

Humanity 421

Chapter 421 How to Kill

In the wooden hut, Lu Ye accepted the challenge, chose the terrain of the combat field, and as fate would have it, Heaven's Augury descended, causing the figures of a man and a tiger to quickly vanish.

It was still the same combat field, covering just a few dozen square feet. Lu Ye steadied his stance, waited for the white light in his vision to scatter, and then lifted his gaze to size up the opposite side.

On the other side of the combat field, a tall woman dressed in purple quietly stood there. Her appearance was undoubtedly beautiful, and her physique was exceptional, exuding an aura of tranquility and refined elegance.

This woman was named Lan Ziyi, dressed in purple, truly living up to her name.

Lu Ye's gaze shifted downward, his eyebrows imperceptibly raising.

While he assessed the other, the other was also assessing him. As the strongest members emergent from their respective camps, it wasn't about empathy for each other; observing the opponent before a big battle was an instinct.

Lan Ziyi showed no signs of equipped Spiritual Artifacts. Could she be a magic cultivator? Lu Ye pondered skeptically.

Yet, looking at her apparel, it didn't quite seem so.

Whether she was or not, he would know after trying.

The supplies box at his waist buzzed, releasing nine streaks of spirit light like tigers bursting from their gates, chasing the moon and stars as they attacked Lan Ziyi, covering most of the dozens of feet in a blink.

Lan Ziyi raised her hand and pointed forward. A pure streak of spirit force transformed into a spirit force line and shot out.

This was not any magic or spell, but a precise control of one's own spirit force. Yet its power was no less significant than any spell.

Surprisingly, after this spirit force line shot out, it suddenly split into nine, each aiming at the nine streaks of spirit light.

With a series of clinking sounds, all nine of Lu Ye's controlled weapons were blocked.

More spirit force lines shot out from the opposite side, some unchanged, others suddenly branching off. In an instant, the space before Lu Ye was interwoven into a vast net with spirit force lines, casting down over him.

This spirit force net locked the earth and sealed the sky, leaving Lu Ye with nowhere to evade.

The Boulder Mountain Saber thunderously unsheathed, with a strike toward the front.

A fiery red streak flashed past, the spirit force net covering Lu Ye was cleaved open, and he shot out like an arrow released from its bow, charging toward Lan Ziyi.

If the opponent seemed to be a magic cultivator, then Lu Ye naturally would engage closely with her to maximize his advantage.

However, as soon as Lu Ye charged forward, he heard the clear sound of a chime, lifting his eyes just in time to see more than a dozen streaks of light attacking from that side.

Those many streaks of light, were all flying swords!

A magic cultivator commanding flying swords? That was quite uncommon.

Lu Ye remained undisturbed amidst change; his psyche under control, he had the nine controlled weapons surrounding him meet those flying swords, while his steps did not cease and he continued his assault.

The clinking sounds were incessant to the ears, as both parties' weapons clashed and sparred mid-air, sending sparks flying everywhere.

In the blink of an eye, Lu Ye had closed in to within ten feet of Lan Ziyi, the Boulder Mountain Saber wrapped in fiery light, bursting with killing intent.

Lan Ziyi, who hadn't moved from her spot, lifted her hand to grasp in the void, and a two-handed glaive appeared in her hands, Lu Ye hadn't even seen clearly how the sword had appeared.

This was a two-handed glaive, much wider than a traditional longsword, and appeared significantly bulkier, providing a striking visual contrast when held by such a woman as Lan Ziyi.

With both hands on the glaive's handle, she faced Lu Ye's descending saber and met his strike with her sword!

Boom...

In the combat field, a wave of energy swept over and a moment of violent spirit force explosion, Lu Ye's figure shook, but he steadied his body.

Lan Ziyi also slightly bent her body, yet she did not take a single step back.

This surprised Lu Ye, as no Spirit Stream Realm cultivator had ever taken one of his slashes without retreating, not even the physique cultivators of the 9th Heaven.

Yet this delicate and tall woman had managed it.

This person was definitely not any magic cultivator!

What also concerned Lu Ye was that from the beginning to the end, the woman had a light smile at the corner of her mouth. Her silent demeanor carried an air of superiority.

Han Tiejun was right; this woman was tricky and truly faced the battle with a gamelike attitude.

Locked in close combat, the two stood less than ten feet apart, eyes locked, with one red and one blue spirit force under their respective commands, fiercely colliding and clashing.

In general, this was the time when the Sun Blaze Spirit Runes would come into play...

Spirit light flashed upon the Boulder Mountain Saber, bursting with dazzling light, and just then, Lu Ye felt an overwhelming force from ahead. Propelled by that fierce power, he found himself drifting several feet backward.

Simultaneously, Lan Ziyi seized the moment to retreat, closing her eyes.

Clink, clink, clang...

Around them, the controlled weapons and flying swords were still relentlessly clashing, even as their swords crossed, this skirmish did not cease.

Such a test undoubtedly challenged one's psyche. Lu Ye's psyche was strong because he had purified his soul in the Soul Cleansing Pool and continued to consume a considerable amount of Soul Cleansing Water afterward.

However, the strength of Lan Ziyi's psyche was no less than Lu Ye's, which was somewhat bewildering.

Just as they were both retreating, a flying sword broke through Lu Ye's weapon control blockade and slashed at him silently.

Lu Ye, not yet having landed, didn't even look as he lashed out with a saber, its destructive power dimming the spirit light of the flying sword and sending it flying to the edge of the combat field.

The usually infallible Sun Blaze Spirit Runes didn't work wonders this time, as Lan Ziyi's reaction was too quick; the moment she sensed something was amiss, she pushed Lu Ye away while simultaneously closing her eyes.

When the light scattered, two figures charged at each other again in another fierce collision, akin to two great mountains smashing together, their great sword and longsword enveloped in differently colored glows, intertwining and bursting with killing intent.

Lu Ye's eyes narrowed, having sensed something amiss the moment he was pushed back.

This woman's strength seemed excessively great, and now he felt it even more clearly; each time their swords clashed, his arm shook slightly, and his palms gradually went numb.

It was almost unbelievable.

In a contest of strength, he had actually been bested by a woman!

Looking at her blood Qi, it wasn't incredibly vigorous, so how could she possibly unleash such formidable power?

During the clash, Lu Ye thought of a possibility and immediately formed Insight Spirit Runes in his eyes.

Under his insight, he finally saw the truth.

In terms of blood Qi energy, Lan Ziyi certainly was not as potent as him, but this woman clearly mastered the Blood Moving Technique; every time her great sword chopped down, she could perfectly utilize all her strength, which is why her burst of power was stronger than his.

This was something Lu Ye could not match; although he had practiced the Blood Moving Technique for a few days, he was nowhere near as skilled as she was.

If one were to compare, if the power inside Lu Ye's body was a hundred, then Lan Ziyi's would only be about seventy or eighty; but without using the Blood Moving Technique, Lu Ye could only unleash half of his own strength, and although using the Blood Moving Technique, he could match her, he could never achieve her level of proficiency.

In contrast, Lan Ziyi could unleash all her strength at any time.

Lu Ye dared not use the Blood Moving Technique lightly; the battle had just begun, and it was irrational to prematurely use his trump card without understanding the opponent's capabilities fully.

A trump card should indeed be something that finalizes the battle!

Although he was outmatched in strength, Lu Ye still had spirit runes to activate—Move-Like-The-Wind, Hefty Weight, Sharpness—all sorts of spirit runes employed in various ways, which also caused Lan Ziyi quite a bit of trouble, rendering the fight inconclusive for the time being.

Amber roamed the edge of the battlefield while Yiyi hid underground, neither taking part in this fight.

Both the spirit and the tiger knew Lu Ye's intentions; encountering such an opponent was rare, and naturally, he wanted to fight joyously first to hone his own skills, rather than overwhelming the opponent with numbers which, even if victorious, would hold little satisfaction.

The airborne exchanges of controlled weapons and flying swords gradually quietened...

Both Lu Ye and Lan Ziyi had recognized the other's power, facing such an opponent, neither could afford any distraction, thus they both recalled their controlled weapons and flying swords.

Once more, a fierce collision occurred, with the effectiveness of the Hefty Weight Spirit Runes causing Lan Ziyi to stoop almost to the ground, almost kneeling from a momentary oversight, Lu Ye gathered his blood Qi energy madly towards his right arm; instantly, his entire right arm swelled, turning a bright red.

The Boulder Mountain Saber also flashed with spirit light, enhanced by Double-Sharpness.

Single Flash!

He struck successfully!

This strike hit Lan Ziyi's waist, relying on the burst of Single Flash and the enhancement from Double-Sharpness Spirit Runes, no one in the Spirit Stream Realm could withstand this hit, and Lan Ziyi's most likely fate was to be split in two, instantly killed.

However, the next moment, Lu Ye realized something was wrong.

This strike indeed hit Lan Ziyi, but her body had not been split apart; the moment the longsword fell, Lu Ye distinctly saw a thick barrier enveloping Lan Ziyi entirely.

The immense force sent Lan Ziyi flying, tumbling several times in mid-air before she landed awkwardly.

However, Lu Ye also felt pain in his abdomen; in the instant she was sent flying, the great sword pierced Lu Ye's body, penetrating three inches deep; had he not sent Lan Ziyi flying, the sword almost would have skewered him!

Such a wound inflicted by the great sword was considerably severe.

Lu Ye's abdomen immediately gushed blood, his body staggering backward.

He quickly formed Bloodstain Spirit Runes at his chest, and under the pull of the runes, the flowing blood gathered back.

Standing there, Lu Ye frowned and looked over at the woman.

He couldn't fathom what kind of defense that was, capable of blocking his attack enhanced by Sharpness Spirit Runes and even the activated Blood Moving Technique of Single Flash!

He hadn't seen Lan Ziyi activate any Spiritual Artifacts, indicating the barrier was her own doing.

This is troubling!

If even Single Flash couldn't break through her defense, how was he to kill her?

On the other side, Lan Ziyi, half crouching with her great sword grounded and legs dragging two lines in the combat field, barely managed to not fall.

Although she didn't know what measure she'd used to block that fatal strike, thus avoiding the fate of being bisected at the waist by Lu Ye, she could not mitigate the violent impact, and now blood oozed from the corner of her mouth.

She leaned on her longsword and slowly stood up, her eyes curiously sizing up Lu Ye as if reassessing him.

Chapter 422 Spirit Robe

It cannot be denied, Lan Ziyi was strong.

Her strength, just like Lu Ye's, surpassed what one would expect from the Spirit Stream Realm. Perhaps only the three scourges on the Spirit Stream Ranking from a few months ago could claim the right to surpass them, but those three had settled in the Spirit Stream Realm level for more than a decade, a testament to the time which had granted them such formidable strength.

Their situations were not the same as Lu Ye's and Lan Ziyi's.

Powerful people all had their secrets, and Lan Ziyi was no exception.

Her secret was something no one could possibly know. Although she was only at the Spirit Stream Realm in her cultivation, her vision far exceeded that realm, and the various techniques she mastered were certainly not within the reach of an ordinary Spirit Stream cultivator.

Lifting her thumb, she gently wiped the corner of her mouth, looked down, and saw that, indeed, she was bleeding...

She was somewhat puzzled. How could there be someone in this world within the Spirit Stream Realm capable of injuring her?

The faint smile that had lingered at the corner of her mouth faded, her expression turning serious. She lifted her greatsword, grasping the hilt with both hands, and held it upright in front of her.

In an instant, the charming woman gave off an impression of an impenetrable fortress, as though, with her standing there, no attack could ever bring her down.

Naturally, Lu Ye wouldn't give her any time to catch her breath. He forcefully pushed off the ground, creating two pits where he had stood, leaving afterimages as he lunged towards Lan Ziyi.

Before he could get close, Lu Ye saw the woman suddenly split her hands, the greatsword that had been held upright in front of her turned into two longswords in a blink!

The greatsword was actually made up of two combined longswords.

Lu Ye was surprised. This woman really had a lot of tricks, but this didn't slow down his advance or his determination to kill her.

The distance between them closed rapidly.

Lan Ziyi suddenly struck a strange pose, pointing one sword towards the heavens and the other towards the earth. She spun her lithe, tall figure slightly and slashed out with one sword.

It met Lu Ye's strike head-on.

With a clang, sparks flew, and Lu Ye's rushing momentum was halted; however, the force transmitted through the Spiritual Artifact made Lu Ye realize something—the power contained in the opponent's sword had weakened.

Because of this collision, he clearly had the upper hand.

He sensed something was amiss and did not follow through with his attack. Instead, he took a step back.

As he stepped back, Lan Ziyi's figure spun again, and the other longsword came crashing down.

Clang...

Lu Ye took another step back.

Clang clang clang...

With each sound, Lu Ye stepped back again.

When wielding the greatsword, Lan Ziyi's power was extremely fierce, although her attacks were somewhat clumsy.

Now that the greatsword had become two swords, her power seemed somewhat restrained, but the nimbleness and speed of her attacks were incomparable to before.

