

Humanity 1941

Chapter 1941 - Ding'an Changes Rulers

"Dizzy?" Zhou Ping was stunned, his expression suddenly changing, feeling the world spinning before his eyes. "Not good, there's poison in the tea!"

He struggled to stand up, but felt his whole body soft and weak, and plopped back into his seat, dazedly asking, "What's going on?"

Seeing this, Lu Ye knew the poisoning was not Zhou Ping's doing.

He had sensed earlier that there was poison in the tea because of some abnormal reactions from the Talent Tree, but he pretended not to notice.

Unexpectedly, Zhou Ping was poisoned too, so it wasn't him who arranged someone to poison... then...

The sound of fluttering robes arose, and from the inner side of the hall, a portly man stepped out, looking somewhat authoritative, with an elder half-scholar holding a feather fan following behind him.

With swishing sounds, another group of people stepped through the main door, each with an unfriendly expression.

"City Lord?" Zhou Ping saw the scene and was stunned, completely unaware of what had happened.

The City Lord said nothing, merely sitting in his Taishi Chair, his gaze gloomy.

The scholar-like elder stood beside the City Lord, his expression like one displeased with failure, pointing at Zhou Ping with his feather fan: "Zhou Ping, you've stirred up a great disaster!"

"Mr. Meng, what do you mean by that?" Zhou Ping asked angrily. Though straightforward, he was not foolish; if he hadn't understood what had happened before, now he had a guess.

Mr. Meng sighed, "Is the Black Scarf Army a force to provoke lightly? Thirty Black Scarves were killed before the city gate; they won't let this pass easily. In no time they will be at the city gates, and Ding'an will fall into ruin!"

Zhou Ping said, "That's why I invited Mr. Lu here, to join us in resisting the bandit army!"

Mr. Meng replied, "Do you think, given our strength in Ding'an, that we can withstand the Black Scarves?"

"We will fight to the death to defend!" Zhou Ping was weak all over, with even the flow of spirit force halted, but his words were powerful.

Mr. Meng shook his head: "Shifang City's foundation is much stronger than ours, yet three months ago it was still trampled flat by the Black Scarves. After the city fell, the Black Scarves slaughtered for ten days; Shifang City ended up with ten homes left empty. Past lessons, vivid as if yesterday!" His tone shifted, looking heartbroken: "Moreover, the Black Scarf scouts came this time only to demand some grain from us. Their current battlefield is not here. We should give it to them, why did you kill?"

Zhou Ping widened his eyes: "The Black Scarves kill our people, and we should give them money and food? Mr. Meng, do you hear what you're saying?" His face was filled with anger: "Even if Mr. Lu hadn't acted today, I would have acted!"

Mr. Meng's face turned cold: "Zhou Ping, you are beyond saving!"

Zhou Ping gritted his teeth and spat angrily: "Meng Deyun, I think you are beyond saving! Do you think giving food and money to the Black Scarves will stop them from invading? Have you forgotten how Huangye City was broken?"

"Huangye City..." Meng Deyun furrowed his brows, of course, he had heard about Huangye City's situation, similar to today, and Huangye City had cooperated well.

Zhou Ping no longer argued with Meng Deyun but turned to the silent City Lord: "Sir, the example of Huangye City, we cannot repeat the same mistake! The appetite of the Black Scarf Army cannot be

satisfied; if you give them food today, they will demand you open the city gates tomorrow, and then all the citizens will be slaughtered. Better to rise and resist!"

The portly City Lord remained silent; after a while, he said: "Huangye City was broken, yet still, half of its people survived, better than Shifang City."

Zhou Ping's face was incredulous: "Sir, don't you know that most of those who lived were women, left alive by the Black Scarves as forced prostitutes?"

"Not just women." The City Lord waved his hand, "Those with cultivation, would be recruited, not easily killed."

Zhou Ping's eyes widened: "Sir, you want to join the Black Scarves?"

Meng Deyun shouted angrily: "It's because you forced us! Without today's events, how could Ding'an suffer such disaster?"

Zhou Ping looked at him and the City Lord, even as straightforward as he was, he finally understood what was going on, his voice lowered: "So you poisoned the tea, making Mr. Lu and I your bargaining chips?"

The City Lord said: "Not you, him!" He turned his gaze to Lu Ye, "He killed their people; only by handing him over can we ensure safety."

"What about the citizens of Ding'an?" Zhou Ping still held onto a last shred of hope.

"Those worthless commoners, no need to care whether they live or die."

Zhou Ping's lips trembled, his face flushed, held back for a long moment before he roared angrily: "I am truly ashamed to be among such scum as you! I didn't expect you all to be rotten to this extent!"

Meng Deyun shouted sternly: "Zhou Ping, watch your tongue!"

Zhou Ping sneered, ignoring him, turning apologetically to Lu Ye: "Mr. Lu, this time it's Zhou who got you involved, truly sorry."

He had seen Lu Ye's strength and, with good intentions, invited him, not expecting to bring him such a crisis.

"It's nothing." Lu Ye, who had remained silent, finally spoke quietly, then, under everyone's stunned gaze, picked up his teacup and drank it all. "Not bad taste!"

Then he slowly stood up, rolling his neck, a cracking sound immediately emanating from his neck.

"You..." Meng Deyun stared at Lu Ye in shock, vaguely feeling something was off. Not daring to hesitate, he immediately waved his hand: "Capture him!"

The sound of whooshing filled the air as several thick ropes crisscrossed and flew out. Several figures leaped and maneuvered, and in the blink of an eye, Lu Ye was tied up like a zongzi.

Only then did Meng Deyun let out a sigh of relief. When he saw Lu Ye stand up just now, he thought the poison didn't work. He stared deeply into Lu Ye's eyes: "Young man, having a chivalrous spirit is not a bad thing, but you must know where to use it. Blame yourself for killing those you shouldn't have."

Lu Ye looked at him with a calm expression: "The ones I've killed are..."

Suddenly, the sound of snapping was heard. The ropes binding him seemed to have been sliced by an invisible blade and instantly broke apart, the edges neat and clean.

Lu Ye took a step forward and was already in front of Meng Deyun.

This scholar had also undergone cultivation, and his face changed drastically at the sight. He raised a palm and struck hard at Lu Ye's chest, exerting all his spirit force.

Lu Ye didn't budge, but Meng Deyun's wrist was painfully shaken instead.

Then, he felt his head being gripped, and Lu Ye brought his face close, almost touching his: "...all deserving of death, including you!"

Terrified, Meng Deyun was just about to muster his strength to break free from Lu Ye's grip when a sharp pain came from his head, and he became unresponsive.

"You want to die!" The rotund City Lord shouted angrily, his fat hand instantly closing into a fist that resembled a bird's beak, and he struck fiercely at Lu Ye's waist.

His wrist was suddenly clenched, grabbed by a small hand. Shocked, he tried to pull away, but the grip held him like an iron clamp, immobilizing him.

Intense pain emanated from his wrist, and he heard the sound of bones cracking.

"Ah!" The City Lord screamed.

The scream abruptly stopped as Lu Ye withdrew his punched fist, blood rain cascading through the air. A headless, obese corpse slowly fell.

Feeling weak and powerless, Zhou Ping was stunned.

He knew Lu Ye was strong; otherwise, he couldn't have killed so many Black Scarf members alone. But he never imagined Lu Ye was this powerful.

As far as he knew, Meng Deyun had opened the 7th orifice, and the City Lord the 8th orifice. So how many orifices had Lu Ye opened? The 9th orifice? But the 9th orifice shouldn't have such terrifying crushing power.

As he was lost in thought, Lu Ye had already begun a massacre.

The sound of short, sharp cries echoed, and in just three breaths, the entire grand hall was silent.

The heavy scent of blood made one nauseous. Zhou Ping's face was pale as he looked at Lu Ye standing in the center of the hall, not a drop of blood on him, unable to recover his senses.

He quickly realized something: the City Lord was dead, so what would happen to Ding'an City?

A half-day later, an order was issued from the City Lord's Residence, announced throughout the city.

It was declared that the original City Lord had suffered from cultivation deviation, died of severe injuries, and now Zhou Ping of the Zhou family would assume the position of City Lord!

Accompanying this order was a mobilization decree.

What happened in front of the city gate today was too significant and, in just half a day, had spread throughout Ding'an City. Countless civilians were in panic and anxiety, clearly aware of the consequences of provoking the Black Scarf Army and full of uncertainty about the future.

Their notorious behavior, known city-wide, was feared, even for those who cooperated, like Huangye City, whose fate wasn't great. If the Black Scarf Army broke through Ding'an, a brutal massacre would surely follow.

In this atmosphere, the City Lord's Residence issued the mobilization order at a timely moment, and many aspiring men gathered there, willing to follow command.

These included some with cultivation, though most hadn't cultivated. However, in such a world, the gap between cultivators and ordinary people wasn't vast, especially in military confrontations. If met with a military formation, bravery from soldiers meant that it wasn't impossible for ordinary men to kill cultivators.

Within just less than two days, Ding'an City was completely integrated and ready to engage at any moment.

"Sir, everything is prepared. Ten scouts are out gathering intelligence. If the Black Scarf Army approaches within fifty miles of Ding'an, we'll receive reports," Zhou Ping respectfully stood before Lu Ye, reporting the situation at the City Lord's Residence.

This respect came not just from Lu Ye's previous display of strength but from other sources as well.

With the City Lord dead and Zhou Ping reluctantly taking over, it was Lu Ye's suggestion. Ding'an needed a leader, and an outsider like him wasn't suitable. The Zhou family, being one of Ding'an's three major families, had Zhou Ping qualified for the position, so it wasn't out of place.

The following measures were all implemented under Lu Ye's guidance, and they had shown positive results. Especially after the City Lord's Residence widely publicized the brutality of the Black Scarf and the consequences of its siege, even though the people of Ding'an were still fearful, they had quickly united.

Everyone wanted to survive; no one wanted to die. So, they could only band together to defend Ding'an.

Chapter 1942 - Black Scarf Attacks

Zhou Ping had never seen anyone like Lu Ye before. He appeared to be just in his early twenties, yet he possessed such profound insight and wisdom that Zhou had never encountered in his life. It could be said that if it weren't for Lu Ye's guidance, Ding'an wouldn't have stabilized so quickly after the City Lord's death.

At the same time, there was something he was very curious about...

After hesitating for a long time, Zhou Ping couldn't suppress the doubts in his heart: "Might I ask about your cultivation, sir?"

"8th orifice!" Lu Ye glanced up at him, considering it nothing he couldn't share.

Escorting Yao Nuan and the others along the way, all the inferior Spirit Stones looted from Great Wind Mountain had been consumed. They ate quite a bit during the journey, so in just a few days, Lu Ye had opened up to the 8th orifice and was now advancing towards the 9th.

"8th orifice..." Zhou Ping's heart trembled. He had thought Lu Ye's cultivation would be higher; he never expected it to be the same as the deceased City Lord.

But with the same cultivation level, why did the former City Lord seem like a helpless chick in front of Lu Ye, utterly defenseless?

"No need to wonder." Lu Ye saw what he was thinking, "Sometimes, cultivation level doesn't mean everything."

"Then..." Zhou Ping was about to ask what could determine strength, when suddenly a soldier rushed over, knelt on one knee, and presented a secret letter with both hands: "City Lord, the reconnaissance team has sent a message!"

Zhou Ping turned abruptly, quickly took the secret letter, opened it, and his face became grave.

"Is the Black Scarf here?" Lu Ye asked.

Zhou Ping nodded: "Yes, they were already fifty miles away half an hour ago, coming fiercely and in large numbers, though it seems to be just the vanguard army."

Lu Ye waved his hand: "Go, I'll take action when necessary." Another batch to deliver Asura Seals.

With Lu Ye backing them, Zhou Ping felt more at ease, cupped his fists in salute, and quickly left. He was clearly going to make some arrangements. Although Lu Ye had previously demonstrated extremely strong personal combat power, this time it wasn't a skirmish, but a large-scale invasion, and he couldn't place the entire city's safety solely on Lu Ye.

After all, human strength has its limits. If Lu Ye couldn't hold them off, the city would still rely on its collective power to defend.

As Zhou Ping left, Lu Ye continued to refine the low-quality Spirit Stones in his hand and checked his own cultivation progress.

