

Humanity 301

Chapter 301 A Prophecy Fulfilled

Nearly nine months had passed, and Lu Yiye of the Righteous Blood Sect was once again thrust into the limelight—this time, the situation was far more serious than the last battle at Golden Light Peak.

The battle over Golden Light Peak had been triggered by an imminent evaluation of sects' grades. Ten Thousand Demons Ridge intended to completely disqualify the Righteous Blood Sect. Therefore, many strong cultivators from the inner and core circles disregarded the rules and their own reputations, forcefully stepping forth to eliminate Lu Ye from the outer circle.

However, under the successive protection of various sects in the Haotian Alliance, Lu Ye had repeatedly escaped catastrophe. Eventually, both sides confronted each other at Golden Light Peak, where Lu Ye proposed—and many Spirit Stream Ranking powerhouses witnessed—the signing of the Heaven's Augury Pact, leading to a battle on the stage.

In that battle, Lu Ye, at Level 5 cultivation, fought forty-three bouts without a single defeat, severely bruising the face of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge.

No matter how it was put, Lu Ye was still a Level 5 cultivator at the time. Even if he could kill an enemy beyond his own level and demonstrated his immense potential, it was merely his individual strength.

The strength of an individual ultimately has its limits. Although Ten Thousand Demons Ridge was somewhat wary of him, true powerhouses would not care about him unless Lu Ye could safely grow to a level where he posed a threat to them.

This world never lacks geniuses, and countless geniuses die young.

But this time was different; the incident he triggered now had nothing to do with personal strength or weakness. The capability he demonstrated was enough to pose a huge threat to any force.

Initially, news came from Fenghua Courtyard that Lu Yiye, by some means, had stealthily infiltrated their encampment, which was enveloped by a protective array. Shortly thereafter, he seized the Great Array

Jade Cluster from the hands of the Deputy Governor at Fenghua Courtyard, breached the major array, leading to the loss of the encampment and severe losses.

When the news spread, it caused an uproar throughout the Nine Provinces and the Spirit Stream battlefield.

All cultivators who heard this news, regardless of their cultivation strength or status, were astounded.

A junior cultivator of the Spirit Stream Realm managed to infiltrate a sect's protective array?

Indeed, some had accomplished this, but all were strong cultivators skilled in the Array Path, possessing profound mastery in arrays.

A mere Spirit Stream Realm cultivator, what merit and capability did he have?

Initially, many believed that Fenghua Courtyard had exaggerated, or that the Governor who lost the encampment was shirking responsibility.

However, a second piece of news soon emerged—this time it was from Illuminating Sun Mountain, not far from Fenghua Courtyard.

Illuminating Sun Mountain's encampment was also breached!

This occurred less than a day after Fenghua Courtyard's encampment was breached.

According to surviving cultivators from Illuminating Sun Mountain, Lu Yiye had a miraculous method that allowed him to forcibly break a hole in a perfectly functioning protective array and invade it.

The reason Illuminating Sun Mountain's encampment was breached was because Lu Yiye employed this method, then led in ten physique cultivators to assault the formation, resulting in the death of their own Governor and the theft of the array jade cluster.

One said Lu Yiye could infiltrate an array without a sound, another said he could forcibly create a hole in an array. Although the accounts differed, this indicated one thing: Lu Yiye, a cultivator at Spirit Stream Level 8, truly had profound accomplishments in the Array Path, or more specifically, in array destruction.

Two encampments of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge were breached, all tracing back to Lu Ye. As for fellow cultivators from Surreptitious Palace and Soaring Cloud Palace, hardly anyone mentioned them.

This news initially spread within a limited scope, but in just half a day, it was known by everyone in the Nine Provinces and the entire Spirit Stream battlefield.

Because if this were true, it was truly terrifying.

All major sects' encampments on the Spirit Stream battlefield had their protective arrays, which provided cultivators with a sense of security. It was much like how mortals lock their doors at night.

But now? There was someone who could silently unlock this door or forcibly create a hole in it, then barge into your home, kill your people, steal your provisions...

This, of course, could incite panic.

If the battle at Golden Light Peak had only shown Ten Thousand Demons Ridge the immense potential in Lu Ye's growth, the consecutive breaches of Fenghua Courtyard and Soaring Cloud Palace cemented a deep wariness in them toward him.

This wariness, even Divine Sea Realm cultivators could not ignore.

Across the Nine Provinces, which respected force in the Spirit Stream battlefield doesn't have an encampment? Those encampments are filled with Spirit Stream Realm cultivators, and Lu Ye, who can easily infiltrate or create a hole in their protective arrays, is simply the nemesis of protective arrays.

If even protective arrays can no longer provide security, it's likely that all cultivators of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge will live in fear.

Once a protective array is breached, it's only a matter of time before the encampment falls.

As this matter continued to ferment, another incident was also brought to light.

A few months ago, during the Insect Plague, the encampments of Sky Fiend Hall and the Phong Clan, neighboring the Righteous Blood Sect, had also been breached, with the Phong Clan suffering disastrous casualties, nearly annihilating all cultivators of the Spirit Stream Realm.

Although these two encampments were breached mainly due to the Insect Plague, anyone could see that Lu Yiye had a hand in it.

Over the years, both Sky Fiend Hall and the Phong Clan had been fine, but coincidentally after Lu Ye arrived at the Righteous Blood Sect's encampment, both encampments lost their defenses? This was completely unreasonable.

First, the outer circle's Sky Fiend Hall and Phong Clan fell, followed by the inner circle's Fenghua Courtyard and Illuminating Sun Mountain; in just a few months, Lu Yiye had brought down four Ten Thousand Demons Ridge powers' bases.

Since ancient times, no cultivator had ever accomplished such a feat on the Spirit Stream battlefield.

At the Silver Light Island base, Governor Luo Fu and Deputy Governor Qih Shi sat opposite each other, their expressions complex.

More than two months earlier, when Lu Ye had left Silver Light Island, Qih Shi had mentioned that some Ten Thousand Demons Ridge powers might face misfortune.

His prediction had come true; just over two months later, indeed, some Ten Thousand Demons Ridge powers had experienced misfortune, and two at once.

The Ten Thousand Demons Ridge wasn't yet aware that the Sky Supporting Sect's base had also been breached by Lu Ye, although at that time, Lu Ye had borrowed the power of the quasi-flood dragon to forcibly break through the Sky Supporting Sect's protective array, a different method from this time.

If the Sky Supporting Sect is counted, the number of bases on the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge side that had been captured due to Lu Ye would now be five.

It is certain that more than two months ago, Lu Ye had not possessed such capabilities; otherwise, he would have used them that very day.

"Fellow Daoist Lu is now only at Level 8 realm," Qih Shi suddenly remarked.

Luo Fu glanced at him, "What are you trying to say, Junior Brother?"

Qih Shi said, "By the rules, Fellow Daoist Lu can move freely in the inner circle before reaching the 7th Heaven level, and even after reaching the 7th Heaven, he need not completely leave the inner circle. Given Fellow Daoist Lu's cultivation speed, it would probably take him at least a year or two to reach the 7th Heaven, right?"

Luo Fu slowly realized, "Those Ten Thousand Demons Ridge forces' governors in the inner circle, they won't be able to sleep peacefully anymore."

"Indeed," Qih Shi nodded, "but as the saying goes, 'the tree that stands out in the forest gets blown down by the wind,' so Fellow Daoist Lu must still be very careful."

"I'll contact him later," Luo Fu changed the subject, "Brother Chen Hai of the Fahua Sect sent a message a while ago, saying that in a few days we should join forces again to strike at the Cloud Mist Cult, so Junior Brother, you should start preparing early."

Qih Shi promptly nodded, "I understand."

The Cloud Mist Cult's base was also neighboring Silver Light Island, and last time when Lu Ye was there, Luo Fu had wanted to attack the Cloud Mist Cult's base, proposing to use the quasi-flood dragon again. However, after Lu Ye tried, the quasi-flood dragon had become wise and couldn't be lured out, so that plan fell through.

Unable to use the power of the quasi-flood dragon, Luo Fu however did not give up on the plan to attack the Cloud Mist Cult, so he joined hands with a nearby Alliance Sect to pressure the Cloud Mist Cult.

In the past, the Cloud Mist Cult could have cooperated with the Sky Supporting Sect, but now that the Sky Supporting Sect was as weak as a grasshopper after the autumn, barely able to jump, they had no energy to worry about the Cloud Mist Cult.

This led to the Cloud Mist Cult facing oppression from two Haotian Alliance organizations, causing great distress for their disciples.

One could say that after Lu Ye used the quasi-flood dragon to breach the Sky Supporting Sect's base, the nearby Haotian Alliance forces had one less threat to deal with and could free up more power to fight other enemies.

Not to mention Silver Light Island, but similarly, the Surreptitious Palace and Soaring Cloud Palace now had it easier; originally they had to combine efforts to confront Fenghua Courtyard and Illuminating Sun Mountain in a battle of wits and bravery. Now that Fenghua Courtyard and Illuminating Sun Mountain no longer had the capital to oppose them, the Surreptitious Palace and Soaring Cloud Palace could do much more.

The two could occasionally visit the Fenghua Courtyard and Illuminating Sun Mountain bases, or even join forces to strike at other Ten Thousand Demons Ridge powers.

The capture of bases brought not only the plundering of resources and enhancements but also various subsequent benefits.

In a nutshell, the situation in this region, previously characterized by a stalemate between two major camps, had become fluid.

The larks chirped sharply and sunlight streamed down as Lu Ye opened his eyes and slowly got up.

He hadn't slept this comfortably in a long time; waking up, he felt as if the fatigue of the past days had been swept away, leaving him refreshed and invigorated.

Yiyi, who was meditating next to him, saw him wake and brought over some water for washing his face and mouthwash.

Lu Ye freshened up a bit, picked up the amber that had been pressing on him, and tossed it aside. Then he dressed and got out of bed.

He went downstairs where breakfast had already been prepared, looking lavish and still hot, evidently the folks from the Surreptitious Palace had put in some effort.

Lu Ye didn't stand on ceremony and sat down to eat.

Yiyi sat opposite him, resting her chin in her hands, watching him eat.

Lu Ye chewed his food while checking his battlefield marking.

Waking up, his battlefield marking had accumulated a lot of information.

The capture of the two Ten Thousand Demons Ridge forces' bases had again spread his name across the Spirit Stream battlefield. This was expected, as whether he had infiltrated Fenghua Courtyard or broken through Illuminating Sun Mountain's array, many from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge had witnessed it and those who did not die naturally spread the news.

Most of the messages that arrived were from governors or deputy governors of major sects met in the Chess Sea, expressing concern for his safety and urging him to be cautious in the future, as the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge faction now recognized his unique array-breaking skills, and thus were quite wary of him.

Others were eagerly inviting him to visit their bases, clearly with ulterior motives.

Chapter 302 Please Call Out Fellow Daoist Yiyi

Second Senior Sister Shui Yuan and Fourth Senior Brother Li Baxian have both sent messages. Second Senior Sister advised him not to wander around lately and to just stay at the Surreptitious Palace residence and cultivate, her words filled with concern and worry.

Fourth Senior Brother's message had a different implication, telling him to be bold and not to hesitate, and that if anyone dared to break the rules, he would teach them a lesson himself.

There was also a message from Hua Ci. Perhaps because she had become the Deputy Governor of the Righteous Blood Sect, this woman was much more serious than before. She didn't say much in her message, only informing Lu Ye about some of the recent situations at the Righteous Blood Sect's residence and telling him to rest assured while he was away because she was taking care of everything at home.

After reading this message, Lu Ye frowned, inexplicably sensing the strange feeling of a man striving outside while a woman keeps the home.

However, considering the time, it wasn't long until Hua Ci would reach Level 8.

Once she reached Level 8, she too would need to enter the inner circle. If she left, then the Righteous Blood Sect's residence wouldn't even have a Deputy Governor. Lu Ye wondered if she had found someone to take her place.

Chen Yu definitely wouldn't be suitable, as he was likely to advance to Level 8 even earlier than her.

There were truly few remaining in the sect who could take on the responsibility; ultimately, it was a decline in talents. However, since the Righteous Blood Sect had only just begun to redevelop, this issue couldn't really be resolved.

As for where they would go to affiliate with a sect and cultivate after reaching Level 8, it was up to their own choice. Lu Ye had already paved the way; currently, there were several sects to choose from, and he believed they would receive proper care wherever they went.

Responding one by one, he kept busy for quite a while before finishing.

"What are you smiling about? You seem so happy."

Lu Ye spoke without lifting his head.

"Nothing," Yiyi shook her head.

Lu Ye sighed, "Ah, girls grow up and have their own little secrets."

"You know yet you ask," Yiyi made a face at him.

What Lu Ye didn't know was that Yiyi had always been worried that Lu Ye was growing too fast. When they first met, everyone's cultivation wasn't high, but at that time, Amber was actually stronger than Lu Ye. However, as time passed, not only did Lu Ye surpass Amber, but the gap between them was growing wider and wider.