With two different sword forms, Lan Ziyi's style of combat was drastically different. Shockingly, she could perfectly control and switch between these two styles with ease!

Being tall naturally, the longswords in her hands were half a foot longer than ordinary swords. As she spun like a top, with her at the center, everything within several meters became her attack range.

The sword light swept through, cutting through the Void, and carried deadly Sharpness with it.

Lu Ye suddenly thought of a scenario: If this woman were surrounded by a large number of enemies, relying on this technique, she could probably kill all enemies encircling her cleanly.

Where she passed now was like unleashing a storm of death.

Initially, Lu Ye managed to block each of her strikes, but as he kept retreating, her spinning speed increased, and the frequency of her attacks grew higher. After only a dozen or so steps back, Lu Ye found it hard to keep up with her rhythm. Often, out of five swords she swung, he could only block four, and one would inevitably strike him.

Fortunately, he still had Defense Spirit Runes to activate, but even with the Defense Spirit Runes, he could only defend passively!

Another dozen steps back, and Lan Ziyi's attack speed further increased. The ringing sounds of their weapons clashing were incessant, filling his ears without end.

Occasionally accompanied by the shattering light of Defense Spirit Runes and scenes of blood spraying.

In just a few breaths, Lu Ye's body had accumulated over a dozen wounds, varying in depth.

He knew he couldn't keep retreating. The combat field was only so large, and once he reached the edge, there would be nowhere left to go. When the storm of death swept through, if he couldn't withstand it, he would likely be diced into pieces in an instant.

Should he use Single Flash? He had already used it once, and even with the Double-Sharpness Spirit Runes enhancing Single Flash, it hadn't broken through her layer of protection.

Lu Ye still didn't understand how she had blocked that strike, nor what that layer of protection was.

Without understanding this first, it would be unwise to recklessly use Single Flash.

As he contemplated, spirit light burst forth from the Boulder Mountain Saber in Lu Ye's hand, and his retreating figure suddenly stopped. He lunged forward again toward Lan Ziyi.

Blood splattered, and in that instant, the newly formed Defense Spirit Runes shattered, adding several wounds to Lu Ye's body as his flesh turned over.

However, Lu Ye's saber also, taking advantage of the momentum, slashed onto Lan Ziyi's body. The moment the longsword became one with him, Lu Ye's eyes, with the aid of the Insight Spirit Runes, were more divine than ever.

That invisible protective layer appeared again, blocking the strike.

But after blocking this strike, the protection disappeared without a trace, eerily elusive. Even with the aid of the Insight Spirit Runes in his eyes, Lu Ye could not see clearly what the protection really was.

At the cost of sustaining a slash, the strike forced Lan Ziyi to retreat; the woman floated back more than ten feet, standing still, with one longsword pointing at Lu Ye and the other behind her.

Compared to Lu Ye's disarray, Lan Ziyi was undoubtedly more composed at this moment. At least she was without injuries. In contrast, Lu Ye's clothes were somewhat tattered, his whole body enveloped in a thick mist of blood Qi.

Since challenging the Spirit Stream Ranking, Lu Ye had never been in such a dire state.

The woman before him was definitely the strongest he had encountered in the Spirit Stream Realm.

Lan Ziyi finally realized something was amiss; despite the many wounds Lu Ye had suffered, not a single drop of fresh blood came out. Moreover, the more severe his injuries, the thicker the blood mist that enshrouded his body became.

Lan Ziyi cocked her head, a look of puzzlement on her face. The tall and charming woman struck a somewhat silly and cute pose.

In her eyes, Lu Ye at this moment resembled an injured ferocious beast, with its innate fierceness fully aroused.

Two figures flashed simultaneously on the spot; in the next instant, where there was nothing before, both figures appeared, saber and sword colliding...

Lan Ziyi let out a surprised yelp because the power Lu Ye displayed this time was much greater than before, and his speed was also much faster!

The Bloodstain Spirit Runes were taking effect!

In the previous exchange, Lu Ye had been cut to a point where he started to doubt his life, even though he had forged the Bloodstain Spirit Runes, they took effect slowly and did not immediately yield results.

By now, the more blood Lu Ye had shed, the greater the enhancement the Bloodstain Spirit Runes could bring him.

The blood mist that enveloped his body was the manifestation of the Bloodstain Spirit Runes.

The Boulder Mountain Saber was almost danced into a whirl of sword light, while Lan Ziyi's twin swords were indescribably fast. At this moment, in terms of power, Lu Ye undoubtedly held the absolute advantage, for with every collision, the longswords were forced backward.

But in terms of speed, even with the boost from the Bloodstain Spirit Runes, Lu Ye was still not as fast as Lan Ziyi.

The opponent's twin swords stabbed, slashed, and cut from all sorts of unimaginable angles, continually adding to the wounds on Lu Ye's body.

The Boulder Mountain Saber also constantly struck the opponent's body, but each time Lan Ziyi's body would produce that invisible protection, blocking his attack.

Gradually, Lu Ye understood.

Though he didn't know how that protection formed, he realized it wasn't invincible. With each slash he delivered, there were signs the protection weakened. However, his attacks weren't enough to destroy that layer of defense, so up until now, he hadn't truly harmed Lan Ziyi.

Without breaking that defense, Lan Ziyi would remain undefeatable!

As if sensing Lu Ye's intent, Lan Ziyi suddenly spoke amidst the combat, "It's a spirit robe; as long as my spirit force isn't exhausted, the spirit robe will always exist. If you want to defeat me, you need to drain my spirit force entirely."

With her 9th Heaven cultivation, Lan Ziyi naturally had more spirit force stored than Lu Ye, and in such an intense battle, Lu Ye was the one consuming more spirit force.

Before Lu Ye's spirit force was completely exhausted, it was impossible for Lan Ziyi's to run out.

Lu Ye didn't believe that the opponent suddenly sharing this information with him was out of kindness. Revealing one's cards to the enemy in a life-and-death struggle was undoubtedly a psychological tactic.

By clearly stating to him that as long as her spirit force lasted, the spirit robe could not be broken, it was apparent that she aimed to beat down Lu Ye's confidence. If another cultivator heard these words, they would probably immediately think of retreating, and once that thought emerged, death wouldn't be far off.

The one thing Lu Ye could be sure of was that Lan Ziyi wasn't lying; this so-called spirit robe was indeed closely related to her spirit force.

This reminded him of the last fight he had at Golden Light Peak.

It was a battle against a Saintess of the Sacred Fire Order who used a Spiritual Artifact to create a layer of protection. It was also the kind that couldn't be broken as long as spirit force remained. However, it proved one thing—there was no defense that couldn't be broken, only attacks that were not fierce enough!

To break this type of defense, one had to use a method that exceeds its defensive capabilities.

Did he have such a method?

Single Flash had already been used, but even with the Double-Sharpness Spirit Runes enhancing it, it couldn't break through the opponent's protection.

It seemed, then, that he had no choice but to use another type of saber skills!

In these days, he had benefited from observing his third senior brother's saber skills cultivation insights; and it wasn't just Man-Sword Synthesis and the Blood Moving Technique that he had learned.

In those insights was a simple technique of saber skills that Lu Ye had tried while cultivating Single Flash with the help of the Blood Moving Technique and had found it very easy to master.

This saber skill technique could be used in conjunction with Single Flash...

Lu Ye had never tried it; he didn't know if, with his current strength, he could perform it, but this was his last hope. If he couldn't execute it, he would most likely have to call upon Yiyi and Amber to gang up and mob Lan Ziyi.

This was a challenge for the Spirit Stream Ranking, and the position of number one on the list affected the pride of two major camps; this was not a place for talking about righteousness.

Chapter 423 Repeated Slashing

If even that level of saber skill couldn't penetrate Lan Ziyi's spirit robe protection, calling for Yiyi and Amber to join in a group beating wouldn't make much difference.

But one had to at least give it a try!

However, the opponent's speed was too fast, and to land a strike on her, he needed to create some opportunities.

During their combat, Lu Ye's figure suddenly staggered, appearing as if his strength was waning.

Lan Ziyi wouldn't miss such an opportunity, her right hand thrusting with her sword, piercing directly through Lu Ye's abdomen and out his back!

Lu Ye grunted.

Before Lu Ye could counterattack, Lan Ziyi's left-hand sword was already stabbing towards him, aiming for his neck. If it struck, Lu Ye would lose his fighting ability even if he didn't die.

That sharp longsword rapidly enlarged in his vision, and just as the sword came within reach, Lu Ye suddenly raised his left hand in front of himself.

The sword's tip pierced through the palm, going straight through.

Lu Ye reached out with his large hand, letting the entire sword run through his palm, then clenched his left fist.

"Snap!"

The clenched fist caught hold of one of Lan Ziyi's hands.

The woman on the other side looked up, her eyes brimming with shock. Reflected in her eyes was Lu Ye's cold expression, and at that instant, she realized something.

She had been tricked!

Lu Ye's earlier staggering was merely a ruse, bait to make her act rashly.

But this kind of bait had cost Lu Ye dearly, with one sword piercing through his abdomen and another through his palm—it was ruthlessly harsh, both to his enemy and even more so to himself.

Lan Ziyi's sense of alarm burst forth, her whole body felt a piercing sensation, a sign of a great crisis looming.

Suddenly, spirit light flashed over her body, and that spirit robe, which normally would only appear when she was in danger, manifested ahead of time this time.

Rip...

The sound of clothing tearing could be heard.

In that instant, Lu Ye's right arm, holding the sword, swelled immensely, bursting the fabric on his arm. His blood Qi surged toward his right arm in an extremely short time, causing his face to become as pale as paper.

Lu Ye lifted his sword, bringing it down with a thunderous chop.

The Boulder Mountain Saber created several afterimages in that instant!

Single Flash!

Repeated Slashing!

In that instant, Lu Ye delivered three slashes downward, all were Single Flash Saber Technique enhanced with Double-Sharpness spirit runes. This technique, which delivered multiple attacks in a very short

time, was known as Repeated Slashing, specifically designed to break through strong defenses, and was most appropriate here.

Lu Ye had planned to deliver a fourth slash, but after three, his right arm was completely powerless and numb, swollen to the thickness of a thigh, with split skin, torn muscles, and drenched in blood, it looked extremely horrifying.

He didn't even feel when his Boulder Mountain Saber had flown out of his grasp.

When the first slash of Repeated Slashing came down, Lan Ziyi's spirit robe perfectly withstood it. But as the second slash fell, the luster on the spirit robe suddenly dimmed greatly.

The third slash broke through the spirit robe, carving a frightening wound on Lan Ziyi's body that began at her right shoulder down to her lower left abdomen, with flesh ripped apart and clothing shredded to reveal pale skin, and within the gruesome wound, one could faintly see the beating heart.

The three slashes of Repeated Slashing not only shattered Lan Ziyi's spirit robe but also inflicted heavy wounds, along with the massive force that sent her flying backward.

However, in the instant she was sent flying, Lan Ziyi's long leg swept out like a long whip to strike Lu Ye's temple.

This woman didn't miss any chance to counterattack! She was as ferocious as a wild beast.

In that moment, Lu Ye was completely unable to move, and without even the chance to react, he was swept away, miserably crashing to the ground.

As he hit the ground, two longswords were pulled from his body and palm, blood spouting forth.

Upon landing, Lu Ye's head spun, stars danced in front of his eyes. He stumbled to his feet, but dizzy and disoriented, he couldn't stand firmly and collapsed back to the ground. After several attempts, he barely managed to kneel on the ground.

While he was so utterly debilitated, it was no easier on the other side.

Lan Ziyi was dazed by the three slashes from Lu Ye, and before this battle, she truly had never expected someone of the Spirit Stream Realm to be able to injure her, let alone in such a grievous manner.

As Han Tiejun had told Lu Ye before, she had always approached the Spirit Stream Ranking with a gaming mentality.

Until she met Lu Ye.

She had used all her skills, yet she nearly perished beneath someone else's three slashes.

The instant she was sent flying by Lu Ye's slashes, Yiyi and Amber moved into action simultaneously.

Having followed Lu Ye for so long, the spirit and the tiger naturally knew when to step in and when to keep a low profile.

Before, when Lan Ziyi had her spirit robe for protection, even if they had made a move, it wouldn't have been very effective. But now that the spirit robe was shattered and Lu Ye was running on fumes, it was their turn to make an entrance.

But Lan Ziyi wasn't foolish. Now, severely injured, she was not in any shape to continue the fight. If it was only Lu Ye, she might still have a chance to risk a fight, the outcome uncertain.

Amber suddenly rushed towards her, followed by a girl who was randomly casting spells. Lan Ziyi took a moment to assess the situation before her lips moved rapidly, and she vanished from the combat field.

Yiyi's spells missed their mark, which almost got her nose out of joint in frustration.

She hurried over to Lu Ye, only to find him half-kneeling on the ground, completely still, as if he didn't even have a breath left in him. His eyes also lacked their usual luster and had become extremely dim...

With a cry, Yiyi let out a sob.