These inferior Spirit Stones were found in Ding'an City's warehouse. Naturally, such a large city had some Spirit Stone reserves.

Though his Talent Tree allowed swift refining, the spirit force contained in these stones was terribly thin, so opening the 9th orifice still required accumulation.

It seemed there was no time...

From outside, the sounds of gongs and drums could be heard, and soldiers loudly warned of the Black Scarf's invasion, urging citizens to take shelter.

All of Ding'an was instantly tense and on high alert.

Shortly after, many figures stood on the ten-zhang-high city walls, and the gate on this side had long been shut.

Those defending the city weren't only original soldiers but also some practitioners who joined spontaneously. However, most of them weren't highly cultivated, and whether soldiers or practitioners, they all looked anxious and fearful.

This was a normal reaction for most people; after all, the Black Scarf was notoriously infamous.

Dust clouds billowed from afar, fast approaching.

Moments later, they swept to three miles outside the city, and as the dust cleared, the scene before everyone's eyes made their hearts tighten.

A military formation of no less than a thousand slowly appeared, each donned a black scarf. The leader rode a tall horse, his figure burly, clad in ornate armor, holding a long spear. The horse reared its front half up, neighing loudly. The man sat on the horse, coldly surveying those on the city walls.

Behind him, a flagbearer held aloft a pitch-black banner, emblazoned with a large red "Fang" character, as if written in fresh blood.

"The Black Scarf is coming, the Black Scarf is coming!"

"Oh my god!"

"It's the Man-Eating Demon, Fang Kuang!"

The city walls erupted in chaos. Although Ding'an had mentally prepared for the Black Scarf's invasion, witnessing the thousand-strong formation below left many faint-hearted feeling anxious and uneasy.

Especially since it was one of the Black Scarf's most infamous units, led by Fang Kuang, notorious for his infamous deeds. He had a particular craving for human flesh, especially young children's hearts. This vanguard army included many with similar proclivities.

Whenever the Black Scarf passed through, many were killed and then divided among this army.

It was hard to imagine the fate of Ding'an's citizens if the city fell.

Zhou Ping's expression was also grim. He hadn't expected Fang Kuang to be the first from the Black Scarf to arrive, evidently enraged by Lu Ye's previous actions of executing their scouts.

The horse paced back and forth. On its back, Fang Kuang shouted fiercely: "Where is the City Lord of Ding'an?"

At a distance of three miles, a normal person's voice would struggle to carry, yet Fang Kuang's voice showed no sign of diminishing, resonating in everyone's ears, deafening. This further paled many faces, clearly realizing Fang Kuang's formidable strength.

"Zhou Ping is here!" Zhou Ping responded from atop the city gate.

Fang Kuang looked over, a bit puzzled: "Have you changed City Lords in Ding'an?" He remembered the Ding'an City Lord as a big fat man, but that wasn't his concern. Raising his long spear, he pointed at Zhou Ping: "You really have a lot of nerve, daring to kill my Black Scarf soldiers. Open the gates of Ding'an within two hours, or else after our troops break in, I will slaughter everyone, leaving no one alive in Ding'an!"

Zhou Ping's palms were sweaty, knowing Fang Kuang wasn't bluffing. But he also understood that when armies confront each other, morale must remain high. Especially since he was the City Lord, and at this moment, many saw him as their backbone. He snorted coldly: "The Black Scarf has quite the audacity. If that's the case, I give you one hour to return from whence you came, lest you bring upon yourselves a calamity."

"A calamity!" Fang Kuang's eyes bulged, then he burst into laughter: "It's been a while since I've heard such a hilarious joke. This general wants to see what kind of calamity it is. And as a reward for amusing me... let's change the one hour to one incense stick's time. After that, we attack. Don't blame us for your mistakes!"

Zhou Ping's face changed.

"Open the gate!"

"Open the gate!"

"Open the gate!"

At this moment, the vanguard army behind Fang Kuang shouted in unison, accompanied by the clash of swords and shields, creating a grand and overwhelming momentum that seemed to change the weather.

"Creak..." A heavy sound echoed.

On the city wall, Zhou Ping's face changed: "Who opened the gate?"

The sound just now clearly indicated someone was opening the city gate, which was unbelievable to him because he had specifically ordered no one to open the gate, regardless of what happened. Ding'an City's overall strength was weak; only by defending with maximum effort could they possibly block the Black Scarf Army's attack. Opening the gate was equal to courting death!

"No need to panic, City Lord, it was the young master who opened the gate." A panting voice came, and Zhou Ping turned to see Yao Nuan rushing over anxiously, evidently here on Lu Ye's orders to notify Zhou Ping.

Upon hearing this, Zhou Ping's heart stirred, and he hurried to the edge of the city wall, looking down.

Thud, thud, thud... the sound continued, and he indeed saw Lu Ye riding a black horse, carrying a large spear, emerging from the gate.

Behind him, the just-opened gate quickly closed again.

"What's the gentleman up to..." Zhou Ping's face was grave; he couldn't deny that Lu Ye's personal power was strong, stronger than he had ever imagined, but ultimately just at the cultivation level of the 8th orifice. Facing a vanguard unit of the Black Scarf Army single-handedly, how could he expect a good outcome?

Moreover, Zhou Ping faintly heard Lu Ye muttering something at this moment, but Lu Ye's voice was too small to make out.

Lu Ye rode out, his eyes glowing, yet his expression was somewhat troubled.

So many Asura Seals... how could he consume them all?

A team of over a thousand, if he could kill them cleanly, that would truly be a feast; calculating based on each bandit army member being worth two thousand Asura Seals, that would be over two million, and not every bandit army member is only worth two thousand Asura Seals. The leader, Fang Kuang, would be worth nearly ten thousand Asura Seals...

If he could kill them all, there's no doubt he could gather two and a half million Asura Seals, but being alone, it's clearly impossible to kill them all. Others might escape if overwhelmed.

The black horse beneath him moved forward restlessly, clearly sensing the danger as well.

Fang Kuang squinted his eyes, his expression slightly surprised. At this time and age, there aren't many who dare to face the Black Scarf Army alone. The last one got shot dead by a flurry of arrows.

And now, there's another one today.

Yet Fang Kuang vaguely felt that the one seen today is different from the previous one; there's a tranquillity in his expression.

"Who goes there?" Fang Kuang shouted angrily.

Lu Ye remained silent, continuing to advance with the spear on his shoulder. With the spirit force activated, the black horse slowly increased its speed from a walk to a trot, and within a few breaths, it was sprinting forward.

"Bow!" Fang Kuang sneered, raising his hand and shouting.

Within the army formation, the archers immediately stepped forward three steps, drawing their bows and nocking arrows, the strings pulled into full moons.

"Release!" Fang Kuang's hand dropped.

"Whizz, whizz, whizz..." The sound of arrows slicing through the air arose, all forming an arc in the sky and converging into a cluster from afar, resembling a swarm of bees.

The arrows descended, covering the area where Lu Ye was located.

The archers of the Black Scarf Army were experienced hands, and under such coverage, it was nearly impossible for ordinary people to avoid the rain of arrows.

Yet at this moment, the black horse beneath Lu Ye abruptly accelerated, charging forward by more than ten zhang, instantly evading the densest part of the arrow rain. Those few not evaded were all swept aside by Lu Ye's brandished spear.

This round of volleys surprisingly did not harm him at all.

"Oh?" Fang Kuang's eyes lit up. Although he knew Lu Ye certainly possessed cultivation, achieving this level of prowess was truly unexpected.

"Zhao Yuwen," Fang Kuang called.

"Yes, commander." A rider stepped forward, saluting from horseback.

"Go and test him!"

"Yes!" Zhao Yuwen accepted the order, tightened the reins, turned his horse towards Lu Ye, and rapidly closed the distance.

Zhao Yuwen drew two big axes from his back, shouting loudly, "Boy, give me your life!"

The two horses passed each other, neither stopping.

Fang Kuang's face suddenly darkened.

Behind Lu Ye, Zhao Yuwen fell from his horse, a pool of red blood dyeing the earth.

Chapter 1943 - Do You Really Want to Die That Much?

"How can this be, how can this be?"

"This person's courage is too great, charging alone into the formation. What if something goes wrong?"

"He's risking his life for the Asura Seal!"

In that unknown land, in front of the mirror reflecting Lu Ye's figure, several people who had been secretly observing him now looked flustered and anxious.

Even the old Clan Leader stood not far away, watching with a nervous expression.

The development of things... has somewhat exceeded their control.

Originally, Lu Ye was escorting Yao Nuan and others all the way here. Though encountering some mountain bandits, he handled them with ease. But this time is different; it's an army attacking, and Lu Ye dares to face it alone. How confident is he in himself?

They have been waiting for the inheritor of this generation, and the other party has already passed the test, just waiting for the next trial to guide him here. If anything goes wrong, what could they do?

You must know they've waited nearly ten thousand years for this opportunity. If they miss this, who knows when the next chance will come?

"Perhaps we were wrong." The old Clan Leader smiled bitterly. If they hadn't interfered with the operation of the Asura Field, allowing Lu Ye to earn a large number of Asura Seals even by killing ordinary mountain bandits, and clearly see the Asura Seals represented by those bandits, he wouldn't have acted this way. Because of the huge benefits, he takes risks now.

But if they didn't do this, they couldn't truly test Lu Ye's character and couldn't entrust the future of the clan to him.

"Clan Leader, what do we do now?" asked a worried woman supporting the old Clan Leader.

The Clan Leader was silent. In this situation, even he was powerless and could only watch the development quietly.

At this moment, in the mirrored scene, Lu Ye, after killing Zhao Yuwen, slew another enemy officer who overestimated himself and came to block him.

His goal was clear; he charged straight at Fang Kuang.

Now, the biggest problem troubling him wasn't his own lack of strength, but insufficient spirit force. With only the cultivation of the 8th orifice, how much spirit force could he have reserved, so Lu Ye was economical, using spirit force only when absolutely necessary.

Under such circumstances, to resolve such a military array, he could only kill the main general first.

Fang Kuang undoubtedly understood his intention, so he withdrew before Lu Ye's advance. With a command, the Black Scarf Army surged towards Lu Ye like waves.

Lu Ye was helpless and could only charge on horseback. As he went, the broad spears swept and thrust, and the Black Scarf Army fell like wind-blown straw.

In the unknown land, as Lu Ye charged around the military array, repeatedly encountering crises, the observing ones, including the old Clan Leader, couldn't help but be on edge, occasionally exclaiming.

Several times the situation was extremely dangerous, but repeatedly at crucial moments, a shield formed from concentrated spirit force blocked incoming threats, allowing Lu Ye to avert danger safely.

"Scream..." The black horse fell.

In this charge, Lu Ye couldn't protect the mount under him. After only three charges, this black horse from the Sixth Master of Great Wind Mountain couldn't hold on any longer.

He simply abandoned the horse, wielding his spear alone, sweeping in all directions.

Screams arose incessantly, bodies flew high, blood stained the earth, and the rich stench of blood lingered in the air.

Though one thousand men may not seem many, nor too few, even if Lu Ye's efficiency in killing is high, trying to kill so many enemies alone isn't an easy task.

From all directions, light spots continually flew into his waist's Asura Authority Token, keeping him fully motivated and energized.

After such a slaughter, he had killed two to three hundred Black Scarves, clearly scaring the rest.

If Fang Kuang weren't on site, such heavy casualties would have dispersed the entire vanguard. But because Fang Kuang was persistently issuing commands, the surviving Black Scarves could only grit their teeth and persevere.

Lu Ye suddenly realized the advantage of not having killed Fang Kuang yet. Even though there was more pressure, he gained more Asura Seals. If he had killed Fang Kuang right away, the Black Scarf vanguard troops might have scattered.

His spirit force was already more than half consumed. At the current efficiency, he could probably kill another two to three hundred Black Scarves before exhausting his strength.

Silently resolved to kill Fang Kuang at the final moment!

Amidst the chaotic battlefield, Lu Ye suddenly heard the pounding of hooves swiftly approaching, followed by Zhou Ping's voice: "Mr. Lu, we are here to assist you!"

He had seen Lu Ye's unmatched bravery from the distant city wall and, feeling inspired, immediately led a group of soldiers to aid. Along with them came many spontaneous cultivators.