Especially after Lu Ye left Qingyun Mountain and was on his way to the Righteous Blood Sect, initially she and Amber could still help somewhat in battles, but as Lu Ye's cultivation increased and he encountered stronger and stronger enemies, her and Amber's roles became very limited.

At most, Amber could serve as a mount, while she could only help Lu Ye scout the surroundings.

It was then that she understood there would come a day when the gap between them would be so vast that she could no longer see Lu Ye's back, and despite how much she didn't want to, they would have to separate.

This was something she didn't want to accept or even think about.

Under the influence of her mood, Amber continuously consumed elixir pills within its limits to enhance itself, but it still couldn't keep up with the pace at which Lu Ye was strengthening.

It wasn't until they returned to the Righteous Blood Sect that the situation slightly improved.

Studying magic and spells under the sect master, she managed to cultivate on her own. In this way, her and Amber's growth rate increased considerably, for they were both becoming stronger, thereby

nurturing each other in return. One could say that others cultivated alone, but Amber and Yiyi cultivated as a spirit and a tiger simultaneously, doubling the effort and doubling the joy.

In Xianyuan City, Amber's talent to transform minion spirits was a great help.

In the Soul Cleansing Pool, Yiyi was purified by the Soul Cleansing Water, experiencing an earth-shattering transformation. Moreover, she could feel that this change wasn't just a one-time burst of power; it would continue to play a role as her strength grew in the future.

When they broke through the Great Array at Illuminating Sun Mountain together with Lu Ye, both she and Amber were of great assistance. Amber's tiger roar, coupled with her large-scale magic, created the opportunity for Lu Ye to seize the Great Array Jade Cluster and also allowed people like Giant Armor to rush in on time.

Only then was she sure that she had finally caught up with Lu Ye's pace of cultivation, if only just barely.

She dare not say how it would be in the future, but at the very least, she didn't have to worry about being left far behind by Lu Ye for a while.

So, since returning from Illuminating Sun Mountain, Yiyi had been in a very happy mood.

"Oh, right, this was sent over by the Surreptitious Palace this morning." Yiyi took out another storage sack and handed it to Lu Ye.

"What's all this stuff?"

"Just Spirit Stones and elixir pills."

Conquering the two big sect residences at Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, the benefits reaped weren't just those pilfered from Heaven's Augury Pillar, but also many medicinal ingredients and various other items, including cultivators' storage sacks.

The Surreptitious Palace likely considered that it was inconvenient for Lu Ye to carry too much, so they had converted it all into Spirit Stones and elixir pills.

These two items were the hard currency of cultivation; no one would ever complain about having too many.

"Keep it," Lu Ye looked around and asked suspiciously, "Where's Giant Armor?"

"It seems like he's cultivating."

"How are his injuries?"

"I checked, it's nothing serious."

Lu Ye nodded, ate and drank his fill, left his residence, and went to the training room at the Surreptitious Palace to cultivate and read.

He had originally planned to continue moving on after he had taken over Fenghua Courtyard and the base at Illuminating Sun Mountain, but given the current situation, it seemed wise to lay low for a while and give Ten Thousand Demons Ridge a chance to cool down.

While Second Senior Sister might have been overly concerned, it was indeed not suitable for him to show himself at this time and risk provoking the powers of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge.

Moreover, after this incident, Lu Ye could almost imagine that his image would certainly spread throughout all the big sect bases in Ten Thousand Demons Ridge.

Copying an image was not difficult, there was a kind of spirit runes for that purpose, called 'image message,' and its counterpart 'audio message,' which could record sound. The former could record images, while the latter could record voices.

If the two were used together, they could produce some wonderful effects.

For example, Lu Ye had found a vividly illustrated album in Manager Yang's storage sack that, when infused with spirit force, not only brought the characters to life with astonishing and seemingly impossible actions but also emitted various strange sounds.

The album employed both 'image message' and 'audio message' spirit runes; back then, Lu Ye didn't realize its worth. Now, it seemed that the album was quite valuable, a pity that the sect master had confiscated it.

Moreover, the album might not be what he thought; the sect master had told him it was a dual cultivation technique, at the time he thought the sect master was just babbling, but now it seemed it could be true.

In the past, he was just an ordinary cultivator at the Spirit Stream Realm level, and even if he had some outstanding performances, he wasn't worth too much attention.

But now it was different, with two Ten Thousand Demons Ridge bases broken, Lu Yiye of the Righteous Blood Sect would surely become a person closely watched and heavily guarded by all the big sects at Ten Thousand Demons Ridge.

Once he was discovered at any of their bases, it would inevitably cause panic and misunderstandings.

Lu Ye had also considered buying an item that could alter his appearance from Heaven's Augury treasure vault. Although expensive, such an item could be purchased there and used to change one's appearance.

But changing his appearance alone was meaningless. What about Amber, and not to mention Giant Armor with its distinctly noticeable size? The features were too clear.

Unless Lu Ye moved alone from now on, he might be recognized by people from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge no matter where he went.

This made him somewhat worried. His original plan to take revenge in the inner circle had only just begun; was it to end so prematurely?

It was somewhat difficult to accept, but he could only console himself that the situation might not be as bad as he thought. Both the victories at Fenghua Courtyard and Illuminating Sun Mountain had elements of luck, and such incidents would not be possible if Ten Thousand Demons Ridge took specific preventive measures.

The cultivators of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge were not fools; once they understood the full situation, they should be able to see this clearly.

While Lu Ye was cultivating and reading in the training room at the Surreptitious Palace, the great hall was bustling with activity.

Guests kept arriving, and they were all governors or deputy governors from the nearby Haotian Alliance who had come in person. In less than a day, seven or eight people had gathered, obviously having heard the news.

Gu Canyang and Wey Li personally accompanied them, trying to explain with great patience, lacking the triumphant excitement they had after overtaking the two Ten Thousand Demons Ridge bases.

Lu Ye had warned them the previous night that people might come to the Surreptitious Palace to request his aid and asked Gu Canyang and Wey Li to explain on his behalf.

This wasn't some prophetic insight from Lu Ye; rather, it was based on his previous experience on Silver Light Island.

After Silver Light Island used the quasi-flood dragon to break the base of the Sky Supporting Sect, the nearby Haotian Alliance forces started to take an interest in the quasi-flood dragon, and if it hadn't become more astute, more Ten Thousand Demons Ridge powers would have been in trouble.

Therefore, once the news that Lu Ye could break protective arrays spread, it was inevitable that people would come to seek his services.

He chose not to show himself because his presence was of no use, and instead left this hot potato to the people at the Surreptitious Palace.

"Fellow Daoists, Fellow Daoists!" Gu Canyang stood up and pressed his hands down in a pacifying gesture, quelling the noisy voices around, "Gu understands why you're all here and your feelings, but you need to understand that it's not that Surreptitious Palace wants to hide Brother Yiye, it's just that Brother Yiye himself has made it clear that taking over Fenghua Courtyard and Illuminating Sun Mountain had a great deal of luck involved, and such events cannot be replicated."

"Brother Gu, when you say that, it sounds meaningless. Surreptitious Palace and Soaring Cloud Palace have followed Fellow Daoist Yiye and reaped the benefits, just asking for a bit of the leftovers is not too much, right? If Fellow Daoist Yiye has the means to break through those two sects' big arrays, naturally he can break others as well. In this world, some things only differ between zero and countless occurrences."

"That's right, Brother Gu, we've known each other for a long time, and I, Brother Niu, have nothing but good words for you. If you don't ask Fellow Daoist Yiye to come out today, I might just spill all of your secrets."

Gu Canyang's eye twitched, and with a bitter smile, he said, "Brother Niu, you can't do this."

"Then ask Fellow Daoist Yiye to come out!"

"Ask Fellow Daoist Yiye to come out!"

The great hall rang with the shouts of the governors and deputy governors, and those who had just arrived, still unaware of the full situation, joined in the uproar, causing great headaches for Gu Canyang and Wey Li.

Chapter 303 Zhao Li

No cultivator from the Spirit Stream Realm had ever been as celebrated as Lu Ye; after Fenghua Courtyard and Illuminating Sun Mountain had their bases breached, Lu Ye instantly became the apple of every big sect's eye. Achieving such an accomplishment at Spirit Stream Level 8 was unprecedented.

Who wouldn't want to breach their neighboring base's big array and then subdue their long-standing neighbors on the ground? Unfortunately, there had been no means to break the arrays until now.

Now there was!

All the big sects of the Haotian Alliance naturally flocked to him.

Gu Canyang raised his hand again in a pacifying gesture, "Gentlemen, please calm down and listen to what I have to say."

As the crowd's attention turned to him, Gu Canyang said, "You have all come from afar, and it would be remiss of me today if I did not provide a proper explanation. I mentioned earlier that taking over the Fenghua Courtyard and Illuminating Sun Mountain bases involved a great deal of luck—it is true, not a fabrication. What you do not know is that we managed to take over the Fenghua Courtyard mainly because Madam Moon Charm never imagined someone could infiltrate the base undetected..."

As Gu Canyang explained, the crowd's mood gradually stabilized, and during this moment, Wey Li promptly had tea served.

Following this, Gu Canyang began discussing the situation regarding the taking over of Illuminating Sun Mountain's base.

A moment later, when he finished, Gu Canyang said, "The methods Brother Yiye used to take over these two bases were different, but indeed, they cannot be used again. You are all wise, and I believe you understand this point."

The previously vociferous governors and deputy governors all fell into contemplation; if conditions were indeed as Gu Canyang had described, then these methods could not be replicated.

The fall of Fenghua Courtyard was due to Moon Charm's negligence.

It wasn't fair to say she was careless, as this situation would have caught anyone unprepared. Previously, no one had ever managed to sneak into an enemy sect's big array quietly, and even if they did, facing a governor like Moon Charm, they wouldn't necessarily have a chance to seize the Great Array Jade Cluster.

Lu Ye managed it—within two strikes, not only did he sever one of Moon Charm's arms, he also seized the moment to snatch the Great Array Jade Cluster, allowing the forces from Surreptitious Palace and Soaring Cloud Palace to break through the protective array and enter the base.

As for the situation at Illuminating Sun Mountain, there's even less to say. After Moon Charm sent out the message, Illuminating Sun Mountain was on high alert against Lu Ye, leaving him no chance to infiltrate and forcing him to change his method of breaking the array.

The ultimate success was also due to the scant number of cultivators left in Illuminating Sun Mountain—just over a hundred, whom Lu Ye, along with ten physique cultivators, overwhelmed in their assault.

If there had been even a few dozen more cultivators stationed at Illuminating Sun Mountain, the situation would have been entirely different. Then, even if Lu Ye could lead the likes of Giant Armor into the fray, he would have only been surrounded and killed.

This intelligence was not a secret; surely the side from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge had already understood the situation through Fenghua Courtyard and Illuminating Sun Mountain. Thus, with targeted arrangements such as setting up alerting Arrays within the bases or dispatching more cultivators to remain, Lu Ye's methods would become useless.

There was a long silence in the great hall.

After a substantial pause, the governor with the surname Niu finally said, "So you're saying that we came here for nothing?"

Gu Canyang said, "Brother Yiye mentioned that when his cultivation and Array Path skills improve further in the future, there might still be things he can do, but for now, he indeed has no means."

Although everyone was somewhat disappointed, they also knew that Gu Canyang was speaking the truth.

While Lu Ye's methods were brilliant, they were also easy to anticipate and defend against—as long as enough manpower remained at the bases, even his unique ability to destroy arrays would be useless.

"That might actually be a good thing," said one lean cultivator suddenly.

"What do you mean by that, Brother Zhao?"

Cultivator Zhao said, "Originally, with Fellow Daoist Ye possessing such abilities, he would have been greatly feared by the side of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge. If he wished to operate in the Spirit Stream battlefield in the future, he would likely face many targeted attempts. But now, seeing that his methods can be easily defended against, the threat he poses to Ten Thousand Demons Ridge has greatly reduced, thus making Fellow Daoist Ye's situation safer."

Upon hearing this, everyone thought his reasoning was sound.

Had Lu Ye's methods been truly indefensible, Ten Thousand Demons Ridge would undoubtedly be extremely anxious, possibly acting as they did before, disregarding rules and attacking willfully, and if that were to attract the attention of the Level 8 cultivators from the Core Circle on the Spirit Stream Ranking, Lu Ye certainly wouldn't be able to withstand them.

Now it was different; Ten Thousand Demons Ridge would still have fears, but they were unlikely to act recklessly.

"Both the Surreptitious Palace and Soaring Cloud Palace really got lucky!" some remarked enviously, lamenting that Lu Yiye hadn't visited their sect headquarters before. If he had, then Surreptitious Palace and Soaring Cloud Palace wouldn't have had the advantage.

"Your concession is accepted, your concession is accepted!" Gu Canyang laughed heartily. Upon reflection, Surreptitious Palace really was fortunate. If not for Lu Ye, he and Jik Yan and others would have already died in Xianyuan City, and none of the subsequent developments would have happened.

