

Humanity 771

Chapter 771 Top 100 of Cloud River

The handover with Master Feather went smoothly, Lu Ye got the Boulder Mountain Saber, and Master Feather received his merit, both sides delighted.

In front of Heaven's Augury Pillar, Lu Ye examined the Boulder Mountain Saber after its upgrade.

The shape, the length, had not changed in the least, but the blade had become even darker, as if it could swallow light itself.

He ran a finger over every corner of the blade, and all traces of the fierce battles that it bore were erased, the whole saber reborn anew.

It wasn't overtly sharp; the Boulder Mountain Saber had never relied on sharpness for victory. Its first impression was always one of solidity.

With the saber in hand, one felt deep and immovable, like a mountain that would never fall throughout the ages.

When spirit force was poured into it, there was no delay, a hum emanated from the blade, and the saber felt like an extension of his own body.

Lu Ye silently sensed the flow of his own spirit force and the many restrictions within the blade.

Originally, the Boulder Mountain Saber was merely a top-grade spiritual artifact with twenty-seven restrictions, but now, it housed seventy-two restrictions, making it the epitome of a low-grade magic artifact.

The myriad restrictions were seamlessly connected, complementing each other without flaws, showcasing the profound skill of Master Feather in the Path of Artifact Refining.

This also counted as Lu Ye's very first magic artifact in his life.

Spiritual artifacts, magic artifacts—the more complex the restrictions they contained, the greater the power they could unleash, but correspondingly, the greater the toll on the wielder.

Those below the True Lake Realm typically do not use magic artifacts, not because they can't afford to.

The Heaven's Augury treasure vault is right there, and with enough merit, not to mention low-grade magic artifacts, even top-grade magic artifacts can be easily exchanged.

But what does it matter if they can afford it when the consumption is too high? Even with a magic artifact, a cultivator below the True Lake Realm couldn't sustain it for a long duration.

Therefore, under normal circumstances, magic artifacts are more or less exclusive to True Lake Realm cultivators.

Theoretically, a low-grade magic artifact can accompany a True Lake cultivator for a very long time.

Although Lu Ye is currently only at Cloud River Level 8, using the power of a magic artifact entails significant consumption, but compared to other cultivators, his recovery is simple, and he has a spirit energy-storing ring as backup, so the problem isn't serious.

Moreover, at this stage in the Nine Provinces Cloud River Realm, it's unlikely he will encounter an opponent that could force him into prolonged battle.

As long as he can conclude the fight quickly, it doesn't matter if he uses a low-grade magic artifact or even a supreme-grade magic artifact.

After inspecting the Boulder Mountain Saber and confirming that it met and even exceeded his expectations, Lu Ye sheathed the saber and conveniently upgraded his supplies box and weapon control to the class of magic artifacts.

His supplies box and weapon control were only of mid-grade spiritual artifact quality and had long been unable to keep up with his strength improvement in cultivation. He had not dealt with it before mainly because, as his cultivation increased, he used weapon control less frequently.

For most cultivators, weapon control mainly serves as a means to kill enemies at a medium range—a supplementary method, not the main one.

After all, whether you're a combat cultivator, a physique cultivator, or a ghost cultivator, you need to engage in close combat to display your full strength.

This is especially true for Lu Ye. Now, he has achieved a high level of mastery in the path of magic, and to him, weapon control is actually optional.

It's just a precaution.

Magic-artifact-class weapon control and supplies boxes are extremely valuable, each costing tens of thousands of merits. Lu Ye chose one with three weapon controls and spent about 30,000 merits on it.

As a result, he still had over 80,000 merits left.

Without returning to Emerald Bamboo Peak, he simply sat cross-legged in Heaven's Augury Hall, refining the supplies box and weapon control while cultivating and reading.

Although he was eager to witness the origin of the Soaring Dragon World and glimpse the tumultuous lives of those powerful figures who stirred up an era, to extract the essence of their cultivation, some things should not be rushed.

Life is long; there's no need to hurry.

And so, several days passed in such a manner.

When his battlefield marking on the back of his hand stirred, Lu Ye knew that the results for the second round of the Cloud River Contest were out.

He checked his own marking, and in the last column, he saw new words.

Cloud River Contest Ranking: Top 100!

There was no specific rank, but as his consciousness delved into this information, he immediately recognized the names—some familiar, some strange.

A total of one hundred.

These one hundred were the top finalists of this Cloud River Contest.

Any cultivator who had participated in the Cloud River Contest could inquire through their own battlefield markings.

In the list, Lu Ye found his name, Fong Rulie's, Lan Ziyi's, and he saw Li Baxian and Feng Yuechan, even Giant Armor made the shocking entry!

That Li Baxian and Feng Yuechan reached the top 100 was not surprising to Lu Ye; these two had a very solid foundation accumulated in the Spirit Stream Realm. In Fox Fairy Valley, they had also received a baptism bestowed by Heaven's Augury along with him, allowing their foundations to become even more prominent.

Now, what held them back was only their cultivation level.

It could even be said that they were a bit out of luck with the times.

If their cultivation was not at Level 7 but at Level 8, Lu Ye thought that they would definitely be able to make it into the top ten.

But whether they could actually enter the top ten now was something Lu Ye couldn't be sure of.

As for the Giant Armor... this simple-minded individual with exceptional talent possesses a physique so powerful that it's alarming. At the level of the Cloud River Realm, Lu Ye found it hard to imagine anyone who could pose a threat to him.

Whether it was excellent magic and spells or unparalleled swords and sabers, Giant Armor could simply overpower them with his brute strength. In the past seven days, every opponent who faced him in combat could barely describe their bitter struggles.

Because Giant Armor had no particular strategy against enemies, he would just charge headlong, chasing after his opponents around the field until he drained them of their spirit force by sheer persistence, forcing them to concede defeat actively.

It was within expectation not to see Hua Ci's name.

After all, her cultivation was a bit too low. She didn't have a deep foundation like Li Baxian and Feng Yuechan, nor did she have Giant Armor's exceptional talent. Even though her means of poisoning were unfathomably cunning, a battle environment similar to the combat arena in the Cloud River supremacy competition was very disadvantageous for her; such conditions didn't allow her to unleash her full potential.

In the Nine Provinces' Cloud River Realm, talents emerged in great numbers, and once she encountered an opponent who could decide the outcome in a short time, she would surely lose.

The entire Great Reversal Valley Spirit Ground only had five people, yet the Cloud River supremacy's top 100 list included four of them, a staggering achievement.

Like the first two rounds, both the third and fourth rounds would last for seven days.

This made the duration of this significant event nearly a month.

During the first and second rounds, cultivators couldn't choose their opponents but were left to the whims of Heaven's Augury. They were sent into the combat arena without knowing what kind of opponent they would face – it was all up to chance.

Of course, the operation of Heaven's Augury was naturally fair; what kind of cultivators would meet what kind of opponents was something cultivators themselves couldn't interfere with, but Heaven's Augury had its own reasonable arrangements.

However, during the third round, cultivators had the opportunity to choose their opponents.

In the third round of the Cloud River supremacy, theoretically, each cultivator had to fight ten battles. The final ranking would then be determined by the outcomes and performance in these ten battles, combined with the cultivator's results from the first two rounds.

The reason this is theoretical is that it is not absolute.

In the third round, what each cultivator must do is actively challenge five different opponents.

That is, to select and challenge five people from the top 100 list to decide the outcome.

The other rule is to passively accept challenges up to five times! This is to prevent collusion among some individuals specifically targeting one person.

Of course, if you're lucky enough, you might not be challenged by anyone during the entire third round. In that case, you only need to actively challenge others five times, and the other five battles that you were not challenged in would all be counted as victories.

Therefore, in the third round of the tournament, cultivators would fight a minimum of five battles and a maximum of ten.

The emergence of the top 100 list also signified the official start of the third round of the competition.

It wasn't that Lu Ye underestimated his opponents, but with his current strength and perspective, cultivators at the level of the Cloud River Realm were unlikely to pose any threat to him.

Choosing what kind of opponent didn't make a difference to him.

As his consciousness moved across several names, just when he was about to randomly select a lucky Fellow Daoist, his battlefield marking suddenly stirred.

At the same time, a hollow voice rang in his mind.

"Ying Wuji has issued you a challenge!"

Lu Ye's eyebrows raised.

Someone's not afraid of death?

As the voice sounded, ripples emanated from the Heaven's Augury Pillar in front of him. Without giving Lu Ye any time to react, it enveloped him.

His vision blurred, and he found himself within a dense forest!

The first and second rounds of the Cloud River supremacy battles took place in an environment similar to a combat arena, with ample space for cultivators of any school to fully exert their strength, so the competitors could see each other as soon as they entered.

But the third round was obviously different.

This time, the battlefield was not the combat arena, but a small space.

Moreover, this space was chosen by the challenger, allowing them to fully utilize their advantages and gain the upper hand in the terrain.

Having previously learned about the various rules of the Cloud River supremacy competition, Lu Ye was not surprised by this.

The dense forest was quiet, and the rustling trees and grass carried an undertone of murderous intent.

Furthermore, Lu Ye faintly sensed that hidden within this dense forest were formations.

With a thought, he tried to take to the skies, but after ascending thirty feet, it felt as if he were bearing the weight of a vast mountain, preventing him from flying any higher.

The Great Sky Prohibition Array!

The challenger could not only choose terrain that was advantageous and allowed them to leverage their strengths, but they could also tailor specific formation arrays. Of course, these arrays would cover the entire combat field and affect both parties involved in the battle.

Such an environment, coupled with the Great Sky Prohibition Array,

Immediately informed Lu Ye that his challenger must be a ghost cultivator!

The quiet, vegetation-rich forest suited ghost cultivators to conceal their presence and launch surprise attacks. The main purpose of the Great Sky Prohibition Array was to prevent him from taking flight and fleeing.

And thinking of the name Ying Wuji...

Lu Ye felt it sounded somewhat familiar; he seemed to have heard this name somewhere before.

But making it to the top 100 of the Cloud River Realm, every single one came from core disciples of top sects. These people had mostly made a name for themselves on the Cloud River battlefield, so it was normal for him to have heard of them before.

Chapter 772 Never See This Guy Again

The dense woods enveloped Ying Wuji who perched upon the trunk of a large tree, activating his Secret Technique to conceal his form and restrain his breath.

Of Lu Yiye's might, he had naturally heard recent tales.

Alone he stood against two hundred foes from Ten Thousand Demons Ridge, leaving his enemies to crumble and scatter.

Outside Heaven's Augury City, under the watchful eyes of the public, he slew Xia Liang with his saber, his reputation soaring high.

Such fearsome strength was beyond his means to confront directly, he admitted to himself, feeling utterly outmatched.

However, for a specter cultivator executing assassinations, the disparity in cultivation was never the principal concern. Like sword cultivators, their faction was innately capable of defeating enemies of higher realms.

But unlike the upfront approach of sword cultivators, specter cultivators always operate through stealth and guile, so no matter how powerful Lu Ye was, as long as he found an opportunity, he could kill him in one strike!

He had once suffered a major loss at the hands of Lu Ye. Previously, when Song Zhui led a group of Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators to attack the Great Reversal Spirit Ground, Song Zhui distracted Lu Ye in the open while he lay in ambush. Barely within thirty feet of Lu Ye, he was inexplicably discovered, injured by Lu Ye's Formation, and forced to flee.

Gravely weakened, he healed deep within the Great Wilderness Mountain. By ill fate, he encountered Lu Ye departing from Great Reversal Valley via a teleportation array, suffering another setback.

At that time, Lu Ye was only at Cloud River Level 6, while he had already reached Cloud River Level 9!

It was a humiliation beyond compare!

After that encounter, he returned to the Nine Provinces sect headquarters and while healing, he diligently practiced the Secret Technique of Senluo Hall.

Half a year passed, and at last, he made significant progress.

Though his cultivation had not increased, his strength underwent a heaven-shaking transformation, and the previous losses at the hands of Lu Ye were debts he intended to repay.

It wasn't just this reason that compelled him to challenge Lu Ye.

More importantly, back in Great Reversal Valley, when Lu Ye perceived his concealed presence, he always felt it wasn't through the might of a Formation.

That Lu Yiye seemed to possess a special skill that allowed him to see through his concealment!

For a specter cultivator, this was absolutely unbearable. Being able to move unseen was their greatest advantage; if this advantage no longer existed, what purpose would a specter cultivator have?

Half a year later, every time he thought of that moment when Lu Yiye suddenly turned to look at him, Ying Wuji tossed and turned with worry.

Now that he had succeeded in his Secret Technique, his path as a specter cultivator far surpassing the one of half a year ago, he was confident enough to challenge Lu Ye!

In this battle, he aimed to confront his own flaws and uphold the honor of specter cultivators!

The mountain breeze was bleak. In his view, Lu Yiye hovered three zhang in the air, serenely suspended with a relaxed posture, utterly unguarded.