Fang Kuang was momentarily overwhelmed. Until today, he had never thought someone could disrupt his military array single-handedly, yet this was happening to him now.

Where did this guy come from? Fang Kuang felt that, under observation, although the opponent's spirit force wasn't extremely strong, the person was incredibly agile, and every action wasn't wasted; every spear thrust resulted in a Black Scarf's death.

He had also killed many people, was called a Man-Eating Demon, and had eaten many people, but such fierce slaughter still made him fearful.

If it were just Lu Ye, he still had confidence to slowly grind him down, but at this crucial moment, Zhou Ping led the army here.

With many thoughts flowing through his mind, Fang Kuang ordered the Black Scarves to split into two groups: one continued besieging Lu Ye, and the other confronted Zhou Ping's forces.

He then dismounted, removed his armor, and hid among the crowd, like a snake waiting for the right time to strike.

No matter what, he had to kill this person today, or he couldn't account for it upon returning.

A moment later, he finally found an opportunity. While Lu Ye was engaged with several soldiers and couldn't spare attention elsewhere, he thrust his spear forward fiercely.

The spear struck squarely on Lu Ye's back, and Fang Kuang was initially delighted, but then his expression froze.

Because the spear shaft couldn't penetrate Lu Ye's body; at the point of contact, there was a swirl of spirit force that transformed into a visible shield.

It's that move again!

He had seen Lu Ye use this ability several times before, always managing to block deadly strikes at critical moments.

He was confident that his attack had left no trace and was a surprise from behind, yet it was still blocked.

This guy... does he have eyes on his back? How could he sense my attack in such a chaotic situation?

"Do you... really want to die so badly?" Lu Ye suddenly turned to look at him.

Originally, he hadn't planned to kill Fang Kuang so quickly, but since the man was seeking death, there was no need to hold back.

He raised his hand to seize Fang Kuang's spear and yanked it fiercely towards himself. Fang Kuang's face changed drastically, he let go of the spear, but it was already too late.

The spear in Lu Ye's hand had already thrust toward Fang Kuang's chest.

In the face of life-and-death danger, Fang Kuang was flustered but not chaotic; while retreating, he summoned all his spirit force to gather at his chest, forming a shield.

This is a self-preservation ability that every cultivator can proficiently master, especially someone like Fang Kuang, with extensive battle experience, who could effortlessly deploy it.

As long as the opponent's cultivation didn't far surpass his own, he should be able to block it!

Thinking this, his chest ached.

Fang Kuang froze entirely and looked down, only to see that his chest had been pierced through. The protective spirit force he relied on had not offered any defense at all; it was pierced like a sheet of paper.

In the last moment of his life, he suddenly recalled Zhou Ping's call from the city wall earlier, warning him not to kill himself.

At that time, he had felt contempt, but now...

Lu Ye drew out the spear without even giving him a glance and continued to fight.

"Fang Kuang is dead!" At a distance, Zhou Ping witnessed this scene and was overjoyed, bursting out with spirit force in a loud shout.

Lu Ye wished he could sew Zhou Ping's mouth shut!

"Fang Kuang is dead!"

"Fang Kuang is dead!"

From all directions, shouts echoed. Those shouting hadn't seen Fang Kuang killed and didn't know if he was truly dead, but they chanted along regardless.

The Black Scarf Army was already suffering great casualties, filled with fear and dread; now with the loss of their general, their morale plummeted, and without anyone to restrain them, they began to scatter in all directions.

"Kill!" Zhou Ping shouted, leading the chase, and others followed suit.

Lu Ye wiped the blood from his face, mounted a riderless horse, and rode off towards the direction with the most people.

In front of the mirror, a group of people let out a long breath; in less than an hour, their emotions had surged with Lu Ye's charge, rising and falling several times...

Finally, it was over, and the Black Scarf vanguard troops were defeated; Lu Ye was temporarily safe.

They had never experienced such a thrilling and dangerous moment before.

"Clan Leader, Clan Leader, what's wrong?" a woman's voice came, alarming the group, and they quickly turned their heads.

They saw the old Clan Leader clutching his chest, gasping heavily, his face pale as a sheet, looking as if he were about to die.

They were all taken aback, realizing instantly that the old Clan Leader's age could not withstand such enormous emotional swings.

"Quick, quick, give the Clan Leader an elixir pill." Someone shouted, taking out a life-saving elixir pill and placing it into the old Clan Leader's mouth, activating mana to assist in refining it.

After a good while, the old Clan Leader finally regained his breath, though his hands continued to tremble uncontrollably.

"Clan Leader, you should go back and rest," the woman said with concern.

The Clan Leader shook his head, "I want to stay here and watch until he returns alive to the Sky Asura World." He then asked, "What's his mission this time?"

"Let me check." The woman closed her eyes, seemingly immersed in some investigation, and moments later, she spoke uneasily, "To defeat the Black Scarf Army and ensure Ding'an's safety."

The old Clan Leader's lips quivered slightly, finally letting out a sigh, "What a sin!"

To engage just one vanguard troop of the Black Scarf was already so perilous; what will it be like when the main Black Scarf Army attacks?

The key is that the kid doesn't know restraint, causing him old man to teeter on the edge of the Ghost Gate.

But in retrospect, it was all his own doing...

Chapter 1944 - Preparation

Ding'an City, after a great battle, hundreds of corpses lay strewn three miles outside the walls.

The city gates stood wide open. Surrounded and escorted by many soldiers, Lu Ye rode back on horseback. Countless soldiers on the city walls, who had personally witnessed the battle just now, all gazed at him with worship and reverence, while on both sides of the inner passage, throngs of commoners welcomed the triumphant return of their meritorious hero.

They had clearly also learned of the Black Scarf vanguard troops being routed.

In a world where the level of cultivation was so extremely low, Lu Ye's performance just now was simply too shocking: charging alone into a formation of a thousand troops, slaughtering hundreds by his own strength, beheading the enemy general in the midst of their ranks—such things had only ever been heard of from storytellers' lips.

Yet today it had actually unfolded right before their very eyes.

Lu Ye returned to the Zhou family's small courtyard and, without stopping to rest, immediately began bitter cultivation.

Piece after piece of inferior Spirit Stone was devoured by the Talent Tree and turned into useless waste rock, while his own cultivation rose slowly yet steadily.

One day later, the 9th Spiritual Orifice opened, and Lu Ye let out a long breath.

Though the eighth and 9th orifices differed by only a single orifice in cultivation, it was in fact a qualitative transformation, because opening the 9th orifice meant truly stepping onto the path of cultivation. Strictly speaking, only at this point did one have the right to call oneself a cultivator.

Spirit force flowed through each spiritual orifice, linking them together, performing the work of a Minor Circumambulation—endless, inexhaustible.

Spirit Stream Level 1! With this, both his personal strength and his endurance would see a tremendous boost.

This round of tempering left Lu Ye with a very peculiar feeling. He had never thought he would walk the road he once trod all over again, yet compared to back then, now he was moving along this path much faster.

If he'd had Level 1 cultivation when facing the Black Scarf vanguard troops earlier, Lu Ye truly had the confidence to devour that entire vanguard by himself—provided they didn't all scatter and flee in every direction.

"Yao Nuan." Lu Ye called softly.

"Sir." Yao Nuan immediately walked in from outside, her eyes filled with reverence. Earlier she had watched with her own eyes from the city wall as Lu Ye displayed his divine might; for a girl her age, such a scene was overwhelmingly impactful.

"Has Zhou Ping come?" Lu Ye asked.

When he'd returned earlier, Zhou Ping had been leading men to clean up the battlefield. After all, so many had died, and right outside Ding'an City at that; if left unattended, it might well breed plague and the like. But Lu Ye had instructed him to come find him once the matter was dealt with.

"The City Lord has been waiting outside all this time," Yao Nuan replied. When Zhou Ping arrived, Lu Ye had been cultivating; upon learning this, he hadn't dared disturb him.

"Invite him in."

"Yes!"

A short while later, Zhou Ping strode in with long steps. Compared to the days of worry before, he was now undoubtedly much more high-spirited. Upon seeing Lu Ye, he cupped his fists in salute at once. "I pay my respects to you, sir."

Lu Ye nodded slightly.

Zhou Ping said excitedly, "In the battle just now, sir displayed divine might and truly won our deep admiration. For Ding'an to have you, sir, is our great fortune. With you sitting in town for this city, we shall never again need to worry."

He actually couldn't quite figure it out: clearly Lu Ye's cultivation was only one orifice higher than his, so why was he so unstoppable on the battlefield?

In that situation, if he'd gone up instead, a single volley of enemy arrows would likely have left him dead or at least gravely wounded.

But that was unimportant. At present, as Ding'an's City Lord, with Lu Ye's support, he had the confidence to hold this city and protect the peace of the people in this region. He had even considered whether to let Lu Ye assume the position of City Lord. Previously he hadn't done so mainly because Lu Ye was an outsider and not suitable; but after the battle just now, Lu Ye undoubtedly already had the foundation for this among the populace.

Now in all Ding'an, who did not know of Mr. Lu's chivalrous name?

As he was thinking this, before he could bring it up, he heard Lu Ye ask, "Tell me about the specifics of the Black Scarf."

Zhou Ping's expression grew solemn. After pondering for a moment, he said, "The Black Scarf rose from bandits in the mountains. After their name spread, many bandits came to join them. Outwardly they claim thirty thousand, but according to the information we obtained, their actual strength should be around ten thousand or so..."

As he spoke at length, Lu Ye listened in silence.

When he finished, Lu Ye finally said, "So in other words, though we've routed their vanguard troops, in terms of the Black Scarf's overall size, it doesn't hurt them much."

Zhou Ping admitted somewhat unwillingly, "That is indeed the case. A ten-thousand-strong army, with only a few hundred casualties, can truly be ignored." Then he changed the subject: "However, sir need not be overly worried. The Black Scarf is currently attacking another city; their main target is not Ding'an. That first small squad was actually here in Ding'an to gather grain. It was only because they lost that squad that Fang Kuang's vanguard troops were drawn here. Now that Fang Kuang is dead and the vanguard has been smashed, the Black Scarf likely won't take any major action for the time being; they simply don't have enough forces to split their troops in two directions."

Lu Ye fell silent, lost in thought. If this weren't his trial scenario, then Zhou Ping's judgment was not unreasonable. But this was his trial scenario, so Lu Ye felt that the Black Scarf definitely wouldn't let it go at that.

Nor would he place the future peace in the enemy's hands.

"Let's go. Take me to the warehouse," Lu Ye rose to his feet.

Zhou Ping did not hesitate and immediately led the way.

Moments later, in the spacious warehouse, Lu Ye paced back and forth inspecting. This was one of the most important places in Ding'an, guarded by heavy troops. Inside were stored supplies sufficient to sustain all the city's populace for several months, as well as some items used for cultivation.

Zhou Ping did not know what Lu Ye was looking for, but now the safety of all Ding'an rested on Lu Ye alone; naturally, whatever was in the warehouse was his to take as he pleased.

A short while later, Lu Ye stood in front of a pile of pitch-black rocks. He casually picked up a fist-sized stone and slightly urged his spirit force. His brow lifted.

Zhou Ping watched his expression and immediately stepped forward to explain, "Sir, this is black-green ore. After smelting, it can be used to forge spirit weapons."

Not all minerals are suitable for forging weapons for cultivators. This involves conductivity. When cultivators fight enemies, they must drive their spirit force. The easier the material used to forge a spirit weapon conducts spirit force, the more valuable it is. Some materials that cannot conduct spirit force can only be forged into ordinary weapons.

Just like that thick, long spear Lu Ye used before—that was merely an ordinary spear. It was only because it was quite heavy that it could display such tremendous destructive power in Lu Ye's hands.

This black-green ore could indeed be used to forge spirit weapons, but in Lu Ye's view, spirit weapons made from it would only be the lowest grade, because the mineral itself was very poor in quality.

But in a world like this, having something like this was already quite rare.

"Aside from what's in the warehouse, does I have any other black-green ore elsewhere?" Lu Ye asked.

Zhou Ping thought for a moment and said, "The Zhou family has some. The other two of the three great families should also have part of their own stock. If you need it, I can requisition it all."

"Get it all here, then find people to smelt it."

