

Humanity 431

Chapter 431 Overlord's Battle

At Heavenly Sword Peak, Lu Ye sat cross-legged with the Boulder Mountain Saber resting on his knee, holding the handle with both palms facing up. With each inhale and exhale, his body and mind resonated with his saber.

He had already been here for three days, and it had been five days since he had made his conditions known to the various forces of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, but so far, no cultivator from any of those forces had shown themselves.

However, Lu Ye's powerful perception could detect that in the dark corners around him, several ghostly presences of cultivators were hidden.

Lu Ye had initially thought these ghostly cultivators were here to assassinate him, but now it seemed unlikely because if they had really come for that purpose, they would have acted by now, as he had exposed many weaknesses over the past few days.

Did Ten Thousand Demons Ridge not want to kill him? Of course, they did.

But those ghostly cultivators dared not act rashly. Lu Ye had already proposed conditions to the big sects of the Core Circle of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, urging that they could avoid disaster by paying a certain price. During such a sensitive time, which ghostly cultivator would dare make a move?

Indeed, killing Lu Yiye would be good, but if they failed, the consequences were unthinkable.

Therefore, Lu Ye had also roughly guessed the thoughts of these ghostly cultivators. Some of them stationed in the shadows were likely sent by the big sects of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge to monitor his movements, and others might have brought a lot of valuables, prepared to pay him off, merely waiting for the right moment to hand them over.

Another point was that none of these ghostly cultivators wanted to be the first to hand over the valuables. They were all waiting for someone else to make a move first, as it was not a matter to be proud of...

There were still five days left until the deadline Lu Ye had set, so there was no rush.

As time passed, the number of ghostly cultivators who had arrived at Heavenly Sword Peak and hidden themselves in the dark to observe Lu Ye had gradually increased.

Meanwhile, Heaven's Augury Mercantile Union released an interesting piece of news.

Unbeknownst when, another Overlord-class demon beast appeared in the Core Circle, and it was a shape-changing female demon. Unlike other recorded Overlord-class demon beasts, this female demon did not stick to a fixed territory but roamed around the Core Circle, seemingly in search of something.

In fact, as early as two months ago, Heaven's Augury Mercantile Union had observed this female demon, but she had not appeared frequently until recently, which had led her to increasing attention and vigilance from many.

As for what she was specifically looking for, no one knew.

The only relief was that this female demon seemed to harbor no great malice towards the cultivators; as long as they did not provoke her, she would not harm them.

According to observations by the powerhouses of Heaven's Augury Mercantile Union, this female demon was of the fire attribute and her original form was likely a fire entity. It is highly possible that she originated from the Land of Fiery Flames.

Since the Land of Fiery Flames, a forbidden area for cultivators and most suitable for fire-attribute demon beasts, had mysteriously vanished several months ago.

Thus, Heaven's Augury Mercantile Union speculated that this female demon originally lived in the Land of Fiery Flames; now that it had disappeared for unknown reasons, she had lost her territory and was searching elsewhere for a place to stay.

When the news spread, all the big sects were moved.

A shape-changing female demon could certainly be incorporated into a sect. If so, it would undoubtedly bring a significant boost to the sect. Not to mention, with such an Overlord-class female demon stationed at a location, who would dare to cause trouble?

Why had the territory of the Righteous Blood Sect been as solid as a fortress these years, with no one daring to trespass? Wasn't it because they had an Overlord-class demon beast stationed there?

Several cultivators from various sects had already tried to contact the female demon, but all attempts had ended in failure.

It wasn't until the female demon flew over Heavenly Sword Peak and suddenly seemed to discover something, landing directly in front of Lu Ye, her fiery red eyes staring at him as she muttered a few unclear words, "Found it!"

Lu Ye, who was cultivating and reading, looked up and saw her, which was quite a headache, "Why have you come here?"

He had not expected to see this Overlord-class female demon again, and from the tone of her words, it seemed she had been looking for him...

The ghostly cultivators hidden in the shadows were shocked at this moment, unclear how Lu Yiye had gotten involved with an Overlord-class female demon, and judging by their interaction, their relationship seemed... complicated?

"Looking for you!" the female demon said.

"Is something the matter?"

"Can't find that fire."

"Then it is gone."

Finding it would have been strange, for the Phoenix True Fire had long been devoured by the Talent Tree, and had now become his own Fire Phoenix Spirit Runes.

However, the female demon's persistence was admirable; after all this time, she was still looking for that fire.

The female demon shook her head, "Impossible, it's not gone. You bring me to it," she insisted, reaching out to grab Lu Ye, regardless of whether he was willing.

Lu Ye was unwilling, and not to mention that the Phoenix True Fire was gone—even if it still existed, he did not want to involve himself with such an Overlord-class demon beast, far too unsafe.

With a Single Flash, he dodged her grasp, and Lu Ye said, "Why don't you look more carefully?"

"I can't find it," the female demon shook her head, stubborn in her belief, "You bring me."

She reached out for Lu Ye again.

Lu Ye frowned, the Boulder Mountain Saber thunderously unsheathed, the blade light flashed, and the female demon deftly retracted her hand, her red eyes slightly narrow

wing, her expression turning unfriendly.

"Don't lay a finger on me when others are speaking to you politely; listen carefully," Lu Ye said, resting the long saber in front of him, his voice resolute.

"I want that fire!" the female demon said impatiently, her ten fingers rapidly sharpening into claws, fiery red demonic power surging around her.

A group of ghosts hiding in the shadows were stunned.

They had initially thought the relationship between Lu Yiye and this Overlord-class demon beast was unusual, otherwise, she wouldn't have directly sought him out; but now, it seemed, the relationship was indeed special, albeit hostile?

Now there would be a good show to watch.

Lu Ye rubbed his thumb over the hilt of the saber, his eyelids slightly drooping, and said, "Don't make a fuss; there are hundreds of brothers behind me, be careful or you won't be able to leave here today."

The female demon's sharp gaze immediately swept around, and under her watch, those ghosts hidden in the shadows felt as though they were stripped naked, each of them greatly alarmed, knowing their movements had long been detected by Lu Yiye.

Whoosh whoosh whoosh...

A series of whistling sounds broke the silence as the hidden ghosts revealed themselves, brandishing spiritual artifacts, darting in all directions.

The female demon turned her head to look at Lu Ye.

Lu Ye had already struck with his saber.

Having interacted with this female demon twice before, Lu Ye knew she was strong but not very smart—a common trait among stubborn creatures. Since she had been persistently seeking him to find the Phoenix True Fire, she wouldn't easily back down.

So, to make her rethink, he would have to fight her.

When Lu Ye first encountered her in the Land of Fiery Flames, he had only a 7th Heaven cultivation. During that brief encounter, he had been injured.

But times had changed; Lu Ye now possessed a 9th Heaven cultivation and had undergone Heaven's Augury's baptism three times, single-handedly overwhelming the entire Ten Thousand Demons Ridge camp until they were nearly suffocating.

He didn't know whether he could defeat this female demon, but only sufficient strength qualified one to converse on equal terms.

This was an eternal truth in the demon realm.

As the saber slashed down, the female demon's body floated back effortlessly as if weightless, easily dodging the attack.

However, what followed was a storm-like barrage of saber lights.

Lu Yiye began fighting the Overlord-class female demon at Heavenly Sword Peak!

The news spread like it had grown wings, sweeping across the Spirit Stream battlefield in less than the time it took to finish a cup of tea and then spreading to the Nine Provinces.

The powerhouses from various forces of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge were shaken, nearly bursting into mad laughter.

What goes around comes around; although they didn't know why Lu Yiye started fighting with that Overlord-class female demon, she was an Overlord after all. How could Lu Yiye match her?

The cultivators from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, who loathed Lu Yiye to the core, seemed to see his violent death at the hands of the female demon, eagerly awaiting the moment to celebrate.

According to the information relayed by the ghosts present, the Overlord-class female demon had come directly for Lu Yiye, appearing and stating, "I've found you," and then discussing something about a fire with Lu Yiye...

Whatever the case, the battle between the cultivator and the demon was now in full swing, with various ghosts watching from a distance, continually passing new information to the outside.

The forces of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge secretly prayed that the female demon would display her divine might and kill Lu Yiye. If he died, the Spirit Stream battlefield would be peaceful again, and they would not have to hand over their prepared goods.

However, as the news spread, the eager anticipations of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge were coldly dashed...

Lu Yiye's strength was beyond imagination; he managed to fight the Overlord-class entity impressively, with strong displays of force and cunning tactics...

Near Heavenly Sword Peak, two figures constantly interweaved and maneuvered—one was Lu Yiye, propelled by wings spirit runes, and the other was the winged female demon.

Both figures were exceedingly agile, colliding occasionally, their spirit force and demonic power staining the sky a brilliant red.

In terms of speed, Lu Yiye was not inferior to the female demon at all, even matching her in strength, and surpassing her in tactics.

The news of the great battle continued to be relayed by the secretly watching ghosts, leaving the once lively Ten Thousand Demons Ridge camp utterly silent.

Ten Thousand Demons Ridge realized a terrifying fact: Lu Yiye, capable of such a fierce battle with an Overlord-level existence, undoubtedly had the might of an Overlord-level existence himself!

This was the first time in history a cultivator had ascended to the status of an Overlord!

This battle lasted from day to night, and then from night to day...

The battlefield shifted from underground to the sky, and from the sky back to the ground...

Only after a full day and night did the battle finally cease.

Chapter 432 Are You Scolding Me?

On Heavenly Sword Peak, Lu Ye, bare-chested and covered in wounds, was sitting while Yiyi gently cleaned and dressed his injuries with herbs at his side.

The fierce battle with the female demon was strenuous, yet thrilling.

With his current strength, no one on the Spirit Stream battlefield could match him.

Before ascending to 9th Heaven, Lan Ziyi might have been able to battle him, but after his ascension, even Lan Ziyi had to step aside.

Over the past two months, Lan Ziyi, who was ranked second on the Spirit Stream Ranking did not challenge him, which spoke volumes.

The only ones who could duel with him were those Overlord entities.

The battle had no definite winner or loser, one could say they both won and lost; he and the female demon were injured to varying degrees, both nearing their limits as they fought to exhaustion.

Following the battle, the female demon quickly left the scene. Despite her simple mind, she knew better than to show herself in her current condition and it was unknown where she had gone to recuperate.

Lu Ye did not leave; he needed to wait here for the people from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge to bring the items.

Under the cover of night, the sound of someone stepping on dry leaves echoed.

Amber immediately entered into alert mode, and Yiyi cautiously scanned the surroundings while Lu Ye, still seated, raised his hand to grip the Boulder Mountain Saber.

This was his most vulnerable moment; if the people from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge truly wanted to kill him, now would be their best chance.

A figure appeared not far in front of Lu Ye, dressed unmistakably as a ghost cultivator. He stopped about thirty feet away from Lu Ye and cupped his fists in salute from a distance before raising his hand and tossing a bulging storage sack toward him.

Yiyi caught it with her hand then lifted her eyes to see that the ghost cultivator had already disappeared. From beginning to end, he didn't utter a word or reveal his origins.

Thoughtful, Yiyi quickly opened the storage sack and took out a jade tablet inscribed with three large characters, clearly the name of a core circle power from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge.

Softly, Lu Ye said a word and he nodded slightly, indicating he understood.

After the first ghost cultivator appeared, more and more appeared, throwing storage sacks toward Lu Ye from a distance and swiftly escaping without a word.

Using wealth to avert disasters wasn't a glorious deed, so those ghost cultivators delivering the tribute maintained their silence. The storage sacks left messages and Lu Ye would understand which sect had complied and which had not.

Soon, the storage sacks were flying in like rain, Yiyi briefly unable to gather them all.

Many of the ghost cultivators involved in delivering the goods did not even show their faces but merely tossed their storage sacks from a distance, ensuring they were collected on Lu Ye's end before considering their task complete.

At this moment, there were still three full days left until the ten-day deadline set by Lu Ye.

Originally, these ghost cultivators delivering goods had resolved to wait until the last day, but after Lu Ye's battle with the female demon, the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge side was completely without spirit.

The current Lu Ye was universally recognized as a cultivator who had entered the ranks of the Overlords, pioneering an unprecedented first, leaving no Ten Thousand Demons Ridge sect daring to act rashly.

Moreover, the precedent of twenty-three sect headquarters being breached lay before them.

Some sects had intended to negotiate with Lu Ye, hoping to pay less, considering even a 1st grade sect would find it challenging to produce items valued at three hundred thousand merit at once.

But now, they could not make such a request; facing an Overlord, spending money to ensure peace was an acceptable affair.

By the time dawn arrived, the storage sacks laid before Lu Ye had grown to number four to five hundred.

Feeling somewhat dizzy, Yiyi looked at the storage sacks and murmured, "Lu Ye, we're rich!"

"We're rich!" Lu Ye nodded emphatically.

Handing over the ten-part map to Yiyi, he left her to manage the task of inventorying the wealth. Using the map's annotations, she would check whether the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge forces had delivered adequate amounts of goods, a tedious task best suited for Yiyi.