Ying Wuji's eyes were calm as a specter, as he leapt down from the tree trunk and swiftly approached Lu Ye.

Without a sound, without a trace.

Having envisioned combat with Lu Ye countless times, when he finally took action, Ying Wuji immersed himself in a ripple-less state.

For a specter cultivator, this was undoubtedly the perfect state.

In this state, relying on his foundation, he was confident in his ability to ambush even a True Lake Realm opponent.

As he moved, two pitch-black, ink-like curved sabers appeared in his hands.

Just as he closed in three zhang behind Lu Ye, he suddenly burst forth to launch his attack.

The tranquil space was disturbed by the sudden explosion of spirit force fluctuations, and amidst the howling wild winds, trees swayed violently.

Ying Wuji transformed into a black streak, like a dark thunderbolt, striking towards the heart of Lu Ye from behind.

In the blink of an eye, he was upon him.

At that instant, a fiery red light emerged, and as the piercing saber light descended, his tranquil state was shattered by shock.

Ying Wuji's figure suddenly became visible, his two curved sabers crossed in front of him, blocking the stroke that Lu Ye had turned around to deliver.

Their eyes met at close quarters, and Ying Wuji caught a glimpse of the chill in Lu Ye's eyes.

"You..." Ying Wuji's face was a picture of shock.

He didn't know if his previous movements had been exposed. If they had been, then Lu Yiye's perception was far too keen. He was not the same as he had been half a year ago; he had mastered Senluo Hall's Secret Technique, and his stealth had greatly improved since then.

Within the realms of Cloud River Realm, it made no sense for anyone to have spied his concealed movements, especially from behind.

Yet if not for foreseeing his approach, Lu Yiye's reaction speed was terrifyingly fast!

It was nearly as if the moment he made his move, Lu Yiye had counterattacked. Could such a feat be achieved within the Cloud River Realm?

"It's you!"

Lu Ye finally recognized who Ying Wuji was.

They had clashed once in Great Reversal Valley and once in the Great Wilderness Mountain. This fellow had suffered greatly at his hands twice, disappearing without a trace afterward, only to face him again in the Cloud River competition.

The first clash was where he wounded this man through the power of a Formation.

The second was like kicking a man when he was down...

Those encounters did not truly reflect his own strength.

This time was different; even with a one-level cultivation gap, once Ying Wuji revealed himself, he posed no further threat.

As they spoke, Lu Ye suddenly exerted strength in his hands.

Ying Wuji had no time for shock, as he suddenly felt an overpowering force on his twin sabers, forcing them apart. He could see the flaming long saber descending towards him.

Ying Wuji's pupils contracted, his spirit force fluctuating wildly as he hurriedly exclaimed, "Covert Shadow Formless, vanishing without a trace!"

The saber split Ying Wuji in two.

Lu Ye's eyebrows raised.

This strike didn't feel like it hit anything solid; what he had just cleaved seemed to be merely a shadow!

What secret technique was this?

He immediately turned his head, focusing on a certain area to the side, and with a powerful push from his feet, the ground cracked as he dashed fiercely towards that direction.

Ying Wuji, who had hidden his form once again, felt his scalp tingle!

Was his whereabouts discovered?

Impossible!

He had pushed this secret technique to its limit on himself; there was no reason it should be exposed so easily.

Yet even now, while his form was hidden, it seemed as though he could still see his own reflection in Lu Ye's eyes.

A terrifying sense of oppression swept over him as Lu Ye's figure approached, making it almost impossible for him to breathe.

In that moment, he finally understood something.

This Lu Yiye bastard... his perception was incredibly strong, which was why he could so easily see through his tracks.

And his second saber strike... he definitely couldn't block it.

Without any hope for luck or pointless resistance, he quickly shouted, "I admit defeat!"

The moment his figure reappeared, it disappeared again, having been sent out of the area.

Lu Ye halted in his tracks, sheathed his saber, and after a moment, his figure also slowly faded away.

In the Senluo Hall, within Heaven's Augury Hall, Ying Wuji appeared, his face pale. Scanning his surroundings and seeing the familiar scene, he finally relaxed!

When he saw the waiting, gaunt old man, Ying Wuji went up to him with a guilt-ridden face: "Master, your disciple has been defeated."

As soon as the old man saw Ying Wuji, he guessed what had happened, so he didn't much care: "A single defeat doesn't mean anything. Cultivators cultivate for a lifetime, victory and defeat are common, and no one can ensure they are never defeated. Facing one's own shortcomings and recognizing your weaknesses is the only way to grow stronger."

"Yes." Ying Wuji nodded respectfully, then after thinking he added, "Master, that Lu Yiye's perception seems outrageously strong. My Concealment Technique had no effect on him at all, not even the Covert Shadow Formless secret technique worked."

This time, the old man couldn't help but be surprised: "He could see through even the Covert Shadow Formless?"

Ying Wuji nodded.

"That is indeed strange. In principle, unless someone is several levels higher in cultivation than you, they would be able to see through your movements. He's only at Cloud River Level 8 now, no matter how strong his perception is, how strong can it really be?"

"The disciple suspects that he may be gifted with an innate psyche far stronger than ordinary people," Ying Wuji speculated.

The strength of the psyche is directly determined by the strength of the psyche, and prior to the Divine Sea Realm, the increase in a cultivator's cultivation and the passing of time can indeed gradually strengthen the psyche, but all of that is passively accumulated and cannot be actively cultivated, unless one has consumed some precious treasure that can enhance the psyche's strength.

Such treasures are incredibly valuable, and even Divine Sea Realm strong cultivators would compete for them, so there's no way Lu Yiye, a mere Cloud River Realm cultivator, would have access to one.

Thus, Ying Wuji could only speculate like this, which was quite reasonable.

"If that's the case, then retreat from him, leave him be, avoid him, and after the long years have passed, look back on him again."

"Yes!" Ying Wuji responded respectfully, silently making up his mind.

In the future, wherever Lu Yiye appeared, he would surely retreat and avoid him—better yet, never see this guy again!

Defeating Ying Wuji wasn't much of a feat for Lu Ye. The ghost cultivator's main reliance had no effect in front of him; in terms of head-on combat power, Ying Wuji wasn't even comparable to Xia Liang, so how could he be his opponent?

Back at the Righteous Blood Sect's Heaven's Augury Hall, Lu Ye immersed his mind into the battlefield marking, continuing to draw lucky Fellow Daoists.

He didn't have any special targets in mind and just chose at random. Of course, he couldn't pick his fourth senior brother and the others.

After choosing several people in succession, the feedback from the marking indicated that these individuals were currently in battle.

He hadn't spent much time dealing with Ying Wuji, but for the others, that wasn't the case.

You see, those who were currently locked in fierce battles were all top hundred contenders, each with formidable strength. Typically, their battles wouldn't conclude in just a moment or two.

He wasn't in a hurry, continuing to make his choices.

Eventually, someone would be free.

It wasn't until he selected one person in particular that the battlefield marking gave a different feedback.

An empty voice resonated in his mind.

"Challenging Lan Ziyi."

This woman... seems a bit unlucky, Lu Ye thought.

But being chosen by him also proved something from a side note.

This woman was strong, so she could settle the score with her opponent in a very short time, and thus she was in an "idle" state at the moment.

After waiting a moment, that empty voice sounded again.

"The opponent accepts the challenge, you may choose the combat field."

As a combat cultivator, he naturally didn't fuss about the choice of battlefield; it would be one of those simplest combat fields with small spaces.

His vision blurred, and he found himself in the combat field.

Looking up, he saw Lan Ziyi not far away, looking at him with a furrowed brow.

Chapter 773 Individual Rankings

"Did you do that on purpose?"

In the combat field, Lan Ziyi looked at Lu Ye with an expression of annoyance.

Out of a hundred people, he just had to choose her. What else could it be, if not deliberate?

Lu Ye couldn't be bothered to explain anything to her. Even if it wasn't intentional, what did it matter if it was?

Raising his hand to the hilt of the Boulder Mountain Saber, his entire being entered a state of readiness for battle, poised to charge out in an instant.

"Don't lift a hand, I will admit defeat on my own."

With a single sentence from Lan Ziyi, Lu Ye was caught in an awkward position, feeling extremely uncomfortable.

Although he had previously bested Lan Ziyi in a contest, he had only revealed the capabilities of a magic cultivator. To concede without a real fight in the midst of the Cloud River competition, Lu Ye didn't know whether to call this woman time-wise or cowardly cautious.

"Though I do not know where I have offended you, enough to warrant such targeting, I still want to say, you can't kill me, and no amount of targeting will help. Also, the words you said last time, I cannot..."

Before he could finish, Lu Ye had already dashed out, leaving behind afterimages under the boost of Move-Like-The-Wind.

Lan Ziyi, out of breath with irritation, blurted out, "I concede!"

As her figure disappeared, Lu Ye also reached the spot where she had originally been.

"If you concede, then concede. No need for so much chatter."

What he didn't know was that, after Ying Wuji, the second person in the world who wished never to see him again had just emerged.

Indeed, the battles among the top one hundred were extremely fierce; almost every match would last for a long duration, and according to the rules set by Heaven's Augury, the challenged had three Shichen to rest and recover.

In other words, even if they accepted the challenge, they had six hours to adjust their condition and heal any injuries.

This resulted in long intervals between each of Lu Ye's battles. After defeating Lan Ziyi, he waited a full six Shichen before he successfully challenged his second opponent.

The battle ended quickly, and naturally, he was utterly victorious.

It has to be said, the personalities of the top figures in the Cloud River were all exceptional. Even when they knew they were being challenged by Lu Ye, and even if they were injured and not fully recovered, nobody ever rejected his challenge; some even took the initiative to challenge him.

Perhaps they did not believe the rumors of Lu Ye's exaggerated strength, perhaps it was out of confidence in themselves, or perhaps they did not want to miss the opportunity to fight Lu Ye. In any case, these prodigies from the top sects, after clashing with Lu Ye, were injured in body and somewhat wounded in spirit, no matter how lightly or severely.

Because the strength that Lu Ye showed had surpassed their perceived limits.

And what nobody knew was that this was not Lu Ye's limit.

According to the rules of Heaven's Augury, he could have brought the Amber with him. If he had merged his blood Qi with the Amber, his strength would have been even greater.

After two days, the ten battles were finally over.

He returned to Emerald Bamboo Peak to resume his deep cultivation, quickly forgetting the passage of time.

It was only when there was a stir in his battlefield marking that Lu Ye came to his senses.

The third round of the Cloud River competition had ended.

He checked his own battlefield marking.

The last line of information had changed.

Cloud River competition ranking: First Place.

The first round of Cloud River competition selects three thousand people from amongst the countless Cloud River Realm cultivators.

The second round then whittles these three thousand down to one hundred.

However, there are no rankings for the first two rounds, only after the end of the third round, through the battles among the top hundred, are temporary rankings determined.

These one hundred individuals, undoubtedly, are the most elite of the Nine Provinces Cloud River Realm in the past five years, each with the potential to advance to the Divine Sea. As soon as the second round ended and the names were announced, it garnered the attention of major and minor sects in the Nine Provinces, and now with the rankings out, the enthusiasm for attention is even higher.

Despite some prior predictions, when those powerful figures from various sects saw the name ranked first, they still found it somewhat difficult to believe.

Lu Yiye!

With a Level 8 cultivation base, he overshadowed a generation of prodigies. Looking across the entire Nine Provinces, such a feat had never happened in the history of the Cloud River competition.

Every Cloud River competition's top position, without exception, has always been held by someone with a Level 9 cultivation base.

The gap in one level of cultivation can often be vast as heaven and earth.

He captured first place at Level 8, so just how terrifying would his strength be at Level 9?

And after this Cloud River competition, Heaven's Augury will grant rewards again, and Lu Yiye is already not far from Level 9!

The order of names on the list is determined by Heaven's Augury without any room for human interference, so nobody questions its fairness. That means if Lu Ye is listed at the top, then he possesses the strength of the top position.

Fortunately, others still have a chance, because this list is only temporary.

The fourth round of the Cloud River competition is the battle that will set the final rankings!

Based on the outcomes of the third-round fights as well as the performance of the cultivators in earlier combats, Heaven's Augury temporarily determines the rankings of the top one hundred.

But to finalize the ranking list, the fourth round of the contest had to end.

For the top hundred cultivators in the Cloud River realm, what they needed to do in the fourth round was to challenge those ranked higher than themselves. If they defeated the challenged party, they could take their place on the ranking list.

They had three opportunities!

That is, they had three chances to fail.

If they failed three challenges, then they would have no more opportunities to advance.

The rules of Cloud River's power struggle had always been so, never changing across generations. Hence, some cultivators did not reveal their true strength in the first three rounds of the fight. Instead, they feigned incompetence under the pretense of possibility, only going all out in the fourth round, unleashing their full power.

The biggest difference between the fourth round and the previous three was that it could be observed.

Nine Provinces cultivators, regardless of their cultivation, just needed their own battlefield marking, and they could immerse their minds in those battles through the marking, watching the battles of these prodigies as observers.