"What does Sir intend to forge?" Zhou Ping asked.

"You'll know when the time comes." Lu Ye didn't explain much.

After a short while, he returned to his small courtyard and continued his cultivation.

Zhou Ping's efficiency was undoubtedly high. Only two days later he came again to report that all the black-green ore in the city had been gathered and fully smelted.

In the east of the city, at a place seething with heat, Zhou Ping and the Family Heads of the other two great families waited. This was the ironsmith workshop jointly owned by the three great families; almost all the weapons in the entire city were produced here.

Lu Ye arrived unhurriedly. Zhou Ping and the others hurriedly saluted him, their attitudes respectful.

"It's all here?" Lu Ye's eyes immediately fell on the piled-up items to the side. The things were black, square, about an inch thick and five inches long and wide, roughly a bit more than twenty pieces.

"All here," Zhou Ping replied. This black-green ore was expensive; what lay before them was already the entire stockpile of the whole city.

Lu Ye picked up a piece and weighed it, finding it quite heavy. He urged his spirit force into it and gave a slight nod. "Passable, I suppose."

This stuff was far too low in quality. Over in the Nine Provinces, it was trash no one would bother to glance at, but in a world like this, he could only make do.

"Find a blacksmith master to come over," Lu Ye instructed again.

Very soon, a burly, thick-waisted blacksmith stood before Lu Ye. His face was fierce, yet his attitude was respectful. "Mr. Lu, what spirit weapon do you wish to forge?"

By the side, Zhou Ping introduced, "This is the forging chief of our three great families. His craftsmanship is absolutely reliable."

Lu Ye nodded and looked at him. "You'll be my assistant."

What he intended to forge was not something a blacksmith of this world could create.

The previous battle with the Black Scarf vanguard troops had made Lu Ye realize something: in a world like this, the role cultivators could play was largely diminished. Even he himself, at that time, had no way

to wipe out a vanguard force of over a thousand. Even if he went all out, killing four or five hundred would already be remarkable.

Because the level of cultivators was too low and the gap in physical fitness between them and ordinary people was not so enormous.

Just a Black Scarf vanguard troop was already so troublesome. If the full Black Scarf army launched an assault, Ding'an most likely could not be held.

So he could not rely on himself alone!

Yet the personal strength of the other cultivators was even weaker. Even gathering them together wouldn't let them exert much power. In that case, he could only borrow External Force and pool these scattered strengths together.

The As-Close-As-Siblings Array Disc was undoubtedly the best and only choice!

Back then, Lu Ye had refined countless such array discs and was already thoroughly practiced. The only troublesome part was that the As-Close-As-Siblings Spirit Runes were extremely complex.

This was also why Lu Ye had to raise his cultivation to Spirit Stream Level 1 before making a move—because cultivation at the 8th orifice stage simply wasn't enough.

Even now, at Spirit Stream Level 1, he wasn't sure he could succeed.

"Bring the goods!" Lu Ye gave another order.

Zhou Ping gestured, and soldiers immediately lifted a large chest and set it down by Lu Ye's feet. He opened it; inside were all those inferior Spirit Stones.

Lu Ye stepped onto these Spirit Stones with one foot, ready to replenish his spirit force at any time. Only then did he roll up his sleeves. "Let's begin."

A short while later, the clang of metal rang within the ironsmith workshop. The chief blacksmith was sweating profusely, and soon forged a piece of black-green ore into the shape of a round disc.

Chapter 1945 - What a Sin

The black bluestone disc is merely the prototype of an array disc; its core lies in the spirit runes, without which it serves no purpose.

After the chief blacksmith forged this prototype, Lu Ye immediately stepped forward to take over.

A group of people stood curiously watching from the side, not knowing what Lu Ye was about to craft, and Lu Ye himself didn't seem like someone well-versed in such matters.

With a "ding," as the hammer fell, the spirit force was activated, and immediately a tiny, nearly imperceptible basic element appeared on the disc.

Ding dong, ding dong...

Lu Ye's movements were incredibly swift, wielding the hammer with a continuous rhythm, never pausing, each strike precise, birthing a basic element with every blow.

Spirit runes emphasize continuity; the slightest mistake could render all previous efforts useless.

Previously, Lu Ye could refine with ease, relying on vast and pure spirit force, but now he could only use this clumsy method of hammering.

Initially, Zhou Ping and others couldn't discern anything significant, as the Yin-Yang primordial elements were too small. They only sensed Lu Ye's effortless motions, and the sound seemed like a special kind of musical instrument.

But as time passed, everyone expressed astonishment.

As each Yin-Yang Dual Origin gradually embedded and spread out, the outline of array runes slowly revealed itself.

A marvel, hard to imagine without witnessing it firsthand, that someone could craft such intricate and complex patterns on this disc.

No one knew what the pattern represented, as the world's cultivation techniques were still rudimentary, and the concept of spirit runes did not exist.

At this moment, Lu Ye divided his attention three ways: forging the spirit runes, monitoring his spirit force consumption, and activating the Talent Tree's power to replenish himself from the inferior Spirit Stones beneath him.

After more than two hours, Lu Ye delivered the final hammer strike.

The onlookers vaguely saw a glimmer flash across the disc, but it moved too fast to capture, leaving them to assume it was just an illusion.

An array disc, in the time of two hours... Lu Ye was somewhat speechless; something he once crafted effortlessly.

Yet the result was satisfactory, thanks to the Talent Tree consuming Spirit Stones to replenish himself; without this aid, his present cultivation alone could not succeed in creating such an object.

Tossing the crafted array disc aside, Lu Ye began on a second one.

Time passed, as one array disc after another was crafted.

Apart from Zhou Ping, the other two Family Heads showed signs of distress, for Lu Ye's consumption was immense—a basket after basket of inferior Spirit Stones were brought over and soon were completely depleted. No one saw how he refined them, but invariably, no spirit force remained in the transported Spirit Stones.

One must know, a significant portion of these Spirit Stones were provided by their two families, intended for confrontation, not knowing they'd be used this way.

"City Lord, what exactly is the thing Mr. Lu crafted?" one Family Head couldn't resist asking.

Zhou Ping shook his head, indicating he did not know. Taking a glance at Lu Ye who was busy on the other side, he picked up a disc for investigation.

This wasn't a weapon, evidently not for killing enemies, as it couldn't be thrown at foes; hence, Mr. Lu's effort surely wasn't on a futile effort.

Being of this mind, Zhou Ping infused some spirit force into it, and quickly turned to look at the Family Head beside him.

"What is it?" the Family Head inquired, puzzled.

Zhou Ping continued to gaze at him.

The next moment, the Family Head showed astonishment, having sharply sensed Zhou Ping's energy trying to merge with his own breath—acting at once, they exchanged energies.

"Ah?" Both Zhou Ping and the other simultaneously exclaimed, as their energy merging encountered no resistance. Merely this was astonishing, and more so was their awareness of being able to borrow each other's spirit force!

"What happened?" The other Family Head inquired, expression filled with doubt.

Zhou Ping steadied himself, guiding the already intertwined energy towards him, and soon, the third Family Head also wore a startled expression.

Time continued slipping by, and one after another, array discs were completed.

Two days later, a total of twenty discs were produced.

There's no need to continue crafting, as the cultivator population within Ding'an City is limited—under three hundred; with half having only opened one or two orifices, and the other half having opened three or more.

Thus, twenty array discs were absolutely sufficient.

In the plaza, all cultivators in Ding'an with more than 3rd orifice gathered here, per Lu Ye's instructions, grouped in sevens into twenty groups.

Each group had at least one cultivator with more than 5th orifice, holding an array disc.

Zhou Ping, having grasped the substantial value of this array disc, demonstrated slightly, and the cultivators immediately understood, forming arrays to practice enthusiastically.

How could they ever have encountered such magical objects before?

As Lu Ye stepped forward, Zhou Ping hurriedly met him with excitement, clasping his fists, "Master."

The cultivators who were practicing also stopped and looked toward him.

Lu Ye nodded, stretched out his hand, and waved toward the below. At once, a cultivator holding an array disc stepped forward and handed the array disc to him.

Lu Ye held up the array disc: "This As-Close-As-Siblings Array Disc, its magical uses I believe you all are somewhat aware of. With this array disc as the core, seven people can link their spirit force, and the effect they can exert is far greater than what seven people can achieve when merely teaming up."

Everyone nodded.

Lu Ye shifted the topic: "Linking spirit forces is just the simplest function of this array disc. Its true purpose is to assist in formation creation!"

"Formation creation?" Zhou Ping showed a puzzled expression.

"Just like..." Lu Ye spoke while stepping forward a few steps with the array disc, arriving beside a few cultivators, where he activated the spirit force to stimulate the array disc.

Under the conduction of the spirit force, six people were enveloped within the formation, their spirit forces interconnecting and their spirit forces converging.

In the next instant, an illusory and ethereal figure suddenly appeared, enveloping all seven people, including Lu Ye.

"...like this!"

"This is..." Zhou Ping couldn't help but widen his eyes. Before today, he had never seen such a bizarre scene. Although the figure was ethereal, on closer inspection, some traces could still be discerned.

It was evidently a large tortoise!

How did this come about?

Not just Zhou Ping, but many cultivators showed expressions of disbelief; it was almost like witnessing a miracle.

Lu Ye was not satisfied, however, because the Black Tortoise's phantom was too faint; mainly due to the current low cultivation, the spirit force manifestation is limited to this degree. But even so, it left everyone present in awe.

"This is the Black Tortoise Array. Under the formation, defense greatly enhances, most suitable for charging and slaying enemies!" Lu Ye's voice resounded again, "Next, I will instruct you on how to create formations!"

Everyone looked expectant.

With the array disc as an aid, as long as they could understand the key points of formation creation, it wasn't difficult to establish formations.

Three days later, the gates of Ding'an City swung open, with Lu Ye at the forefront, accompanied by a hundred riders!

He had roughly grasped what his main task in this training was – to resolve the Black Scarf Army. Although, if they just waited, the Black Scarf Army would certainly invade Ding'an City again, Lu Ye preferred to take the initiative rather than be passively attacked.

Especially since slaying the Black Scarf yielded a substantial bounty of Asura Seals, he was becoming impatient.

In uncharted land, the mirror image reflected the advancing cavalry, with Lu Ye's figure positioned at the center of the scene.

"What a sinful thing, what a sinful thing!" The old Clan Leader beat his chest and stamped his feet, full of worry.

Given the normal progression of affairs, the Black Scarf would indeed invade Ding'an City again in about ten days. By then, the Black Scarf would have been unsuccessfully attacking another city, the troops would be exhausted, and although Lu Ye's current cultivation level made it somewhat challenging to handle, it would not have been too difficult.

This would have been the standard training process.

But now Lu Ye actually took the attack initiative!

This kid... why can't he be a little steadier?

"Clan Leader, actually, actively attacking at this time might be more advantageous for him," said the woman who had been accompanying the old Clan Leader to reassure him.

"What do you mean?" asked the old Clan Leader.

The woman said, "The Black Scarf Army is currently fully attacking Thousand Streams City. If he leads people over now, it could create a pincer situation with Thousand Streams City over there. As long as he achieves some battle success, those in Thousand Streams City will likely see an opportunity. Then, if they leave the city to meet the battle, it's possible to annihilate the Black Scarf and complete the training ahead of schedule."

The worry-laden old Clan Leader, hearing this, pondered briefly and nodded: "Indeed, there's truth to your words!"

The woman continued, "I have interacted with this senior brother; he isn't the reckless type. You see, before setting out, he prepared the array disc. In the midst of a major battle, such units can play a significant role. If he wasn't confident, he wouldn't act this way."

The old Clan Leader finally released some of his worry: "After this, when his next training comes, guide him over promptly!"

Better not let wanton mishaps happen again; his old bones couldn't bear too much upheaval.

The horse team advanced, with Lu Ye leading the charge and twenty squads closely following. After three days of practice, the Ding'an cultivators had become proficient in array disc usage, so even if there were casualties during battle, squads could promptly shift formations.

Zhou Ping didn't come along; he wanted to, but unfortunately, as the City Lord, he had to stay and guard Ding'an no matter what.

This time, Lu Ye's target was Thousand Streams City, located about 300 miles away. According to reliable information received from Ding'an, the Black Scarf was fully attacking Thousand Streams. However, the status of the situation on that side was unknown.