Since the previous methods of breaking the arrays couldn't be repeated, there was no further reason for everyone to stay, and they began to take their leave one after another.

Gu Canyang and Wey Li, of course, saw them off warmly.

It wasn't until every governor and deputy governor had departed that Gu Anyang finally let out a slight sigh of relief.

Returning to the great hall, he sat opposite Wei Li to discuss the next steps.

With the bases of Fenghua Courtyard and Illuminating Sun Mountain breached, the former still had roughly three hundred cultivators alive, but the latter was in worse shape, with only about two hundred. And both groups would certainly need to rebuild their bases.

Surreptitious Palace and Soaring Cloud Palace could hardly agree to that; fully eliminating these two enemy sect forces was impossible, but continuing to suppress them, preventing them from recovering their vital energy too soon, was feasible, as long as Surreptitious Palace and Soaring Cloud Palace worked together to maintain the pressure on these two bases from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge. This would make it very difficult for them to turn the tide.

With this development, the Surreptitious Palace and the Soaring Cloud Palace could arbitrarily develop themselves and even pull some manpower to cooperate with nearby Haotian Alliance sects to attack more forces from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge.

However, exactly how to proceed would need to be adapted according to the situation, and conclusions could not be hastily made.

While they were in the midst of discussing, Gu Anyang suddenly felt something, checked his own battlefield marking, and then sent out a message.

"Zhao Li has come back," Gu Anyang looked at Wei Li. "Hasn't he given up yet?"

The Zhao Li he mentioned was one of the governors who had left not long ago, returning for reasons unknown.

Wei Li pondered briefly and said, "Brother Zhao is meticulous in his thoughts. We have already said everything that needed to be said; I don't think he would trouble us anymore."

"Then why has he come back?"

"Remember, Brother Zhao's backing is the Tianyan Sect, which stands on its own in the Nine Provinces."

Gu Canyang thought for a moment, then realized, "I see, this guy is cunning. He said nothing when there were many people around, now he sneaks back by himself. He probably wants to hog it all."

Wey Li smiled wryly, "Maybe, maybe not, but if Brother Zhao speaks up, Brother Yiye might not refuse."

At that point, he closed his mouth, as he had already sensed Zhao Li's presence.

"Brother Gu, Brother Wey," Zhao Li stepped in.

Gu Canyang pretended to be casual, "Brother Zhao, did you leave something behind?"

Zhao Li smiled, "Not at all, I just forgot to mention something to Brother Gu earlier and thought of it only halfway back." His expression turned solemn, "Earlier, I said that after things were cleared up with Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, Fellow Daoist Yiye's situation would be relatively safer. But I thought about it carefully, and that was just one possibility."

"There's another possibility?"

"Another possibility, of course, is that Ten Thousand Demons Ridge would put all its effort and disregard rules and face to target Fellow Daoist Yiye," Zhao Li said seriously. "Fellow Daoist Yiye, now a cultivator of Spirit Stream Level 8, already possesses such capabilities. Although it's simple to prepare defenses now, as his cultivation and mastery of the Array Path deepen, it'll become harder to guard against. Ten Thousand Demons Ridge might want to nip problems in the bud. If so, not only is Fellow Daoist Yiye's situation worrisome, but the Surreptitious Palace's situation could be perilous as well."

Gu Canyang was startled, surprised that it had somehow come around to involve the Surreptitious Palace.

"Fellow Daoist Yiye is currently residing in the Surreptitious Palace, which is not a secret. Ten Thousand Demons Ridge must also be aware of this. If they want to eradicate Fellow Daoist Yiye completely, then surely in the next few days, they will gather troops from their nearby residences and come to attack the Surreptitious Palace's residence!"

Gu Canyang's expression grew somber, "Brother Zhao, how likely do you think this is?"

Zhao Li slowly shook his head, "Hard to say, this is just my speculation. That's why I am thinking of staying here for a while to observe, rather than returning to my residence immediately. This way, if Ten Thousand Demons Ridge really takes big action, Tianyan Sect can also come to help in time. Of course, if nothing happens, it just proves I was wrong and that would be nothing but a false alarm."

"Then thanks to you, Brother Zhao."

"It's my duty. However, I think what Brother Gu needs to do now is to quickly inform the Soaring Cloud Palace and the nearby Alliance Sects to be ready to come to the rescue at any time. After all, they are closer."

"You make a good point." Gu Canyang nodded solemnly.

"Then I'll take my leave." Zhao Li clasped his hands together and bowed.

"Junior Brother Wey, please show Brother Zhao to the guest quarters," Gu Canyang turned to look at Wey Li.

Wey Li nodded and led Zhao Li to the area where guests resided.

A moment later, Wey Li returned, finding Gu Canyang seated in a chair, deep in thought. Wey Li walked to the side, poured himself a cup of tea, and took a sip before saying, "What are you thinking about, Senior Brother?"

"I'm thinking about Zhao Li. He twisted and turned so much he nearly got me caught up in it."

"Huh?" Wey Li looked at him, not understanding.

Gu Canyang smiled slightly, "If I'm not mistaken, did he specifically request to be neighbors with Brother Yiye?"

The guest quarters area wasn't small, consisting of separate pavilions. Currently, only Lu Ye stayed there with Giant Armor. It was Wey Li's job to sort accommodation; however, if a guest specifically requested something, Wey Li wouldn't refuse.

"Right," Wey Li responded, "On the way, Brother Zhao asked about Brother Yiye's residence and chose the pavilion next to him."

Gu Canyang gritted his teeth, "Just as I thought."

"You mean..."

"Can't you see? This guy came back to poach people."

Wey Li was not a fool, just overwhelmed with trivial matters today that left him somewhat confused. His realization came immediately after Gu Canyang enlightened him, "So, what Brother Zhao previously said... was he exaggerating the danger?"

Chapter 304 Hundred Arrays Pagoda

"It's not entirely that," Gu Canyang said with his hands crossed on his lap, his eyes reflecting deep thought. "I wouldn't have thought of it if he hadn't mentioned it, but now, our sect really needs to be more cautious. I've already sent messages to several nearby Alliance Sects to be careful—it's never wrong to be cautious. However, the chances of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge making a move against our sect headquarters are slim, not to mention whether they can breakthrough our defenses, and even if they could, so what? Couldn't we still run away if we can't beat them? Hence, it's impossible for Ten Thousand Demons to try to deal with Brother Yiye by attacking our sect."

Wey Li couldn't help but smile bitterly, "Then Brother Zhao also said that if there was a situation, they could send their people to help in time."

"If he hadn't mentioned that, I wouldn't have realized something was amiss. Tianyan Sect is far from here; what help could they possibly provide? He was able to come here quickly because he happened to be nearby for other matters. By the time his clan's people could provide help, it would be too late."

"This Brother Zhao... If there's something to say, why not say it clearly? What's the need for all this beating around the bush?"

"That's why he's here to poach people. He isn't sure whether Brother Yiye is affiliated with our sect, so it would be inappropriate to ask abruptly. If he can communicate well with Brother Yiye in private, then the situation would be different. I suspect Brother Yiye wouldn't be able to refuse his invitation either."

"This guy," Wey Li said with a mix of laughter and helplessness, "I've long heard that Zhao Li of Tianyan Sect is full of schemes. Now it seems his reputation is well deserved. Brother, should we...?"

"No need," Gu Canyang waved his hand, "Brother Yiye never mentioned his intention to cultivate at our sect from the beginning. He's more likely just passing through, and our sect already owes him a lot of favors. If Zhao Li really manages to recruit him, then that's his capability. Setting that aside, we still have to stay on guard here. We should send more people out to monitor the movements in all directions. If Ten Thousand Demons Ridge truly launches a big attack, we'll be able to respond promptly."

"Yes!"

...

Recently, Giant Armor found a good place to be—the training room of Surreptitious Palace.

In the past, when he followed Sima Yang, he barely even entered the grounds of other people's sects, and never experienced the feeling of cultivating under such a high concentration of nature's spiritual energy. Ever since Lu Ye took him there once, he became extremely obsessed with the place. Apart from returning to eat his fill every night, he was almost never seen during the day.

Giant Armor was a person capable of settling down and enduring, something that even Lu Ye couldn't compare with.

It wasn't surprising when you thought about it; if he wasn't patient, he wouldn't have followed Sima Yang for so long. The extent of Sima Yang's exploitation was something no one could bear.

But remembering that Sima Yang led him on the path of cultivation, Giant Armor never complained about how Sima Yang treated him no matter what.

The cultivators from Fenghua Courtyard who killed Sima Yang had long since died in Xianyuan City. Even the grounds of Fenghua Courtyard had been taken over by Lu Ye's tactics. With Sima Yang's great vengeance avenged, he would surely rest in peace if he knew about it.

In the attic, Lu Ye and Zhao Li sat opposite each other, engrossed in conversation. They discussed matters related to the Array Path.

A few days ago, the two met "by chance" and gradually became acquainted. However, since Lu Ye spent much of his time in the training room, they hadn't spoken much overall.

It wasn't until today that Lu Ye learned Zhao Li was also cultivating the Array Path and his interest was piqued, so he pulled Zhao Li into a deep discussion.

What he learned from Madam Yun was primarily about the Path of Spirit Runes, and his contact with the Array Path mainly relied on the books he brought from Madam Yun's, making him self-taught. Of course, it was mainly because the Array Path is a branch of the Path of Spirit Runes.

Although he now had some insights, Lu Ye wasn't sure how proficient he was on the Array Path since he lacked a point of comparison.

The more Lu Ye and Zhao Li talked, the better they connected, completely unaware of the cold sweat gradually forming on Zhao Li's forehead.

At this moment, Zhao Li was inwardly wailing. Lu Ye's ability to sneak into or break through someone else's protective arrays using special techniques showed his significant proficiency in the Array Path.

But through this exchange and discussion, Zhao Li realized that Lu Ye's talent for the Array Path was high, yet oddly skewed.

The Array Path has two directions: array setup and array destruction. Generally, these two aspects complement each other—those who understand array setup can surely break an array, and vice versa.

However, Zhao Li found that Lu Ye's cultivation on the Array Path was somewhat lopsided...

Simply put, Lu Ye was flawless in array destruction, but when it came to array setup, he seemed somewhat raw.

During their exchange and discussion, it wasn't just talk; they each set up arrays and challenged the other to break them.

Now, no matter what array Zhao Li set up, Lu Ye could break it within a few breaths. Although Zhao Li's proficiency in the Array Path wasn't particularly high, and his arrays weren't extremely exquisite, they shouldn't have been broken so quickly. This was a huge blow to Zhao Li, making him wonder if all the years he spent learning were in vain.

Luckily, the arrays set up by Lu Ye weren't that impressive either, and with some effort, Zhao Li was still able to break them, which gave him some confidence back.

Sure, the arrays Lu Ye set up weren't great, but the process of setting up those arrays shocked Zhao Li. Lu Ye directly mobilized spirit force to construct a Formation in an extremely short amount of time, without the use of any array setup tools whatsoever.

A thought is born, the grand array is completed; this kind of technique he had only witnessed on the Great Elder of his sect. But what is the cultivation of the Great Elder, and what is the cultivation of Lu Yiye?

For cultivators of the Spirit Stream Realm like them who want to set up arrays, it is necessary to use some tools, the most common being small array banners or array bases. Each array banner and array base has different characteristics, and only by utilizing these banners and bases, after spending some time and energy, can they successfully set up a formation.

So now Zhao Li wanted to understand one thing.

"Brother Yiye, who did you learn the stuff about arrays from?"

Lu Ye thought of Madam Yun. Although Madam Yun had only taught him things about the Path of Spirit Runes, since array cultivation is a branch of the Path of Spirit Runes, it wouldn't be wrong to say that he learned from Madam Yun.

But Madam Yun had expressly cautioned him before, he must never mention her to anyone.

"There are some ancient tomes about arrays in the Righteous Blood Sect, Brother Zhao should have also heard that I once received the legacy of a spirit runes master, and a spirit runes master has some connection with the Path of Arrays, so when I have nothing else to do, I would take out some tomes and read them."

"Brother Yiye, did you teach yourself?" Zhao Li's eyes twitched.

Without anyone teaching, yet to achieve such accomplishments through self-study, what if he had had a good teacher? He began to feel afraid to imagine.

Old people in his sect always said that there will always be peerless geniuses in the world that ordinary people can't match, but he never took it seriously. In his opinion, even if those so-called peerless geniuses were stronger than him, they couldn't be that much stronger; after all, Zhao Li was also a genius.

But now it seemed that he was the one being arrogant and ignorant.

However, he finally understood why the performance of Lu Ye in the Array Path was so unusual, being able to easily destroy arrays, yet the arrays he set up seemed clumsy, and yet the method of array setup was somewhat shocking.

What shock Zhao Li even more was that Lu Yiye, who had taught himself, actually used some special array destruction techniques to break the protective array of others.

"Brother Yiye, have you ever heard of the Hundred Arrays Pagoda?"