For the older generation of cultivators, such observation allowed them to see their apprentices' performance firsthand, recognize their shortcomings, and then provide targeted guidance for the future while also spotting the potential of young talents from rival factions.

For the younger generation of cultivators, such observation undoubtedly allowed them to absorb a lot of useful experience, to witness the strength of others, realize the gap between themselves and the powerful, and strive to catch up with vigorous efforts.

Therefore, throughout history, in the time that the fourth round of Cloud River's contention lasted, each and every battle, with its thrills and intensity, captured the immersed attention of countless cultivators through their markings. These spectacles would be the talk of the town for a good while, leaving much to reflect upon.

On Emerald Bamboo Peak, Lu Ye set off toward Righteous Peak while checking the complete list of the top hundred.

He saw many familiar names, as well as many he had never come across before.

The name directly below his was that of Muk Qingyun.

Lu Ye's eyes flickered. If he remembered correctly, the surname of the Beixuan Sword Master was Muk. It was highly likely that this Muk Qingyun was a sword cultivator from the Beixuan Sword Sect, and moreover, the current Sword Heir!

However, on the Cloud River battlefield, Lu Ye had never heard of Muk Qingyun. Judging from this, he must be one of those who had stayed in the Cloud River Realm for a long time, deliberately not advancing to the True Lake, just waiting for the Cloud River contest.

Such people generally did not move around within the Cloud River battlefield. They were usually within the Nine Provinces, so even if they had made a big name for themselves before, their fame would gradually fade over time.

Looking around, the top ten were all seemingly strong figures who had burst onto the scene out of nowhere. However, if their names had been placed one or two years earlier, they would certainly have been well-known on the Cloud River battlefield.

Just like him today.

Lan Ziyi was ranked eleventh.

Although Lan Ziyi had conceded twice in front of him, the woman was actually very strong; it was just bad timing for her.

In Lu Ye's estimation, her strength could definitely land her in the top ten.

However, the main factor affecting the current rankings was the outcome of previous battles, and since Lan Ziyi had been defeated by him, her ranking naturally could not be too high.

But if she truly had the corresponding strength, she could naturally climb up slowly thereafter.

The one who had introduced himself to him, Fong Rulie, was ranked fifteenth.

These were not the ones Lu Ye cared about. He just gave them a cursory glance and then paid them no more attention.

Finally, he found the name he was looking for at the thirty-sixth position on the list.

Giant Armor! This big fellow really achieved a remarkable result.

Compared to Lu Ye's cultivation, his was even lower, merely at the Cloud River Level 7, but being ranked thirty-sixth was already a very high position.

This meant that in the previous rounds of the fight, he had been defeated no more than three times!

Having a strong physique did have its advantages. In the face of an enemy, no matter what Secret Technique or secret technique you have, you just need to charge forward with a hard head!

Nevertheless, Giant Armor was ranked even higher than his fourth senior brother and Feng Yuechan, something unexpected for Lu Ye. He also did not know by what standards Heaven's Augury had judged this.

At the forty-second and forty-third places, Lu Ye saw the names of Li Baxian and Feng Yuechan, back to back in the list.

He stopped looking at the rest of the list; he only cared about a few close names around him.

As for others...let's wait another ten years to see how many peers remain.

Even Lu Ye himself dared not claim what he could achieve ten years from now. Too many accidents and tribulations could occur in a cultivator's growth process. There were plenty of prodigies from generation to generation who fell before they could fully grow.

The fierce confrontation between the two big factions buried the dreams of countless Nine Provinces cultivators.

Soon after reaching Heaven's Augury Hall, Lu Ye sat cross-legged in front of the Heaven's Augury Pillar.

He was the top-ranked among the hundred, naturally, he didn't need to challenge others. All he could do was one thing, wait here for others to challenge him!

Luckily, he had plenty to do—digesting the bounty from the Hundred Arrays Pagoda, reviewing the books he took from Madam Yun, and casually consuming elixir pills for cultivation—so even just waiting wasn't boring for him.

Time ticked away slowly, and the battlefield marking showed no reaction.

Lu Ye wasn't surprised.

According to the rules, the only ones now qualified to challenge him were the second-ranked Muk Qingyun and third-ranked Yang Yuan. Most likely, these two didn't lack the courage to challenge him; it just wasn't the right moment yet!

Chapter 774 Set the List

With battle after battle erupting, the ranking of the top hundred continuously changed.

As some rose, naturally, others fell, and the names on the leaderboard bobbed up and down, creating a bustling scene.

Almost every battle attracted countless Nine Provinces cultivators as spectators, especially the fights involving top-ranked contenders, which even the big shots at the Divine Sea Realm watched with great interest.

Seeing the vigor of the younger generation, they couldn't help but reminisce about their own youth.

On the first day of the fourth round, Lu Ye didn't receive any challenges and passed the day peacefully.

The next day, finding himself with nothing to do, he found the name Giant Armor on the top hundred list and immersed his mind.

The next instant, a clear image appeared in his mind.

It was as if the image was directly projected into his mind, a unique way of spectating only available to Nine Provinces cultivators.

In the familiar terrain of the combat field, the bulky Giant Armor was intensely battling a magic cultivator.

The fight had been going on for who knows how long, and when Lu Ye watched, he saw that the magic cultivator's aura was fluctuating unpredictably, his expression both annoyed and helpless, as he was chased around the field by Giant Armor.

Such terrain was actually not friendly for magic cultivators, as the space available for maneuvering was not large.

If it were up to him to choose the terrain for the battle, he certainly wouldn't choose such a place.

But he was the one being challenged, and it was Giant Armor who had initiated the challenge; the right to choose the terrain was in Giant Armor's hands.

The magic cultivator was undoubtedly at Cloud River Level 9, with strength and foundation both formidable, as various magic and spells soared into the air.

However, facing these powerful spells that would make any Level 9 physique cultivator retreat, the Level 7 Giant Armor, who was cultivating physique, seemed undeterred. He was like a wild beast gone mad, breaking spells as he encountered them, using his incredibly strong body to shatter each spell while continuously pursuing the magic cultivator.

The fierce spells exploding on him could at most make him falter slightly, causing only superficial injuries.

His bare upper body's muscles bulged as the blood Qi in him boiled like an explosion of a big sun.

Lu Ye watched for a moment and knew that Giant Armor probably won this battle.

Giant Armor's strengths and weaknesses were both very clear; his biggest strength being his unbelievable physical strength, allowing him to ignore most attacks. At the Cloud River Realm level, very few could do anything threatening to his life; even Lu Ye at present would probably have to exhaust all his efforts and use Myriad Stars.

But his weakness was his lack of agility, though this was only relatively speaking.

One who couldn't effectively injure his opponent despite going all out, and another who relentlessly pursued but couldn't get close to his enemy; such a battle could only end when one's spirit force was exhausted.

The magic cultivator constantly deployed spells, consuming a lot of his own energy while Giant Armor had no such concerns, so the first to falter would likely be the magic cultivator.

And considering the need to either challenge others or accept challenges later on, the magic cultivator certainly wouldn't allow himself to fall into a state of spirit force exhaustion.

It probably wouldn't take long before Giant Armor's opponent would concede.

Just as Lu Ye thought, less than half a tea time later, the gasping magic cultivator suddenly stopped running, looked helplessly at Giant Armor charging towards him, and exclaimed, "Why did I have to encounter such a monster!"

Giant Armor, as if he did not hear, advanced closer, and hurled down a heavy iron fist.

"I surrender!" the magic cultivator yelled out, and his figure vanished, leaving Giant Armor punching the air.

He didn't mind much, having been through many such situations since participating in the Cloud River battle; most of the time, nobody could really handle him, nor could he handle others, simply wearing down his opponents.

Lu Ye was not the only spectator of this battle; among them were some powerhouse cultivators from big sects in the True Lake-Divine Sea Realm.

Even though Giant Armor hadn't inflicted the slightest injury on the magic cultivator from start to finish, his formidable physique impressed those from the True Lake-Divine Sea enough to stir their hearts.

Many had already begun secretly inquiring about Giant Armor's background and origins.

Unlike Lu Ye, who stirred up tempests on the Cloud River battlefield and gained tremendous fame, Giant Armor had gone unnoticed since entering the Cloud River battlefield.

Suddenly displaying such brilliance naturally piqued the interest of those big sect powerhouses.

Such a uniquely talented physique cultivator, if recruited into a sect and trained, would surely become a major pillar of support in the future!

Inquiries here and there, yet no one could track down Giant Armor's past; where he came from was a mystery, leaving those interested in him feeling quite frustrated.

After Giant Armor's fight ended, Lu Ye went to watch his fourth senior brother's battle.

The fight involving his fourth senior brother was much more intense, with Sword Qis crisscrossing and swords clashing continuously; the light of flying swords shuttled through the Void, engaging in a fierce back-and-forth with his opponent, tremendously spirited.

It was the kind of fight that was both entertaining to watch and genuinely substantial.

The strength of his fourth senior brother's opponent was not inferior to him in any way, so Lu Ye couldn't tell who would win this battle.

But as a sword cultivator, every strike of Li Baxian consumed a great deal, and if he couldn't secure victory soon, he would certainly be the one to lose.

Sword cultivators are known as the foremost in killing among all Nine Provinces cultivators, yet their downside is the great consumption.

Until Li Baxian merged with the sword light, slicing a Spectral Bewitchment stroke through the Void...

It was as if using the sword as a brush, splashing ink with a powerful stroke...

This strike hit a weak spot in the enemy's defense, clearly catching Li Baxian's opponent off-guard, and before he could respond, another sword light swept across.

Cutting through the Void, like a finishing stroke!

Words and Sword Theorem.

Although Li Baxian hadn't mastered the Words and Sword Theorem for long, his natural talent in the way of the sword cultivator was extremely high, and he had already comprehended some aspects that were uniquely his own.

These unpredictably spectral twin swords completely disrupted the enemy's formation; one wrong move led to total defeat.

Moments later, in the field, Li Baxian's opponent had already admitted defeat and left, leaving only Li Baxian in his white robe, gently exhaling.

This battle was not won easily.

Moreover, he could feel that he had reached his limit.

To climb any higher, unless he could enhance his cultivation, the Cloud River Level 7 was still somewhat too strenuous.

With a slight sigh, he quickly left.

This edition of the Cloud River battle is destined to astonish many from the Divine Sea in the Nine Provinces because there are not only Lu Ye, who dominates a generation at Level 8.

There are also such uniquely talented physique cultivators like Giant Armour, and Li Baxian, and Feng Yuechan...

And these three, are all just at Cloud River Level 7!

Such an occurrence has never happened in any previous Cloud River battles.

In previous generations of the Cloud River battles, the top hundred were almost entirely Cloud River Level 9, when could Level 7 and Level 8 ever ascend to such a battlefield?

And each one of them performed exceptionally!

Meanwhile, another name also entered the sight of the strong cultivators of the Nine Provinces.

Lan Ziyi!

This woman, originally ranked eleventh on the top hundred list, was steadily advancing her rank.

Under the rules of the fourth round, challengers could only challenge opponents two ranks above them; it was not possible to directly challenge those ranked even higher.

Starting from the eleventh place, Lan Ziyi could at most only challenge the ninth-ranked individual.

So after the first day of the fourth round, she replaced the ninth-ranked individual.

On the second day, she became ranked seventh.

By the third day, she was ranked fifth.

By the fifth day, she had risen to second place, just below Lu Ye!

Her calm and methodical approach, fighting only one battle per day, undoubtedly showcased her absolute confidence in her strength; she believed she could defeat the opponents ahead of her and replace their ranks.

And she truly achieved it.

All those who noticed this found it incredible.

Besides Lu Ye, the other top ten were all strong cultivators who had settled into the Cloud River Realm for at least a year, yet Lan Ziyi defeated them all, indicating her formidable strength.

Those cultivators who had watched her battles could see that this female cultivator was not the type with mere cultivation levels without corresponding strength.

Her fighting style varied greatly, and she had immense experience against enemies; she could perfectly display her own strength, so nearly every battle was not too difficult for her to win.

The only exception was her battle with Muk Qingyun, which was relatively arduous, but this was not because Muk Qingyun's strength surpassed others, but as a sword cultivator, every move and style of Muk Qingyun was lethal, forcing Lan Ziyi to be cautious.

In that battle, Lan Ziyi was injured, while Muk Qingyun was even more severely wounded.

Everyone was waiting for her next move, waiting for her to challenge Lu Yiye, who had always occupied the top rank, and who had not yet been challenged by anyone!

So, when the sixth day of the fourth round arrived, countless gazes across the Nine Provinces were fixed on Lu Ye and Lan Ziyi's names, expecting a tremendous battle to unfold.

However, everything remained quiet...

Maintaining her rhythm of one battle per day, Lan Ziyi showed no signs of action on the sixth day, inevitably leading to disappointment.