Since following Lu Ye until now, she had never seen him in such a dire state, not even when she had taken him to Mount Ying to seek aid from Sister Hua Ci, had he been this miserable.

She quickly laid Lu Ye down flat and called out to Amber, "Quick, get Lu Ye out of here."

Upon hearing this, Amber ran back with the Boulder Mountain Saber and then bit onto the collar of Lu Ye's clothes.

Before Yiyi flashed back into Amber's body, she looked up into the sky and yelled, "Get us out of here!"

Amidst the mists of destiny, Heaven's Augury descended, leaving the combat field empty of any people.

At the third floor of the wooden house, the figure of Amber carrying Lu Ye appeared.

Yiyi's voice, panicked and distraught, emanated from within Amber, "Sister Hua Ci, Sister Hua Ci!"

With the Heaven and Earth spirit force being sealed, Yiyi couldn't reveal her physical form, but when she was hiding inside Amber's body, she was actually able to communicate with others.

"I'm here!" Sister Hua Ci's voice immediately responded.

She had been waiting there all along and the room was already prepared with some hot water and herbal bandages, clearly expecting that Lu Ye would be injured in this battle.

Holding Lu Ye, Sister Hua Ci placed him on the bed and sat beside him, examining his injuries, her expression growing increasingly grave.

Looking up at Lu Ye's face once more, his eyes were open, but the glimmer within was dull. Yet through those eyes, it seemed he held a deep anticipation for tomorrow and the future.

Anxiously, Yiyi asked, "Sister Hua Ci, how is he?"

Sister Hua Ci pursed her lips and remained silent. Instead, she lifted her hand to cover Lu Ye's eyes and gently stroked them.

Yiyi felt a pang in her heart, her voice trembling, "Sister Hua Ci?"

"Hmm?" Sister Hua Ci responded, and seeing that Lu Ye's eyes were still open, she reached out to cover them again.

"What are you trying to do, you witch?" Lu Ye blinked his eyes weakly, "I'm not dead yet! I just didn't want to move to conserve strength."

"I know you're not dead," Sister Hua Ci defended, "I was just trying to let you rest properly. You're the one who looks like you won't die with your eyes closed!"

Lu Ye, angered and in pain, decided to close his eyes and ignore her.

Yiyi exclaimed indignantly, "Is this really the time for jokes?"

After a thorough examination, Lu Ye's injuries were severe. The wounds left by Lan Ziyi on his body were actually the least of his concerns; most were either flesh wounds or through-and-through injuries. With Lu Ye's current condition coupled with Sister Hua Ci's methods, he could recover within a few days.

The key issue was Lu Ye's right arm, which was torn to shreds as he exerted the Repeated Slashing state of the Single Flash Saber Technique. At the moment, his right arm was swollen as thick as a thigh, with blood Qi accumulating within and unable to dissipate, causing injuries both visible and hidden. Even with Sister Hua Ci's skills, healing him would take some effort.

Especially now that the spirit force was restricted, many techniques were difficult to use.

Half a day later, Lu Ye lay in a barrel, soaking comfortably amid the verdant medicinal solution. Sister Hua Ci sat beside him, promoting blood flow in his right arm. The room steamed with warmth, shrouded in a veil of mist.

The battle that had captured the attention of countless cultivators from both camps had ended in utter silence.

Yet the outcome of this battle was inadvertently spread far and wide.

Lan Ziyi of Endless Island, who had followed in Lu Ye's footsteps and soared to third place in a storm-like ascent, suffered a grievous injury and was defeated in her challenge against Lu Yiye from the Righteous Blood Sect!

The news spread without much stir, mainly because Lu Ye's strength had already become deeply ingrained in people's hearts. The Ten Thousand Demons Ridge camp, though initially considering Lan Ziyi's challenge an opportunity, had no idea how substantial that opportunity was.

As for her defeat, it meant little loss to the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge camp.

On the other hand, the Haotian Alliance breathed a sigh of relief. As the challenged party, Lu Ye's victory was expected. Had he been defeated, the first place on the ranking would have been jeopardized, prompting many from the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge to likely clamor and make noise.

However, both the Haotian Alliance and Ten Thousand Demons Ridge had come to understand one thing.

That was, this vast Spirit Stream battlefield was about to be dominated by a single person!

Looking back through history, such a thing had never occurred before.

The previous three "cancers"—whether Feng Yuechan, Li Baxian, or Yanh Xing—were all powerful in their own right. But they belonged to two opposing camps and thus checked each other's power.

Furthermore, their strength was personal, unable to bring much benefit to their entire camp.

But Lu Yiye was different. Not only was he personally powerful, but he was also capable of things the three "cancers" could not achieve.

Back in the inner circle, he had already stirred up storms, leading the Haotian Alliance Allied Forces to overcome a hundred or so clan strongholds from the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge side.

In recent days within the Core Circle, he had continued to foment one disturbance after another. Although he hadn't breached any clan strongholds, who could ensure that he wouldn't do such a thing once he advanced to the 9th Heaven?

If he really set out to do this, there would truly be no one on the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge side who could stop him!

Suddenly, the high-ranking members of the major powers within Ten Thousand Demons Ridge found themselves with grayer hair, faced with the most pressing issue of how to secure their own strongholds after Lu Yiye's ascent to the 9th Heaven.

Chapter 424 The Last Orifice

Name: Lu Yiye.

Status: Disciple of the Righteous Blood Sect.

Cultivation: 335 orifices.

Location: Spirit Stream battlefield.

Merit: 9,352 points.

Lu Ye hadn't used the battlefield marking to check his complete information in a long time. He was gravely injured, resting in a wooden hut, and aside from cultivating and reading books, there was nothing else he could do.

Looking at the column with his name, Lu Ye furrowed his brows, a wave of sorrow rising in his heart.

He clearly remembered his name as Lu Ye, but he didn't know when Heaven's Augury had started to recognize him as Lu Yiye.

The Spirit Stream Ranking had it so, and now even the information in the battlefield marking was the same!

It had been over two months since he advanced to the 8th Heaven, but he had only opened up 335 orifices. The speed of opening orifices wasn't fast, especially with the recent howling of the origin magnetic field and the ban on spirit force, which prevented him from operating the Bestial Gluttony Feast, significantly reducing the efficiency of his cultivation.

He was just twenty-five orifices away from the 9th Heaven, which wasn't far off!

His merits were not too abundant, having all been earned from killing enemies recently. This was despite having a large amount of spoils of war that hadn't been sold to Heaven's Augury treasure vault yet. If he had sold those, the number of his merit points would definitely have multiplied several times over.

The Spirit Stream battlefield was just like that; it was difficult for cultivators with insufficient strength to earn merit, but for someone like Lu Ye, gathering merit was simply too easy.

Especially since he was in a situation where he was opposed by the entire Ten Thousand Demons Ridge camp, stepping outside would attract a large group of people wanting to kill him, and if they couldn't kill him, they would be annihilated...

With Hua Ci's care every day, the injuries on his body recovered swiftly, though the condition of his right arm was not looking optimistic, still swollen immensely.

Reflecting on his battle with Lan Ziyi, Lu Ye was incredibly grateful that he had learned some special techniques from the saber skills insights of his third senior brother, Xiao Xinghe.

With those saber skills insights, the Single Flash Saber Technique became complete.

Furthermore, he had learned Repeated Slashing!

Whether Single Flash or Repeated Slashing, being both saber skills and techniques, used separately, the strain on Lu Ye wasn't too great. But if he used them together, the outcome would be as it was now. Six or seven days had passed, and his right arm still hadn't recovered, and that was with Hua Ci's care. Without it, Lu Ye estimated that his right arm would most likely have been ruined.

It was undeniable that Single Flash combined with Repeated Slashing was indeed powerfully excessive. Lan Ziyi's spirit robe defense was very strong; even Single Flash couldn't easily break through it, and it took three consecutive slashes by Lu Ye to finally penetrate it.

As powerful as it was, the side effects were severe, and the reason for such serious consequences was twofold: the last three slashes placed too much strain on Lu Ye himself, and the second reason was that Lu Ye wasn't skilled enough in executing them.

If he were more practiced, the side effects shouldn't have been so terrifying.

Over the past few days, besides taking elixir pills for cultivation, Lu Ye would meditate for two hours every day, breathing in harmony with the Boulder Mountain Saber to deepen the connection between man and blade, and also read the books he had brought from Madam Yun or contemplate the saber skills insights of his third senior brother.

Time flew by quickly.

In the wooden hut, Lu Ye and Amber were on high alert, while Hua Ci had gone to cultivate somewhere else.

With the current ban on nature's spiritual energy, the cultivation of all cultivators was greatly affected, except for Lu Ye and Hua Ci. The former's cultivation mainly relied on consuming elixir pills, while the latter fed on the poison mists of the Ten Thousand Poisons Forest.

One month had passed since the last blessing of Heaven's Augury, and the second blessing was about to arrive.

Having experienced it once before, Lu Ye was very much looking forward to this kind of blessing.

He didn't have to wait long. Heaven's Augury descended, and the scenery began to change.

By the time Lu Ye regained his senses, he had already appeared in the Heaven's Augury Pond, surrounded by rich spirit mist.

With limited time, he hastily set up a spirit energy gathering array in the Heaven's Augury Pond and constructed a small spirit energy gathering funnel within his own spiritual orifice.

Yiyi flashed out from Amber's body, and they, a man, and a tiger, each found a suitable spot to devour the spirit mist heartily, feeling the mist's transformation and enhancement of their beings.

Lu Ye felt this especially keenly due to his unhealed injuries.

After the washing from the last Heavenly Reward, he had noticed that the spirit mist here had the effect of regulating the internal trauma accumulated in the body.

This time it was even more apparent. The wounds that hadn't fully healed rapidly mended, and his swollen right arm began to deflate and slowly returned to its normal state.

The cool and refreshing sensation was extremely pleasant.

The only regret for Lu Ye was that, even as the leader of the Spirit Stream Ranking, he could only stay in the Heaven's Augury Pond for one hour! The time was too short—given enough time, he might have been able to reap even more benefits.

But then he thought again that the effect of the spirit mist on cultivators was limited. Most cultivators could only enter three or four times before it lost its effectiveness, but he, currently at the 8th Heaven cultivation level, still had opportunities to enter.

Additionally, last time Lu Ye tried to collect some spirit mist to take with him, but it seemed to trigger something in Heaven's Augury, giving him the vague suspicion that the omnipresent Heaven's Augury might possess its own spiritual intelligence.

This made Lu Ye take note, unsure of how to test and confirm this suspicion.

...

Lu Ye vaguely felt that if he could communicate with Heaven's Augury, perhaps he would be able to understand the true nature of the cultivation world!

Why are the Haotian Alliance and Ten Thousand Demons Ridge two major factions in opposition, and why can cultivators obtain merit by slaughtering those from different factions? What's the situation with the Heaven's Augury treasure vault, and what exactly is the connection between the Heaven's Augury Mercantile Union and Heaven's Augury?

Many cultivators, he believed, would like to have these questions answered.

The half an hour quickly passed, and by the time Heaven's Augury sent Lu Ye back to his wooden hut, his injuries had healed, and even his right arm had fully recovered.

This second baptism of bounty from Heaven's Augury had made Lu Ye's blood Qi and spirit more vigorous. He could feel that if he used the Single Flash Saber Technique in a Repeated Slashing state again, he should be able to execute the fourth strike, unlike previously, when he could only perform three.

There was no doubt that this was a marked increase in strength.

However, at the level of the Spirit Stream Realm, the only one who was worthy of making him use this kind of self-damaging saber technique was probably only Lan Ziyi.

Although the Nine Provinces cultivation world was full of talented individuals, there were still not so many monstrously talented figures in the world.

Two days later, the origin magnetic field subsided, and nature's spiritual energy began to flow again.

Lu Ye took a long breath.

As a cultivator, being imprisoned with one's spirit force unable to be used felt incredibly awful. During the roaring phase of the origin magnetic field, almost every cultivator would feel an inexplicable sense of crisis, because not only was their spirit force shackled, but even their senses were severely dampened. It was like suddenly becoming blind and deaf – nobody knew when danger might strike.

The first thing Lu Ye did was to reset the arrays inside and outside the wooden hut.

He had been constantly worried about one thing: the depletion of the Talent Tree's fuel.

Without the big arrays to isolate him, he had been living in the midst of the poison mist this whole time. Amber had always been with Hua Ci, and even Yiyi was confined within Amber's body, lacking freedom.

If the fuel stored in the Talent Tree was indeed exhausted, he would have to rely on Hua Ci to survive here.

Fortunately, the crisis was now averted.

He didn't set up the parent transmission array again because Lu Ye felt it was no longer needed.

He swore to himself that he would not leave the Ten Thousand Poisons Forest until he ascended to the 9th Heaven, even if the sky crumbled and the earth split outside!

The Three Saints Sanctuary had already been breached; thus, the forces of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge would have a hard time threatening him to show himself again.

