realm alone.

Ye Chaoqun had long placed him on equal footing with himself!

Vaguely, he felt as though he had overlooked something, but given the current situation, where was the time for him to ponder?

It wasn't until he felt locked by a powerful Mental Consciousness and a peerlessly sharp strike suddenly targeted him that Ye Chaoqun was jolted awake, finally realizing what he had overlooked.

Since Lu Ye had attacked from behind, why were there still nine auras at the East Camp? There should have been only eight!

And that sharp strike gave him a sense of familiarity...

As insight struck him, Ye Chaoqun's body suddenly darted forward, meeting a sword light coming his way. Initially intending to dodge the sword light that vaguely threatened him, he found himself with no choice left but to confront it head-on.

Whoever attacked him from behind, their timing was extremely cunning!

As the saber light flashed by, Ye Chaoqun managed to evade, but that sword light pierced through his chest, bringing forth a spurt of hot blood!

Without looking back, Ye Chaoqun dashed forward, sensing the life forces around him starting to wane.

After finally breaking through the encirclement of sword light to reach a relatively safe spot, he at last had the leisure to look back at the battlefield.

What he saw made his eyes almost pop out of their sockets.

The original formation of thirteen from the South and West troops now only had seven remaining! Besides the three initially slain by Lu Ye's Sword Qi, another three had been killed in that instant he escaped amidst danger, one of whom was another Constellation Mid-Stage.

What met his eyes was the sight of Lu Ye slaughtering that Constellation Mid-Stage. This person faced the same situation as Ye Chaoqun, attacked by a sword light. Unlike Ye Chaoqun, who decisively evaded, this person tried to fend off the sharp sword light and ended up being killed by Lu Ye himself.

Ye Chaoqun was momentarily stunned, glancing at the unmatched figure maneuvering through the battlefield, then at the other figure directing sword light, his expression slightly dazed.

Two... Lu Ye?

And his eyesight couldn't discern which was real or fake; it seemed both were real!

Watching Lu Ye swiftly moving towards the last Constellation Mid-Stage on his side, Ye Chaoqun dared not hesitate any longer and swiftly moved to provide support.

Having experienced Lu Ye's terrifying methods, he knew that his companion wouldn't stand a chance without his aid. If he didn't intervene, the opponent would face grim odds.

However, just as he moved, a torrent of sword light bombarded him, hindering his steps.

On the other side, Lu Ye, accompanied by Huang Li and Xu Xinghe, had already reached the last Constellation Mid-Stage, cutting down a Constellation Early Stage along the way.

This brief delay, however, gave the enemy a chance to catch their breath. By the time Lu Ye's squad reached this person's side, he had already activated a Golden Body Talisman, the golden light enveloping him.

Not only did this Constellation Mid-Stage use a Golden Body Talisman, but everyone on the battlefield, except for Lu Ye, had activated theirs.

In an instant, a dazzling golden light filled the scene.

Yet how could the Boulder Mountain Saber, empowered by the Divine Sharp Edge Spirit Runes, be so easily resisted? Even with the Golden Body Talisman's protection, the gap in absolute strength was too great for this individual to remain unharmed.

It must be said, the Golden Body Talisman of a Constellation Mid-Stage is indeed sturdier than that of an Early Stage.

Before, Lu Ye had solo killed an Early Stage with a Golden Body Talisman, succeeding after three slashes. This time, even with Huang Li and Xu Xinghe's assistance, it took five slashes.

With the death of this last Constellation Mid-Stage on the battlefield and Ye Chaoqun being detained by the doppelganger, unable to give support, the situation was settled!

The three East Camp squads swiftly moved to eliminate the remaining Early Stages.

Lu Ye turned his attention towards Ye Chaoqun on the other side.

However, that slippery guy, seeing the unfavorable situation, slapped a Spirit Talisman on himself and transformed into a streak of light, vanishing instantly.

The once-roaring battlefield finally calmed down. While the members of the East Camp celebrated in excitement, they curiously observed both Lu Ye's main body and doppelganger, even Hai Tang, who'd already speculated about it, was the same.