"What is that?" Lu Ye's eyebrows raised, although he had never heard of it, just by the name he could tell it was related to formations.

"You could say it's a treasure passed down from the previous era."

The so-called previous era was a time before the Spirit Stream battlefield came into existence.

Lu Ye knew a bit about the Nine Provinces, so naturally, he was aware of the concept of eras.

He had originally thought that a world like the Nine Provinces, with its many cultivation sects and countless strong cultivators, must have a very ancient history.

But in reality, it's not so simple; the situation was a bit more complicated than he thought.

To put it simply, no records exist about what the Nine Provinces were like before the Spirit Stream battlefield appeared. All historical records only describe the events after the appearance of the Spirit Stream battlefield, which seems to be about two to three thousand years ago. Since then, the Nine Provinces have been divided into two major factions: the Haotian Alliance and the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge.

But it can be certain that before the Spirit Stream battlefield appeared, the Nine Provinces were also a thriving cultivation world, because within the Nine Provinces there are many things that clearly do not belong to this era, such as ruins and ancient legacies that frequently emerge in the Spirit Stream battlefield.

It's a pity that no records about this aspect have been found, so the era before the Spirit Stream battlefield is generally referred to as the previous era.

The existing records and materials only go back about two to three thousand years, which makes no sense at all. For the turnover rate of cultivators, two to three thousand years is not long; cultivators of the Divine Sea Realm, if they encounter no accidents, typically have lifespans of around a thousand years, those of the True Lake Realm about five hundred years, the Cloud River Realm about two hundred years, and as for the Spirit Stream Realm... cultivators of this level are like leeks, cropping up one after another, endless.

Of course, these numbers are only theoretical; cultivators often fight fiercely and suffer grievous injuries, which certainly affects their lifespan.

So now, the cultivation world of the Nine Provinces generally believes that something earth-shattering must have happened in the cultivation world of the previous era, and this event was powerful enough to sweep across the entire Nine Provinces; otherwise, it makes no sense that the history of the Nine Provinces is only documented up to two to three thousand years ago.

What Zhao Li was talking about, the Hundred Arrays Pagoda, must be a relic of the previous era.

"The Hundred Arrays Pagoda has a total of one hundred levels, each level has different formations, and each level is more difficult than the last. Each time you break through a level when you enter, you will receive a reward from Heaven's Augury, and those rewards are all about array cultivation. There is a saying among array cultivators, that those who have not broken through the Hundred Arrays Pagoda are not considered true array cultivators. According to our current classification of array cultivators' accomplishments, those who can break through the first ten levels are basically considered to have entered the threshold of the Array Path and can barely be counted as a qualified array cultivator. Those who can break through twenty levels are considered to have mastered the Array Path, and if you can break through thirty-three levels, you can claim the title of master. If you can break through sixty-six levels, then you are a grandmaster of the Array Path..."

"So, what if someone breaks through a hundred levels?"

"No one has tried it yet." Zhao Li said this with a hint of regret in his eyes, "Because right now, the Hundred Arrays Pagoda is incomplete, there are only sixty-six levels."

Chapter 305 Going to the Appointment

...

The Hundred Arrays Pagoda was not only incomplete, it was also divided into three parts. One part is at the Tianyan Sect headquarters, which is in the Nine Provinces, another part is within the Cloud River battlefield—a place accessible only by those in the Cloud River Realm. The situation there is quite different from the Spirit Stream battlefield; sects don't have any permanent stations inside it. As for the last part, its whereabouts are unknown.

This is a constant pain for all array cultivators in the Nine Provinces, since conquering the Hundred Arrays Pagoda can bring immense benefits to array cultivators. Those top-notch array cultivators from the Nine Provinces had once gained immensely from the Pagoda.

Why this object became divided into three is unknown to anyone. Some have speculated that it was severed by an extremely powerful being using immense force.

Even the strongest cultivators of the Divine Sea Realm from the Nine Provinces dare not claim they can destroy the Hundred Arrays Pagoda now. The Pagoda can almost be considered an extraordinary treasure, surpassing the level of a spirit treasure.

"Brother Yiye, if you wish to cultivate the Array Path, I suggest you go to the sect headquarters to challenge the Hundred Arrays Pagoda. It will surely be of great benefit to you," Zhao Li said.

Just as Gu Canyang had suspected before, Zhao Li's return was indeed with the intention of recruitment. He didn't believe that Lu Ye could remain indifferent to the profound foundation of the Tianyan Sect in the Array Path.

However, after interacting with Lu Ye, he truly felt that Lu Ye should visit the Hundred Arrays Pagoda. The Pagoda is very peculiar, and those with greater talent in the Array Path can derive even more benefits from it.

Of course, as long as Lu Ye was willing to go to the Hundred Arrays Pagoda, then Zhao Li's purpose would be achieved.

In fact, Lu Ye really found it hard to resist such temptation. Through his actions at Fenghua Courtyard and Illuminating Sun Mountain previously, he had realized his shortcomings.

Considering the current situation, his proficiency in the Array Path was still lacking. The idea of sneaking into the enemy's protective array using his unique skills was now out of the question. The previous lesson from Fenghua Courtyard ensured that the stations of the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge would be on high alert, leaving no opportunity for him to exploit.

There were also many drawbacks to opening a hole on the opponent's big array. The success of his last attempt involved a lot of luck, and opened holes would quickly be repaired, preventing many people from rushing in at once, or else Lu Ye wouldn't have only brought ten physique cultivators.

If he wanted to break arrays more effectively, he had two options. The first was to quickly improve his cultivation. With the Insight Spirit Runes, an advantage that other array cultivators couldn't easily obtain, he could easily identify the flaws of an array. As long as his cultivation was strong enough, one strike would suffice to break any array, eliminating the need for additional effort.

The saying 'sheer force can subdue cunning' is exactly the point; there is nothing in this world that cannot be broken with absolute force. If one strike isn't enough, then two!

Of course, thinking about this was still premature. He had tried before, but with insufficient strength. Hence, if he wanted to break arrays, he had to improve his mastery of the Array Path.

Learning on his own, his progress was indeed not slow, but to reach the goal he had set for himself, he was still far off. Even if he returned to the Righteous Blood Sect to ask Madam Yun for guidance, his wish might not be fulfilled.

While Madam Yun is an outstanding spirit runes master, a person's energy is limited, and her skills in the Array Path might not be very advanced.

If the Hundred Arrays Pagoda is as mystical as Zhao Li has said, then it is definitely worth challenging.

Lu Ye took out his ten-part map to locate the Tianyan Sect's station and found it was still some distance away; even with weapon control-flying, it would take several days to reach.

"Brother Zhao, I am truly grateful for your kind invitation, but I still have some matters to attend to. How about you go back to your station first, and I'll bother you later after I've finished handling my affairs?" Lu Ye suggested.

Zhao Li was overjoyed and stood up to say, "That sounds excellent. Then I'll wait for Brother Yiye's news," as he found his way out.

Lu Ye personally escorted him out.

Shortly after, Zhao Li found Wey Li, who was on duty, and took his leave.

Having achieved his goal, there was no need for him to stay any longer.

Back in the pavilion, Yiyi appeared, puzzled, "Lu Ye, what else do we have to deal with?"

She hadn't noticed Lu Ye being preoccupied with anything urgent in recent days.

"Nothing much," Lu Ye shook his head.

"Then why did you tell him that... Oh, I get it. You didn't want to refuse him outright, so it was an excuse," Yiyi realized.

"It's not quite like that," Lu Ye chuckled, "but given the stir I've caused previously, I am afraid we might encounter some troubles when we leave this place. If Brother Zhao were to accompany us, he would surely get dragged into it. It's better for him to go ahead first."

"I see, you have given this a lot of thought," Yiyi understood, "So when we leave here, will we really encounter trouble?"

"Who knows," Lu Ye replied.

It was an unpredictable matter, but it was best to be cautious in advance.

A few days went by, and Lu Ye found Gu Canyang to bid him farewell.

Gu Canyang tried to persuade him to stay a little longer, but seeing that Lu Ye's mind was made up, he said no more. Despite his regret, he had long realized that Lu Ye was just passing through and not here to pursue his cultivation.

...

He was actually somewhat envious of Lu Ye in that regard. Not being tied to one place, traveling all over, one would certainly encounter more dangers, but knowledge and experience would also increase accordingly. Envious as he was, if it were up to him to do the same, he simply couldn't manage it.

Gu Canyang watched as Lu Ye left with Giant Armor before returning to his own quarters.

In the sky, the light from a Spiritual Artifact streaked past. Lu Ye sat cross-legged upon it, with Giant Armor in front of him.

This Flying Spirit Artifact was not the small boat he had obtained from Yuan Guang. He had tried it before and found that flying with his Level 8 cultivation was still somewhat strenuous, mainly because his spirit force endurance was not sufficient. Therefore, when traveling before, Lu Ye would generally ride Amber.

In doing so, he could save spirit force and simultaneously cultivate.

The Spiritual Artifact belonged to Giant Armor. Previously, in order to help Giant Armor accumulate enough merit, Lu Ye had given him many Spiritual Artifacts, including quite a few Flying Spirit Artifacts, from which Giant Armor had chosen one he liked to keep.

This was the advantage of having Giant Armor travel with him; with him operating the weapon control-flying, they could save a lot of time on the road. If he rode Amber to the Tianyan Sect quarters, it would take at least half a month.

With Giant Armor operating the flight, it would take only three to four days to arrive.

Moreover, because Giant Armor had something similar to a "demonic pill" inside him that stored a large amount of spirit force, if necessary, he could continuously operate the weapon control-flying without stopping and didn't need to rest at all.

But considering that doing so would place a heavy burden on Giant Armor and physical strength would still be depleted, it was better to rest after flying for half a day before continuing the journey.

At the same time as Lu Ye and Giant Armor were flying away, five miles from the Surreptitious Palace headquarters, in a concealed spot, a pair of eyes strained their Ocular Power to observe. Recognizing Lu Ye's identity, they immediately sent out a message.

Once confirmed by the recipient, the message continued to spread. It went from one to ten, ten to a hundred, and soon enough, many attentive individuals were aware that Lu Yiye from the Righteous Blood Sect had left the Surreptitious Palace headquarters, his destination unknown.

Zhao Li's previous worries were not unfounded. After Fenghua Courtyard and Illuminating Sun Mountain headquarters were breached, even though the various forces of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge had come to understand the details, they still couldn't let Lu Ye continue to grow.

Eight or nine months ago, Lu Ye was just a Level 5 junior cultivator, but now he had reached Level 8! His growth rate was a bit too fast.

If they left him unattended, it would be even harder to deal with him once his cultivation advanced further. Compared to his increasing power, Ten Thousand Demons Ridge was more worried about his progress in the Array Path.

At the moment, Lu Ye already had special techniques for array destruction. Who knew how much further he would advance in the Array Path in the future? If they let him continue like this, even those from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge hiding in their quarters would feel no safety.

Therefore, these days, the various forces of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge had already come to a consensus to eliminate Lu Yiye from the Righteous Blood Sect as soon as possible to prevent future troubles. As a result, Lu Ye's image had been distributed for relevant personnel to memorize his appearance.

Silently, the entire Ten Thousand Demons Ridge began to coordinate their actions.

This time, they did not plan to make too much noise; the battle at Golden Light Peak was a lesson from the past.

Therefore, while Lu Ye was at the Surreptitious Palace, Ten Thousand Demons Ridge did not act, because attacking the palace was meaningless. They could not ensure the definite killing of that Lu Yiye. Even if they took over the palace, Lu Yiye could still use the Heaven's Augury Pillar to return to the Nine Provinces and evade them.

To kill him, opportunities would be in the wilderness!

The scattered informants played their role; every so often, Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators would report Lu Ye's movements. Because so many were mobilized and scattered in different positions, it was difficult for Lu Ye to escape surveillance from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, no matter where he went. Even if they lost track of him briefly, someone would soon spot them flying.

The only slightly frustrating thing for Ten Thousand Demons Ridge was that Lu Ye's movements were completely unpredictable, heading east for a while, then west, and occasionally circling around a few times.

This was clearly his way of guarding against being tracked, but it was meaningless given that almost every force within the inner circle of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge had agreed on this. As long as he showed up, his movements would be exposed, and all the circling would be futile.

Aboard Giant Armor's Flying Spirit Artifact, Lu Ye's eyelids were slightly lowered.

Although unaware of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge's plans, ever since he left the Surreptitious Palace quarters, he had an indistinct feeling of being watched.

That's why he had Giant Armor constantly change directions, but it seemed to be of no use now.

In the past, it would have been impossible for him to notice this, but the advantage of having a strong psyche was that he could sense some abnormalities through the unknown.

Unable to shake off the enemy's surveillance, there were only two possibilities: either someone was constantly following nearby or there were many keeping watch over his movements.

It seemed the situation was more complex than expected.

Checking his own spiritual orifice, he had reached the 165th orifice. To the Level 9 180th orifice, there were only fifteen more.