With nature's spiritual energy available and the spirit force no longer shackled, the efficiency of cultivation greatly increased.

However, because Lu Ye spent a lot of time every day on saber skills cultivation, the pace of his orifice-opening maintained a steady state.

The saber skills insights from his third senior brother had been fully digested. What remained was practice and reflection, which required the precipitation of time and could not be rushed.

On the Spirit Stream Ranking, many familiar names had vanished, replaced by some he didn't recognize – a perfect illustration of the old adage: "As the old waves recede, new waves aspire to push beyond."

Lan Ziyi had climbed to the number two spot on the Spirit Stream Ranking but had not challenged Lu Ye again.

Her strength was indeed formidable, previously sufficient to compete with Lu Ye for the top spot, but her biggest reliance was her spirit robe. Since Lu Ye had the means to break through her spirit robe, she no longer qualified to compete with him.

As long as Lu Ye remained on the Spirit Stream Ranking, she could only be second to him!

He chatted casually with his Second Senior Sister Shui Yuan from time to time, leading an extraordinarily leisurely life.

Time passed, and before he knew it, more than a month had gone by.

After Lu Ye, accompanied by Yiyi and Amber, received the baptism of Heaven's Augury for the third time, he noticed a problem.

The spirit mist in the Heaven's Augury Pond had less of an enhancement effect on himself, and even less so on Yiyi and Amber, than the previous two times.

The first and second times, Lu Ye felt that his blood Qi and spirit had improved by at least ten percent.

This third time was less than half of the previous two.

He didn't know how much improvement he could expect the next time.

It seemed that the rumors were true that after receiving the baptism of Heaven's Augury three or four times, its effects on cultivators diminished.

Returning to his wooden hut, Lu Ye felt refreshed.

Examining his spiritual orifice, he had 359 orifices!

He was only one orifice away from advancing to the 9th Heaven!

When he first began cultivating, the sect master had told him that as a cultivator gets closer to completing their orifice-opening, the difficulty would increase. As a result, many cultivators were unable to fully open all 360 orifices at the Spirit Stream Realm level, depending on their aptitude and talent.

However, as long as one switched to cultivating a Heaven Rank technique and opened more than 240 orifices, they would qualify to advance to Cloud River.

Until now, Lu Ye had never experienced the increasing difficulty of orifice-opening mentioned by the sect master; it seemed that the difficulty of each orifice-opening was similar for him.

This was related to the purity of his spirit force. No matter how pure other cultivators' spirit force was, as long as they had consumed elixir pills, there would be pill poison accumulated. The higher the cultivation, the more severe the pill poison buildup. Although there were ways to remove pill poison, it's like injuries among cultivators – it might seem like the wounds had fully healed on the surface, but in reality, there are undetectable hidden damages.

Chapter 425 9th Heaven and Travel

The pill poison accumulated within a cultivator's body is just like this.

The more pill poison that accumulates, the more difficult it is to open orifices.

Since the day Lu Ye began his cultivation journey, his Talent Tree had been burning away pill poison. Although there was a period of time where the Talent Tree ran out of fuel, leading to a significant accumulation of pill poison, as he replenished the fuel for his Talent Tree, the accumulated pill poison was also burned away.

His spirit force was purer than anyone else's, so during the process of opening orifices, he never felt too much resistance.

Of course, in terms of the speed of opening orifices, Giant Armor was unrivaled, managing to ascend from a 7th Heaven cultivator all the way to the Cloud River. This feat alone, when looking through history, was unmatched by anyone.

But Giant Armor's situation was unique, after all, no other cultivator had the kind of demonic pill that he possessed within his body.

Stimulating his own spirit force, he struck towards the last unopened spiritual orifice.

This spiritual orifice was located close to the Root Spiritual Orifice, almost right beside it. When a cultivator embarks on the path of cultivation, the first orifice they open is the Root Spiritual Orifice, and the last one in the Spirit Stream Realm is also near the Root Spiritual Orifice, so that, looking back upon ascending to the Cloud River, connecting all spiritual orifices would form a Major Circumambulation cycle.

The spirit force continued to surge, striking time and time again until at a certain moment, the thick spiritual orifice barrier was broken through, allowing the flow of spirit force to fill the newly opened orifice.

Spirit Stream Realm Great Perfection!

At this point, three hundred and sixty orifices spread throughout Lu Ye's limbs and body, so if a cultivator loses an arm or a leg carelessly in combat, it would greatly impact their strength. This impact is not solely from the physical loss but also from the loss of spiritual orifices, the latter of which has an even greater effect.

For the Nine Provinces cultivation world, regenerating lost limbs is too far-fetched, and it has never been heard of someone achieving such a miraculous feat. However, reattaching severed limbs is possible, as long as the severed limbs remain intact, there's a chance they can be reattached.

That requires extremely sophisticated medical skills!

Within the Spirit Stream Realm, opening a full three hundred and sixty orifices signifies Great Perfection. At this level, the cultivation of the Spirit Stream Realm has basically come to an end.

Generally speaking, only cultivators from sects above the 3rd grade have the means to cultivate to the level of Great Perfection.

This is not to say that sects above the 3rd grade have some special methods of cultivation, but when these sects recruit disciples, they take away all those with good aptitude. Those they eliminate and do not want are then taken in by sects below the 3rd grade.

Take for example the recent recruitment ceremony hosted by the Three Saints Sanctuary. As the main organizer, with many minor sects as co-organizers, the most outstanding disciples in the entire recruitment ceremony were taken in by the Three Saints Sanctuary. The rest were left for the other minor sects to choose from.

In this way, through a series of selections, the best talents always appear in the big sects, and the minor sects can only take in those with poor aptitude.

But there are no absolutes in anything; there are always some unremarkable jade stones in their youth, not displaying any brilliance. If the minor sects can pick up such talents, they have a chance to raise their sect's grade.

Any cultivator who reaches the level of Great Perfection is definitely capable of ascending to the True Lake, with an eighty to ninety percent chance of advancing to the Divine Sea—provided they do not die young!

The strife in the Nine Provinces cultivation world is very cruel if one is killed on the path of growth, then there's no talking about ascending to the Divine Sea, even the True Lake is out of reach...

The number of 9th Heaven cultivators that Lu Ye has killed during this time is not small, especially during his efforts to climb the Spirit Stream Ranking, where almost everyone he encountered in the first few days was slain.

With the final orifice opened, Lu Ye stimulated his spirit force, successively piercing through those sixty unsystematic spiritual orifices, performing a Minor Circumambulation.

Waves of energy swept through, his body hummed, and he achieved 9th Heaven status!

In that instant, Lu Ye felt some difference within himself. Although the nine Minor Circumambulation systems within his body were unrelated to each other, when the ninth Minor Circumambulation system was formed, there seemed to be some resonance between them. The speed at which the spirit force flowed within his body also increased significantly, and if one listened carefully, they could even faintly hear the sound of flowing water.

At this time, if Lu Ye wanted to ascend to the Cloud River, he could do so at any time by simply connecting all the spiritual orifices into a Major Circumambulation cycle, without any difficulty.

But why would he ascend to the Cloud River at this time?

Not to mention that the baptism from Heaven's Augury had not reached its limit, even his vendetta with the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators needed proper settling.

Having been cooped up in the Ten Thousand Poisons Forest for so long, he had been building up resentment. Now that he had finally advanced to 9th Heaven, how could he not vent a little?

Besides, he had some other matters to attend to.

At a conservative estimate, he would still need to stay in the Spirit Stream Realm for another month or two.

After 7th Heaven, the technique he switched to cultivating was the Great Sun Glazed Glass Method, which cost him more than five thousand two hundred points of merit. It was the most expensive technique suitable for him in Heaven's Augury treasure vault.

The quality of a Cultivation Technique depends on the sequence in which the spiritual orifices are connected. Different sequences mean different pathways for cultivating, which in turn means different efficiencies for the flow of spirit force within the body. Thus, the aid brought to a cultivator varies greatly...

The better the Cultivation Technique, the faster the spirit force flows, and correspondingly, the greater the improvement it brings to the cultivator.

Compared to the worst techniques, the Great Sun Glazed Glass Method costs several times more than an average Heaven Rank technique, yet the benefits it provides may only be ten to twenty percent more.

Such a high level of aid is already significant. A technique that can improve one's strength by ten to twenty percent poses a lethal attraction to any cultivator.

Moreover, the Great Sun Glazed Glass Method also had the effect of tempering the body, a process that required no extra effort from Lu Ye, merely the maintenance of spirit force circulating within the body, invisibly slow-strengthening his physique over time.

Lu Ye, however, hadn't noticed it, perhaps because his body was strong enough that the enhancement was not pronounced, or perhaps because the strengthening was gradual and imperceptible.

But this was a product of the Heaven's Augury treasure vault, so it couldn't possibly be a fraud.

Although he had ascended to 9th Heaven, Lu Ye didn't plan on leaving immediately. The newly formed Minor Circumambulation cycle was not very stable, so he needed to consolidate it for a few days to prevent it from ceasing suddenly during combat, which could cause a drastic and potentially disastrous drop in strength.

In the small courtyard, Lu Ye practiced his saber skills meticulously.

Hua Ci had returned from her extrinsic cultivation, glanced at Lu Ye, and said, "Reached 9th Heaven? Congratulations."

Sheathing his saber, Lu Ye replied casually, "There's nothing to congratulate."

Hua Ci had ascended to 9th Heaven over half a month ago! The speed of her cultivation was nothing short of astonishing.

"Are you planning to leave?" Hua Ci inquired. Though Lu Ye had not shared his intentions with her, she could sense that after reaching 9th Heaven, it was unlikely for him to continue staying here.

"In a few days. What about you? Any plans?"

"Me? I don't have any plans."

"You've already reached 9th Heaven, yet you neither strive for the Spirit Stream Ranking nor prepare to ascend to Cloud River. What do you plan to do? Moreover, now that you're at 9th Heaven, how can you continue your cultivation?"

This was something Lu Ye couldn't figure out. Logically, one couldn't increase their cultivation after reaching the 9th Heaven unless they ascended to the Cloud River, but Hua Ci still left early and returned late every day just as before.

Yiyi had gone to check and found that she was still ingesting the poison fog from the Ten Thousand Poisons Forest, its purpose a mystery to them.

Moreover, whether it was an illusion or not, Lu Ye had recently felt that the nearby poison fog seemed to have thinned out significantly.

"I have my methods," said Hua Ci with a smile, not going into detail. "I'll go cook. What would you like to eat tonight?"

Lu Ye casually retrieved a large chunk of beast meat from his storage sack and tossed it to her.

Three days whizzed by, and with everything ready, Lu Ye prepared to leave.

Hua Ci straightened his clothes, her tone like that of a kindly mother seeing off her son, "Be careful in all things when you're away from home."

Lu Ye couldn't help but twitch at the corner of his eye. He thought to himself that he wasn't heading to any far-off places, and although he had left the Ten Thousand Poisons Forest several times before, Hua Ci had never given such advice.

"I don't have much to give you, but take this for self-defense," Hua Ci said, and as Lu Ye watched dumbfounded, she opened her mouth and gently exhaled toward him, releasing a green, round bead about the size of a thumbnail from her mouth.

Lu Ye's eye twitched even more violently because, as her breath touched his face, not only did he smell her sweet fragrance, the Talent Tree also ignited with a thick haze...

This woman's breath was now highly toxic!

"What is this?" Lu Ye instinctively felt that the green orb was not a good thing.

"Ten Thousand Poisons Pill?" Hua Ci chuckled lightly, pulled out a wooden box, placed the pill into it, and slapped it into Lu Ye's hand, "If you're surrounded and can't escape, just channel some spirit force and throw this thing."

"What effect does it have?"

After tilting her head and pondering, Hua Ci replied, "Don't know, I've never used it. You try and then tell me the results."

"..."

Lu Ye carefully stored the wooden box in his storage sack, placing it in the most secure position.

"I'm leaving." Lu Ye bid farewell, then called for Amber, who jumped onto his shoulder like a cat. Subsequently, Lu Ye summoned his spirit ark and soared into the sky.

Standing there, Hua Ci watched as Lu Ye departed until the streak of light disappeared from her sight. Only then did she turn around and head toward her usual cultivation spot.

As she moved forward, her previously 9th Heaven cultivation level quickly began to decline, falling to the level of 8th Heaven in just a short period.

Conjuring the Ten Thousand Poisons Pill had clearly taken a toll on her, a loss that took a piece of her own cultivation level!

Such mysterious methods or Cultivation Techniques had never been seen before in the Nine Provinces cultivation world.

At her usual spot for cultivation, she sat cross-legged, and with each breath, a thick poison fog from the surroundings began to gather around her. In just a moment, the fog condensed into a mass in front of her, spinning rapidly, its powerful pulling force attracting even more of the surrounding poison fog. In mere moments, a vortex formed in front of Hua Ci.

Chapter 426 Lu Yiye Arrives

Although Lu Ye had been promoted to 9th Heaven for several days, since he had not shown his cultivation in front of others since his promotion, the annotation on the Spirit Stream Ranking still listed him as 8th Heaven.