Lu Ye needed to recuperate, after all.

"Oh, and hold onto the storage sack from Mad Saber Sect," Lu Ye instructed further.

"Okay."

Three days later, Lu Ye's injuries were almost healed and the contents of the several hundred storage sacks had been thoroughly inventoried and categorized by Yiyi, grouping different types of goods together.

Even after careful organization, it was impossible to store the contents of several hundred storage sacks into one; there were simply too many items.

In the end, there were still about thirty full storage sacks. Lu Ye frowned slightly, having so many sacks hanging from his body was somewhat unsightly and could hinder combat...

But this was an unavoidable problem, a rich man's dilemma that few could empathize with.

According to Yiyi's comparison with the ten-part map, the core circle, aside from the twenty-three sects previously breached by Lu Ye, all other Ten Thousand Demons Ridge sects had sent their dues without omission.

"This one is from Mad Saber Sect." Yiyi handed over a storage sack kept aside to Lu Ye who opened it to see a mix of various items inside—elixir pills, Spirit Stones, and even Spiritual Artifacts and herbs. Lu Ye couldn't immediately estimate the value, but given Mad Saber Sect was affiliated with Dingzhou and a 1st grade sect, the contents should ostensibly be worth three hundred thousand merit.

"Do you think this is worth three hundred thousand?" Lu Ye asked Yiyi.

"Maybe?" Yiyi was also uncertain; she vaguely felt Lu Ye harbored some ill intentions.

"If you're unsure, then it's not enough!" Lu Ye suddenly said with a fierce tone, "Mad Saber Sect really has a lot of nerve. It seems they don't want their headquarters anymore."

Yiyi's eyes twitched, "What are you planning to do?" She was unclear why Lu Ye seemed to be targeting Mad Saber Sect.

"To Mad Saber Sect!" Lu Ye stood up, summoned his Flying Spirit Artifact, and soared into the sky.

Only half a day later, Lu Ye's figure landed in front of the Mad Saber Sect's base.

Immediately, a cultivator from the Mad Saber Sect sensed the commotion and came to investigate, spotting at first glance a young figure with a circle of storage sacks hanging around his waist.

Those storage sacks hung from his belly to his back, leaving the cultivator dumbfounded.

He had never seen anyone carry so many storage sacks; Lu Ye's current appearance was only short of having the word "wealthy" engraved on his forehead.

Upon seeing the young man's face, the cultivator's expression changed drastically, "Lu Yiye!"

Lu Ye acted as if he didn't exist, activated Insight Spirit Runes to observe the array nodes in front of him, and then planted several array banners.

"Lu Yiye, what are you doing?" Seeing what Lu Ye was doing, the cultivator couldn't help but shout angrily.

Rumors had it that Lu Yiye had unique skills in array destruction; sects that had their bases breached by him were first infiltrated through special means into their protective arrays, where he would then wreak havoc.

So, seeing what Lu Ye was doing now, the cultivator became somewhat panicked.

And as he finished speaking, Lu Ye had already lifted a corner of the big array and casually walked in.

The cultivator immediately stepped back several paces, grabbed his Spiritual Artifact with his hand, and, though fearful, yelled out, "Lu Yiye is attacking!"

In an instant, the entire Mad Saber Sect's base was in an uproar, figures flying in from all directions to gather tens of meters in front of Lu Ye, ready for battle.

True to its status as a 1st grade sect's base, the response was extremely swift; less than ten breaths after the shout, dozens of people had already assembled.

Though they had heard of him, most were seeing Lu Ye, the living legend, for the first time. They couldn't help but size him up and down, noticing nothing particularly remarkable, but his status as an Overlord demanded their utmost attention.

So, even though the Mad Saber Sect had superiority in numbers, the cultivators were tense and apprehensive, in stark contrast to Lu Ye, who, alone in the enemy's protective array, was composed and at ease.

A man of striking appearance stepped forward, his voice grave, "Lu Yiye, you have intruded into our Mad Saber Sect base, what are your intentions?"

The person who could speak at this time must be either the Governor or the Deputy Governor; no one else had that authority.

Lu Ye tossed the storage sack in his hand toward the man.

The man caught it, frowned as he opened it, and quickly packed it up, his expression sour, "What do you mean?"

The storage sack was clearly handed by him to a ghost cultivator under his command, then sent to Heavenly Sword Peak.

It was also the property the Mad Saber Sect paid for, worth three hundred thousand merit.

Lu Yiye suddenly returning the untouched storage sack clearly indicated his hostile intentions.

"Not enough!"

"Did you check it thoroughly?" the man said through gritted teeth.

It wasn't possible that it was not enough! The man and an elder from the True Lake Realm from his sect were responsible for this, so he was more aware than anyone else of what items and their values were in the storage sack.

Having chosen to pay off the disaster with wealth, the Mad Saber Sect naturally would not skimp on the assets, as that would undoubtedly invite trouble.

"You can now sell them to Heaven's Augury treasure vault and see if it amounts to three hundred thousand merit," Lu Ye said expressionlessly as he watched him.

Although he didn't know the exact value of these assets, selling them to Heaven's Augury treasure vault would definitely net less than three hundred thousand, something he could be sure of because there was a nearly double price difference between buying and selling at the treasure vault.

The man's color changed, "Are you calculating this way?" If so, they would have to pay the equivalent value in assets.

It was an outright outrage!

"Do you see a problem?"

It was not just a problem; it was a huge problem!

Moreover, as far as he knew, the assets paid by other Ten Thousand Demons Ridge powers were calculated based on the purchase price from Heaven's Augury treasure vault, not the selling value.

The man clenched his teeth and laughed sarcastically, "Lu Yiye, don't be too greedy!"

"Are you scolding me?" Lu Ye fixed his gaze on him.

"I didn't..."

His words had just finished when his face turned pale, because in his field of view, Lu Ye's figure suddenly blurred with an afterimage, and in an instant, he was up close with a fiery red saber light slashing down. The man hurriedly summoned his Spiritual Artifact to defend.

With a booming sound, great force hurled the man back into the crowd. He staggered to his feet, blood already trickling from the corner of his mouth!

His face was full of shock. Being ranked in the twenties on the Spirit Stream Ranking, he hadn't even been able to withstand a normal slash from Lu Ye!

"This matter today won't be solved without twenty volumes of saber skills insights!" Lu Ye's voice rang out slowly.

Chapter 433 Not Accepting Bargaining

Third Senior Brother Xiao Xinghe's insights into saber skills greatly aided Lu Ye, and it should be known that Third Senior Brother is currently only at the True Lake Realm.

Ever since Lu Ye obtained those insights, he had been thinking that it would be wonderful to have more insights into saber skills.

However, looking across the Nine Provinces, there was no sect within the Haotian Alliance that was famous for their saber skills...

There was a sword sect, though, the Beixuan Sword Sect of Bingzhou. Thus, sword cultivators from various major sects in the Nine Provinces liked to go to Beixuan Sword Sect to further their studies and improve their mastery of the Sword Dao.

Since Lu Ye practiced saber technique, going to the Beixuan Sword Sect wouldn't make much sense for him, and he certainly couldn't dare to approach the Mad Saber Sect of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge—if he did, he wouldn't see not just tomorrow's sun, but even tonight's moon.

Unable to visit the main branch of the Mad Saber Sect, storming into the Mad Saber Sect's establishment on the Spirit Stream battlefield should pose no problem.

He didn't expect the strong saber users of the Mad Saber Sect to personally guide him. He would be content with twenty portions of saber skills insights, just like those from Third Senior Brother.

If it weren't for this reason, why would he specifically target the Mad Saber Sect out of hundreds of sects from the Core Circle of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge?

After he spoke those words, the cultivators of the Mad Saber Sect finally understood Lu Ye's intention for coming.

Claims that the contents of the storage sack were worth less than three hundred thousand merit points were all nonsense. He had come here to demand insights into saber skills—that was the truth.

Inside the light curtain of the big array, upon seeing their Governor wounded by Lu Ye with a single strike, someone immediately couldn't contain themselves and their figure flickered as they rushed towards Lu Ye.

Lu Ye's eyelids drooped low, his long saber obliquely pointing towards the ground, spirit force surged, and the blade shimmered with flames.

"Halt!" The man quickly bellowed in anger, and seeing his own cultivator stop in their tracks, he breathed a sigh of relief.

They absolutely couldn't let their own cultivators clash with Lu Yiye. If a battle were to break out, no one knew how many would die before it was over. The Xuanqing Palace was a lesson from the recent past!

The first stronghold that Lu Yiye broke through in the Core Circle was Xuanqing Palace. During that battle, Xuanqing Palace's cultivators suffered seventy to eighty percent casualties, and their vital energy was greatly damaged; it was unknown how many years it would take for them to recover.

Although the grade of the Mad Saber Sect was higher than that of Xuanqing Palace, the overall strength of the cultivators at the Spirit Stream Realm level wasn't much stronger than those of Xuanqing Palace.

If Lu Yiye could kill seventy percent of Xuanqing Palace's cultivators, he could naturally kill seventy percent of the Mad Saber Sect's as well. By then, not even their own stronghold could be preserved, and the accumulation of more than a dozen generations would be destroyed in an instant.

Taking deep breaths for a while, the man said, "Lu Yiye, don't go too far."

"If you're not the one to decide, then go find someone who can. I have urgent matters to attend to. I'll give you one hour. If there isn't a satisfying result after one hour, I'll break your Mad Saber Sect stronghold!"

The man stared deeply at Lu Ye for a long time before turning his head to instruct the people beside him and hurriedly left.

This matter was indeed beyond his authority; he had to return to the Nine Provinces sect headquarters and ask for instructions from the powerful members within the sect.

Lu Ye sheathed his Boulder Mountain Saber and planted the scabbard in front of him, with both hands resting on the hilt, closing his eyes to conserve his energy, waiting.

A group of Mad Saber Sect cultivators stood confronting him, separated by dozens of paces, but due to the orders from their departing Governor, none dared to make any rash moves. They could only glare at Lu Ye hatefully, using their gaze to vent the frustration and anger in their hearts.

Some were also curiously observing Lu Ye as they had heard the name Lu Yiye of the Righteous Blood Sect many times, but this was their first time seeing him in person.

Time trickled by.

Suddenly, a valiant-looking female cultivator stepped out of the crowd, offering a cup of tea held in both hands as she approached Lu Ye.

"Our honored guest has arrived, please enjoy the tea!"

Lu Ye opened his eyes, gazing down at her from above.

The female cultivator's lips curled into a mocking smile, "Don't you dare?"

They indeed couldn't beat Lu Ye, but if they are humiliated at their doorstep without any resistance, they wouldn't be the fearless saber users they claimed to be.

The Governor had instructed them not to engage in conflict with Lu Ye before he left.

Serving tea, of course, did not constitute a conflict, and it was also a way to treat a guest.

But from Lu Ye's standpoint, no one would dare to drink this tea casually—who knew if it was poisoned? The female cultivator simply wanted to retaliate silently in this way, to quell Lu Ye's arrogance.

If Lu Ye was afraid to take the tea, then the moniker "Cowardly Lu Yiye" would surely spread afterward. After all, the man was not short of nicknames and wouldn't care for one more.

While the female cultivator was thinking this, Lu Ye took the teacup and drained it with a tilt of his head.

Who cares if it's poisoned or not; poison won't kill him anyway!

The corner of the female cultivator's eye twitched.

There was no poison in the tea, but she truly didn't expect that Lu Yiye would be so audacious. She regretted inwardly—if only she had put some deadly poison in the tea! Maybe it could have killed the bastard outright, making for an enormous feat.

Now it looked as though she had genuinely come to offer tea to Lu Ye...

Before the hour was up, the man who had left earlier returned.

He made his way through the crowd and stood firm before the cultivators. Before he could speak, Lu Ye said, "I will not accept any bargaining. Your Mad Saber Sect has been handed down for so many years with countless strong saber users. Twenty portions of saber skills insights shouldn't be too much for you."

The man's prepared response was stuck in his throat.

Before coming here, the elders in the sect had given clear instructions to bargain with Lu Ye to see if they could give fewer saber skills insights. Although these were not unique copies, giving them to Lu Yiye was like providing aid to the enemy. Naturally, they should give as little as possible and withhold if they could.

This was different from giving wealth...

Lu Ye clearly anticipated this and deflected the statement, leaving the Mad Saber Sect no opportunity.

After giving Lu Ye a deep look, the man raised his hand and tossed over a storage sack, which Lu Ye caught.

The storage sack had no restriction locks, so he reached inside and pulled out several hand-written notes, randomly selecting one to open and read. The ink on the pages hadn't even fully dried, indicating they must have just been rubbed down.

He gave a cursory scan of the content to confirm it indeed contained insights on saber skills cultivation without any mistakes.

After checking several books in succession, he found no significant issues.

Only then did Lu Ye carefully store the saber cultivation insights and looked up at the man, reaching out his hand and saying, "The item!"

The man's face was grim, "What item?"

What else could it be?

Lu Ye said as a matter of course, "The thing I initially gave to you!"

The man looked at Lu Ye in shock, "You want it back?"