If he had a sufficiently ample cultivation environment, Lu Ye would be able to open fifteen more orifices in less than a month. Then, he would be able to follow the guidelines of the Heaven Rank technique, the Great Sun Glazed Glass Method, which had cost more than five thousand merits to acquire, to open subsequent orifices. He was very much looking forward to this technique.

Chapter 306 Veteran Level 9

Lu Ye's initial plan was to wait until he reached Level 9 before leaving the base of the Surreptitious Palace, also taking the opportunity to lie low.

But the Hundred Arrays Pagoda mentioned by Zhao Li was too tempting, and he couldn't hold back.

Having enemies lurking in the shadows, Lu Ye was not afraid, as long as the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge acted within the generally accepted rules, they really couldn't do anything to him.

What he feared was that Ten Thousand Demons Ridge might take desperate actions.

It wasn't until dusk that the vague feeling of being spied on finally disappeared.

No matter how meticulously Ten Thousand Demons Ridge set their arrangements, it was impossible for them to monitor him at all times; there were instances when they would lose track of him.

Lu Ye commanded the Giant Armor to descend from the fleeing light and flew into a forest.

After starting a bonfire, Giant Armor took out several pieces of beast meat from his storage sack, gave one piece to Amber, and then grilled the rest over the fire.

He went about these tasks with practiced ease, clearly having done this often while following Sima Yang.

Soon, sizzling hot oil and the aroma of the meat filled the air, and Giant Armor even pulled out some spices and salt from somewhere, sprinkling them over the meat.

The smell immediately became more intense.

Before the beast meat was fully cooked, Giant Armor began to devour it eagerly, but not before he gave Lu Ye a piece as well.

Lu Ye wasn't particular, and ate heartily with him.

This way of eating meat heartily undoubtedly pleased Giant Armor greatly, and over these days, his relationship with Lu Ye had grown much closer.

Lu Ye discovered a problem: apart from Yiyi, it seemed that everyone else in his group was a foodie.

He and Amber didn't need mention, they were total elixir pill consumers, currently using up forty to fifty pills a day.

Giant Armor didn't used to take elixir pills much, because Sima Yang wouldn't give them to him. His current level of cultivation was all achieved through meditating and absorbing Spiritual Energy on his own.

Now that he was following Lu Ye, Lu Ye certainly wasn't as stingy as Sima Yang, and provided plenty of elixir pills. Giant Armor began to freely consume them, although he didn't use too many because consuming too many pills would affect the purity of his spirit force.

After a satisfying meal for two people and one tiger, Lu Ye took out the Scale Armor, absorbed a blood vein from it himself, and then allowed Amber and the Giant Armor to each absorb one as well.

Previously, he wouldn't dare to do this; every time, he would place the Scale Armor in the Spirit Gathering Array during his training session in the training room, letting the blood Qi vaporize and absorb it slowly.

But as his cultivation advanced and his soul power increased, consuming it directly was not an issue anymore.

Amber was the same; since returning from Xianyuan City, absorbing the blood veins in the Scale Armor no longer affected him harshly as before, which showed that the enhancements in soul power brought many unexpected benefits.

Lu Ye estimated that if he were to enter the Mirage Realm again now, the aftereffects would not be as severe as before. Previously, after each emergence from the Mirage Realm, he would suffer from splitting headaches.

However, recently, he was so engrossed in studying the Array Path that he hadn't gone to the Mirage Realm to temper himself.

After putting out the bonfire, Giant Armor sat down to cultivate, while Lu Ye, holding a book, studied by the moonlight. Amber lay next to him, already snoring softly.

Athin figure stealthily approached from a hundred paces away, almost completely merging with the surroundings; his trail was unseen and even his breath and vitality were blocked by some mysterious force, leaking nothing. His body was extremely light, even stepping on leaves wouldn't make a sound.

His speed was not slow, almost the speed of a person walking normally, obviously very confident in his own concealing abilities.

Previously, Ten Thousand Demons Ridge lost track of Lu Ye's whereabouts, knowing only that he disappeared nearby without knowing the exact location. Now, many people from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge were secretly searching, all of them spectral cultivators, as only they were most suited for this job.

Hidden in the darkness, the spectral cultivator eyed the young figure ahead, and even his long-stilled heart couldn't help but ripple with excitement.

Because if he could kill this young man named Lu Yiye, then he might have a chance to reach Cloud River!

Last time, to get Righteous Blood Sect excluded, Ten Thousand Demons Ridge and other big sects jointly issued an extremely generous bounty, which was enough for any cultivator to enjoy for a lifetime. This time, although the bounty was not as substantial, it was enough for him to buy hundreds of barrier-breaking pills. With so many pills, he could open the subsequent spiritual orifices and fulfill the requirements to ascend to Cloud River.

He had waited for this day for a full thirty years!

Within the Spirit Stream Realm, there exists a very special group known as the old Level 9 cultivators!

This term is neither derogatory nor commendatory; it is just an apt description.

Not every cultivator in the Spirit Stream Realm is qualified to ascend to Cloud River. Opening spiritual orifices later becomes increasingly difficult, and everyone reaches their limit.

Out of 360 spiritual orifices in the human body, only 10 percent of those in the Spirit Stream Realm can open all the orifices, and these individuals are undoubtedly the most talented amongst cultivators.

The remaining ninety percent don't have a way to advance to Cloud River? Naturally, there is.

Once a cultivator reaches Level 9, as long as they acquire a Heaven Rank technique and subsequently open up to 240 spiritual orifices, switching their original cultivation technique to the corresponding Heaven Rank technique, they can choose to advance to Cloud River.

In other words, to advance to Cloud River, a cultivator needs to have opened at least 240 spiritual orifices, and no fewer.

However, inevitably, many people are unable to open that many spiritual orifices. Some reach their personal limit after opening just over 200 orifices, like this skinny spectral cultivator, who has only managed to open 223 orifices, still seventeen short of the minimum requirement to advance to Cloud River.

And he has been stuck at the Spirit Stream Level 9 for thirty years.

Those whose cultivation has stagnated at Spirit Stream Level 9 for many years, unable to open further spiritual orifices to advance to Cloud River, are what are known as veteran Level 9 cultivators.

They are a very special group within the Spirit Stream realm.

The strength of these people cannot often be defined simply by Level 9, as almost every one of them can display power beyond their level.

Many sects have such individuals, and if you see aged cultivators in the Spirit Stream battlefield, they are generally these so-called veteran Level 9 cultivators.

Cultivation stagnant and unable to continue cultivating, they look for ways to enhance their own strength, so these veteran Level 9 cultivators often possess intriguing methods not available to ordinary cultivators.

Take this spectral cultivator, for example, setting aside everything else, his Path of Concealment has almost reached a transcendent state—even those spectral cultivators in the Core Circle who have switched to Heaven Rank techniques mostly can't match him.

Righteous Blood Sect's Lu Yiye specializes in battling beyond his level. Atop the Golden Light Peak, he had once demonstrated this talent. During the previous assault on the Fenghua Courtyard compound, he managed to sever Moon Charm's arm with his Level 8 cultivation in two slashes, taking the Great Array Jade Cluster.

This news was not a secret, and the spectral cultivator had naturally heard of it.

However, battling beyond one's level is not exclusive to Lu Ye. Many geniuses in the cultivation world possess this ability, and the spectral cultivator group thrives on fighting stronger opponents, as they seldom engage in direct combat. Given the right opportunity, not to mention battling beyond one's level, even two or three levels higher would not be an issue.

Thus, this spectral cultivator, who had stealthily approached, had a very simple task at the moment, which was to sneak up behind Lu Ye, suddenly strike, deliver a fatal blow, and bring back his head for a reward!

The physique cultivator named Giant Armor might be a bit of trouble. Once he revealed his presence, that big fellow would definitely attack him, but he was confident in his speed. As long as he could block Giant Armor's first strike, he would be able to escape effortlessly.

It was risky, but compared to the rewards, what did this risk count for? To advance to Cloud River, it was a necessary risk to take.

The plan was perfect.

However, when he got within three meters of Lu Ye, his figure suddenly stiffened.

Because in that instant, Lu Ye, who was reading a book, suddenly closed the pages and looked up in his direction. Their eyes met, and the spectral cultivator felt a chill from head to toe.

Had he been discovered?

Impossible!

How could an insignificant Level 8 combat cultivator possibly detect his presence? He was fully confident in his concealment skills, having once assassinated a 7th Heaven level cultivator with these skills. He still remembered the incredulous look of disbelief in that man's eyes as he died.

If even a 7th Heaven level couldn't detect him, how could a mere Level 8?

No, he hadn't been exposed; there must be something unusual behind him that had drawn Lu Yiye's gaze.

He made that judgment because not only did Lu Yiye look up at him, but the Giant Armor sitting in meditation beside him also opened his eyes and looked his way, and even the demon beast by Lu Yiye's side had raised its head and stared blankly in his direction.

With three pairs of eyes focusing on him, the spectral cultivator felt a mountainous pressure...

If he had been a typical young man, he might not have been able to withstand such pressure, but having cultivated for many years, what kind of storm hadn't he seen? Thus, even though he was taken aback, he remained unperturbed. He immensely suppressed his own aura, pushing his concealment skills to the extreme and slowly shifted a step to the side.

What horrified him happened next—the three pairs of eyes turned following his movement.

Lu Ye was particularly intrigued, propping his chin with one hand, the other hand resting on the Boulder Mountain Saber at his waist, his fingers lightly tapping the scabbard.

This completely flustered the old spectral cultivator.

Being discovered by Lu Ye might have been forgivable as maybe that man was extraordinarily gifted.

But why did Giant Armor, that beefy savage brute, have such strong perception? And what about that demon beast, why the hell? Were his decades of Netherworld spectral cultivation so easily dismissed?

An adjacent, half-extinguished bonfire crackled softly.

The spectral cultivator's figure blurred as he lunged towards Lu Ye, now three meters away, but he was met with a bright flash of saber light.

Blood splattered—the spectral cultivator's chest opened with a gory wound, nearly being cleaved in two. He rapidly pulled back, perfectly embodying the specter cultivator's essence of fleeing thousands of miles if a strike missed.

Chapter 307 Ambush

"Oh?"

Lu Ye's expression showed a hint of surprise, seemingly not expecting that his single strike hadn't killed the spectral cultivator, but after getting a clear view of his aged appearance, he realized this must be the so-called seasoned Level 9.

Indeed, his reputation was well-deserved; an ordinary Level 9 would not have been able to withstand his fully-powered strike. These long-lived seasoned Level 9s certainly had some skills.

For some reason, there were intense fluctuations of spiritual energy behind the spectral cultivator, followed by a dazzling rope descending from the sky. It was Yiyi, hidden in the darkness, casting the Spirit-Binding Lock at the old spectral cultivator. This technique wasn't taught by the sect master. When the sect master was teaching Yiyi, she hadn't been able to grasp such an advanced technique.

This was a technique that Yiyi had figured out on her own in Xianyuan City by watching the Xianyuan Guards use it, because she felt it was very suitable for capturing people.

The unsuspecting spectral cultivator realized something was amiss too late. The dazzling Spirit-Binding Lock came crashing down, binding him firmly in place.

He struggled with all his might, his spiritual energy surging wildly, and to his horror, he found that the Spirit-Binding Lock was incredibly sturdy. Although he could escape, it would take some time.

A streak of Liu Guang came at him head-on, penetrated through the eye socket, and exited from the back of his head. The old spectral cultivator instantly stiffened up.

When Yiyi dispersed the technique, the spectral cultivator's thin body thudded onto the ground.

"Let's go."

Lu Ye called out, collected the old spectral cultivator's storage sack, and Amber leaped onto his shoulder, while Giant Armor brought out his own Flying Spirit Artifact.

Moments later, a beam of fleeing light shot into the sky, extremely conspicuous against the night sky.

At the same time, several beams of light flew up from below, coming straight for them. It was obvious that they were Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators who had been searching nearby for Lu Ye's whereabouts.

"Shoot him down!" someone shouted explosively.

Before cultivators transition to cultivating a Heaven Rank technique, they generally don't engage in combat while using weapon control-flying, because they lack sufficient control over their own spiritual power, which is dangerous. Even if they are more powerful than others, they could still be shot down, and falling from a height of dozens of yards, if they can't slow down their descent, they might as well wait for death.

The four Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators who were intercepting had a numerical advantage, but they still didn't dare to fight Lu Ye in midair. After all, it was rumored that Lu Yiyi from the Righteous

Blood Sect had a wings rune tattoo that allowed him to fly, so engaging him in battle in the air would clearly be unwise.

As the voice of that man fell, beams of weapon control fleeing light came shooting toward them, reaching them in an instant.

Standing in front, Giant Armor focused on controlling his Flying Spirit Artifact, which then fluttered through the attacks like a dancing butterfly, unharmed by the onslaught.

This scene not only surprised the attacking cultivators from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge but also left Lu Ye somewhat astonished.