The Dwarf Race could craft such body talismans, so the idea of a doppelganger wasn't unfamiliar. In fact, when cultivators reach a certain level of cultivation, many possess doppelgangers in various forms, some through secret techniques, others by refining external objects.

For instance, Yun Xuechu's Little Butterfly doppelganger was a casting of the Cover Armor Technique.

Considering this, Lu Ye didn't mind exposing his doppelganger. It wasn't something exclusive to him, and revealing it wouldn't be a big deal.

But the Dragon Throne, that must not be revealed easily.

In the Taichu Realm, Lu Ye has used the Dragon Throne, and it was under the watchful eyes of many. Thus, many speculated that the disappearance of the pill gourd was greatly related to the person using the Dragon Throne. Even if the pill gourd did not fall into this person's hands, it is with his comrades.

The Dwarf Race is not isolated from the world but drifts along with Mount Fangcun, moving everywhere. If the Dragon Throne is used here, it might draw the attention of those with ulterior motives, especially since Lu Ye did participate in the Divine Sea competition of the Taichu Realm, making it easy for people to connect the dots.

Others might not know the wonderful uses of the pill gourd, only knowing that it is an affiliated treasure of a supreme treasure, something that would tempt anyone.

As for the sword gourd...

Lu Ye wasn't too worried because he was not the only sword cultivator with such an appearance. Furthermore, according to rumors, the sword gourd's power could overthrow stars and extinguish suns. The power he could evoke from the sword gourd might at most kill a Constellation, far from the rumors, so it won't naturally lead others to associate them.

Nobody asked further questions. Under the scrutiny of the crowd, the doppelganger merged into the body without a trace, leaving only the worn clothes and sword gourd, which Lu Ye put away.

"Have we... won?" Huang Li asked quietly.

The South and West troops joined forces to attack, now only leaving Ye Chaoqun a solitary figure. Looking at his stance, it's unlikely he'll accomplish anything else. There's limited time left until the end of the Martial Arts Meet, leaving the South and West troops little opportunity. Even if they hurriedly rushed over, if they couldn't seize the Spirit Orb quickly, it would be of no use.

After all, transporting the Spirit Orb back to the camp also takes time.

So, if they are wise, they should stay put in their camp, waiting for the time limit to reach.

"Probably... yes!" Xu Xinghe appeared somewhat dazed.

"Do not be careless!" Even though Hai Tang also felt that this time's Martial Arts Meet probably wouldn't have much change, as the apparent leader, she still didn't let her guard down, "This time it's the closest the East has ever been to first. No matter what others do, we must do our best."

Han Molong immediately nodded: "Senior Sister Hai Tang is right." Then he changed his tone, jokingly, "But considering the time, they really have no chance unless they can get here in a short period. But with the camps so far apart, how could they..."

Upon reaching this point, Han Molong suddenly seemed to remember something and fell silent.

At this very moment, suddenly a violent surge of spirit force burst forth from afar, and the people of the East all raised their heads and looked in that direction, seeing a massive pillar of light soaring into the sky, enveloping a vast area.

Within the intense spirit force fluctuations was the aura of Ye Chaoqun!

And that direction was precisely where Ye Chaoqun had just fled.

The expressions of the people of the East instantly became serious, and Han Molong, wearing a mournful face, hit his own mouth, "Oh, this crow's mouth of mine!"

"What is that?" Lu Ye frowned, observing the expressions on everyone's faces; it was clear they all realized what had happened.

"A Grand Teleportation Talisman!" Hai Tang responded solemnly, "Only the Sun Blaze Master Uncles have the qualification to refine such a Jade Talisman, and even in my Dwarf Race, it's considered scarce and extremely precious!"

Lu Ye immediately understood, "Is this the killer weapon granted by the West?"

The three Dwarf Race factions have competed in martial arts within the Black Abyss for many years, leading to some customary rules, including not inviting external reinforcements from the Constellation Late Stage because opening this gateway might result in all three factions bringing in outside support, ultimately making the Martial Arts Meet entirely about external participants, leaving no relevance for the Dwarf Race.