"Nonsense!" Lu Ye said expressionlessly, "That was the protection money for your Mad Saber Sect, and naturally, I must take it back; of course, if you don't want this protection, it's all the same to me."

The man was so angry it hurt, and he took off the storage sack from his waist and threw it directly to Lu Ye.

After securing it, Lu Ye spoke again, "Am I leaving on my own, or are you allowing me to leave?"

"Open the array!" the man barked.

Why create trouble when the person can leave anyway? Though rage simmered in his heart, the most prudent action for now was to quickly usher this plague out!

A gap opened in the big array, and Lu Ye soared into the sky, disappearing in the blink of an eye.

Watching the direction where Lu Ye departed, every cultivator from the Mad Saber Sect clenched their fists, as endless humiliation and anger churned within them.

Controlling his flight through weapon control, Lu Ye consulted the ten-part map and followed its guidance towards the Ten Thousand Poisons Forest.

Almost done dealing with matters in the Core Circle, besides the twenty-three sects whose bases he had previously destroyed within the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, all the other sects had paid protection money, so it wasn't right for Lu Ye to create more trouble.

He was planning to return to the Righteous Blood Sect headquarters.

He was still the governor of the Righteous Blood Sect, so he had to hand over this role to a suitable candidate before his promotion to Cloud River.

Moreover, after having taken down those twenty-three bases and looted a great amount of resources, he needed to return to the sect headquarters to deal with it.

Another reason was that he had too many storage sacks on hand, worth fifty to sixty million merits, which he had to bring back to Shui Yuan at the headquarters. Carrying so much was not something Lu Ye felt at ease with.

In ten days, the blessing of Heaven's Augury was due, and based on previous experiences and Lu Ye's estimation, the Spirit Mist from the Heaven's Augury Pond wouldn't be of much help to him after this time.

His cultivation had reached the end of the Spirit Stream Realm, having gained all the benefits there were to gain, and apart from one last unaccomplished task, there was no further need to stay on the Spirit Stream battlefield.

The reason he was heading to the Ten Thousand Poisons Forest was, of course, to leave some cultivation materials for Hua Ci.

Having confirmed his direction, he was flying along the way when a message suddenly came through his battlefield marking.

Lu Ye looked at it and saw a message from his Second Senior Sister, Shui Yuan.

"Before your promotion to Cloud River, come back to the sect headquarters!"

"Got it."

Lu Ye wasn't sure why Second Senior Sister had reminded him of this, but he was already intending to go back in that direction.

Two days later, Lu Ye directly descended into the Ten Thousand Poisons Forest, appearing in front of the cabin.

Not seeing Hua Ci, the woman was probably cultivating somewhere.

Lu Ye didn't go looking for her. Instead, he went straight to the third floor, lay down on the bed, and fell into a comfortable sleep.

In the entire Spirit Stream battlefield, this was the only place where he could totally relax, much more so than at his own base.

Unfortunately, he couldn't stay here forever.

He didn't know how long he had slept when he was woken up by a fragrant scent and laughter. By the time Lu Ye opened his eyes, it was already bright daylight. The voices of Yiyi and Hua Ci were coming from outside the window.

Lu Ye got up and walked to the window, looking down. He saw the smoke curling up from below and the two women chatting and busy working.

He rested his arms on the window sill, quietly watching the scene below, his heart filled with warmth.

If it weren't for Hua Ci tossing some lively and bizarre creatures into a clay pot to make soup, that warmth might have lasted a long time.

"Lu Ye, you're awake?" Yiyi looked up, locking eyes with Lu Ye and waving to him.

"Hmm!" Lu Ye casually responded, ducking his head back in, "Call me when it's time to eat."

He sat cross-legged on the bed, took out a book of saber cultivation insights from his storage sack, and began to study it attentively.

As the Mad Saber Sect was concentrated with saber users, and being a 1st grade sect, the sect had countless formidable practitioners who wielded sabers since ancient times, leaving behind innumerable insights on saber cultivation that were challenging to enumerate.

Chapter 434 Triumphant Return

Lu Ye went to the Mad Saber Sect to ask for twenty sets of saber skills cultivation experience. For the Mad Saber Sect, this was not an issue at all, and he could be certain that the saber skills cultivation experience they provided were all quite basic, and would definitely not include any advanced cultivation techniques.

Lu Ye never expected them to offer anything profound.

As he looked through the contents of the letter, he gradually gained some insights.

It was only when Yiyi came over with a washbasin, wet a towel, and meticulously scrubbed Lu Ye's face a few times.

Moments later, in the small courtyard outside the wooden house, Lu Ye and Hua Ci sat opposite each other, feasting heartily.

After eating his fill, Lu Ye said, "I'm going back to the garrison. I should be promoted to Cloud River in a while. What are your plans?"

"I don't have any plans for the moment," Hua Ci replied indifferently while cleaning up.

"Are you planning to stay here indefinitely?" Lu Ye didn't understand.

"Don't worry about me. I have my own plans. Besides, if you diligently cultivate, who knows, even if I were at the Spirit Stream battlefield, I might progress faster in cultivation than you," Hua Ci said, squeezing her eyes at him.

Lu Ye snorted, "Then I really need to work hard."

Standing up, he summoned his spirit ark and leapt onto it, "I've left some cultivation resources for you in the room on the third floor. I'll wait for you at the Cloud River battlefield."

"Go ahead."

Lu Ye nodded his head, soared into the sky, and disappeared as a trail of light.

Watching Lu Ye leave, Hua Ci smiled and continued to clean up the messy dining table. She didn't feel too much bitterness from the departure because a brief separation was just for a better reunion later on.

When Lu Ye first set out from the garrison into the Core Circle, he had to relay with Giant Armor for weapon control, and it took him a total of ten days to travel from the Righteous Blood Sect's garrison to the Loyal Heart Sect's garrison.

But now his cultivation had greatly increased, and both the speed and the endurance of his weapon control were incomparable to before, so this time, it took him less than three days to return to the Righteous Blood Sect's garrison.

Being a Governor, he was able to enter the protective array without raising any alarm, but as soon as he entered, he was detected by a cultivator responsible for monitoring the garrison. The cultivator approached to investigate and, seeing that it was Lu Ye, exclaimed joyfully, "Fifth Senior Brother is back!"

The news rapidly spread outward, with more and more people gathering here.

Lu Ye glanced around, noting the large number of cultivators in his sect's garrison, most of whom were unfamiliar faces with only a small number being recognizable.

Among those unfamiliar faces, some appeared noticeably young, around twelve or thirteen years old...

Lu Ye guessed that these young kids were probably new disciples recently accepted into the sect. As for the older ones, perhaps some were from his sect, but many were likely from outside sects that had come to the Righteous Blood Sect for affiliation and cultivation.

Looking at the outer circle of the battlefield, there were countless sects, but in terms of nature's spiritual energy richness, the Righteous Blood Sect's garrison was second to none because Lu Ye had already bought the enhancement of the garrison's Spiritual Energy to its limit the last time he was here.

The concentration was eleven times greater than outdoors, unmatched by any other sect in the outer circle.

If there were to break this limit, it could only happen if the grade of the Righteous Blood Sect was elevated to 6th grade, allowing the garrison to move into the inner circle of the battlefield.

Moreover, the Righteous Blood Sect was currently riding high, with other sects within the vicinity of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge being completely suppressed, unable to raise their heads. Coming here for affiliated cultivation guaranteed efficiency and safety, which is why sects on good terms with the Righteous Blood Sect were willing to send their less advanced Disciples here.

The only downside might be the slower rate of earning merit.

In the garrison, pairs of eyes watched with curiosity, admiration, reverence – a mix of emotions.

To Lu Ye's surprise, he found that most of the cultivators he used to know were no longer visible.

People like Kong Niu, Ruan Lingyu, He Xiyang, and Guo Yang had all entered the inner circle.

The Spirit Stream battlefield was always like this, new generations replacing the old, cultivators forever toiling on the vast battlefield, striving for their cultivation and future. Those who survived in this tumultuous tide were the ultimate winners.

Lu Ye didn't even know who the current Deputy Governor of the Righteous Blood Sect was...

Entering the Heaven's Augury Hall, he exchanged the enhancements plundered from the devastating of those Ten Thousand Demons Ridge garrisons into sect merit. He could see, with his naked eye, the number representing the sect's merit crazily and rapidly increasing.

To think, garrisons belonging to twenty or thirty Core Circle sects had been breached, and all their enhancements had been taken by Lu Ye alone. Even though there had been heavy losses during the plundering, the final amount he obtained was still terrifying.

After one incense stick's time, the sect's merit settled on a figure starting with the number three, in tens of millions...

With such a vast amount of sect merit, looking across the entire Spirit Stream battlefield, probably only the Righteous Blood Sect could claim such wealth.

With so much merit, the Righteous Blood Sect's garrison could extend its radiation range by more than a dozen times.

However, Lu Ye did not plan to use these merits for the time being. It was certain that the sect's grade would be elevated, only the timing was a question. Once the grade was advanced enough to relocate to the inner circle, a substantial amount of merit would inevitably be spent. There was no particular need to spend merit on the current Righteous Blood Sect's garrison, so accumulating more was no harm.

He merely allocated himself a monthly stipend, rounding up his own merits to an exact 100,000.

Using the Heaven's Augury Pillar, he returned to his sect headquarters.

Shui Yuan, who had already received the news, was waiting in front of the Heaven's Augury Hall. Sensing movement, she looked up to see Lu Ye with a row of storage sacks hanging from his waist walking out, and she couldn't help but chuckle.

She had long heard that their little junior brother, after breaking through over twenty garrisons of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, had extorted quite a lot of benefits from the remaining hundreds of Ten Thousand Demons sects. It seemed now that those benefits were quite substantial indeed.

"Second Senior Sister," Lu Ye approached.

Shui Yuan nodded and gave him a glance, "You've gotten darker and stronger."

"Can't help it with the wind and sun," he replied while untying the storage sacks from his waist and handing them all to Shui Yuan, immediately feeling much lighter.

"So many!" Shui Yuan knew that Lu Ye had made a fortune this trip, but she didn't know the exact amount. After all, Ten Thousand Demons Ridge had not broadcasted the details. Only now, after a brief inspection, did she realize the extent of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge's loss this time.

"Leave it for the sect's development, handle it as you see fit," Lu Ye said, "I'm going to greet the sect master."

"The old man's not here," Shui Yuan informed him.

"Then I'll go greet Madam Yun." Every time he returned from the outside, these two elders were the first ones he had to see, as a matter of courtesy.

"Wait a moment," Shui Yuan called out, then took a wooden box out of the storage sack and handed it to Lu Ye.

Lu Ye took it and opened it to see two jade vials inside, each containing some amber-colored elixir pills, the size of soybeans.

"These were refined using the honey you had Giant Armor bring back. They have beautifying effects. Madam Yun should like them," Shui Yuan said.

Women always care about their appearance, especially those of a certain age, fearing the day when their beauty fades. So in the cultivation world, items with beautifying effects are generally highly sought after by female cultivators.

Lu Ye was surprised, "That honey has that kind of effect?"

He really didn't know.

Last time, when Giant Armor advanced to Cloud River in the Ten Thousand Poisons Forest and before returning to the sect, Lu Ye had him bring back a large quantity of honey. His original intention was to let Shui Yuan research whether it could be used to refine elixir pills for restoring spirit force, but now it seemed that instead of pills for restoring spirit force, they had refined ones for preserving beauty.

"It does. I've tried it," Shui Yuan said with a smile, "And bringing this is certainly better than every time you bring fish."

"Second Senior Sister has thought things through." With that, Lu Ye simply handed over all his stored honey to Shui Yuan. Since the honey had beautifying properties, it would be wasted staying in his possession.

He also handed over the remaining royal jelly to Shui Yuan, not much was left. As for how to handle it, that was Second Senior Sister's matter now.

Summoning his Spiritual Artifact, he went straight to Bright Heart Peak to see Madam Yun and present the gifts he brought. Madam Yun was indeed delighted, praising Lu Ye for his filial piety and understanding.

However, there were still assessments that needed to be made. During his time outside the sect, Lu Ye had improved his skills in the Path of Spirit Runes, so dealing with Madam Yun's assessment wasn't difficult.

After receiving some advice, Lu Ye benefited greatly.

He returned the books he had borrowed earlier and borrowed a new set.

Lu Ye discovered that he had already read nearly half of the books on the Path of Spirit Runes collected by Madam Yun.

By evening, Lu Ye bid farewell to Madam Yun.

"Come find me after you advance to Cloud River."

"Yes," Lu Ye acknowledged.

"Go on then."

It was the same maid who did not speak but only smiled that saw Lu Ye out.

Every time he saw this maid, Lu Ye always felt a bizarre sensation, as if the maid wasn't as real as she appeared...

Back at Jade Cauldron Peak, Second Senior Sister had prepared a table of medicinal meals.

Lu Ye rolled up his sleeves and dug in.

"By the way, Second Senior Sister, why did you want me to come back to the sect before advancing to Cloud River?" Lu Ye asked while he ate.