Still, Thousand Streams was considerably stronger overall compared to Ding'an, so anyway, they could endure for some time.

The horses had exotic beast bloodlines, possessing greater endurance than ordinary horses. In three days, Lu Ye and his men had already reached the 300-mile mark.

They did not engage in battle immediately but rested at a spot 50 miles away from Thousand Streams, while also scouting the situation over there.

Aside from him, the endurance ability of others in the entire team wasn't strong. Their spirit force diminished with each use, so this strike needed to achieve decisive results. Otherwise, once the Black Scarf Army regained its senses, a troop of just over one hundred wouldn't be enough to kill them.

Chapter 1946 - Are We Really This Strong?

A short while later, a squad of seven returned and reported the scouted intelligence to Lu Ye, who was waiting there.

It was about as he had expected. The foundation of Thousand Streams City was indeed much stronger than Ding'an's. The Black Scarf Army had already launched three assaults in succession, yet had never managed to achieve a decisive result; on the contrary, their own losses had been considerable.

It was precisely because of this that a Black Scarf squad had gone to Ding'an earlier to gather provisions and pay, only to be wiped out by Lu Ye, which in turn drew over a vanguard army of a thousand—and they too suffered over half casualties.

Exactly because the fighting here was so deadlocked, the Black Scarves had no spare strength to go looking for trouble with Ding'an.

At the moment, the Black Scarf Army was resting and regrouping. From the look of it, they had no intention of letting things go. That was only normal. The Black Scarves had started as mountain bandits

and had developed all the way here with the wind at their backs. Wherever they passed, there were many cases of cities surrendering on their own, yet here at Thousand Streams they had lost men and bled for it.

How could the Black Scarf leader possibly retreat like this? So long as he could take Thousand Streams, all the losses up to now would be worth it.

Anyone in the Black Scarf leader's position would not withdraw easily.

To go hunting for the Black Scarves' trouble at this time would undoubtedly be irrational. Though the hundred-plus men he had brought were all cultivators, their numbers were ultimately too few; they would have to move at the right moment to exert their greatest effect. After thinking it over briefly, Lu Ye decided to wait quietly for the right opportunity, trusting that the Black Scarves would not keep him waiting long.

He ordered everyone to stay hidden where they were, then left alone. No one knew where he went; only, a little less than half a day later, he returned again.

The Black Scarves truly did not keep Lu Ye waiting long. Merely two days later, while they were resting, everyone faintly felt an unusual disturbance coming from the direction of Thousand Streams City.

Lu Ye immediately bent down, pressed his ear to the ground, and listened carefully.

A moment later, his brows lifted and he gave a low shout: "Get ready!"

The hundred-plus men, hearing the order, at once adopted a strict battle array.

"Mount up!" Lu Ye gave another command.

They swung onto their horses, movements uniform and tidy, expressions solemn.

"Move out!" Lu Ye glanced over them, then took the lead, riding toward Thousand Streams.

At this very moment, the great Black Scarf army was storming the city. Huge stones wreathed in flames were hurled by catapults, tearing through the sky to smash against the city walls or crash down inside the city.

The thick city walls were pitted all over with craters, and there was much damage within the city as well. The bodies of slain civilians were visible everywhere. Around the walls, it was a scene from purgatory.

A full one hour of stone bombardment was followed by another hour of arrow volleys before the Black Scarves launched a full-scale assault.

Like a tide, the bandit soldiers charged forward with shouts, some bearing crude scaling ladders, some with shields held up in front, their ferocity surging.

Thousand Streams had already weathered several such assaults, and by now naturally handled them with practiced ease.

The fiercest clash between the two sides was along the section of wall at the East Gate. Again and again, Black Scarf soldiers, fearless of death, used the ladders to clamber up the wall, only to be hacked down by the defenders of Thousand Streams.

In the gate tower above the East Gate, Thousand Streams City Lord Xie Li stood there with a grave expression. One soldier after another rushed in to report on the situation at various points, and with just a few words from him, they hurried away again.

That Thousand Streams had managed to hold out under the Black Scarves' onslaught until now was not merely due to the city's deep foundation; it also owed much to Xie Li's central command and coordination.

It could be said that without Xie Li, Thousand Streams City would never have lasted to this point.

Looking at the Black Scarves surging below, he could clearly judge that they could only sustain this one more assault. If they could just hold this wave, the Black Scarves would definitely retreat, and Thousand Streams would then have a chance to breathe.

But whether they could truly hold or not, he actually had no certainty. In a battle like this, there were too many factors affecting the overall situation. Even with his exceptional military skill, he could not completely dictate the course of the war.

He could only do all that human effort allowed, and leave the rest to fate.

Unbidden, the face of a young man surfaced in his mind.

It was a young man he had never met before, who had suddenly come calling two days ago, seeking him out and claiming to have come from Ding'an City, about 30 miles away.

At the time, the two had exchanged only a brief conversation, enough for him to learn a bit of the other party's arrangements.

He knew that at such a time he really shouldn't pin his hopes on External Force, yet he still couldn't help feeling a bit of anticipation. If there truly was a surprise force, it ought to appear around now, shouldn't it?

His gaze shifted, sweeping over the entire battlefield, but to his disappointment, all he saw in his field of view were Black Scarves; there was no sign of any surprise force...

This even made him start to doubt whether that scene two days ago had really happened at all, because after the young man left, he had specifically ordered subordinates to shadow him in secret, only for the man to vanish in the blink of an eye.

The other had appeared in such a mysterious fashion, and then disappeared again like a Spectral Bewitchment.

"What's that over there?" A man dressed like an adviser beside him suddenly cried out in surprise and doubt.

Xie Li followed his gaze in that direction and vaguely saw some small black dots rapidly approaching. His expression shifted; he immediately roused his spirit force to empower his eyes.

His vision became a little clearer.

"Cavalry?" Xie Li frowned. He could tell that a cavalry squad had suddenly appeared over there. He couldn't clearly see the one in the lead, but the figure was roughly similar to that young man he'd met two days ago.

However, this cavalry squad was small in number, only a little over a hundred riders.

Xie Li looked past that cavalry squad, but saw nothing behind them.

Could this be the surprise force that young man mentioned? A mere hundred or so people, even if every single one of them had cultivation, what could they do on a battlefield like this?

At most they'd charge through the battle array a few times, and once their spirit force was exhausted they would just be waiting to be slaughtered.

"My lord, are those people from the Black Scarf?" that adviser asked.

Xie Li shook his head. He wasn't sure where this cavalry squad had come from, but judging from their posture, they were clearly heading straight for the rear of the Black Scarf Army.

As he watched, the Black Scarf Army clearly also noticed the cavalry squad's presence. A unit of five hundred men immediately moved out to intercept them, and the distance between the two sides quickly shrank.

Xie Li stared without blinking. He knew he would soon be able to determine the cavalry's stance. Friend or foe would be clear as soon as he saw what happened when the two sides met.

Ten breaths later, the two units collided, and Xie Li's expression couldn't help but change.

Because the two units instantly fell into a bloody melee. The cavalry squad that had rushed over from afar was like a long arrow, smashing through the Black Scarf unit of five hundred, ripping them apart and continuing to charge forward without even looking back.

In just that one pass, over a hundred of the five hundred were killed, and they hadn't even been able to stop the cavalry squad for a single instant. Wherever the cavalry passed, the Black Scarf soldiers toppled like stalks of grain.

The adviser exclaimed, "Where did these people come from? They're using few to strike many, yet they're unstoppable. The one in the lead definitely has no ordinary cultivation, and at least half the squad must have cultivation as well."

"Ding'an!" Xie Li's eyes shone. He finally confirmed it: what had happened two days ago was real. That elusive young man had come, and he'd brought a cavalry squad. The only pity was that there were far too few of them.

"People from Ding'an?" The adviser came to a sudden realization at his words. "I heard earlier that the Black Scarf went to harass Ding'an, but got beaten badly instead. Looks like Ding'an also understands the principle that if the lips die, the teeth grow cold. This should just be the vanguard army; the main force of Ding'an is probably rushing over as we speak." Thinking of this, the adviser's spirits lifted. If Ding'an's main army could attack the Black Scarf from the rear while Thousand Streams attacked from the front, there really might be hope of crushing the Black Scarf Army in one stroke.

As he spoke, the adviser was startled again. "What are they trying to do?"

Nothing else—because in his field of view, the cavalry squad that had originally been in a straight line suddenly changed formation. The hundred-plus riders transformed into a wedge shape, pointing straight at the belly of the Black Scarf main army and driving in.

The adviser could hardly bear to watch. Even though the cavalry squad had just demonstrated tremendous mobility and destructive power, they still shouldn't be acting so recklessly.

Their best tactic should have been to hunt along the edges of the Black Scarf Army, not to stab straight into its belly. The risk was too great. Once their momentum was checked, they would be surrounded by

enemies on all sides, and in that kind of encirclement no one could survive—unless they could maintain overwhelming offensive pressure the entire time.

Xie Li also couldn't figure out what this cavalry squad was trying to do. In his view, this approach was pure suicide.

Ten miles outside Thousand Streams, Lu Ye rode in the very front, shouting an order: "Stay tight!"

In the entire cavalry squad, everyone except him wore tense faces, restless and uneasy. They all had cultivation, but before this, none of them had ever done something so insane. What Xie Li and the adviser could see, they, being in the middle of it, understood even more clearly: if anyone fell behind, that would be a dead end. So every single person was on full alert.

The only thing giving them the slightest sense of safety right now was the interwoven qi linked by the array disc. Under the array disc's effect, they could clearly feel that their spirit force consumption was extremely low. This undoubtedly meant their endurance was several times greater than usual.

The true collision erupted in that instant. Everyone followed closely on Lu Ye's heels, charging forward without a care. Miserable screams rose and fell incessantly in their ears, and the stench of blood was overwhelmingly thick.

Then everyone was astonished to discover something: from the very start, the cavalry squad's speed had not decreased in the slightest. No matter how many enemies blocked the way ahead, the hundred-plus riders were like an invincible arrowhead; everyone who touched them died or was maimed on the spot.

They advanced all the way, cutting through the waves, leaving corpses strewn across the ground in their wake.

In less than the time it takes to drink half a cup of tea, the cavalry squad had already charged into the belly of the Black Scarf main army, yet their offensive still showed no sign of slowing, as if the ones blocking them were not the infamous Black Scarf Army, but a bunch of random riffraff.

Are we really this strong? One after another, the cavalry who had followed Lu Ye this far couldn't help but have this strange thought flash through their minds. They knew that with the help of that

miraculous array disc, they could unleash power far beyond their own cultivation, but none of them had expected their charge in a battle like this to be so smooth.

So... we really are this strong!

A mere Black Scarf—nothing but a clown jumping around!

Their thoughts shifted, their wills gradually firmed. Their earlier unease completely disappeared. The cavalry squad fully let loose, and in an instant, the Black Scarf's casualties skyrocketed.

Chapter 1947 - Such a Brute

On the watchtower above the city gate, Xie Li and his adviser were in awe!

At first, they thought this cavalry squad was acting recklessly and doubted their chances, but who could have imagined such a colossal surprise?

This cavalry squad of over a hundred people was unexpectedly all with cultivation, especially the young leader whose strength was undoubtedly the greatest. With a swing of his long spear, no one survives within three zhang. It could be said that this cavalry squad's surprise assault crushed through like breaking bamboo, with the young leader playing a decisive role.

"Truly a fierce general!" The adviser's eyes shone brightly as he suddenly clasped his hands in salute: "My lord, such a fierce general must not be lost. If we could recruit this cavalry squad, our odds against the Black Scarf would increase by twenty percent."

Xie Li nodded: "Indeed!" Even if the adviser hadn't mentioned it, seeing such a cavalry squad sparked his interest in talent.

The adviser continued: "I observe their intention, it seems they want to pierce through the Black Scarf Army formation, and their direction is precisely towards the city gate. My lord, we need to provide support!"

Xie Li immediately understood his plan and waved over a messenger: "My lord!"

"Order the guards at the city gate to open the gate when the opportunity arises to support the cavalry squad below!"

"Understood!"

Although opening the gate at this time would pose a significant risk, welcoming this cavalry squad in would be worth the cost.