Despite Giant Armor's bulky and unsophisticated appearance, his control over the Flying Spirit Artifact was meticulous, something Lu Ye admitted he couldn't achieve to the same degree.

The distance between them closed rapidly. The expressions of the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators blocking the way turned to horror. Although they desperately urged their own artifacts to turn around and chase, they still couldn't catch up.

Lu Ye reached into his storage sack, took something out, and tossed it forward. Four Spiritual Artifacts flew out, each flashing with light as they were enhanced with the Move-Like-The-Wind technique.

Screams rang out, and immediately two of the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators were pierced through by the Spiritual Artifacts, their heads pointing downward as they plummeted toward the ground. From the looks of it, they were unlikely to survive.

The remaining two, although injured by the artifacts, managed to not fall, narrowly escaping death.

However, before they could catch their breath, four beams of fleeing light crossed and struck them again.

Two more screams ensued.

The four cultivators might have posed some challenge on the ground, where Lu Ye might have had to put in more effort, but in midair, it wasn't as troublesome.

Without pause, Giant Armor manipulated his Flying Spirit Artifact, streaking across the night sky, leaving behind a dazzling trail of light.

As they pressed on, the occasional Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivator who had received news in advance tried to intercept with weapon control-flying. However, unlike last time when Lu Ye had frantically fled riding on Amber, which though not slow, was not particularly fast, leading to an extremely difficult escape, this time he was flying with Giant Armor's weapon control-flying, which had much stronger mobility.

Moreover, since Ten Thousand Demons Ridge dared not make too much of a fuss for fear of provoking a backlash from the Haotian Alliance, they only dispatched Level 8-9 cultivators.

This resulted in Ten Thousand Demons Ridge not being able to form a large-scale interception.

Three to five people would come each time, usually not returning.

After several such encounters, the cultivators from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge no longer dared to act rashly.

News continued to spread outward, and through Lu Ye's movements, the cultivators from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge could roughly deduce the direction he was heading. Although they were unclear of his ultimate destination, they had already gathered forces in the distance, ready to deliver a fatal blow once Lu Ye entered their encirclement.

A day later, as Giant Armor's controlled Flight passed over a serpentine river, they were confronted by no fewer than twenty beams of light approaching head-on, fierce and imposing.

Meanwhile, beneath the great river, another twenty or so figures shot up into the sky, blocking the escape route.

In the blink of an eye, the path ahead was blocked, and the route behind was already cut off.

Without needing Lu Ye's order, Giant Armor had already commanded the Spiritual Artifact to veer to the side, but just as he had not flown far, several dozen streaks of light shot up from the hillside over there.

It must be said that Ten Thousand Demons Ridge's layout this time was very meticulous, and their judgments very accurate. They had set an ambush well in advance along Lu Ye's path, simply waiting for him to blunder into it before closing the net.

It was actually not just a matter of judgement. There were two more similar encirclements nearby. As long as Lu Ye did not deviate too far from their predictions, he was destined to fall into an ambush.

Retreating now was clearly too late, and to come down from the fleeing light was not realistic either. If they truly landed on the ground, that would be a scenario with no chance of survival.

Lu Ye's eyelids drooped slightly as he took out four Spiritual Artifacts from his storage sack and silently urged his spirit force. The four Spiritual Artifacts hovered beside him.

Yiyi revealed herself and stood behind Lu Ye.

The spirit force surged around Giant Armor, and the luster of the controlled Spiritual Artifacts suddenly accelerated, charging straight towards the front. In the current situation, if they wanted to stay alive, they could only focus on breaking through in one direction. Only then could they withstand the least pressure.

As long as the speed of Giant Armor's controlled Spiritual Artifacts was fast enough, the first two groups of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators would not be able to threaten them.

What they needed to deal with was only the group of enemies directly in front of them.

The distance between them quickly closed in, and among the opposing ranks, seven or eight magic cultivators took the lead in activating their spells. In an instant, multicolored light enveloped them from across the way.

Giant Armor's Flying Spirit Artifacts danced once more, and under the dumbfounded gaze of a group of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators, it dodged and weaved through the air, miraculously avoiding the spells' attacks in the most dangerous moments.

They had never seen someone handle Flying Spirit Artifacts this slickly before. Such control over spirit force truly made them feel inferior.

As the distance continued to shrink, the frequency of spell attacks began to increase. That's because the magic cultivators realized that their well-crafted and powerful spells couldn't do much against their opponent and thus opted for smaller, faster-cast spells.

This put Giant Armor in a difficult situation, unable to dodge all the attacks anymore. However, he was clever enough to let the spells hit him rather than the Flying Spirit Artifacts.

His thick skin and abundant blood Qi could handle being hit by a few small spells, but it was different for the Flying Spirit Artifacts. They didn't have much protective force and could possibly be destroyed after a few hits.

Yiyi also made her move, and when she did, all the opposing magic cultivators began to feel ashamed, as whether in terms of casting speed, variety of spells, or their power, Yiyi was streets ahead of them.

Although she was only one person, the spells she unleashed in a short period were no less impressive than those of three or four ordinary magic cultivators attacking together.

Their spells collided and contended in mid-air, spiritual energy causing chaos and turbulent noises that were incessant. Amid this disarray, from within the ranks of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, a combat cultivator suddenly drew a strong bow, pulling the bowstring to a nearly full moon shape, the bow and the cultivator himself gleaming with spirit light.

"Whoosh!"

The sound of the air tearing sounded as an arrow, four feet in length, almost instantly arrived in front of Giant Armor just as it was launched. This arrow was faster than all the spells, and even the might of

controlled Spiritual Artifacts couldn't compare. The sheer power of this arrow was evidently extremely formidable.

Focused on controlling his Flying Spirit Artifacts, Giant Armor had no way to avoid it and roared as he raised his arms, blocking in front of his body. At some point, his arms were adorned with a pair of pitch-black bracers. These bracers, which were clearly quality Spiritual Artifacts, exuded a sense of thickness and heaviness.

The cultivator who fired the arrow's breath was slightly disordered. An all-out shot from him clearly caused some loss, and seeing Giant Armor's movement, the corners of his mouth curved up slightly.

He had also heard of Giant Armor's renown; his full-force shot might threaten an ordinary physique cultivator but was practically useless against Giant Armor.

His arrow hadn't been aimed at Giant Armor at all.

As the light streak from the arrow was about to strike Giant Armor, it suddenly shot downward at an angle, clearly targeting Giant Armor's Flying Spirit Artifacts.

Their group's target had always been the Flying Spirit Artifacts from the start!

Just as the opponent's goal was about to be achieved, a layer of spirit rune patterns suddenly covered the area in front of the Flying Spirit Artifacts. Those spirit runes quickly formed an extremely solid defense.

Behind Giant Armor, Lu Ye had crouched down, his hand placed on the surface of the Flying Spirit Artifacts.

With his current control over his spirit force, it was still possible for Lu Ye to bolster the Flying Spirit Artifacts with Defense Spirit Runes.

Boom...

The arrow struck the Artifact, causing a huge boom and chaotic spirit force. Although it didn't completely destroy the Artifact as anticipated, the powerful impact caused the Artifact to stagger and fall towards the ground.

Giant Armor hurriedly concentrated on controlling it, managing to stabilize it after much effort.

Yet, this delay led to even more spells closing in, and that wasn't even the worst of it. The worst was that the first two groups of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators had already approached them quickly, clearly about to enter their attacking range.

Chapter 308 Big Trouble

"Charge through!" Lu Ye ordered in a low shout, directly enhancing the flying spirit artifact beneath him with Move-Like-The-Wind Spirit Runes.

A flash of light passed, and the stabilized flying spirit artifact immediately transformed into a stream of light, charging straight ahead.

The Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators in front, who had already summoned their own spiritual artifacts and were prepared to fight using weapon control, hadn't yet reacted when the enemy was already upon them.

Four streams of light flew from Lu Ye's hands, while Yiyi's magic and spells were also deployed, blocking attacks from all sides.

The expression of a Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivator blocking the front turned to extreme horror, as the enemy charged directly towards him without dodging or avoiding. Seeing that the opponent had no intention of changing direction, the cultivator couldn't help but scream in terror, "Don't come any closer!"

Giant Armor paid him no heed. Lu Ye had instructed it to charge through, so it would, even if there were a copper wall and iron barrier in front, it wouldn't even frown.

With a booming sound, the two flying spirit artifacts collided. The one from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge shattered instantly into countless pieces, and the cultivator himself was hit so hard that his chest caved in and he spat out blood, screaming as he plummeted downward.

In contrast, Giant Armor's flying spirit artifact was completely undamaged.

The moment the collision occurred, Lu Ye had reinforced his own side with Defense Spirit Runes. As for the dent in that man's chest, it came from a punch that Giant Armor had thrown.

Screams sounded again, coming from the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators who were injured by Lu Ye's weapon control and Yiyi's magic and spells.

With the opponents in front now broken through, under the boost of the Move-Like-The-Wind Spirit Runes, Giant Armor rapidly carried Lu Ye and Yiyi away into the distance.

The Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators pursued for a while but soon gave up in frustration.

The enemy was too fast! Even though they were at Level 9 of cultivation, they could only move at about half the speed that Giant Armor did with his weapon control-flying. How could they possibly catch up?

"What are you all doing? How could you let them break out so easily?" one of the hurriedly approaching Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators, his face ashen, could not help but curse.

The Ten Thousand Demons Ridge had meticulously laid plans, waiting for Lu Ye to arrive, hoping to kill him here. Yet, contrary to their desires, he had escaped, leaving them feeling utterly deflated, as if punching cotton.

"If you can do it, then you go!" replied a jittery young man with an ugly expression, "Giant Armor is as stubborn as Heaven's Augury Pillar— who can stop him?"

"That's no excuse for your failure! If one person can't stop him, what about all of you?"

"Cut the cold remarks. If Giant Armor had broken through your line, the situation would have been the same."

"Bullshit..."

"Alright, alright, everyone just stop," someone jumped in to mediate, "We all came here for Lu Yiye. Since the operation has failed, there's no need to waste our energy and morale fighting amongst ourselves and let the Haotian Alliance laugh at us."

The two arguing parties glared at each other disdainfully.

The other Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators also wore solemn expressions, having witnessed the situation themselves. Giant Armor's stubbornness was indeed excessive. Generally, no cultivator in midair combat would choose such a risky approach. Reportedly, Lu Yiye can activate spirit runes in combat and possesses the potential of a battle runes master. It seems that the spirit runes he mastered could not only enhance himself but also bolster flying spirit artifacts defensively.

This posed a considerable challenge.

Moreover, the speed at which Giant Armor flew was also extraordinarily fast. Among the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators, many were adept at weapon control-flying, but compared to Giant Armor, they were greatly overshadowed.

Suddenly, everyone realized that this Lu Yiye was somewhat beyond handling.

With so many people mobilized this time, and he even fell into the encirclement, yet they still couldn't stop him; chances like this might be hard to come by in the future.

Attacking him after he lands also seemed impractical, not to mention whether there'd be such an opportunity again, and even if there was, this fellow also had a wings rune tattoo— if he couldn't win, he would definitely fly away.

Moreover, where exactly was this guy headed? Since coming out from the area of the Surreptitious Palace, he had been continuously on the move. As for his destination, no one knew as of yet.

How to handle Lu Yiye had become a tricky issue for the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge; today's Lu Ye wasn't the same as the Level 5 junior cultivator who was once trapped on Golden Light Peak. Compared to then, Lu Ye's methods were unquestionably much richer now. Simply put, the inner circle's cultivators had no way of dealing with him effectively.

To handle him, only someone from the Core Circle would have a chance, but taking such an action would definitely lead to nasty repercussions.

Last time, Ten Thousand Demons Ridge had broken the rules, and as a result, a True Lake Realm powerhouse from the Righteous Blood Sect did not hesitate to charge into the Spirit Stream battlefield, bearing down with the Soul-Destroying Divine Lightning atop Golden Light Peak, causing blood to flow into rivers.

After the battle at Golden Light Peak ended, the sect master of the Righteous Blood Sect took things even further by personally leading an attack into Yunzhou, annihilating three Ten Thousand Demons Ridge forces. Although the arriving Ten Thousand Demons Ridge powerhouses managed to repel him later, those from the Divine Sea Realm also did not dare to retaliate recklessly, and the matter was left unresolved.

It is said that those three forces faced a drastic decline in their sect's grade during the subsequent sect evaluation, an extremely tragic outcome.

As the proverb goes, "Let the past guide the future." The protective stance of the Righteous Blood Sect left a deep impression.

This time, if they broke the rules, one couldn't know what retaliatory measures the Righteous Blood Sect might have, yet if they merely acted within the rules, there really wasn't a good way to handle Lu Yiye.

A moment of melancholy followed.

Two days later, news came that Lu Ye had arrived at the Tianyan Sect headquarters.

Only then did the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge side confirm his destination, and they immediately sensed that something big was amiss.

The reason they went to such lengths to target Lu Ye was because of the astonishing talent he had shown in array destruction before.