Some speculated that, following her battle with Muk Qingyun, Lan Ziyi had been wounded, so she was certainly healing that day, preparing to confront Lu Ye in her best condition!

This speculation seemed reasonable and naturally gained the agreement of many.

Under the watchful eyes of the public, the final day of the fourth round arrived!

Even more attention was focused on Lan Ziyi and Lu Ye's names, and the entire Nine Provinces seemed shrouded in a repressive yet expectant atmosphere.

In front of Heaven's Augury Pillar, Lu Ye sighed softly.

He originally thought that in this fourth round, he might have to fight Muk Qingyun and Yang Yuan; these prodigies not only had the courage to challenge stronger opponents but were also willing to prove themselves on such an occasion, even if it was just to witness the methods and style of stronger opponents. They wouldn't miss such an opportunity.

Because if he were in their place, Lu Ye would also make such a choice.

But now it seems... probably not.

Now ranked second was Lan Ziyi, this woman had already admitted defeat twice, making it highly unlikely that she would challenge him.

As for Muk Qingyun, who she had pushed out of her way, it seemed his injuries had not yet healed. Maintaining the third position was already good enough; he hardly had the strength to challenge others.

Chapter 775 I'm Back

On the seventh day of the fourth round of the Cloud River Ranking Battles, clashes erupted continuously; nearly everyone on the leaderboard was locked in struggle, with the roles of challenger and challenged revolving ceaselessly!

Even Muk Qingyun found no reprieve, having been challenged by those ranked fourth and fifth one after another, left utterly exhausted.

In such a fervor, many found it hard to comprehend the calmness of the top two ranked individuals.

Lu Yiye hasn't made a move, that's because he's temporarily leading the board, and he can't challenge anyone else.

Why hasn't Lan Ziyi challenged Lu Yiye?

Given the formidable strength and foundation that this female cultivator exhibited before, she certainly is qualified to challenge Lu Yiye; maybe she could even pull him down from the top position!

But gradually, some people began to realize.

Lan Ziyi's inaction undoubtedly suggested that these two had crossed swords before!

Looking back at the rankings after the end of the third round, Lan Ziyi was eleventh, which means she definitely lost a battle before.

And with her power, the only person capable of defeating her would be that Lu Yiye, perhaps even more than once...

It was because she knew she was no match for him that Lan Ziyi made no move.

Upon realizing this, countless cultivators felt both heartbroken and disappointed.

On the list of the top hundred, female cultivators are not abundant. Lan Ziyi, born from nobility and bursting with beauty, naturally gathered quite a following. These supporters all hoped to see her defeat Lu Ye, only to now learn that Lan Ziyi had already suffered at the hands of Lu Ye; she didn't even have the courage to challenge him, which naturally led to heartache!

And they grew even more resentful of that lofty name.

The seventh day of the fourth round passed in this intense and strange atmosphere.

Once midnight had passed, the top hundred rankings were set in stone, which also marked the end of this session of the Cloud River Ranking Battles.

Lu Ye scanned the leaderboard.

He naturally topped the list, having not participated in any battles throughout the fourth round.

It seemed like a case of "Success comes to one while they are sitting at home; the top position falls from the sky," with the first place arriving unexpectedly easily.

Following close behind was Lan Ziyi.

Muk Qingyun ranked third, and as the Sword Heir of the Beixuan Sword Sect, he actually had the qualifications to contend for the first place.

That is, if Lu Yiye and Lan Ziyi hadn't rapidly emerged.

Lui Qing was fourth.

Yang Yuan, who was ranked third at the end of the third round, settled in at fifth place.

Sixth went to Fong Rulie.

Lu Ye continued to scan downwards; Giant Armor was ranked twenty-ninth, not much change from thirty-sixth before, considered a slight improvement.

His fourth junior brother and Feng Yuechan were ranked thirty-third and thirty-fourth, always inseparable and closely matched.

If one also considers Hua Ci in the top three hundred, then all members from the Great Reversal Valley Spirit Ground had made a name for themselves on the list, reaping great rewards.

As for Lu Ye, the top ranker, it goes without saying; a reward of twenty gold-hued spirit fortune sticks, even more lavish than what he had obtained in the Soaring Dragon World's secret realm.

After all, this was an event of the Nine Provinces that occurred only once every five years. The rewards bestowed by Heaven's Augury wouldn't be stingy, which is why cultivators at the pinnacle of the Cloud River Realm, even if it meant delaying their advancement by a year or two, chose not to ascend to the True Lake.

For core disciples like Muk Qingyun from top sects, the supply of cultivation resources is likely not a concern. The rewards from the gold-hued spirit fortune sticks might not be enough to motivate such a decision, but the favor of Heaven's Augury is something that cannot be sought after.

This was what the Nine Provinces cultivators would compete for if they could.

The Cloud River Ranking Battles drew to a close, yet the aftermath would undoubtedly take months to settle, especially since this session had revealed so many unexpected talents and battles, drawing enough attention to concern even the strong cultivators of the Divine Sea Realm.

The moment the top hundred rankings were solidified, Lu Ye, sitting before the Heaven's Augury Pillar, felt the favor from Heaven's Augury descending through the ether.

He had experienced this several times before, so he remained unfazed.

Long before the start of the Cloud River Ranking Battles, Hua Ci had told him that not only would the top ten receive a large number of gold-hued spirit fortune sticks, but also the favor of Heaven's Augury.

And the favor of Heaven's Augury would influence a cultivator's own fortune.

Lu Ye once thought that fortune was elusive and intangible, hard to grasp.

Now he thinks that although he cannot sense fortune, the Hall of Battle Merits must have a significant connection to the favor of Heaven's Augury.

About the Hall of Battle Merits, he didn't have much information, only that it wasn't a place just anyone could enter. The last person who qualified to enter was from decades ago.

As to why he qualified to enter the Hall of Battle Merits, these past few days Lu Ye had his speculations.

Perhaps it was related to the favor of Heaven's Augury.

Once the favor of Heaven's Augury reached a certain level, one would qualify to enter the Hall of Battle Merits.

Gathering his focus, Lu Ye placed his hand on the Heaven's Augury Pillar, linking his consciousness to the Heaven's Augury treasure vault.

The Cloud River Ranking Battles were over, and the favor of Heaven's Augury had been affirmed, so naturally, it was time to collect his spoils of war.

Gifts such as the gold-hued spirit fortune sticks bestowed by Heaven's Augury all needed to be claimed actively from the Heaven's Augury treasure vault.

Soon, Lu Ye exited the Heaven's Augury Hall and returned to Emerald Bamboo Peak; his storage space now impressively contained twenty gold-hued spirit fortune sticks.

Now at the Cloud River Level 8 in cultivation, Lu Ye thought that not to mention twenty gold-hued spirit fortune sticks, even ten could be enough for him to ascend to Cloud River Level 9. Twenty... could almost bring his Cloud River Realm cultivation to its limit.

However, he was not in a rush to use these gold-hued spirit fortune sticks to enhance his cultivation.

It hadn't been long since his advancement from Cloud River Level 6 to Level 8, and although his foundation was solid, without any hidden dangers, he still needed time to consolidate his gains.

Slowly consuming elixir pills for cultivation was one thing, but continuing to use these fortune sticks for rapid advancement was not appropriate.

Moreover, he currently had no rivals within the Cloud River Realm, so his desire for higher cultivation was no longer as urgent.

Lu Ye had peacefully stayed on Emerald Bamboo Peak for two days.

Then he bid farewell to Shui Yuan.

The sect master wasn't at Righteous Peak, and since the day he was captured by Yun Xuechu, he hadn't appeared again.

According to Shui Yuan, the sect master was now helping out at Bright Heart Peak, but as for what exactly he was helping with, even Shui Yuan wasn't clear.

Lu Ye had his suspicions, as he had previously handed over the damaged Dragon Throne to his master for repair, and she must be busy with that.

But relying solely on her own power was probably insufficient, which is why the sect master had been taken to assist.

In the Heaven's Augury Hall, Lu Ye stood with his sword, Amber crouched on his shoulder, and Yiyi had already hidden inside Amber's body.

"Are you ready?" Lu Ye asked softly.

Amber responded with a howl.

Lu Ye placed his hand on the Heaven's Augury Pillar, and in his mind, points of light immediately reflected, each representing a Heaven's Augury Pillar. Among the myriad points of light, two were differently colored and stood out.

They were the pillars he had obtained on the Cloud River battlefield by spending his merits.

One was within the original hunting grounds.

The other, within the spirit ground of Great Reversal Valley.

He chose the one in Great Reversal Valley's spirit ground. As his vision shifted, he was in the Cloud River battlefield!

"I'm back!" Lu Ye shouted as he walked out of the wooden hut.

No one greeted him, only the demon wolves wandering around glanced at him.

Lu Ye didn't mind. During the Cloud River contest, the people from Great Reversal Valley had obtained varying numbers of gold-hued spirit fortune sticks, so they were likely cultivating and enhancing their cultivation.

Amber leaped down from his shoulder, and Yiyi flashed out of her body.

For Lu Ye at this moment, whether cultivating in the Nine Provinces or on the Cloud River battlefield didn't make much of a difference. However, here in Great Reversal Valley, the nature's spiritual energy was richer, which naturally made cultivation more efficient.

Moreover, his fourth senior brother and the rest were here, which made it a livelier atmosphere.

If he stayed in the Nine Provinces, among his peers, he would be alone. Even if he could talk to the Second Senior Sister, it would still feel lonely and quiet.

So when the one-month deadline arrived, he chose to return to Great Reversal Valley.

...

In Bingzhou, Beixuan Sword Sect.

As the current Sword Heir, Muk Qingyun naturally drew thousands of glories onto himself, taken in as a disciple by the sword master from a young age, and attentively instructed.

His nature was firm, his personality amiable, and he was open-minded—a fitting demeanor for a disciple from a big sect.

Originally, he aimed to be the first in the Cloud River contest, yet he ended up third. To say he wasn't disappointed would be impossible.

But having crossed swords with Lan Ziyi and personally experienced the female cultivator's strength, Muk Qingyun had no complaints about his defeat at her hands.

Better skilled but deficient in cultivation, the day of another battle would eventually come. A person like him wouldn't be brought down by a single failure.

He simply felt some regret.

He hadn't had the chance to fight with Lu Yiye!

Lan Ziyi was already so strong; to what extent was Lu Yiye powerful, such that Lan Ziyi didn't even contemplate challenging him?

If possible, he definitely wanted to witness the other's strength for himself.

However, he had stayed in the Cloud River Realm for over a year now, and it wouldn't be good to delay further.

With a slight sigh, he retrieved a gold-hued spirit fortune stick from his storage space.

His injuries had healed over these days, and it was time to advance to True Lake and share the burden for his sect.

Just as he was about to crush the gold-hued spirit fortune stick in his hand, an unexpected premonition struck him, as if by advancing to True Lake at this moment, he would miss something.

This made Muk Qingyun feel astonished.

He was just a Cloud River Realm cultivator, and though his mind was stronger than that of an average cultivator due to being a sword cultivator, he was far from having premonitions about the unknown.

After pondering for a while, he got up and left the secret chamber, his sword light soaring to the sky, and soon arrived at a cliff at his sect headquarters.

On a rock jutting into the Void, a figure sat upright, straight as a sword.

He had no imposing aura, and his attire was very plain, appearing as an ordinary person.

But this person was a renowned figure throughout the Nine Provinces.

Beixuan Sword Sect's current sword master, Muk Suifeng!

Perhaps not the oldest or most senior among those at the Divine Sea Realm level, but he was one of the most fearsome in terms of killing.

No one dared to underestimate his ability to kill.

Muk Qingyun stepped up behind him and paid his respects with a bow.

"What's the matter?"

Without turning around, Muk Suifeng simply asked softly.

"Master, your disciple has encountered a strange affair," Muk Qingyun replied.

"Let's hear it," said Muk Suifeng, knowing his disciple's character. Anything he deemed a strange affair was bound to be extraordinary.

Chapter 776 Personal Grudges

At Beixuan Sword Sect, before the cliff, as Muk Qingyun narrated, Muk Suifeng's tightly closed eyes slowly opened, flashing a look of interest, as if he sensed something.

"Master, this matter is very strange, I do not know how to decide, please advise me," Muk Qingyun spoke.

"Sword cultivators act according to their hearts, since your heart responds, then let nature take its course. Besides, you are not in a hurry to advance to the True Lake Realm."

"I understand," said the Disciple.

After Muk Qingyun left, Muk Suifeng remained seated without moving, and after a long while, he lifted his head to look at the sky, his gaze profound.

Meanwhile, on Endless Island, in a coastal area, atop a spirit mountaintop by the sea, Lan Ziyi wearing purple clothes, with a gold-hued spirit fortune stick in her hand, curled up the corners of her mouth, revealing a faint smile.

A soft murmur arose, "Interesting."

Without much hesitation, she put away the spirit fortune stick, didn't even continue cultivating by meditating, but instead, came out of her own chamber, heading straight for the Heaven's Augury Hall on Endless Island.