Such a cavalry squad would definitely play a monumental role in the battle against the Black Scarf.

Moreover, their target seemed to be the city gate, likely aiming to rest after charging, but Xie Li worried that the squad might not have enough stamina to reach the gate.

However, he quickly realized his worry was unwarranted, as the hundred-plus cavalry squad showed no signs of slowing down. Occasionally, a horse would fall, but nearby comrades would swiftly assist, pulling them onto their horse's back.

After another half-cup of tea's time, the entire Black Scarf Army was almost pierced through, with the cavalry squad less than three hundred zhang from the city gate.

"They're coming!" Xie Li clenched his fists.

Creek... the heavy gate slowly opened, and inside, numerous guards swarmed out, engaging the Black Scarf ahead in a bloody fight, creating opportunities for the cavalry squad's charge.

Xie Li exhaled deeply, at this point, there shouldn't be any unexpected incidents, and the cavalry squad should safely enter the city. Yet at this moment, his eyes widened in extreme astonishment, as if witnessing an unbelievable scene.

The adviser beside him was similarly frozen: "What are they... doing?"

In their vision, the cavalry squad charging directly toward the city gate unexpectedly swerved a hundred zhang from the gate in an arc and continued the assault on the other side, crushing through as relentlessly as before!

Weren't they going to enter the city? Are they still attacking?

"Incomprehensible, incomprehensible!" The adviser's mindset exploded instantly, how could there be such reckless men in this world?

Though their ability to pierce through the Black Scarf formation was truly awe-inspiring, how could such an offensive sustain? Thousand Streams even opened the gate proactively to greet them, yet they didn't glance at it and turned away.

This turn of events left Thousand Streams' defense vulnerable, as instant crises emerged.

Originally, the Black Scarf couldn't capture the city and could only sacrifice lives to fill in, but with the gate open, nearby Black Scarf troops immediately gathered like cats sensing fish, converging towards this area. Suddenly, the pressure on the East City Gate was immense, and despite the guards' desperate resistance, they retreated gradually, seemingly about to be breached by the Black Scarf.

Xie Li was already unable to focus on the cavalry squad anymore, issuing orders as guards were urgently redirected to the city gate, filling the gap. If the gate wasn't closed, this area would perpetually remain a weak point in defense.

Amid his overwhelming stress, his peripheral vision suddenly glimpsed the cavalry squad charging back!

Still, they were unstoppable, sweeping through, with no Black Scarf able to withstand them, all falling dead on the spot.

The cavalry squad charged past, leaving the area around the city gate suddenly empty. The guards who originally faced enormous pressure stared dazedly at the numerous corpses strewn before them, momentarily bewildered.

The cavalry squad didn't charge too far, but after a bout of assault, they turned in a big arc and came back this way, once again eradicating the incoming Black Scarf.

"Such a remarkable force..." Xie Li's lips quivered. He realized he had underestimated this cavalry squad's capabilities. The hundred-plus individuals exerted an impact on the battlefield beyond his imagination. Their actions were undoubtedly alleviating the pressure on the city gate, allowing time to close it back up.

"Close the gate!" Xie Li shouted angrily.

With the cavalry squad's repeated charges, the East City Gate was finally closed again. Only by then did the cavalry squad leave this battlefield, as if with no worries, continuing their previous rhythm of heedless assault.

"Young friend, the banner over there indicates the Black Scarf leader's position. Kill him, and we can win this battle!" Xie Li hurriedly shouted down to Lu Ye.

Indeed, the cavalry squad had slain many Black Scarf troops and thoroughly disrupted their formation, but as long as the Black Scarf leader remained alive, the battle would not end. Conversely, if the Black Scarf leader were killed, their army would immediately become dispersed like sand, allowing Thousand Streams to even open the gates to engage the enemy and settle the battle.

Given the power the cavalry squad had demonstrated, Xie Li felt confident they could complete this beheading mission and promptly provided the direction.

Because he discovered that although this cavalry squad was unparalleled in bravery, they didn't seem to notice that obvious command flag at all.

However, to Xie Li's frustration, even after his reminder, the other party still had no intention of complying, continuing to charge towards the most densely populated area of the Black Scarf.

This young man... Is he blind?

But the next moment, Xie Li's expression turned to astonishment because from beneath that command flag, a tall figure suddenly rode out on horseback, closely followed by a group of soldiers.

Xie Li hurriedly shouted again, "Young friend, be careful, the Black Scarf leader is coming for you."

Apparently, the opposing side had recognized the destructive power of the cavalry squad led by Lu Ye and decided to personally intervene. The Black Scarf leader was out of options. Since this cavalry appeared, countless Black Scarf soldiers had fallen at their hands. Initially, he was shocked by the power this cavalry displayed. The reason he waited until now was that he felt the time was right. After such intense fighting, how much more power could this cavalry squad exert?

In order to take down this cavalry squad in one move, the Black Scarf leader not only personally intervened but also brought his own personal guard. This was the most elite part of the entire Black Scarf, exceeding the cavalry squad in numbers by more than three times.

On horseback, leading the charge, Lu Ye blinked. Of course, he heard Xie Li's shouting, feeling rather helpless...

He had his own plans and did not wish to engage with the Black Scarf leader too early. Based on his limited past experiences, if he dealt with the Black Scarf leader, this trial would basically be over.

But he didn't wish to kill the enemy, yet couldn't stop the enemy from seeking their own death!

He paid slight attention to the position of the Black Scarf leader, an easy observation because the flag-bearer was by his side; the location of the flag-bearer marked the leader's position.

For the next hour, Lu Ye continuously led the cavalry to evade the personal guard led by the Black Scarf leader. This made Xie Li rather speechless, but in the eyes of the Black Scarf leader, there was no doubt it seemed like the opponent was showing weakness. However, the opponent's speed was too fast, slipping away like a loach, making several attempts to catch him fruitless.

In frustration, he glanced at his own flag-bearer and ordered the command flag to be concealed.

With this move, Lu Ye no longer knew where the Black Scarf leader was, and could only constantly change the cavalry squad's direction.

After one more incense stick's time, a striking armored and well-disciplined troop suddenly appeared in front, led by one with a tempting "ten thousand" character above their head...

Lu Ye sighed, still unable to avoid it.

There was nothing to be done, as the Black Scarf leader intentionally hid and targeted this cavalry squad, so they were bound to meet sooner or later.

"Brat, let's see where you run this time!" The Black Scarf leader nearly ground his teeth to bits, his face filled with rage looking at Lu Ye, as if he wanted to skin him alive.

As he spoke, he personally confronted Lu Ye, wielding a massive three-hundred-pound saber with an irresistible force.

Behind him, numerous personal guards also advanced in unison.

Spirit force surged, and Lu Ye immediately discerned that this guy had cultivation at the Spirit Stream Level 1, worthy of being the Black Scarf leader, someone valued at ten thousand Asura Seals, indeed different from ordinary soldiers.

After such prolonged intense combat, Lu Ye's spirit force and physical strength were greatly depleted. Facing this Black Scarf leader alone might indeed be troublesome, but unfortunately for him, Lu Ye wasn't alone.

Almost at the moment when the Black Scarf leader's attack fell, Lu Ye urged his spirit force, and in an instant, the shadow of a large turtle flashed and vanished.

The Black Scarf leader was momentarily stunned, thinking he was seeing things...

However, the next instant, his face drastically changed because a long spear from the adversary was thrust straight towards him, carrying a power he couldn't possibly resist, and causing his saber to tremble as his midsection lay exposed!

The spear tip rapidly magnified in his vision!

My life is over!

The Black Scarf leader felt a chill over his entire body, unable to believe that after maintaining such high-intensity combat, the opponent could still unleash such a terrifying killing move!

Just as the Black Scarf leader thought he was doomed, Lu Ye slightly tilted his spear downwards, piercing his collarbone.

Then he lifted him up and fiercely flung him far away, "Scram!"

Blood spattered as the Black Scarf leader, face full of shock, flew out and heavily crashed to the ground.

On the city gate tower, Xie Li's delighted gaze turned to astonishment, his eye twitching, "What... is he doing?"

He clearly saw during that moment of clash, Lu Ye obviously had the chance to kill the Black Scarf leader, but for some reason, he spared his life!

What could this mean? Xie Li was baffled.

Chapter 1948: Terrifying Harvest

The tall figure of the Black Scarf leader landed on the ground in a disheveled state, his eyes filled with a look of panic, having truly sensed the threat of death just a moment ago.

If that young man wished, he could have actually killed him! Yet, he didn't know why the other party spared him.

Although he couldn't understand, the Black Scarf leader still made the right choice. He hurriedly got up, blended into the crowd, and fled into the distance!

This place was not suitable for a prolonged stay. This cavalry squad was simply beyond his Black Scarves' ability to resist. To stay longer would mean certain death.

On the city gate tower of Thousand Streams City, Xie Li watched this scene unfold. He then glanced at Lu Ye's cavalry squad, slashing through the personal guard of the Black Scarf leader as easily as cutting through vegetables. He finally made up his mind: "Open the city gates, prepare to engage!"

Upon the command, the city gates, which had been painstakingly shut, showed signs of opening once more.

Truth be told, he had entertained this thought when the gates were not yet closed, but taking such a risk seemed too great. He had no idea how long the cavalry squad could hold out. If they couldn't, actively engaging would drag Thousand Streams into the mire.

Seeing the Black Scarf leader flee with his own eyes up to this moment, he hesitated no more.

At this point, if he still hesitated, he wouldn't be fit to be the City Lord of Thousand Streams.

The cavalry squad continued its charge, and under the command of the Black Scarf leader, the personal guard, though many times their number, performed no better than ordinary soldiers, crumbling at the first contact.

Once the gates of Thousand Streams City were flung wide open, and the defenders charged out, the Black Scarf Army realized something was amiss. Their leader was nowhere to be seen, their formation was in complete disarray, and even the commands of the victorious officers couldn't salvage their dire position.

They were, after all, just a bandit army. When things went smoothly, their morale soared, but faced with setbacks, they crumbled into a scattered mess.

Initially, only a few of the perceptive Black Scarves began to flee. Gradually, the panic spread across the entire battlefield.

Less than an hour after the gates of Thousand Streams had opened, the Black Scarf Army was utterly defeated.

Under Lu Ye's command, the cavalry squad had already dispersed, forming formation units to chase and kill on all sides.

Before long, all the cavalry who came with Lu Ye collapsed onto the ground. Even with the help of the array disc, such prolonged combat had exhausted all their strength.

Only Lu Ye remained, single-handedly continuing the slaughter, stopping only after dispatching the last Black Scarf in his line of sight.

The sound of hooves came from behind, and Lu Ye turned to see a squad rapidly approaching. After watching for a while, he was somewhat disappointed. They were not the Black Scarf bandit army, but seemed to be people from Thousand Streams City.

Leading them was a middle-aged man, the one who had called out to him from the city gate tower earlier. If he guessed correctly, it must be the City Lord of Thousand Streams City.

A moment later, they faced each other. Xie Li looked at the blood-covered Lu Ye with appreciation. The young man's previous valiant and heroic demeanor floated to mind. Such a fierce general, if he could bring him under his command, he needn't fear any Black or White Scarves in the future. Clasp his fists, he saluted, "I am Xie Li, City Lord of Thousand Streams City. Thank you, young brother, for your righteous assistance."

Lu Ye nodded, returning the salute from atop his horse, "City Lord, you are too kind. The Black Scarf bandit scourge angers both heaven and men. Everyone should punish them."

Xie Li's eyes lit up, "Well said, young brother! This time, Thousand Streams was able to break the siege and severely defeat the bandit army, thanks to the cavalry you led. I invite you to return to the city with me so that I may fulfill my duty as a host."

Lu Ye did not refuse. Having fought to this point, he had indeed expended a great deal and needed some time to rest properly.

Immediately, he returned towards Thousand Streams City along with Xie Li.

Not long after their journey began, a rider quickly approached and whispered something to Xie Li. Upon hearing it, Xie Li's expression turned joyful, and he couldn't help but burst into laughter.

The reason being, the Black Scarf leader, who was injured by Lu Ye, had been captured alive by those from Thousand Streams and was currently being escorted back.