Moreover, Sun Blazes would prepare a killer weapon for their faction of the Dwarf Race, typically some functional talismans, not focused on killing.

Otherwise, everyone holding the lethal Spirit Talismans refined by the Sun Blazes, unleashing power far beyond their own strength, would defeat the purpose of the Martial Arts Meet.

This kind of granted killer weapon had historically mainly been array talismans like the Nine-Melody Chain Array Talisman safeguarded by Hai Tang.

Such a killer weapon may not be used, but it must exist, lest others use it when one's own side cannot cope.

The South and West troops also have such killer weapons. Now, it seems the West's killer weapon is this Grand Teleportation Talisman!

As the strongest overall Western Region, lacking attack methods was not their issue, something the Sun Blazes understood well. So they prepared a spirit talisman capable of rapid movement for them to handle sudden situations.

What Ye Chaoqun handed Duan Xiuchen earlier was exactly the Grand Teleportation Talisman, which works in pairs, otherwise the teleportation can't be completed.

His original intent was to seize the opportunity, bring Duan Xiuchen and others returning from the Southern Region Camp, and then jointly split the East's Spirit Orbs.

But the situation changed too rapidly. Now, everyone from the South is over at the camp, leaving Ye Chaoqun the only one in the West, ensuring the West wouldn't have any contribution, but to give up like this made him reluctant. Letting the strategically vulnerable East take first place would bring shame to both the South and the West. Now, he can only pin his hopes on the South.

Even if the South taking first is more acceptable, and with this assistance, forming an easier alliance in the next event becomes more plausible.

Precisely because of these considerations did Ye Chaoqun use this exceedingly precious Grand Teleportation Talisman.

Amidst the spirit light soaring, a gigantic, mysterious talisman array rotated slowly in the Void, and several figures appeared beside Ye Chaoqun!

Chapter 1350 Array Talisman

When he appeared, Duan Xiuchen's face was as somber as water!

Before this Martial Arts Meet, no one imagined that the situation would develop so bizarrely. Now, in the Black Abyss, the Eastern forces hold an absolute advantage. Not only do they have all four orbs in hand, but in the recent battle, they almost annihilated the South and West troops entirely.

This left everyone from the South and West troops with a deep sense of defeat and humiliation.

With little time left, whether they can snatch the Spirit Orbs from the Eastern side depends on this final gamble!

Originally, Duan Xiuchen did not dare leave his camp easily because there was still the elusive Lu Ye on the other side. However, after several cultivators from the Southern Region were killed and resurrected, bringing back vital information, he immediately realized that the Lu Ye who had raided the camp had already arrived at the East Camp.

With this understanding, the Southern Region also had an opportunity for an all-out effort. So, upon sensing Ye Chaoqun's summons with the teleportation talisman, he decisively led all his men to teleport over.

Turning his head, he saw Ye Chaoqun sitting pale and weak in front, his aura feeble to the extreme, and blood had stained his right chest.

Duan Xiuchen immediately understood that Ye Chaoqun was no longer capable of fighting.

It wasn't due to his injuries; for someone in the Constellation Late Stage, a penetrating wound in the right chest was not a major issue. The main problem was the depletion of his spirit force.

The teleportation talisman was a top-grade Jade Talisman refined by a Sun Blaze Realm expert. It was not something that could be easily activated. Normally, Ye Chaoqun would either join forces with others to activate it or set up a Formation first to harness its power to trigger the teleportation talisman.

But being alone, with no leverage and time pressing, there was no chance to set up an array. Relying solely on his own power led to terrifying consumption of spirit force.

Moreover, after the prolonged fierce battles earlier, his spirit force was now almost exhausted, leaving him unable to participate in the ensuing combat.

Fortunately, he was in the Constellation Late Stage; any cultivator in the Early or mid-stage would probably find it impossible to unleash the talisman's power even if they drained their spirit force to the limit.

Their eyes met, and Ye Chaoqun gave a wry smile, "Brother Duan, I'll leave the rest to you from the South. If the East takes first place, it would be a great disgrace to us."