Compared to Muk Qingyun's full-hearted confusion, she obviously realized something.

...

"This is for me, what about your own cultivation?"

In the Great Reversal Valley Spirit Ground, Lu Ye looked at Hua Ci in surprise.

Not everyone was cultivating, Hua Ci wasn't, so Lu Ye found her easily after his return.

To Lu Ye's surprise, Hua Ci took out two gold-hued spirit fortune sticks and handed them to him.

In this Cloud River Realm competition, Hua Ci made it into the top three hundred. Although the reward wasn't very generous, she still received two gold-hued spirit fortune sticks.

"I've said before that my method of cultivation is different from normal people; this thing is not very useful to me."

It's not that it had no use to her at all. With the help of the spirit fortune sticks, by swallowing elixir pills or inhaling nature's spiritual energy, she could also advance her cultivation like other cultivators.

But her main aim in cultivation was not just to elevate her cultivation level. While improving her cultivation, enhancing her poison was her way of cultivating.

If she focused solely on improving her cultivation, one day her means of using poison would become ineffective against her enemies.

For example, with her current capabilities, any cultivator from the Cloud River Realm wouldn't dare to underestimate her, and she could even pose a threat to some cultivators of the True Lake Realm with lower cultivation levels.

But for those in the True Lake Realm with a bit higher cultivation, they could resist her poisons.

If she didn't enhance her poison, when she advanced to the True Lake Realm and faced enemies from the same realm, she would have no effective means of confronting them.

A healing cultivator like her couldn't be expected to fight enemies head-on.

"Also, this isn't really a gift, think of it as a reward," she added.

"What reward?" Lu Ye asked, puzzled.

"Tomorrow, escort me to a place."

Lu Ye gradually began to understand, "Are you hiring me as your escort?"

Hua Ci's eyes curved with amusement, "I wonder if this little reward is enough to hire the number one of Cloud River."

Lu Ye couldn't help but snort with laughter and casually replied, "I'm afraid it's not enough."

"Then what should I do?" Hua Ci's expression suddenly turned pitiable, her tone melancholic, "I have nothing of value; if really necessary... then I can only compensate with my body!"

Lu Ye looked around guiltily, as if a thief, fearing that Yiyi had heard the conversation. Once he realized Yiyi was not nearby, he relaxed.

He scolded Hua Ci, "You woman, always so indiscreet with your words. Dare to do it again, and be careful, I'll hit you!"

Hua Ci's expression became even more aggrieved, "It's not like you haven't hit me before..."

She still remembered the slap she received in the guest room of the Heaven's Augury Mercantile Union.

Lu Ye didn't want to continue that line of dialogue, "Escorting you is no issue, but keep the spirit fortune sticks for yourself. You might need them one day, so there's no need to give them to me."

He took a few steps away, then turned back remembering to ask, "Where are you going?"

"The Five Poisons Pond!"

Just as the Spirit Stream battlefield had the Ten Thousand Poisons Forest, a forbidden land full of poison, rampant with poisonous fog, the Cloud River battlefield naturally had similar forbidden lands. Such

places were always fraught with danger, even cultivators of Cloud River Level 8 or Level 9 rarely dared to venture there willingly.

But for Hua Ci, there was no better cultivation environment than such places in this world.

In Great Reversal Valley Spirit Ground, her progress in cultivation mainly relied on refining the poison pills Lu Ye gave her, without breathing in a bit of nature's spiritual energy, hence her advancement in cultivation was not significant.

But with the inheritance she had acquired, as long as she found a suitable cultivation environment, she could grow rapidly in a short period of time.

As soon as she entered the Cloud River battlefield, she had wanted to search for a place similar to the Ten Thousand Poisons Forest. However, before she had the chance, she heard the news from Li Baxian that Lu Ye was trapped. Without delay, she started her journey to rescue him.

Afterward, she was brought by Lu Ye to the Great Reversal Valley Spirit Ground and took part in the Cloud River competition. During this period, she purchased a ten-part map from the Heaven's Augury treasure vault and used it to find a suitable place for her cultivation, eventually locating the Five Poisons Pond.

Now that the Cloud River competition was over, it was naturally time to set off.

The journey was not short, and having Lu Ye escort her would make it safer, avoiding any unexpected dangers along the way.

After arranging the matter with Hua Ci, Lu Ye took out the ten-part map to locate the Five Poisons Pond.

He quickly made progress.

On the ten-part map, the words "Five Poisons Pond" appeared dark and deep, instilling a sense of unease in anyone who looked at it. It was clear that this place was a perilous land, not to be trespassed lightly.

Just as he was about to stow away the ten-part map, Lu Ye seemed to remember something and quickly took another look at the route from Great Reversal Valley to Five Poisons Pond.

A moment later, he put away the map and headed straight for the direction of the Heaven's Augury Pillar.

Li Baxian, Feng Yuechan, and Giant Armor were all in closed-door cultivation; it would be improper to rashly disturb them.

Fortunately, gatherings and partings among cultivators were frequent occurrences, so there was no need for formal farewells when leaving with Hua Ci. Once their fourth senior brother and the others emerged from seclusion and couldn't find themselves or Hua Ci, they would surely send messages to inquire.

It would not be too late to explain then.

An uneventful night passed, and the next day, as dawn broke, Lu Ye packed his belongings and, with Amber, stepped out of his wooden hut. The door next door swung open at the same time.

"Let's go," Lu Ye called out as he summoned his spirit ark.

Hua Ci stepped aboard unceremoniously and sat down at an angle.

Lu Ye gave her a glance but had no choice but to follow suit.

As spirit force surged, the spirit ark soared into the sky.

Racing along the way, the unique scent of Hua Ci filled his nostrils. Yiyi appeared, engaging in idle chatter with Hua Ci, and throughout the journey, her silver bell-like laughter sprinkled through the air.

When one's cultivation was not high, flying with weapon control on the Cloud River battlefield had to be cautious. One could not fly too high, for if an overwhelming enemy was encountered, escape would be impossible.

Neither could one fly too low, for it would risk ambushes from the ground.

An altitude of about one hundred meters was just right.

Reflecting on the various experiences and hardships when he first entered the Cloud River battlefield, Lu Ye felt a mix of emotions.

Now, he no longer needed to worry about these things. He could fly however he wanted, as high as he desired. If anyone dared to cause trouble, his long blade would teach them a lesson.

In the blink of an eye, his cultivation was approaching the limit that the Cloud River battlefield could accommodate.

Looking back, it seemed his time in the Cloud River battlefield was not particularly long, was it?

It was even shorter than the time he spent practicing in the Spirit Stream battlefield.

Once he advanced to the True Lake Realm, he would have to leave the Cloud River battlefield, and the vast stage of the Nine Provinces would be waiting for him.

With improved cultivation, the speed of weapon control also increased significantly.

In just one day, they left Great Wilderness Mountain behind.

They found a spot in the wilderness to rest for the night, setting up a warning and Protective Array, which meant there was no fear of surprise attacks.

On the second day, they set off again.

Hua Ci quickly noticed something amiss, "Lu Ye, is the direction wrong?"

The overall direction was not incorrect, but the angle of flight seemed a bit off. If they continued like this, they would definitely deviate from the location of Five Poisons Pond, and they would have to make a detour later.

"No mistake," Lu Ye replied. "I'm going to settle a personal grievance first."

Hua Ci understood and silently offered her condolences to the unknown enemy.

She did not ask whom Lu Ye was seeking trouble with. As far as she was aware, in the Spirit Stream battlefield, Lu Ye had enemies everywhere, and it seemed the same was true in the Cloud River battlefield.

She just didn't know who was unfortunate enough to be directly sought out by him.

Lu Ye was not the type to forget grievances; it was just that he had too many enemies, and remembering them all was futile. Moreover, the situation in the Cloud River battlefield was different from the Spirit Stream battlefield as most cultivators here did not have a fixed abode. Even if one wanted to seek revenge, there might never be an opportunity to encounter their target.

But there was one exception to this.

That was the cultivators who owned spirit grounds!

Under normal circumstances, it was not easy for cultivators with spirit grounds to relocate unless they were willing to bear the consequences of a decline in the rank of their spirit ground. This is because once a spring spirit was settled, attempting to retrieve it would inevitably result in a decrease in its quality.

In the Cloud River battlefield, many cultivators participated in the siege and chase to kill Lu Ye, but there was only one place he could take revenge.

The Sacred Universe Spirit Ground!

Conveniently, the Sacred Universe Spirit Ground wasn't far from Great Wilderness Mountain, and it was, more or less, on the route for this particular journey.

Originally, Lu Ye didn't plan to go to the Sacred Universe Spirit Ground, but yesterday, while checking the ten-part map and confirming the route, he inadvertently glanced at the words "Sacred Universe Spirit Ground."

It could only be said that they were a bit unlucky!

From a distance, the Sacred Universe Spirit Ground came into view.

Normally, the vicinity of such a large spirit ground, for about 30 miles around, was almost equivalent to the main gate of a sect.

Any cultivator daring to approach was challenging its authority.

Throughout the entire Cloud River battlefield, the strength of the Sacred Universe Spirit Ground ranked amongst the top. It was a spirit ground built collaboratively by the Sacred Fire Order and Universe Sect. Through generations, it had nurtured countless elites for the two big sects.

Such a large spirit ground could be considered one of the foundations of the two big sects.

Within the spirit ground, there were about 300 cultivators with robust arrays for defense. Even if attacked, the spirit ground would not be breached swiftly. As long as they delayed the attackers for a while, reinforcements would arrive from various places within the Cloud River battlefield or directly from the sect headquarters.

Therefore, over the years, even though the Haotian Alliance knew this spirit ground was created collaboratively by the two big sects, no one dared to covet it.

However, at this moment, an unexpected guest descended from the sky, challenging the protective array that shrouded the spirit ground!

Chapter 777 Greatly Breaking the Sacred Universe Spirit Ground

A spirit ground capable of accommodating two to three hundred cultivators for simultaneous cultivation is not easy to construct. This is the result of generations of effort accumulated by the Sacred Fire Order and the Universe Sect, and it is also an important foundation for both sects on the Cloud River battlefield.

Within both sects, not all cultivators from the Cloud River Realm qualified to cultivate within the spirit ground.

From each generation in the two big sects, the number of Cloud River Realm cultivators ranged from at least a thousand to sometimes two or three thousand. A single spirit ground simply couldn't accommodate all, so even if half a year ago, the Sacred Universe Spirit Ground had suffered heavy casualties, it had since been replenished.

The one originally stationed here, Huo Liaoyuan, died in Great Reversal Valley. The Sacred Fire Order then sent someone named Wang Xhun from the Cloud River Level 9 to replace Huo Liaoyuan's position, jointly managing the area with Tu Guanxiong of the Universe Sect.

At this moment, the two were discussing affairs, and the topics shockingly concerned Lu Ye.

For the cultivators of the Cloud River Realm, the distance between the Sacred Universe Spirit Ground and Great Reversal Valley wasn't considered far, which was why the Sacred Universe Spirit Ground had previously tried to take over Great Reversal Valley.

The bounty on Lu Ye himself was one aspect, and the Great Reversal Valley Spirit Ground was another.

In Huo Liaoyuan's view, eliminating Lu Ye while seizing the spring spirit from the Great Reversal Valley Spirit Ground would not only kill two birds with one stone by enlarging his own spirit ground, but it had also seemed feasible.

Yet, who could have imagined that his ambitions would end with his demise, and the cultivators from both sects who went with him were almost entirely annihilated.

The Sacred Fire Order had dispatched Chu Yun and Zhou Pei to hunt down Lu Ye, and after a lengthy pursuit, not only had they failed to capture him, but they had also been slain by Lu Ye instead.

Moreover, Lu Yiye had reached the top position in the Cloud River contenders' ranking with his cultivation at the Cloud River Level 8.

All these events clearly indicated one thing—Lu Yiye was a formidable enemy!

Priorly, they were the ones initiating trouble, but now that Lu Yiye had truly matured, who knew if he would seek revenge?

In normal circumstances, a single big spirit ground naturally wouldn't worry about such matters. After all, numbers aside, even the protective array shrouding the spirit ground wasn't easily broken.

The Sacred Universe Spirit Ground had been stable for many years, certainly with good reason.

But what about Lu Yiye? Not only was his strength extraordinary, his expertise in Array Path was unimaginable. As early as in the Spirit Stream battlefield, the protective arrays of each big sect's headquarters within the Core Circle seemed non-existent to him; the Sacred Universe Spirit Ground's protective array might not stop him either.

And once he broke into the spirit ground, numerous disciples from both sects could die or be injured.

If such a formidable enemy truly came to cause trouble, the cultivators from both sects wondered how they could defend themselves, which gave Tu Guanxiong and Wang Xhun extreme headaches.

Before they could devise a plan, a thunderous booming sound was heard, deafening and shaking the entire spirit ground violently.

"What's happening?" Tu Guanxiong's brows jumped as he suddenly stood up.