"Nothing much, just wanted you to advance here at the sect's location so the other disciples could observe. Also, the old man said your advancement this time might be a little out of the ordinary."

"Out of the ordinary?"

"Yes, I can't explain it now because the old man isn't certain either. You'll find out whether it's true or not when the time comes," Shui Yuan said as she served food to Lu Ye.

Lu Ye nodded and then said, "Then tell me about the Cloud River battlefield, Second Senior Sister."

Since he would be entering the Cloud River battlefield after advancing to Cloud River, he naturally wanted to understand some information about it in advance.

"The Cloud River battlefield..." Shui Yuan's eyes glimmered with reminiscence, and she smiled, "That place is completely different from the Spirit Stream battlefield, and it's much more interesting than the Spirit Stream battlefield, but also much more dangerous..."

It was apparent that Shui Yuan had also experienced the trials of the Cloud River battlefield. She then explained some of the rules within the Cloud River battlefield to Lu Ye, who listened intently and memorized them carefully.

In the end, Shui Yuan cautioned him, "Remember one thing, in the Cloud River battlefield, the forces from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge are not eternal enemies. Sometimes you even need to cooperate with them to achieve your own goals."

"Understood," Lu Ye said.

Chapter 435 The Journey Taken

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The next day, outside the Spirit Stream battlefield, at the Righteous Blood Sect's encampment.

In the Council Hall, Lu Ye sat waiting. Moments later, two people stepped inside and, upon reaching Lu Ye, bowed together: "Fifth Senior Brother."

Lu Ye put down his teacup and looked at the two familiar faces, two of the earliest disciples to join the Righteous Blood Sect.

However, due to their background as independent cultivators with limited aptitude, even after so much time, their cultivation had not increased much. Now one was at Level 7 realm, while the other was at Level 6.

Even so, their current situation was far better than their wild aspirations when they were independent cultivators. When they joined the Righteous Blood Sect, they were only at Level 3-4 realms and thought they could at most cultivate to Levels 7-8 in their lifetime. But now, it seemed they could look forward to an even brighter future.

The Righteous Blood Sect's encampment provided a nourishing environment for cultivation, and the resources for cultivation were exceedingly abundant. Therefore, even the original independent cultivators had grown beyond their natural potentials.

Lu Ye looked at the one at Level 7 realm: "Duan Yi!"

"Present."

"Transfer your Deputy Governor authority to Cheng Mu."

Cheng Mu was the cultivator at Level 6.

"Yes."

Duan Yi complied, asking for Heaven's Augury to transfer his Deputy Governor authority along with the Deputy Governor seal to Cheng Mu.

After he was done, Lu Ye then handed over the Governor authority and the big seal to Duan Yi.

With this, the Level 7 realm Duan Yi became the Governor, and the Level 6 realm Cheng Mu became the Deputy.

Choosing Cheng Mu as the Deputy was not Lu Ye's own idea, but a comprehensive decision after consulting with Second Senior Sister the previous night.

As the Righteous Blood Sect's new generation of disciples was still growing and couldn't yet bear the main responsibilities, the Governor and Deputy had to be chosen from among the very first group of disciples who pledged their loyalty.

Although Duan Yi and Cheng Mu did not have significant aptitude, they were steady people and handled affairs appropriately. In the current Righteous Blood Sect encampment, their abilities were still considered respectable.

The reason for not choosing another cultivator at Level 7 as the Deputy was mainly due to the close proximity of advancing to Level 8. Once they reached Level 8, they would have to leave the encampment.

Choosing someone at Level 6 meant they could stay longer at the encampment. By the time Cheng Mu advanced to Level 7 realm, Duan Yi would almost be ready to leave, making Cheng Mu the perfect person to take over.

"When Gu Yang took over as Deputy Governor, I told him that besides managing the encampment well, he should also look for the next candidates for Governor and Deputy. I have the same message for you two. In the future, the encampment here will require much of your effort."

"We will not let the sect and Fifth Senior Brother down," both stated together.

Lu Ye nodded slightly, "Go, cultivate earnestly. Do not preoccupy yourselves with matters of aptitude and talent. Your future is not limited to the outskirts of the battlefield."

After the two left, Lu Ye exited the Council Hall, used weapon control to rise into the air, and arrived at a nearby spirit mountaintop. Little Gray flapped its wings and approached. Lu Ye took out a Blood Red

Trout from his storage sack to feed it. Little Gray gobbled them up one by one, clearly enjoying them as if they were mere bugs.

Lu Ye stroked its tail feathers and said, "When Big Senior Brother left the Spirit Stream battleground, he asked you to protect our sect's encampment. Now, our sect has gone through the hardest of times. The days ahead will only get better, and if you wish to leave, you are free to do so anytime. You don't have to keep guard here anymore. Of course, if you want to come back, you're always welcome. And if you'd like to stay, that's even better."

Little Gray, being an Overlord-class demon beast, undoubtedly understood human emotions, so Lu Ye knew it could understand his words.

The Righteous Blood Sect had been in decline for thirty years, and Little Gray had guarded the encampment for as long. Even when there was not a single disciple left, it remained faithful to Big Senior Brother's last command and never left. The once young eagle had grown into an Overlord-class existence over the years.

But it was a soaring eagle at heart, yearning for freedom and the sky. Therefore, Lu Ye thought it was time to offer it a greater opportunity for freedom and choice.

As for what Little Gray would choose, that was entirely its own matter.

A while later, Lu Ye took off into the sky using weapon control, rapidly disappearing from sight.

Sometime after, a clear eagle's cry rang out. The many disciples of the Righteous Blood Sect looked up to see Little Gray soaring away with powerful wingbeats, gradually moving further into the distance.

Traveling swiftly eastward.

Five days later, Lu Ye passed a remarkably flat mountain peak and descended.

This peak appeared so unusual, as if some peerless strongman had sliced off the top of the spirit mountaintop with a single blow—leaving the surface as flat and polished as a mirror.

On that peak, dark bloodstains still lingered, evidence of a fierce battle that had taken place there.

Golden Light Peak!

Back then, with his Spirit Stream Level 5 cultivation, he fought forty-three battles in a row here, slaughtering numerous cultivators from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge at Level 6, ultimately fighting for a chance at survival for himself.

This was where Lu Ye made his name.

It was also where the legend began.

It's been nearly two years now!

How time flies!

In two years, from Spirit Stream Level 5 to the 9th Heaven level, his pace of cultivation had been very fast. Only those born into the top sects with exceptional talent and aptitude could hope to compete with Lu Ye.

Rumor had it that Golden Light Peak hid a fortuitous opportunity because the terrain had been carved out by a powerful swordsman, leaving the essence of his saber skills behind.

Yet Lu Ye had not felt anything special here.

He continued on his journey, moving steadily forward.

A day later, he passed a spirit mountaintop, and below was a valley.

It was here that, riding Amber, he had once roared, "Lu Ye is here!"

...

...

In that valley, Lann Yudie and the cultivators of the Beidou Sect were blocking the pursuers from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge for him, fighting bitterly in a bath of blood...

He continued on his way, following the same path he had trodden two years earlier.

Back then, how weak he was, riding Amber, with Yiyi accompanying him as he departed from Qingyun Mountain. Clutching a ten-part map, he headed towards the Righteous Blood Sect's territory, facing trials and tribulations along the way.

Yet two years later, he could traverse in one day the distance that previously took a month or two to complete.

Now, he had grown into an existence at the level of an Overlord.

His emotions surged.

The sky in the outer circle was very calm, unlike the core circle, where, when flying by means of weapon control, one would occasionally encounter other cultivators doing the same.

The cultivators in the outer circle were not highly skilled in their cultivation; they lacked even the means to fly on weapons, so how could they bump into anyone?

Departing from the territory of the Righteous Blood Sect, it took Lu Ye a full ten days to arrive at a sect of the Haotian Alliance.

The ten-part map showed that this place was Mount Qingyu.

Nearby were two other forces from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, one was the Tailuo Sect, and the other was the Qin family.

At the junction of the three forces was Hundred Peaks Mountain, with a total of one hundred peaks. Over the last two years or so, Lu Ye had slain many from the Tailuo Sect and the Qin family there.

Soaring down outside the Mount Qingyu territory, Lu Ye scrutinized the protective array before him.

The reaction of the sects in the outer circle was much poorer than those in the core circle. When Lu Ye appeared at the sects in the core circle, he was detected almost instantly, which then led to chaos.

But when he came to the territory of Mount Qingyu, none of the cultivators there noticed him.

It was only after a long while that a cultivator passing by saw Lu Ye standing outside the big array and immediately became vigilant.

Just as Lu Ye was about to announce himself, he suddenly frowned; a premonition from Heaven's Augury descended upon him.

The baptism of Heaven's Augury's favour had arrived!

This was the fourth baptism he had undergone since topping the Spirit Stream Ranking. Based on his previous experience and estimation, this baptism wouldn't be of much use to him anymore.

Not resisting, he let the Augury lead him. His vision shifted quickly, and he soon found himself in the Heaven's Augury Pond.

Indeed, as Lu Ye had predicted, despite the spirit mist inside the Heaven's Augury Pond being as dense as ever, it was no longer of much benefit to him. Not only him, but Yiyi and Amber were the same.

They had reached their limit!

In other words, even if Lu Ye continued to stay in the Spirit Stream Realm, he wouldn't gain any more benefits. He had already accumulated all that was to be accumulated, and the time had come to ascend to Cloud River.

Meanwhile, within the territory of Mount Qingyu, the cultivator who had seen Lu Ye called over a group of people, including Su Zining, the Governor of Mount Qingyu.

"Where is the person?" Su Zining's gaze swept over the area without catching a glimpse of anyone.

"He was just here a moment ago, and then he suddenly vanished," explained the cultivator who had seen Lu Ye, pointing to a spot.

"Suddenly vanished?" Su Zining frowned. "Could it be a ghost cultivator?"

Only a ghost cultivator would possess the skill to vanish so suddenly.

"Did you get a clear view of his cultivation level?" Su Zining asked again.

"No, he disappeared too quickly."

Su Zining's expression grew solemn: "Spread the word for disciples in the sect to remain on alert. Report immediately if there are any suspicious individuals or activities."

Not sure of the stranger's identity or intent, Su Zining naturally prepared for the worst.

The crowd acknowledged the orders, and the several hundred cultivators of Mount Qingyu instantly went into battle-ready mode.

Lu Ye hadn't expected his appearance to make Mount Qingyu so cautious; the timing was just too coincidental. He hadn't been at the territory of Mount Qingyu for long before the favour of Heaven's Augury arrived.

Half a Shichen later, Lu Ye reappeared outside the Mount Qingyu territory, right where he had vanished earlier.

Immediately sensing people looking at him, he looked up to see several cultivators staring his way, one of whom shouted, "Who goes there?"

Lu Ye looked at the people: "Lu Ye of the Righteous Blood Sect here to visit!"

Mount Qingyu was a sect of the Haotian Alliance, so naturally, he wouldn't trespass on their territory lightly. Besides, Mount Qingyu did treat him with some kindness.

"Lu Ye of the Righteous Blood Sect?" One cultivator furrowed his brow, feeling the name sounded terribly familiar, yet couldn't recall where he had heard it.

Lu Ye had been causing a stir in the core circle recently, and prior to that, in the inner circle, which meant that recent rumors about him in the outer circle were scarce. This led the cultivators in the outer circle to not immediately recognize his name.

But very soon, that person remembered and pointed at Lu Ye with trembling fingers: "You are that... You are Lu Yiye from the Spirit Stream Ranking!"

Everyone knew of Lu Yiye, but who knew anything about Lu Ye?

"Yes!"

The group of cultivators became visibly excited. Someone hurriedly ran in to make a report.

The living top of the Spirit Stream Ranking—how often did cultivators from the outer circle get to see such a figure? And for many from the sects of the Haotian Alliance, Lu Yiye of the Righteous Blood Sect had already become a symbol of invincibility.

Furthermore, titles like "Lu Ye the Sect Destroyer" and the "Three Calamities of Spirit Stream" were not something an ordinary person could ever carve out for themselves.

Chapter 436 Return to Dragon Spring

A moment later, in a grand hall at the Mount Qingyu residence, Lu Ye and Su Zining took their seats, one as the guest and the other as the host.

It was evident that even Su Zining, a governor, was quite restrained in the presence of Lu Ye, not to mention everyone else.

Mount Qingyu was currently an 8th grade sect, and the strongest person in the entire sect was only at the True Lake Realm. Although there were a few at the Spirit Stream Realm in the core circle, limited by aptitude and talent, they could at most cultivate up to the 8th Heaven level.

It could be said that so far, Mount Qingyu had not produced anyone at the Spirit Stream Realm who had reached the 9th Heaven level!

So, the sudden visit of Lu Ye, the top ranker of the Spirit Stream Ranking, naturally made Su Zining feel pressure like a mountain.

He was still unclear about the purpose of Lu Ye's sudden visit.

After some small talk, Lu Ye casually asked, "How has Brother Tang Wu been recently?"

Back when his identity was exposed, and he was chased by cultivators from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, Tang Wu had also stepped forward to help him resolve the crisis. If it were not for Tang Wu's timely appearance to stop Han Zheyue, who had come chasing him, he would have been in considerable trouble then.