In the entire Spirit Stream battlefield, aside from Hua Ci, no one knew that he had been promoted to 9th Heaven.

The previous two times he had left the Ten Thousand Poisons Forest, his movements were quickly exposed, drawing numerous Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators to pursue and intercept him in a bustling chase.

This time, however, it was much quieter. He flew several hundred miles on his spirit ark before he saw three gleaming fleeing lights approaching rapidly in the distance.

In the Core Circle, many cultivators, for the sake of convenience in traveling, moved high in the sky, which generally didn't pose too much risk. As long as one was sufficiently vigilant, even if encountered by an enemy, there was a chance to escape if one couldn't overpower them—unless the speed difference was too great.

Seeing those three fleeing lights, Lu Ye flew directly towards them.

The three on the other side obviously saw Lu Ye as well and stopped to wait.

These three had unknown origins and destinations, and neither knew which faction Lu Ye belonged to, nor did Lu Ye know theirs. The only reason they dared to stop and wait was because they relied on having greater numbers.

If everyone belonged to the same faction, then naturally there would be no dispute. However, if they were from hostile factions, with three against one, they could take advantage.

The distance between them quickly closed.

When they were about thirty miles apart, one of the three suddenly felt a leap in his heart. Straining his Ocular Power, he peered towards Lu Ye and at the same time spoke out, "Senior Brother Li, does that guy look like Lu Yiye to you?"

The other two were startled. The cultivator addressed as Senior Brother Li said, "Don't scare your brother."

Suddenly remembering that they were not too far from Ten Thousand Poisons Forest, it indeed could be possible to encounter the scoundrel Lu Yiye. They hastened to strain their Ocular Power, and what came into view was a young man swiftly approaching with a snow-white demon beast perched on his shoulder.

If it wasn't Lu Yiye, who else could it be?

"Run!" The one with the surname Li shouted, and the three fell into a panic, summoning their fleeing light to escape the area.

However, it was already too late. As the sound of air being torn apart rose, nine beams of light split into three batches and struck the three men.

With modest cultivation levels—two at 8th Heaven and one at 7th Heaven—how could they withstand the might of Lu Ye's weapon control?

A brief scream echoed, and fresh blood scattered from the sky. By the time Lu Ye arrived at their original location, all three men had perished.

With his strength greatly increased after advancing to 9th Heaven, Lu Ye found it increasingly easy to slay these Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators.

Yiyi flashed out, casually cleaned up the battlefield, collected the spoils of war, and Lu Ye set off again.

Along the way, whenever he encountered a cultivator, Lu Ye would go forth to confirm their faction allegiance.

Over the next several days, every Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivator he came across was slain on the spot.

Three days later, Lu Ye appeared outside the protective array of a Ten Thousand Demons Ridge outpost known as Xuanqing Palace.

His eyes, augmented with Insight Spirit Runes, studied the nodes of the big array.

A cultivator with wide sleeves and a broad robe hurried over and, through the array's light curtain, shouted at Lu Ye, "Who is there?"

After asking, he took a closer look at Lu Ye and his complexion drastically changed as he lost his voice in alarm, "Lu Yiye?"

The cultivator turned pale with fear, never expecting that the notorious Lu Yiye would suddenly appear outside their outpost. Moreover, given his posture, it was clear he came with malicious intent.

He quickly stimulated his spirit force and bellowed, "Lu Yiye is here!"

At his roar, the outpost instantly boiled with activity as streams of light soared into the sky, heading in that direction.

Outside the light curtain of the array, Lu Ye had already thrown out several array banners and as he took action, the light curtain within the covered area ceased its flow of spirit force.

He lifted his hand, flipping open a corner of the array as if lifting a curtain, and walked in nonchalantly.

By this time, a number of fast cultivators had arrived, and many more were on their way.

The few cultivators who had reached the spot saw Lu Ye breaking into their outpost and were in no mood for niceties. They all unleashed their techniques and hit out at Lu Ye.

The instant the Boulder Mountain Saber was unsheathed, boosted by Move-Like-The-Wind Spirit Runes, Lu Ye's figure flickered and dodged, masterfully avoiding all attacks as he rushed toward one of the cultivators. His hand lifted, the saber fell.

Blood splattered!

His form unceasingly darted forward, charging towards the next target...

In a mere three breaths, five bodies lay where they were, blood dripping from the Boulder Mountain Saber.

More cultivator figures converged, with a 9th Heaven cultivator bellowing loudly, "Lu Yiye, you're courting death!"

For someone to single-handedly break into their outpost and kill people was intolerable to anyone, and as they saw several forms lying in pools of blood, the eyes of many Xuanqing Palace cultivators reddened.

As the words of the 9th Heaven cultivator fell, a downpour of magic and spells along with the force of weapon control bombarded Lu Ye.

With a swoosh, as the fiery red spirit force flowed, Lu Ye's back sprouted wings and he shot into the sky, all incoming attacks hitting nothing but air.

He soared above the crowd, his gaze fixed on the 9th Heaven cultivator who had shouted, the fiery red wings on his back flapped only twice before he directly dived towards his opponent.

An indescribable sense of oppression hit him head-on, accompanied by a bone-chilling killing intent, The anger and humiliation on the 9th Heaven cultivator's face had been replaced by shock and terror as he saw Lu Ye plummeting towards him, his figure rapidly falling downwards.

Although he also had a 9th Heaven cultivation, he didn't even qualify to enter the Spirit Stream Ranking, and now that he had attracted the attention of a top-ranked contender like Lu Ye, he felt no sense of safety.

Now, to kill Lu Ye, they could only rely on the advantage of numbers.

The moment his silhouette moved, Lu Ye was already closing in fast.

How could this guy be so fast? This thought leaped into the mind of the 9th Heaven cultivator.

The wings spirit runes were already more flexible than weapon control-flying, let alone that Lu Ye, in order to charge faster, had also added the Move-Like-The-Wind Spirit Runes to himself.

Utilizing both spirit runes at once, saying his speed was like lightning wasn't an overstatement.

A fiery light enveloped the Boulder Mountain Saber as it slashed down at the 9th Heaven cultivator, who raised his Spiritual Artifact to block. However, the moment their weapons barely made contact, he felt an overwhelming force rush forth, causing his Spiritual Artifact to fly out of his hand as his palm split open and his arm ached.

Under the immense force, his entire body uncontrollably plummeted towards the ground.

As Lu Ye's second saber strike was about to come down, he was struck with horror and frantically reached into his storage sack, pulling out a Golden Body Talisman.

Before he could slap the talisman onto himself, Lu Ye's saber had already chopped down.

Blood sprayed, and a body fell in two.

Cries of shock rose from below, mixed with mournful roars.

No wonder, for the one Lu Ye killed was the governor of Xuanqing Palace!

In Xuanqing Palace, the governor had performed his duties excellently, taking good care of his junior brothers and sisters. Seeing him slaughtered, the cultivators from Xuanqing Palace naturally felt grief and anger in their hearts.

Lu Ye had no idea he had killed their governor; it was just his speculation, for even the Core Circle sects had limited numbers of 9th Heaven cultivators, and each one was a precious talent. Killing one decisively first could both alleviate the pressure he was facing next and serve to deter the enemy.

But now it seemed that the deterrent effect was not significant and had instead stirred the unity and determination of the group of Xuanqing Palace cultivators.

Everyone looked at him with eyes red with rage, the anger almost spilling out.

After slaying the 9th Heaven cultivator, Lu Ye's figure descended with the momentum, swiftly shifting direction just above the ground, and plowed towards the most densely packed area of the crowd.

The buzzing of his supplies box at his waist, nine weapon-controlled artifacts flew out, intertwining and spinning around one another like a top, crashing into the crowd with Lu Ye's figure closely following behind, the Boulder Mountain Saber constantly swinging and slashing.

Screams of pain and roars of anger rose up in successive waves.

There was also Amber's roars.

With each roar, she fiercely assaulted the minds of the cultivators up ahead, disorienting them as Lu Ye took the opportunity to unleash deadly attacks.

After one round of charging, more than a dozen bodies lay on the ground, and Lu Ye himself was drenched in blood, both his own and his enemies'.

Facing multiple opponents, it was impossible for him to escape unscathed. Fortunately, he had the Defense Spirit Runes to use, keeping his vitals protected was enough.

Lu Ye returned to the side of the big array's light screen, his long saber pointing obliquely to the ground, his eyelids slightly lowered, those from Xuanqing Palace opposite him no longer harbored their previous rage but stared at Lu Ye in disbelief, as the chaotic scene suddenly fell into an eerie silence.

Before this, if someone had told them that there was a person in this world capable of single-handedly invading a sect's residence and wreaking havoc, and that it was a Core Circle sect's residence no less, no one would have believed it. Human power sometimes has its limits; even the most powerful individual has boundaries.

Even Feng Yuechan and Li Baxian, among the three major scourges, couldn't achieve such a feat back then. For a start, breaking through the protective array and invading the residence posed a problem for them.

Yet now, such an event unfolded right before their eyes, happening under their very noses!

Internally in turmoil, as they gazed at the blood-drenched figure before them, the group of Xuanqing Palace cultivators really wanted to ask, Are you even human?

Without wasting time, as the nine weapon-controlled artifacts hummed, Lu Ye dived into the enemy formation once more.

Having experienced his ferocity before, the Xuanqing Palace cultivators scattered at once and retreated backward. Lu Ye pursued them relentlessly, charging along the way, bodies continuously falling in his wake.

He massacred his way to the plaza in front of Heaven's Augury Hall, where nearly seventy cultivators were already arrayed in tight formation, ready for battle.

There weren't many cultivators in a Core Circle residence, averaging out to about a hundred or so per sect, and even those with more wouldn't exceed two hundred.

Xuanqing Palace was no different; the entire sect, including their own cultivators and those affiliated from other sects, only totaled around one hundred and twenty or so.

However, in that short span of time, less than the duration of a cup of tea, nearly a third of the one hundred and twenty had been slain!

The rest were all gathered in front of the plaza of Heaven's Augury Hall.

The physique cultivators in front, the combat cultivators behind, followed by the magic cultivators, and as for the ghost cultivators, they had already concealed their traces, looking for the right opportunity to strike suddenly.

Chapter 427 A Single Person Wipes Out a Sect

The formation deployed by the cultivators of Xuanqing Palace was already capable of contending against an Overlord-class demon beast.

To them, the strength displayed by Lu Ye at that moment was no less than that of those fabled Overlord-class demon beasts.

Standing twenty zhang apart, the atmosphere was tense, with a murderous aura subtly surging.

Standing in his original spot, Lu Ye suddenly turned around and swung his saber, severing a ghost cultivator who had silently approached him and was about to strike. The blade's light flashed by, cutting the ghost cultivator cleanly into two halves.

In the moments before his death, his eyes were filled with disbelief, unable to understand how he had betrayed his presence.

The might of this single slash deterred other hidden ghost cultivators from acting rashly again; the perceptiveness of Lu Yiye from the Righteous Blood Sect seemed excessively powerful. For ghost cultivators, attempting to ambush him was as difficult as ascending to heaven.

Moreover, that slash seemed like a signal. Following the death of that ghost cultivator, a shouted "Kill" suddenly erupted from the ranks of the Xuanqing Palace cultivators.

In the next instant, a deluge of magic and spells, along with controlled weapons, bombarded Lu Ye's position, dense and fast as a torrential downpour.

Boosted by the Move-Like-The-Wind Spirit Runes, Lu Ye swiftly advanced while dodging one attack after another. Within the sight of the Xuanqing Palace group of cultivators, Lu Ye's figure was as agile as a fish in water. Most of the magic and controlled weapons they launched missed, hitting empty air, and the few that did make contact were blocked by the spirit runes that Lu Yiye had activated.

In a brief three breaths' time, he had already closed the twenty zhang.

Facing Lu Ye was a physique cultivator holding a spirit artifact big shield upright in front of him. His blood Qi and spirit force surged together in an indomitable stance reminiscent of the Vajra Indestructible.

Lu Ye's right arm, holding the saber, suddenly swelled, rich blood Qi gathering towards it. He aimed at the opponent's spirit artifact big shield and hacked down with his saber.

A Single Flash!

Under the shocked gazes of everyone, the big shield with nine prohibitions directly shattered, breaking into pieces that scattered all around. The protective role it was supposed to serve failed to manifest even in the slightest. Furthermore, the Boulder Mountain Saber continued its motion, felling the physique cultivator behind the big shield to the ground.

With the fall of this physique cultivator, a small gap appeared in the stringent formation of Xuanqing Palace.

Lu Ye's figure charged through this gap into the crowd like a tiger descending the mountain, his controlled weapon swirling around him, with his Boulder Mountain Saber continuously chopping down.

When he was at Level 8 in cultivation, he had once entered the residence of a Ten Thousand Demons Ridge faction, only to be beaten into a humiliating retreat, scurrying away in disarray.