Wang Xhun also looked outside, his face full of confusion.

The next moment, screams reached their ears, brief and frantic, clearly issued in the moments before death.

"It's an attack!" Tu Guanxiong quickly realized.

Following this, the shouting outside became clearer, making his skin crawl.

"Lu Yiye! Lu Yiye has broken in!"

"It's Lu Yiye, block him... Ah!"

In an instant, the previously calm spirit ground erupted like a boiling pot of oil, completely boiling over as figures dashed out from their places of retreat in panic.

Tu Guanxiong and Wang Xhun quickly emerged, faces etched with terror.

The protective array of the spirit ground was still in operation, with a visible spirit force protective barrier enveloping the entire ground. Under normal circumstances, no one should be able to break into the spirit ground without breaching this barrier.

Yet, at that very moment, an unfamiliar figure appeared within the spirit ground. Wrapped in surging, fiery red spirit force, he looked as if he was engulfed in flames, wielding a pitch-black long saber with scorching spirit force climbing the blade. His movements were as swift as thunder, wreaking havoc wherever he went, stirring a storm of blood and gore.

Moreover, three weapon control streams of light revolved around him, devastating the cultivators under his precise control, assaulting them continuously.

No one could withstand his single saber strike, let alone the power from his controlled weapons!

In just a short period, twenty to thirty people in the spirit ground had already been killed or injured!

"How could it be so fast!" Tu Guanxiong was shocked.

Upon hearing the disturbance, he and Wang Xhun had rushed out, and in just a short time, Lu Yiye had already made his way in, killing indiscriminately without any prior warning.

And at this time, when the Sacred Universe Spirit Ground was utterly unprepared, the scattered, fleeing cultivators were no match for Lu Ye.

"Lu Yiye, you're seeking death!" Wang Xhun roared furiously and charged towards Lu Ye.

"Senior Brother Wang!" Tu Guanxiong cried out in alarm, unable to stop him, and with gritted teeth, he too rushed forward.

Then he witnessed a terrifying scene—Wang Xhun, who had charged out furiously, was casually slashed back by Lu Ye, his spirit force in disarray, blood scattering across the sky. If Tu Guanxiong hadn't caught him in time, he would have been in an even more wretched state.

Even though they knew Lu Ye was now very powerful—otherwise, he wouldn't have been able to kill Xia Liang, slay Chu Yun and Zhou Pei, nor would he have been able to claim the top spot on the Cloud River contenders' ranking—

knowing was one thing but without having witnessed it firsthand, their understanding of that so-called strength wasn't clear.

Until now!

Wang Xhun was also from the Cloud River Level 9, having previously participated in the Cloud River struggle for supremacy. Although he didn't make it into the top hundred, he still ranked within the top three hundred.

Among those at his level in the Nine Provinces' Cloud River Realm, he could be considered outstanding.

Tu Guanxiong admitted he was unmatched.

Yet such an outstanding figure had been casually struck flying back by Lu Yiye with a single slash of his saber, and had even sustained moderately severe injuries!

Could a strength from someone at Cloud River Level 8 be so formidable?

Or was the Spiritual Artifact he wielded extraordinary?

Tu Guanxiong, with his keen eyesight, had already noticed that the Boulder Mountain Saber in Lu Ye's hand reached the level of a Magic Artifact; yet even so, Wang Xhun should not have been so ineffective!

During his brief moment of distraction, more than a dozen people were slaughtered.

Fortunately, the cultivators who had been in closed-door cultivation had all rushed out together. Without needing any orders, facing the enemy who suddenly invaded their spirit ground, they each unleashed their abilities to attack.

In an instant, multicolored lights carrying the formidable power of magic and spells streaked back and forth within the spirit ground, creating a scene of fervent activity.

Faced with such a dense offensive, no matter how fast Lu Ye was, or how agile his movements, he could not completely avoid them.

The Defense Spirit Runes on his body kept breaking and reforming, yet he was still battered all over, uncaring as before, just like when he fought against Xia Liang and his group of enemies, charging wherever there were more people.

The three magic-artifact-class weapons had a significant effect. With Lu Ye sparing no expense of spirit force, the speed and lethality he unleashed were not something that ordinary Cloud River Realm cultivators could withstand. As Liu Guang flickered, blood sprayed and limbs flew.

Tu Guanxiong discovered with horror that if the situation continued to develop like this, regardless of whether Lu Yiye would die, the disciples of the two sects at this spirit ground would likely be massacred in a short time.

"Quick, return to our sect headquarters for reinforcements!" Tu Guanxiong gritted his teeth and issued the command, as he and Wang Xhun together rushed toward Lu Ye.

Given the strength Lu Ye displayed, no cultivator below Level 9 could withstand a single slash from him; only he and Wang Xhun could slightly hold him back.

Before the reinforcements from the two sects arrived, they must hold him back at all costs!

Thinking this way, yet when they truly faced his edge head-on, Tu Guanxiong realized how naive he had been.

The terrifying power that was impossible to withstand, the wild and fierce aura, the indescribable sense of oppression; Lu Yiye merely had to slash down, and he was spattered with blood and sent flying.

Wang Xhun fared even worse. He had already been injured before, and this slash had severed one of his arms, tormenting even his resilient spirit, making his face twitch in pain.

Such an enemy... how could they block him?

In facing him, he himself, a cultivator from the Level 9, was like a child facing an adult.

What felt like an immensely long twenty breaths of time felt like it had lasted twenty years.

In the Sacred Universe Spirit Ground, the dead and injured had already exceeded a hundred, and almost every moment, disciples were dying. Those who were still alive, their eyes brimming with fear and horror, their attacks becoming timid and hesitant.

Tu Guanxiong deeply realized that when a person's strength reached a certain level, the number of opponents no longer mattered.

Indeed, there were still many disciples alive on their side, but in this short period, they had been scared out of their wits. No one had the courage to directly face Lu Yiye, and under such low morale, being slaughtered was only a matter of time.

He and Wang Xhun again joined forces to try to hinder Lu Ye, but it had no effect. Wang Xhun was severely injured and near death, and he himself had been struck by Lu Ye's saber, leaving a huge wound in his abdomen, the flesh horrifically mangled.

And yet, this wasn't even Lu Ye specifically targeting them; it seemed he had merely swung at them casually.

Disaster!

This was undoubtedly the biggest disaster since the establishment of the Sacred Universe Spirit Ground!

If they did not overcome this challenge today, then in the future on the Cloud River battlefield, there would be no more Sacred Universe Spirit Ground, and the two big sects would also lose a foothold here.

If so, it would be a severe blow to both sects.

Fortunately, at this moment, within the Heaven's Augury Hall where the Heaven's Augury Pillar was placed, suddenly, several strong auras appeared, and even more auras continued to emerge from within the hall.

Tu Guanxiong's face lit up with joy, knowing that the reinforcements from the two sects had arrived!

From the time he sent for help back to their sect headquarters to now, it had only been a few dozen breaths, and the response speed of the two sects couldn't be said to be slow!

However, his joy had just surfaced when it transformed into boundless fear.

Because, within the spirit ground where he was slaughtering left and right, Lu Yiye suddenly turned his head towards the direction of the Heaven's Augury Hall. Following that, he turned into a fiery red stream of light, wrapped in a fierce aura, and directly barged into the Heaven's Augury Hall.

Tu Guanxiong was dumbstruck in an instant!

Then from the Heaven's Augury Hall came a series of exclamations and screams, along with the roaring of beasts.

Amid the turmoil of spirit force, one aura after another flickered out like extinguished candles.

Tu Guanxiong's eyes trembled violently.

In his mind, an unimaginable scene popped up, one that he simply couldn't accept. Though he hadn't seen it with his own eyes, he felt that this scene was probably what was happening.

Chapter 778 Plundering the Spring Spirit

"Run!"

As Tu Guanxiong was in a daze, a weak voice from Wang Xun reached his ears.

He gazed down at him in a stultified manner, momentarily unresponsive.

"Run, for God's sake!" Wang Xun screamed with all his might.

Only then did Tu Guanxiong come back to his senses and hastily cried out, "Escape!"

The many panic-stricken cultivators of the spirit ground, as if granted amnesty, all spurred on their forms and fled in all directions.

They no longer possessed the courage to confront Lu Ye.

Tu Guanxiong also hurriedly embraced the gravely injured Wang Xun, stimulated his spirit force, and shot toward the sky.

Not far into their flight, booming sounds came from behind, as if something had collapsed.

He looked back to see that the place where Heaven's Augury Hall originally stood was now enveloped in dust; the entire hall had become ruins.

The Heaven's Augury Hall here was itself hastily built by a group of Cloud River Realm cultivators and couldn't be mentioned in the same breath as the Heaven's Augury Hall of the Nine Provinces sect headquarters; it simply couldn't withstand the aftermath of a fierce battle.

Within the shrouded dust, a figure slowly walked out, holding a pitch-black long saber— who else could it be but Lu Yiye?

At this moment, Lu Ye's upper clothes had been torn away, revealing his muscular torso with wounds large and small densely covering it, making him seem like he had been soaked in a blood pool.

Despite appearing in a pitiful state, the ferocity of his bearing made it difficult for others to look directly at him.

Among the collapsed ruins behind him lay numerous broken bodies, at least twenty people, among which Tu Guanxiong recognized many familiar figures.

Boundless sorrow welled up from within him, and Tu Guanxiong spat out a mouthful of fresh blood.

A single thought echoed in his mind.

Invincible!

With such strength, within the Cloud River Realm, it was already impossible for anyone to pose a threat to him.

What he found fortunate was that Lu Yiye seemed to harbor no intention of pursuing them to the bitter end, merely glancing over from a distance of over ten miles before no longer paying them any heed.

Lu Ye indeed had no intention of an all-out purge, mainly because it wasn't very feasible.

The two sects' cultivators who had escaped totaled over a hundred people, scattered in all directions. How could he, alone, chase after them?

So he chose not to bother.

His trip here was secondarily to kill enemies; his main focus was actually on the Sacred Universe Spirit Ground itself.

Huo Liaoyuan's advance to the Great Reversal Valley had appeared aggressive and imminent, yet who could have imagined, in just a few months' time, such a calamity would befall the Sacred Universe Spirit Ground.

He wondered what his thoughts would be if he knew about it in the afterlife.

In front of the destroyed Heaven's Augury Hall, Lu Ye frowned and pondered.

Should he go to the Heaven's Augury treasure vault to find a treasure garment with protective abilities?

Otherwise, coming out of battles like this with tattered clothes was rather unseemly.

The last time he killed Xia Liang and their group was the same, and this time was no different.

But after careful consideration, he decided against it.

Treasure garments, compared to spiritual artifacts of the same defensive capabilities, were much more expensive. Those of lower quality were of little use to him now, and those of high quality came with a high price. If they were damaged, fixing them would not only be troublesome, but the most important aspect was that during combat, he would have to stimulate his spirit force to activate the garment's protective powers.

For a combat cultivator, this was undoubtedly disadvantageous.

Therefore, in the Nine Provinces cultivation world, combat cultivators generally did not wear treasure garments. It wasn't a matter of being unwilling— for all combat cultivators, offense was the best defense.

Instead of diverting a portion of spirit force to activate the power of a treasure garment, Lu Ye preferred to construct Defense Spirit Runes.

Only magic cultivators with fragile constitutions would wear treasure garments. Yet, despite having killed so many magic cultivators, the protection provided by their treasure garments was very limited.

Yiyi had already begun cleaning up the battlefield and collecting the spoils of war.

Hua Ci's voice came from outside the protective array, "Open up, will you!"

During the previous battle, she stayed outside, and only when the dust had settled here did she leisurely fly over, but was blocked by the protective array.

Lu Ye stepped toward her direction, examining the array nodes, and released a series of array banners, quickly bringing Hua Ci inside.

As Hua Ci leisurely tended to his wounds, her gentle jade hands caressing Lu Ye's chest, her beautiful eyes filled with disbelief, "The vitality in your body... it's extraordinary."

The robust vitality made Lu Ye's physique strong and significantly enhanced his healing ability.

So although on the surface, he seemed terribly wounded, in reality, he was hardly troubled, and if his enemy were deceived by this appearance, they would surely suffer a great loss.

With the vitality contained within his body now, such injuries would fade without a trace in a day or two even without Hua Ci's help.

Even though it wasn't the first time she had felt it first-hand, Hua Ci still found it astonishing.

"Focus on healing the wounds and stop touching all over!" Lu Ye couldn't help but glare at her as her caressing tickled him.

Hua Ci pursed her lips and chuckled, refraining from teasing him further.

Soon, the healing was complete.

Lu Ye approached the Spiritual Spring, using its water to wash his body before changing into a set of clean clothes.

Immediately after, he took out a small net-like object from his storage space, about the size of a palm.

Hua Ci looked puzzled, "What is this?"

She had never seen such a spiritual artifact before.

"It's a spirit capturing net, specifically used to capture spring spirits," Lu Ye explained.