"Brother Tang Wu has already been promoted to Cloud River, Brother Yiye is thoughtful," replied Su Zining.

Hearing of Tang Wu's promotion to Cloud River, Lu Ye was not surprised. Tang Wu had already been at a Level 9 cultivation two years ago, and by now, it was time for a promotion.

However, Lu Ye guessed that Tang Wu had been promoted with a 7th Heaven or 8th Heaven cultivation.

He then asked about Xie Jin, Qiao Qiao'er, Song Xie, Tao Tiangang, and Mhu Ling, who had treated his injuries back then, the people with whom he had fought side by side.

Su Zining replied, "Senior Brother Xie, Sister Qiao, and Sister Mhu have all entered the inner circle, while Senior Brother Song and Brother Tao have already passed away."

Lu Ye fell silent.

In just two years, things had completely changed. The growth and cultivation of a cultivator always inevitably involved slaughter and various crises.

Utterly curious, Su Zining asked, "Brother Yiye, how do you know so many brothers and sisters from our sect?"

Lu Ye smiled and said, "Didn't they tell you that I participated in the battle at Hundred Peaks Mountain two years ago? At that time, I fought shoulder to shoulder with those brothers and sisters of yours."

Su Zining couldn't help but exclaim in surprise, as he really hadn't known about it and had never heard anyone mention it before. Hearing it from Lu Ye now, he finally understood the connection between them.

He suddenly felt the top ranker of the Spirit Stream Ranking sitting before him to be a lot more approachable.

"Do you need me to send a message and call back Senior Brother Xie and Sister Qiao?"

"No need," Lu Ye waved his hand. "It's a long journey to the inner circle, and then coming back and forth would only waste their cultivation time. I am here for a matter and will leave once it's resolved."

"Brother Yiye, what matter do you need to address? If my Mount Qingyu can be of help, feel free to ask," Su Zining offered.

"I will indeed need your Mount Qingyu to take action," Lu Ye looked at Su Zining, "I need to enter Dragon Spring!"

Su Zining was puzzled, "Brother Yiye, you are already at a 9th Heaven level cultivation, going into Dragon Spring shouldn't be of much use to you."

Lu Ye shook his head, "I have my reasons."

As he spoke, he unfastened a storage sack from his waist and pushed it towards Su Zining, "Please trouble you to return to the headquarters of Mount Qingyu and report this matter. I know it's not yet time for Dragon Spring to open, but I believe your sect should have a way to let me in. Consider these things as my compensation."

Su Zining hurriedly said, "No need for compensation, Brother Yiye. I will report it as it is."

Lu Ye smiled and slapped the storage sack into his hand, "This compensation is for Mount Qingyu. Let the elders of your sect decide on it."

After thinking it over, Su Zining nodded and said, "Then Brother Yiye, please wait a moment. I'll return to our sect!"

"Much obliged!"

When Su Zining left, Lu Ye waited in the hall.

In just half a Shichen, Su Zining returned, and an elderly man also arrived with him.

Lu Ye stood up.

Su Zining introduced, "Brother Yiye, this is Elder Ye Yang of Mount Qingyu."

Lu Ye bowed, "I have met Elder Ye."

Being an Elder of Mount Qingyu, he was definitely a powerhouse at the True Lake Realm, but because he had entered the Spirit Stream battlefield, the old man's displayed strength was only at the 8th Heaven level.

Elder Ye Yang scrutinized Lu Ye and stroked his beard, "I have long heard of the great name of Lu Yiye of the Righteous Blood Sect. Seeing you today, you truly are a dragon among men. Times change, and each generation brings forth new talents; it's hard not to accept one's old age."

"Elder Ye flatters me too much, I am sorry for causing Elder Ye to make a special trip," Lu Ye exchanged pleasantries.

He knew the elder was so courteous partly because of recognizing his potential, and secondly because of the items in the storage sack he had given out, worth a total of three hundred thousand merits—something Lu Ye had deliberately kept aside.

If not for that, what would make such a high-ranking elder condescend to visit the Spirit Stream battlefield?

Entering the Spirit Stream Battlefield as an elder of the True Lake Realm like Elder Ye would indeed cost quite a few merits.

"You flatter me, young friend, please sit." Elder Ye gestured with his hand.

Once again seated, Su Zining accompanied him at the side.

"I heard from Zining that you wish to enter Dragon Spring?" Ye Yang began.

"I wonder if it's possible?"

Ye Yang said, "For others, it's difficult, but if you wish to enter, it's quite easy."

"Oh? Why is that?" Lu Ye asked, puzzled.

Ye Yang smiled and explained, "To enter Dragon Spring, not only my Qingyu Sect but also Tailuo Sect and Qin Family must agree to open it, as Dragon Spring is related to the disciples' body refining; hence, even if Qingyu Sect agrees, without the consent of the other two, we cannot open Dragon Spring. Others might come, and those two might not agree, but given your reputation, just a word from you to those families would hardly leave them daring to disagree."

Lu Ye, known as 'Lu Ye the Sect Destroyer', entering Dragon Spring—would Tailuo Sect and Qin Family dare utter a word against it? Although the Spirit Stream battlefield has its own rules, and the outer circle deals with its own matters, there have been more than one instances where rules have been bent targeting Lu Ye from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge.

Hence, if Lu Ye were to bend a rule now, likely no one from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge would dare say anything.

If Tailuo Sect and Qin Family dared to disagree, Lu Ye could just raise his hand and annihilate their stations.

"I see!" Lu Ye nodded, "It looks like I need to make another trip to Tailuo Sect and Qin Family!"

"Correct," Ye Yang nodded, "As long as you can persuade Tailuo Sect and Qin Family, we at Qingyu Sect have no objections."

This is the benefit of offering substantial incentives. Ye Yang didn't even ask why Lu Ye wanted to enter Dragon Spring. As a seasoned cultivator like him, he naturally knew everyone had their secrets, and it wasn't wise to rashly probe into others' secrets.

Lu Ye promptly stood up, "Then I will make the trip."

Ye Yang said with a smile, "This old man will await the good news atop Dragon Spring Peak at Hundred Peaks Mountain."

Tailuo Sect and Qin Family's stations were not far from the site of Qingyu Sect, just a few tens of miles away.

The situation between outer circle sect stations is often like this since the cultivators in the outer circle aren't very powerful; if the distance were too great, clashes would hardly occur.

In the time it takes to drink a cup of tea, following the guidance of the ten-part map, Lu Ye arrived at the Tailuo Sect's station.

To Tailuo Sect, Lu Ye held no good impressions—previously, Han Zheyue had chased after him to kill him.

At Golden Light Peak, it was this woman who repeatedly exposed his secrets, causing Lu Ye to struggle against more than forty Level 6 opponents.

Enveloped by the light curtain of the protective array, Lu Ye traveled through air and landed before the curtain, his Boulder Mountain Saber thunderously unsheathed as he raised his hand and brought the saber down.

For this strike, he didn't even use the Single Flash Saber Technique; he merely enhanced it with Double-Sharpness spirit runes.

Yet with one strike, the array's light curtain shattered loudly!

The protective arrays at outer circle sect stations are generally weaker compared to those in the inner and core circles, not because Tailuo Sect lacks the merit to acquire a good array base, but because the concentration of nature's spiritual energy is not as dense as in the inner and core circles.

After all, the effectiveness of a protective array is greatly dependent on the density of nature's spiritual energy.

Given Lu Ye's current formidable strength, the protective array of an outer circle sect station could generally be broken with one strike.

The noise of the array shattering was loud, and in an instant, numerous Tailuo Sect cultivators surged out from their cultivation sites, a chaotic scene as no one knew what had happened.

Only when someone saw a figure hovering in the sky on a Spiritual Artifact did terror arise.

A Level 7 cultivator stepped forward and, bolstering his courage, asked, "May I ask which Fellow Daoist graces us with their presence, and why have you broken our Tailuo Sect's protective array?"

It must absolutely be someone from Haotian Alliance; otherwise, there's no reason to break one's own array, and judging by the spirit light emanating from the visitor, he must be a cultivator who had cultivated a Heaven-Rank technique.

So this Level 7 cultivator was truly puzzled. This should be a cultivator who normally cultivates in the core circle, so why come to the outer circle to display power?

"Righteous Blood Sect, Lu Yiye!" Lu Ye spoke mildly.

Previously, when he reported himself as Lu Ye at Qingyu Sect, others didn't react. But now, mentioning Lu Yiye, Tailuo Sect's group of cultivators immediately paled, retreating en masse as though Lu Ye was some devastating natural disaster.

"Summon your elders to speak; I'll be at Dragon Spring Peak on Hundred Peaks Mountain waiting for them!" Lu Ye left these words behind and turned to leave. He indeed had the strength to slaughter all

the cultivators here, but it is the weaker ones who strike at the even weaker, and moreover, with his current 9th Heaven cultivation, actually killing these people would cost him untold amounts of merit.

Thus, from the very beginning, he had no intention of killing anyone.

After he left, the station of Tailuo Sect instantly descended into chaos; someone immediately returned to their sect headquarters to report the incident. For a time, the Tailuo Sect headquarters was also on high alert, unsure why Lu Ye the Sect Destroyer suddenly appeared at their station, demanding their elders to come forward and speak.

Meanwhile, Lu Ye had already reached the Qin Family station, and just as before, he broke the protective array of Qin Family's station with one strike, left a message, and turned to leave.

Moments later, atop Dragon Spring Peak on Hundred Peaks Mountain, Lu Ye landed.

He had visited this place once before, two years ago, to undergo the Dragon Spring Body Tempering where he acquired a piece of Scale Armor.

Now returning, his state of mind was entirely different.

Above Dragon Spring Peak was a grand hall, built jointly by Qingyu Sect and Tailuo Sect. The entrance to Dragon Spring was concealed beneath the hall.

Chapter 437 Give It Some Serious Thought

When Lu Ye entered the hall, Ye Yang from Mount Qingyu had already arrived and was waiting.

Seeing him arrive, Ye Yang chuckled, "Young friend, you really are quite fast."

"You flatter me."

Walking into the hall, Lu Ye followed his memory from his last visit for Dragon Spring Body Tempering and went to a corner of the hall. There should be an entrance leading underground, but now, the entrance was utterly inconspicuous, obviously obscured by some means or restrictions.

Lu Ye observed for a moment and discerned nothing, so he stimulated the Insight Spirit Runes to enhance his vision.

He did not know whether the Tailuo Sect and the Qin family would come. If these two families were too timid to show up, then he would have to open Dragon Spring himself.

He knew a thing or two about breaking arrays and restrictions.

However, after observing for a while, he realized he had underestimated the restrictions here. Even though he had activated the Insight Spirit Runes, he couldn't make out much, let alone begin to break them.

"Elder Ye, are the restrictions hiding the entrance originally in place here?" Lu Ye suddenly asked.

Ye Yang said, "Indeed."

"Then how did your sect and those two families learn the method to open it?"

Ye Yang chuckled and said, "Actually, we also do not know the method of opening it; we simply rely on a jade cluster. According to our sect's records, an unusual phenomenon naturally occurred here long ago, attracting the attention of cultivators from Mount Qingyu and the Tailuo Sect. A great battle ensued, and afterward, a jade cluster was found here. Since the strength of that generation from our sect and the Tailuo Sect were roughly equal, the jade cluster was split in two, each managed by Mount Qingyu and the Tailuo Sect. When necessary, joining the two halves together would allow entrance to Dragon Spring. Later, as the Tailuo Sect felt they were no match for Mount Qingyu, they brought in the Qin family to balance against our sect, continuing to this day. To win over Qin family, the half of the jade cluster in Tailuo Sect's possession was again split in two, so now, opening Dragon Spring necessitates combining the pieces of jade from all three families."

"I see."

"Young friend, have you noticed anything?" Ye Yang asked, as Mount Qingyu had also studied Dragon Spring, albeit without much success.

Lu Ye shook his head: "I didn't notice anything. I just feel that the restrictions here could not have been arranged by ordinary people."

As the two of them were talking, Lu Ye suddenly turned his head to look outside.

Outside the hall, two figures entered side by side, both looking quite old, probably the powerhouses from the Tailuo Sect and the Qin family.

Ye Yang's eyebrows rose, and he cursed teasingly, "You two old things are still alive?"

The person on the left said gravely, "If you're still alive, Ye Yang, how could we possibly die?"

They had all dealt with each other when they were young at the Spirit Stream battlefield, but since their respective sects were far apart, it became difficult to meet after promoting to Cloud River.

A hundred years had passed in the blink of an eye, and seeing each other now, none possessed the youthful spirit of their earlier days, which made them sigh inwardly.

"Is this young friend Lu Yiye?" the speaking elder looked at Lu Ye.

Ye Yang said, "Yiye, let me introduce you. The one with a mouth full of crap is Zhao Xin from the Tailuo Sect, and the mute over there is Qin Ming from the Qin family."

Qin Ming huffed coldly, indicating he was not at all mute.