But now, his cultivation had progressed to Level 9, and he had also been baptized three times by the Heaven's Augury, significantly stronger than before.

At this moment, Lu Ye possessed the capability to annihilate a sect on his own.

If he weren't that confident, why would he have dared to charge into the residence of Xuanqing Palace?

Single-handedly facing so many enemies, the best strategy was to break into their ranks. Though this approach might lead to being surrounded and thus seemed perilously risky, it also better allowed him to control the situation, limiting the number of enemies that could attack him at the same time, effectively restraining them.

Conversely, maintaining a distance would avoid encirclement, but once distance was created, everyone could attack him using controlled weapons or spells, which would only worsen the situation.

Charging into their ranks, he was surrounded on all sides, yet only seven or eight people could attack Lu Ye at the same time, and all were within close combat range. Lu Ye did not need to worry about disturbances from controlled weapons or spells.

With each enemy killed, a few more wounds would appear on his body. Fortunately, Lu Ye's physical strength was sufficient; though the wounds looked severe, they were merely superficial. He always protected his vital parts with Defense Spirit Runes.

The scene turned into chaos.

Perched on Lu Ye's shoulder, Amber occasionally let out tiger roars. Each roar ensured misfortune for a group of people.

In this chaotic situation, a delicate figure silently emerged from behind the Xuanqing Palace cultivators. It was Yiyi.

When Lu Ye broke into the residence of Xuanqing Palace and killed the first few cultivators he encountered, Yiyi had darted out of Amber and hidden underground.

By this time, she emerged, unnoticed by any Xuanqing Palace cultivator.

In her hand, she held a scroll-like treasure, none other than the Nine Worlds map bestowed by Madam Yun.

Soundlessly approaching several of the bewildered Xuanqing Palace cultivators from behind, while Lu Ye was mass-killing and drawing everyone's attention, she draped the Nine Worlds map over those people. In an instant, several cultivators disappeared without a trace, while inside the map, several ink figures appeared, each with an expression of shock, clearly clueless about what had happened to them.

The Nine Worlds map was a spirit treasure-level artifact, always managed and used by Yiyi. Although Yiyi's current strength only allowed her to unleash a fraction of its power, it was already enough to deal with cultivators of the Spirit Stream Realm.

After capturing those people, Yiyi immediately dove deep into the ground, burrowing dozens of zhang downward.

With her current strength and even though she controlled the Nine Worlds map, it was still difficult for her alone to kill those people. Moreover, she couldn't trap others for too long—not because the Nine Worlds map wasn't powerful but because her strength was still insufficient.

If her strength were sufficient, she could control the life and death of any enemy captured within the Nine Worlds map, killing them inexplicably with just a thought.

Since she couldn't trap her enemies for long nor easily kill them, the only option was to release them.

Thus, after burrowing to a position dozens of zhang deep, Yiyi activated the power of the Nine Worlds map and released the people she had captured...

Those cultivators didn't utter a single sound; they died explosively on the spot.

At such a depth, surrounded by immense pressure from the earth, how could cultivators of the Spirit Stream Realm withstand it?

Only Yiyi, a non-corporeal spiritual body, could freely move through the ground.

She charged out again, replicating her previous actions!

The cultivators of Xuanqing Palace were petrified!

Originally, Lu Ye's solo intrusion into their residence to kill had made them feel belittled and insulted, filling their hearts with endless rage.

But at this moment, they realized that he truly had such capabilities.

In just less than the time of a single cup of tea, more than thirty of their eighty-plus people had died. Even the physique cultivators wielding spiritual artifact big shields couldn't block his ferocious strikes. Shields and bodies were cleaved in two.

What puzzled them even more was that many others had silently disappeared without a trace; no one knew where they had gone, yet they were gone.

Of the eighty-plus people, only less than thirty remained. The plaza before the Heaven's Augury Hall was a river of blood and a mountain of corpses, with the slaughter blooming amidst the blood and bodies.

The killer, drenched in blood, was like a mad demon. He hadn't spoken a single word or uttered a sound from beginning to end, engaged solely in the act of killing, seemingly determined to exterminate the entire Xuanqing Palace!

So many had already perished, and those few surviving Xuanqing Palace cultivators were scared witless.

"Retreat to Nine Provinces!"

Finally, someone unable to take it any longer shouted loudly.

The followers quickly gathered.

The surviving Xuanqing Palace cultivators fought as they retreated, running toward the Heaven's Augury Hall. One by one, they disappeared in front of the Heaven's Augury Pillar.

However, during this process, several more fell under his blade.

Only when Lu Ye could no longer see any Xuanqing Palace cultivators within his field of vision did he finally stop moving.

Yiyi emerged from underground, looked around, and exclaimed in shock, "Where are they?"

Using the Nine Worlds map and her unique Spiritual Body, she had been continuously transporting enemies away, only to find they had suddenly disappeared, leaving only numerous corpses on the battlefield.

"They ran."

Lu Ye shook off the blood from his Boulder Mountain Saber and sheathed it.

"Such a pity."

She had thought that this time she could eliminate all the people of Xuanqing Palace. It turned out some had still escaped, but the number was probably not large.

Fifty miles away from the Xuanqing Palace residence, numerous figures hurrying at high speed were led by none other than Governor Situ Han of the Three Saints Sanctuary, followed by other elite cultivators from the Sanctuary.

The Three Saints Sanctuary bordered the Xuanqing Palace residence. This generation of Spirit Stream Realm cultivators from the Sanctuary didn't have many notable figures, and their overall strength was weak, so they were often bullied by Xuanqing Palace and the other two forces from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge.

This was why the Three Saints Sanctuary initially wanted Lu Ye to join their residence for cultivation, hoping to also attract Li Baxian and Feng Yuechan to help ease the awkward situation of their residence. However, both Li Baxian and Feng Yuechan had been promoted and had moved to Cloud River.

The matter of letting Lu Ye join their cultivation had thus fallen through.

Moreover, when the residence of the Three Saints Sanctuary was last attacked, several nearby forces from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge had greatly participated, especially Xuanqing Palace. As old neighbors, the grievances between them were too numerous to recount.

Now, even though the residence of the Three Saints Sanctuary had been rebuilt, it lacked merits, and thus the nature's spiritual energy available within the residence and its surrounding area was much less than before.

So, upon receiving Lu Ye's message, Situ Han immediately mobilized nearly half of his forces, heading furiously towards Xuanqing Palace's residence to coordinate with Lu Ye and avenge past grievances.

Following behind Situ Han, the group of cultivators were all eager for action, brimming with a murderous aura.

"Junior Sister Phong," Situ Han suddenly spoke.

"Yes?" Standing behind him, Phong Yue quickly responded. Phong Yue was now at Level 9 of cultivation. Moreover, with the help of the Three Saints Sanctuary, she had gathered enough merit to purchase a Heaven Rank technique and felt it wouldn't be long before she could advance to 7th Heaven.

"Where is Brother Yiye now?" Situ Han asked.

"Let me check," said Phong Yue, hurriedly sending a message to Lu Ye to inquire about the situation.

Moments later, her expression turned strange, "Fifth Brother says he's currently inside Xuanqing Palace's residence."

Upon hearing this, Situ Han's face slightly changed, "Brother Yiye is so impatient; has he already started killing inside?"

After a brief moment of thought, he channeled his spirit force and shouted, "My fellow brothers and sisters, Fellow Daoist Yiye has already charged into Xuanqing Palace's residence and might now be surrounded by enemies. Let's speed up and go support him!"

"Yes!" the cultivators answered loudly; the next moment, everyone's speed increased markedly.

An incense stick's time later, dozens of people led by Situ Han hurried to the outside of Xuanqing Palace's residence, but upon looking over, the protective array of Xuanqing Palace was already operational, extending from a certain direction into the residence, the ground strewn with corpses and blood.

Is this... over? Situ Han was somewhat stunned.

Chapter 428 Nine Provinces Tremble

Following the signs of battle, Situ Han lead dozens of people to rush to the plaza in front of Heaven's Augury Hall, where they saw a blood-soaked figure sitting on the steps from afar, a sheathed long sword casually placed beside him, and in front of him lay one or two hundred storage sacks.

Given his focused demeanor, he seemed to be... unlocking the restriction locks of the storage sacks?

And that blood-drenched figure, if not Lu Yiye, then who else could it be!

"Fifth Senior Brother!" Phong Yue hurriedly approached.

Lu Ye looked up, nodded slightly, then turned to Situ Han, who was behind her, with a complex expression, "You've arrived?"

Regaining his senses, Situ Han hurriedly performed a formal bow and then asked, "Brother Yiye, are we too late?"

"Not at all, you came just in time, the battle has just ended."

This is exactly coming late... Situ Han had originally planned to bring dozens of people to assist Lu Ye, but upon arriving, he found that Lu Ye had already finished the fight, and it ended with the tragic defeat of the Xuanqing Palace. Just a moment ago, he had casually counted the bodies scattered around this station—there were at least sixty to seventy...

Suddenly realizing, it seemed from the beginning to the end that Lu Ye never intended to ask for his help; thus, he said they weren't late!

"Brother Yiye, did you kill all these people yourself?"

"Certainly not."

Situ Han's heart relaxed, thinking as expected, if it really was one person doing all the killings, that would have been too terrifying. He had not seen any other helpers, perhaps they were hidden or had already left.

"Amber was helping me too." Lu Ye raised his hand and patted the head of Amber, who was lying beside him.

Isn't that basically one doing all the killing?

Situ Han's mood fluctuated wildly, suddenly feeling a bit dizzy.

Standing behind him, a group of Three Saints Sanctuary disciples also swallowed hard...

The tragic scene of the Xuanqing Palace headquarters sprawled before their eyes, the plaza in front of Heaven's Augury Hall littered with bodies and blood, all done by one person!

They had long heard that Lu Yiye of the Righteous Blood Sect was exceptionally strong and skilled, but only upon seeing it with their own eyes did they realize the fame was well-deserved.

Taking a deep breath, Situ Han said with a complex expression, "Then, Brother Yiye, you asked me to come here because you wanted to..."

He was somewhat confused. If Lu Ye possessed the capability to annihilate a sect, why would he ask Phong Yue to call him over? He initially thought that Lu Ye wanted him to bring some people for assistance. However, it seemed that wasn't the case.

"Previously because of my matters, the Three Saints Sanctuary station was destroyed. I found out that the Xuanqing Palace played a major role in it. As the saying goes, 'an eye for an eye,' they destroyed your Three Saints Sanctuary station, so I came to destroy their Xuanqing Palace headquarters. Moreover, there was an agreement between our sect's headquarters and your sect that I would cultivate at the Three Saints Sanctuary station. Now that I have reached the 9th Heaven level, I will soon be leaving the Spirit Stream battlefield, and that agreement cannot be honored. As a parting gesture, I thought I might as well alleviate some pressure for the Three Saints Sanctuary on this side."

Situ Han was left speechless.

This was more than alleviating pressure; seeing the outcome of this battle, with so many people from the Xuanqing Palace dead, they wouldn't dare act high and mighty above the Three Saints Sanctuary anymore.

"Everything here for the Xuanqing Palace is untouched; Brother Situ, please help yourself."

At these words, the group from the Three Saints Sanctuary became excited, clearly understanding Lu Ye's intention.

Situ Han was overwhelmed with shame, "How can this be proper? We didn't do anything..."

"In the inner circle, as the Tianyan Sect station was compromised because of me, whatever they lost, I help them retrieve. Since the Three Saints Sanctuary station was also compromised because of me, it should be treated equally. Brother Situ, please do not refuse. In the future, it is likely that more disciples from the Righteous Blood Sect will come to your sect station for cultivation and training; we will still need your sect's care by then."

After hearing what Lu Ye had to say, Situ Han no longer hesitated, "Then I will not be modest. If your sect's disciples want to come to our sect's station for cultivation in the future, just let us know, our sect's station doors will always be open to your sect's disciples!"

With a shout from Situ Han, the group he brought with him dispersed like tigers descending the mountain, pillaging the Xuanqing Palace headquarters. Everything that could be carried away was stuffed into storage sacks and taken, and what couldn't be moved was destroyed on the spot.

Meanwhile, Situ Han himself entered the Heaven's Augury Hall, standing in front of the Heaven's Augury Pillar and, using his identity as a governor, plundered various enhancements from the Xuanqing Palace.

Lu Ye continued to unlock the restriction locks on the storage sacks, while Phong Yue stayed behind to heal his wounds.

It must be said, after training for days in the Three Saints Sanctuary, Phong Yue's cultivation and medical skills had greatly improved. Lu Ye casually chatted with her, knowing that the Three Saints Sanctuary treated her well and didn't blame her for the past incident.

After all, being a healing cultivator and a delicate woman at that, no one would casually offend such a delicate healing cultivator. Moreover, the previous destruction of the Three Saints Sanctuary station had nothing to do with her; it was an operation from the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge targeting Lu Ye.

While they were busily engaged, the news of Lu Ye single-handedly annihilating the Xuanqing Palace had spread rapidly.