Hua Ci realized, "So you came prepared."

In the spirit ground, there is a Spiritual Spring, and within it reside spring spirits that can be captured and seized. Although Hua Ci had not been in the Cloud River battlefield for long, she was aware of such common knowledge.

This was also the origin of the birth of the large spirit grounds within the Cloud River battlefield.

These large spirit grounds did not naturally exist as such; they were developed slowly through the efforts of generations of people.

From the moment Lu Ye left Great Reversal Valley, he had headed straight for this place and had brought a spirit capturing net, clearly having prepared well in advance.

While speaking, Lu Ye tossed the spirit capturing net in his hand into the Spiritual Spring in front of him, yet he still held onto a long, thin line.

How to refine a spirit capturing net was unknown to the entire Nine Provinces, as it was a unique object from Heaven's Augury treasure vault, its essence not any particularly powerful spiritual artifact; it was simply endowed with a special ability by Heaven's Augury.

And such a spirit capturing net was priced at five thousand merits in the Heaven's Augury treasure vault, definitely not cheap.

The depths of the Spiritual Spring were unknowable, and as Lu Ye held onto the thin line, he had the odd impression of fishing.

The spirit capturing net continued to descend deeper and finally sank to the bottom of the Spiritual Spring. Soon, Lu Ye felt a movement and quickly pulled the net out.

There were no complications, and after just a moment, the spirit capturing net emerged wrapped around a plump and chubby object resembling a silkworm cocoon, coming into Lu Ye's view.

Having obtained a spring spirit before, he was not surprised by this.

However, Hua Ci was seeing such a thing for the first time and couldn't help but be curious, "So this is a spring spirit."

As she spoke, she even poked it with her hand.

The spring spirit seemed to lazily shrink its body a bit.

Lu Ye scrutinized the spring spirit before him and didn't find it much different from the ones he had acquired before, but he knew that if he could find a place for it, it would give birth to nothing but a Class B spirit ground.

The Sacred Universe Spirit Ground was Class A, but once a spring spirit was taken out, its quality would drop by one grade.

As for the range that the spirit ground would cover, that probably wouldn't change too much.

Of course, Lu Ye wasn't planning to create another Class B spirit ground; the primary purpose of the spring spirit in his hand was to bring it back to Great Reversal Valley and place it in the Spiritual Spring to expand the scope of Great Reversal Valley's spirit ground.

How much it could be expanded was yet to be seen.

The Great Reversal Valley spirit ground was currently a small spirit ground although the nature's spiritual energy was rich there, it could only accommodate a limited number of people.

In the future, undoubtedly there would be a continuous stream of disciples from the Righteous Blood Sect advancing to the Cloud River, entering the Cloud River battlefield. Having the Great Reversal Valley spirit ground in this place would at least provide the disciples an easier start.

Lu Ye then took out the box used to contain the spring spirit, a reward from a previous hunting ground, and placed the spring spirit from the spirit capturing net into it, carefully keeping it secure.

"Let's go!" Lu Ye called out and once again brought out his spirit ark, carrying Hua Ci towards the direction of the Five Poisons Pond.

Behind them lay a broken spirit ground, the stench of blood reaching to the heavens.

Who could have imagined that a large spirit ground with many years of heritage could be breached and toppled by the power of one person, and moreover, turned into a river of blood within it.

And the cause of it all was Huo Liaoyuan's previous attack on the Great Reversal Valley spirit ground.

There are no secrets that wind does not reveal; when the news from the Sacred Universe Spirit Ground spread, the name Lu Ye the Sect Destroyer resurfaced in the minds of many Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators.

Especially those who had experienced the dark era when Lu Ye ruled the Spirit Stream battlefield, they all had a vague feeling.

The scenario of a vast battlefield dominated by a single person seemed to be reemerging.

For a time, countless cultivators from the Ten Thousand Demons Ridge were frightened and uneasy.

Lu Yiye was so vengeful and now so powerful that if they encountered him in the wild, an unpleasant fate was certain.

This led to many Ten Thousand Demons Ridge cultivators who had previously troubled Lu Ye either returning to the Nine Provinces sect headquarters or shut themselves away in earnest cultivation within the Cloud River battlefield, seldom daring to venture out.

The atmosphere of the Cloud River battlefield itself became much more peaceful as a result.

At night, with the moon's hazy light, the campfire flickered.

Hidden formations around provided warning and protection.

Hua Ci and Yiyi were roasting beast meat by the campfire, the crackling sounds unceasing, and the tempting aroma spread in all directions.

Lu Ye, with his upper body bare, was practicing saber skills not too far away.

Recently, he had been studying the secrets of the Tyrannical Saber Technique and gained some understanding, but unfortunately, the environment was not suitable for entering the Mirage Realm to hone it, so he had to cultivate on his own.

Suddenly, Lu Ye stopped moving.

It was not that he had gained any insight, but rather his battlefield marking began to react oddly.

The sensation was not like someone sending a message. It was a type of response Lu Ye had never experienced before.

Curious, he placed his hand on the battlefield marking and immersed his consciousness to investigate. A burst of information suddenly exploded in his mind, forming lines of text.

Lu Ye watched intently, his expression beginning to change.

This information wasn't sent to him by anyone; it appeared out of nowhere in his battlefield marking.

Without guessing, Lu Ye knew who possessed such means.

The content of the information naturally led to speculation.

Chapter 779 Five Poisons Pond

In the Cloud River battlefield, there are many perilous forbidden lands, many of which are occupied by Overlord-class Demon Generals, such as the territory of the Berserk Giant Ape within the Great Wilderness Mountain, a place no cultivator would dare provoke casually.

However, there are also many areas that are merely environmentally harsh, so harsh that even those in the Cloud River Realm find it difficult to endure.

The Five Poisons Pond is undoubtedly one of those places.

The conditions inside are not much different from those of the Ten Thousand Poisons Forest, teeming with all sorts of venomous creatures whose toxins, constantly released, envelop the entire Five Poisons Pond in a poisonous fog that no wind can disperse.

However, relatively speaking, the toxicity of the many venomous creatures and poisonous fog in the Five Poisons Pond is much more severe than that of Ten Thousand Poisons Forest.

After all, one is a forbidden land of the Spirit Stream battlefield, and the other is a forbidden land of the Cloud River battlefield, and there is still a difference in levels.

Within this forbidden area, the most prevalent are various venomous spiders, centipedes, frogs, snakes, and scorpions.

Hence the name Five Poisons.

Although it contains the word 'pond,' it is not merely a small pool of water—viewed from the sky, it appears as a vast expanse, an abyss of unknown depth.

At a glance, the bottom of the Five Poisons Pond is completely out of sight.

It is rumored that Overlord-class Demon Generals exist here, but such a dangerous place normally keeps cultivators far away, so whether there are actually Overlord-class demon beasts is uncertain.

Lu Ye, commanding his own spirit ark, hovered a hundred yards above the abyss, looking down at the churning poisonous fog below, as if monstrous creatures could emerge at any moment.

"This place..." Lu Ye glanced leisurely at Hua Ci, "is extremely dangerous! Are you sure you want to cultivate here?"

Hua Ci's eyes shone with excitement. Although she had located Five Poisons Pond on the ten-part map and deduced that it was suitable for her cultivation, she had never actually visited before, nor had she thoroughly investigated the conditions of Five Poisons Pond.

Only upon seeing the environment with her own eyes did she immediately confirm that this was the place she had been dreaming of.

To others, this location might be utterly horrifying, but she was irresistibly drawn to it.

"Of course!" Hua Ci smiled, took a step forward, and leaped off the spirit ark, descending towards the area below, her garments fluttering beautifully, like a banished fairy.

Lu Ye stowed away the spirit ark and followed closely behind.

Meanwhile, he submerged his mind to observe the reaction of the Talent Tree.

Scarcely had they entered the range of the Five Poisons Pond when grey mist began to rise from the Talent Tree, increasing in intensity the further down they went.

This showed the harshness of the environment, likely ten times worse than that of the Ten Thousand Poisons Forest.

Yet Hua Ci seemed exhilarated, looking around as if she were not in a deadly location feared even in the Cloud River Realm, but rather in a beautifully scenic garden.

This woman...

Lu Ye watched her enchantingly retreating figure and slowly shook his head.

If he did not have the Talent Tree by his side, he likely wouldn't have even had the right to approach her.

Hua Ci did not descend to the deepest parts; although she could use toxins for cultivation, she also had her own limits. Due to the inheritance she received, her sensitivity to toxins was sharper than anyone else's.

Thus, although she did not have a Talent Tree, she could still clearly perceive that the deeper they went, the fiercer the toxins contained in the environment of the Five Poisons Pond became.

The point they stopped at was the most suitable place for her to cultivate.

Lightly landing on an adjacent protruding rock wall, Hua Ci took a deep breath, spread her arms as if to embrace the entire Five Poisons Pond.

"From now on, this is my territory," she declared joyfully.

Unfortunately, Lu Ye was the only audience member.

Having cultivated in the Ten Thousand Poisons Forest, which ceased to exist on the day she emerged, Lu Ye found it hard to imagine what it would be like after Hua Ci eventually emerged from cultivating in such a place.

Would even the Five Poisons Pond become a safe area?

If so, her cultivation progress would be terrifyingly rapid.

"Are you sure you don't want to reconsider?" Lu Ye asked as he looked toward the nearby rock wall, where a black snake as long as a chopstick was rapidly moving while flicking its tongue, clearly emitting poisonous gas from its mouth.

"What's there to reconsider?" Hua Ci responded with a smiling tone.

"I can't stay here with you to cultivate forever."

If the supplies for the Talent Tree were abundant, he could stay longer, but living in such an environment would definitely deplete the Talent Tree's reserves quickly.

Even setting up a Formation might not be able to withstand the corrosive toxins.

Hua Ci turned to look at him, her lips curving in a smile: "I appreciate the thought, but I'm not a child. Cultivation is inherently a dull affair; there's no need for company. You've been mostly alone on your journey as well—if Amber and Yiyi weren't with you, wouldn't you also have been solitary? If I can't even handle this solitude, how can I continue to cultivate?"

Lu Ye nodded: "You stay here, I'll go down and have a look."

With that, he flashed downward, Hua Ci wanting to stop him but was too late.

If he couldn't stay with Hua Ci here permanently, then at least he could ensure there wasn't anything in the vicinity that could threaten her life.

Although she didn't say it outright, Hua Ci knew exactly what Lu Ye was thinking, and her heart warmed instantly.

Soon, she felt intense fluctuations of spirit force emanating from below, occasionally accompanied by the sounds of blades clashing, along with various peculiar shrieks and roars.

It seemed that Lu Ye was engaging with something.

Lu Ye didn't return until the next day; his clothes were neat, but Hua Ci could tell at a glance that they were freshly changed.

Approaching Hua Ci, he casually tossed her a storage sack, slightly regretful, "The rumors were wrong; there are no Overlord-class Demon Generals here."

He did encounter many demon generals of the Cloud River Realm tier, diverse in kind, but none were Overlord-class.

He was quite keen to test his skills against an Overlord-class demon general.

Hua Ci took the storage sack and upon opening it, saw it was packed with demonic pills, many green snake gallbladders, and some venom sacs, clearly Lu Ye's gains from this expedition.

Just from these spoils of battle, it was evident that Lu Ye had killed a significant number of venomous creatures.

"This is..." As Hua Ci spoke, she suddenly pulled a flower out of the storage sack. The flower was entirely black, about the size of a palm, and at first glance, it looked like it had a sinister smiling face imprinted on it.

"Devil's trumpet?" Hua Ci was astonished, looking at Lu Ye, "You found this below?"

Lu Ye nodded, "There's a large patch at the bottom of the pond. I wasn't sure what it was, but it felt highly toxic. I brought one back to see if it's useful to you?"

He made such an assessment because many venomous creatures lived in that area, and these creatures seemed fond of this kind of flower.

"Useful, very useful to me!" Hua Ci nodded assertively.

"Then I'll go and gather some more." Lu Ye said, preparing to leave again.

Hua Ci grabbed his arm, shaking her head, "No need; leave some thoughts for me. One day I will go down and gather them myself."

Lu Ye thought for a moment, then relented, "Alright then."

In cultivation, the fear is the lack of goals; without goals, there is no motivation.

Leaving those devil's trumpets as Hua Ci's goal might make her cultivate even harder.

There were still many venomous creatures in the Five Poisons Pond that Lu Ye hadn't dealt with, but these creatures were not much of a threat to the current Hua Ci.

"You should go; it's not good to stay here for too long." Hua Ci's tone was soft and tender.

"Then I'm leaving."

Turning around, as if remembering something, Lu Ye then said, "Oh right, I have something else for you."

"What?" Hua Ci was curious.

"Give me your hand."

As told, Hua Ci extended a small, fair hand, delicate as if carved from white jade.

Lu Ye clenched his fist, apparently holding something, and gently placed it in her hand.