Zhao Xin from the Tailuo Sect looked at Lu Ye: "Young friend, you really carry a great presence. The leader of the Spirit Stream Ranking not involved in the core circle, yet you venture to the outer circle to break the protective array of our sect and the Qin family, what are you intending to do?"

Both Zhao Xin and Qin Ming displayed a cultivation level of 8th Heaven, but neither showed a hint of fear when facing Lu Ye, knowing well that fortune or disaster couldn't be avoided, and if Lu Yiye truly intended them harm, fear would be pointless.

The prestige of leading the Spirit Stream Ranking was earned through countless battles.

Moreover, when Lu Ye had topped the Spirit Stream Ranking, he had only been at the 8th Heaven level of cultivation. Now that he was at the 9th Heaven, no one on the entire Spirit Stream battlefield could match him.

Even though both were True Lake Realm cultivators, they probably couldn't withstand a single strike from Lu Ye at the Spirit Stream battlefield.

"Open Dragon Spring!"

Upon hearing this, Zhao Xin understood: "So it is."

When he received the message from his disciples, he suspected that Lu Ye was targeting Dragon Spring, for what else could attract the attention of such a rank leader to this remote area besides Dragon Spring.

The silent Qin Ming said, "May I ask, young friend, what you need to do in Dragon Spring? With your current strength, even Dragon Spring Body Tempering wouldn't benefit you much, one might even say it would be ineffective."

That was also what Zhao Xin wanted to clarify.

Lu Ye considered briefly before speaking, "There is a commoner who lived to be a hundred years old, still vigorous and healthy. Do you know why?"

Zhao Xin frowned, "A commoner living to be a hundred years old is already of a very old age, nearing life's end, unless they practiced a Body Nurturing Skill."

Lu Ye shook his head.

Qin Ming said, "Then it must be because they took life-prolonging Spiritual Medicine."

Lu Ye shook his head again.

"Then why?"

"Because the old man never meddles in others' business."

Zhao Xin and Qin Ming were taken aback, eventually grasping the implication in Lu Ye's words. Zhao Xin said, "Dragon Spring concerns the tempering of disciples from three families; how could this be meddling in others' business? If you do not explain clearly, Old Man cannot cooperate."

Lu Ye's fingers caressed the hilt of his blade: "With one slash of my blade, who knows how many of your sect's disciples would survive; you better think carefully."

Zhao Xin waved his hand: "No need to think anymore. Others may want to enter Dragon Spring, but my Tailuo Sect would definitely not agree. Since it's young friend who wants to enter, then let it be. Brother Qin, what do you think?"

Qin Ming nodded: "I have no objections!"

Ye Yang stepped forward with a smile, "Shall we start then?"

"Start!"

The three of them each took out their own jade clusters and poured their spirit force into them. The three jade clusters radiated bright light, attracting each other, and quickly assembled together.

It was a dragon-shaped jade cluster!

The jade cluster vibrated, resonating with an invisible force. Accompanied by a humming sound from the mountain's belly, a gap suddenly opened in a corner of the great hall, leading straight underground.

Each of them raised their hands, taking back their respective jade clusters.

"This matter is concluded, I bid farewell!" Zhao Xin said, and with a clasped fist, he prepared to leave.

Lu Ye looked at Ye Yang with an inquiring expression.

Ye Yang said, "After activating the Dragon Spring, they are no longer involved. This place will close automatically in a few days."

Lu Ye nodded.

Zhao Xin and Qin Ming immediately flashed out of the great hall, summoned their Flying Spirit Artifacts, and soared into the sky, vanishing in the blink of an eye. Although they appeared calm and composed in front of Lu Ye, they were actually very nervous. If not for the fear of offending Lu Ye the Sect Destroyer, they would never have dared to come here.

"Young friend, go ahead, I will keep watch outside for you."

"Thank you!"

Lu Ye followed the entrance, venturing downwards.

Just like his previous visit, there was a spiral staircase below. As he descended, the hollow sound of footsteps echoed. After a long walk, he reached the bottom, arriving in front of a bronze door.

The bronze door was heavy and ancient, exuding an immense sense of age. Carved on it was the figure of a dragon, lifelike as if it were alive.

The door was already open, and a faint red mist was swirling inside.

Lu Ye stepped inside and immediately felt a sense of weightlessness. Looking around, he found himself in a secret chamber about thirty feet long and wide.

The chamber was filled with a light red mist, and in the center of the chamber, there was a spring, its waters churning.

Lu Ye tried to absorb the mist in the chamber for Body Tempering, but found the blood Qi contained in the mist very thin, which was almost insignificant for a 9th Heaven cultivator like himself.

This was also why cultivators with slightly higher cultivation levels didn't find the Dragon Spring Body Tempering very effective. The mist contained too little of what was beneficial for cultivators; for those with lower cultivation levels, the improvement was quite substantial, but for those above level 6-7, it was almost useless.

Yiyi emerged from Amber, curiously looking around, and asked, "Lu Ye, what are you doing here?"

"Meeting an old friend," Lu Ye replied offhandedly.

"Old friend?" Yiyi did not understand.

During Lu Ye's last visit for the Dragon Spring Body Tempering, Amber had not followed him, hence Yiyi was also unaware of what Lu Ye had encountered inside the Dragon Spring.

While speaking, Lu Ye sat down cross-legged.

Recalling his previous experience, during the process of the Dragon Spring Body Tempering, it seemed as though a pair of enormous blood-red pupils were watching him. For a long time afterwards, he thought it might have been an illusion.

But as his cultivation level rose and as he delved deeper into the knowledge of the Nine Provinces cultivation world, Lu Ye gradually understood that it was probably not an illusion.

Moreover, he had obtained a piece of Scale Armor from the Dragon Spring!

It was indeed a genuine dragon scale!

After obtaining the Phoenix True Fire, Lu Ye specially sent a message to inquire from Second Senior Sister, subsequently learning about the Four Auspicious Sacred Beasts.

Azure Dragon, Vermillion Bird, White Tiger, Black Tortoise!

These were the legendary sacred beasts said to exist in the Nine Provinces cultivation world.

The Vermillion Bird truly existed; the Phoenix True Fire Lu Ye had obtained was the best proof.

According to Second Senior Sister, Amber likely possessed the bloodline of the White Tiger because no other tiger demon beast could transform its spiritual body into a minion spirit, yet Amber possessed this ability.

In addition, Amber had many divine skills that tiger demon beasts did not...

If the Vermillion Bird and White Tiger were real, then Azure Dragon and Black Tortoise definitely existed.

Only then did Lu Ye confirm that what he had obtained in the Dragon Spring was an actual dragon scale, and the dragon blood stored within had such a powerful effect on body tempering.

And this place was Dragon Spring, from where the dragon scale had been obtained.

Thus, Lu Ye conjectured that there might be a True Dragon suppressed beneath this Dragon Spring.

He had traveled thousands of miles not for anything else, but to gather more dragon scales, as their effect on body tempering was incredibly powerful, necessary not only for himself but also for Amber and the Giant Armor.

How to obtain more dragon scales was an issue.

The previous time, the dragon scale had suddenly appeared before him, which meant it was given to him by the True Dragon suppressed here. The enormous blood-red pupils he felt were probably the dragon eyes.

No good deed goes unpunished; the True Dragon suppressed here had given him a dragon scale apparently without reason, definitely having something it desired. Therefore, Lu Ye felt that he could approach it from this angle.

Chapter 438 The Truth of the World (Happy New Year)

Shui Yuan knew Lu Ye had a dragon scale because she had seen him refine his body using the blood Qi energy within that dragon scale.

At that time, she had inquired about the origin of the dragon scale, and Lu Ye naturally didn't hide it.

Shui Yuan then speculated that there might be some hidden secrets or opportunities beneath Dragon Spring.

Lu Ye had already made up his mind that once his cultivation in the Spirit Stream Realm reached its limit, he would definitely make a trip to Hundred Peaks Mountain to see if he could obtain more dragon scales.

Mount Qingyu, Tailuo Sect, and the Qin family, although they had occupied Dragon Spring for so many years, they probably were unaware of what lay beneath it, otherwise, they would have started exploring long ago.

In other words, the dragon scale that Lu Ye obtained might be the only one.

If his conjecture was true, that a True Dragon truly was suppressed beneath the Dragon Spring, then why would it give him a dragon scale without any reason?

It was definitely not due to luck or because it found him pleasing to the eye; there had to be another deeper reason.

There was probably something about him that other cultivators did not possess!

Reflecting on his last experience in Dragon Spring, Lu Ye faintly guessed it in his heart.

In the secret chamber, he stimulated his spirit force and began to construct various spirit runes.

Sharpness, Defense, Gathering Spirit...

Bloodstain, Sun Blaze, Foundation Fortification, Move-Like-The-Wind, Hefty Weight...

Cactus, Breath-concealing, Insight...

Audio Message, Image Message, Spirit Energy Storage, Underwater Breathing, Explosion, Concealment...

Golden Arc, Lightning Attracting, Wings...

Apart from the Fire Phoenix Spirit Runes, he constructed all the spirit runes he had mastered so far, one by one.

He repeated the process a full three times!

The spirit force surged, the spirit runes transformed, and their connections were extremely smooth. Even Madam Yun, a spirit runes master of her caliber, would have been taken aback if she were here to witness it.

Because even with her mastery in the Path of Spirit Runes, she couldn't construct so many complex spirit runes in such a short time, let alone transition between various spirit runes without fault.

But with the help of the Talent Tree, Lu Ye did it with ease.

No response...

Lu Ye couldn't help but frown. Had he made a mistake?

If it really was a mistake, then he might have made the trip for nothing.

Without too much regret, after all, everything here was just his speculation, and his understanding of the Nine Provinces cultivation world was not deep enough; it was inevitable to make some mistakes in some things.

Standing up, he took steps to leave the chamber.

Suddenly, his movement halted, as his keen awareness detected a pair of eyes watching him from behind. His skin instantly tensed, and he felt as though he was being pricked by a million needles, experiencing an indescribable tingling sensation.

Amber, crouching on his shoulder, instantly bristled and flattened against him, growling in a low tone.

Lu Ye grasped the Boulder Mountain Saber in his hand.

Beads of sweat the size of beans slid down his forehead!

He slowly turned his leaden body and suddenly met a pair of huge blood-red pupils!

There was an indifferent and superior air about those pupils. Under their gaze, Lu Ye felt an ant-like insignificance.

He hadn't been mistaken; it was very likely that a True Dragon was indeed suppressed here, and the immense blood-red pupils he felt last time were not an illusion, as they had appeared again now.

At this moment, above the Dragon Spring, a dragon head formed purely of condensed blood Qi filled most of the secret chamber. The dragon head had two dragon horns, was covered with fine dragon scales, and the dragon whiskers beneath its jaw fluttered as endless draconic might pervaded the space.

Lu Ye felt as if a mountain had been placed upon his shoulders, the weight was so heavy that he struggled to breathe.

The tremendous pressure caused Lu Ye's body to bend slightly, and despite using all his strength, he couldn't resist it.

"Roar!" Amber roared, with visible waves of energy impacting forward. At the same time, the figure of the Fire Phoenix standing on the Talent Tree came to life, with its loud cries echoing from within Lu Ye's body.

The indifferent dragon eyes clearly showed a surprised expression.

The Boulder Mountain Saber thundered out of its sheath, Lu Ye's right arm swelled, and he slashed at the dragon head with his saber.

Single Flash!

The saber strike, which could have instantly killed a 9th Heaven physique cultivator, did not harm the blood Qi dragon head, as it was not a physical being.

With that strike, Lu Ye felt as though he had severed something, and the heavy pressure suddenly disappeared.

He let out a breath of relief and looked toward the dragon head.

"Did you choose me specifically because you want me to save you?"

It was merely a conjecture before, but now he could be certain.

Lu Ye didn't know why the real body of this dragon head was suppressed here, but it definitely wasn't content to be oppressed like this. Since it wasn't content, it needed someone to save it. Other cultivators might not catch its eye, but Lu Ye's talent in the Path of Spirit Runes was quite obvious, giving the dragon head a ray of hope.

That's why when he was at Level 5 realm and refined his body here, it had rewarded him with a dragon scale.

However, looking at the current situation, Lu Ye was somewhat inclined to leave, being oppressed with such might; should it be released, what a fierce existence it would be.

"Young man, you are very smart!" the dragon head suddenly spoke.

"This is not the attitude of someone seeking help," Lu Ye's eyelids drooped. The other party first demonstrated a false retreat, revealing itself only when he was about to leave and then tried to intimidate him into nearly kneeling; clearly, it was not a good thing.

"Currently, you are too weak."

"Then give me something that can make me stronger, like those dragon scales last time. Just a hundred or eighty pieces will do."

The dragon head burst out laughing, the thunderous laughter causing the secret chamber to shiver incessantly.

In the midst of laughter, the dragon head gradually dissipated.

Lu Ye frowned.

But after the dragon head disappeared, Dragon Spring suddenly surged, and from the spring's eye, a dragon scale emerged, followed by another, and then a third, a fourth...

A total of five dragon scales emerged before Dragon Spring returned to its normal state.