A short while later, at the city gate, Lu Ye and Xie Li had just arrived when the Black Scarf leader was brought in, bound hand and foot.

Lu Ye glanced at him, feeling that this fellow was truly disappointing. Despite being given a chance to escape, he was captured anyway.

The Black Scarf leader, covered in wounds, was a pitiful sight. But his expression remained defiant.

However, when his gaze met Lu Ye's, he couldn't help but shiver. Among everyone present, he held disdain for the rest, but Lu Ye was different. He knew this was not someone he could provoke; the earlier forceful spear thrust had left too big a shadow in his psyche.

Lu Ye stepped forward, looking down at him from a height, and asked, "Will your underlings come to rescue you?"

The Black Scarf leader hesitated and weakly replied, "We are just like-minded individuals gathered together. Now that I am defeated and captured, the Black Scarves no longer exist. Who would come to save me?"

"Then you... are of no use," Lu Ye sighed. If more Black Scarves had attempted a rescue, this leader might still hold some value.

As he spoke, he thrust his spear forward, piercing the man's chest.

A glimmer flew from the leader's body, darting into the Asura Authority Token at Lu Ye's waist. Then the body too dissipated into scattered glimmers of light.

Everything around froze in that instant, then shattered into nothingness.

Lu Ye's vision blurred, and the exhaustion that had filled him vanished in an instant. That indescribable weakness disappeared completely at this moment.

The suppression of the Asura Field... was gone! He had regained his original strength.

Thick domain energy enveloped his body as he turned his head to look around. All around, cultivators' figures suddenly appeared or disappeared.

The training was over!

Lu Ye oriented himself and immediately headed towards the cave residence.

Soon after, he was seated cross-legged inside the cave, examining his Asura Authority Token.

Then his eyes widened...

Even though he knew he would gain a significant amount of Asura Seals this time, the number still exceeded his expectations.

A total of more than fourteen million Asura Seals!

Before entering this training scene, he only had over seven million Asura Seals. Now, this number had doubled.

All in all, he had spent less than a month there.

Gaining over seven million Asura Seals in a month's time is an efficiency even Sun Blaze couldn't achieve!

Despite the training scene being quite unfriendly to him, as if targeting him everywhere, with his cultivation suppressed, his Boulder Mountain Saber couldn't be drawn, and his storage ring couldn't be opened, the rewards were still high.

If he could experience such training scenes a few more times, he might soon gather enough Asura Seals to exchange for the treasures he needed.

But Lu Ye vaguely felt that such opportunities might not come again.

This training definitely had something abnormal or wrong! He had never heard of anyone gaining a massive amount of Asura Seals just by randomly killing enemies in a training scene.

Moreover, it was something not good to ask others about.

With more than fourteen million Asura Seals, he could exchange for almost ten pieces of the most expensive Zixia ice crystal in the treasure vault, which would significantly enhance his Magic Source.

Yet, to polish the Magic Source to Perfection, there was still some way to go.

Lu Ye didn't rush to exchange; he planned to save up to twenty million Asura Seals for a one-time exchange.

After admiring the massive number of his Asura Seals, Lu Ye sent a message: "I'm back."

Previously, during the training, he received a message from Arbuluo, who, knowing Lu Ye was training, told him to contact after returning.

These guys, along with Gu Sheng, definitely had something to discuss with him!

The last time the three gathered, Lu Ye noticed it, but since the others didn't bring it up, he naturally didn't ask.

Primarily, they hadn't interacted much and weren't very familiar with each other.

Now it seemed they had made some decision and wanted to have a good talk with him.

After the message was sent, there was no response, and Lu Ye didn't know what Arbuluo was up to, so he decided to visit the Reward Hall to see if there were any suitable tasks for him to accept, like previous detoxification tasks, which were effortless, effective, and profitable.

With countless cultivators training in the Asura Field, they were bound to face various accidents, and those poisoned were not few. Those capable of resolving the issues wouldn't post rewards, but those incapable had to seek external force this way.

Indeed, Lu Ye received two reward tasks again; the rewards weren't much, totaling less than one hundred thousand Asura Seals combined.

After completing those tasks, Arbuluo responded.

Lu Ye straightforwardly reported the number of his small secret room and then quietly waited.

These small secret rooms within the Reward Hall were generally used for task exchanges between both parties, but cultivators could also use them to discuss some matters, as long as the time wasn't too lengthy.

Not long after, two figures walked in one after another, precisely Arbuluo and Gu Sheng.

They looked the same as before, but it seemed Gu Sheng's injuries had healed. Lu Ye didn't know what injuries he had, only that he encountered a strong enemy during the latest training.

Both took their seats.

"What's up?" Lu Ye looked at Arbuluo and asked.

"Hehe..." Arbuluo sneered, his voice carrying a hint of slyness, while he laughed and glanced at Gu Sheng.

Gu Sheng frowned and said, "Since it's decided, there's no need to hide it." Pausing, he added, "Also, don't laugh at me like that, or I'll want to hit you!"

Arbuluo's expression turned serious, staring at Lu Ye, he said, "Brother, want to make a fortune?"

"What kind of fortune?" Lu Ye suddenly felt a bit wary. Gu Sheng seemed alright, with delicate features and seemingly well-educated like a lady, but Arbuluo gave a somewhat unreliable impression, so hearing his question, Lu Ye couldn't help but recall some unpleasant things.

Seeming to perceive his thoughts, Arbuluo said, "Don't worry, we won't do anything against the rules of the Asura Field. That's a path to death!"

Lu Ye thought it made sense; in the Asura Field, no underhanded act would have a good end. For something both Arbuluo and Gu Sheng cared about, it was certainly no small matter.

"Tell me about it."

Chapter 1949: An 80 Million Asset Path

"A financial opportunity worth eighty million Asura Seals—is Brother Lu interested?" Arbuluo whispered, looking sneaky.

"Eighty million!" Lu Ye's expression was one of shock.

Currently, he has a substantial amount of Asura Seals, but it's only over fourteen million, far from eighty million.

Though he knew that anything Arbuluo and Gu Sheng considered important would be significant, he never imagined it would be to such an extent!

If he could gather eighty million Asura Seals in a short time, even if split three ways, he would still have over twenty million. Coupled with what he currently has, it might be enough to refine his Magic Source, or at least not too far off.

However, this number...

Lu Ye was intrigued, quickly picked up his Asura Authority Token, and checked the reward board using it. Upon seeing the bounty for the top-ranked reward, he realized he wasn't mistaken.

He glanced at Arbuluo, then Gu Sheng: "Brother Luo, the financial route you're referring to, is it..." He gestured upward.

Arbuluo nodded solemnly and slowly, "Indeed, Brother Lu is clever and insightful; it's exactly what you're thinking."

The top-ranked task on the reward board is to provide any concrete information regarding the specific location of the Asura Field—bounty: eighty million Asura Seals!

Lu Ye had noticed this task the first time he came to the Reward Hall; it's undoubtedly a task released by a veteran Sun Blaze and represents a massive force behind it.

Throughout history, countless experts have come to the Asura Field seeking traces of this stellar space supreme treasure. This reward has possibly been up for unknown years, yet unfulfilled, showing its difficulty.

Lu Ye was perplexed: "Do you have clues on this matter?"

Arbuluo looked at Gu Sheng: "This guy does!"

Lu Ye was even more puzzled: "In that case, why not just accept the bounty?" He then exclaimed, "Could it be you both are tempted by the supreme treasure?"

That is a stellar space supreme treasure, not something Moon Jade could easily touch. Numerous Sun Blaze strive to find it in the Asura Field, and obtaining it might be fatal for Moon Jade, rendering it useless even if obtained.

Gu Sheng shook his head: "Tempted, yes, but only that much. Moreover..." He seemed unable to explain further, saying, "The bounty requires solid intelligence to obtain the reward. Mere clues are useless, and what we need to do is dig up this concrete intelligence!"

Lu Ye agreed and asked, "Brother Gu, having originated from Yellow Dragon World, there should be Sun Blaze experts in the Asura Field. Why not inform them?"

Gu Sheng replied, "Because it's a training scene that only Moon Jade can enter—Sun Blaze cannot!"

Lu Ye understood; if Gu Sheng informed those Sun Blaze, they would be powerless.

"So, what do you need from me?"

Gu Sheng had already teamed up with Arbuluo. These two were the top rankers in the Moon Jade Ranking, their alliance arguably unstoppable at the Moon Jade level. Now involving Lu Ye—this implies danger...

"I visited that scene alone for training before; the prior injuries stemmed from it. Details aside, at the end, there's a remarkably ancient and powerful cover armor that I cannot defeat alone, even with Radish Head, likely not!"

Radish Head... Lu Ye glanced at Arbuluo, who wore a look of disdain.

"But if Brother Lu joins forces, with our combined strength, we might secure it!"

If Lu Ye hadn't emerged suddenly, Gu Sheng would have had to try with Arbuluo alone. But Lu Ye's presence gave him new possibilities.

With their trio—a physique cultivator, a magic cultivator, and a combat cultivator—against that cover armor, unless it's at the Sun Blaze level, it wouldn't stand a chance!

By overcoming that cover armor, they could explore the final secret, which Gu Sheng's intelligence indicated is definitely related to the Asura Field.

By then, not only could they fulfill the bounty task and acquire copious Asura Seals, they could also report the intelligence to the domain's Sun Blaze.

Listening to Gu Sheng's narration, Lu Ye pondered in silence.

He could sense Arbuluo and Gu Sheng meant no harm, so forming an alliance wasn't problematic, but some questions needed asking.

"Is the scenario Brother Gu entered repeatedly accessible?"

The Asura Field's training scenarios, some are one-time entries, while very few are repeatable; Lu Ye knew this, hence the query.

"Not entirely; I can enter two more times!" Gu Sheng replied, "And I brought a thing out, with which I can bring at most two companions inside."

Lu Ye understood: entry frequency and participant limit explained why Gu Sheng approached him. Without such limits, given Yellow Dragon World's resources, he wouldn't seek external collaboration.

"If successful, how do we share the Asura Seals?" Lu Ye asked. Since it's a collaboration, all details must be discussed upfront, despite Arbuluo and Gu Sheng seeming trustworthy, caution is wise.

"I'll take half, the remaining half will be split between you two," Gu Sheng proposed.

Lu Ye nodded: "Reasonable!"

Gu Sheng discovered the training scene; they both need Gu Sheng to escort them in. Their task is merely to jointly battle that powerful cover armor, so the sharing is fair.

Half of fifty percent equates to twenty million Asura Seals—a considerable sum.

"Brother Lu, do you mean..." Gu Sheng looked at him. Although he could infer from Lu Ye's tone, he still needed a definitive answer.

"Let's do it!" Lu Ye nodded. Such a good opportunity came knocking, and naturally, there was no reason to pass it up.

Gu Sheng smiled, truly captivatingly...

He reached out and instantly, an Asura Pact appeared before him: "Though a gentleman's word is as solid as a bond, and I am willing to trust Brother Lu, it's still wise to sign a contract for clarity's sake."

Especially since Lu Ye wasn't very familiar with them, no one truly knew each other's nature. In such circumstances, an Asura Pact was quite necessary.

"No problem." Lu Ye readily agreed and examined the various clauses on the Asura Pact. It seemed to be something Gu Sheng had already drafted. There weren't too many constraints, only stipulations to work sincerely as a team during the experience, without any secret schemes, along with the profit-sharing ratio after success.

Gu Sheng and Arbuluo had already left their marks on it.

Lu Ye also left his mark, and the Asura Pact immediately transformed into a glow, enveloping the three of them.

The Talent Tree reacted immediately, large swaths of grey mist rising up.

After the agreement, Gu Sheng and Arbuluo stood up together. Gu Sheng looked at Lu Ye and said, "Brother Lu has just returned from training, so take a few days to rest and make some preparations. Get in touch with us when you're ready to train again."

Arbuluo and Gu Sheng left, and after a brief contemplation, Lu Ye didn't linger there but quickly returned to his own cave residence.

There wasn't much he needed to prepare, as he carried all his cultivation and recovery resources with him, and didn't need healing either.

He just needed to wait a few days until this calm period passed to enter the practice scene again. By then, the Talent Tree should be able to burn away the power of the Asura Pact.

However, there was one item that caught his attention.