Expecting something delightful, Hua Ci's face was full of anticipation, but as she felt the fuzzy sensation mixed with slight sharpness on her palm, her expression changed drastically as if struck by lightning, turning deathly pale.

Looking up, she saw a mischievous smirk spreading across Lu Ye's face.

Looking down again, when Lu Ye moved his hand away, a spider with eight legs was crawling on her palm.

In that instant, Lu Ye could almost see the fine hairs on Hua Ci's delicate skin stand on end.

Jerkily pulling back her hand, she flung the spider away as if severely frightened, following instinct, she wrapped herself in a fragrant breeze and plunged into Lu Ye's arms, clinging tightly to him, her body trembling uncontrollably.

The mischievous smile on Lu Ye's face instantly froze.

He had never expected such a reaction from Hua Ci.

He remembered, back on Chess Island during the Spirit Stream Defense Battle, when Loo Yushan from the Thousand Contraptions Pavilion produced a life-like spider-like cover armorer, Hua Ci had been so scared she smashed the spider with a slap.

He had only intended to tease her before parting, but it seemed he might have taken the joke too far.

Feeling the astonishing curves and contours against his chest, with her intoxicating scent in his nostrils, and her hair tickling his face as it fluttered in the wind...

Inside Hua Ci's chest, her heartbeat was fierce and rapid, like the pounding of a war drum, her head buried in his embrace as if only in this way she could find a trace of security.

A wave of guilt overwhelmed Lu Ye as he gently patted Hua Ci's shoulder, opening his dry lips to soothe, "I..."

But then the flesh around his waist was suddenly pinched and twisted fiercely by Hua Ci.

After a severe venting, Hua Ci finally stepped back, her beautiful eyes filled with a mist, staring wide-eyed at Lu Ye.

Lu Ye felt rather awkward, avoiding her gaze, scratching his head, and gave a forced chuckle, "I'm going now, take care of yourself, and I'll visit you when I have the time."

Until the end, Lu Ye never dared to meet Hua Ci's eyes directly.

Fortunately, he knew that Hua Ci wouldn't really be angry or detest him over this matter, but it seemed like he had bullied her quite harshly this time.

He silently decided not to do such a thing again.

Feeling a bit of regret that he hadn't bid farewell properly, this parting was ambiguous, and it was uncertain when they would meet again.

Chapter 780 Giant Armor Has Changed

"Lu Ye, you're too much!"

It wasn't until she dashed out of the Five Poisons Pond that Yiyi emerged from within the Amber, glaring at Lu Ye with puffed cheeks as she scolded him, "Are you a child? Playing such tricks?"

Lu Ye hung his head, somewhat deflated by the scolding.

In his heart, he couldn't help but worry. With a weakness like that, how would Hua Ci manage to survive in the Five Poisons Pond in the future?

At the Five Poisons Pond, with the protruding rock walls behind her, Hua Ci watched in the direction Lu Ye had left. When she could no longer see that familiar figure, her beautiful eyes curved like crescents: "Let's see if you dare to do it again next time!"

A hint of triumph flickered in her eyes.

Rustling noises came from the ground at her feet; it was the poisonous spider she had thrown away earlier, crawling back to her.

Hua Ci bent down, extending her jade hand, and let the spider climb onto her palm.

Her expression was calm; where was the slightest hint of fear? She even reached out with her other hand to gently stroke the spider's back a few times...

Half a day after Lu Ye left the Five Poisons Pond and made sure that he was far enough away, Hua Ci brought out her Flying Spirit Artifact and, following a certain indescribable intuition, flew off in a certain direction.

She wasn't clear what this sensation was, but it felt incredibly real, impossible to ignore, and she had an ominous premonition about it. She couldn't even put it into words.

Therefore, on her way to the Five Poisons Pond, even though she had wanted to discuss this matter with Lu Ye several times, the words would not come out when they reached her lips, as if doing so would definitely trigger some terrible consequences.

Thus, she could only wait for Lu Ye to take her to the Five Poisons Pond and, after he had left, act on her own.

Fortunately, there was still time.

In midair, Lu Ye controlled the artifact as he traveled, thinking about the unexpected information that had appeared in his battlefield marking two days earlier.

That information hadn't been sent to him by someone; it had appeared abruptly within his marking, found through his investigation.

The message indicated that he should rush to a certain place within five days.

Why he needed to go there, what was there, and what would happen after he arrived, Lu Ye had no idea. But he couldn't ignore it, for he knew that this sudden information was most likely conveyed to him by Heaven's Augury.

Apart from the unfathomable and omnipresent Heaven's Augury, who else could possess such mystifying methods?

When he received that information, he was escorting Hua Ci to the Five Poisons Pond. With time to spare, he decided to deliver her safely before setting out.

Another day later, a spirit mountaintop loomed in the distance.

Lu Ye recalled the content of the message and examined his surroundings, confirming that the spirit mountaintop ahead was his destination.

He went straight for the spirit mountaintop without any particular caution.

Before getting close, Lu Ye's sharp senses already detected the faint presence of living people on top of the spirit mountaintop.

He furrowed his brows, immediately put away the Boulder Mountain Saber, stuffed Amber back into the spirit beast sack, and took out a mask to wear.

He descended straight onto the top of the spirit mountaintop.

Indeed, there was someone there: a middle-aged man with a fair appearance, wearing clothes embroidered with gold thread. At first glance, he looked less like a cultivator and more like a wealthy merchant or a prominent businessman.

Someone from Heaven's Augury Mercantile Union!

A thought crossed Lu Ye's mind.

Having dealt several times with the Heaven's Augury Mercantile Union and engaged with many of its managers, he naturally recognized the unique style of the Union's attire. Moreover, judging by the gold thread patterns on the man's clothes, his status within the Heaven's Augury Mercantile Union might be quite high.

"Fellow Daoist, you are welcome!"

The middle-aged man greeted Lu Ye with a fist salute, then, without any idle chatter, he tossed a storage sack over.

"Here are the goods for Fellow Daoist."

Lu Ye caught the storage sack in his hand, contemplating inwardly.

He was guided here secretly by Heaven's Augury to trade with someone from the Heaven's Augury Mercantile Union?

"What's inside?" Lu Ye asked in a hoarse voice.

The middle-aged man shook his head: "I'm just responsible for delivery. I know nothing else and don't want to know. The goods have been delivered, I take my leave!"

With that, he shot up into the sky, refusing to engage in any more conversation with Lu Ye.

Lu Ye felt a subtle mood shift.

What exactly was going on here?

Gazing in the direction of the departing merchant union middle-aged man, Lu Ye looked down at the storage sack in his hand.

He was led here by Heaven's Augury's guidance. Before his arrival, someone from the Heaven's Augury Mercantile Union was already waiting here to hand over this storage sack to him. Furthermore, at their meeting, he didn't even ask for Lu Ye's name or origin, as if he was certain that Lu Ye was the person he was waiting for, handing over the "goods" directly.

Wasn't he afraid of giving it to the wrong person?

Or could it be that he, too, received a secret sign from Heaven's Augury?

Unable to figure it out, Lu Ye was even more curious about what was inside the storage sack.

The storage sack was sealed with a restriction lock, but naturally, that wouldn't stop Lu Ye. With a flick of his finger, he broke the seal, reached inside, and pulled out the contents of the storage sack.

Four crystal-like objects, not very large, each about five inches long.

The crystals weren't the main point—the main point was what was sealed within them.

Looking at what was sealed in the crystals, Lu Ye narrowed his eyes slightly.

This thing looked like...

He turned it over and over, scrutinizing it for a long time before finally confirming that he wasn't mistaken.

"Heaven's Augury Pillars!"

The items sealed within the four crystals were actually Heaven's Augury Pillars!

However, what was different about the Heaven's Augury Pillars sealed within these four crystals from those that Lu Ye knew of was that not only were they minuscule in size, but the surfaces of the Heaven's Augury Pillars were also etched with many intricate and dark golden patterns, seemingly more complex and mystical than the normal pillars.

Lu Ye had never known that the Heaven's Augury Pillar could be shrunk to such an extent, it seemed to be the work of the crystals.

He had no idea what these crystals were, but they not only completely sealed the aura of the Heaven's Augury Pillar but also shrank them to such a tiny size.

Things were getting strange.

He was guided to this place, and the people from Heaven's Augury Mercantile Union had just handed him these items, but what next?

As he was filled with doubt, there was suddenly a movement from his battlefield marking.

This time, it wasn't the peculiar kind of movement, but someone was sending him a message.

Hurriedly checking, Lu Ye found that it was his Fourth Senior Brother who was sending the message.

Fourth Senior Brother had been in closed-door cultivation all this while and must have just come out. Not having found Lu Ye and Hua Ci, he decided to ask around.

Lu Ye sent a message back, informing him that Hua Ci needed to undertake cultivation at the Five Poisons Pond and that he was escorting her there.

"So that's how it is. Well, Little Junior Brother, be careful on your journey and tell Giant Armor to come back soon. The wolf pack has been circling me, probably trying to find out where Giant Armor has gone," Fourth Senior Brother replied.

Lu Ye was astonished, "Giant Armor isn't cultivating?"

Fourth Senior Brother was also confused, "Isn't Giant Armor with you?"

"I'll send a message to ask," Lu Ye frowned.

He and Hua Ci had left the spirit ground for a reason, but why had Giant Armor also left without making a sound?

The big guy was usually the kind who preferred stillness over movement and had always been cultivating in earnest at the Great Reversal Valley Spirit Ground. Except for the time he followed Fourth Senior Brother and the others on a trip outside, it made no sense for him to leave without even saying goodbye.

Lu Ye had a vague sense of worry. Had Giant Armor encountered some trouble?

But Giant Armor didn't know many people, so what kind of trouble could he have encountered?

He located Giant Armor's marking impression and sent a message to inquire about the situation.

After a long wait, there was a reply from the other side.

"With stillness comes the desire for movement, just taking a walk," it read.

"Who are you?" Lu Ye was startled.

Was this a message Giant Armor would reply with?

After careful verification, he confirmed that it was indeed Giant Armor's marking impression.

Battlefield markings were something that every cultivator in the Nine Provinces had, and they were unique to each individual; it wasn't possible for someone else to impersonate him. Lu Ye found it hard to believe that someone like Giant Armor, who was reticent by nature, could come up with a phrase like "with stillness comes the desire for movement."

Giant Armor had changed!

After chatting with Giant Armor for a few more messages and making sure that he was not in any danger and was indeed just out for a walk, Lu Ye didn't say much else.

At a certain location in the Cloud River battlefield high in the sky, Giant Armor ended the communication with Lu Ye, his face filled with guilt. With a face as large as a fan, he scratched his head and heaved a heavy sigh.

If it were possible, he would never keep anything from Lu Ye.

However, whenever he thought of revealing the truth, some kind of dangerous premonition would always surface mysteriously, preventing him from speaking his mind. With no other choice, he had to come up with a random excuse.

This was also the reason he had left without informing Li Baxian and the others.

He wasn't one to lie. If he had tried to take his leave in front of Li Baxian, his deception would surely be noticed.

...

The Flying Spirit Artifacts soared through the sky with speed.

Ying Wuji was excited.

As a Core Disciple of Senluo Hall, born of a noble line with exceptional talent, and being a ghost cultivator with a naturally strong mindset, there weren't many things in this world that could excite him.

One of them for sure!

The favor of Heaven's Augury!

The top ten competitors in the Cloud River battle would all be granted different degrees of Heaven's Augury's favor. Growing up in a top-notch sect like Senluo Hall, having been meticulously tutored by its experts since his childhood, he knew full well what the favor of Heaven's Augury signified.

Unfortunately, even though the ghost cultivator faction was inherently capable of defeating enemies beyond their level, it had one disadvantage.

They couldn't gain much advantage in situations like the Cloud River battlefield.

When ghost cultivators killed, their victims often didn't realize they were being targeted, which allowed ghost cultivators to freely employ their methods.

But in the Cloud River battle, one's opponents were aware of their presence and were always on guard, so it wasn't easy for him to succeed.

Thus, even though he was powerful, he only managed to secure the sixteenth position in the end!

In the entire top hundred list of the Cloud River battle, he ranked as the most powerful ghost cultivator.

With such a ranking, he naturally wouldn't receive the favor of Heaven's Augury. Ying Wuji had already decided to quietly focus on the Cloud River when, unexpectedly, he felt a faint guide from Heaven's Augury.

He couldn't wait to enter the Cloud River battlefield, following that faint sense in his heart, flying towards the horizon.

He didn't know what awaited him, because of this he couldn't even inform his own master.

Could this be the legendary favor of Heaven's Augury?

What breathtaking treasures or astonishing opportunities lay ahead?

With his heart pounding with excitement and anxiety, Ying Wuji continued onward until at a certain moment, he suddenly came to a halt.

For no apparent reason, he felt that the mountain range ahead, with its overlapping peaks and valleys, was his destination for this venture!

As to the specific location, he would need to delve deeper to understand.