"Cultivate well, young man. When you understand the truth of this world, come find me again. I look forward to our next meeting!" The voice came from an unknown place, clearly reaching Lu Ye's ears.

It seemed convinced that Lu Ye would come to find it again!

Lu Ye stepped forward, muttering "stingy" while he put away the five dragon scales.

The five dragon scales were roughly the same size as the ones he had gotten before, each about the size of a palm, but Lu Ye could feel that the blood Qi energy contained within was much denser, almost several times stronger.

He excitedly placed the five dragon scales into his storage sack.

Lu Ye thought back to the dragon head's parting words; the dragon head clearly had more to imply, even mentioning something about the truth of this world...

As a cultivator of the Spirit Stream Realm, how could Lu Ye know anything about the truth of this world?

He had just put away the dragon scales when a repelling force surrounded him, and the next moment his vision blurred, and he found himself outside the bronze gate.

The gate slowly closed, and Lu Ye looked at the dragon shadow engraved on it, noting the dragon head in the pattern looked almost like the one he had seen.

A True Dragon lay suppressed beneath Dragon Spring, a fact probably no one had ever expected.

Following the way he had come, Lu Ye walked into the main hall, where Ye Yang was waiting.

Seeing Lu Ye returned so soon surprised Ye Yang, as Lu Ye had been gone for less than half a day, and he hadn't expected him to be back so quickly.

"Have you finished your business, young friend?"

Lu Ye nodded, then shook his head. The situation was about what he had expected, but it was also much more complicated than he had thought.

Without prying further, Ye Yang knew some things were not to be asked, nor did they need to be. It was enough to understand in his heart.

"Since the matter here is settled, this junior will take his leave now."

Ye Yang tried to persuade him to stay: "It's rare for you to come by. Won't you sit a while at our sect?"

"No, thank you. Second Senior Sister sent me a message asking me to return early."

Ye Yang nodded: "Then I won't keep you any longer, young friend. May you have a smooth journey."

"I take my leave!"

Summoning his spirit ark, Lu Ye stepped onto it and soared into the sky, disappearing in an instant.

The journey there had taken nearly ten days, and the return trip was the same.

However, the time spent on the road was not wasted, as Lu Ye devoted himself to studying the saber cultivation insights he had obtained from Mad Saber Sect. Thanks to Yiyi's reminders, he did not get lost or fly in the wrong direction during weapon control-flying.

It was about ten days later that Lu Ye returned to the territory of the Righteous Blood Sect. Looking up at the nearby spirit mountaintop, he saw that Little Gray was back.

Diverting his gaze, a voice suddenly came from the side: "Brother Yiye is back!"

Lu Ye looked toward the voice and was surprised to find Governor Situ Han from the Three Saints Sanctuary, accompanied by several disciples.

"Brother Situ!" Lu Ye called out. "What brings you here? Is there something wrong with the Three Saints Sanctuary?"

"Not at all," Situ Han laughed. "Both Xuanqing Palace and Half-Moon Pavilion have suffered heavy losses. Now everything is fine at our sect headquarters. We heard you were about to ascend to Cloud River, so we've come to watch the ceremony."

Lu Ye laughed: "It's just an advancement to Cloud River."

Situ Han looked puzzled at him: "Doesn't Brother Yiye know?"

"Know what?" Lu Ye was confused by his question.

Situ Han chuckled: "It seems Brother Yiye really doesn't know. But no matter, you'll understand when the time comes."

Just as Lu Ye was about to ask for clarification, more people approached to greet him and, soon, more and more people gathered around.

The arrivals were all cultivators from the Core Circle, and they were led by governors or deputy governors of the big sects, with several people from a single sect attending.

Some of those people were ones Lu Ye had heard of, especially the strong ones on the Spirit Stream Ranking. Even if he hadn't met them, he had heard their names. But most were people he had neither seen nor heard of before.

They had all come to observe the ceremony.

Lu Ye was truly bewildered. He was merely advancing to Cloud River, yet it seemed to have turned into a grand event, attracting governors and deputy governors from all the big sects in the Core Circle to come and watch.

He had recently wondered why there were so many extra people in their territory.

Now, the Righteous Blood Sect's territory was bustling with people. It wasn't only about the sect's few hundred disciples; nearly two thousand people had come from hundreds of sects in the Core Circle...

So much so that Duan Yi had to ask Second Senior Sister for instructions, spending a considerable amount of merit to temporarily expand the sect's territory.

Not only that, a tall platform had also been built in front of the Heaven's Augury Hall square.

Reportedly, that was where Lu Ye would breakthrough from Spirit Stream Realm and ascend to Cloud River!

The platform was over a dozen zhang high to ensure that all the visitors could see everything clearly.

Lu Ye was completely bewildered. He had been away for just about twenty days, and somehow the world had become somewhat unfamiliar to him.

Chapter 439 Spiritual Artifact Upgrade

Members from almost every sect in the Core Circle had come, which was a good thing for the Righteous Blood Sect, as those who came were led by Governors or Deputy Governors. Over the past few days, the Righteous Blood Sect had forged Alliance Pacts with these sects.

In the future, if disciples of The Righteous Blood Sect were to train and cultivate in the Core Circle, they would have plenty of choices, almost any of the Core Circle sects to choose from.

Guests from afar were always welcomed, and naturally, the Righteous Blood Sect treated them with meticulous care.

Moreover, it had been many years since the Righteous Blood Sect had seen such liveliness.

After exchanging greetings with the various guests for a while, Lu Ye took advantage of the Heaven's Augury Pillar to return to his own sect.

The sect headquarters was bustling with people, but they were all disciples from his own sect. On seeing Lu Ye, they paid their respects one after another.

Finding Shui Yuan who was busy at work, Lu Ye waited until she was finished before asking, "Second Senior Sister, why has my advancement to Cloud River caused such a big stir?"

Shui Yuan tucked a strand of hair behind her ear and said, "Have you ever heard of Heaven's Augury Bestowment?"

Lu Ye shook his head, he truly had not heard of it.

"The Heaven's Augury Bestowment is a legend. The last occurrence was decades ago." A reminiscent look flashed in Shui Yuan's eyes, as if recalling some old memories, and she paused a good while before continuing, "Attaining Heaven's Augury Bestowment is incredibly difficult; it requires continuously overcoming enemies at a higher level and accumulating the attention of the Augury. When the time comes for advancing to a great realm, the Augury then bestows its blessings. Overcoming enemies at a higher level may not be difficult for disciples from big sects, but the hard part is being able to overcome all enemies at a higher level. Looking at the cultivators of our generation, only you, little junior brother, have the opportunity and qualifications to do so."

Ever since the day he started his cultivation, Lu Ye had been fighting enemies beyond his own realm of power.

This wasn't particularly noticeable before he reached the Level 5 realm.

However, after the battle at Golden Light Peak, this accumulation became quite evident.

At Golden Light Peak, apart from the first cultivator who went to battle being at the Level 5 realm, the rest were all at Level 6.

During that battle, Li Baxian and cultivators from the Haotian Alliance had already seen the beginnings of Heaven's Augury Bestowment in him, but at that time, Lu Ye was still far from advancing to Cloud River, so it was just a hint of what was to come.

After that, be it in the outer, inner, or Core Circle, the enemies Lu Ye encountered were, eight or nine out of ten, cultivators with higher levels of cultivation than him.

But without exception, not one of them was a match for Lu Ye.

He had even reached the top of the Spirit Stream Ranking with his 8th Heaven cultivation, dominating the entire Spirit Stream battlefield. After advancing to 9th Heaven, he was almost synonymous with invincibility.

This continuous accumulation along the way made Heaven's Augury Bestowment a natural result.

"Gathering the attention of the Augury?" Lu Ye's heart stirred, "Sister means, this Augury..."

"The Augury, permeating the cultivation world, is not simple," Shui Yuan explained. "With your current low level of cultivation, you can't feel it distinctly, but as your cultivation grows, you'll understand."

Lu Ye nodded, "What are the benefits of this Heaven's Augury Bestowment?"

"I'm not sure about the specific benefits because there are too few people qualified to receive the Heaven's Augury Bestowment, and all information about it is top secret, not allowed to be disclosed. The last person to receive it was our eldest senior brother. However, he received the Augury's Blessing when he advanced from Cloud River to True Lake. Since then, his cultivation has advanced by leaps and bounds, which also led our sect to glory. But as you know the state of our sect, it was our eldest senior brother who led both its rise and fall."

"Eldest senior brother..." Lu Ye murmured, thinking about this senior brother he had heard about many times but never met.

"Don't think too much about it right now. No one knows if you'll receive the Heaven's Augury Bestowment. It's just that everyone thinks it's highly possible for you, which is why so many have come to witness the event," Shui Yuan encouraged.

Lu Ye nodded.

"When do you plan to advance?" asked Shui Yuan.

"I'm ready anytime."

"Let's set it for three days from now."

"I'll listen to you, senior sister."

Shui Yuan looked at him, her expression like that of someone watching their own child grow up, then she suddenly smiled, "It's happening so fast, you're about to advance to Cloud River."

She paused and then said, "However, after your advancement to Cloud River, you'll have to change your Spiritual Artifact."

"I was planning to consult with you about this matter," Lu Ye said, as this was indeed troubling for him. All of his current Spiritual Artifacts, whether the Boulder Mountain Saber or the weapon control implements in the supplies box, even his Flying Spirit Artifacts, were all Restriction Level 9 low-grade spirit artifacts.

Low-grade spirit artifacts were generally used by cultivators in the Spirit Stream Realm. After advancing to Cloud River, one should switch to mid-grade spirit artifacts above Restriction Level 9.

As for weapon control and Flying Spirit Artifacts, they can be swapped out at any time. Among the possessions paid by the various sects of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, there were many spirit artifacts of various grades. If Lu Ye wanted to switch, he could do it at any moment.

But the Boulder Mountain Saber was the only exception...

This saber had been with him for two years, and there was Man-Sword Synthesis between them. Even if he were to switch to another long saber that had the same design as the Boulder Mountain Saber, it might not necessarily fit well in Lu Ye's hands. To reach the level of Man-Sword Synthesis again, it might take a long time to accumulate.

This was not cost-effective.

But if he didn't change it, the Boulder Mountain Saber would no longer keep up with his progress in cultivation, and after two years of battles, the blade of the Boulder Mountain Saber had many notches and was no longer fit for major use.

After relaying his concerns to Shui Yuan, she laughed and said, "As so with you saber users and your fourth senior brother who is a sword cultivator, you both cherish your Spiritual Artifacts and are reluctant to change them. The solution is simple though, upgrade it."

"Upgrade?"

"It will cost a bit, but you can hire an Artifact Refiner to elevate your saber to the level of a mid-grade spirit artifact. The cost is substantial, however, because an Artifact Refiner capable of upgrading a spirit artifact would have to be at least at the Grandmaster level. Those below Grandmaster level simply don't have that ability. But there's an advantage to this; you can make specific requests based on your needs, essentially getting a custom-made upgrade!"

Lu Ye's eyebrows rose in interest, "There's such a good thing? Does Senior Sister know any Artifact Refining Grandmasters with such skills?"

"I do know some, but they are far away, not in this province."

"That's alright..."

"Actually, it's not that complicated. When you go to the Heaven's Augury treasure vault later, connect your mind to Heaven's Augury, entrust the task of upgrading the spirit artifact, and someone will accept it."

"The Heaven's Augury treasure vault has this function?" Lu Ye was surprised; whenever he entered the Heaven's Augury treasure vault, he was only buying or selling items.

"Try it and see for yourself, but remember, transactions there are conducted exclusively with merit."

"Okay." Lu Ye said and hastened into the Heaven's Augury Hall, connecting his mind with the Heaven's Augury Pillar and entering the treasure vault.

The vast treasure vault stored an array of dazzling items. When Lu Ye had first seen it, he was overwhelmed by the choices. However, by stating some specific keywords for filtering, the number of items would decrease, leaving only those that met the criteria. The more specific the filters, the fewer the items that matched. Eventually, the cultivators who entered the Heaven's Augury treasure vault could easily find what they need—provided they have sufficient merit.

In the Heaven's Augury treasure vault, all transactions are recognized by merit only.

"Entrust, spirit artifact upgrade!" Lu Ye spoke softly.

The vast treasure vault twisted and changed, and Lu Ye felt as if he was in a small room with only a pedestal in front of him and nothing else.

Understanding the process, Lu Ye placed the Boulder Mountain Saber on the pedestal in front of him.

Unsure how long he would need to wait for someone to accept the entrustment, Lu Ye was about to leave when suddenly the space in front of him distorted, and a blurry figure appeared.

This was the first time he had seen another person in the Heaven's Augury treasure vault, and he couldn't help but size them up and down, unable to discern the newcomer's cultivation level or gender.

The figure picked up the Boulder Mountain Saber, glanced at it, and spoke in a disappointed tone, "Just a low-grade spirit artifact..."

For the figure, this was clearly a job with meager rewards.

"What requirements?" Despite the disappointment, the figure didn't leave. After all, opportunities to accept such tasks in the Heaven's Augury treasure vault were rare, and every little bit counted.