Not all from the Xuanqing Palace had died; in the end, approximately thirty managed to escape through the Heaven's Augury Pillar. However, after this battle, over seventy percent of the core circle cultivators from the Xuanqing Palace were slain, substantially weakening their vital energy.

Everyone who heard this news initially reacted with disbelief!

Even if Lu Yiye was strong, even if he had advanced to the 9th Heaven level... Truly, after he had ascended to the 9th Heaven, following a battle at the Xuanqing Palace, his cultivation level had been updated on the Spirit Stream Ranking.

But even so, it was impossible for him to single-handedly destroy a sect! Throughout history, this had never happened. Even Feng Yuechan and Li Baxian, in their time, did not possess such capability; what made Lu Yiye think he could?

Keep in mind that both Feng Yuechan and Li Baxian had been immersed in the Spirit Stream Realm for over a decade...

News continuously spread to the Xuanqing Palace as they probed for information to confirm the truth of the matter.

Eventually, it was confirmed... the unbelievable had actually occurred.

The vast Xuanqing Palace headquarters had been challenged single-handedly by Lu Ye. According to the reports, Lu Yiye forced his way into the Xuanqing Palace headquarters by leveraging his expertise in the Array Path; he wreaked havoc all along his path, and even though the Xuanqing Palace had prepared a force of over eighty people in an array formation, they failed to stop him. Instead, he slaughtered them, causing a river of blood.

Such vile character and brutal methods were unheard-of. He butchered core circle cultivators as if they were mere chickens...

The Nine Provinces were shaken.

Inside the Spirit Stream battlefield, cultivators from the core circle of the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge felt endangered one by one.

All who confirmed this news from the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge couldn't help but be aghast.

Before this, the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge faction had anticipated that if Lu Yiye ascended to the 9th Heaven, he might dominate the entire Spirit Stream battlefield alone, but even so, no one could have imagined that right after ascending to the 9th Heaven, he would commit such a dramatic deed.

Could it be that this enormous Spirit Stream battlefield was truly entering an era ruled by one man?

The Ten Thousand Demons Ridge faction, discontented, wondered: Could such a murderous person truly be beyond control?

Half a day later, another shocking piece of news emerged.

Not far from the Xuanqing Palace headquarters, the Half-Moon Pavilion headquarters was breached!

Again, it was Lu Yiye, again alone!

If the breach of the Xuanqing Palace headquarters could be attributed to their inadequate foundation—owing to the 3rd grade faction's limited number of 9th Heaven level cultivators and the absence of Spirit Stream Ranking powerhouses—the breach of the Half-Moon Pavilion headquarters was clearly because Lu Yiye was powerful enough.

After all, the Half-Moon Pavilion was a 1st grade faction! They had more 9th Heaven cultivators than the Xuanqing Palace, and even had a powerhouse ranked in the fifties on the Spirit Stream Ranking.

Even so, after paying a very heavy price, the surviving cultivators from the Half-Moon Pavilion were forced to retreat back to the Nine Provinces, surrendering their large base to the hands of one man.

Overall, the Half-Moon Pavilion's losses were not too severe thanks to the lesson learned from the Xuanqing Palace. They had arranged their formations from the start, and their retreat was well-organized; nevertheless, thirty to forty people died.

These were thirty-four promising talents who could have ascended to the Cloud River Realm, mercilessly killed, causing the high echelons of the Half-Moon Pavilion immense grief.

When the Xuanqing Palace headquarters was breached, many within the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge still harbored hope, thinking that the Xuanqing Palace was just too weak. However, with the subsequent breach of the Half-Moon Pavilion headquarters, even those who had been hopeful had to start taking Lu Yiye seriously.

If even the headquarters of a 1st grade sect couldn't stop his carnage, who else in the entire Spirit Stream battlefield could possibly stand in his way?

The following day, a third Ten Thousand Demons Ridge headquarters nearby was breached.

While the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge faction was furious, they were also terrified.

Back when Lu Yiye was causing upheaval within the inner circle, he had to enlist the aid of a Haotian Alliance Allied Force, relying on the power of the alliance to act. But now, in the core circle, he didn't need to enlist any allied forces; wherever he went, he brought the devastation of sect destruction.

Lu Ye the Sect Destroyer, rightly named!

Indeed, there's no wrong nickname, only misused names.

At that time, in order to contain Lu Yiye, the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge faction had also gathered many people, confronting the Haotian Alliance Allied Forces while having Divine Sea Realm strong cultivators negotiate. Only after compensating with many resources did they manage to calm matters.

But now, with Lu Yiye acting alone, the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge truly found it difficult to respond. Of course, they could gather people again, but with Lu Yiye currently at 9th Heaven cultivation and unmatched in weapon control speed, who could possibly catch up to him?

If they couldn't catch up, what was the point in gathering more people?

For a time, many strong cultivators from the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge were extremely troubled, and they shockingly realized that they had no means to restrain Lu Yiye, unless they abandoned all their bases and formed a large army to eradicate the Haotian Alliance's base as well.

If so, then it would be a case of 'if I go down, no one ends well.'

However, such actions would have no effect on Lu Yiye himself. His Righteous Blood Sect headquarters were located on the outermost periphery of the battlefield, far from the storms of the core circle, completely unaffected.

As time passed, one sect headquarters after another in the core circle of the battlefield was breached, no matter if it was a 1st grade sect; in front of Lu Ye, they were as fragile as paper. Initially, some sects refused to believe the external exaggerations of Lu Ye's strength and tried to resist his onslaught with numerical superiority, but after suffering losses, they all abandoned their bases and retreated to the Nine Provinces sect headquarters.

Chapter 429 Zijin Sect

In just ten days, over twenty sect residences of the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge faction within the Core Circle were breached, averaging about two per day.

Some sects, in order to reduce the loss of personnel, would retreat en masse to the Nine Provinces when Lu Ye arrived, taking with them everything they could, but the enhancements granted by the Heaven's Augury Pillar could not be taken away and were all plundered by Lu Ye.

There were also sects that resisted desperately, but after Lu Ye killed his way in and out several times, causing heavy losses in manpower, they finally recognized the reality.

Now in the Spirit Stream battlefield, truly no one can restrain Lu Yiye!

All the sects of the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge in the entire Spirit Stream battlefield, whether 1st grade, 2nd grade, or 3rd grade, were like girls stripped of their clothes, lying at his mercy, for him to ravage and take from as he wished.

It was only at this moment that the powerhouses of the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge began to realize in terror that when someone becomes strong enough, they really can do whatever they want!

And riding on the momentum stirred up by Lu Ye, many Haotian Alliance sects were also getting restless; for a time, there were undercurrents swirling within the battlefield, within the Core Circle, indicating the imminent outbreak of a staggering war.

In the sky, Lu Ye ended the communication with his Second Senior Sister, his brows deeply furrowed.

These ten days of relentless activity brought him enormous gains. Not only did he plunder a great deal every time he broke through a Ten Thousand Demons Ridge residence, but the loot he collected from killing those Core Circle cultivators was also immense.

However, he had a faint feeling that if he continued this way, something was likely to go wrong. The greatest possibility was that the Core Circle would descend into complete chaos, at which point neither Ten Thousand Demons Ridge nor Haotian Alliance members would have good days ahead.

Therefore, he specifically reached out to his Second Senior Sister, sharing his concerns.

Shui Yuan didn't say much, only telling him to follow his heart and act with a clear conscience.

Ahead, a sect's residence was shrouded in the light of a big array; according to the ten-part map, it belonged to a 2nd grade sect called the Zijin Sect.

Liu Guang veered, thunderously landing outside the array's light screen.

At this moment, an elder with white hair and beard, his face ruddy, stood serenely outside the light screen, exuding an amiable aura that felt very warm.

Gazing at the youth who descended from the sky, landing before him, the elder smiled slightly, "Are you the friend from Righteous Blood Sect, Yiye?"

Lu Ye's hand rested on the handle of his blade as he looked up at him.

He could see at a glance that this old man wasn't a Spirit Stream Realm cultivator; with his advanced age, he must be at least in the True Lake Realm!

Throughout these ten days of relentless killing, the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators he had killed were not only from the Spirit Stream Realm. Several sects even dispatched Cloud River-True Lake Realm powerhouses, because relying solely on Spirit Stream Realm cultivators, they couldn't defend their residences, and they had no choice but to call upon stronger forces from their sects.

Of course, whether Cloud River or True Lake, once they entered the Spirit Stream battlefield, subject to the suppression and balance of Heaven's Augury, the strongest power they could display was at most 9th Heaven.

It must be said that these Cloud River-True Lake Realm powerhouses indeed gave Lu Ye quite a bit of trouble. Three days prior in a fierce battle, Lu Ye had to kill his way through the sect's residence not once but five times, decisively shattering the opponent's will to fight.

So now, seeing a white-haired old man, Lu Ye was no longer surprised.

His sharp gaze swept over the old man's vital points, secretly calculating how many strikes it would take to kill him if he were to suddenly attack.

The elder's expression visibly stiffened, and he quickly said, "Young friend Yiye, please be at ease. I am waiting here today not to cause you trouble, but to discuss a potential deal with you."

Lu Ye remained silent, his gaze lifting slightly to look behind the elder, at the more than a hundred figures within the light screen of the big array.

The elder let out a chuckle, "The young ones are only concerned for my safety, hence the close watch. You have no need to worry. As long as I don't give the order, they won't do anything to you. This is not the place for a conversation; if you trust this old man, please follow me."

As he spoke, the elder summoned his Flying Spirit Artifact and flew off into the distance.

Lu Ye glanced at the old man, then at the more than a hundred people inside the light screen of the big array. His hand, which had been stroking the handle of his blade, loosened slightly, and he followed the elder with his weapon control.

After a short while, they landed on a mountain peak some ten miles away from the sect's residence.

With Insight Spirit Runes enhancing his eyes, Lu Ye checked the surroundings; there was no ambush and no trace of any formation.

With one hand behind his back, the elder stood on the peak, looking down at the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge territory covered beneath him. He then said leisurely, "The view here is quite nice, would you like to see it together, young friend?"

Lu Ye stepped forward, standing not far beside him, looking down below.

"What you should see in the eyes of a young friend is plenty of merit and wealth, but what I see in the eyes of an old man is the outcome of several generations, even more than a decade of hard work by my Zijin Sect, as well as the future of my Zijin Sect." The elder spoke slowly, "Of course, you and I belong to different camps, standing on different stands, naturally what we see will differ."

"Speak plainly!"

Lu Ye said.

The elder nodded and continued, "Since you are a straightforward person, the old man will not beat around the bush. From the time of the Xuanqing Palace's stance to today, in these ten days, there have been twenty-three forces of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge that you have destroyed, and several hundred

cultivators from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge have died by your hands. Admittedly, with the strength and foundation you have shown so far, the sects in the Core Circle might not be able to stop your slaughter even if we old folks make a move, if you wish, you can just attack one sect after another, breaking through all the strongholds of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge in the Core Circle!"

This is the reality that the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge side needs to face now; if Lu Ye really wanted to, not a single force of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge could keep its stronghold!

"Say 'but'!"

The elder felt somewhat helpless due to Lu Ye's attitude, so he could only continue, "But have you considered what would happen if it really came to that?"

Without waiting for Lu Ye to speak, the elder answered himself, "If it really comes to that, then there will be countless Heaven rank cultivators in the Core Circle without worries about their rear. They don't need to defend their already destroyed strongholds; they can join forces to attack other Haotian Alliance strongholds. If a hundred people can't take it down, then two hundred, if two hundred can't, then three hundred... There will be a time when it will be taken down. Observing your actions, you are not the kind of person who acts recklessly and should be able to foresee this outcome. Of course, if you also kill all the enemies within the stronghold while taking it down, then naturally there is no hidden danger."

The elder stated methodically while Lu Ye listened with an expressionless face.

What the old man said was precisely what Lu Ye had been worried about these days.

Ever since he entered the Core Circle, he had been variously targeted by the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge side. Before ascending to 9th Heaven, he had resolved to retaliate with interest against all those who targeted him once he reached 9th Heaven!

But after advancing to 9th Heaven and actually doing it, he realized that he had oversimplified the situation.

The elder was right; for every stronghold of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge he breached, an additional hidden danger would arise in the Core Circle unless he killed all the enemies upon taking a stronghold.

But that was impossible. With Lu Ye's fearsome record now public, the cultivators of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge forces simply didn't dare to defend their strongholds and directly confront him. The most likely scenario was that whenever Lu Ye arrived somewhere, the cultivators of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge would abandon their strongholds and retreat to the Nine Provinces to conserve their strength.

Hence, for every additional stronghold of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge he occupied, the hidden danger grew.

Once these risks accumulated to the limit, they would definitely erupt, engulfing the entire Core Circle in war, and the undistracted Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators would definitely band together to attack the Haotian Alliance's strongholds.