Although the methods he used at Fenghua Courtyard and Illuminating Sun Mountain couldn't be repeated for various reasons, and Ten Thousand Demons Ridge would not give him such opportunities again, no one dared let him continue to grow unchecked, for that would leave no one at ease in the future.

The mere thought of being able to break the protective arrays of their headquarters was bone-chilling.

But what kind of place was Tianyan Sect? It housed the first part of the Hundred Arrays Pagoda.

Moreover, many cultivators within Tianyan Sect were adept at Array Path, and although the Great Elder was only at the True Lake Level 9 in cultivation, his mastery in Array Path was admired throughout the Nine Provinces.

Out of all places, Lu Yiye chose to go to Tianyan Sect, and his purpose was self-evident.

This guy clearly was addicted to breaking arrays, knowing that he couldn't continue using his original methods, he sought to deepen his knowledge of Array Path at Tianyan Sect!

If he were successful, could the cultivators of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge still sleep at night? Perhaps the big array of their headquarters could be broken unexpectedly, followed by a swarm of Haotian Alliance cultivators charging in...

A massive sense of crisis loomed over every sect of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge like countless dark clouds, and even the strong cultivators from Divine Sea Realm realized the severity of the situation.

The moment Lu Ye set foot in the Tianyan Sect headquarters, messages from many Divine Sea Realm strong cultivators of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge flurried across the Nine Provinces, urgently deliberating on how to handle this situation.

A mere junior cultivator from Spirit Stream Level 8, through an unintentional act, had stirred up clouds and winds across Nine Provinces—an unprecedented occurrence.

As for Lu Ye himself, completely unaware of this, had encountered no further troubles after breaking out from the encirclement of nearly a hundred cultivators at Ten Thousand Demons Ridge. Accompanied by Giant Armor and Amber, he traveled all the way to the Tianyan Sect headquarters, where he was warmly received by the Deputy Governor and settled in the guest area.

He didn't meet Zhao Li, who, according to the Deputy Governor, was at the Nine Provinces sect headquarters and seemed temporarily unable to extricate himself from some matters, thus he had asked him to host Lu Ye.

Lu Ye didn't have any objections to this; when in Rome, do as the Romans do. Although he was eager to check out the Hundred Arrays Pagoda now, there was no need to rush anything. It wouldn't be too late to wait until Zhao Li had dealt with his matters.

Meanwhile, in a grand hall at the headquarters of Tianyan Sect...

Tianyan Sect Master Yooi Xiao and the Great Elder Bai Qian were seated on the left and right, respectively. The former appeared to be a forty-something middle-aged man with a dignified look. However, one could not judge a cultivator's age by appearance; often they may seem young but could have lived for hundreds of years.

As for the latter, he was a small old man with white hair and beard and a ruddy complexion.

Standing in front of them was Zhao Li, who now looked pale as if he had done something wrong, and said with a mournful face, "Sect Master, Great Elder, I didn't think too much about it. Thinking that Fellow Daoist Yiye has a talent for Array Path, I invited him to visit Tianyan Sect. If he can break through his own mastery in Array Path, it would also reflect well on our sect."

He spoke the truth, originally thinking that his plan was without faults, but it was only after being enlightened by the Sect Master and the Great Elder that he realized his grave mistake.

If it were normal times, wanting to befriend Lu Ye and invite him to visit Tianyan Sect wouldn't be a problem. Across the Nine Provinces, the sects interact closely with each other, and disciples from the Spirit Stream Realm often help each other. Moreover, Tianyan Sect and the Righteous Blood Sect share some connections.

But this time it was utterly unacceptable.

Lu Ye had just caused a big stir recently, and right now who knows how many eyes from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge were watching. Inviting Lu Ye to Tianyan Sect at such a time would definitely make the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge side anxious, fearing that he might learn something about Array Path in Tianyan Sect and thus enhance his existing mastery.

Now they could still fend off Lu Ye, but if his mastery in Array Path were to increase further, they might not be able to defend against him at all.

In such a situation, Lu Ye's entry into Tianyan Sect headquarters necessitated a response from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge.

The most likely scenario was that Ten Thousand Demons Ridge would quickly gather a large number of people and launch a strong attack on the Tianyan Sect headquarters, forcing Lu Ye to leave.

Thus, Lu Ye's visit to the Tianyan Sect headquarters at such a time was akin to putting Tianyan Sect on a fire, and if mishandled, the headquarters might even be lost.

Do not underestimate the resolve and determination of the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge side; the Haotian Alliance would not handle this situation any more leniently if it were them.

This was also the reason why the Tianyan Sect Master and the Great Elder personally intervened in this matter; otherwise, affairs concerning a few Spirit Stream Realm cultivators wouldn't normally require the involvement of these True Lake Realm seniors.

Today, having been summoned here and hearing the Great Elder's account, Zhao Li also realized the shortcomings in his considerations.

Chapter 309 Poisoning to Death

Yooi Xiao looked at Zhao Li with an expression of severe disappointment, "All you know is to play your little tricks, so short-sighted."

Being rebuked by his own sect master, Zhao Li sniffed, "Disciple has made a mistake."

The attitude of admitting his mistake was quite good.

"Disciple will immediately contact Fellow Daoist Ye and tell him not to come," Zhao Li said.

"Having already sent out the invitation, can we tell people not to come? Would the disciples of the Tianyan Sect not be seen as those who break their promises?"

Zhao Li said, "Fellow Daoist Ye is very easy to get along with. If I explain the situation to him, he should understand. After this storm passes, he can come over stealthily in the future."

"No need, he has already arrived at the station," said Yooi Xiao, waving his hand. He had already received a message from the sect disciples a moment ago, indicating that Lu Yiye from the Righteous Blood Sect had already arrived at their station and had been settled in.

"It's no problem, I will go find him now," Zhao Li said, turning to leave.

"Come back!" Yooi Xiao called out sharply.

At the same time, the little old man Bai Qian stretched out his foot to trip him. Zhao Li was so taken aback that he nearly stumbled. He quickly turned around and stood obediently.

"As disciples of the Tianyan Sect, we cannot be those who break our promises, no matter what. Once Ten Thousand Demons Ridge finds out the young man is at our headquarters, they will surely target us. If it comes to it, we'll abandon the station."

"Sect Master..."

Yooi Xiao's stern gaze softened slightly, "I know you are considering our sect. Our station's location in the Spirit Stream battlefield is not good, surrounded on three sides by Ten Thousand Demons Ridge. It has indeed been difficult to develop over the years. You have great ambition, but remember, in the future, think thrice before acting."

"Yes."

"Furthermore, our sect actually has some history with the Righteous Blood Sect. Many of our sect's strong practitioners once followed orders under someone from that sect. If it weren't for that person's care, our sect wouldn't have the status it has today, a 5th grade sect, which isn't bad."

Zhao Li didn't know exactly who the sect master was referring to, but he understood the meaning behind his words. This was to ensure he didn't bear too great a mental burden; even due to the connection with the Righteous Blood Sect, Tianyan Sect would not drive Lu Ye away.

"Go to the station now and prepare early. Our sect might be facing a calamity," Yooi Xiao waved his hand.

Zhao Li bowed and left.

After he left, Yooi Xiao sighed. Although he had made up his mind, as the moment approached, he couldn't help but feel heartache. If things turned out as he anticipated, his station would surely be lost.

"Is it very serious?" Bai Qian asked.

"I've heard some rumors," Yooi Xiao nodded, then suddenly asked, "Veteran Bai, how do you rate that Lu Yiye's talent in the Array Path?"

After a moment's contemplation, Bai Qian said, "Based on what Zhao Li said, that young man's talent is not ordinary, and he has many ingenious ideas. The only thing that confuses me right now is..."

"What is that?"

"That young man is only at the Spirit Stream Level 8 in cultivation, how did he manage to discern the critical nodes of the big array? All his methods must target the nodes to be effective. Logically, even if he has decent talent in the Array Path, without finding the nodes of the big array, it's useless. It's quite a mystery."

"Perhaps Veteran Bai could test him personally?"

"That's what I was thinking. Let's wait for his visit. When he comes, have him meet me," Bai Qian said.

At the Tianyan Sect station.

In the Lowe where Lu Ye was staying, Zhao Li arrived late. He promptly apologized, and then had his disciples quickly prepare a table for a feast, to welcome and clean Lu Ye from the dust of travel.

Although Lu Ye was keen to see the Hundred Arrays Pagoda, with the other party being so hospitable, it was difficult to refuse, so he let Zhao Li have his way.

Soon the feast was ready, Lu Ye and Giant Armor sat down, with Zhao Li accompanying them.

As an apology, Zhao Li first punished himself with three cups, and then offered a toast.

Lu Ye drank with him, and as for Giant Armor, he was already beginning to eat ravenously...

"Brother Yiye, was your journey here peaceful?" Zhao Li asked while pouring wine.

"It went smoothly enough, but..."

Lu Ye began to speak but suddenly stopped mid-sentence, frowning.

He felt something off in his body and quickly immersed his consciousness to check. On internal inspection, he saw the Talent Tree rooted within his Root Spiritual Orifice, its leaves blazing fiercely, and a gray aura continuously spreading around the tree.

Normally, this wasn't unusual.

Every time Lu Ye consumed an elixir pill, the Talent Tree would react in this way, burning up the pill poison from the pill and providing him with extremely pure spirit force.

But it was clearly abnormal for this to happen now, as he hadn't consumed any elixir pills at all.

And as he watched, the gray smoke rising from the Talent Tree was exceptionally dense, not at all like the reaction from burning pill poison.

This was the first time Lu Ye had encountered something like this.

"Brother Yiye?" Zhao Li looked at him, puzzled, not understanding why Lu Ye's expression was becoming increasingly grave.

Lu Ye raised his hand to stop Giant Armor's chopsticks and looked towards Zhao Li. After a brief analysis and hesitation, he said in a deep voice, "There's poison in the wine!"

Furthermore, the poison was very potent, but judging by Zhao Li's reaction, it didn't act quickly since Zhao Li didn't show any abnormal signs.

Of course, it was also possible that Zhao Li was the one who had administered the poison, although the likelihood was slim. After all, this place was Tianyan Sect headquarters, and Zhao Li was the governor. If he poisoned Lu Ye, the consequences would be severe, which was why Lu Ye was frank with him.

It was also Lu Ye's way of testing him.

Under his scrutiny, Zhao Li's expression clearly showed some astonishment before he weakly asked, "Is Brother Yiye joking?"

Lu Ye remained silent.

"But I don't feel anything odd," Zhao Li started to panic.

Lu Ye turned to look at Giant Armor beside him. Giant Armor slowly shook his head; he didn't feel anything either. However, Giant Armor hadn't drunk any wine, he had only been focusing on eating, and he didn't know if there was poison in the food as well.

Lu Ye continued to examine his Talent Tree. The thick gray fog around it dimmed very quickly, which evidently meant that the poison was being burned off.

He truly didn't know that the Talent Tree had such a peculiar effect, but thinking about it, it wasn't strange at all. Since the Talent Tree could burn off pill poison, it naturally could burn other toxins as well.

In just a dozen or so breaths, no more gray fog drifted out, and for a moment, Lu Ye could not confirm whether his conjecture was correct.

After thinking it over, he poured himself another cup of wine and then downed it in one gulp.

Zhao Li stared at him with a stunned face: "Brother Yiye?"

He couldn't understand what Lu Ye was doing. Just now, Lu Ye had told him the wine was poisoned, but now he had drunk another cup. Was this... really just a joke?

"There really is poison," Lu Ye once again saw the dense gray fog drifting beside his Talent Tree.

Zhao Li was completely dumbfounded. His mind couldn't quite catch up, and his thoughts were a mess. He didn't know if it was a psychological effect, but he felt like his whole body was not quite right...

Then he saw Lu Ye pick up another chopstick-full of food and eat it, and after a moment, he said, "The food is poisoned too."

"Brother Yiye!" Zhao Li almost cried out.

"Spit it out!" Lu Ye turned to look at Giant Armor, who immediately got up and went to the side.

Lu Ye then pressed on his battlefield marking and sent a message out before turning to Zhao Li, "Brother Zhao, please order a lockdown of the headquarters. No one is allowed to leave, and also check if anyone has left in the past two hours. If there has been, please send trustworthy people to bring them back!"

Hearing this, Zhao Li recognized the seriousness of the issue. It seemed that Lu Ye was not joking, and there really was poison in the food and wine.

With a slight shock, Zhao Li quickly sent the message.

At the Righteous Blood Sect headquarters, Shui Yuan rushed into the sect master's residence, disturbing the meditating sect master.

"Lu Ye has been poisoned!"

A glint of cold ferocity flashed in the sect master's eyes as he asked in a deep voice, "Where is he?"

"At the Tianyan Sect headquarters!"

The sect master immediately got up, and within just a few breaths, two figures turned into streaks of light and soared into the sky.

At the Tianyan Sect headquarters, Yooi Xiao received the news with a green face. He slapped the armrest of his chair to pieces and growled through clenched teeth, "Dammit!"