Duan Xiuchen's expression was solemn, "Rest assured, Brother Ye, if the West is supporting us so greatly, and we from the South fail to seize this opportunity, that would indeed be incompetence. We shall wreak havoc in the East!"

Ye Chaoqun slightly nodded, closed his eyes to concentrate, and held two pieces of spirit jade to recover himself.

Turning his gaze toward the East Camp, where the four glaring Spirit Orbs were painfully eye-catching, Duan Xiuchen's gaze became resolute, and he shouted in a low voice, "Sacrifice the talisman!"

For this final gamble, the West had already deployed their trump card, leaving the opportunity for the South; how could the Southern forces hold back?

With Duan Xiuchen's command, a majestic momentum and powerful aura began to fluctuate and spread out in all directions.

At the East Camp, Han Molong looked grim, "They're using the array talisman. Do they need to go to such lengths?"

Hai Tang stepped forth, "For a long time, the top spot in the Martial Arts Meet has always been contested between the South and West. Especially this time, their forces are unprecedentedly strong. If they fail to seize first, they won't have the face to meet their Sun Blaze. They have no choice left!"

Han Molong nodded, "It seems we have no choice either!"

Hai Tang gripped a Jade Talisman in her hand, where an extraordinarily mysterious aura emanated. She shouted, "Sacrifice the talisman!"

The array talisman is the culmination of the Dwarf Race's talisman path, demanding an extremely high level of refinement. Only those in the Sun Blaze Realm have the right to refine it, making it a strategic reserve of the Dwarf Race. With its power, cultivators can effortlessly form arrays, jointly exhibiting power beyond their normal limits.

From this aspect alone, the array talisman shares similarities with the As-Close-As-Siblings Array Disc.

However, as Hai Tang mentioned earlier, the array talisman is talisman-based while the array disc is human-based. Comparatively, cultivators can form arrays with greater flexibility when using the As-Close-As-Siblings Array Disc, a capability that the array talisman cannot match.

Yet this does not diminish the array talisman's power.

Lu Ye had never seen an array talisman before and was unsure of what to do. Only after Hai Tang explained through an audio transmission did he understand.

Since the talisman was the core, once it was sacrificed, there was no need for highly coordinated cooperation; he merely needed to inject his spirit force into it.

As he did so, the other members of the Eastern forces did the same.

The array talisman in Hai Tang's grip immediately blossomed with dazzling light, as its mighty aura climbed steadily.

After a full ten breaths, the Jade Talisman in her hand suddenly shattered, dispersing into countless glowing flecks that drifted around, engulfing nine people.

When the glow faded, a colossal figure appeared on the Eastern Camp platform; at a glance, it was a gigantic Nine-Headed Hydra.

The creature appeared fierce and lifelike, as if it were alive. It was so enormous that it resembled a small mountain, with its nine snake heads held high and its tail even coiling around the platform once.

However, this is ultimately just the manifestation of an array talisman and not truly a living being. Therefore, on the surface, the body of the Nine-Headed Hydra doesn't appear solid but is purely condensed from energy. Through its serpentine form, the nine people from the East can be clearly seen, each at one of the snake heads.

Lu Ye was still experiencing the mysteries of the array talisman when an extremely ferocious aura rapidly approached.

Looking up, he saw a giant wolf swiftly charging from the location where the Southern cultivator had previously appeared. The wolf's size was no less than that of their own Nine-Headed Hydra, and it even had a single horn on its forehead crackling with electric arcs!

This was obviously the manifestation of the Southern array talisman, though it was unclear what its significance was.

Just like the situation on the Eastern side, the giant wolf's body wasn't solid. Through its form, the nine people from the South could be seen within different parts of the wolf's body, their vital energies interconnected.

The visual impact of such a massive creature charging at them was quite intense. Moreover, Lu Ye noticed that the horn on the giant wolf's forehead was definitely not just for decoration and must have some special function. What also caught his attention was that the surface of this giant wolf was not covered with fur but with distinct, scale-like formations.