He reached into his arms and took out the Dice of Fate, placing it in front of him.

This baby fist-sized item was quite eerie. Lu Ye clearly remembered that before his last experience, he deliberately left this item in his cave residence.

Yet somehow, it entered the practice scene with him. Even though rolling a "great fortune" helped him smoothly, there's no guarantee it wouldn't roll a "great misfortune" next time.

Especially since the next practice scene was a place where even Gu Sheng was severely injured. So, despite his reluctance, he had to deal with it promptly!

With a thought, Lu Ye grabbed the Dice of Fate and entered the Asura Treasure Vault, quickly arriving at a specific place.

Then he placed the Dice of Fate on a column in front of him.

Some treasures acquired by cultivators in the Asura Field could be reclaimed by the Asura Treasure Vault for corresponding Asura Seal rewards.

Most cultivators used this method to assess the value of treasures they couldn't identify.

Of course, not everything would be reclaimed by the treasure vault, only certain special items with value were eligible for reclamation.

Previously, Lu Ye had used this method to learn about the specific information on the Dice of Fate, but he hadn't intended to reclaim it at that time.

Now, as the Dice of Fate was placed, Lu Ye immediately had the same information as last time appear in his mind.

Dice of Fate: Affiliated treasure of a supreme treasure, brings fortune and averts misfortune, altering destiny, all in a single roll.

He silently said "reclaim" in his mind.

But there was no response.

This thing... can't be reclaimed?

He frowned, looked around to see no one was paying attention, and quietly took out the sword gourd, retrieving the Dice of Fate, and placed the sword gourd instead.

Sword gourd: An affiliated treasure of the Creation Vine's supreme treasure, capable of devouring treasures to transform Sword Qi. The higher the quality of the devoured treasures, the stronger the Sword Qi. If all seven gourds are gathered, the wonders of creation may be revealed.

Even in the information received, whether the sword gourd could be reclaimed was unknown, and Lu Ye didn't dare to try. If it were reclaimed, the sword gourd would be lost.

Only at this moment did he know that there are indeed seven affiliated treasures of the Creation Vine!

The pill gourd was currently with him, now under the control of the Second Senior Sister for alchemy, and he had only heard of a wind gourd, the remaining four were completely unheard of.

As for the wonders of creation after gathering all seven gourds, Lu Ye had no idea.

Retrieving the sword gourd, Lu Ye frowned deeply.

He initially wanted to have the Asura Field reclaim the Dice of Fate, but it turned out this plan wouldn't work. From the looks of it, this thing was bound to him? What kind of logic was this?

Helpless, he could only let it go. After all, it's an affiliated treasure of a supreme treasure, it might unexpectedly come in handy. And if it does roll something bad... he still has the Talent Tree to burn it away.

Chapter 1950: I Need an Explanation

A few days later, three figures gathered in Lu Ye's cave residence. Besides him, the other two were Arbuluo and Gu Sheng, who had arrived after receiving his message.

"Are we all set?" Gu Sheng asked.

Arbuluo clenched his fists and clapped them in front of his chest, "Let's go! After this, we'll live in luxury."

Gu Sheng looked at Lu Ye, who slightly nodded.

"Then let's move." With that, he took the lead and soared into the sky, with Lu Ye and Arbuluo flanking him.

Moments later, he suddenly produced an item in his hand, a square piece resembling a crystal shard. It was the item Gu Sheng had obtained from that special training scenario. It didn't have any other purpose except one - it allowed Gu Sheng to re-enter that training scenario.

According to him, using this item, he still had two opportunities to enter that scenario again.

As the mana was activated, the crystal shard suddenly erupted with blinding light, enveloping all three of them, and then their figures vanished without a trace.

Boundless darkness engulfed the surroundings, and in that instant, Lu Ye lost his sense of Gu Sheng and Arbuluo's presence.

One breath, two breaths, three breaths...

He frowned, annoyed by the familiar sensation.

Ever since arriving in this Asura Field, the first time he entered the training scenario was normal, but every time after that, it's been peculiar like this.

Originally, he thought there would be no problem this time. After all, he wasn't alone this time; he had teamed up with Gu Sheng and Arbuluo, led by that special item, to enter a specific training scenario.

But given the current situation, it was evidently similar to the previous incidents, leaving him feeling quite helpless.

"Brother Luo?" Lu Ye attempted to call out.

"Brother Gu?"

There was no response at all, and even when he extended his Mental Consciousness, he couldn't detect a hint of any presence or vitality. In this boundless darkness, it was as if he was the only one.

During his last training, he waited in this darkness for two full days before breaking free. How long would it take this time?

Were Gu Sheng and Arbuluo facing the same situation?

Having experienced this before, Lu Ye wasn't panicked and decided to simply wait in place.

Moments later, he was struck by a sensation and turned his head in a certain direction, feeling like he'd heard something akin to a wind sound.

But upon listening closer, it wasn't like the wind at all. Instead, it seemed like a subtle, ethereal call...

And it was calling his name!

Lu Ye frowned, secretly mobilizing his mana to shield himself and placed a hand on the hilt of the Boulder Mountain Saber. After a moment of thought, he walked towards the direction the voice was coming from.

This encounter felt somewhat different from the previous ones.

After a short distance, the voice suddenly became much clearer, and a surreal gate of light mysteriously appeared ahead, with a fluid-like, constantly shifting shadow standing behind it.

With some effort, he could discern that the shadow was a female figure, seemingly waving at him, and the call was indeed coming from that direction.

Lu Ye grew even more cautious. In such an eerie place and encountering such a bizarre event, no one would dare to be careless.

Stopping ten meters from the gate of light, the female figure outside the gate became more distinct, and the voice considerably clearer.

"This way, Senior Brother Lu, come over, don't be afraid, it's me."

Lu Ye carefully identified the voice, finding it vaguely familiar, though he couldn't immediately place where he'd heard it before.

He looked back at the way he came, seeing nothing but endless darkness.

Steeling himself, he confidently strode forward, convinced that the Asura Field's training posed no lethal dangers, eager to see what on earth was ahead!

Apparently sensing his approach, the female figure took several steps back from the gate of light.

At the final meter, Lu Ye dashed forward, crossing the gate of light in an instant. As a metallic ringing echoed, the Boulder Mountain Saber leapt out of its sheath, aiming a vicious slash forward.

The next moment, Lu Ye's movement halted, with the Boulder Mountain Saber, reinforced by the Divine Sharp Edge, positioned right at the neck of a slender, white-skinned woman. Her expression of eagerness and anticipation turned into shock; after a brief hesitation, a sense of relief emerged from the brink of death, forcing a frail smile toward Lu Ye, "Senior Brother..."

Lu Ye gazed at her in bewilderment, unsure whether he was experiencing some illusion, "Junior Sister Duoduo?"

The woman who had been calling him from the other side of the gate of light turned out to be Aqiduo, whom he had encountered during his training in Zhongyou World!

It was precisely because he timely saw her face clearly that Lu Ye abruptly stopped his hand. Otherwise, if this saber truly chopped down, Aqiduo might have perished.

No way! Lu Ye suddenly realized something.

"What did you call me?" He asked.

Aqiduo was just a shadow, a trace left by a cultivator who came to practice countless years ago, condensed under the operation of the Asura Field's rules. She could appear in the Zhongyou World, transform into a person from Yunluo Sacred Land, and appear in other training scenarios with other identities.

Having left the scenario in the Zhongyou World and entered this strange place, even if he did meet Aqiduo again, she shouldn't recognize him!

"Senior Brother... I am Duoduo!" Aqiduo looked at Lu Ye sincerely, "Earlier I was injured, and you helped to heal me, as well as regarding my bloodline."

Is she really that Aqiduo?

Lu Ye's thoughts stirred: "Is this the Zhongyou World?"

Has he returned?

"This is not the Zhongyou World." Aqiduo replied, glancing at the Boulder Mountain Saber at her neck: "Senior Brother, can you please remove the saber first?"

"Apologies!" Lu Ye hastily withdrew the Boulder Mountain Saber.

Only then did Aqiduo shrink her neck and touched the place that was previously cold, seeing no trace of injury. Even though she knew Lu Ye was very strong, such strength was hard to truly understand without direct confrontation.

She was also Moon Jade, yet when Lu Ye's saber chopped down, she had no time to react.

Lu Ye was currently surveying his surroundings, here was a valley full of birds and flowers, not far away stood a small wooden house. The entire valley was adorned with colorful flowers, forming a sea of flowers. Looking back, the previous gate of light had no trace at all.

All the experiences just now were not an illusion. On the opposite side of the gate of light, the one calling him and guiding him here was undoubtedly Aqiduo.

Combining what he saw and heard, Lu Ye gradually realized one thing: Aqiduo... shouldn't be a shadow but like him, a cultivator of this era!

He turned his head and looked at Aqiduo: "I need an explanation!"

Even if Aqiduo truly is a cultivator of this era, why is she able to guide him to such a place? At this moment, he should be in that special scenario with Gu Sheng and Arbuluo.

Aqiduo nodded: "Of course, I will explain everything to Senior Brother."

A moment later, outside the small wooden house, at a round table, the two sat opposite each other. Aqiduo was brewing fragrant tea, the rich tea aroma wafting everywhere, her movements elegant.

Soon, the tea was ready, Aqiduo poured a cup for Lu Ye, then looked at him and began: "Senior Brother, let me tell you a story first."

Lu Ye was silent.

Aqiduo began to speak: "Long, long ago, there was a very powerful race that controlled a stellar space supreme treasure. With it as the foundation, they were able to continuously develop and expand, as time passed, their power spread outward, conquering one star system after another. According to the records, at their peak, hundreds of star systems around them were their territories."

"If no accident had occurred, they might have conquered more star systems, continuously expanding their territory this way. But suddenly, a world-shaking war broke out, this race encountered an

extremely powerful enemy, and the two sides fought for countless years; the final outcome was that this race repelled the external enemies. Though they paid a huge price, they ultimately won the final victory!"

"They thought they had won..." Aqiduo's expression suddenly turned somewhat strange, as if filled with sorrow or regret, "but actually, those powerful enemies had planted an unsolvable hidden danger within this race. All the tribe members were afflicted with a kind of Curse Poison, a strange thing inherited through bloodline. This Curse Poison typically posed no danger and didn't affect cultivation life. The only impact it had was on the members' lifespan! From then on, the new generation of tribe members had a maximum lifespan of only two hundred years. As the older generation of strong men gradually died out, and the new generation couldn't succeed them, the decline and weakening of the race became inevitable."

"Many years ago, on the eve of the last strong person's death in the tribe, he foresaw the race's final fate, so he made some arrangements. He made the external world think that the race was completely extinct, after all, during their outward conquests, they had made quite a few enemies. Thus, they relied on the stellar space supreme treasure's power, always hiding in a secret place, continuing to multiply generation after generation, merely surviving."

"Until today!"

The story concluded, not complex.

Lu Ye was shocked at heart. Before setting out from the Nine Provinces, he had learned some information about the Asura Field and its related matters from Su Yuqing. At this moment, what Aqiduo told him matched with various things, and in the Zhongyou World, he helped Aqiduo burn away the Bloodline Curse Poison inside her...

Things are obvious now.

"You are from the Heavenly Shura Clan?"

Aqiduo stood up, her black hair suddenly turned silver, even her eyes flashed with silver light, her entire temperament instantly transformed from gentle to boundlessly cold and beautiful. She solemnly clasped her fists: "Sky Asura Aqiduo, pays respects to Senior Brother Lu!"

Even though he had speculated and Aqiduo upon admitting herself, Lu Ye still examined her in surprise.

He had asked Su Yuqing about what the Heavenly Shura Clan looked like, but Su Yuqing didn't know, as the time of the Heavenly Shura Clan's extinction was too distant, leaving no information verifiable.

Only now did he realize that outwardly, the Heavenly Shura Clan appeared not very different from the human race, and moreover, this race was not extinct, always hiding in a secret place.

As for Aqiduo's silver hair and silver eyes, Lu Ye didn't know if this was a singular case or a common trait.

No wonder... in the Zhongyou World, Lu Ye noticed Aqiduo's outstanding talent. He thought she was a shadow left by some extraordinary person from a certain era in the Asura Field, yet he didn't expect her to actually be from the Heavenly Shura Clan.