Lu Yiye from the Righteous Blood Sect had only been at their headquarters for a short while and had already been poisoned. Clearly, someone had made their move in secret. What Yooi hadn't anticipated was that there were people from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge within the Tianyan Sect, and their actions had been swift.

The two camps had been in opposition for many years, and it was common practice to plant spies within each other's ranks. No one could guarantee that their disciples were free from internal threats.

Some spies might never reveal their identities in a lifetime, but once they struck at a crucial moment, they could inflict significant damage on the enemy.

Take, for instance, the incident when the sect master was returning to the Righteous Blood Sect headquarters with Lu Ye and they were ambushed midway. A spy from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge played a role in that too, and that spy was a True Lake Realm cultivator. Although Pang Zhen later found clues and eradicated them, if it weren't for good luck, Lu Ye would have already been dead by then.

Both sides spent great effort and paid a high price to groom spies. Even if they managed to place them successfully, the spies might still get discovered. Those who remained hidden were extremely important and wouldn't be used lightly unless it was absolutely necessary.

But this time, Ten Thousand Demons Ridge must have been desperate. To deal with a cultivator of Spirit Stream Level 8, they didn't hesitate to use a spy they had placed within the Tianyan Sect.

Soon, the Great Elder Bai Qian returned, the old man's expression somber: "What's the situation now?"

"It's confirmed that he's been poisoned. As for who did it, we are still investigating, but we have narrowed down the suspects," Yooi replied.

"We must find the poisoner no matter what. Only then can we determine which poison was used and find the right antidote," Bai Qian said gravely.

"I have the same thoughts. Moreover, Lu Yiye has already arranged this immediately, and Zhao Li is acting according to his plans," Yooi said.

"So young and yet so calm?" Bai Qian was somewhat surprised, "How are they now?"

"Zhao Li said the symptoms aren't obvious. It seems to be a very covert poison, but the toxicity is fierce."

"Symptoms not obvious, but the toxicity fierce?" Bai Qian frowned. This was clearly not right. If the poison was sufficiently potent, the symptoms should be evident. These two characteristics shouldn't coexist.

Chapter 310 The Poison of the Psyche

"If the symptoms aren't obvious, how can you be sure the poison is very fierce?"

"Zhao Li said that it was Lu Yiye who deduced it."

"Order them to return to our sect headquarters at once!"

"I've already sent them a message."

Sitting at the dining table within the Tianyan Sect's territory, Lu Ye watched as Zhao Li's nostrils began to bleed, then suddenly turned and threw a punch at Giant Armor's nose.

The punch was heavy and powerful; even Giant Armor seemed stunned by it, looking at Lu Ye with confusion before his nose also started to bleed.

"Hit me with a punch," said Lu Ye, looking at Giant Armor.

Giant Armor scratched his head and replied in a muffled voice, "I won't hit you."

At a loss for words, Lu Ye could only headbutt the table in front of him violently. Stars exploded in front of his eyes and when he looked up again, he sniffed his nose.

Zhao Li felt dizzy and spoke in a feeble voice, "Brother Yiye, what are you doing?"

"We're going to your Tianyan Sect headquarters!" Lu Ye called out to Giant Armor while speaking.

Giant Armor got up nonchalantly, picked up the unsteady Zhao Li, and hoisted him up.

"Pick me up too," Lu Ye hurriedly shouted.

"Oh."

Giant Armor lifted Lu Ye onto his shoulder and strode off toward the Heaven's Augury Hall of the Tianyan Sect. Tianyan Sect disciples they passed along the way were baffled by the sight, but soon, news spread that the guests from the Righteous Blood Sect and their own Governor Zhao Li had been poisoned.

The Tianyan Sect disciples were in an uproar, finally understanding why the place had suddenly been sealed off and checking who was not within the territory.

Lu Ye had just arrived at the Tianyan Sect's territory not long ago when he was poisoned. The perpetrator was clearly a Tianyan Sect disciple, and one with access to their food.

This matter wasn't hard to investigate, so the person who had poisoned them in secret wouldn't be able to hide. To stay alive, they would have to leave the Tianyan Sect's territory quickly.

Anyone who was able to touch the food and left the territory within a Shichen must be the poisoner.

What no one expected, though, was that Lu Ye's Talent Tree could incinerate toxins, giving him an immediate awareness of the situation. This meant that the person who acted in secret didn't expect to

be exposed so quickly. If the Tianyan Sect acted swiftly, there was still a chance to capture the fleeing culprit.

The only thing Lu Ye was grateful for now was that Amber only ate raw meat and hadn't touched anything on the dining table.

Judging by Zhao Li and Giant Armor's reactions, the weaker one's physical constitution, the greater their reaction to the poison, which explained why Giant Armor seemed so unconcerned. But once the poison fully erupted, it was uncertain whether Giant Armor would be able to withstand it.

The likelihood was that he wouldn't be able to hold on, and since Ten Thousand Demons Ridge had already made its move, they would ensure that there was no room for error.

Lu Ye and Zhao Li had already formed an Alliance Pact, and previously, Giant Armor had been taken in as a disciple in name by the Righteous Blood Sect, so even though neither of them was originally from the Tianyan Sect, they could use the Heaven's Augury Pillar to enter the Tianyan Sect's headquarters.

By the time they reached the sect's headquarters, many high-ranking members of the Tianyan Sect had already been informed and were waiting under the leadership of Yooi Xiao, each with an expression so dark it seemed water might drip from it.

An incident with Righteous Blood Sect's people under their own roof was inexcusable by any measure. If Lu Ye were to die in the Tianyan Sect, they didn't know how they would explain themselves to the Righteous Blood Sect.

Healing cultivators were already ready on the Tianyan Sect's side, and shortly thereafter, the three of them were settled into a room with a healing cultivator responsible for each.

By this time, Zhao Li's condition had become very critical, continuously vomiting blood water and looking exceedingly feeble; the healing cultivator treating him was running about in a panic.

There were also some reactions from Giant Armor, but his symptoms weren't as severe as Zhao Li's.

As for Lu Ye, since arriving at the Tianyan Sect's headquarters, he had lost consciousness with a tilt of his head.

The female healing cultivator responsible for him examined him carefully, her eyebrows lifting.

There was something complicated going on.

After thorough diagnosis and confirming that she wasn't mistaken, she stood up and went to Yooi Xiao's side, whispering something to him.

Yooi Xiao looked surprised and asked in a low voice, "Are you sure?"

The female healing cultivator with True Lake Level 3 cultivation nodded, "Certain."

Yooi Xiao trusted the medical skills of his own healing cultivators, this particular one was considered the most skilled healing cultivator in the entire Tianyan Sect, unsurpassed by the others.

Assigning their most skilled healing cultivator to treat Lu Ye indicated that the Tianyan Sect was also acting with the best of intentions.

"Well then, go take care of Zhao Li," Yooi Xiao instructed, sighing deeply, while simultaneously beginning to worry about his own disciples.

But as a Sect Master, he quickly understood Lu Ye's intention, and without exposing him, Yooi Xiao let him lie there.

As time passed, and under the healing cultivators' care, Zhao Li's condition gradually stabilized. As for Giant Armor, his reactions had never been too severe to begin with.

Having spent the entire night, Zhao Li's breath had finally stabilized, indicating that his life was no longer in danger, yet he remained unconscious. Not only was he in this state, but Giant Armor had also fallen asleep.

The female healing cultivator approached Yooi Xiao and reported, "Sect Master, the poison in their bodies has been removed."

"Then they're out of danger?" Yooi Xiao breathed a sigh of relief. Zhao Li was talented and quick-witted, or else he wouldn't have been able to take on the governor's position. If he were to be lost like this, it would be a huge loss.

The female healing cultivator said, "Logically speaking, they should be fine, but judging from their current reactions, I suspect..."

"Suspect what?"

"I suspect that the poison not only affects the body but is primarily aimed at the psyche." This was also the reason they, as healing cultivators, were able to remove the bodily poison with relative ease.

Yooi Xiao's expression turned grave in an instant, "Can you confirm this?"

The female healing cultivator glanced at Zhao Li and Giant Armor lying there, "Seventy percent sure!"

"This is troublesome."

Poison that targets the psyche is most difficult to resolve. If the poisoned were in the Divine Sea Realm, that would be better. At this level of cultivation, the power of the psyche could be tangibly manifested, making detoxification easier. However, on the other hand, cultivators of the Divine Sea Realm wouldn't so easily be poisoned like this.

Zhao Li and Giant Armor were both only of the Spirit Stream Realm, and although they possessed their own psyches, it was an innate power. Without sufficient cultivation levels, they were unable to stimulate it at will, making them incapable of cooperating with the healing cultivators to detoxify. Now, both of them were trapped in a comatose state – not to mention any sort of cooperation.

Ten Thousand Demons Ridge did not hesitate to use a hidden pawn to strike at Lu Ye, indicating they were quite confident. The unknown poison left the healing cultivators of the Tianyan Sect at a loss.

"Sect Master, if we don't come up with a solution, the most likely outcome is that they will slowly die in their sleep. Giant Armor might be able to hold on for ten days to half a month, but Zhao Li probably won't live past two days."

The female healing cultivator's words were clear: their medical skills were limited, and they were helpless in the current situation.

"Both at Level 9, why is the difference between Zhao Li and others so vast?" Yooi Xiao frowned. They had been poisoned: one wouldn't live past two days, while the other could last ten days to half a month – the disparity was too obvious.

The female healing cultivator shook her head, "I'm not entirely sure, but judging from the symptoms, Giant Armor is obviously much lighter. Perhaps his psyche is naturally stronger than others."

As she spoke, she couldn't help but take another look at Lu Ye lying over there.

One could say Giant Armor's situation was due to a naturally strong psyche, but what about this man? When they were treating Zhao Li, he had told them that Lu Yiye had also drunk the poisoned wine and eaten a few bites of the food; he should be poisoned as well.

"Veteran Bai," Yooi Xiao turned to look at the Great Elder, "please hurry and set up a Soul Nurturing Array and place them inside."

Since a strong psyche was able to resist the poison, they would find a way to enhance the psyche. Although the Soul Nurturing Array would consume quite a bit and not have much effect in a short time, they couldn't afford to be concerned about that now.

"I will go at once," Bai Qian said, turning to leave.

"As for Wuzhou, who do you think has the ability to treat this poison?" Yooi Xiao looked toward the female healing cultivator.

The female healing cultivator pondered for a moment, then shook her head sadly, "Although there are healing cultivators in Wuzhou with medical skills greater than mine, it's doubtful that merely high medical skills can solve this poison. Perhaps..."

"Perhaps what?"

"Has the Sect Master forgotten? The Righteous Blood Sect itself has a top-notch healing cultivator."

Yooi Xiao thought for a moment and then suddenly realized, he quickly said, "I'll send a message to Veteran Thang right away."

He had been preoccupied before and should have sent a message to Veteran Thang as soon as the issue concerning a disciple of the Righteous Blood Sect arose.

A message was sent out and a response came back quickly – Yooi Xiao was slightly surprised, because Veteran Thang was already on the way, and he was bringing Shui Yuan Second Senior Sister as well.

Yooi Xiao turned to look at Lu Yiye lying on the bed and realized this must have been Lu Yiye's doing; otherwise, it made no sense for those two from the Righteous Blood Sect to arrive so swiftly.

With a wave of his hand, he had everyone else retreat, leaving only himself behind.

"Young Friend Lu," Yooi Xiao called out gently.

Lu Yiye, who had been "unconscious" since arriving at the Tianyan Sect headquarters, opened his eyes, sat up slowly and paid his respects, "Sect Master Yooi."

He could feign unconsciousness to deceive others but certainly not the female healing cultivator who had checked him; she would not hide something like this from Yooi Xiao. Now that Yooi Xiao was alone with him, it was clear he had something to say.

"Veteran Thang and Second Senior Sister Shui Yuan are already on their way and should arrive in less than half a day."

Although Bingzhou and Wuzhou were far apart, a strong cultivator of the Divine Sea Realm could travel through air quite quickly. After Lu Yiye had sent the message, Sect Master and Second Senior Sister had immediately set off, so naturally, it wouldn't take them long to arrive.

"You must have heard the conversation just now," Yooi Xiao turned to look at Zhao Li, "Zhao Li invited you here perhaps with some selfishness, but certainly with no intent to harm you. It's just that one cannot guard against a thief in the day and night; an unexpected situation no one wanted to see has arisen."

Lu Yiye raised his hand to interrupt, "Sect Master Yooi, there's no need to say more. I'm already aware of the situation. As the saying goes, it's hard to guard against an insider. This is something nobody wanted to see."

Yooi Xiao nodded, "It's best that you think so, Young Friend. There's one thing I'd like to ask of you."

"Don't worry. Second Senior Sister Shui Yuan will not hold a grudge against the Tianyan Sect. I got along quite well with Brother Zhao at our first meeting. Once Second Senior Sister arrives, I will ask her to treat Brother Zhao."