It's foreseeable that this giant wolf's defense is likely not weak!

With the battle about to break out, there was no time to get familiar with the situation. Almost at the same time Lu Ye noticed the giant wolf's figure, the horn on the opponent's head flashed brilliantly, and after approximately three breaths of gathering force, a massive beam of light was unleashed, striking towards them with a thunderous crash.

The beam surged forward in silence, but at an incredible speed. Almost as the beam erupted, the attack had already struck their Nine-Headed Hydra.

Immediately, a penetrating hole was blasted through the thick serpentine body, causing the massive form to become somewhat unsteady. Standing on one of the snake heads, Lu Ye even felt as though the attack had truly landed directly upon himself, with the sensation of the earth shaking beneath him.

Before he could regain his footing, he immediately felt a pulling force devouring his own spirit force, quickly channeling it into the snake's body for replenishment.

At the same time, the tail of the Nine-Headed Hydra slammed down on the base platform, using the recoil to leap forward directly towards the giant wolf.

Clearly, this was Hai Tang harnessing the power of the array talisman.

The nine of them were jointly urging the array talisman, naturally divided into leaders and supporters. If it were any other time, given Lu Ye's strength and past performance, Hai Tang would certainly let him take the lead. However, since Lu Ye had no prior knowledge of the array talisman and there was no time to become familiar, Hai Tang unhesitatingly assumed the primary role.

Although she didn't have much experience in fighting with others, she understood the principle of playing to strengths and avoiding weaknesses. Since the Southern array talisman manifested a giant wolf capable of long-range attacks, they would have to engage in close combat.

The hole blasted through the snake's body looked terrifying, but it wasn't truly flesh and blood. As long as there was enough spirit force, it could be quickly repaired.

Of course, this posed a significant test of the spirit force endurance of the cultivators controlling the array talisman, as repairing such a hole consumed a lot of spirit force.

Lu Ye immediately realized that this confrontation over the array talisman was not just a battle of control but also a test of each side's resources!

Both were array talismans refined by the Dwarf Race Sun Blaze Realm powerhouses. Even if there were differences in the talismans themselves, the discrepancy shouldn't be too large. Strictly speaking, the ultimate power of the array talismans on both sides should be nearly equivalent.

However, since the cultivators controlling the array talismans were different, it naturally resulted in different levels of power.

East clearly suffered more, as overall, their strength was much weaker on this side!

That was likely one of the reasons the South decisively deployed the array talisman. Having been exhausted by the various schemes and plots of the East previously, it was time for an all-out confrontation! The array talisman required joint efforts, thereby greatly suppressing Lu Ye's personal performance. No matter how capable he was of defeating opponents of higher statuses, he couldn't showcase it in this kind of battle, while also eliminating the East's opportunity to continue with their schemes and plots.

Hai Tang understood how to play to strengths and avoid weaknesses, and surely the South knew this too.

In the Void, the two massive creatures rapidly drew closer and soon collided. The faint sound of a wolf's howl could be heard, and the giant wolf opened its maw, biting one of the snake heads while its claws simultaneously seized two more.

However, the remaining six snake heads, under the control of the Eastern cultivators, bit fiercely onto the giant wolf's body.

From a distance, ignoring the insubstantial bodies of the two giant entities, it looked less like a cultivator duel and more like a primal clash between two ancient ferocious beasts!

Lu Ye felt as if the opponent was particularly targeting him, as the wolf's bite came directly at his snake head.

Fortunately, he dodged quickly, preventing the opponent's success, which instead landed the misfortune on Zhang Chao beside him.

The giant wolf exerted its strength, trying to bite through Zhang Chao's snake head, but it's not easy to break through this manifestation of an array talisman.

Lu Ye felt his spirit force rapidly drain away, flowing towards the snake head where Zhang Chao was, replenishing the consumption there.

He himself then experienced a peculiar sensation as if he truly transformed into one of the snake heads, biting down on the enemy.

The feedback was unmistakable... hard!

The angular scales covering the giant wolf's surface indeed provided extremely strong defense.