It was precisely this concern that had led him to send a message to Second Senior Sister Shui Yuan before, wanting to ask how he should proceed next, but unfortunately, Shui Yuan didn't give him clear guidance.

"Of course, if you only care about your own satisfaction and do not consider the adverse consequences that the Haotian Alliance may face in the future, then consider it as if the old man had said nothing. My Zijin Sect can't stop you, and even though the old man is of the True Lake, he is not a match for you in the Spirit Stream battlefield. You can kill me and then take over the territory of the Zijin Sect. This old skeleton of mine should be worth a few hundred points of merit."

Could Lu Ye disregard the adverse consequences that the Haotian Alliance might face in the future?

Of course, that was impossible.

When his identity as a disciple of the Righteous Blood Sect was exposed, it was the many sects of the Haotian Alliance who relayed protection all the way, ensuring his safety. On his previous trip to the Ten Thousand Poisons Forest, it was the cultivators of the Haotian Alliance who protected him along the way, giving him enough time and energy to stimulate the Fire Phoenix Spirit Runes, breaking through the blockade of the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators, and killing his way into the Ten Thousand Poisons Forest.

As a member of the Haotian Alliance, no matter what, he had to consider the pros and cons of matters from the Alliance's perspective. How can people of the same camp fight against another camp if they are not united and of one mind?

If an action could benefit oneself but put the entire camp into deep trouble, then it was absolutely not to be done; otherwise, it would be difficult for disciples of the Righteous Blood Sect to gain a foothold in the Nine Provinces in the future.

He was now nominally the fifth senior brother of the Righteous Blood Sect cultivators but actually the eldest senior brother, and his actions naturally had to consider his junior brothers and sisters more.

"If the young friend does not take action to kill the old man, then the old man will continue speaking." Seeing how Lu Ye reacted, the old man was greatly relieved. Knowing that Lu Ye was listening, he finally relaxed the tension in his heart.

To be honest, even though he appeared calm on the surface, he was actually quite nervous inside. After all, standing next to Lu Ye the Sect Destroyer required a great deal of courage, especially since the youth was full of vigor and strong—it would not be surprising if one word set him off, and a single strike came hurtling down.

It's not strange for hot-blooded youths to do something unbecoming.

Now it seems that Lu Yiye understood the situation quite well.

"Given the current situation, it is you, the young friend, who reigns supreme as the strong, and there is only one rule in the cultivation world: the one with the bigger fist makes the rules. The destruction of the territories of twenty-three sects has already established your invincible position in the Spirit Stream battlefield; this is something even Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cannot deny."

Chapter 430 Greedy Lu Yiye

If in the Nine Provinces, an elder of True Lake Realm cultivation could easily overpower someone like Lu Ye of the Spirit Stream Realm.

However, this was the Spirit Stream battlefield; it didn't matter if he was of the True Lake Realm or even the Divine Sea Realm, he would have to consider Lu Ye's reaction before speaking, which was truly exhausting.

"In the Spirit Stream battlefield, young friend is unmatched in the world, and no one would deny that; but sometimes, individual power does not permit one to do whatever one wishes..."

"Get to the point!" Lu Ye interrupted his rambling.

The elder didn't mind and, after considering his words, spoke, "If young friend does not plan to attack our Zijin Sect's base, my Zijin Sect is willing to pay for peace!"

Spending money to avert disaster was the elder's ultimate purpose in coming to see Lu Ye.

"Name your price!"

Lu Ye's directness left the elder slightly astonished; he had prepared a whole set of arguments to appeal to both emotion and reason.

"Fifty thousand merit's worth of goods!"

Lu Ye turned his head to look at the elder, his aura gradually becoming more dangerous.

The elder felt his scalp tingle and quickly said, "Young friend, please be calm. Admittedly, if young friend were to break our Zijin Sect's base, the merits obtained would certainly be more than fifty thousand, not even fifty hundred thousand could compare! But as I said earlier, once our Zijin Sect's base is broken, it will create a group of homeless, miserable people. They will surely join with others whose bases have been broken to challenge the Haotian Alliance, and surely you wouldn't want to see that happen. Since we are treating this as a business matter, naturally, both sides have to make concessions."

"If you think the Zijin Sect's base is only worth fifty thousand merits, then we have nothing more to say."

The elder smiled and replied, "Of course, the Zijin Sect's base is worth more than fifty thousand merits. The sect has been painstakingly cultivating it for generations, and the merits invested in the base are beyond calculation. If it were just my Zijin Sect, let alone fifty thousand, we would be willing to offer five hundred thousand. But have you considered, my young friend, how many sects there are in the Core Circle of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge?"

Lu Ye frowned, "What do you mean?"

The elder explained, "What I mean is, if young friend agrees, the other sects of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge should also be willing to spend money to avert disaster. Fifty thousand per sect, just think, young friend, how much wealth that lone transaction would bring you?"

Seeing Lu Ye silent, the elder spoke again, "Let me do the math for you, young friend—in the Nine Provincial States, each provincial state has about ten 1st grade sects, twenty to thirty 2nd grade sects, and forty to fifty 3rd grade sects. Adding them up conservatively, there are between eighty to one hundred sects per province, and adding all the Nine Provincial States together, there are roughly eight hundred to a thousand sects of 3rd grade and above. If Haotian Alliance and Ten Thousand Demons Ridge split it evenly, Ten Thousand Demons Ridge alone would have four to five hundred sects. If each contributes fifty thousand merit's worth of goods, you could gain over twenty million merits worth of goods. With such calculations, do you still think it's too little?"

Who knew without calculating, and upon calculating, one would be startled; Lu Ye too was shocked by the elder's way of tabulation.

Worth of twenty to thirty million merits, what abundant and vast resources would that be?

Take his Boulder Mountain Saber, for instance, it was bought from the Heaven's Augury treasure vault for merely one hundred and thirty-eight merits, and it was already considered one of the pricier among the Restriction Level 9 spirit artifacts.

And those orifice repair pills, now worth sixteen million merits each, twenty to thirty million could buy hundreds of them... Of course, the Heaven's Augury treasure vault was nearly out of stock, with only the last few remaining.

"So, young friend, don't think my Zijin Sect is offering too little; fifty thousand merits is the result of my deep consideration. If you really ask for too much, which other powers of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge would dare to give you? When the time comes, they would rather lose their bases than give away so much wealth, for fear of nurturing a monster."

"Are you sure the other forces of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge would also wish to spend their wealth to avert disaster?" Lu Ye asked.

Smiling and stroking his beard, the elder replied, "Last time young friend caused some turmoil in the inner circle, wasn't it settled in exactly this way by Ten Thousand Demons Ridge? Compared to the loss of a base being captured, what is sacrificing some wealth? You have to realize, every core circle base is the result of efforts spanning several to over a dozen generations."

Lu Ye nodded.

Although the elder did not specify, Lu Ye faintly guessed that the forces of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge must have reached some consensus. The elder, seemingly representing the Zijin Sect in negotiations today, actually stood for the whole of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge! The proposal he made to spend wealth to avoid disaster was probably the best solution that Ten Thousand Demons Ridge could accept at the moment.

It wasn't a bad deal...

Lu Ye had been worried that continued attacks on Ten Thousand Demons Ridge bases could end too indirectly, perhaps even jeopardizing other Haotian Alliance forces. Choosing to spend wealth to avert disaster, while it significantly reduced his gains, would also not stir too much trouble and chaos.

And speaking of which, the merits he was currently collecting needed to be converted into sect merits which were incomparable to the direct use of assets in cultivation.

Righteous Blood Sect wasn't in urgent need of merits at the moment; the nature's spiritual energy of their base had been maximized, and even more merits could only serve to expand the range of the base.

But if it meant acquiring supplies for cultivation, then the disciples' growth rate would accelerate too.

It was a good deal.

"3rd grade sects, one hundred thousand merits; 2nd grade, two hundred thousand; 1st grade, three hundred thousand!"

If Ten Thousand Demons Ridge was making this a business, then he wouldn't blame himself for hiking the price. He naturally couldn't agree to the elder's suggested chip of fifty thousand merits per sect; others had their conditions, and he had his too.

Actually, to be realistic, merchandise worth fifty thousand merits was already quite a lot—the Boulder Mountain Saber alone could purchase hundreds of items like that.

But compared to the immense merits spent by those sects on their bases, what's one hundred thousand, two hundred thousand, or three hundred thousand really?

Lu Ye believed his pricing was fair and something that the major sects of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge could accept!

"Young friend..." The elder quickly spoke.

However, Lu Ye gave him no opportunity, taking out a ten-part map to scout and selecting a location, "I'll wait for you at Heavenly Sword Peak for ten days. After ten days, whichever sect hasn't delivered the supplies I need, I'll personally pay a visit!"

As he spoke, he took out his spirit ark and soared into the sky.

"Young friend!" the old man called out loudly, but Lu Ye completely ignored him. The old man could only watch helplessly as Lu Ye disappeared from view.

Merely one incense stick's time later, the conditions set by Lu Ye had already spread throughout all the Core Circle sects of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge.

Many people were hopping mad, cursing Lu Yiye for his insatiable greed.

As the old man had mentioned earlier, fifty thousand per family, the amount of wealth that the Righteous Blood Sect could ultimately obtain was worth two to three million merits. If they agreed to Lu Yiye's terms, the value of the wealth that would end up in the hands of the Righteous Blood Sect would be terrifying.

Merely calculating, it could be worth fifty to sixty million merits' worth of wealth!

Twenty to thirty million merits was enough to completely transform the Righteous Blood Sect, but fifty to sixty million was another concept altogether.

Unthinkable!

The more hot-tempered were even shouting, suggesting that Lu Yiye should just go ahead and break through all the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge's strongholds. Then everyone could join forces to deal with the Haotian Alliance stronghold together, and no one would get off easy.

But after all, it was just bluster...

As the elder of the Zijin Sect had put it, each family's stronghold in the core circle was the result of the hard work of several generations, even up to a dozen generations. The merits invested in these strongholds were hard to calculate. In reality, paying one hundred thousand, two hundred thousand, or three hundred thousand to mitigate disaster was actually acceptable; it was just that some people couldn't get over it internally.

The 23 sects whose strongholds had been broken nearly cried...

It would have been so much better if Lu Yiye had proposed this condition earlier. Currently, their strongholds had already been breached, and they had no idea how many years of effort it would take to rebuild them.

No one had ever thought that a Spirit Stream Realm cultivator could create such an enormous amount of wealth!

If one were to count the previous compensation Ten Thousand Demons Ridge had paid to the Haotian Alliance because of Lu Yiye, Ten Thousand Demons Ridge had lost far too much because of this man.

Heavenly Sword Peak, located in the very center of the Spirit Stream battlefield, was also at the heart of the core circle. The entire spirit mountaintop stood like a sword that had fallen from the sky, erect upon the land.

The spirit mountaintop was a thousand blades high, with rugged rocks all around.

Lu Ye chose to make the trade with the various forces of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge at Heavenly Sword Peak because of its central location. No matter which direction any Ten Thousand Demons Ridge force came from, ten days were always enough.

If they didn't arrive in ten days, it clearly meant they didn't agree with the method of mitigating disaster by paying money, and then there would be no need to be polite with them; breaking through their strongholds directly would be in order.

Lu Ye took two days to travel from the Zijin Sect to Heavenly Sword Peak.

Upon the lonely peak, there were actually people.

Two women, seemingly contemplating nature here and cultivating in tranquility.

Hearing the noise, they opened their eyes, and feeling Lu Ye looked strangely familiar, they scrutinized him closely for a moment, then were startled!

It was Lu Yiye of the Righteous Blood Sect!

The two women lamented their extremely bad luck. To encounter this Killer Star during their cultivation at Heavenly Sword Peak made them shiver involuntarily.

The older sister whispered softly, "What do we do now?"

The other woman meekly suggested, "Fight him?"

"We can't beat him; he has killed so many people recently," the elder sister shook her head.

"So what do we do?" the younger sister's voice carried a crying tone.

"How about... intentionally seduce him?" the elder sister suggested.

"With what? He looks so frightening," the younger sister looked bewildered.

"Silly, of course use your chest! I heard he really likes women with large busts. Do you know Bai Lan from the Spirit Stream Ranking? She survived under his hand because she was ample enough. You're also quite endowed, sister; you can definitely do it."

"Ah?" The younger sister clearly heard this for the first time and found it hard to accept. Suddenly seeing Lu Ye turn his head their way, her face paled dramatically.

Quickly, the elder sister slapped her in the back, and the younger sister immediately straightened her chest.

With a twitching corner of her eye, she conjured up a strained smile, but before she could speak, she saw Lu Ye glance at her indifferently and carelessly uttered a word: "Scram!"

Perhaps he had killed too many people recently to muster any killing intent.

The two women paused for a moment, then hastily conjured their spiritual artifacts, soared into the sky, and in an instant, disappeared from sight.

After flying far away, the younger sister patted her chest, "That was terrifying!"

The elder sister said, "See, I knew it, he likes them big and round! How infuriating!"