"Keep the shape and length the same, 18 layers of restriction, make it extremely durable, and if the weight could be tripled, that would be best." As his strength increased, a spirit artifact like the Boulder Mountain Saber had become too light for Lu Ye. If it were three times heavier, it would feel just right in his hands. As for sharpness, he had no particular demands because, after all, every strike he made was enhanced with the Sharpness spirit runes—as long as the saber was durable enough.

"Your demands are not low, name your price!"

Lu Ye pondered for a moment, "Eight hundred points."

A low-grade spirit artifact normally sells for between thirty to one hundred and fifty points in the Heaven's Augury treasure vault, while mid-grade ones go for around two hundred to five hundred points of merit.

Offering eight hundred points, Lu Ye's bid was more than enough to buy the best mid-grade spirit artifact with points to spare.

"Too little. To meet your specifications, just the cost of the materials would be no less than six hundred points of merit," the figure huffed lightly. "Kid, if you want to upgrade your spirit artifact, don't measure it by the artifact's original price."

"How much do you want?"

"Without two thousand points of merit, it's not worth my effort."

"Deal!"

Lu Ye now had a total of one hundred thousand merits on him; what were a mere two thousand points? As long as the Boulder Mountain Saber's grade could be raised, even if it cost a bit more, it would be acceptable.

The figure was momentarily taken aback by his straightforwardness and rued inwardly, wondering which wealthy and powerful family's disciple this could be, to spend so generously. Had they known, they would have quoted a higher price.

"Summon the Heaven's Augury Pact," said the figure.

A moment later, with the summoned Heaven's Augury Pact at hand, both parties left their imprints on it. It detailed the compensation Lu Ye would pay, his specific requirements, and the deadline.

The deadline was crucial because the Boulder Mountain Saber would be taken away for upgrading, and it would be troublesome if it was not returned in time.

And the deadline set in the Heaven's Augury Pact was three days!

This made Lu Ye somewhat contemplative; Artifact Refining skills at the Grandmaster level could earn two thousand points of merit in just three days, which seemed far too easy.

Withdrawing his consciousness from the Heaven's Augury treasure vault, Lu Ye returned to find Second Senior Sister Shui Yuan.

The issue with the Boulder Mountain Saber was resolved, and now he had to sort out his weapon control and Flying Spirit Artifacts.

Last time, he had handed over possessions worth fifty to sixty million points of merit to Shui Yuan, which were now stored in the Righteous Blood Sect's treasure vault.

After receiving the key from Second Senior Sister, Lu Ye entered the treasure vault for a haul.

Chapter 440 Promotion to Cloud River, Heaven's Augury Bestowment (Happy New Year)

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Time flew, and three days later, at the high platform in front of Heaven's Augury Hall at the Righteous Blood Sect's residence, Lu Ye was sitting cross-legged.

A few dozen yards from the platform, in all directions, were cultivators who had come to witness the ceremony. Shadows of people filled the sky and the earth. These Spirit Stream Realm level cultivators might not understand much about Heaven's Augury Bestowment, but the older generation knew that among their generation of cultivators, Lu Yiye of the Righteous Blood Sect was highly likely to receive the Heaven's Augury Bestowment during his ascension to Cloud River.

Because along his path of cultivation, the enemies Lu Ye killed were mostly of higher cultivation levels.

Under the orders of the older generation, the younger generation of cultivators would gather at the Righteous Blood Sect's residence.

Nobody knew how much benefit a cultivator could gain from Heaven's Augury Bestowment, but no one wanted to miss the opportunity to witness it.

Even if they had miscalculated and Lu Ye did not receive the Heaven's Augury Bestowment, having the younger generation of cultivators come was not a big loss; at worst, they would have wasted a few days of cultivation time.

It wasn't often that so many Core Circle cultivators gathered in one place, allowing them to get acquainted with one another and broaden their horizons. This in itself was a good thing.

Despite the large crowd, the entire residence was silent.

Up on the high platform, Lu Ye felt quite some pressure.

He was only advancing to Cloud River, yet it had attracted so many people to come and watch the event. He suddenly realized that in the Spirit Stream battlefield, he had unconsciously gained such immense influence.

Considering what his Second Senior Sister had told him before he left the sect's headquarters, he didn't need to worry about the Heaven's Augury Bestowment. If it came, that would naturally be for the best; if not, then there was no need to force it, and a burden was lifted from his shoulders.

The nine Minor Circumambulation cycles within his body gradually came to a stop under his control, and his cultivation level plummeted from the 9th Heaven level.

Until all his spirit force condensed within his spiritual orifices, without the slightest movement anymore.

He had seen Giant Armor ascend to Cloud River in the Ten Thousand Poisons Forest, and the transition from Spirit Stream to Cloud River was not a difficult matter for a cultivator, as long as one had enough

spiritual orifices opened within the body. By connecting all the spiritual orifices according to the cultivation method and performing the Major Circumambulation, one would naturally ascend.

Thus, he knew exactly what he had to do now.

Remembering the details recorded in the Great Sun Glazed Glass Method, he followed the cultivation technique's pathways, activating his spirit force, beginning from the Root Spiritual Orifice, linking one spiritual orifice after another.

The dormant spirit force surged once more within the spiritual orifices, flowing more swiftly and fiercely as more orifices were connected.

Until at one moment, 360 orifices were linked, and the circulating spirit force surged back into the Root Spiritual Orifice.

At this moment, his spirit force began and ended with the Root Spiritual Orifice, the Major Circumambulation was complete.

There was a buzzing within Lu Ye's body, spirit force surging like a raging river.

An invisible wave of force suddenly swept in all directions, an inexplicable aura burst forth—Spirit Stream advancing to Cloud River!

Previously in the Ten Thousand Poisons Forest, once Giant Armor had ascended to Cloud River, he was immediately repelled by Heaven's Augury and sent out of the Spirit Stream battlefield, returning directly to the sect headquarters' Heaven's Augury Hall.

After his ascension to Cloud River, Lu Ye also felt an unmistakable sense of rejection from the world around him. He felt as if he were in an extremely crowded environment, with every inch of space around him trying to squeeze him out.

However, just then, Heaven's Augury seemed to descend mysteriously from above, and that omnipresent sense of rejection vanished in an instant.

At the same time, the cultivators watching around him stirred, because above Lu Ye's head, a seven-color Treasure Lotus suddenly appeared, rotating slowly and descending directly toward him.

"Heaven's Augury Bestowment!" someone exclaimed.

Although they had learned from their elders that Lu Yiye was very likely to receive the Heaven's Augury Bestowment during his ascension to Cloud River, no one could be certain until it actually happened.

Only at this moment was it true that Heaven's Augury had bestowed its blessing!

The object was undoubtedly a seven-color Treasure Lotus descending from the sky. It was not a physical entity but seemed more like an illusion, or an inexplicable convergence of energies.

The moment the seven-color Treasure Lotus appeared, an odd fragrance pervaded the heavens and the earth, refreshing and invigorating the spirit, and lightening the body.

The Treasure Lotus descended, enveloping the figure of Lu Ye. At first glance, it seemed as though Lu Ye was sitting within a rotating seven-color lotus, with his surroundings becoming as vibrant as a blooming flower, mystical visions of destruction and creation manifesting!

Furthermore, layers of lotus illusions appeared and disappeared with the rotation of the Treasure Lotus, returning in a cycle.

A strange energy filled the Righteous Blood Sect's residence.

Some quick-witted cultivators tried to absorb the energy and were amazed to find that the energy that spread freely strengthened their bodies and enhanced their minds.

"Quick, cultivate!" one cultivator called out upon noticing the abnormality.

The cultivators standing on the ground immediately sat down cross-legged, entering a state of cultivation. Those who were hovering in mid-air watching hurriedly looked for a place to land.

Within less than thirty breaths since the seven-color Treasure Lotus descended, the entire Righteous Blood Sect's residence, including all disciples from the sect and the outside cultivators who had come to observe, adding up to two or three thousand people, all entered a state of cultivation.

Everyone could feel the odd energy aiding their own bodies and rejoiced, knowing that coming to witness the ceremony was the right decision.

If the energy leaking out already had such an effect, then Lu Ye, who was seated within the Treasure Lotus, felt it even more acutely.

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After the omnipresent repulsive force disappeared, he clearly felt a gentle power flow into his body, tempering his physique while also strengthening his psyche.

This feeling was like swallowing the spirit mist in the Heaven's Augury Pond, but the benefits were much greater than those gained from the pond.

Not to mention, he had entered the Heaven's Augury Pond four times, with the last time being nearly pointless, yet the baptism of the Heaven's Augury Bestowment clearly helped him.

As time trickled away, the Righteous Blood Sect's residence was eerily silent.

Until a certain moment, when a cultivator slowly opened his eyes, looked up, but could no longer see Lu Ye's figure; the platform was empty, signaling to him that Lu Ye must have ascended to Cloud River, leaving the Spirit Stream battlefield.

More and more cultivators opened their eyes, silently sensing the changes in themselves, all sporting smiles that could not be contained.

There was no surprise there, as almost everyone who had witnessed the ceremony gained various degrees of benefit, generally feeling their bodies and minds had grown stronger. Some had even managed to open spiritual orifices they had not opened for a long time without realizing it, while others found that the pill poison accumulated in their bodies had lessened and their spirit force had become purer.

In their awe, they were merely affected by the ripple effects of the Heaven's Augury Bestowment; if they had gained so much from just that, what kind of benefits did Lu Ye, the prime beneficiary, receive?

While the Righteous Blood Sect's residents were abuzz with excitement, the areas belonging to the big sects from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge were also erupting in jubilation.

It was none other than Lu Yiye from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, who had finally ascended to Cloud River!

Just now, on the Spirit Stream Ranking, Lu Yiye's name, which stood at the top position, suddenly vanished, replaced by Endless Island's Lan Ziyi!

Lu Yiye couldn't have died, so the only possibility was that he had ascended to Cloud River.

Celebrations were in order!

It was not easy; they had finally seen him off. The days when a vast camp on the Spirit Stream battlefield was dominated by one man were gone.

With the disappearance of the suffocating mountain that loomed over everyone, the quietly suffering factions of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge felt it was time to stand straight and live with dignity!

When Lu Yiye was on the Spirit Stream battlefield, all the sects of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge had difficult days, with no one daring to make any significant moves, fearing they would catch the eye of this calamitous star.

Now it was all good; he had ascended to Cloud River! He would enter the Cloud River battlefield in the future, not the Spirit Stream battlefield!

It was a day for rejoicing and a day worth remembering. The faces of the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators finally displayed long-lost smiles, all that was lacking was some gongs and drums to bid farewell to Lu Yiye.

But soon, another piece of news came that shrouded the joyous mood of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge under a layer of mist.

Lu Yiye had received the Heaven's Augury Bestowment during his ascension to Cloud River!

This was the attention and recognition from Heaven's Augury; throughout history, very few had received its bestowment, yet every one of them achieved great things in the future.

The last one to be blessed by Heaven's Augury belonged to the Righteous Blood Sect, and that person led the Haotian Alliance to hammer Ten Thousand Demons Ridge so badly that they nearly couldn't recognize their own parents. If it weren't for his stubbornness, Ten Thousand Demons Ridge would probably be struggling to survive in a dark corner.

Because of the Heaven's Augury Bestowment, the good mood of many cultivators from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge was thrown into disarray, cursing Lu Yiye for being so detestable. He had ascended to Cloud River and still wouldn't let them be at ease; it was typical of him to disgust them one last time before leaving...

In the Righteous Blood Sect headquarters, within the Heaven's Augury Hall, Lu Ye sat cross-legged, silently sensing the changes within himself.

In his body, the 360 orifices flowed with the circulation of the Major Circumambulation, and spirit force surged like a river, marking a major realm's improvement as his strength increased substantially!

Lu Ye estimated that his power had increased by at least half in the moment he ascended to Cloud River!

This was evident from the speed of the spirit force coursing through his body, which was incomparable to before.

What puzzled him was the Heaven's Augury Bestowment!

Under the Heaven's Augury Bestowment, his physique had clearly been enhanced, as well as his mind, and the effect was roughly equivalent to the sum of his first two baths in the Heaven's Augury Pond.

But after such a grand ceremony, was this all the benefit he got?

Lu Ye felt there was something not quite right.

He didn't know what his senior brother's experience with the Heaven's Augury Bestowment looked like decades ago because there were no detailed records, and even Shui Yuan was unclear about it, being quite young at that time.

But if the Heaven's Augury Bestowment had only this much to offer, it didn't fit its legendary status.

He couldn't figure it out.

Perhaps there was something he hadn't yet discovered?

Lu Ye could only comfort himself with this thought.

After inspecting himself and confirming that the Major Circumambulation inside his body was functioning well, with nothing amiss, Lu Ye was about to stand up when his battlefield marking suddenly showed signs of activity.

Upon a brief investigation, he realized it was a reminder from Heaven's Augury; it was time for his appointment with that Artifact Crafting Grandmaster.

He quickly raised his hand to touch the Heaven's Augury Pillar, connected his mind to the Heaven's Augury treasure vault, and soon reappeared in that small room from before.